Constructing Nation and History

Hindu Mahasabha in Colonial North India 1915-1930

Prabhu Narain Bapu

Thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

School of Oriental and African Studies
University of London
November 2009

ProQuest Number: 11010467

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS
The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript
and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed,
a note will indicate the deletion.

ProQuest 11010467

Published by ProQuest LLC (2018). Copyright of the Dissertation is held by the Author.

All rights reserved.
This work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code
Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

ProQuest LLC.
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 – 1346

SOAS LIBRARY

Dedicated to ...

Gurdwara Sri Guru Singh Sabha, Southall, London

Gurdwara Guru Nanak Nishkam Sewak Jatha [UK], Hounslow, London

Gurdwara Sri Guru Singh Sabha, Hounslow, London

Declaration for PhD thesis

I have read and understood regulation 17.9 of the Regulations for students of the School of Oriental and African Studies concerning plagiarism. I undertake that all the material presented for examination is my own work and has not been written for me, in whole or in part by any other person. I also undertake that any quotation or paraphrase from the published or unpublished work of another person has been duly acknowledged in the work which I present for examination.

Prabhu Narain Bapu

School of Oriental and African Studies

University of London

Constructing Nation and History

Hindu Mahasabha in Colonial North India 1915-1930

Abstract

This study's paramount objective is to examine the emergence of the Hindu Mahasabha as a political force and its campaign for Hindu unity and organisation in the context of the growing Hindu-Muslim conflict in colonial north India, mainly focusing on the United Provinces, in the early twentieth century. It explains that the Mahasabha articulated *sangathan* [Hindu consolidation] ideology as a means of constructing a distinct Hindu political identity and unity in conflict with Muslims in India. The work explores the way Arya Samaj and *sanatan dharm* influences, though different, were opportunistically drawn on by the Mahasabha in its *sangathan*ist narrative. It examines the ambivalence between the Mahasabha and the Indian National Congress and at the individual level [M.M. Malaviya, etc], despite their ideological opposition. It argues that the Mahasabha with its Hindutva ideology had its focus on anti-Muslim rather than anti-colonial antagonism, adding to the difficulties over the Nehru report and the Round Table Conferences, but also showing its occasional alliances with the British, despite its fascist sympathies. It suggests that the Mahasabha had a limited class and regional base and was unable to generate much in the way of a mass movement of its own, but nonetheless developed a quasi-military wing, besides its involvement in a number of popular, more or less single-issue campaigns -- *shuddhi*, cow protection, Nagari, etc. The work explains that the Mahasabha rejected the Congress's vision of a secular territorial nation and instead advocated a state based on Hindu religion and culture, in effect a Hindu *rashtra* [nation] based on a Hindu majority rule, excluding Muslims and Christians from the India nation. The thesis bridges the gap in Indian historiography by focusing entirely on the Hindu Mahasabha's politics and its *sangathan* ideology in the formative period in the UP.

Contents

Part III

Hindu Nation

Acknowledgements

This thesis has been inspired by Sir Christopher Bayly: the theme of the Hindu Mahasabha came up in one of my informal meetings with him on a foggy winter day at the British Library, London, in 2000. Professor Bayly wondered that no one had written a complete history of the Hindu Mahasabha, which remained an unexplained mystery in Indian historiography. The theme appeared novel, as it represented a political movement in colonial India. The Hindu Mahasabha has rarely been on the academic agenda in India, far less a topic of discussion in the classes and seminars of the University of Delhi -- where I have studied. At the first glance, it appeared almost unfathomable: I did not anticipate a long story of *sangathan* [Hindu unity] and its contextual anti-Muslim tirade and hostility that incubated the Mahasabha's politics of a 'Hindu nation' in India. Later on, it has dawned on me that this study is perhaps one of the first or pioneering attempts on the formative history of the Mahasabha: the narrative begins in 1915 and ends in 1930. The thesis revisits the Hindutva assumption that the Hindu-Muslim divide in colonial India was deeply rooted in the country's social and political history, an issue of debate that is bound to dominate the decades to come.

It was strange that many of the vulnerabilities of my own student life and its aims were reconciled, despite the absence of secure funding, at my PhD course's difficult birthing at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, in September 2000. I could not get a fellowship to pursue this project: there was the seriousness, the infatuation with SOAS, and the surprising naiveté, nevertheless. The funding crisis plunged me into a gloom. I did not fully realise the magnitude of the research I was undertaking. My research certainly went through a tidal rhythm of advance and retreat, dictated by the availability money at every step. Even I steadied my footing in the City of London, there was a turmoil as well as depression, marked by isolation and loneliness. My road to the thesis's completion has become longer, more tortuous and far to less likely than anticipated.

This thesis has taken over eight years to write, and I owe a great debt to my teacher and Orientalist – Professor Peter Robb. Professor Robb is my most important audience and critic: he has been a patient and generous supervisor and a great editor throughout. He guided my research with energy and steady purpose in a genial spirit and courtesy, showing an understanding of me and my own vulnerabilities. I am grateful to him for the long hours he has spent on the countless number of drafts and patient explanations he made in the chapters through suggestions and detailed comments, written in feathery strokes. His approach is tutorial: when I required his rescuing, he has given more attention to the chapters. The chapters have gone through many drafts destroyed by him at various stages and kept changing in detail and argument till September 2009 when the thesis rolled out. Professor Robb has looked as generously as possible on many of my own weaknesses and remained attentive and sympathetic. If there is one reader to whom this work is addressed as my first audience, it is to him as a social historian.

Source material for this thesis has been collected in Lucknow, New Delhi, and London. However, there is a vacuum of data on the Hindu Mahasabha due to the missing of many documents, particularly in Lucknow; and the assembling of evidence on Mahasabha activities and campaigns in the United Provinces has been extremely difficult. Many documents that could have established a clearer picture of the Mahasabha's programmes are not available in the archives and libraries of Delhi and London. A few records do exist; and some part of evidence has been acquired from newspapers at the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library [NMML], New Delhi; the National Archives of India [NAI], New Delhi; and the Oriental and India Office Library, London. The writings of the Hindu Mahasabha leaders – Swami Shraddhananda, Bhai Parmanand, and V.D. Savarkar – and the collected works of M.K. Gandhi have been studied in depth. In addition, the private papers of M.M. Malviya, B.S. Moonje, V.D. Savarkar, and M.R. Jayakar have been a major help in constructing a theory of the Mahasabha's ideology. More important, the timing of the thesis has been fortuitously advantageous to me: many new works on Hindu nationalism have appeared in the 2000s. I owe a great debt to the research institutions in London. In particular, I am grateful to SOAS Library, London; the British Library of Political and Economic Science, LSE, London; and the Oriental and India Office Collections [IOL], London.

This thesis has become an obsessive and consuming passion of my many long years in London. I gratefully acknowledge the respect and kindness, the dedication and generosity with which my Indian community in London has supported my research – a support that inspires in me pleasant memories and emotions. Mr Ramesh Desai, chairman, and Mr Anil Pota, secretary, Friends of India Society, London, have organised an appeal in the Indian community to back my PhD registration at the University of London; and their support is of inestimable value. Mr Jagdish M. Rajpara, and Mr Mukund Bhatt, Vishwa Hindu Parishad, showed great energy and determination in supporting me over the tuition fee: I am forever grateful to them. I am extremely grateful to Dr Ghiyasuddin Siddhiqui, chairman, Muslim Parliament, Hammersmith, London, who was most kind and generous in taking an initiative to pay part of the tuition fee; and this work is a tribute of my gratitude to his personal pre-eminence and force in supporting this research. Dr Jesdev Singh Rai, director, Sikh Human Rights Group, London, has paid part of the fee; and Mr Jog Raj Ahir and Mr G.P.S Bhatia, president and former president, Shri Guru Ravidass Sabha, Southall, London, have shown strong commitment to this research: I owe my extreme gratitude to their invaluable support. I am overwhelmed by the resolve and commitment shown to my research by Mr Surinder Singh Sahns, president, and Mr Jaspal Singh Bhambra, general secretary, Ramgarhia Sabha, Southall, London; and I am deeply grateful to them. I owe my warm admiration and respect to Mr Sarabjeet Singh Gill, Cranford Community College, London; Mr Sahani, president, Central Gurdwara, Shepherd's Bush, London; and Mr S.S. Hunjai, president, Khalsa Centre, Tooting, London. Their wholehearted commitment has greatly helped me complete this thesis during my difficult, complex years of anxiety and frustration in London.

I owe my deep gratitude to Mr R.L. Bhandari, president, Mr Ashok Sharma and Mr Vidyasagar Sharma, Executive Committee members, Vishwa Hindu Temple, Southall, London, who have paid part of the tuition fee. I am overwhelmed by the commitment shown by Mr Ranjit Singh, OBE, chairman, Guru Nanank Chair Trust, London, who has sent part of the tuition fee on the basis of a solitary phone call by me; and I am deeply grateful to him. I remain grateful to Mr Akbar Shiraji, deputy managing director, Noon Products Ltd, Middlesex, London, who has paid part of the tuition fee. I hold in high esteem the affectionate support given to me by Mr Zul Virani, chairman, Zul Virani Trust, London. Mr Maqsood Malik supported me enormously when the constant worries and everyday struggles nearly wore me out; and I am grateful to him. I am greatly indebted to Mr Mazhar Mirza, Muslim leader, Brixton, for his unwavering support and inspiration: he took me in his car, despite his advancing age, to various parts of London in an effort to get funding for the tuition fee. He has given me the ability to pull through the crisis in my early days in London. I owe special gratitude to Mr Rajender Sharma and Mr Darshan Singh Khuller, Hindu leaders, who have shown a great depth of commitment to my studies. Mr Ashwini Lakhan Pal, and Mr C. Mohindra, Hindu leaders, helped me with their unreserved support to this research. Mr Surjeet Singh, director, South Asia Cultural Heritage Centre, London, stood together with me as the financial crisis cast a shadow on me; and I am grateful to him. The memory of the kindness and support of my Indian community in London I hope to retain in my heart as long as I live; and my victory or triumph, if any, belongs to them and their patriotism.

Three Sikh gurdwaras have given extraordinary support to this research, and they are holy institutions to me. Mr Himmat Singh Sohi, president, Gurdwara Sri Guru Singh Sabha, Southall, London, has sponsored a substantial part of my tuition fee and is my mentor. Mr Sohi's unequalled commitment inspires deep emotions in me. The late Amolak Singh, chairman, and Mr Sarup Singh Mahon, secretary, Gurdwara Guru Nanak Nishkam Sewak Jetha [UK], Hounslow, London, have supported me with solicitous care and affection in the early stages of the thesis. Mr Sarup Singh's leadership and influence guided the way for me during my hard, dark days in London. I deeply value the affectionate support and true service given to me by Mr Jagjiwan Singh, president, Mr Mohan Singh Sigh Nayyar, general secretary, and Mr Piara Singh Aulakh, Executive Committee member, Gurdwara Sri Guru Singh Sabha, Hounslow, London. They have shown great resolve in supporting my research; and I owe my extreme gratitude to their leadership. I dedicate this thesis to these three gurdwaras in deep gratitude and reverence.

One strong idealist and dharmik influence during my London years is my brother, Mr Venkata Balaram Ramisetti, Indian Revenue Service [IRS]: he has paid part of the tuition fee and supported my research. His idealism, sensitivity and counsel have become part of my social conscience; and he remains a transforming figure to me. His wife Dr Sandhya Maliye and children Sri Krishna and Shriya Thalli have given me all the love and care. Mr Vijay Krishna Ramisetti, Indian Police Service [IPS], reformist and idealist, has supported my

research and stood by me in my difficult times, particularly in the final stage of the thesis's revision. Mr Babar Zaman and Mr Velluri Mohandas Reddy have given me strong support, particularly in my efforts to organise the research material and themes methodically in the run-up to thesis submission.

In all of my anxious times and years of hardship in this project, my two angels -- Abhinav and Mira -- have given me perhaps the strongest emotional strength and sense of security – the dominating power over me and the only influence upon which I could build my physical and emotional strength beyond my years.

Note on Translation and References

Hindi phrases and words have been translated in the text and some words included in the glossary. The text does not have diacritical marks. The names of organisations, castes, deities, etc, have not been italicised. The spellings and names of places are standardised: Banaras for Benaras, Allahabad for Prayag, Kanpur for Cawnpur, and Mathura for Muttra are used in the text, except when they appear in quotes, or in the actual title of a newspaper -- or an organisation. All references to archival unpublished documents state file number, followed by year, other details, department and location. For a few tracts, the name of the publisher and the number of copies published has been given in footnotes, where relevant to the text.

Abbreviations

AIWC	All India Women's Conference
Deptt.	Department
EPW	*Economic and Political Weekly*
GAD	General Administration Department
Home Poll	Home [Political] Department
IESHR	*Indian Economic and Social History Review*
IOL	India Office Library and Records, London
JAS	*Journal of Asian Studies*
Judl	Judicial
MAS	*Modern Asian Studies*
NAI	National Archives of India, New Delhi
NMML	Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi
NNR	Native Newspaper Reports of UP [also called Selections from Vernacular Newspapers and Notes on the Press]
NWP	The North Western Provinces and Oudh [later known as the United Provinces]
PAI	*Police Abstracts of Intelligence* of UP Government
SH	*Studies in History*
UP	The United Provinces of Agra and Oudh [later known as Uttar Pradesh]
UPSA	Uttar Pradesh State Archives, Lucknow
SAR	*South Asia Research*

Glossary

adarsh	ideal
Agarwal	Hindu trading caste of north India
ahimsa	non-violence
Ahir	non-elite Hindu peasant-pastoral caste of north India, also known as Yadav, sometimes associated with milk trade
akashvani	heavenly announcement
akhara	gymnasium, or club, for wrestling and physical culture
andolan	movement
Arya Samaj	activist Hindu revival association founded in 1875
ashlil	obscene, indecent
ashram	refuge -- stage of one's life
atmaraksha	self defence
badmash	rascal, bad character
Bais	jati of Rajputs in Awadh
Bania	caste associated with commerce, trade, or moneylending
bhajan	devotional song
bhakti	religious devotion emphasising adoration of personified Hindu deities
bhangi	sweeper
Bharat Mata	Mother India
boli	dialect, language, speech
brahmacharya	male celibacy and chastity
Brahman	the highest Hindu caste in the fourfold *varna* scheme, known for priestly traditions
Chamar	a major untouchable caste of north India, associated with leather work
chutki	pinch – a system of contribution used in the cow-protection movements of north India
crore	*unit of ten million*
dangal	wrestling tournament
dargah	Muslim saint's tomb
dharma	religion, moral order
dharmashastra	body or code of precepts having religious sanction as Hindu law
dhoti	yards of cloth worn by men as lower garment
dhunia	cotton carder

durzi	tailor
fakir	Muslim mendicant
farman	injunction, or order
Gau Mata	mother cow
gaubhakshak	cow killer
gauraksha	cow protection
gaurakshini sabha	cow protection society
gaushala	home for cattle
ghat	landing or bathing place at a riverside: some *ghats* have religious significance for Hindus
ghazal	a song of metrical type on an amatory theme
ghee	clarified butter
goonda	scoundrel, evil character
hakim	doctor
havan	oblation with fire and *ghee*
Hindu Mahasabha	all-India Hindu body founded in 1915
Hindutva	politics of Hindu identity: the term had been popularised since the 1920s by Hindu campaigners
Holi	prominent Hindu festival of colour held in spring
janani janmabhumi	motherland
jat	important Hindu agricultural caste of north India
jati	basic unit of Hindu caste, a subcaste division
johari	jeweller
kabir	a type of 'indecent' song sung at the Holi festival
kaccha	uncooked food
kaccheri	court, public office
kahani	story
kal charka	epoch, wheel of time
Kaliyug	in Hindu mythology the fourth and most degenerate age of human history
Kalwar	Hindu caste of liquor distillers: some became traders and landowners
katha	sacred tale, legend
Kayastha	Hindu caste of north India – mainly with administrative and scribal traditions
Khatri	Hindu caste of north India with military and scribal tradition

kori	weaver
Kshatriya	Hindu upper caste -- just below the Brahmin in the fourfold *varna* scheme – with kingly and warrior traditions
Kurmi	Hindu peasant caste of eastern Gangetic plain
lathi	bamboo staff
mahant	head of a Hindu religious trust
mandir	Hindu temple
matri bhasha	mother tongue
maulvi	Muslim religious teacher
mazar	tomb, or shrine, of a Muslim siant
mela	fair, large gathering
mleccha	non-Hindu, barbarian – often used for Muslims
mofussil	suburban
mohalla	urban residential locality and neighbourhood
Muharram	chief Shia Muslim festival of mourning for martyred leaders of the faith
nautanki	a type of folk-drama in north India
nikah	Muslim marriage
pagri	turban -- a mark of distinction
paigamber	prophet
panchayat	court of arbitrators in a village – usually consisting of community's five elected elders
panda	Hindu ritual specialist, usually applying to those of Banara
pandit	Brahmin with knowledge of Hindu scriptures – used often by upper castes, learned Hindus as a suffix to their names
pir	local Muslim deity, or Sufi saint
prabhati kirtan	morning group singing of hymns
pracharak	propagandist, promulgator
prakrti	nature
Purana	collection of Hindu sacred texts, dating from the first millennium AD
rahasya	secret
rais	nobility, rich
Rajput	Hindu military and landowning caste of north India
roza	Muslim fasting during the month of Ramazan
sabha	an association, or society

sadhu	ascetic
sahitya	literature
samaj	society, organisation
sangathan	organisation – consolidation of Hindus in defence of 'Hindu' interests
sangit	dramatic performance with song, music
sarraf	gold or silver merchant – loosely applied to Hindu traders
sewa samiti	service organisation
shakti	activated power and energy – endowing deities, especially goddesses
shastra	a body of knowledge and writings, usually of Hindu scriptures
shuddhi	purification; Hindu movement in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries to reclaim those who had converted from Hinduism to other religions
Shudra	lowest Hindu caste in the fourfold *varna* scheme, with labouring traditions
swadeshi	manufactured and belonging to one's own country; *swadeshi* movement was to ban importation of foreign goods to India
swaraj	self rule, independence
swayamsevak	volunteer
tabligh	a movement seeking conversions to Islam
tahsil	revenue sub-division of a district
tazim	call for Muslim organisation to promote education and unity among Muslims
tapasya	religious austerity, ascetic fervour or practice
tazia	models of the tombs of Shia imams Hasan and Husain carried in procession in the Muharram festival
Teli	Hindu oil-presser caste
updeshak	counsellor, mentor
vaid	*ayurvedic doctor -- an Indian medical system*
Vaishnava	a sect and cult with a tradition to worship the Hindu deity Vishinu
Vaishya	a caste third in the Hindu fourfold *varna* scheme, usually involved in trade
vakil	a senior legal practitioner or pleader, lawyer
Veda	India's most ancient Hindu classical religious scripture, compiled c.2000 BC
yavana	foreigner, barbarian – often used for Muslims

1

Introduction

The debate on Indian nationalism has been advanced over the past few decades through the exploration of the social and regional dimensions of 'Muslim separatism' and the Indian National Congress's secular nationalist creed. The explanation of the partition of Indian subcontinent has centered mostly on the rival paradigms of the 'two nation' theory and the 'secular nationalist' worldview of the Congress. This work revisits the 'great divide' by exploring the third dimension of the Partition: the politics of Hindu nationalism and identity. It seeks to explain the long silence on the history of Hindu nationalism as articulated by Hindu publicists and leaders, for the politics of Hindu identity has been marginalised and explained away as 'subordinate' or 'separate' in the narratives of the larger issue of India's struggle for freedom. This study explores the ideological development of Hindu nationalism, which arose in a specific historical context as a counterweight to the Muslim League's theory of a separate 'Muslim nation'. It examines the emergence of Hindu nationalism as a political ideology represented by the Hindu Mahasabha by exploring the campaign for Hindu unity and organisation – which was launched in the context of the growing Hindu-Muslim conflict in north India in the early twentieth century.

The United Provinces, comprising Oudh and Agra, was the largest Muslim minority province and also the most highly urbanised area of India in the colonial period.[1] It had the second largest provincial population after Bengal [nearly one-seventh of India's total population] and occupied about one-sixteenth of British India -- an area of 105,000 square miles.[2] It was a relic of Muslim rule in north India and the homeland of the Muslim elite, which had fostered a distinctively Muslim culture and politics.[3] Politically, the UP was India's most dominant region in the 1920s and 1930s and the key province that had been at the forefront of the urban professional support for the Muslim League, the protagonist of Muslim separatism. The province had emerged as the pivot in the political projection of the League's 'two nation' theory and the Pakistan demand in the 1930s and 1940s.[4] This study's main focus will be on the provincial stage, in particular the UP.

Nationalism in India was an acutely contested and contradictory terrain in the first half of the twentieth century, with divergent religious and community impulses exerting pressure on the incipient nation. Two master

---

[1] The British acquired the Banaras region in 1775 and the Ceded and Conquered Provinces in 1801 and 1803. The 'Ceded and Conquered Provinces' were renamed the 'Upper Provinces' in 1809. Banaras and the Upper Provinces, together with later additions in Garhwal and Bundelkhand, became in 1836 the North-Western Provinces under the control of a Lieutenant-Governor. Oudh was annexed in 1856 and separately administered by a Chief Commissioner until 1877 when the North-Western Provinces and Oudh were joined together under a single Lieutenant-Governor. In 1902 the NWP and Oudh was renamed the 'United Provinces of Agra and Oudh'. Later in 1937 the province was made the 'United Provinces'. William Gould, *Hindu Nationalism and the Language of Politics in Late Colonial India*, Cambridge, 2004, p. 1.

[2] A.C. Turner, *Census of India, 1931: United Provinces of Agra and Awadh Part I – Report*, Allahabad, 1932, p. 7.

[3] Francis Robinson, *Separatism Among Indian Muslims: The Politics of the United Provinces' Muslims, 1860-1923*, Cambridge, 1993 [1974], 11.

[4] Mushirul Hasan, *Legacy of a Divided Nation: India's Muslims since Independence*, London, 1997, pp. 75-6.

narratives – secular nationalism and religious nationalism – had emerged as the leading political idioms in India. Secular nationalism guided the Indian National Congress's drive for a united front of all communities in India's struggle for freedom from the English as the ruling ideology.[5] The Congress, founded in 1885 and transformed into a mass organisation under Gandhian leadership in the 1920s and 1930s, had aspired to represent all communities by defining India as a multi-religious nation. Its universalist narrative, positing 'unity in diversity' as the essence of Indian nationhood, evoked the image of a nation as a neutral state in religious affairs.[6] The 'secular' nationalist ideal was *sarvadharma samabhava*, signifying the equality of all communities and the spirit of accommodation among them.[7] This position was in contrast to the colonial view that the basic unit of Indian society was the community defined by religion, and that India's religious differences were 'irreconcilable'.[8] In claiming to transcend religious differences, the Congress represented itself as 'a truly nationalist movement to confront colonialism' and 'meet its criticisms – to make India "better"'.[9]

Religious nationalism – both Hindu and Muslim -- was the chief competitor of secular nationalism in India. Muslim nationalism had led to the birth of Pakistan on the basis that the Hindus and the Muslims were not merely two different religious communities but two separate nations. Hindu nationalism, which had evolved into a coherent ideology of Hindu exclusivity and nationhood by the 1920s, on the contrary, viewed India as originally the land of the Aryans rooted in Hindu culture and homogenity: the Hindus must have a cultural and political primacy in shaping India's destiny.[10] Its discourse centred on Hindu culture, retaining an ambiguous yet important relationship with the ideals of Indian nationalism,[11] even though it remained outside the Congress-led nationalist movement in the country.[12] Nonetheless, it carried a potential for an anti-imperialist resistance and protest, conceiving freedom as the ultimate objective without giving up the sectional politics of Hindu interests.[13] Hindu nationalism represented an ideology in which territory, nationhood, and culture were cohesively articulated as the basis of a 'Hindu nation'. The internal unity displayed by the Muslims as evident in the anti-Hindu riots during the post-Khilafat [1919-1922] period had provided the rationale for the growth of Hindu nationalist ideoliogy, which sought to resist the perceived 'threat' from Islam in India.[14]

---

[5] Ashutosh Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life: Hindus and Muslims in India*, New Haven, 2002, pp. 171-6.
[6] G. Pandey, *The Construction of Communalism in Colonial North India*, Delhi, 1990, p. 210.
[7] Prakash Chandra Upadhyaya, 'The Politics of Indian Secularism', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 4, 1992, pp. 815-53.
[8] Ravindra Kumar, *Essays in the Social History of Modern India*, Delhi, 1983, pp. 31-3.
[9] Peter Robb, *Empire, Identity, and India: Liberalism, Modernity, and Nation*, Oxford, 2007, p. 56.
[10] Christophe Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement and Indian Politics 1925 to the 190s: Strategies of Identity-building, Implantation and Mobilisation [with special reference to Central India]*, London, 1996, p. 11.
[11] John Zavos, *The Emergence of Hindu Nationalism in India*, New Delhi, 2000, pp. 8-9.
[12] Chetan Bhatt, *Hindu Nationalism: Origins, Ideologies and Modern Myths*, Oxford, 2001, p. 41.
[13] Home Poll., B, File No. 32-41, November 1909, NAI.
[14] C. Jaffrelot, 'Hindu Nationalism: Strategic Syncretism in Ideology Building', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 28, Nos. 12-13, 20-27 March 1993, pp. 517-24.

Hindu nationalism was consciously articulated and codified as an ideology largely through the written work of V.D. Savarkar in the early 1920s.[15] In the pre-1920s formulations, 'Hindu-leaning' Indian nationalism did not demarcate the Muslims as exterior to the Indian nation, but within it.[16] In the 1920s, however, Hindu nationalism was characterised by a confrontation against the Muslims as the 'aggressor' and primary 'threat' to the Hindus, situating them as an 'outsider' to Indian nationalism.[17] It represented an ethnic conception of India as a 'Hindu nation'; and its exclusivist, combative drive for Hindu identity was radically distinct from the Congress's universalist nationalism.[18]

In the studies of ethnicity and sectarianism in India, the Hindu-Muslim conflict has been focused as being instrumental in the rise of Muslim separatism and Hindu nationalism in the early twentieth century. Recent debates have ranged from the assertions of the continuity of sectarian identities between the pre-colonial and colonial periods[19] to native elites that had the primacy in determining the articulation of sectarianism – be it by the Hindus,[20] or the Muslims.[21] There are three important arguments which offer an interpretation of what made the sectarian conflict emerge as the major force of political cleavage in north India. Paul Brass argues that the Muslim elites started to ask for preferential treatment in reaction to electoral politics, inducing the Hindu elites to mobilise the Hindu community for political action. Rivalries existed at two levels: the level of organised politics at the top where Hindu and Muslim elites had competed for the control of the government, and the level of tension and violence at the base in the localities of north India. In Brass's 'instrumentalist' analysis, Muslim separatism was not 'pre-ordained', but a result of the conscious manipulation of the symbols of 'Muslim identity' as well as religious and cultural issues by the Muslim elite groups in political competition with the Hindus in north India.[22]

A second analysis advanced by Francis Robinson states that there existed long-standing essential differences between the Hindus and the Muslims in India.[23] In this 'primordialist' assertion which was also the view of the leaders of Muslim separatism, Robinson explains that the Hindus and the Muslims had constituted in pre-modern times distinct civilisations destined to develop into separate nations once political mobilisation took place in the country. Robinson argues that the 'religious differences' between the Hindus and the Muslims in the

---

[15] C. Jaffrelot, 'The Genesis and Development of Hindu Nationalism in the Punjab: from the Arya Samaj to the Hindu Sabha [1875-1910]', *Indo-British Review*, Vol. 21, No. 1, 1993, pp. 3-39.

[16] Bishen Narain Dar, president of the 1911Congress, stressed natural affinities of the Hindus and the Muslims, calling the Muslims the 'bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh' and criticising the 'divisive' British policy. Bishan Narain Dar, *An Appeal to the English Public on Behalf of the Hindus of North-western Province and Oudh*, Lucknow, 1893, p. 23.

[17] Joya Chatterji, *Bengal Divided: Hindu Communalism and Partition, 1932-1947*, Cambridge, 1994, p. 2; Peter Heehs, *Nationalism, Terrorism, Communalism: Essays in Modern Indian History*, New Delhi, 1998, p. 117.

[18] Jaffrelot, *Hindu Nationalist Movement*, pp. 19, 24.

[19] C.A. Bayly, 'The Pre-History of "Communalism"? Religious Conflict in India, 1700-1860', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 2, *1985, pp. 177-203.*

[20] Chatterji, *Bengal Divided,* pp. 155-79.

[21] Francis Robinson, *Separatism Among Indian Muslims: The Politics of the United Provinces' Muslims, 1860-1923,* Cambridge, 2nd edn. 1993 [1974], pp. 77-8.

[22] P. Brass, 'Elite Groups, Symbol Manipulation and Ethnic Identity among the Muslims of South Asia', in David Taylor and M. Yapp [eds.], *Political Identity in South Asia*, London, 1979.

[23] Francis Robinson, 'Nation Formation: The Brass Thesis and Muslim Separatism', *Journal of Cmmonwealth and Comparative Politics*, Vol. 15, No. 3, November 1977, pp. 215-34.

nineteenth century before social mobilisation began were 'fundamental', and that some differences, particularly those on idol worship, monotheism, and cow slaughter, had helped to 'set the Muslims apart' as modern politics and self-governing institutions developed in the towns and districts of north India, more so the UP. The Muslims saw themselves as an identifiable and separate community with distinct political interests of their own, fearing that 'the Hindu majority would not only interfere with their religious practices such as cow-sacrifice, but also ... would discriminate against them in education and employment'.[24] At a deeper level, the Hindus and the Muslims in late nineteenth-century India were separate religious communities predisposed towards separate political or national groups, particularly when the new arenas of political power had come into existence since the introduction of separate electorates in the early twentieth century.[25]

A third analysis developed by nationalists puts the blame on the hegemony of the colonial state, which recognised the religious community as a fundamental organising principle of the political system in India. In nationalist historiography, it was the 'divide and rule' policy of the British that had created the sectarian cleavage, casting Indian society into two distinct religious communities by denying the existence of solidatities and common interests between the Hindus and the Muslims in the country.[26] The sectarian conflict rendered the religious community an important site of political contestation, demonstrating the collective unity and affirmation of community identity by both the Hindus and the Muslims in the early twentieth century.[27]

This study focuses on the emergence and evolution of Hindu nationalism as part of a particular historical trajectory articulated by the Hindu Mahasabha in the colonial period.[28] The reconstruction of the Mahasabha's political narrative and activities centering on Hindu identity and politics forms an integral part of this project. It is an attempt to understand what Hindu nationalism signified at the point of the Mahasabha's formation, how it conflicted with the Congress's secular regime of power and democracy, and why it continued to be so deeply inflected with Hindu idiom in the country. This thesis argues that the Mahasabha's *sangathan*ist ideology was established in a particular historical moment, and that it made possible the articulation of new categories of Hindu identity and society as part of a political movement to construct a 'Hindu nation' in India. It examines how the construction of a homogeneous Hindu community operated in opposition to the perceived 'hostile other' – the Muslims – in the country.

In the section on 'Hindu nationalism', the first chapter examines the emergence of Hindu consciousness and unity in the Punjab in the early twentieth century by analysing the beginnings of an urban, upper-caste, self-conscious Hindu politics that represented the political idiom of Hindu nationalism. Hindu organisations in the

---

[24] Robinson, *Separatism Among Indian Muslims*, 13.
[25] Francis Robinson, 'The Congress and the Muslims', in Paul R. Brass and Francis Robinson [eds.], *Indian National Congress and Indian Society, 1885-1985: Ideology, Social Structure, and Political Dominance*, Delhi, 1987, pp. 162-5, 170.
[26] Bishan Narain Dar, *Collected Speeches and Writings of Pt. Bishan Narain Dar*, Vol. 1, Lucknow, 1921, pp. 51-7.
[27] John R. McLane, *Indian Nationalism and the Early Congress*, Princeton, 1977, p. 279.
[28] Influential studies have been done on the Hindu Mahasabha in Bengal and the UP. See Chatterji, *Bengal Divided*, pp. 229-59; R. Gordon, 'The Hindu Mahasabha and the Congress', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 2, 1975, pp. 145-203.

Punjab had made efforts to regenerate and consolidate the Hindu community by advocating a more exclusive form of Hindu politics, leading to the formation of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha in the UP in 1915.[29] The Mahasabha's formation was predicated on the new arenas of competition between the Hindus and the Muslims engineered by the colonial state through electoral politics in the country. In 1909 the Morley-Minto reforms granted separate electorates to the Muslims in India's legislatures not only in accordance with their numbers but also in line with their 'historical and political importance'.[30] The state's institution of separate electorates in its search for potential loyal and conservative allies in Indian society had resulted in the creation of a separate Muslim electoral category in its own right, triggering propaganda and identity formation by Hindu publicists that became so prominent in the Mahasabha's birth. The Mahasabha's Hindu-oriented discourse and its emphasis on Hindu religion and culture as the basis of a national political order had effectively resulted from its perceived need to combat Muslim 'domination and influence' in India's colonial politics in the early twentieth century.

Chapter 3 will study the nature and composition of the socio-economic base that became crucial for the emergence of the Hindu Mahasabha movement in north India. The Mahasabha had originated with the support and patronage of the very social groups that were once the patrons of the Congress, even though it heavily depended on the support of landed and aristocratic groups, business houses, and urban traders in north India. This study argues that the Mahasabha was an elite-led organisation like the pre-Gandhian Congress, but that its reliance on the influence of the aristocracy and notables with attendant conservatism and factionalism hampered its development as a mass organisation. The Mahasabha was conspicuously absent in the anti-colonial mass struggles of the Congress and failed to attract the mass following in India.

In the section on '*sangathan* ideology', chapter 4 explains that a grassroots organisation – Hindu *sangathan* – came into its own in the aftermath of the Khilafat movement and the Moplah massacres in the 1920s, representing an aggressive and militant anti-Muslim variety of nationalism in north India. The basis of *sangathan* ideology was a unified Hindu society, which emphasised community rather than hierarchy, and unity rather than division – all presumed to create a monolithic Hindu community in opposition to the Muslims. The Hindu Mahasabha had relied on various means to create the semblance of a unified 'Hindu' society -- *shuddhi* [ritual purification], the abolition of untouchability, and caste uplift programmes that sought to integrate the lower castes and untouchables into the Hindu community.[31] This study shows that there were several conflicts and divisions among the Hindus due to the institutional pervasiveness of the caste *[varna]* hierarchy.[32] The

---

[29] Kenneth W. Jones, 'Two Sanatan Dharma Leaders and Swami Vivekananda: A Comparison', in William Radice, [ed.], *Swami Vivekananda and the Modernisation of Hinduism*, Delhi, 1998, pp. 224-43.

[30] Shabnum Tejani, *Indian Secularism: A Social and Intellectual History, 1890-1950,* Ranikhet, 2007, pp. 113-17.

[31] Rosalind O'Hanlon, 'Acts of Appropriation: Non Brahmin Radicals and the Congress in Early Twentieth-Century Maharashtra' in M. Shepperdson and C. Simmons [eds.], *The Indian National Congress and the Political Economy of India 1885-1985,* Avebury, 1988, pp. 102-46.

[32] Heinrich von Stietencron, 'Religious Configurations in Pre-Muslim India and the Modern Concept of Hinduism', in Vasudha Dalmia and H. von Stietencron [eds.], *Representing Hinduism: The Construction of Religious Traditions and National Identity,* New Delhi, 1995, p. 51.

campaign for Hindu homogeneity, which Hindu identity politics treated as fundamental, was not a natural but a constructed form of closure, as the lower caste consciousness and untouchable uplift were not fully accommodated.[33] The Mahasabha's programme of Hindu unity and consolidation was driven by an apparent reconciliation of deeper caste tensions as well as the discourse of a 'conflict' with the Muslims in India.

Chapter 5 discusses the Hindu Mahasabha's articulation of militant nationalism that was firmly set within the framework of the ideas and writings of V.D Savarkar -- the ideological father of Hindutva -- whose narrative demonstrated a shift from anti-British themes to an anti-Muslim antagonism in India.[34] Hindutva – or political Hinduism – became a foundational doctrine devoted to explicating Hindu identity and the ideological contours of a Hindu *rashtra* [nation]. Savarkar's notion of a 'Hindu nation' was based on territory, race and ethnicity, and culture; and the real enemy was not the British, but the Muslims.[35] The primal patronymic, 'Hindu', was fundamentally antagonised in history through a conflict with the 'Other' – the Muslims. This work suggests that Hindutva was firmly based on a conception of Hindu majoritarian rights counterposed against the potential rights of the minorities – the Muslims and the Christians – who were to be assimilated by their allegiance to Hindu cultre in the country. An anti-Muslim hostility was central to Hindutva narrative, which was predicated on the theory of a 'Hindu nation' and became profoundly aggressive and militaristic after Savarkar's presidentship of the Mahasabha in the late 1930s.

Chapter 6 shows that in the UP, Hindu publicists -- comprising a disparate variety of reformers, revivalists, Arya Samajists, and *sanatan dharm*ists [orthodox Hindus] – carried a massive campaign against the Muslims and Islam in the early twentieth century. The campaign of anti-Muslim hostility, which had become the basis of the Hindu Mahasabha's *sangathan* narrative, was accelerated in the 1920s. There were increasing conflicts with the Muslims related to issues such as cow slaughter and Hindu processional music outside mosques in north India.[36] There were aggressive displays of strength in Hindu festivals with the increasing participation of the lower castes in the public arenas, aiding the expression of Hinduism as a 'martial religion'.[37] The UP had witnessed the most serious cases of 'communal' conflict in the entire colonial period, with 91 Hindu-Muslim clashes reported in the province from 1923 to 1927.[38] Propaganda campaigns against the 'abductions and conversions' of Hindu women by Muslim men, if imagined, had provided occasions for abstract unities and militant Hindu articulations in the province.[39] *Sangathan* had its ideological focus on an anti-Muslim antagonism

---

[33] H. Owen, 'The Non-Brahman Movements and the Transformation of the Congress, 1912-1922' in J. Masselos [ed.], *Struggling and Ruling: The Indian National Congress, 1885-1985*, London, 1987.

[34] Ellen E. MacDonald, 'The Growth of Religious Consciousness in Maharashtra', *Indian Economic and Social History Review, Vol. 5, No. 3, September 1968, p. 232.*

[35] V.D. Savarkar, *Hindutva: Who is a Hindu?*, 4th edn. Poona, 1949, rept. New Delhi, 2003, pp. 91-95.

[36] 'Legislative Assembly Resolutions: 24 August 1926 and 1September 1926, regarding the regulation of religious festivals', IOR L/P&J/6/1890, IOL; Nita Kumar, *The Artisans of Banaras: Popular Culture and Identity*, Princeton, 1988, p. 51.

[37] S.B. Freitag, *Collective Action and Community: Public Arenas and the Emergence of Communalism in North India,* Berkeley, 1989, p. 101; Nandini Gooptu, *The Politics of the Urban Poor in Early Twentieth Century India,* Cambridge, 2001, pp. 130-74.

[38] Statement of communal riots in the UP between 1922 and 1927', IOR L/P&J/6/1890, IOL.

[39] 'Charu Gupta, Sexulaity, *Obscenity, Community: Women, Muslim and the Hindu Public in Colonial India*, Delhi, 2001, p. 322.

rather than an anti-British struggle for India's independence. The anti-Muslim orientation of *sangathan* ideology and its Hindu idiom had contributed in part to the persistence of the sectarian conflict in the UP in the 1920s and 1930s.

Chapter 7 focuses on the Hindu Mahasabha's programme of militarisation – which was based on a perceived need to combat the Muslims in India. The growing realisation about the imminent assumption of power by the Indian parties after British departure made the Mahasabha support the militarisation drive in order to counter the 'Muslim threat', particularly in the event of an internal disorder in the country. The Mahasabha targeted the Muslims as the 'enemy within', making them the object of violence during the 1920s and 1930s.[40]

In ideological terms, *sangathan*ist narrative clashed with Gandhi's doctrines of *ahimsa* [non-violence] and Hindu-Muslim unity.[41] Chapter 8 explains that Hindutva ideology centred chiefly on the refutation of *ahimsa*, justifying a conflict with the Congress's non-violent non-cooperation movement against the British in the country.

Chapter 9 argues that the development of the Nagari and cow protection movements had been widespread across the UP since the 1860s and 1870s, and that they were effectively appropriated by the Hindu Mahasabha into its discourse of Hindu unity. The Nagari campaign was at the heart of *sangathan*'s mobilisation of the Hindu community in avowed conflict with the Muslim elite, resulting in an attack on Urdu that had remained the official vernacular of the colonial administration in the UP till 1900. The campaign for the promotion of the Hindi language, literature and print became a significant means of contest against the dominance of Urdu/Persian in the province.[42] In a parallel development, the cow protection movement centred on the cow as a 'sacred symbol' and had the potential for a regional, cross-caste Hindu mobilisation in north Inia. The cow agitation was inflected with an upper-caste idiom, representing an avenue by which local grievances could be articulated in ways that were both anti-colonial and anti-Muslim, more so the latter.[43] This study argues that the working of the Hindu consciousness through the narratives of Nagari and the cow was used as a source of political mobilisation and became the basis of *sangathan*'s deeper hostility and antagonism against the Muslims in the UP.

In the section on 'Hindu nationalism', chapter 10 focuses on the marked ambiguity of relations between the Hindu Mahasabha and the Indian National Congress resulting the informal associations and nexus that had been widespread in the UP in the 1920s and 1930s. The implications of the nexus between the Congress's stated views on nationalism and the *sangathan*ist assertions of the Mahasabha is one of the key issues explored in this thesis. This work suggests that even though the Congress's image at the all-India level

---

[40] Susan B.C. Devalle, 'Social Identities, Hindu Fundamentalism, and Politics in India', in D.N. Lorenzen, *Bhakti Religion in North India: Community Identity and Political Action*, New York, 1995, p. 316.

[41] Nandini Gondhalekar, 'Indian Nationalism and "Hindu" Politics: Maharashtra and the Hindu Mahasabha, 1920-1948', PhD Dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1999, p. 17.

[42] F. Orsini, *The Hindi Public sphere 1920-1940: Language and Literature in the Age of Nationalism*, New Delhi, pp. 3-7.

[43] Peter Robb, 'The Challenge of Gau Mata: British Policy and Religious Change in India, 1880-1916', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 20, No. 2, 1986, pp. 285-319.

remained secular, a reliance on the use of Hindu idiom was not an alien feature of its programmes and activities in north India. The associations between the Hindu Sabhas and the Congress committees had persisted in more informal forms in terms of the personnel and programmes in the towns and districts of the UP until the Congress blacklisted the Mahasabha as a 'communal organisation' in 1938. The Mahasabha emerged as a political party under the leadership of V.D. Savarkar in the late 1930s, vigorously making efforts to emerge as the political challenger of the Congress in north India.[44] This work argues that the Mahasabha rejected the Indian National Congress's vision of a secular 'territorial India nation' and instead advocated a 'Hindu state' [Hindu *rashtra]* based on a Hindu majority rule. It made consistent efforts to distinguish its goals from the Congress's programmes, claiming that it was the sole legitimate organisation to represent the Hindus in the country.

Chapter 11 examines the debates on the question of political safeguards – reservations for the Muslims in India's legislatures – which became crucial for India to emerge as 'one nation'. The ideal of concessions to the Muslims had held sway since the 1910s, representing the possibilities of imagining a way for Muslim existence within a 'united India'. The Hindu Mahasabha had consistently opposed the Muslim League's demands for safeguards, arguing that reservations undermined India's national unity. This study reveals that the Mahasabha's Hindutva discourse predicated on the rule of a majority, defined as 'Hindu', as well as its resistance to the Muslim demands was one of the principal reasons for the breakdown of negotiations on constitution-making in India in the 1920s and 1930s. The ideal of secularism was at the heart of the Congress's formulation of the Indian nation; but the Mahasabha contested the Congress's secularism on the basis that there was an imperative need for creating a majority rule based 'on one man, one vote', which in turn implied the Hindu majority: India was a 'Hindu nation'. The Mahasabha represented a formulation of nationalism that involved a discourse on community representation with the definitions of a democratic majority, viewed broadly as 'Hindu'. Hindutva was made up of 'majoritarianism', which meant that the Indian majority had to be constructed as 'Hindu' to the exclusion of the Muslims. The Congress's anti-colonial mobilisation failed to achieve unity in 1928, in part deepening the crisis on the path to the Muslim League's demand for 'Pakistan' in the 1940s.

This study locates Indian historiography within the larger framework of Hindu nationalist ideology in colonial India. It aims to fill a void in historiography on the development and evolution of Hindu nationalist ideology as well as the emergence of the the Hindu Mahasabha as a political force in the 1920s and 1930s. It investigates the 'sectarian' consciousness that emerged from the social and cultural formation of the Hindu community in its contestations and conflicts with the Muslims and the colonial state. It offers a critique of the colonialist history [dominated by 'the story of the British Empire in India'] and the mainstream nationalist discourse of the Indian

---

[44] V.D. Savarkar, *Samagra Savarkar Wangamaya: Writings of Swatantrya Veer V.D. Savarkar,* Vol. 6, Delhi, 2003, p. 115.

nation, which leave out of account the social discourse of Hindu nationalists and publicists. Its purpose is to draw the links between the twin dialectics in modern South Asian history – all-India nationalism and religiously based Hindu nationalism in the early twentieth century.[45]

.

[45] John R.McLane, 'The Early Congress, Hindu Populism and Wider Society', in R. Sisson and Stanley Wolpert [eds.], *The*

PART I

Hindu Nationalism

2

The Origins and Evolution of Hindu Mahasabha

Early nationalism in India had diverse roots and varied character, representing the presence of both secular and Hindu idioms in its discourse. The most significant aspect of the Hindu idiom was Hindu nationalist ideology articulated by the Hindu Mahasabha as a political movement in north India in the early twentieth century.[1] The Mahasabha claimed to represent Hindu consciousness and identity based on its vision of 'Hindu pride and greatness' in India's past and sought to construct a 'Hindu nation' on the basis of a homogeneous culture; and the explicit acceptance of Hinduness as the essence of India's nationhood implied the assimilation of other religions into 'Hindu culture'. Its nationalist narrative was an external factor and subsidiary to the Indian National Congress's movement for India's independence. The Congress viewed the nation as an entity inclusive of all religious and ethnic communities, including Hindus and Muslims – a vision that conflicted with the Mahasabha's discourse of an exclusive 'Hindu nation'. The Mahasabha developed an alternative narrative to the Congress's secular idiom in politics, rejecting the latter's universalist nationalism. Its ideology centred on the discourse of religious identity, equating the Hindu community with the nation and situating Muslims outside the nation as the 'hostile other'. This chapter charts the development and evolution of Hindu nationalist discourse that culminated in the foundation of the Mahasabha. It argues that this process was central to the definition and codification of Hindu nationalist ideology, and that it reflected the deepening conflict between Hindus and Muslims in colonial north India.

Hindu nationalism emerged in north India as the ideology of the Hindus who required representation in colonial politics, aligning the idea of India and Indianness with 'Hindu' identity. The main arena for the emergence of this strand of politics was popular mobilisation on the issue of colonial constitutional reforms. The established 'moderate' discourse of the Congress put faith in the state's constitutional gradualism and 'symbolic representation' on the assumption that civil rights would be gradually extended, eventually resulting in 'self-government'. The moderates were interested in co-operation rather than a conflict with the state – an approach that was attacked by the 'extremist' group as a politics of 'mendicancy'; and, of course, the state was scarcely serious about its commitment to 'self-rule', or the 'devolution of power' to indigenous control. The 'moderate' group was progressively challenged by the 'extremists' who were critical of constitutional gradualism, resulting in the latter's expulsion in the Surat split of the Congress in 1907, even though the 'extremists' had returned to capture the Congress by 1916. Hindu nationalists, drawing inspiration from Bal Gangadhar Tilak's radicalism and his politics of 'Hindu revival and regeneration', supported the 'extremist' group; and the Hindu constituency

[1] Bruce D. Graham, 'The Congress and Hindu Nationalism', in D. A Low [ed.], *The Indian National Congress: Centenary Hindsights*, Oxford, 1988, p. 171; Bipan Chandra, *Communalism in Modern India*, Delhi, 1987 [1984], p. 100.

gained importance as a counterpoint to the 'moderate' Congress. The conflict gave an impetus to the development of Hindu nationalist sentiments among India's religious and political sections outside the Congress.

The Hindu nationalists viewed the freedom movement as crucial, yet an insufficient solution to India's problems. The end of British rule would be of little use if the Indian nation was not based on 'Hindu values': reform had to come from within the 'traditions' of Hinduism. The belief in the superiority of Hindu values and indigenous knowledge over those of the west was central in the anti-imperialist movement. Colonialism deprived Indians of their self-honour, which could be revived with *swaraj* [freedom]; and the Hindus had to develop an understanding of the 'glories' of India's history. From a defence of past glories through a criticism of the policies of the colonial state to an assertion of the inherent superiority of Hindu culture, the Hindu nationalists evolved an anti-colonial critique that was Hindu in idiom, excluding the Muslims.[2] Hindu nationalism emerged as a popular challenge to the Congress's definition of a 'nation', centring on the articulation of Hindu interests and political concerns and rejecting the Congress as no 'true representative' of the Hindus.[3]

I. Hindu Sabha Movement

The Hindu Sabha movement, the institutional exponent of Hindu nationalism, developed in the dominant Hindu commercial and religious culture of the Punjab, the 'germ cell' of Hindu nationalism, aiming to provide a collective defence of the socio-political interests of the Hindus *vis-a-vis* the Muslims in the early twentieth century.[4] The need to unify the Hindu community and regenerate Hinduism became central in the foundation of the Lahore Hindu Sabha in December 1882 by Hindu leaders, representing a challenge to the pro-British organisational activities of Sayyid Ahmed Khan and Aligarh College.[5] Sayyid Ahmad believed that the reformed councils, dominated by the Hindus, would have no place for the Muslims who should remain outside the Congress, and that their best chance of protecting their interests in India lay in an active alliance with the British.[6] The Lahore Hindu Sabha, led by Raja Harbans Singh and Lala Sangam Lal, had inevitably sought to protect Hindu interests through the advocacy of the political rights and privileges of the Hindu community on the basis of a perceived 'threat' from the Muslims and 'organised Islam'.[7]

In the subsequent years, there was a strong Hindu resentment against the British efforts to favour the Muslims in the Punjab by preventing Hindu moneylenders from acquiring land under the Land Alienation Act of 1901 and by restricting the Hindu elite's access to administration. Ram Bhaj Datta, an Arya Samajist of the

---

[2] Gail Omvedt, *Cultural Revolt in a Colonial Society: The Non-Brahman Movement in Western India, 1873-1930*, Bombay, 1976, p. 124.

[3] Christophe Jaffrelot [ed.], *Hindu Nationalism: A Reader*, Delhi, 2007, pp. 4-5.

[4] R. Gordon, 'The Hindu Mahasabha and the Indian National Congress, 1915 to 1926', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 2, 1975, pp. 145-203; Christphe Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement and Indian Politics 1925 to the 1990s: Strategies of Identity-building, Implantation and Mobilisation [with special reference to Central India]*, London, 1996, pp. 17-8; John Zavos, *The Emergence of Hindu Nationalism in India*, Oxford, 2000, p. 100

[5] See N.G. Barrier, 'The Arya Samaj and Congress Politics in the Punjab 1894-1908', *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 3, May 1967.

[6] Mushirul Hasan, *Nationalism and Communal Politics in India 1916-1928*, New Delhi, 1991, p. 53.

[7] Kenneth W. Jones, *Arya Dharm: Hindu Consciousness in 19th-Century Punjab*, Berkeley, 1976, rept. New Delhi, 1989, pp. 65-6.

College faction, founded the Hindu Sahaiak Sabha in Lahore in 1906 in protest against the government's 'pro-Muslim' bias and 'discrimination'. Datta called for a new type of Hindu politics; and a series of Hindu Sahaik Sabhas were established through the initiatives of local Arya Samajists in the cities of the Punjab.[8] Sections of the middle class Hindus nursing a grievance against British 'hostility' embraced the Hindu Sabhas because the Congress and its secular discourse could not address their basic dilemmas and anxieties in the years before World War I.[9] A broad unity on the basis of an emerging Hindu consciousness had gained momentum in the Punjab, where the Arya Samaj shaped the first blueprint of Hindu nationalism.[10]

The Hindu Sabha movement gained strength and influence after the formation of the first Hindu Sabha in the Punjab in 1906.[11] The Sabha, founded in Lahore on 4 August 1906, had included prominent Arya Samaj and Hindu *sanatani*st [orthodox] leaders: Lala Lajpat Rai, Shadi Lal [Agarwal barrister], Harkrishna Lal, Raja Narendra Nath [ex-civil servant, landowner and leader of the Kashmiri Brahman community], Rai Bahadur Ram Saran Das [Khatri mill-owner and a major figure in the Sanatan Dharma Sabha], Ruchi Ram Sahini, Ram Bhaj Datta, and Lala Hans Raj.[12] These leaders were dependent for their position on British loyalty and rarely carried Sabha activities beyond the 'confines of their drawing rooms and the Governor's durbar'.[13] The Sabha's main objective was limited: it aimed to improve the 'moral, intellectual and material condition of the Hindus' within the framework of loyalty to the British.[14]

A provincial Hindu Sabha was formed in Lahore in 1907 on the ground prepared by the Lahore Hindu Sabha to safeguard Hindu interests as a minority community under the proposed constitutional reforms in the Punjab.[15] The Sabha showed vigorous action on issues concerning Hindu issues, leading to the formation of new Hindu Leagues, or Hindu Sabhas.[16] The new Hindu Sabhas, which consisted of the cream of the Arya and *sanatani*st societies, were formed throughout the Punjab – mainly in Multan, Sialkot, Gujranwala, and Lyallpur -- during 1907-1908. The common theme marking their activities was the Hindu community's unity and co-operation in the promotion of its social and political interests. The Sabhas did not have any crystallised ideology, but retained their religious and social roles to protect Hindu interests by reviving the 'feelings of self-respect, self-

---

[8] N.G. Barrier, *The Punjab Alienation of Land Bill of 1900*, Durham, 1966, pp. 49-71; idem, 'The Punjab Disturbances of 1907: The Response of the British Government in India to Agrarian Unrest', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 4, 1967, pp. 353-83; Jones, *Arya Dharm*, p. 208.

[9] Jones, *Arya Dharm*, pp. 194, 316; K.L. Tuteja and O.P. Grewal, 'Emergence of Hindu Communal Ideology in Early Twentieth Century Punjab', *Social Scientist*, Vol. 20, Nos. 7-8, July-August 1992, pp. 7-17.

[10] N.G. Barrier, 'The Punjab Government and Communal Politics, 1870-1900', *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 3, May 1968, pp. 523-39.

[11] *The Tribune*, 6 August 1906, p. 3, Microfilm, NMML.

[12] *The Tribune*, 23 December 1906, p. 2, Microfilm, NMML.

[13] B. Cleghorn, 'Religion and Politics: The Leadership of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha: Punjab and Maharashtra 1920-1939', *in* B.N. Pandey [ed.], *Leadership in South Asia*, New Delhi, 1977, p. 396.

[14] *The Tribune*, 24 August 1906, p. 3, Microfilm, NMML.

[15] Indra Prakash, *Hindu Mahasabha: Its Contribution to Indian Politics*, New Delhi, 1966 [1938], pp. 15-45.

[16] Indra Prakash, *A Review of the History and Work of the Hindu Mahasabha and Hindu Sangathan Movement*, New Delhi, 2nd edn., 1952, [1938], pp. ii, v-vii; Jones, *Arya Dharm*, pp. 261-94.

help and mutual co-operation' in the community. They judiciously swore unswerving loyalty to the British, however.[17]

I. 1. Separate Electorates

The wider context for the development of Hindu consciousness in the Punjab was set in part by the recognition of communal representation in the constitutional reforms introduced by the British, which betrayed the state's 'alliance' with the Muslims. The state's strategy, while pursuing reform for the introduction of self-government in India, lay in creating allies in stable sections of society in order to offset the destabilising effects of the nationalist agitation and militancy.[18] Terrorism and political unrest evident during the 1905 Swadeshi movement had forced the state to look for potential allies in Indian society. The Muslim League's policy of commitment and sustained loyalty to British rule in India in the early years and the predominance within it of the loyalist Aligarh elite encouraged the state to consider more seriously Muslim demands for concessions in representation.[19]

The demand that Muslim representation required a substantive consensus of the community became a persistent feature in the campaign for separate Muslim electorates in north India in the early 1900s.The notion of special representation had originated from the campaign of Muslim leaders against the 'western' principles of elective representation. In December 1896 the Indian Defence Association, founded by Sayyid Ahamad Khan, had called for the existing system of elective representation to be replaced by the institution of separate Muslim electorates, opposing the application of 'majority rule' in India.[20] Sayyid Ahmad defended separate electorates on the basis that they were the means to ensure that the Muslims were really represented by Muslim councillors who would be elected by 'exclusively Muslim constituencies'. 'Western' elective representation, he argued, was inherently unacceptable because it endorsed territorial constituencies that promoted predominantly 'Hindu interests'.[21] The unit of Indian society was not territorial but religious; and the community became the legitimate basis for Muslim political power and representation. The Muslims, it was argued, were a community with 'separate traditions, interests and religion'. Communal representation was desirable because it protected the Islamic principle of 'solidarity' in which the community not the individual was central: it represented the 'Muslim consensus' and became an instrument of social and political cohesion for the Muslims.[22]

The demand for separate Muslim electorates was formally mooted in the Simla Memorial of October 1906, which defended the exclusive right of the Muslims to elect Muslim representatives as an imperative measure to counter the effects of 'western' elective representation. In theory, political representatives were deemed to be

---

[17] *The Tribune*, 28 January 1908, p. 6; 20 March 1908, p. 4; Microfilm, NMML; Cleghorn, 'Religion and Politics', pp. 391-2.
[18] Shabnum Tejani, *Indian Secularism: A Social and Intellectual History 1890-1950,* New Delhi, 2007, p. 114-7.
[19] Matiur Rahman, *From Consultation to Confrontation: A Study of the Muslim League in British Indian Politics, 1906-1912,* London, 1970, p. 38.
[20] F. Shaikh, *Community and Consensus in Islam: Muslim Representation in Colonial India 186-1947,* Cambridge, 1989, p., 119.
[21] Cited in Shaikh, *Community and Consensus,* pp. 111-2.
[22] Note by W. Lee Warner, 18 April 1907, *John Morley Papers,* MSS. EUR. D. 573, Vol. 32, IOL.

responsible to individual and group interests organised within territorial constituencies. The Simla Memorial rejected this principle of 'western' representation based on territorial constituencies. The election of a Muslim from a communally mixed territorial constituency, it stated, could not guarantee the 'substantive representation' of the Muslims as a community. Really representative men would emerge when the Muslims themselves, organised as a separate electorate, were empowered to elect Muslim representatives.[23] Numerical strength was wholly inadequate as the basis of Muslim representation and power which, it was argued, emerged from their 'historical role' in Indian society and politics. The Muslims of India, it was stated, had been the rulers of India until the arrival of British rule, that their previous tradition of rule gave them a 'historical and political importance' far beyond the numbers of the Muslim community, and that they were entitled to more than proportionate share of political power under British rule.[24] 'Western' representation would continue to be problematic so long as it did not recognise the 'political importance' of the Muslims in India. It was proposed that the Muslims should be granted representation not merely in proportion to their actual numerical strength but in recognition of 'the prestige and influence' they exercised 'a little more than a hundred years ago'.[25] Parity, not political majorities, determined the debate on Muslim representation in India.[26] In 1907 the London Committee of the All-India Muslim League led by Sayyid Ameer Ali, a former judge of the Calcutta High Court, through a petition to Secretary of State for India Sir John Morley, represented the Muslims in terms of their 'political and historical importance' as a basis for their claim to additional representation.[27] In March 1908, the Muslim League formalised the demand, calling for measures which would enable 'Mohammedan voters to elect their own representatives' to legislative councils and local boards.[28] It called for an end to Muslim 'mandatories' accountable to non-Muslim constituencies and emphasised the urgency of securing 'really representative' Muslims accountable to exclusively Muslim electorates.[29]

In the council reforms Act of 1909, the government under Viceroy Lord Minto granted separate electorates and 'weightage' for the Muslims in provincial legislative councils throughout India, 'satisfying Muhmmadan claims to be represented in proportion not merely to their numbers, but also to their political and historical importance'.[30] The Muslims were provided with representation in excess of their actual numerical strength in the councils and local bodies under the 1909 Act. Seats gained through separate electorates would comprise the

---

[23] S.R. Wasti, *Lord Minto and the Indian Nationalist Movement, 1905 to 1910*, Oxford, 1964, pp. 166-90.
[24] Address of the Simla Deputation, enclosed in Lord Minto's note to John Morley, 4 October 1906, *John Morley Papers,* Vol. 9, Paragraphs 8, 10, 11, 2, IOL.
[25] Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan wondered in a speech delivered in Lucknow on 28 December 1887: 'What is this nation of ours?' 'We are those who have ruled India for six or seven hundred years.' A.M. Zaidi [ed.], *Evolution of Muslim Political Thought in India, Vol. I: From Syed to the Emergence of Jinnah*, New Delhi, 1975, p. 42.
[26] Address of the Simla Deputation, enclosed in Lord Minto's note to John Morley, 4 October 1906, *John Morley Papers*, Vol. 9, Paragraph, 5, IOL.
[27] P. Hardy, *The Muslims of British India*, Cambridge, 1972, pp. 154-158.
[28] Sir Alfred Lyall's memo to John Morley, 15 February 1909, *John Morley Papers*, MSS. EUR. D. 573, Vol. 49, IOL.
[29] Sayyid Ali Imam's comments while moving the third resolution of the All India Muslim League, 31 December 1908, in Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada, [ed.], *Foundations of Pakistan: All-India Muslim League Documents 1906-1947*, Vol. 1, Karachi, 1990, p. 61.
[30] Viceroy Lord Minto's letter to Sir John Morley, dated 8 February 1909, Morley Papers, Vol. 33, IOL.

majority of Muslim seats; and anything gained in general electorates and nomination would be supplementary – the 'weightage'. In October 1909 the government stated that the 'special representation of Muhammadans was only claimed and only conceded on the ground that so important a minority required protection'.[31] The Indian Councils Bill of 1909 provided the Muslims with eight out of twenty-seven elected seats on the Viceroy's Imperial Council: the separately elected seats constituted a total of 29.6 per cent representation against 24 per cent Muslim population in British India. In the elections held under the terms of the new Act in January 1910, the Muslims secured a total of 11 seats [separately and jointly elected], which brought the total Muslim representation in the council to 40.7 per cent.[32] After 1909, the Muslim community, in its efforts to adjust to the introduction of the reforms, set about to unify the community for political representation and to seek government commitment to a legal definition of separate Muslim interests.[33]

Indian nationalist leaders argued that separate electorates were a classic expression of Britain's 'divide and rule' policy, pitting the Hindus against the Muslims.[34] Hindu publicists claimed that representation for the Muslims in the legislative councils in greater proportion than their numerical strength was excessive and at the expense of the Hindus. Shadi Lal, Hindu Sabha general secretary, voiced an extreme concern against separate electorates through a petition to Lord Minto as part of a welcome address to the latter in Lahore in April 1909. The petition opposed any concession or the claim of 'excessive representation' to any community on the basis of its 'historical or political importance'. 'The Hindu community humbly submits,' protested Shadi Lal, '... the claim of excessive representation advanced in certain quarters, in connection with the Reform Scheme, is opposed to the principles of justice and fair play ...'[35] Separate electorates marked a turning point, resulting in the increasingly hostile and antagonistic relations between the Hindus and the Muslims in north India.[36] In the Punjab where the Muslims were a numerical majority, separate electorates could not be justified, awakening in sections of the Hindus the fears of vulnerability, more so in view of the perceived 'Muslim domination'.[37] The networks of Hindu Sabhas were formed in the Punjab by *sanatani*st [orthodox] Hindus.[38] The Hindu Sabha movement was a direct response to the fears that the Muslims as a constitutional minority would become

---

[31] Confidential note on the New Legislative Councils, Appendix ii on Muhammdan Representation, *John Morley Papers*, MSS. EUR.. D. 573, Vol. 34, IOL.

[32] Lord Minto's memo to John Morley, 6 January 1910, *John Morley papers,* Vol. 23.

[33] A.M. Zaidi [ed.], *Evolution of Muslim Political Thought in India, Vol. III: Parting of the Ways,* New Delhi, 1977, p. 686.

[34] M.N. Das, *India under Morley and Minto*, London, 1964, 99-101; Home Poll., Part A, Proceedings 29-31 December 1909, NAI.

[35] The Memoranda of the Hindu Sabha, Home Department [Political Part A], Proceedings No. 29-31 and 50-53, December 1909, NAI.

[36] Francis Robinson, *Separatism Among Indian Muslims: The Politics of the United Provinces' Muslims 1860-1923*, Cambridge, 1993 [1974], pp. 135-47.

[37] C.H. Philips [ed.], *The Evolution of India and Pakistan 1858-1947: Select Documents*, Vol. 4, London 1962, p. 86.

[37] The Hindus were in a minority in the Punjab -- comprising 40.7 per cent of the population, against 51.3 per cent Muslims and 7.5 per cent Sikhs [1881 census]. *The Census of India 1881: Punjab Census Report*, Calcutta, 1882, p. 77.

[38] Home Poll., GOI, June 1911, File No. B 1-3, Weekly Report, 11April 1911 NAI.

dominant in an imperial system of collaboration engineered by the British under the council reforms of the 1909 Act.[39]

I. 2. 'Declining' Hindu Numbers

One significant context for the emergence of Hindu politics in colonial north India was the state's categorisation and enumeration, which had a momentous significance for the birth of the Hindu Sabha movement in the Punjab. India's decennial censuses had since the late nineteenth century classified the population according to religion, community and caste; and in the politics of India's localities and provinces, representative institutions gave importance to communities defined by religion and assessed by their demographic weight.[40] The British initially assisted this process by treating the Muslims as an official category for the purposes of census enumeration, distribution of government appointments, and education. This policy triggered the fears of a threat to the Hindus as an 'enumerated' community, becoming the basis of the politics and rhetoric of Hindu publicists.[41] In the Punjab, the census revealed a steady decline of the Hindu population – from 43.8 per cent in 1891 to 36.3 per cent in 1911, against an increase of 5.7 per cent in the Muslim population.[42] The official 'loss' of the Hindus was perceived to be an outcome of conversions. The 1911 census showed that since 1901, 40,000 Hindus had been converted to Islam, and 120,000 to Christianity.[43] The demographic growth rate of the Muslims proved equally alarming. O'Donnell, all-India Census Commissioner, had in 1891 pointed to the slower Hindu growth rates relative to the Muslims, claiming that the Hindus would cease to exist in 700 years.[44] The 'declining Hindu' scare was raised again by Census Commissioner H.H. Risley in 1901. 'Can the figures of the last census,' he wondered, 'be regarded in any sense the forerunner of an Islamic or Christian revival which will threaten the citadel of Hinduism ... or will Hinduism hold its own in the future as it has done through the long ages of the past.'[45] The census report of 1911 stated: 'It has long been known that Musalmans are more fertile than Hindus and that their chances of life are better; and the figures of the last decade merely strengthen this view ...'[46] The 'main factor', remarked one census official, 'is natural growth, and ... this largely depends on strength of Mussalmans, who, as is well known, are more prolific than Hindus'.[47] The official census projections precipitated the fears that the numerical 'Hindu decline' was an outcome of colonial rule that favoured the Muslims. The idea that numbers, demographic majorities and

---

[39] Prakash, *A Review*, p. 12.
[40] Kenneth W. Jones, 'Religious Identity and the Indian Census', in N.G. Barrier [ed.], *The Census in British India: New Perspectives*, Delhi, 1980, pp. 73-101.
[41] Arjun Appadurai, 'Numbers in the Colonial Imagination', in Arjun Appadurai [ed.], *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, Delhi, 1997, pp. 114-38.
[42] K. Jones, 'Religious Identity and the Indian Census', in N.G. Barrier [ed.], *The Census in British India*, New Delhi, 1981, pp. 87- 92.
[43] *The Census of India 1911: Punjab Census Report*, Calcutta, 1912, p. 99.
[44] *The Census of India 1891, Bengal*, Vol. 3, Calcutta, 1892, p. 146.
[45] H.H. Risley, *Tribes and Castes of Bengal: Ethnographic Glossary*, Calcutta, 1981 [1891], p. 384.
[46] *Census of India, 1911, UP*, Vol. 15, Part I, Allahabad, 1912, pp. 109-10.
[47] L.S.S. O'Malley, *The Census of India 1911: Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and Sikkim*, Vol. 5, Part I, Calcutta, 1912, p. 63.

minorities were directly related to power in colonial politics had become a marked feature of the emerging Hindu consciousness as prominently articulated by Hindu publicists in north India.[48]

The 'inadequacy' and 'disempowerment' of the Hindus resulting from the 'declining' numbers strengthened a broad alignment for Hindu unity and consolidation.[49] In 1910 there was a storm of protest over India's Census Commissioner E.A. Gait's abortive circular, which proposed ahead of the 1911 census an exclusion from the 'Hindu' category of the lower castes and tribal groups who did not worship the 'great Hindu gods' or were subjected to untouchability and pollution taboos.[50] The Gait circular threatened to reduce sharply the number of officially recorded 'Hindus' by rejecting the 'Hinduness' of the lower castes and untouchable groups and reclassifying them as 'non-Hindus'.[51] Arya Samajists, Sanatana Dharm Sabhas, and Hindu leaders in the Punjab feared an 'amputation of part of the numerical strength' of the Hindu community.[52] Lajpat Rai staunchly attacked the British policy, claiming that it aimed to 'thin the Hindu numbers with a view eventually to make them politically impotent'.[53] 'The possibility of losing the [six crore] untouchables,' he wrote, 'has shaken the intellectual section of the Hindu community to its very depths.'[54] Local Hindu Sabhas in the Punjab were exhorted to adopt resolutions declaring the untouchables to be their 'kith and kin' in protest against the proposed 'division' of the Hindu community.[55] The Hindu outcry and high caste protests did not focus on caste reform, but combined an argument of 'Hindu unity' with hierarchical inequality. The Gait circular was withdrawn in 1912, but the apprehensions it triggered were potent enough to strengthen the nascent consciousness of Hindu unity as a community. The Hindu demographic strength was an important factor that helped to deepen the emerging drive for Hindu identity and consolidation in the Punjab.[56]

The census as well as the implications was at the heart of significant literature produced during the early twentieth century. In June 1909 U.N. Mukherji wrote an essay that was serialised in the *Bengalee* of Surendranath Banerjea, entitled 'A Dying Race'; and it was later published as an influential pamphlet – *Hindus:*

---

[48] Lucy Carroll, 'Colonial Perceptions of Indian Society and the Emergence of Caste[s] Associations', *Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 37, No. 2, February 1978, pp. 233-50; Nandini Gooptu, *The Politics of the Urban Poor in Early Twentieth-Century India,* Cambridge, 2001, p. 204.

[49] Papia Chakravarty, *Hindu Response to Nationalist Ferment: Bengal 1909-1935*, Calcutta, 1992, pp. 72-91.

[50] The *Tribune* of Lahore published the Gait circular in November 1910: 'The Census Returns of Hindus', *The Tribune*, November 12, 1910, Microfilm, NMML.

[51] E.A. Gait's Notes of 31 May and 14 June 1911: E.A. Gait, *The Census of India 1911: Report,* Vol. I, Part I, Calcutta, 1912, pp. 115, 121.

[52] P.K. Datta, '"Dying Hindus": Production of Hindu Communal Common Sense in Early Twentieth-Century Bengal', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 28, No. 25, 19 June 1993, pp. 1305-19: p. 1306.

[53] Lajpat Rai, *The Arya Samaj: An Aaccount of its Origins, Doctrines and Activities, with a Biographical Sketch of the Founder*, Delhi, 1967 [1915], pp 124-5.

[54] Rai, *Arya Samaj,* p. 124.

[55] Cited in Zavos, *Emergence*, p. 123.

[56] Christophe Jaffrelot, 'The Genesis and Development of Hindu Nationalism in the Punjab: from the Arya Samaj to the Hindu Sabha [1875-1910]', *Indo-British Review,* Vol. 21, No. 1, 1993, pp. 3-40; Harald Fischer-Tine, 'Kindly Elders of the Hindu Biradri: The Arya Samaj's Struggle for Influence and its Effect on Hindu-Muslim Relations, 1880-1925', in Antony Copley [ed.], *Gurus and Their Followers: New Religious Reform Movements in Colonial India*, New Delhi, 2000, p. 126.

A Dying Race.[57] It sought to create a demographic scare through a selective use of the census data and projections on the 'disappearance' of the Hindus within the next 420 years due to a relative increase in the Muslim and Christian population. Mukherji pointed to an inexorable 'decline' in the Hindu numbers relative to the 'virile, energetic and united Muslims'. The threat of biological 'Hindu extinction', he argued, had a remedy in the uplift of the untouchables and tribals under the leadership of Brahmans, as they were vulnerable to conversions to Islam and Christianity.[58] Mukherji's analysis proved to be an influential and enduring work in strengthening the emerging Hindu nationalist consciousness and urge for unity.[59]

Swami Shraddhananda [1857-1926], the Arya Samaj ideologue and pioneer of the Hindu *sangathan* movement of the early 1920s, borrowed the idea of the Hindus as a 'dying race' from Mukherji, reiterating that the 'conversions by violence, force and fraud of Muslim conquerors and Christian missionaries' were largely the reason for the imminent 'extinction' of the Hindus. However, he argued, Hinduism showed resilience in the face of the 'corrupt and dishonest methods' of conversion perpetrated by Islamic and Christian proselytisers.[60] He proposed *sangathan* -- the strategic organisation of Hindu society – as a solution to the crisis of 'numerical decline'.[61] The anxiety over Hindu numbers accompanied by alarming Muslim demographic growth was in part central to the narrative on the construction of a monolithic Hindu community, which had become an important endeavour of Hindu publicists. [62]

I. 3. Lal Chand's Vision of Nationalism

One prominent influence behind the birth of the Hindu Sabha movement in the Punjab was Rai Bahadur Lal Chand [1852-1912], an Arya Samajist, a judge in Lahore, first president for twenty years of the Arya Samaj's Dayananda Anglo-Vedic College, Lahore, and one of the founders of the Punjab National Bank, Lahore. Lal Chand, regarded by the Hindu Mahasabha as the founder of the Hindu nationalist movement in the Punjab, wrote in 1909 a series of 15 articles in the *Punjabee* of Lahore, the newspaper founded by Lajpat Rai, under the title 'Self Abnegation in Politics'; and it was later republished as *Self-Abnegation in Politics* in 1938.[63] Lal Chand's *Self-Abnegation,* a Hindu version of the 'two-nation theory', anticipated much of the discourse of the Hindu Mahasabha on the political rights and representation of the Hindus and their 'plight' in colonial India. Lal Chand viewed the attitude of the Hindus towards politics as 'self-denying', which allowed the claims of the Muslims to take 'precedence'. Separate electorates granted under the 1909 reforms, he argued, were the

---

[57] *The Bengalee*, 22 June 1909: the essay was serialised from 1 June to 22 June 1909. U.N. Mukherji, *Hindus: A Dying Race*, Calcutta, 1909, pp. 19-21.

[58] U.N. Mukherji, *Hinduism and the Coming Census: Christianity and Hinduism*, Calcutta, 1911, p. 16.

[59] K. Jones, 'The Negative Component of Hindu Consciousness', *Indo-British Review*, Vol. 19, No.1, September 1993, p. 63.

[60] Swami Shraddhanand, *Hindu Sangathan: Saviour of the Dying Race*, n.p. 1926, pp. 79-80, 91. p. 127. Shraddhananda first issued an appeal entitled 'Save the Dying Race' in 1923. He later wrote *Hindu Sangathan* in 1924, which was published in 1926. J.T.F Jordens, *Swami Shraddhananda: His Life and Causes*, Delhi, 1981, pp. 131-4, 151-2.

[61] Shraddhanand, *Hindu Sangathan,* p. 127.

[62] P.K. Datta, *Carving Blocs: Communal Ideology in Early Twentieth-Century Bengal*, New Delhi, 1999, ch. 1; idem, 'Dying Hindus', pp. 1305-19; Sumit Sarkar, *Beyond Nationalist Frames: Postmodernism, Hindu Fundamentalism, History*, Bloomington [UK], 2002, p. 83.

'apotheosis of surrender' by the Hindus. There was an 'oppression' and 'discrimination' of the Hindus due to the 'British bias' that had promoted Muslim interests, leading to the fears about the 'Muslim domination' of India.[64] Lal Chand put the blame for the loss of Hindu self-assertion on the Congress, an organisation that 'makes the Hindu forget that he is a Hindu and tends to swamp this communal individuality into an Indian ideal', making him break with all his 'past traditions and past glory'.[65] The Congress ideal of a composite nationhood was 'erroneous', he argued, and had become impossible under the declared 'hostile attitude' of the Muslims. Any concessions by the Hindus to Muslim separatism would end in failure. 'My own belief,' he explained, 'is that if we succeed in establishing a strong independent Hindu organisation, the Muslims would in course of time join us in making common demand for redress of common grievances.'[66] Lal Chand favoured Hindu politics as an alternative to the national politics of the Congress, proposing the substitution of Hindu Sabhas for Congress committees and of a Hindu press for the Congress press for the protection of Hindu interests. He justified the development of the Hindu Sabha movement on the basis that Hindu patriotism ought to be 'communal and not merely geographical'.[67] Lal Chand's work set the pattern for the beginning and strengthening of Hindu Sabha ideology as a powerful symbol of Hindu unity and cohesiveness in the Punjab.

I. 4. Punjab Hindu Sabha

The most significant event in the development of Hindu consciousness and politics in India in the early twentieth century was the formation of the Punjab Hindu Sabha in 1909 by prominent leaders of the Aray Samaj. Madan Mohan Malaviya presided over the Hindu Sabha's first session in Lahore in October 1909. The Sabha was formed around a nucleus of the Arya Samajists -- Lala Lajpat Rai, Lal Chand, and Shadi Lal -- who were the first 'political exponents' of Hindu nationalism.[68] The Hindu Sabha stated that it was 'not sectarian, but an all-embracing movement' with an aim to safeguard 'the interests of the entire Hindu community in all respects'.[69] Its ideology was determined in part by Arya Samajist nationalism, deriving India's pride from the 'Vedic golden age' and 'ancient Hinduism'.[70] The Arya Samaj's social reformism, particularly the removal of untouchability and the advocacy of widow remarriage, was not successfully assimilated by the Hindu Sabha. On the contrary, *sanatan dharm* [orthodox Hindu] ideology, represented by the Sanatana Dharma Sabhas and the Bharat Dharma Mahamandal, was to prove central in the articulation of a coherent image of Hindu unity projected by the Sabha. The Sabha worked as a pressure group, functioning through petitions to both provincial and central

---

[63] Lal Chand, *Self-Abnegation in Politics* [foreword by Bhai Parmanand], Lahore, 1938, pp. 33, 100, 103, 118, 121.
[64] Cited in Christophe Jaffrelot, 'Hindu Nationalism: Strategic Syncretism in Ideology Building', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 20, Nos. 12-13, March 20-27, 1993, p. 519.
[65] Lal Chand, *Self-Abnegation*, p. 21.
[66] Chand, *Self-Abnegation*, pp. 122-4.
[67] Lal Chand, *Self-Abnegation*, p. 103.
[68] Home Poll A, August 1909, 182-184, p. 295, NAI; Prakash, *Hindu Mahasabha*, p. 11; Prakash, *A Review*, p. ii.
[69] Cited in Praksh, *A Review*, p. 13.
[70] Jaffrelot argues that the Hindu Sabha movement was an extension of Arya Samaj ideology. Jaffrelot, 'Hindu Nationalism', pp. 26-33. Arya Samajists portrayed India as a glorious ancient civilisation, which 'fell' in the context of colonial rule. Har Bilas Sarda, *Hindu Superiority: An Attempt to Determine the Position of the Hindu Race in the Scale of Nations*, Delhi, 1975 [1906], p. 109.

governments on various issues affecting the Hindu community. It expressed its anxiety over the composition of the Punjab Legislative Council, in which the number of representatives went up from 24 to 30, but to the detriment of the Hindus in relative numbers.[71] Nonetheless, the Sabha swore loyalty to the British and rarely carried its activities to the masses.[72]

The Hindu Sabha sought to demonstrate the emerging unity of the Hindu community by organising the first Punjab Provincial Hindu Conference in Lahore in 1909.[73] Lal Chand was made chairman of the reception committee, which included Ram Bhaj Datta, Hari Chand of Multan, Lala Sukh Dial, and Lala Shadi Lal.[74] The presidentship was offered to Sir Pratul Chander Chatterji, former Punjab High Court judge, Bengali vice-chancellor of the Punjab University and a patron of the Sanatan Dharma Sabha.[75] The conference, which opened in Lahore on 21 and 22 October 1909, was attended by nearly 3,000 leaders and notables, drawn from the United Provinces, the North West Frontier Province, and other parts of the country. It stated its mission as one of 'consolidation and homogenisation', urging different sections of the Hindu community to promote 'mutual brotherly feelings and unity'.[76] Lajpat Rai, in his speech to the conference, emphasised the 'desirability of the sentiment of Hindu nationality and Hindu unity', reiterating that the Hindus constituted a 'distinct and separate nation' because they represented 'a civilisation' of their own. The Hindus needed to organise themselves in unity, he stressed, in order to defend themselves in view of the rapid expansion of the Muslim League and the continued 'British hostility'.[77] Lal Chand, in his address, revealed an anxiety over the 'numerical decline' of the Hindus, urging the need to strengthen the relative position of the Hindus *vis-a-vis* the Muslims in India. 'Numbers,' he stressed, 'carry great weight in this age and help materially in deciding the fate of any struggle.'[78] The conference severely criticised the Congress for its 'failure' to defend the interests of the Hindu community and called for Hindu-centred politics. It urged the establishment of Hindu Sabhas all over the country, besides proposing the organisation of an annual all-India Hindu conference.[79]

Consensual issues became prominent in the Punjab Hindu Sabha's programme. The resolutions passed by Lahore Hindu conference concerned chiefly the promotion of Sanskrit and Hindi, support for cow protection and

---

[71] The Memoranda of Hindu Sabha, Home Department [Political Part A], Proceedings No. 29-31, 50-53, December 1909, NAI.
[72] Home Department [Political Part B] Proceedings No. 69-70, April 1910, NAI.
[73] *The Tribune,* 21 October 1909, p. 1, Microfilm, NMML; Barrier, 'Arya Samaj and Congress Politics', pp. 378-9.
[74] The reception committee members were: Lal Chand, R.B., M.A., Advocate, Lahore, Chairman; Ram Saran Das, R.S., Reis, Lahore, Vice-President; Hari Chand, R.B., Reis, Multan, Vice-President; Meh Singh Chawla, M.C., Lahore, Vice-President; Shadi Lal, R.B., Bar-at-Law, Lahore, General Secretary; Gopal Chand, B.A., LL.B, Pleader, Lahore, Secretary; Roshan Lal, Pleader, Lahore, Financial Secretary; Sukh Dial, R.S., Advocate, Lahore, Financial Secretary; Ram Bhaj Datta, Chaudhari, B.A., Pleader, Lahore, secretary, Organisation Sub-Committee; Karam Chand Puri, M.C., Lahore, Secretary, Accommodation Sub-Committee. *Punjabee*, 28 August 1909, p.1, Microfilm, NMML.
[75] *The Punjabee, Special Conference Issue, 26 October 1909, p. 1, Microfilm, NMML.*
[76] Home Poll., B, File No. 110-117, October 1909, NAI; *The Tribune,* 26 and 27 October 1909, Microfilm, NMML.
[77] Cited in S. Mathur, *Hindu Revivalism and the Indian National Movement: A Documentary Study of the Ideas and Policies of the Hindu Mahasabha 1939-1945*, Jodhpur, 1996, p. 13.
[78] *Punjabee*, Special Conference Issue, 23 October 1909, Microfilm, NMML.
[79] *The Tribune*, 26 October 1909, p. 2; *The Punjabee*, 30 October 1909, p. 1, Microfilm, NMML; Jones, *Arya Dharm*, pp. 289-90.

Ayurvedic medicine, and the writing of a history of India's 'Hindu period'.[80] Several resolutions echoing the Arya Samaj's reformist vision -- the removal of untouchability as well as lower caste amelioration -- were not put before the conference due to *sanatani* apprehensions over caste reform. No change in status was urged for the untouchables and lower castes. 'All that is needed,' Lal Chand emphasised, 'is to advocate the interests of the community at large and the moment we realise this germinal idea, this sacred obligation ... all self-imposed differences and schisms will vanish away like chaff.'[81] The need for consensus and unity was a prominent factor in the Hindu Sabha's movement.

The image of a politically unified and organised Hindu community assumed critical importance in the Hindu Sabha's political programme. The Sabha proposed the establishment of a broad all-India Hindu organisation, which would provide strength to Hindu politics in securing benefits for the Hindus at the provincial and local levels.[82] As part of its plan, it held five Punjab Hindu conferences from 1909 to 1914: the first Hindu conference was held in Lahore in 1909. The second conference was convened in October 1910 in Lahore, with Bahadur Hari Chand chairing the reception committee and Sardar Gurbakhsh Singh Bedi as president.[83] The third conference was organised on 29 September 1911 in Amritsar with Lal Chand once more as president, who demonstrated 'none of the old fire and old reverberation'.[84] Its attendance was not impressive, except for the presence of M.M. Malaviya. Lal Chand's death in January 1912 removed a prominent figure from the Hindu Sabha movement, which was hit by the old pattern of inaction and factional struggles in the Punjab. The fourth Hindu conference, which was convened in Delhi in January 1912 under the presidentship of Lala Shadi Lal, passed the usual resolutions, but disbanded. The December 1913 conference of Ambala, the fifth conference, as well as the sixth Hindu conference held in Ferozepur in 1914 had revealed the weaknesses and difficulties that frustrated attempts to bridge divisions within the Hindu community.[85] The Punjab Hindu Sabha faced the future devoid of any dynamic leadership or plan by expressing the Hindu nationalist sentiment fr India's freedom with little organisational activity. However, it led the drive for the formation of an all-India Hindu organisation.

II. Hindu Mahasabha's Formation

The formation of an all-India Hindu Sabha in the United Provinces was largely an outcome of the development of a broader Hindu communitarian consciousness taking place in the Punjab in the early twentieth century. The UP was a stronghold of Hindu orthodoxy and *santan dharm* ideology, dominated by the holy cities of Banaras, Hardwar, and Allahabad as well as the influence of upper castes -- ten per cent of them Brahmans -- who had formed a large number of *sanatan dharm* associations and educational institutions through their hold

---

[80] *The Tribune,* 27 October 1909, p. 1, Microfilm, NMML.
[81] *The Punjabee*, Special Conference Issue, 23 October 1909, Microfilm, NMML.
[82] Jones, *Arya Dharm*, p. 287; Tuteja and Grewal, 'Emergence of Hindu Communal Ideology', p. 13.
[83] *The Tribune*, 8 October 1910, p. 3; 15 October 1910, p. 1; 5 November 1910, p. 1, Microfilm, NMML.
[84] *The Tribune*, 1 October 1911, p. 3, Microfilm, NMML.

over land, administration and trade. Powerful Hindu mercantile classes had emerged and Hindu corporate towns flourished, resulting in the growth of urban political culture and social ethos.[86] These changes, as Sandria Freitag and Vasudha Dalmia explain, provided the context for Hindu revival and reform, which were evident in the proliferation of religious rituals and celebrations in the 'public arena' and the expansion of activities of religious organisations like the Arya Samaj across the province. The growth of religious festivals and celebrations contributed to the elaboration of a 'sustained ideology of community' and the emergence of a cohesive sense of the Hindu community.[87] In the forefront of religious and cultural revivalism in the UP were the Arya Samaj, the Hindu Samaj of Allahabad, the Bharat Dharm Mahamandal, and the Sanatana Dharma Sabha. The Sanatana Dharma Sabhas and the Bharat Dharma Mahamandal were the chief *sanatan*ist movements in the province.[88] The Mahamandal claimed in 1902 that it represented 'the whole of the orthodox classes of the Hindus in India'.[89] Admittedly, the emergence of Hindu revival and politics became extremely prominent in the UP, particularly in the eastern districts of Allahabad and Bhojpuri region, in effect becoming the basis for the development of the Hindu unity movement.

In ideological terms, the Hindu-oriented elite had been actively involved in the development of the Hindu Sabha movement in the UP since the early twentieth century. The key figure in the new direction of the Sabha movement was Madan Mohan Malaviya [1861-1946], the Bharat Dharma Mahamandala's leading publicist and a prime mover in the Hindu University Society which had raised funds through the patrons of *sanatan dharm.* Malaviya started the Hindu Samaj [Hindu Society] in Allahabad in 1880 to promote Hindu institutions -- such as the local *Magh Mela* whose idolatry was criticised by Christian missionaries.[90] The foundation of the Hindu University Society in 1912 helped to draw together local Hindu Sabhas, which had been formed in Allahabad, Banaras, and Kanpur.[91] The Hindu Sabhas championed Hindu issues like cow-slaughter that provoked an endless agitation by Hindu publicists, but efforts to unify and strengthen the Sabhas on a provincial basis had not survived long.[92] In addition, a variety of Hindu organisations had emerged in the UP towns in the context of deepening involvement in the projects of Hindu improvement and renewal in the early twentieth century.

---

[85] *The Tribune*, 19 October 1912, pp. 2-3; 22 October 1912, p. 7, Microfilm, NMML; Keith Alexander Meadowcroft, '"From Hindu-*Muslim Unity*" *to Hindu Raj: The Evolution of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha 1922-1939', Unpublished Masters Dissertation,* Concordia University, Montreal, 1995, Microfilm, NMML, p. 18.

[86] C.A. Bayly, Rulers, *Townsmen and Bazaars: North Indian Society in the Age of British Expansion, 1770-1870*, Cambridge, 1983, pp. 71-81.

[87] S. Freitag, *Collective Action and Community: Public Arenas and the Emergence of Communalism in North India*, Berkeley, 1989, pp. 197-9; Vasudha Dalmia, *The Nationalization of Hindu Traditions: Bhartendu Harishchandra and Nineteenth-century Banaras*, Delhi, pp. 50-145.

[88] J.N. Farquhar, *Modern Religious Movements in India*, Delhi, 1967, pp. 101-129, 316-23.

[89] Cited in Jaffrelot, 'Hindu Nationalism', p. 317.

[90] M.M. Malaviya became president of the Congress in 1909 and founded *The Leader* and the *Times of India*, along with the Hindi newspaper, *Abhyudaya*. His life's work was the Benares Hindu University. S.L. Gupta, *Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya: A Socio-political Study*, Allahabad, 1987 [1978], pp. 293-6; S. Chaturvedi, *Madan Mohan Malaviya*, Delhi, 1972, p. 12.

[91] V.A. Sundaram, [ed.], *Benares Hindu University 1905-1915*, Benares, 1936, pp. 90-1. The Hindu University Society first met in Delhi in December 1911 and then January 1912; it was incorporated as a society under the Act XXI of 1860 with headquarters in Allahabad. Bhagwan Das, 'Hindu University Genesis', *The Leader*, 24 April 1916, p. 3, Microfilm, NMML.

[92] C.A. Bayly, *The Local Roots of Indian Politics: Allahabad 1880-1920,* Oxford, 1975, p. 148.

A formal move to form an all-India Hindu Sabha was made at the annual session of the Indian National Congress in Allahabad in 1910. A committee was set up with Lala Baij Nath, an Agarwala banker, a *rais* of Kanpur and president of the UP Vaish Conference, as president to draw up a constitution. Little progress had ensued, however.[93] Similar concerns were expressed in 1910 when a meeting of Hindu leaders in Allahabad took the initial step of organising an all-India Hindu Sabha. The goals and rules of the Sabha were agreed and officers selected, but it could not become operational due to internal divisions and factional strife.[94] The Punjab Hindu Sabha eventually led the drive for the founding of the all-India Hindu organisation. The Hindu Sabha, at its fifth session held in Ambala on 7 and 8 December 1913, passed a resolution to create the organisation. 'This Conference,' it stated, 'is strongly of opinion that in order to deliberate upon measures for safeguarding the interests of the Hindu Community throughout India and elsewhere it is highly desirable that a General Conference of Hindus of India be held at Hardwar on the occasion of the Kumbh in 1915, and it requests the following gentlemen to make necessary arrangements for the purpose.'[95] Hindu leaders from all parts of the country, 26 in total, were nominated to the Hindu Sabha Committee. However, only five leaders attended the first preliminary meeting held in Dehradun on 24 September 1914, three of them belonging to Dehradun itself.[96] Office-bearers were appointed, and a budget of Rs 2,000 was passed for the proposed Sabha. But for 'one reason or another the formation of the office and other measures contemplated in the ... proceedings remained in abeyance'. Little progress had occurred on the creation of the all-India Hindu Sabha.[97]

The Punjab Hindu Sabha finally renewed its plan to form the all-India Hindu Sabha in 1914. It reaffirmed the resolution of the Ambala conference at its sixth session held in Ferozepur in end-1914, at which 'the venerable Rai Saheb Lala Murlidhar ... of Umbala presided'.[98] In early 1915, Lala Sukhbir Sinha, general secretary of the planned Hindu Sabha, sent a circular to all those who were supposed to assist in the preparations. The preparatory sessions of the all-India Hindu Sabha were to be held in Hardwar on 13 February 1915, on 17 February in Lucknow, and a final one on 27 February in Delhi.[99] In April 1915, the All-India Conference of Hindus was convened during the Kumbh Mela in Hardwar,[100] where the Sarvadeshak Hindu Sabha -- the All-India Hindu Sabha -- was founded as 'a grand front with a flourish of trumpets' and pledges to represent the Hindu community.[101] Gandhi and Swami Shraddhananda, who were among the speakers at the Kumbh Mela conference, strongly supported the formation of the Hindu Sabha.[102] Maharaja Munindra Chandra Nandi of Kasimbazar, president of the conference, declared the Sabha's loyalty to the British, however. It was the First

---

93 Gordon, 'Hindu Mahasabha', p. 149.
94 Prakash, *A Review,* p. 17.
95 Cited in Shraddhanand, *Hindu Sangathan,* p. 107.
96 Shradhanand, *Hindu Sangathan*, p. 107.
97 Hindu Sabha Committee secretary's report presented on 24 September 1914. Shraddhanand, *Hindu Sangathan*, p. 109.
98 Shraddhanand, *Hindu Sangathan,* p 110.
99 Shraddhanand, *Hindu Sangathan*, p. 108.
100 Gordon, 'Hindu Mahasabha', p. 155.
101 Shraddhanand, *Hindu Sangathan*, p. 107.

World War period of crisis and turmoil. Munindra Chandra Nandi stated: 'As Hindus, we are loyal to the King-Emperor and the government by virtue of our religion and our prayers are rising day and night to the Most High for the victory of British and of our Allies.'[103] Hindu members of the Imperial Legislative Assembly and the commissioner of Meerut division were invited to the Sabha's inauguration. The Meerut commissioner was euphoric about the Sabha's loyalty: 'I have been deeply impressed with the loyal enthusiasm showed *[sic]* by the vast audience assembled whenever any reference had been made to the person of His Most Gracious Majesty the King-Emperor or the British Government in the course of the President's address.'[104] The founding of the All-India Hindu Sabha marked a triumph for the ideology of Hindu unity, which had been actively propagated by Hindu publicists across the Punjab and the UP.

The All-India Hindu Sabha laid particular stress on Hindu solidarity and the need for social reform without identifying itself with 'any particular sect or sects of the Hindu community'.[105] A reference to 'Hindu political interests' was made in the Sabha's constitution, but only in passing in the sixth and last clause of the 'Aims'.[106] A Subjects Committee passed a series of rules for the new organisation and defined its goals:

i. to promote greater 'union and solidarity' of the Hindus as 'one organic whole';

ii. to promote education among members of the Hindu community;

iii. to ameliorate and improve the condition of all classes of the Hindu community;

iv. to protect and promote Hindu interests 'whenever and wherever it may be necessary';

v. to promote good feelings between the Hindus and other communities in India and to act in a friendly way with them and in 'loyal co-operation with the government'; and

vi. generally to take steps for promoting 'religious, moral, educational, social and political interests' of the community.[107]

Nevertheless, the Hindu Sabha lacked any radical programme to reform Hindu society and dropped controversial issues – mainly untouchability and widow remarriage. It scrupulously avoided discussions on political questions, but pledged to develop a greater homogeneity of the Hindus on consensual issues: cow protection, and Hindi and Nagari.[108] It remained on the whole strictly loyal to the British. Swami Shraddhananda, who had declined to join the Hindu Sabha at first, was critical about the exceedingly loyal, pro-British position taken by the organisation, 'run by those Hindus in whose estimation every invader who snatched the

---

[102] Gordon, 'Hindu Mahasabha', pp. 145-204.
[103] Prakash, *Hindu Mahasabha*, p. 12.
[104] Prakash, *Hindu Mahasabha*, p. 13.
[105] Shraddhanand, *Hindu Sangathan*, pp. 109-10. M.R. Jayakar added one more clause to the objectives of the Hindu Mahasabha: to 'adopt measures to admit back those into the Hindu community who, owing to oppression, maltreatment, under pressure or any such other causes, had embraced other religions and desired to return to the Hindu religion'. M.R. Jayakar, *The Story of My Life 1922-1925*, Vol. 2, Bombay, 1959, pp. 113-4.
[106] Shraddhanand, *Hindu Sangathan*, p. 109.
[107] Shraddhanand, *Hindu Sangathan*, p. 108.
[108] *The Tribune*, *12 April 1915*, *p. 1*, *Microfilm*, *NMML*.

Government of a country from its people was God personified'.[109] The Hindu Sabha sought to consolidate its position as the representative of the Hindus without provoking hostility against the government and functioned mostly as a counterweight to the Muslim League.[110] It demonstrated a drive to campaign on various Hindu issues by organising its annual sessions in different parts of India. It organised its second session in Bombay in 1915 and the third conference in Hardwar [Dehradun] in 1916 with Madan Mohan Malaviya as president, which reiterated the need for the revival of the 'ancient greatness of the Hindus'.[111] The fourth session of the Hindu Sabha, which was held in Hardwar in 1917, expressed a desire to conciliate the Muslims. It conceded that the main cause of the Hindu-Muslim riots, which had occurred in 1916 in the UP, was chiefly the 'mutual want of respect for the deep-seated and long-cherished religious sentiments' of the communities. It urged the government to appoint a mixed commission of Hindu and Muslim leaders to inquire into the riots, offering its co-operation.[112] In 1918 under the impact of the UP Home Rule League, the Hindu Sabha held its fifth session at the venue of the Congress session in Delhi under the presidentship of Raja Sir Rampal Singh.[113] During this period, the Hindu Sabha acted as an interest group to safeguard the sectional interests of the Hindus, but did not want to be labelled as 'anti-British'.[114]

II. 1. Non-cooperation Movement

The Congress launched the Non-cooperation-Khilafat movement in 1920 following a successful mobilisation against the Rowlatt Act of 1919 which attempted to make permanent the wartime restrictions on civil rights, including the detention without trial for minor offences – such as the possession of seditious tracts.[115] Gandhi integrated the goals of the Non-cooperation movement with the Khilafat issue, designed to prevent the allied dismemberment of Turkey, the Caliphate of Islam, after World War I. The Hindus, he insisted, would support the Muslims in their quest to retain the Khilafat and prevent the 'dismemberment of the empire of the Khalifa against the dictates of the Islamic law'.[116] 'The Muslims and Hindus of India,' he declared, 'were not only united over the question of the Khilafat, but also on all political questions relating to their motherland – India.'[117] During the greater part of Non-cooperation, the All-India Hindu Sabha ceased to function formally: it met in annual session just once in 1919.[118] The Sabha met at its sixth session under the presidentship of Maharaja Munindra Chandra Nandi later in Hardwar in April 1921, re-christening itself as the All-India Hindu Mahasabha [Akhil Bharat Hindu Mahasabha] on the Congress model. The Hindu Mahasabha amended its constitution to replace the 'loyalty'

---

[109] Shraddhanand, *Hindu Sangathan,* p 114.
[110] Home Poll., B, File No. 49, March 1916; Home Poll., B, File No. 52, April 1916; Home Poll., B, File No. 53, May 1916, NAI.
[111] *The Leader*, 31 December 1916, p. 1, Microfilm, NMML; Prakash, *A Review*, p. 15.
[112] *Home Poll., B, File No. 50, March 1917, NAI.*
[113] Home Poll., B, File No. 51, April 1918, NAI.
[114] Shraddhanand, *Hindu Sangathan*, p. 114; Kenneth W. Jones, 'Politicized Hinduism: The Ideology and Program of the Hindu Mahasabha', in Robert D. Baird [ed.], *Religion in Modern India*, New Delhi, 2005 [2001], p. 247.
[115] Ravindra Kumar [ed.], *Essays in Gandhian Politics: The Rowlatt Satyagraha of 1919*, Oxford, 1971, pp. 21-3.
[116] Gail Minault, *The Khilafat Movement: Religious Symbolism and Political Mobilization in India*, New Delhi, 1999, p. 149.
[117] Cited in B.R. Nanda, *Gandhi: Pan-Islamism, Imperialism and Nationalism in India*, Bombay, 1989, p. 51.
[118] Shraddhanand, *Hindu Sangathan*, p. 114; Prakash, *A Review,* p. 22.

clause with a clause committing the organisation to 'a united and self-governing Indian nation', moving parallel to the Congress.[119] It convened a special session in Delhi on 6-7 November 1921 – where the general secretary and others delivered the speeches from the Congress platform. The session, which was presided over by Lajpat Rai and attended by Gandhi, C.R. Das, Motilal Nehru, and Jamna Lal Bajaj, passed resolutions echoing the Congress agenda, endorsing the Non-cooperation movement in respect of the boycott of foreign goods and the adoption of *swadeshi.* It appealed to all Hindus to give up employment in the military, police and civil services of the British government, besides resolving to boycott the visit of the Prince of Wales as part of Non-cooperation.[120] In this period, the Mahasabha broadly represented the politics of moderate Indian nationalism, even though it rejected the Congress as a 'toothless' and 'unrepresentative' organisation of India. It shadowed the Congress by adopting the latter's agenda and programmes, but did not venture into mass agitational politics.

However, the Hindu Mahasabha remained ambiguous over its position *vis-a-vis* Indian nationalism. The Congress's nationalist struggle made little impact on most Mahasabha leaders, who in general did not participate in the anti-Rowlatt Act Satyagraha and the Non-cooperation movement. The large number of them remained unaffected by the Congress's doctrine of Hindu-Muslim unity. Sir Rampal Singh declared the Mahasabha's commitment to Hindu interests as 'higher patriotism towards which humanity has been gaining strength in this country'.[121] The Khilafat movement was portrayed as an act of 'betrayal', 'a proof of the extra-national loyalties of the Muslim community as a whole'. The Muslims could, it was claimed, never share an 'emotional bond' with India and were eternally 'foreign' because their spiritual home was the Islamic heartland of 'Turkey and Arabia'.[122] In his presidential speech to the Congress's special session in Calcutta in 1920, Lajpat Rai attacked the 'religious objectives' of the Khilafat agitation, protesting that 'Mr Gandhi in his wisdom ... considered it necessary and proper in a way to tack the Indian National Congress to the Central Khilafat Committee'.[123] Distancing itself from the composite nationalism that was the Congress's creed, the Mahasabha saw little worth in a union with the Muslims, believing that there were irreconcilable differences between the Hindus and the Muslims, and that the nationalist vision of unity was 'ill-conceived' and an 'idle and futile' dream. The establishment of powerful Muslim organisations and the resultant Islamic fervour evident during the Khilafat movement in part motivated the Mahasabha to plan a larger mobilisation for Hindu defensive politics throughout India during the 1920s.[124]

The Non-cooperation movement involved the boycott of British goods and institutions -- chiefly the legislative councils, the courts, and colleges -- as part of the all-India strategy of the Congress. Madan Mohan Malaviya,

---

[119] Prakash, *A Review,* p. 163-8; Shraddhanand, *Hindu Sangathan,* p. 116.
[120] *The Tribune,* 9 November 1921, p. 2, Microfilm, NMML; Chetan Bhatt, *Hindu Nationalism: Origins, Ideologies and Modern Myths,* Oxford, 2001, p. 61..
[121] Home Poll., B, File No. 51, April 1918, NAI.
[122] Cited in Joya Chatterji, *Bengal Divided: Hindu Communalism and Partition, 1932-1947,* Cambridge, 1994, pp. 173, 178.
[123] *The Leader,* 17 September 1920, p. 1, Microfilm, NMML; G. Pandey, *The Ascendancy of the Congress in Uttar Pradesh 1926-34: A Study in Imperfect Mobilization,* Delhi, 1978, pp. 115-6.

while remaining within the Congress, first withdrew from the elections in 1920, but later came out strongly against all stages of the Non-cooperation movement, staying aloof from it. He attacked Non-cooperation as 'inimical to the long-term interests of the Hindu community' of India.[125] In his speech to a meeting in Allahabad in October 1920, he condemned the boycott of the schools and colleges as an 'educational suicide'. It would be the 'height of folly,' he argued, 'to cut off much-needed government financial aid to expanding educational institutions', such as the Banaras Hindu University of which he was appointed vice-chancellor in 1919. The legislative councils should not be boycotted, he argued, because 'the peasants have been relying on the nationalists to redress their grievances through the Councils'.[126] In the name of Islam, he protested, Hindu politicians were being asked to boycott the legislative councils and 'sacrifice the achievements of years of political activity'.[127] From 1923 onwards, Malaviya turned his attention to a successful political career in the legislatures in a marked hostility against the Non-cooperation movement. Krishna Kant Malaviya, Malaviya's staunch follower in Allahabad, reportedly urged the delegates to vote against Non-co-operation at the Nagpur session of the Congress in December 1920.[128] Malaviya's supporters in the UP affiliated to the UP Kisan Sabha, the Sewa Samiti, and the radical Kayastha Pathshala of Allahabad – prominently Iswar Saran and Ranjit Singh of Allahabad, Narayan Prasad Asthana and Prag Narayan of Agra, Jugal Kishore of Gorakhpur, and Awadh Bihari Lal of Oudh – were strongly opposed to Non-cooperation and stayed aloof from it.[129] For the Mahasabha, the unravelling of Non-cooperation was read as a 'transitory phenomenon', even though the period 1919-1922 represented the heyday of Hindu-Muslim unity in the anti-colonial movement. The powerful anti-British sentiment that drove the Non-cooperation movement was either overlooked or denied.

Hindu Mahasabha leaders, particularly B.S. Moonje, N.C. Kelkar and M.R. Jayakar, opposed Gandhi's move on council boycott and refused to resign from the legislative councils.[130] In 1919 the Government of India Act devolved considerable powers to the reformed legislative councils and gave elected Indians a more prominent role in the governance of the provinces, while keeping the vital departments at the centre firmly in British control under 'diarchy'. The Mahasabhaites had every incentive to take a decisive advantage of the 1919 Act and of the reformed councils, which were viewed as the 'bastions of power'.[131] Raja Narendra Nath, secretary of the Punjab Hindu Sabha, contested the elections of the Punjab Legislative Council in 1920 in spite of the boycott call given by the Congress. He attacked the Congress for its 'indifferent attitude' towards Hindu interests,

---

[124] Gyanendra Pandey, *The Construction of Communalism in Colonial North India*, New Delhi, 2006 [1990], pp. 210-12.
[125] Malaviya used the example of the boycott of the Allahabad Municipal Board [1916-1919] to exemplify the failure of the Non-cooperation movement. Malaviya's lecture, 'The Present Situation', *The Leader*, 3, 6, 7 October 1920, Microfilm, NMML.
[126] *The Leader*, 10 October 1920, p. 2, Microfilm, NMML.
[127] *The Leader*, 8 October 1920, p. 1, Microfilm, NMML.
[128] *The Leader*, 27 December 1920, p. 3, Microfilm, NMML.
[129] Iswar Saran's letter to *The Leader*, 30 September 1920, p. 1, Microfilm, NMML.
[130] R.L. Wadhwa, *Hindu Maha Sabha 1928-1947*, New Delhi, 1999, p. 75.
[131] Joya Chatterji, *The Spoils of Partition: Bengal and India, 1947-1967*, Cambridge, 2007, pp. 11-12.

insisting that the Hindu-Muslim unity achieved during the Non-cooperation struggle was 'superficial'.[132] In general, the Hindu Mahasabha was more concerned about issues on which it competed with the Muslim League to promote Hindu interests *vis-a-vis* the Muslims rather than an outright confrontation with the British.[133]

The Hindu Mahasabha adopted a new focus and determined position in the wake of its revival in 1922-23. Madan Mohan Malaviya, who assumed the presidentship of the Mahasabha from 1922 to 1925, effectively re-launched the organisation on a firmer ideological basis at its Gaya session in December 1922, unveiling *sangathan* [Hindu unity and consolidation] as its first aim for the attainment of *swaraj.*[134] He emphasised the need for a strong and unified Hindu community to achieve this objective. The Mahasabha's Banaras session in 1923 marked the emergence of a more militant Hindu nationalist orientation in its ideology, committing the organisation toa collective defence of the socio-political interests of the Hindu community.[135] S*angathan* ideology had developed into a defining principle of the Mahasabha's programme in which the 'hostile other' was not the British, but the Muslims.[136] The Mahasabha reinforced and deepened an overarching, all-embracing ideal of 'Hindu unity' based on anti-Muslim hostility throughout the 1920s and 1930s.

Conclusion

Hindu nationalism had emerged as an established feature of politics in north India, with its ideology represented in an institutional form by the Hindu Mahasabha, by the early twentieth century. The Hindu Sabha movement originated in the Punjab, the Arya Samajist stronghold -- where the Punjab Hindu Sabha was formed in 1909 and had spearheaded the movement for the formation of the All-India Hindu Sabha. The Mahasabha was founded in the UP on an explicitly Hindu nationalist agenda in 1915, campaigning over overriding Hindu issues: the propagation of Nagari and Hindi, cow protection, etc.[137] It experienced a political decline between 1919 and 1922 under the impact of the Non-cooperation movement that sought to define the Hindus and the Muslims as partners in an independent Indian nation. The Mahasabha mostly stayed out of the Congress struggle; and its ambiguity over Congress-led nationalism persisted, negating a confrontation with the British. In its articulation of nationalism, the Mahasabha distanced itself from the Congress's anti-imperialist struggle, creating a 'nationalist' political programme in which opposition to British rule played little part.[138] After its re-launch in 1922, it aligned Hindu unity with national unity, articulating an aggressive Hindu self-strengthening and assertion as part of *sangathan.* In the 1920s and 1930s, the Mahasabha's discourse assumed a stridently anti-

---

[132] Narendra Nath wrote: 'Hindu communal interests don't find many champions. Publicists of the present day are political workers and they hesitate to stand up for communal rights. But this is no reason for overlooking them.' Narendra Nath's letter to S.P. O'Donnell, Reforms Commissioner, dated 30 March 1920, Home Poll., B, File No. 104, April 1920, p. 2, NAI.

[133] B. *D. Graham, 'Syam Prasad Mookherjee and the Communist Alternative', in D.A. Low [ed.], Soundings in Modern South Asian History,* London, 1968, p. 334.

[134] Home Poll., File No. 140/1925, NAI; Gordon, 'Hindu Mahasabha' p. 170.

[135] H.N. Mitra [ed.], *Indian Annual Register 1922,* Vol. II, Calcutta, 1923, pp. 941-3; D. Page, *Prelude to Partition: The Indian Muslims and the Imperial System of Control, 1920-1932,* Delhi, 1982, pp. 74-84.

[136] 'Aims and objectives of the Hindu Maha Sabha', *The Tribune,* 27 July and 3 August 1923, p. 1, Microfilm, NMML.

[137] Prakash, *A Review,* pp. xv-xvi; Gordon, 'Hindu Mahasabha', p. 150.

[138] Chatterji, *Bengal Divided,* p. 180.

Muslim hostility, viewing the presence of the Muslims as the main obstacle to the creation of a homogeneous 'Hindu nation'.[139]

[139] Christophe Jaffrelot, 'The Idea of Hindu Race in the Writings of Hindu Nationalist Ideologues in the 1920s and 1930s: A Concept between Two Cultures', in Peter Robb [ed.], *The Concept of Race in South Asia*, Delhi, 1997 [1995], p. 331.

3

Hindu Mahasabha's Social Base and Organisation

The Hindu Mahasabha's origins were located in the internal history of the United Provinces, where a 'Hindu identity' was constructed and given a political expression in the early twentieth century. The 'Hindu identity' served to unite educated and wealthy Hindus, landowning groups, the urban professional intelligentsia, and business groups in the towns and cities of the province. The success of the propaganda about Hindu unity lay in creating a perceived coherence of interests among the Hindu groups. At its grassroots, the Mahasabha was made up of the elite social classes with divergent aspirations, many of which had little to do with Indian nationalism. Its propaganda sought to address typically middle class concerns; and its main support came predominantly from the traditional Hindu elites of the UP. The Mahasabha systematically sought the support of powerful landed interest groups, besides strengthening an active alliance with Hindu ruling princes in north India. It had a close connection with Hindu revivalist groups – the Arya Samaj and the *sanatan dharm* movement – which had been active for some time before its emergence. The Mahasabha's social roots had determined and demonstrated a structure of elite-led politics that hampered its ability to attract mass support: the party's lack of mass mobilisation was in part the reason for its early decline. This chapter explores and assesses the Mahasabha's social base as well as its organisational structure and leadership in the UP in the 1920s and 1930s. This period had proved critical for the ways in which the Hindu community and a Hindu politics emerged in north India.

I. Urban and High Caste Roots

The Hindu Mahasabha was largely but not exclusively urban in character, being concentrated in the largest trading cities of the UP -- Allahabad, Kanpur, Banaras, and Lucknow; and it was supported by the urban Hindu gentry and commercial groups. The development of towns and cities in the UP had since the late nineteenth century been influenced by the consolidation of British rule in north India after the suppression of the 1857 revolt and the proliferation of the railway network, coupled with the growth of local and long-distance trade.[1] The impact of British rule brought economic decline to the rural *qasbah* towns dominated by the Muslim service gentry, while the commercialisation of agriculture and the growth of trade resulted in the prosperity of Hindu market towns [*ganjs*].[2] The towns became important urban centres, all owing their growth primarily to trade and administration, and, in the case of Kanpur, to manufacturing industries. By the first two decades of the twentieth century, the landed service gentry and aristocracies had been gradually eclipsed by commercial groups in the towns in social and political importance. Traders and merchants, a majority of them being Hindu or Jain,

[1] C.A. Bayly, 'The Small Town and Islamic Gentry in North India: The Case of Kara', in K. Ballhatchet and J. Harrison [eds.], *The City in South Asia: Pre-modern and Modern*, London, 1980, pp. 20-4.

constituted a cohesive social group; and their trade and credit institutions created a 'corporate culture of great vitality' in the *ganjs*.[3] The social and commercial organisations of the merchant communities and the 'mutual code of honour' that made efficient commercial transactions possible, Vasudha Dalmia argues, amounted to a 'virtual civic government'.[4] Indeed, the commercial groups laid, Bayly notes, the foundations for a more cohesive 'middle class opinion' in the towns.[5] The merchants and traders, in alliance with emerging professional and service classes, became the driving force behind the increasingly 'purist' or 'reformist' Hindu religious and social initiatives.[6] The Hindu religious and charitable institutions as well as political associations were important in linking together the 'respectable parts' of Hindu society.[7] The elite sections of Hindu society and the 'middle class opinion', dissociated from landed property and urban in its livelihood, in part formed the social base of an assertive Hindu revivalism – which entered politics following the emergence of the Hindu mahasabha in 1915. The Mahasabha drew its support predominantly from politically organised and articulate urban Hindu groups. Eighteen members of the UP Hindu Sabha executive committee, elected in December 1915, were drawn from six of the principal cities in the UP, of which Allahabad alone accounted for ten, while three members came from the western divisions of Meerut, Agra, and Rohilkhand.[8] The urban Hindu gentry and the Hindu traders, who had so long maintined local power and status, became the main supporters of the Mahasabha in the UP.

The Hindu Mahasabha succeeded in attracting support from among the Indian National Congress's traditional supporters -- the 'educated middle class' leaders -- who had been disappointed by the latter's 'failure' to protect Hindu interests in the government and legislature of the UP. The issues which the Mahasabha took up – employment in government services, the 'oppression' of the Hindus, the 'destruction' of Hindu temples, etc. – were precisely those that worried the urban middle classes, who were disillusioned by the lack of effective remedies from the Congress. The Hindu classes that supported the Mahasabha were mostly Brahmans, Banias, Agarwals, and Vaishya groups. A closely-knit and highly organised group of 'Brahman politicians', whom Lieutenant-Governor James Meston termed the 'main characteristic of UP political life' in 1917, largely contributed to the growth of the Mahasabha.[9] The 1915 UP Hindu Sabha committee included nine Brahmans -- four Kashmiris, two Malavis, one Gujarati Nagar, one Telugu, and one Kanyakubya.[10] These Hindu groups, with an involvement in a range of Hindu revivalist and reformist movements across the UP, embraced the

---

[2] C.A. Bayly, *Rulers, Townsmen and Bazaars: North Indian Society in the Age of Britsh Expansion, 1770-1870,* Cambridge, 1992 [1983], pp. 449-57.
[3] C.A. Bayly, *The Local Roots of Indian Politics: Allahabad, 1880-1920*, Oxford, 1975, pp. 19-46; idem, *Rulers, Townsmen,* pp. 429-30, 451.
[4] Vasudha Dalmia, *The Nationalization of Hindu Traditions: Bharatendu Harishchandra and Nineteenth-century Banaras,* Delhi, 1997, pp. 87-8.
[5] Bayly, *Rulers, Townsmen,* p. 452.
[6] C.A. Bayly, 'Patrons and Politics in Northern India', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 3, 1973, pp. 349-88.
[7] S.B. Freitag [ed.], *Culture and Power in Banaras: Community, Peformance, and Environment, 1800-1980*, Berkeley, 1989, p. 8.
[8] Richard Gordon, 'The Hindu Mahasabha and the Indian National Congress, 1915 to 1926', *Modern Asian Studies,* Vol. 9, No. 2, 1975, p. 156-7.
[9] Cited in Gordon, 'Hindu Mahasabha', p. 155.
[10] Gordon, 'Hindu Mahasabha', p. 161.

Mahasabha because its campaign appealed to the notion of 'Hindu unity' and the 'welfare of the Hindu community' as a whole.

The Hindu Mahasabha allied itself with north Indian commercial and industrial classes during the years after First World War I. In the UP, the members of the rich banking families were drawn mostly from the trading castes. The commercial magnates who were the Mahasabha's chief patrons belonged to the three biggest banking houses in the province – Prag Narayan Bhargava of Lucknow, Lala Bishambhar Nath of Kanpur, and Moti Chand Gupta of Banaras.[11] The big business was the first to switch its allegiance from the Congress to the Mahasabha in the 1920s and 1930s. Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava, a Kanpur industrialist who was president of the UP Hindu Sabha in 1942 and who served on the Viceroy's Executive Council, admitted: 'After the Congress assumption of office in UP in 1937, the leading industrialists – all I think Hindu – got together and decided to finance Jinnah and the Muslim League *[sic]* and also the Mahasabha.'[12] Several business and banking houses believed that 'paying a premium to the Mahasabha would provide a better insurance' to them.[13] The UP Hindu Sabha committee included six Kayasthas, seven Vaish, and two Rajputs. The Vaish were divided into three Agarwals, three Khatris, and one Bhargava. Of the 24 members of the committee, only two depended entirely on landed income, while the majority were professional and commercial men.[14] Wealthy Marwari families contributed substantially to the Mahasabha's funds. Seth Jugal Kishore Birla of Calcutta, whose family in the past had bankrolled many Congress campaigns, topped the list of donors who financed the Mahasabha. He was a key financial backer of the Mahasabha and one of the principal bankrollers of the *shuddhi* movement.[15] Ghanshyamdas Birla made donations towards the costs of the election campaign of Madan Mohan Malaviya's Independent Congress Party in 1926, besides giving funds for the Mahasabha's untouchable uplift drive and its propagation of the Nehru Report in 1928-29.[16] Seth Bansidhar Jallan, Badridas Goenka, Radhakissen Kanodia, and Khaitan and Company of Calcutta made generous contributions to the Mahasabha. [17] The Mahasabha was able to attract money in a relatively short period, as sections of Hindu businessmen had begun to shift their loyalties to the party by the 1930s.

A small group of urban professionals dominated the Hindu Mahasabha, with many of its leading personalities being lawyers by profession. Of the 24 members of the UP Hindu Sabha committee [1915-16], 16 were lawyers by profession, including Gokul Prasad, Mahadeo Prasad, Rama Kant Malaviya, and Iswar Saran. The committee comprised three zamindars who were also lawyers, six commercial and landed magnates, of whom one was a *vakil*, two taluqdars, and one journalist. Sarkar Bahadur Johari, an advocate of Allahabad, was

---

[11] Prag Narayan Bhargava, Obituary, *The Leader*, 5 January 1917, p. 4; Home Public, File 623 of 1925, p. 121, NAI.
[12] Cited in Sumit Sarkar, *Modern India, 1885-1947*, Basingstoke [UK], 1989 [1983], p. 358.
[13] Cited in Joya Chatterji, *Bengal Divided: Hindu Communalism and Partition, 1932-1947*, Cambridge, 1994, p. 143.
[14] Gordon, 'Hindu Mahasabha', p. 149.
[15] Chatterji, *Bengal Divided*, pp. 136-7.
[16] G.D. Birla, *In the Shadow of the Mahatma: A Personal Memoir*, Calcutta, 1953, p. 164
[17] Chatterji, *Bengal Divided*, p. 137.

president of the UP Hindu Sabha; and Wati Vishnu Swarup, a lawyer, was the leader of the Bijnore Hindu Sabha. Ram Mohan Lal, an advocate of Moradabad, and Rai Bahadur Vikramjit Singh, a lawyer of Kanpur, were leading lights of the Hindu Mahasabha movement.[18] Gokaran Nath Misra and Brijnandan Prasad were lawyer-politicians associated with the Mahasabha, even though they had held small zamindaris. Most lawyers supporting the Mahasabha and its *sangathan* movement belonged to the upper castes, usually Kayastha or Brahman. Among such lawyers were men reputed to be earning the largest incomes at the High Court Bar in Allahabad, particularly Sir Sundar Lal Dave -- primarily an educationist. They and a few others in the Congress were close friends and attended dinner parties 'at homes' in Allahabad.[19] Journalists and teachers, too, were associated with the Mahasabha: they were significantly men of considerable public experience and reputation, of an older generation. C.Y. Chintamani, editor of the *Leader* and a member the UP Hindu Sabha committee, became minister of education and exercised enormous control in the allocation of funds to the localities in the UP. Malaviya was sceptical about the professionals and referred to the 'distrust of the English-educated elite', adding that such attitude 'grieved' him.[20] However, the Mahasabha's overwhelming and active support came from the middle class professionals in the UP.

The Hindu Mahasabha followed the existing pattern of elite politics, its leaders maintaining ties to several organisations across the United Provinces. Local Hindu Sabhas were indistinguishable from district associations, which were the hub of public life in the larger cities and watchdogs over local government elections as well as smaller mofussil bodies. At least ten members of the UP Hindu Sabha committee had been members of the Hindu University Society executive committee and the University Deputation in 1916,[21] while six were members of the Council of the Banaras Hindu University.[22] Seven were listed as patrons and members of the Nagari Pracharini Sabha, Banaras.[23] Madan Mohan Malaviya, Pandit Deva Ratan Sharma, Raja Sir Rampal Singh, and Lala Ram Saran Das, who had been associated with the leadership of the Mahasabha since its foundation in 1915, were influential leaders active in local government and a number of associations, religious bodies, educational trusts, and charities. Fourteen members of the UP Hindu Sabha committee were members of the legislatures, 12 of the provincial and two of the Imperial Legislative Assemly: Malaviya and Rampal Singh were the members of the Imperial Assembly. Of the 12 Hindu Sabha members in the UP Legislative Council, 11 were elected and one, T.B. Sapru, was nominated.[24] The Hindu elites associated with the Mahasabha were linked to alliances with political and social organisations and religious institutions in the UP. Lala Bishambhar Nath, an Agarwala banker and *rais*, was president of the Kanpur Hindu Sabha in 1915, president of the Kanpur District

---

[18] Gordon, 'Hindu Mahasabha', p. 153; *Sri Bharat Mahamandal Directory*, Benaras, 1930, p. 50.
[19] Motilal Nehru's letter to John Morley, Secretary of State, dated 26 April 1907, UP J &P, 1544 of 1907, IOL.
[20] *The Leader*, 10 June, p. 3; 29 August 1926, p. 2, Microfilm, NMML.
[21] V.A. Sundaram [ed.], *Benares Hindu University 1916-1942*, Benares, 1942, pp. 90-1.
[22] *The Leader*, 16 August 1916, p. 2, Microfilm, NMML.
[23] *The Leader*, 10 August 1916, p. 4, Microfilm, NMML. The Nagari Pracharini Sabha, founded in 1893, claimed to have 1,228 members in 1916.

Association, president of the Chamber of Commerce of Kanpur, and a leading member of the Sanatan Dham Sabha and the Legislative Council. Dr Muratilal Rohtagi, a Vaish medical practitioner, held office at various times in the Congress, the Hindu Sabha, and the Arya Samaj, and was a vice-president of the Kanpur District Association. Lala Anand Swarup, a Kayasth lawyer, was a member of the Kanpur association and an office-holder in the Congress, the Hindu Sabha, and the Arya Samaj. A member of the Legislative Council, he was influential in the Allahabad Bar circles and attended the Kayastha conferences in the UP. Mahasabha leader Lala Sukhbir Sinha was ex-president of the Vaish Conference, while Moti Chand Gupta, a Mahasabha man, was its president in 1916. Munshi Gokul Prasad, a Mahasabhaite, was president of the Kayastha Pathshala of Allahabad. The Mahasabha leaders and patrons with their diverse affiliations between them dominated most institutions of the provincial legislature as well as various social organisations in the UP.[25]

Ideologically, the Hindu Mahasabha was dominated mostly by the followers of *sanatan dharm* [orthodox Hinduism], even though it also represented the Arya Samaj and professional elements associated with the more progressive and reformist UP Social Conference.[26] *Sanatan dharm* ideology sought to promote the hierarchical *varna* [caste] structure and orthodox causes and resisted social reform;[27] and the religious affiliations of most Mahasabha patrons and leaders showed a pronounced bias to the *sanatan dharm* movement. Eighteen members of the UP Hindu Sabha committee were prominent patrons of *sanatan dharm*.[28] The Mahasabha's secretary -- Pandit Deva Ratan Sharma, a Punjabi Brahman of Dehradun -- had been a propaganda worker for *sanatan dharm* in the past. The Bharat Dharma Mahamandal was the most active *sanathan dharm* association with its base in Banaras in the eastern UP: by entering the legislatures, it hoped to sabotage all legislation interfering with *varnashram dharm* and secure separate representation for orthodox Hindus.[29] The Maharaja of Darbhanga, a Mahasabha leader himself, formed the All-India Sanatan Dharma Sammelan in conjunction with the Hindu Mahasabha in Hardwar in 1915.[30] At a Sanatan Dharma Sammelan conference in Delhi in March 1920, he urged all Sanatan Dham Sabhas to support orthodox candidates at the elections to the UP Legislative Council later in that year.[31] The *sanatan dharm* organisations and leaders exerted a revivalist and conservative influence on the ideological development of the Hindu Mahasabha as a Hindu political organisation.

Nonetheless, the core values of the Arya Samaj, which was in perpetual conflict with the *sanatan dharm* movement, increasingly influenced and determined the emergent milieu of Hindu nationalism articulated by the Hindu Mahasabha. The Samaj, founded by Dayananda Saraswati in 1875, was based on a radical reformist

---

[24] Home Public D, June 1913, File No. 40, NAI; Bayly, *Local Roots*, p. 217.
[25] Gordon, 'Hindu Mahasabha', pp. 168-9.
[26] Raja Sir Rampal Singh presided over the UP Social Conference in 1908 and the Indian Social Conference in 1910. *The Leader*, 16 August 1916, p. 3, Microfilm, NMML.
[27] 'Short Note on the Shri Bharat Dharma Mahamandal, Benares', Home Poll., File 313 of 1925, NAI.
[28] John Zavos, *The Emergence of Hindu Nationalism in India*, Oxford, 2000, pp. 59-61.
[29] Minute by Sir James Meston, 24 October 1917, Home Public A, May 1918, 568-98, NAI.
[30] The Sammelan met in 1916 and 1917 in Lahore. In 1917 it was amalgamated with the Bharat Dharma Mahamandal of Banaras. Din Dayal Sarma was founder secretary of the Mahamandal. *The Leader*, 25 February 1916, p. 4, Microfilm, NMML.

programme: the denial of status to Brahmans, the rejection of idolatry, and a critique of the *varna* hierarchy. It contributed significantly to the development of Hindu nationalism through a dissemination of propaganda as well as an extensive network of local Samajs in the UP. The Mahasabha's ideology was in part a reflection of the Arya Samaj's vision of the organisation of the Hindu community on the ideal of the 'ancient golden age' *vis-à-vis* the perceived 'threats' from Islam and Christianity. The important advocates of Hindu *sangathan* – Lal Chand, Swami Shraddhananda, Lajpat Rai, and Bhai Parmanand -- had originated in the Arya Samaj. Madan Mohan Malaviya regarded the Mahasabha and the Arya Samaj not merely 'as members of the same family but as two brothers holding different and even opposing views on some aspects of religion, but united in their faith in and devotion to [India's] ancient religion and civilisation'.[32] The Samaj's strength lay in Meerut and Rohilkhand divisions of the western UP: it was patronised by the Kayasths, the smaller Vaish and agricultural castes.[33] The Samaj was not a political organisation, but used its ideological content for political and social purposes. It put sustained pressure within the Mahasabha for progressive and social reform, such as widow remarriage and the abolition of untouchability, which was resisted by *sanatan dharm* organisations.

In reflection of an ideological division, the Hindu Mahasabha pulled in opposite directions. There was an open clash between Arya Samajists and *sanatan dharm* supporters over various issues. Most *sanatan dharm*ists rallied to the defence of traditional Hinduism and attacked legislative moves by the British to interfere in Hindu practices, preferring 'reform from within' the Hindu trdition.[34] In 1917 a bitter controversy developed over the Inter-Caste Marriage Bill -- moved by V.J. Patel in the Imperial Legislative Assembly -- validating marriages contracted between persons of different castes. The Bharat Dharma Mahamandal, led by its secretary Din Dayal Sharma, and the Maharaja of Darbhanga campaigned throughout north India, rallying the *sanatan dharm* organisations to resist the Bill.[35] In contrast, the Arya leaders, especially Swami Shraddhananda, strongly supported the Bill. The Bill did not become a law, however.[36] The Mahasabha was unable to reconcile the conflicting discourses of the Arya Samaj and *sanatan dharm*, even though it drew its ideology strategically from both movements. Its social radicalism over various issues – caste reform and untoucability, in particular – was in effect hampered due to the relative dominance of *sanatan dharm* within the ranks of the organisation.[37]

I. 1. Rural Base

The Hindu Mahasabha with its urban roots had gained marginal support in the rural areas by the early 1920s and showed a marked expansion in the mofussil following its revival in 1923. M.M. Malaviya sought to expand

---

[31] *The Leader*, 14 March 1920, p. 2, Microfilm, NMML.
[32] Cited in S.L. Gupta, *Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya: A Socio-Political Study*, Allahabad, 1987 [1978], pp. 298-9.
[33] J.N. Farquhar, *Modern Religious Movements in India*, Delhi, 1967, pp. 316-23
[34] Kenneth W. Jones, *Arya Dharma: Hindu Consciousness in 19th Century Punjab*, Berkeley, 1976, pp. 152-75.
[35] UPCID Report, 23 June 1919, Home Poll. D, June 1919, 701-704, p. 37, NAI.
[36] Statement by the UP Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, *The Leader*, 20 November 1920, p. 3, Microfilm, NMML.
[37] N. G. Barrier, 'The Arya Samaj and Congress Politics in the Punjab 1894-1908', *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol 26, No. 3, 1971, p. 379; Jeff Weintraub and Krishna Kumar [eds.], *Public and Private in Thought and Practice*, Chicago, 1997, pp. 38, 182.

the Mahasabha's rural base and established the UP Kisan Sabha, a front organisation of the farmers, in 1918.[38] Meetings of the peasants were held at the Kumbh Mela in Allahabad in 1918. The Kisan Sabha was subsequently absorbed into the Mahasabha organisation as a kisan sub-committee in September 1924.[39] However, the Mahasabha did not have the peasant base which the Congress had in the UP's rural heartland. It shifted to a strategy of working through caste associations directly rather than attempting to organise the peasants in the rural UP. Between 1924 and 1926, the organisers of the Mahasabha were in constant touch with caste bodies in an effort to win their support. Malaviya assiduously attended the Rajput and Jat conferences as president of the Mahasabha.[40] The Gujar and Ahir conferences were persuaded to pass resolutions in support of *shuddhi*, Hindi, and cow protection – the issues championed by the Mahasabha.[41] Raja Rampal Singh, Oudh Hindu Sabha president, his brother Thakur Hanuman Singh, and Durga Narayan Singh, president of the Agra Hindu Sabha, toured the districts of the UP to form Hindu Sabhas; and they used the platforms of the UP Rajput Association and the Kshatriya Upkarini Sabha to enlist support for the Mahasabha.[42] The Mahasabha's organisational activity no doubt represented some swing of support from the urban to the rural areas from the mid-1920s onwards.

The Hindu Mahasabha could not create a representative organisation in the rural areas of the United Provinces through the expansion of its branch structure, or adapt itself to local power structures in the 1920s and 1930s. The Montagu-Chelmsford reforms shifted the political battle back into the provincial arena, giving the vote to a broad range of substantial rural interests: of the 46 million people in the UP in 1921, 89 per cent lived in the rural areas.[43] The Government of India Act of 1919 gave the provinces a much larger measure of autonomy through enlarged provincial councils, making provision for a substantial elected majority and devolving control over departments such as local self-government, education, health, and agriculture to the provinces under 'diarchy'. 'Diarchy' retained 'reserved subjects' under the governor's control, but gave Indian ministers power and patronage in government departments, increasing competition for power at the provincial level.[44] In the formulation of the 1919 Act, the government deliberately kept the number of urban seats at a minimum. In the UP Legislative Council, of the 123 members, 100 were elected [30 from Muslim constituencies] and 23 nominated. Of the 100 members, the government proposed that there should be 70 elected seats in general electorates, of which only ten were to be for urban interests. The large towns and cities which were to

---

[38] Letter of H.D. Craik, Chief Secretary, Government of the Punjab, to S.P. O'Donnell, Secretary, Home Department, Government of India, dated 20 April 1922, Home Poll., File 861 of 1922, p. 1, NAI. The Kisan Sabha was dominant in Allahabad district. CID Report, 2 February 1920, Home Poll, D, February 1920, 75, NAI.

[39] *Rama Kant Malaviya was president and Dwivedi, secretary, of the UP Kisan Sabha. The members of the Hindu Mahasabha* kisan sub-committee were: Rama Kant Malaviya, Krishna Kant Malaviya, Inder Narayan Dwivedi, A.P. Dube, and Sangam Lal, secretary of the UP Kisan Sabha. *The Leader*, 1 September 1924, p. 5, Microfilm, NMML.

[40] *The Leader*, 8 January 1926, p. 2, Microfilm, NMML.

[41] *The Leader*, 11 January, p. 3; 21 February 1924, p. 3; 22 November 1925, p. 6, Microfilm, NMML.

[42] *The Leader*, 22 November, p. 2; 6 December 1924, 4; 23 February, p. 4; 17 April 1925, p. 5, Microfilm, NMML.

[43] *Census of India, 1921: United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, Volume XVI, Part I – Report*, Allahabad, 1923, p. 38.

[44] P. Robb, *The Government of India and Reform: Policies towards Politics and the Constitution, 1916-1921*, Oxford, 1976, p. 87.

receive representation were: Lucknow, Banaras, Allahabad, Agra, Kanpur, Meerut, Bareilly, Moradabad, Shahjehanpur, and Aligarh. Urban qualifications were pitched high, requiring men from the towns to prove a residence of four years in a rural constituency in order to contest an election there: rural landlords and agriculturalists did well under the reforms.[45] The majority of the constituencies drawn up across 48 districts in the UP included predominantly rural areas – where the district was the key territorial unit for political prties.[46] The fallout of the predominantly rural character of the electorate with the peasantry as its core under the 1919 Act was that the reforms were ptched against the urban politician and in favour of the rural vote: the Mahasabha with its urban moorings suffered a political disadvantage.

The 1919 Montagu-Chelmsford reforms extended the franchise beyond the canvassing power of leaders in the United Provinces, most of whom were urban politicians. The franchise was accorded to income tax payers: in the urban areas, to those who paid house tax on property with a rental value of Rs 36 p.a., or who paid municipal income tax of Rs 20 p.a.; and in the rural areas, to those who paid land revenue of Rs 25 per annum, or rent for agricultural land of Rs 50 per annum. This resulted had in an increase in the electorate of nearly 1.3 million voters [of whom about 816,000 were tenants and 333,000 landlords] in 1920 and of 1.6 million voters in 1926. Whereas the elected members of the old 1909 Morley-Minto legislatures had been returned by indirect election, the 1919 Act increased the national electorate to an aggregate of around 5.5 millions. A direct election to the provincial legislature was a new departure, except in the case of a few Muslim seats filled through separate electorates that were extended under the 1919 Act. Rural questions like agrarian reform and the rise of the peasant movement quickly came to the centre of the political stage across the UP.[47] In the post-Montford period, the Hindu Mahasabha, not a full-fledged political party throughout the 1920s, had no effective branch structure or canvassing machinery to mobilise the electorate in the rural constituencies unlike the Congress. Its efforts of winning support remained limited. The Mahasabha's heavy concentration in the towns and cities as well as its reliance on the influence of rich notables and urban commercial magnates largely hampered its attempts to build an organisational network in the mofussil areas of the UP.

I. 2. Landed Aristocracy

In the districts of the United Provinces, the Hindu Mahasabha was increasingly supported by the large landowning magnates as well as taluqdars. The UP, comprising the two regions of Agra and Oudh, followed three distinct tenurial settlements. In Banaras district and small areas adjacent to it, a permanent settlement of the Bengal type was made with landlowners, or zamindars. In the rest of Agra province acquired brtween 1801 and 1817, the *mahal* [estate, or village community] was taken as the unit of settlement. Finally in Oudh, the

---

[45] Ayesha Jalal and Anl Seal, 'Alternative to Partition: Muslim Politics Between the Wars', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 3, 1981, pp. 415-54.
[46] David Page, *The Partition Omnibus: Prelude to Partition: The Indian Muslims and the Imperial System of Control 1920-32*, New Delhi, 2002, pp. 30-1.
[47] Robb, *Government of India*, p. 112; Page, *Partition Omnibus*, p. 32.

British returned to 'the natural leaders of the people' and made settlements with taluqdars. The revolt of 1857 persuaded the British to follow a 'landlord' policy in the UP -- which emphasised the need to win over the aristocratic group that would prevent the broader alienation of north Indian society.[48] The policy – the 'Oudh system' – laid stress on the social predominance and political importance of taluqdars who were introduced in 1877 as the 'natural rulers' by Lieutenant-Governor William Charles Benett who, as his disciple Harcourt Butler put it, was the 'father of Oudh history, the champion of Oudh policy'.[49] The 'Oudh system' was based on personal contact between the administrators and the taluqdars. Sir Harcourt Butler, Lieutenant Governor of UP in 1918-20 and Governor in 1921-1922, proclaimed the landlords as the 'political mediators' of the masses. 'For political purposes,' he stated, 'the Taluqdars are Oudh. In times of peace, and still more in times of civil disorder, their voice will be the voice of Oudh.'[50] The UP, it was claimed, was the most successfully governed of all the British Indian provinces because its government had this 'aristocratic basis'.

The role which the 'Oudh system' assigned to the taluqdars required that there should be channels of communication between them and the government; and this was provided by the three associations formed among the landlords. The taluqdars were obliged to be members of the British India Association [BIA] formed in Lucknow in 1861; the UP Zamindars' Association -- Muzaffarnagar [UPZAM]; and the Agra Province Zamindars' Association [APZA], which was established in Allahabad in 1914. The most effective use of the taluqdari elite was evident in its role as an ally in the governance of the UP; and the taluqdars numbereing well over 250 controlled two-thirds of the territory and collected one-sixth of the total revenue in the districts of the UP.[51] Significantly, several big zamindars in the mofussil towns took up the cause of the Hindu Mahasabha; and they constituted 'the largest group of attached landholders' at elections in the province throughout the1920s.

The access to power and patronage acquired through the agency of the taluqdars remained the dominant element in the Hindu Mahasabha's strategy of alliance with the landed classes. Raja Sir Rampal Singh of Kurri Sidhauli, the most influential Oudh taluqdar with strong Hindu nationalist procilivities, was president of the British India Association [BIA] in 1921-22. Rajeshwar Bali, a landlord from Bara Banki, Raja Suraj Baksh Singh of Kasmanda, and Nihal Singh were Mahasabhaites themselves and Raja Rampal Singh's lieutenants in the BIA. Two taluqdars of Oudh, Rajeshwar Bali and Rajendra Singh, were members of the UP Hindu Sabha committee in 1915-16. Rajeshwar Bali had the support of officials and Hindu landlords in the Legislative Council and became minister for education and public health in early 1924. In Oudh with Lucknow as its centre, the Hindu Mahasabha was strong because taluqdars such as Raja Rampal Singh, Raja Suraj Baksh Singh, and Raja Biswanath Singh were its active patrons. Thakur Hanuman Singh, the older brother of Raja Rampal Singh,

---

[48] GOI Home Poll, 443/1930, Extract from an 'Agent's Report', 1 November 1930, NAI; Gyanendra Pandey, *The Asecendancy of the Congress in Uttar Pradesh, 1926-34: A Study in Imperfect Mobilization,* Delhi, 1978, pp. 13-5.
[49] S.H. Butler, *Oudh Policy: The Policy of Sympathy,* Allahabad, 1906, p. iii.
[50] Butler, *Oudh Policy,* pp. 6-8.

who had been a member of the Legislative Council since 1921, was a notable leader of the Mahasabha. Rai Thakur Mahal Singh Bahadur, Oudh zamindar and leader of the Progressive Landlords party, and Thakur Jagannath Bakhsh Singh of Rae Bareli were thought to be 'wholehearted on [Hindu] communal questions.'[52] In Agra province, Raja Durga Narayan Singh of Tirwa mobilised the landed gentry in the Mahasabha's interest. Kunwar Rajendra Singh, son of the taluqdar of Tikra, was a member of the Zamindar Party that dominated the UP Legislative Council from 1921 to mid-1926: he was an influential Mahasabhaite in his own right. The mofussil zamindars who were patrons of the Mahasabha had once been key supporters of the Congress, but they changed the strategy and backed the Mahasabha on the basis that it promised to defend their landed interests in a more determined fashion from the late 1920s onwards.

In the UP Legislative Council, the taluqdars and landlords were held together by mutual interests as a strong 'landlord party'. In the first elections to the Legislative Council held in November 1920, the landlords made an easy entry as the largest single group because of the Congress's boycott in the Non-cooperation movement. In the elections to the Legislative Council in December 1923, the Congress re-entered political activity as the Swaraj Party. The main contest was between the Swarajists and the Liberals, both calling in their manifestos for full 'Dominion' status for India. The Swarajists were committed to bringing political advance by obstruction within the constitutional system, while the Liberals held to 'constitutional' means and were intent on implementing the reforms. The Liberals rejected Swarajist overtures for an electoral understanding between the two parties.[53] The zamindars called for 'self-government within the Empire' and outlined a set of reforms.[54] The landlord candidates belonging to the Zamindar Party -- a coalition of landlords, taluqdars and government ministers formed in 1921 -- used personal connections to secure the support of those they saw as the 'influential controllers of votes'.[55] In the end, the landlords provided the majority of members elected to the UP Legislative Council, winning some 50 seats in the House, in 1923.[56]

In the UP Legislative Council elected in late 1926, C.Y. Chintamani was the leader of the Nationalist Party, a combination of the Liberals and the Independent Congress Party; and Raja Jagannath Baksh Singh, a staunch follower of Raja Rampal Singh, was the deputy leader of the party in the council. The Nationalist Party, the forerunner of the Hindu Mahasabha, was dominated by Hindu landlords, and its *eminence grise* was Raja

---

[51] Francis Robinson, 'The Re-emergence of Lucknow as a Major Political Centre, 1899-- early 1920s', in Violette Graff [ed.], *Lucknow: Memories of a City*, New Delhi, 2002 [1997], p. 197.

[52] *The Leader*, 9 February 1924, p. 10; 25 February 1924, p. 7, Microfilm, NMML; Peter Reeves, *Landlords and Governments in Uttar Pradesh: A Study of their Relations until Zamindari Abolition*,Bombay, 1991, p. 123.

[53] *The Leader*, 20 August 1923, p. 4; 'Notes', *The Leader*, 17 October 1923, p. 3; 28 October 1923, p. 3; 'Mr. Chintamani's Candidature', *The Leader*, 14 November 1923, p. 3, Microfilm, NMML.

[54] *The Leader*, 14 September 1923, p. 7, Microfilm, NMML.

[55] 'The coming elections', *The Leader*, 12 September 1923, p. 3. This gave rise to the issuing of long lists of supporters for particular candidates: Iqbal Narayan Gurtu [*The Leader*, 28 September 1923, p. 5]; Ganesh Prasad [*The Leader*, 1 October 1923, p. 7]; K.P. Telang [*The Leader*, 22 October 1923, p. 6]; Mohan lal [*The Leader*, 27 October 1923, p. 9]; C.Y Chintamani [*The Leader*, 7 November 1923, p. 4]; Raja Amarpal Singh [*The Leader*, 7 November 1923, p. 11], Microfilm, NMML.

[56] 'Lucknow Campaign', *The Leader*, 19 November 1923, p. 8; 'Who are the adventurers?', *The Leader*, 28 November 1923, p. 3; 'The elections', *The Leader*, 30 November 1923, p. 3; and G. Mishra, *The Leader*, 21 December 1923, p. 8, Microfilm, NMML.

Rampal Singh, who later became president of the Oudh Hindu Sabha.[57] Raja Bahadur Kushalpl Singh, a veteran landlord-politician whose qualities, as Governor Sir Malcolm Hailey commented, were 'respectability, loyalty and Hinduism', was a supporter of the Nationalist Party.[58] The Nationalist Party contained a large segment of Hindu landlords, especially from Oudh.[59] Jwala Prasad Srivastava, who represented the Upper India Chamber of Commerce constituency and had a considerable industrial and financial clout in Kanpur, was the leader of the Unionist group in the UP Legislative Council; and Srivastava later became leader of the Kanpur Hindu Sabha.[60] The Unionist group included several landlords and was often found in the 'landlord party' that supported the government in the council.[61] There was a drift of many passive or loyalist landlords to the Hindu Mahasabha through the Nationalist Party and the Unionist group, even though many backed the government during the nationalist movement in the UP.[62]

In the early 1930s, many landlords, disillusioned with the British and feeling the attraction of political forces, moved towards the notion of an alliance with the Hindu Mahasabha, particularly during the economic difficulties of the 1929 Depression. The Depression triggered by the Wall Street crash of October 1929 brought about a world-wide decline in the prices of agricultural produce, which seriously affected the landed groups in north India: zamindari rents declined drastically. In the UP, particularly the western districts of Meerut division which was the hardest hit because the slump followed a succession of poor harvests, there was a depression of prices throughout the 1920s and poor harvests in 1928 and 1929. The rise in the number of sales and transfers of holdings was particularly dramatic in the UP rural areas.[63] The large body of non-occupancy tenants in Oudh and the eastern UP, who were badly hit by the slump, had by 1931 become critical in creating a popular base for the Congress's Civil Disobedience movement, particularly no-rent movements, across the province. The landlord fears were rapidly heightened by the signs of increasing radicalism within the Congress. Jawaharlal Nehru, in his presidential address to the 44th Congress session in Lahore in December 1929, stated that India would have to adopt a socialist programme to 'end her poverty and inequality'. Any improvement in the conditions of the peasantry, he declared, depended on 'a great change in the land-laws' and the 'present system of land tenures', requiring the extension of 'peasant proprietorship' all over the country.[64] The 1929 Lahore Congress's resolution authorised the All-India Congress Committee, 'whenever it deems fit', to 'launch upon a programme of Civil Disobedience -- including non-payment of taxes' -- for complete independence.[65] In consequence, tension grew between the landlords and the Congress, nonetheless.

---

[57] *The Leader*, 4 July 1928, p. 8, Microfilm, NMML; Pandey, *Ascendancy*, pp. 74-81, 143-4.
[58] Sir Malcolm Hailey's letter to G. De Montmorency, Govt. of Punjab, 12 October 1928, Haley Papers, Mss Eur E 220/14, IOL.
[59] Pandey, *Ascendancy*, pp. 83-4; Page, *Prelude*, p. 140.
[60] *The Leader*, 5 July 1928, p. 9; 16 July 1928, p. 11; 22 September 1928, p. 8; 1 October 1928, p. 12, Microfilm, NMML.
[61] 'Council Personalities by A Constant Visitor', *The Leader*, 21 March 1929, p. 14, Microfilm, NMML.
[62] *The Leader*, 27 February 1928, p. 11; S.P. Sanyal's letter, *The Leader*, 31 March 1929, p. 5Microfilm, NMML.
[63] Nandini Gooptu, *The Politics of the Urban Poor in Early Twentieth-century India*, Cambridge, 2001, pp. 38-9.
[64] Jawahar Lal Nehru's *Congress Presidential Addresses, 1911-1934*, Madras, 1934, pp. 894-5, 897.
[65] B. *Pattabhi Sitaramayya, History of the Indian National Congress, Vol. 1, New Delhi, 1969, p. 357.*

The Congress's Civil Disobedience movement in general was seen as a direct threat to the landlords, who denounced the idea of complete independence from the Bitish Crown. They would, they stated, 'oppose by all possible means' any movement which would affect their 'rights, titles and possessions'.[66] In May 1931, Gandhi came to the UP to seek a settlement of the peasant problem by direct negotiations with Governor Macolm Haliey. He asked the landlords and the government to be liberal towards the tenants, declaring that the Congress aimed 'not at the destruction of property but only at its lawful use'. If the landlords became trustees of their lands, he explained, the Congress would make sure that the tenants paid their rents.[67] The landlords expressed fears, however, that the Congress was preaching 'communism' to the tenants. 'Almost every day,' Raja Rampal Singh informed T.B. Sapru, 'meetings are held in rural areas [in Rae Bareli district] in which property rights are attacked.'[68] UP Governor Hailey claimed that many landlords were afraid to stay on their estates during this period for fear of attack.[69] The Congress, as the British India Association protested on 20 December 1931, was starting a 'class war' and the landlords would give the government all possible help in the fight againt the campaign.[70] Many older taluqdars disavowed sympathy with the Congress. Alarmed at the challenge to their interests which the Congress semed to pose, the landlords retreated to safer ground in support for the government, or the Hindu Mahasabha. Steady landlord support for the Mahasabha, referred to as the 'anti-Congress' movement, indicated that this was the general landlord feeling.[71] As an outcome, the Mahasabha acquired a strong presence of Hindu landholding and aristocratic membership in the 1920s and 1930s, a factor that explains why it was more often attached to political moderation.[72]

I. 3. Hindu Princely States

The Hindu Mahasabha sought the support of powerful Hindu ruling princes and Nepal in a new alignment of its allies in a drive to expand its base.[73] About two-thirds of pre-1947 India was directly administered by the British, and the remaining third covered by the princely states. The Mahasabha rallied to a political alliance with the Hindu states, particularly after Bhai Parmanand's election as president in 1933, by drawing its strategy from the Muslim League which had been extending its support to Muslim princes.[74] It launched a systematic

---

[66] Report, Meeting UP Zamindars' Association, Muzaffarnagar [UPZAM] Executive Committee, 16 Janury 1930, *The Leader*, 25 January 1930, p. 5, Microfilm, NMML.
[67] M.K. Gandhi's leter to Malcolm Hailey, dated 23 May 1931, Hailey Papers, Mss. Eur. E220/20; *The Leader,* 25 May 1931, p. 9; M.K. Gandhi, 'To the UP Kisans', *Young India*, reproduced, *The Leader*, 3 June 1931, p. 7, Microfilm, NMML.
[68] Raja Rampal Singh's letter to TB. Sapru, dated 9 June 1931, Sapru Papers, Part 2, NMML.
[69] Sir Malcolm Haliey, 'Note for Sir H. Haig, 31 August 1934', Hailey Papers, Mss. Eur. E 220/29.
[70] BIA, Register of Executive Committee, Resolution 3, 20 December 1931, cited in Reeves, *Landlords*, p. 179.
[71] Reports of landlord meetings: *The Leader*, 29 April 1932, p. 10; 17 June1932, p. 3, Microfilm, NMML.
[72] Christophe Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement and Indian Politics, 1925 to the 1990s: Strategies of Identity-building, Implantation and Mobilization [with special reference to Central India]*, London, 1996, p. 33.
[73] Lise McKean, *Divine Enterprise: Gurus and the Indian Nationalist Movement,* Chicago, 1996, pp. 154-5, 206,
[74] Ian Copland, 'Crucibles of Hindutva? V.D. Savarkar, the Hindu Mahasabha, and the Indian Princely States', in John McGuire and Ian Copland [eds.], *Hindu Nationalism and Governance*, New Delhi, 2007, pp. 258-60; S. Mathur, *Hindu Revivsalism and the Indian National Movement: A Documentary Study of the Ideals and Policies of the Hindu Mahasabha, 1939-45*, Jodhpur, 1996, p. 215; Ram Lal Wadhwa, *Hindu Maha Sabha 1928-1947*, New Delhi, 1999, p. 149.

campaign to persuade the Hindu princes to take 'a lively interest in the affairs' of the party.[75] Invitations were issued to the princes to preside at Mahasabha functions; and sympathetic notables such as Virendra Shah, Raja of Jagmanpur, UP, were deployed to help integrate other chiefs into the Mahasabha fold.[76] In its policy of 'standing by the Hindu states', the Mahasabha rejected the Congress's charge that the states were an 'unnecessary burden' – or the 'creatures of British Imperialism', even though almost all of them were the active collaborators of the British.[77] B.S. Moonje praised the Hindu princes as a set of 'real leaders', 'embodying manly virtues and commanding armies'.[78] He urged 'all Hindus to respect and love their Hindu Princes as embodiments of Hindu pride and ... achievements'. The Hindu ruler, he continued, was 'a representative of the Hindu Raj of the past' who incorporated 'in himself all [the] traditions of dignity, suffering and fighting for maintaining the Hindu Raj against foreign aggressors'.[79] Moonje himself had benefited from the influence and financial support of Laxmanrao Raje Bhonsle, the heir to the old kingdom of Nagpur, and of an important landowner, M.G. Chitnavis.[80] Laxmanrao Bhonsle of Nagpur was president of the the eighth session of the All India Hindu Mahasabha held in Poona in 1924.[81] V.D. Savarkar viewed the Hindu states as 'the bedrock of Hindu power' in Indian subcontinent and defended the despotic powers of the Hindu rulers,[82] describing the states as 'citadels of organized Hindu power'.[83] He hailed Mysore, Travancore, Oudh, and Baroda as the examples of 'progressive' Hindu states.[84] One objective of the Mahasabha was that it sought to end the growing influence of the Congress in the Hindu states, which were viewed as potential territories for the establishment of a 'Hindu Raj in Hindustan'.[85]

The Hindu states had a great deal to offer the Hindu Mahasabha in terms of material support and resources as well as ideology. They maintained military and police forces and controlled vast territories and revenues across the country. When the Mahasabha needed funds, 'the princes came forward'.[86] Under the scheme of an

---

[75] B.S. Moonje's circular letter to Hindu rulers dated 10 December 1938, M.S. Aney Papers, File No. 7, NMML; Savarkar's presidential address to the 22nd annual session of the Hindu Mahasabha in Madura, 1940, Jayakar Papers, File No. 709, NAI.
[76] Letter of President, Datia Prajamandal, to Pattabhi Sitaramayya, dated 3 March 1948, AISPC [All-India State Peoples' Conference], Pt. I, File No. 43, 1939-48, NMML.
[77] 'Secret Report', Home Dept., Intelligence Bureau, 2 April 1942, Home Poll., 222/42, NAI; V.D. Savarkar's letter to the Maharaja of Jaipur, dated 19 July 1944, Hindu Mahasabha Papers, C-39, NMML.
[78] B.S. Moonje's speech to Baroda Hindu Sabha conference, 30 April 1944, N.N. Mitra [ed.], *Indian Annual Register,* 1944, Vol. I, Calcutta, 1945, January-June, p. 204.
[79] B.S. Moonje's speech to South Kanara Dist. Hindu Conference, Udipi, 3 June 1944, Hindu Mahasabha Papers, C-48, NMML.
[80] Jaffrelot, *Hindu Nationalist Movement,* pp. 32-3.
[81] Nandini Gondhalekar, 'Indian Nationalism and "Hindu" Politics: Maharashtra and the Hindu Mahasabha, 1920-1948', Unpublished PhD Dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1999, p. 43.
[82] V.D. Savarkar's letter to the Maharaja of Jaipur, datd 19 July 1944, Hindu Mahasabha Papers, C-39, NMML.
[83] V.D. Savarkar, *Samagra Savarkar Wangmaya: Writings of Swatantrya Veer V.D. Savarkar,* Vol. 6, Poona, 1964, rept. New Delhi, 2003, pp. 353-4.
[84] V.D. Savarkar's inaugural speech, All-India States' Hindu Conference, Baroda, 23 April 1945, *The Times of India*, 23-4 April 1945, p. 2, Microfilm, NMML.
[85] B.S. Moonje's speech to Baroda Hindu Conference, 1944. *The Times of India*, 3 May 1944, p. 3, Microfilm, NMML; V.D. Savarkar, *Hindu Dhwaja: Sword is the Symbol of Abhyudaya and Kundalini is the Symbol of Nihshreyas,* Bombay, N.d, p. 118.
[86] Alwar provided the Hindu Mahasabha with office space on Canning Lane, New Delhi. Bikaner gave Rs 10,000 in 1929 to the Mahasabha's appeal for funds to set up a Hindu Service Society in memory of Lajpat Rai, and another Rs 5,000 in 1931 towards the expenses at the London Round Table Conference, 1930. Indore donated Rs 25,000 to Moonje's scheme for a Hindu military school, and the Maratha rulers 'also paid up' when approached. Idar contributed Rs 12,000 a year 'to the propaganda work of

all-India federation proposed in the India Act of 1935 which conferred on the states a disproportionate representation in the federal legislature, the princes would acquire considerable legislative and executive power in any future governmement.[87] The Mahasabha's main assumption was that an association with the princess would confer on it much needed support in the form of resources and access to political power.[88] The Hindu states for their part responded positively to the Mahasabha's overtures as a means of security because when the transfer of power came to India they would have the Mahasabha as their ally to protect their interests.[89] The Mahasabha actively supported the princely demand that the states should be allowed to exist even after the transfer of power as separate entities within an Indian federation.[90] British intelligence admitted that 'the Mahasabha leaders succeeded in making a good impression' on the rulers, as they were able to convince them that the party had no policy to restrict their independence.[91] A number of princely states – chiefly Idar, Indore, and Bikaner -- began to subsidise the Mahasabha as a form of extra insurance. The political sympathies of Patiala, Baroda, and Bharatpur clearly lay with the Mahasabha.[92] Tej Singhji of Alwar, Brijendra Singh of Bharatpur, and 'Goerge' Jayaji Rao Scindia of Gwalior were among the rulers in north India who had developed a close working relationship with the party.[93] However, the Hindu states, notorious for maladministration, were mostly unsympathetic to the Muslims, reflecting the Hindu majoritarian principle actively promoted by the Mahasabha.[94] They granted unfettered privileges and governmental perks to the Hindus – all of which denied to the Muslims.[95] The polity of the Hindu states in particular became more overtly anti-Muslim due to Mahasabha influence.[96]

II. Organisation and Leadership

In the formative period, the Hindu Mahasabha was not an all-India organisation in terms of the 'extent of its organisation or the range of its activities'. It was, writes Richard Gordon, 'an amorphous and straggling organization with a very loose all-India structure'.[97] Its constituency remained vague, drawing upon caste associations, religious movements, language societies as well as local Hindu Sabhas, which elected delegates

---

the Hindu Mahasabha'. Letter of Dewan, Idar, to secretary, Hindu Mahasabha, dated 2 May 1940, Hindu Mahasabha Papers, C-27, NMML; Testimony of Ganpat Rai, Oral History Transcript 330, p. 81, NMML.

87 Hindu Mahasabha's resolution passed at the 19th session, Ahmedabad, 1 January 1937, N.N. Mitra [ed.], *Indian Annual Register*, 1937, Pt. II, July-December, Calcutta, 1938, p. 422.

88 Ian Copland, *The Indian Princes in the End-Game of Empire 1917-1947*, Cambridge, 1997, pp. 71-9.

89 B.S. Moonje's letter to B.N. De, chief minister, Sangli, dated 13 February 1938, Moonje Papers, File No. 47, NMML.

90 Draft copy enclosed in V.D. Savarkar to M.R. Jayakar, 5 November 1940, Jayakar Papers, 709; Weekly report from the director of the Intelligence Bureau, Home Deptt., GOI, 18 October 1941, IOR L/P&J/12/483, IOL.

91 Secret report, Home Dept., Intelligence Bureau, dated 2 April 1942, Home Poll., 222/42, NAI.

92 *Note by A.C. Lothian, Resident, Rajputana, dated 18 February 1940, IOR L/P&S/13/1406, IOL.*

93 Copland, 'Crucibles of Hindutva?', pp. 267-8.

94 Letter of Mohammad Akran Ansari, advocate and member, Praja Sabha, Gwalior, to Abdul Rab Nishtar, 8 December 1946, IOR R/1/1/4509, IOL; R.G. Iyengar, Superintendent, Eastern Rajputana States, to MOS, 11 February 1948, RCO, Rajasthan, 83-P/48, NAI.

95 Letter of Col. G.T. Fisher, Resident, Gwalior, to Political Secretary, Governmen of India, dated 18 August 1937, IOR R/1/1/2947, IOL.

96 The Muslims were less in princely states than in British India, comprising in 1931 13.4 per cent of the population of the states.

97 Gordon, 'Hindu Mahasabha', p. 151.

directly to its conferences.[98] A person could become a member of the Mahasabha by paying 5 annas per annum; and the membership was open to Hindus above 18 years of age.[99] The emphasis upon Hindi as the language of a 'Hindu renaissance' as well as cow protection effectively limited the Mahasabha's appeal to the Hindi tracts in north India. The prominent workers of the Mahasabha with their links to the religious and cultural movements gave the Mahasabha a distinctly north Indian character.

The Hindu Mahasabha was supported by a desultory and skeletal framework as an organisation at the all-India level. It had its first headquarters located in Dehradun [Hardwar], the home town of Pandit Deva Ratan Sharma, its first secretary.[100] In October 1915 the Mahasabha offices were shifted to Delhi, but moved back to Dehradun in 1916. In 1925 Lala Lajpat Rai shifted the party headquarters to Delhi during his presidentship, where they have remained ever since.[101] The Mahasabha appointed 13 vice-presidents, including three Shankarachayas, in 1915. Lala Sukhbir Sinha became general secretary, assisted by four secretaries and 50 councillors representing all the provinces in India.[102] Provincial Hindu Sabhas were subsequently formed in the UP with headquarters in Allahabad in December 1915,[103] Bombay city – where the party's annual conference was held in December 1915,[104] and in Bihar.[105] The Mahasabha organised the initial four annual sessions with the Maharaja of Kasimbazar as president and Deva Ratan Sharma as secretary. It held its regular annual sessions in important cities all over the country, presided over by 'eminent and distinguished Hindu personalities'.[106] The leaders who had been active in nationalist politics took control of the Mahasabha's organisation at the national and provincial levels in India.[107]

In the early 1920s, the Hindu Mahasabha attempted a structural reorganisation following its revival at its Gaya session in 1922 and the subsequent Banaras session in 1923.[108] The Gaya conference created an

---

[98] In 1923 Swami Shraddhananda appealed to Sanatan Dharma Sabhas, Arya Samaj and caste associations, including the Rajput, Vaish, Khattri, Kurmi and Ahir Sabhas ,to elect delegates to the Hindu Mahasabha's Benares session. *Hindu*, 9 August 1923, p. 3, Microfilm, NMML.

[99] Kenneth Jones, 'Politicized Hinduism: The Ideology and Program of the Hindu Mahasabha', in R.D. Baird [ed.], *Religion in Modern India*, New Delhi, 2005 [2001], p. 145.

[100] Government of UP to Government of India, Home Department, 10 December 1924, in 'The Communal Situation', Home Poll., File No. 140, 1925, NAI.

[101] Indra Prakash, *A Review of the History and Work of the Hindu Mahasabha and the Hindu Sangathan Movement*, Delhi, 1952 [1938], p. 15. Bhai Parmanand, Mahasabha president, built the party's headquarters -- the Hindu Mahasabha Bhawan -- on *Reading Road in New Delhi in 1933-34. Indra Prakash, Hindu Mahasabha: Its Contribution to Indian Politics*, New Delhi, 1966 [1938], p. 14.

[102] A committee was formed to elect delegates to the All-India Hindu Mahasabha Conference in 1915. The committee included: Rampal Singh, president, Pt. Jagat Narayan, and G.N. Misra from Lucknow; T.B. Sapru, C,Y. Chintamani, M.M. Malaviya, Munshi Iswar Saran, Sunder Lal Dave, Motilal Nehru, Lala Girdhari Lal Agarwala, Rama Kant Malaviya, secretary, and Lala Ram Charan Das from Allahabad; Moti Chand Gupta and Munshi Mahadeo Prasad from Benares; Lala Sukhbir Sinha from Muzaffarnagar; Lala Bishambhar Nath of Kanpur; and Hriday Nath Kunzru of Agra. *The Leader*, 24 December 1915, p. 2, Microfilm, NMML.

[103] Gordon, 'Hindu Mahasabha', p. 150.

[104] The Bombay city branch was allied to the Hindu Missionary Society run by M.R. Jayakar and K. Natarajan, which claimed only 55 paid-up members in 1923. *Bombay Chronicle*, 30 July 1923, p. 4, Microfilm, NMML.

[105] *The Leader*, 31 December 1916, p. 3, Microfilm, NMML.

[106] Prakash, *A Review*, pp. 41-5; Prakash, *Hindu Mahasabha*, pp. 14-15.

[107] Swami Shraddhanand, *Hindu Sangathan: Saviour of the Dying Race*, n.p. 1926, pp. 109-110.

[108] Confidential note on 'Communal Friction in the United Provinces, 1924', *Police Abstracts of Intellegence [PAI]*, Lucknow, No. 18, 12 May 1923.

organising committee to establish Hindu Sabhas in all the provinces with a view to extending the organisation to the village level across India.[109] The central organisation was remodelled on the Congress pattern: a Working Committee with its offices was established at Benares Hindu University. With Madan Mohan Malaviya as president and Deva Ratan Sharma as general secretary, the key positions were occupied by men who had been founders of the Mahasabha. For the purposes of organisation, the Mahasabha divided India into 23 linguistic provinces on much the same pattern as the Congress. The provincial Hindu Sabhas were formed in the Punjab, Sind, Delhi, Bihar, Rajputana, Bengal, Bombay city, and Madras.[110] However, the Mahasabha's strength centred chiefly in north India, its growth being most prominent in the Hindi-speaking areas of the UP, the Punjab, Delhi, and Bihar. Of the 968 paid-up delegates attending the Mahasabha's session in Banaras in August 1923, 56.7 per cent were from the UP alone. The UP, the Punjab, Delhi and Bihar together contributed 86.8 per cent of the delegates. Madras, Bombay, and Bengal combined sent a mere 6.6 per cent of the delegates.[111] The number of local branches varied from time to time in the provinces. In January 1924, the general secretary reported that the Mahasabha had a few provincial and local branches; and by August 1924 only nine had been formed.[112] A provincial Hindu Sabha was formed in Agra in September 1924, and its plans to hold a conference in 1925 had to be dropped due to poor response. Of the 362 affiliated local Hindu Sabhas, the UP and the Punjab together accounted for 60 per cent of the total, and if Bihar was added, 80 per cent: the UP comprised 160 local Hindu Sabhas, the Punjab 65, Bihar 65, Bombay Presidency 22, Central Provinces 16, Bengal 11, Madras Presidency 11, Burma 3, Rajputana three, Assam, Kenya, South Africa, England, and Mesopotamia one each.[113] In the 1920s and 1930s, the Mahasabha showed a new focus and determined action through its organisational revamp, but its political activity and programmes were limited to north India.

In the maritime presidencies of Bombay, Madras, and Bengal, the Hindu Mahasabha was largely inactive. The Bombay branch was not active; and there was not much response to the organisation in Madras. In Maharashtra and the Central Provinces Marathi districts and Berar, the Hindu Sabhas were dominated by Mahratta Brahmans, mainly Chitpavans and Blal Gangadhar Tilak's former lieutenants.[114] N.C. Kelkar, a prominent Tilakite, became president of the Mahasabha at the Belgaum session in 1924; and B.S. Moonje, a Chitpavan doctor and Tilak's lieutenant from Nagpur, assumed the Mahasabha's presidentship in 1927. The Maratha Brahmans became more active in the Mahasabha because they preferred it over the Congress as a

---

[109] Shraddhanand, *Hindu Sangathan*, p. 119.
[110] Gordon, 'Hindu Mahasabha', p. 155.
[111] UP 550 delegates; Bihar 172; Punjab 94; Bengal 46; Delhi 25; CP 25; Rajputana-Deccan 22; Bombay 12; Madras 6; Assam 2; Burma, Patiala, Dumraon, Sind, Travancore and NWFP, 1 each. Total 960. Gordon, 'Hindu Mahasabha', p. 156.
[112] Gordon, 'Hindu Mahasabha', pp. 160-1.
[113] *The Leader*, 1 September 1924, p. 5, Microfilm, NMML.
[114] The Government of Bombay reported in 1925 that there were only eight branches of the Hindu Sabha in the Presidency: Bombay city 1, Maharashtra 3 [Poona, Sangli and Ratnagiri], Gujarat 2 [Kaira and Surat], Sind 1 [Hyderabad], and Karnatak 1 [Belgaum]. Home Poll., File 140 of 1925, NAI.

means of resisting the non-Brahman movement in Maharashtra.[115] In Bengal, the Mahasabha was effectively re-launched many years later in 1939 by V.D. Savarkar; and it was led by Shyama Prasad Mookherjee.[116] The Mahasabha's growth in the provinces was sporadic and uneven, even though it was strongest where riots were fiercest. The local Hindu Sabhas were weak and tended to be preoccupied by purely local questions. The Mahasabha's Surat session in 1929 passed a resolution designed to 'organize Hindu Sabhas in every village and town', calling on 'all Hindu leaders to establish Sabhas in places where they do not exist at the present'.[117] The appeal was not supported by a specific programme of organisational development. The Mahasabha had for the most remained a party of irregular growth in the provinces across India.[118]

In the United Provinces, the Hindu Mahasabha was strongest in eastern districts and Oudh -- the centre of orthodox Brahmanical Hinduism. In the western districts, the most prominent Mahasabha leader was Lala Sukhbir Sinha. Sukhbir Sinha, a Khatri banker and zamindar of Muzaffarnagar, was an avid cow-protectionist, a patron of the *sanatan dharm* movement and a propagandist for ayurvedic medicine. He presided over the Mahasabha's annual session in Lucknow in December 1916. The local Hindu Sabhas were confined mostly to the larger cities of the UP -- Lucknow, Allahabad, Kanpur, Banaras, and Agra. Allahabad was the nucleus of the activity of Madan Mohan Malaviya, Banaras the site of the Banaras Hindu University, and Lucknow the centre of the Hindi-Nagri movement.[119] The Mahasabha preserved a continuity of its work and programmes through its association with the Arya Samaj, the Bharat Dharma Mahamandal, the Hindi societies, and caste associations. However, it had little local-level co-ordination and planning across the UP.

II. 1. Sangathan Hardliners

The Hindu Mahasabha's pioneering leaders, Madan Mohan Malaviya and Lajpat Rai, controlled the organisation in the period 1923-1925. However, the Mahasabha had developed an ideological radicalisation by the mid-1920s under the leadership of *sanatani*st hardliners. The organisation was divided between the Malaviya-Lajpat Rai group which believed that it should be a forum for expressing the problems of the Hindu community by leaving politics to the Congress, and the explicitly Hindu *sangathan* radicals – Raja Narendra Nath, B.S. Moonje, N.C. Kelkar, and Bhai Parmanand – who demanded a political role. The Malaviya group was sympathetic to the Gandhian Congress, believing that it was the only organisation to lead a powerful struggle against the British.[120] Lajpat Rai, Mahasabha president in 1925-1926, emphasised the need for *sangathan* [Hindu unity], the removal of untouchability, and commitment to Indian nationalism, but argued that on no

---

[115] Home Poll, File 25 of 1924 and File 112 of 1925, NAI.

[116] V.D. Savarkar launched the Hindu Mahasabha in Calcutta on 27 December 1939. Viceroy Lord Linlithgow's letter to Secretry of State for India Lord Zetland, dated 23 January 1940, Zetland Collection, IOR MSS Eur D/609/19, IOL.

[117] Prakash, *A Review*, p. 183.

[118] Walter Anderson, 'The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh II: Who Represents the Hindus?', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol 7, No. 12, 18 March 1972, pp. 633-40: p. 634.

[119] Dalmia, *Nationalization*, pp. 50-145.

[120] Malaviya presided over the Hindu Mahasabha session in Patna in 1935 for the last time: he died on 12 November 1946.

account were the Hindus to give up the Congress which was to be supported.[121] Nonetheless, the hardliners demanded increased political participation for the Mahasabha in avowed hostility and conflict with the Congress. Malaviya was distrusted as a leader more in the 'pocket' of the Congress. 'He [Malaviya],' B.S. Moonje wrote to M.R. Jayakar, 'is like a creeper which can't thrive without a strong support. He is a hopeless man in the matter of leadership.'[122] The moderates became effectively marginalised within the Mahasabha organisation, as the hardliners had captured it on an explicit political agenda in challenge to the Congress by the late 1920s.[123] In 1926 the Mahasabha shifted its Working Committee offices from Banaras to Delhi and began to work effectively as an all-India political organisation. By 1926-end, it had established nearly 624 Hindu Sabhas all over India, having founded 130 new branches in 1926 alone.[124] The hardening of *sangathan*ist discourse and its anti-Congress hostility eventually set the stage for the transformation of the Mahasabha into a political party and a challenger of the Congress in the 1930s.

Conclusion

The Hindu Mahasabha drew its social roots from the traditional Hindu middle classes -- Brahmans, Agarwals, and Vaishya groups – in the large cities and towns of the UP. It was an elitist constitutional party dominated by the Hindu gentry as well as professional and service classes, including small-town pleaders and journalists. To a large extent, it depended on the support of wealthy businessmen and urban banking and commercial magnates who constituted the chief source of its resources. Rich taluqdars and landlords, a conservative bulwark against the nationalist struggle, proved crucial for its organisational strength and political mobilisation in the UP during the 1920s and 1930s. The Mahasabha relied, too, on the patronage of the Hindu ruling princes, among whom it recruited its supporters. Nonetheless, the organisation was not equipped in the Montford era to focus on the political constituencies that now had the vote. After the introduction of the overwhelmingly rural electorate and the extension of the electoral franchise under the 1919 Act, the Mahasabha with its reliance on elite and aristocratic support could not survive the power sturggle at the provincial level in the UP, particularly owing to the predominant shift of political activity away from the towns back to the countryside. It did not break through to the classes below the landed and commercial classes, nor could it create a mass base as part of its organisational structure in the provinces of India. It did not become truly represented in elective institutions due to its little organisational growth and expansion. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, the Mahasabha remained an elite organisation in composition and conservative in character with no agitational methods. It sowed extreme hostility to the radical turn which the mass politics had taken under Gandhi's leadership. Opposition to political

---

[121] Speech by Lala Lajpat Rai, president, Eighth Annual Session, All-India Hindu Mahasabha, Calcutta, April 1925: V.C. Joshi [ed.], *Lala Lajpat Rai: Writings and Speeches, 1920-1928*, Vol. 2, Delhi, 1966, p. 257.

[122] B.S. Moonje's letter to M.R. Jayakar, dated 8 January 1930, File No. 436, Jayakar Papers, NMML.

[123] 'Proceedings of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha Working Committee of the AllIndia Hindu Mahasabha, Delhi, on the 9th, 10th,and 11th May 1926', Jayakar papers, File No. 435, NMML.

[124] A Hindu Sabha was established in Sind under the leadership of Jairamdas Daulat Ram, president of the Bombay Hindu Sabha. Prakash, *Hindu Mahasabha,* p. 26.

radicalism implied the Mahasabha's isolation from the the Congress's anti-British struggles at a time when India entered the most turbulent phase of its politics in the 1920s and 1930s. Organisationally, the Mahasabha remained largely a north Indian venture and was scarcely organised outside the Hindi-speaking areas of the UP, the Punjab, and Bihar. By the late 1920s, it had come under the control of the *sangathan*ist hardliners and made an unequivocal effort to be a rival to the Congress as a political party.[125]

[125] Nandini Gondhalekar and Sanjoy Bhattacharya, 'The All India Hindu Mahasabha and the End of British Rule in India, 1939-1947', *Social Scientist,* Vol. 27, Nos. 7-8, July-August 1999, pp. 49-66.

PART II

Sangathan Ideology

4

Sangathan – Unity and Organisation of Hindus

Hindu organisations such as the Arya Samaj and the Sanatana Dharma Mahamandal had made efforts by the late nineteenth century to unify the Hindu community, but such efforts became more aggressive and influential due to the emergence of Hindu nationalist ideology in the 1920s, signifying a sense of religious and community identity amongst Hindus in north India.[1] The core feature of Hindu nationalist ideology was *sangathan* [Hindu unity] – which emerged as a result of the unprecedented upsurge of sectarian rioting across northern India following the collapse of the Non-cooperation-Khilafat movement in the period 1919-1921.[2] The United Provinces witnessed a greater number of riots in this period than any other province of British India;[3] and the violence became the context and rationale for the development of *sangathan* ideology by the Hindu Mahasabha in the 1920s and 1930s.[4] The Mahasabha acquired a more clearly Hindu nationalist orientation, dwelling on the 'weakness' of the Hindus and the need for a stronger, more assertive Hindu community. Its *sangathan* movement drew strength from the notion of a 'unified' Hindu community in conflict with Muslims and aimed to promote the self-assertion of the Hindus by united action against what was perceived as 'onslaught' and 'historical oppression' by the Muslims.[5] This chapter attempts to explore the conscious articulation and evolution of *sangathan* ideology, which developed through an intermittent process due to the extensive propaganda of the Mahasabha launched in the1920 and 1930s.

I. Sangathan Movement

The term *'sangathan'* is derived from the Sanskrit root *sam*, 'together', and *ghat*, 'to form or mould', meaning 'organisation, formation, constitution' – or 'an organised system, or society'.[6] The articulation of nascent *sangathan* ideology had first dominated the Punjab Hindu Sabha's conference in Lahore in 1909.[7] At the All-India Hindu Sabha's session in Delhi in 1918, Raja Sir Rampal Singh, in his presidential address, similarly

---

[1] Gyanendra Pandey, 'Hindus and Others: The Militant Hindu Construction', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 26, No. 52, 28 December 1991, p. 2998.

[2] G. Pandey, 'Which of Us are Hindus?', in G. Pandey [ed.], *Hindus and Others: The Question of Identity in India Today*, New Delhi, 1993, p. 244.

[3] Riots broke out in Agra, Shahjahanpur, Saharanpur, Etawah, Fatehgarh, and Mainpuri in 1923; Lucknow, Meerut, and Muzaffarnagar in 1924; Aligarh in 1925; and Allahabad in 1926. 'Statement of communal riots in the UP between 1922 and 1927', IOR L/PJ/6/1890, File No. 15, 1927, p. 5, IOL; Prabhu N. Bapu, 'Hindu-Muslim Conflict and British Policy in United Provinces 1920-1929', South Asia History Seminar, SOAS, University of London, October 2004, pp. 2-3.

[4] John Zavos, *The Emergence of Hindu Nationalism in India*, Oxford, 2000, pp. 144-45; Gyanendra Pandey, *The Construction of Communalism in Colonial North India*, New Delhi, 2006 [1990], pp. 233-35; Sandria B. Freitag, *Collective Action and Community: Public Arenas and the Emergence of Communalism in North India*, Berkeley, 1989, pp. 220-48.

[5] Christophe Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movemen and Indian Politics, 1925 to the 1990s: Strategies of Identity-building, Implantation and Mobilisation [with Special Reference to Central India]*, London, 1996, p. 19.

[6] Heinrich von Stietencron, 'Religious Configurations in Pre-Muslim India and the Modern Concept of Hinduism', in Vasudha Dalmia and H. von Stietencron [eds.], *Representing Hinduism: The Construction of Religious Traditions and National Identity*, New Delhi, 1995, pp. 79-81; D. Gould, 'Organised Hinduism: From Vedic Truth to Hindu Nation', in Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby [eds.], *Fundamentalisms Observed*, Chicago, 1994 [1991], p. 533.

[7] Indra Prakash, *A Review of the History and Work of the Hindu Mahasabha and the Hindu Sangathan Movement*, New Delhi, 1952 [1938], pp. 5-13.

echoed a *sangathan*ist vision. 'The chief cause,' he explained, 'is that we [Hindus] are disorganised and disunited. It is for the Hindu Sabha to organise and unite the scattered atoms of our Community and to devise means for the amelioration of the whole, so that we might rise again to the same pinnacle of glory and civilisation which our forefathers had attained.'[8] It is not clear when the appeals for Hindu organisation were translated into a notion of the *sangathan* movement. Indra Prakash argues that the *sangathan*ist programme was first mooted by Madan Mohan Malaviya during the Indian National Congress's inquiry into the Multan riot in September 1922.[9] The riot prompted a series of appeals in the press for Hindu unity and organisation. The *Vedic Magazine*, an Arya monthly published in Lahore, expressed a sense of urgency for the Hindus to unite after the riot. 'The tragedy, deplorable as it is,' it argued, 'has a lesson for its victims. Organise yourself. Evolve unity in your own ranks. Develop strength, develop character.'[10] Hindi vernacular newspapers and magazines in the UP emphasised the need for Hindu unity and consolidation in this period.[11] On the eve of the Hindu Mahasabha's session in 1923, Malaviya's *Leader* strongly urged the need for the Hindus to become organised and united. 'Nothing is now left for the Hindus,' it stated, 'but to organise themselves ... They must as a community inspire respect before they can have unity on reasonable and equal terms with the Muslims.'[12] 'All our sufferings,' declared the *Abhyudaya,* 'will cease the day Hindu society is organised.'[13] 'Far-seeing Hindu leaders have for long fought against the communal spirit of the Mahommedans, but their efforts have been of no avail ... Their [Hindus'] first duty, in their own interests, is that they should organise ...'[14] 'The protection of Hindu community,' it was asserted, 'is the most important question at present ... We have to search for new ways to make the Hindu community powerful ...'[15] 'If the Hindus are well organised, no community will venture to perpetrate atrocities on them.'[16] Evidence suggests that the *sangathan* movement gathered force in north India explicitly in the early 1920s.[17]

Swami Shraddhananda [1857-1926] first articulated the ideal of Hindu unity and consolidation, providing a more comprehensive exposition of *sangathan* in the early 1920s. He viewed the ideal of *sangathan* as an attribute of Aryan society -- a facet of the 'golden age'. The Hindus, he explained, had undergone a steady

---

[8] Cited in Prakash, *A Review,* p. 86.
[9] Prakashh, *A Review,* p. 25.
[10] *Vedic Magazine,* September 1922, *Punjab Press Abstracts,* 1922, No. 40, p. 81, IOL.
[11] Interview with Kishem Chandra Sumen [born in Meerut], an Arya Samajist, writer and journalist, by Hari Dev Sharma on 17 September 1971, Oral History Transcript, No. 210, pp. 12-15, NMML. The Hindi newspapers and magazines which supported *sangathan* were: the *Vartman* [Kanpur], the *Leader* [Allahabad], and the *Abhyudaya,* a leading newspaper in Allahabad owned by the Malaviya family, the *Vikram,* and the *Madhuri.* File No. 25, June 1923, Home Poll., NAI.
[12] *The Leader*, Allahabad, editorial, 2 April, 1923, p. 3, Microfilm, NMML.
[13] *Abhyudaya,* 21 October 1922, p. 2, Microfilm, NMML.
[14] *Cited in Charu Gupta, 'Articulating Hindu Masculinity and Femininity: Shuddhi and Sangathan Movements in UP in the 1920s', Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 33, No. 13, 28 March 1998, p. 729.
[15] Ayodhya Prasad Goyaliya 'Das', *Sangathan ka Bigul*, Delhi, 1926, p. 22, cited in Charu Gupta, 'Obscenity, Sexuality and the "Other": Gender and Hindu Identity in Uttar Pradesh, 1880s-1930s', PhD Dissertation, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 2000, p. 136.
[16] *Kartavya* [Etawah, weekly; editor: Rikeshwar N. Raina; 25, 900 copies], 21 August 1922, IOR L/R/5/97, File No. 14, 1922, p. 4.
[17] G.R. Thursby, *Hindu-Muslim Relations in British India: A Study of Controversy, Conflict and Communal Movements in Northern India, 1923-1928,* Leiden, 1975, p. 164.

decline since the Vedic age due to the perversion of the *varna* [caste] system, the proliferation of castes and untouchability, idol worship, child marriage, and the ban on the remarriage of widows.[18] In his programme of *sangathan*, he proposed the building of Hindu *rashtra mandirs* [national temples] in every town and major city as a first step towards Hindu consolidation. The temples played a role analogous to that of mosques for the Muslim community, particularly in uniting and integrating the Hindus.[19] The temples, in which the map of India would replace the image of the deity, were to regenerate Hindu society with the 'social and religious cohesion' which it lacked in comparison with the Muslims – the 'adversaries'.[20] For Shraddhananda, the construction of a 'Hindu nation' implied seriously implementing the agenda of Hindu *sangathan,* which he defined as a movement to resuscitate the 'ancient glory of Aryan civilisation' and combat the symptoms of degeneration and social disunity in Hindu society.[21]

The crystallisation of a distinct *sangathan* ideology occurred during the early 1920s when the first steps towards the mobilisation of the Hindus as a 'nation' had been initiated. V.D. Savarkar's founding text, *Hindutva,* was written in 1923, with the ideology of political Hindutva constituting the chief basis of the *sangathan* movement.[22] The Hindu Mahasabha was re-launched after its Banaras session in 1923, promoting *sangathan* as the chief ideal of a 'Hindu nation'. In the United Provinces, a section of the Congress leadership led by Madan Mohan Malaviya had increasingly adopted a Hindu rhetoric and promoted the activities of religious organisations as part of *sangathan* after the Non-cooperation movement.[23] The growing power of the Mahasabha and the Arya Samaj was in part a reason for the increasing support for the *sangathan* movement in the province throughout the 1920s.[24] *Sangathan*'s key political ideas included the belief that the Hindus constituted of themselves a 'nation', that Hinduism was under a threat of 'extermination' in India, that the Muslims were 'treacherous' and had 'extra-territorial designs', and that there was an imperative need to militarise the Hindus. It rejected the view that sectarianism in India was a product of British policy in preference to the view of a 'thousand-year war' against the 'Muslim aggression'.[25] A projected need for the protection of the Hindus from the 'aggressiveness and violence' of the Muslims was at the heart of the *sangathan* movement.

---

[18] Swami Shraddhanand, *Hindu Sangathan: Saviour of the Dying Race*, N.p., 1926, pp. 78, 94, 140-41.

[19] *The Hindu temples [mandirs] were to be devoted to 'the worship of the three mother-spirits – Gau-mata* [Mother Cow], *Saraswati-mata* [Mother Saraswati – the goddess of learning], and *Bhoomi-mata* [Mother Earth]'. Shraddhanand, *Hindu Sangathan,* p. 140. B.S. Moonje similarly proposed in 1923 the transformation of Hindu temples to achieve Hindu unity. B.S. Moonje, 'Forcible Conversions in Malabar – Dr Moonje's Report', Nagpur, 4 August 1923 Moonj Papers, 13, 1923, NMML.

[20] Jaffrelot, *Hindu Nationalist Movement,* pp. 22-23.

[21] Shraddhanand, *Hindu Sangathan,* p. 95.

[22] Jose Kuruvachira, *Hindu Nationalists of Modern India: A Critical Study of the Intellectual Geneology of Hindutva,* Jaipur, 2006, p. 123.

[23] Prakash, *A Review,* pp. 25-31; Gyanendra Pandey, *The Ascendancy of the Congress in Uttar Pradesh, 1926-34: A Study in Imperfect Mobilization,* Delhi, 1978, pp. 115-27; David Page, *Prelude to Partition: The Indian Muslims and the Imperial System of Control, 1920-1932,* Delhi, 1999 [1982], pp. 74-84.

[24] Home Poll., File No. 140/1925, NAI; Richard Gordon, 'The Hindu Mahasabha and the Indian National Congress, 1915 to 1926', *Modern Asian Studies,* Vol. 9, No. 2, 1975, pp. 145-203.

[25] Nandini Gondhalekar, 'Indian Nationalism and "Hindu" Politics: Maharashtra and the Hindu Mahasabha, 1920-1948', Unpublished PhD Dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1999, p. 43; Chetan Bhatt, *Hindu Nationalism: Origins, Ideologies and Modern Myths,* Oxford, 2001, pp. 77-8.

The wider context for the launch of the *sangathan* movement was provided by the emergence of *shuddhi* as an issue of decisive importance in the early 1920s. Two developments -- the conversion of the Hindus in Malabar and the reconversion of Malkanas in the western UP -- renewed enthusiasm for *shuddhi* and increased its acceptance by traditional Hindu sections in north India. *Shuddhi* emerged as the cornerstone of the desired Hindu unity and strength, giving a powerful thrust in the direction of *sangathan* throughout the 1920s and 1930s.[26]

I. 1. Moplah Conversions and Shuddhi

The Moplah revolt of 1921 by Muslim leaseholders and cultivators against their Hindu landlords in Malabar -- a result of both 'Hindu landlord oppression' and the perception of 'Islam in danger' -- triggered a self-conscious Hindu predicament.[27] The revolt, resulting in the murder of over 600 Hindus, became significant due to its association with Islamic conversions. The Arya Samaj's Pratinidhi Sabha undertook the reclamation of Hindu converts through *shuddhi* – ritual purification -- under the leadership of Pandit Rishi Ram guided by the fourth-century text *Devalasmriti,* reconverting between 2,500 and 3,000 Hindus in Malabar.[28] The violence as well as the forced conversions of the Hindus in Malabar, it was claimed, was an outcome of the evident 'oppression' and 'disunity' of Hinduism.[29] B.S. Moonje [1872-1948], who headed the Nagpur commission on the Malabar riots, argued in his 1923 report that the 'chronic disunity' and 'weakness' of the Hindus was exposed in the face of the organised 'unity and violence' of the Muslims.[30] He catalogued the number of temples that had been destroyed by the Muslim rulers and alleged forcible conversions that had taken place. During the past 900 years, he claimed, India had lost seven crores of Hindus to Islam and Christianity. He proposed the settlement of 'war-like races, such as the Marathas, Rajputs, Sikhs, etc., in Malabar which alone, I think, can solve the Moplah terrorism over meek and helpless Hindus'. The Hindus should, he explained, resist the 'aggressiveness' of the Muslims and match their 'virility' through organisation and unity.[31] The Moplah crisis signified the loss of the strength of Hindu society, driving the Hindu opinion to argue for consolidation.[32] The protection and extension of

---

[26] Chief Secretary, UP Government, to Secretary, Government of India, Home Department, 2 January 1925, Home Poll., GOI, File No. 206/1926, NAI.

[27] R.L. Hardgrave Jr., 'The Mappilla Rebellion 1921: Peasant Revolt in Malabar', *Modern Asian Studies,* Vol. 11, No. 1, 1977, pp. 91-99; K.N. Panikkar, *Against Lord and State: Religion and Peasant Uprisings in Malabar, 1836-1921,* Delhi, 1989, pp. 179-82.

[28] The *Devala Smriti,* a Sanskrit document, codified conditions for the reintegration into Hinduism of Hindu converts from Islam. B.S. Moonje claimed that he had discovered the *Devalasmriti* whilst 'studying the *smritis* that I could get hold of in the libraries of Nagpur after witnessing the problems of the Moplah converts'. Cited in Zavos, *Emergence,* p. 201.

[29] Home Poll., File No. 241/XII, 1921, p. 7, NAI; Prakash, *A Review,* p. 30; S. Sarkar, *Modern India, 1885-1947,* Madras, 1983, rept. Delhi, 1986, pp. 216-17. The challenge meant, in Christophe Jaffrelot's words, a 'strategic syncretism' of Muslim unity. C. Jaffrelot, *'Hindu Nationalism: Strategic Syncretism in Ideology Building', Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. 20, Nos. 12-13,* 20-26 March 1993, pp. 520-21.

[30] B.S. Moonje stated: 'The Hindus are divided into so many water-tight compartments, each having a social culture and life of its own, that there is hardly any association between them in the wider field of social activities ... The Mahomedans on the other hand are one organic community, religiously well-organised.' B.S. Moonje, 'Forcible Conversions in Malabar', Moonje Papers, File No. 13, 1923, NMML.

[31] B.S. Moonje, 'Forcible Conversions in Malabar', Moonje Papers, File No. 13, 1923, NMML.

[32] K. Jones, *The New Cambridge History of India III.1: Socio-Religious Reform Movements in British India,* Cambridge, 1994 [1989], p. 194; R.K. Ghai, *Shuddhi Movement in India: A Study of its Socio-political Dimensions,* Delhi, 1990, p. 87.

the Hindu religion in the face of 'conversions and violence' by the Muslims was perceived as an immediate challenge to Hindu society.

The threat of Islamic conversions brought urgency to the Hindu Mahasabha's attempts to unify the Hindu community. The Hindu Mahasabha's Gaya session in December 1922 laid the foundation of *sangathan*, emphasising the need to unify all elements of the Hindu community and defend them from the 'violence and attacks' of the Muslims. Madan Mohan Malaviya, in his presidential speech, emphasised the need for *sangathan,* explaining that the Hindus were weak and degenerate as never before, and that there was an imperative to organise the community. Hindu-Muslim unity was possible, he argued, if 'each should feel the other was strong enough to ward off successfully unjust attacks by the other ... If the Hindus made themselves strong and the rowdy section[s] among the Mahomedans were convinced they could not safely rob and dishonour Hindus, unity would be established on a stable basis.'[33] He proposed the establishment of an all-India Hindu relief fund to help the victims of riots, calling on the Hindus to work for unity and self-preservation. He proposed the setting up of Hindu Sabhas right down to the village level across India in order to protect the Hindus from 'Muslim attacks'.[34] The Mahasabha acquired a new dynamism by incorporating *sangathan* as an integral part of its ideology in avowed hostility against the Muslims from the 1920s onwards.

Swami Shraddhananda, Hindu Mahasabha vice-president, in his speech to the Banaras session on 19 August 1923, linked *shuddhi* to the need for the development of the *sangathan* movement. He moved two resolutions on *shuddhi* at the session. The first resolution dealt specifically with Malkana Rajputs, the nominal Muslims in the western UP, and the second more generally with *shuddhi* as a process of conversion from other religions, calling for the acceptance 'by the whole Hindu community' of converts regardless of which sect had performed the *shuddhi* rites.[35] The Mahasabha adopted the first resolution, stating that the Malkanas 'should be taken back into the Hindu fold in the castes to which they originally belonged'.[36] On the second resolution, it stated at its special session on 4 February 1924: 'Any non-Hindu was welcome to enter the fold of Hinduism,

---

[33] M.M. Malaviya's Presidential Address, All India Hindu Mahasabha, 1922, cited in S.L. Gupta, *Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya: A Socio-political Study*, Allahabad, 1987 [1978], pp. 297-300.

[34] Kenneth W. Jones, 'Politicized Hinduism: The Ideology and Program of the Hindu Mahasabha', in Robert D. Baird, *Religion in Modern India*, New Delhi, 2005 [2001], p. 248.

[35] The full text of the two resolutions stated:

'1. Looking to the splendid enthusiasm which has been aroused among the Hindu public in the work of reclamation of Malkana Rajputs and their entry into their brotherhood this conference decides once and for all that all such Neo-Muslims whether they be Rajputs or Brahmins, Vaishyas, Jat or Gujars etc., who have always conformed to the Hindu customs and rites, be taken back into their several brotherhoods and be treated as Hindus for all intents and purposes.

'2. *In view of the fact that an overwhelming majority of Indian Mahomedans and Christians are the descendants of Hindu* converts and in view of the catholicity of the ancient Vedic Dharma which absorbed non-Aryans into the community – this conference resolves that non-Hindus converted by any sect of the Hindus according to the purification *[prayaschit]* rites prescribed by the representative body of that sect be considered Hindus to all intents and purposes by the whole Hindu community.' *The Leader*, 8 August 1923, p. 3, Microfilm, NMML.

[36] *The Leader*, 24 August 1923, p. 6, Microfilm, NMML.

though he could not be taken into any caste.'[37] Nonetheless, the Mahasabha became more explicit in its support of *shuddhi* as an integral part of *sangathan,* strengthening its drive to combat Islamic conversions in India.

Shuddhi represented a campaign to preserve the numerical and social strength of the Hindu community through a reconversion to Hinduism of those who had become Muslims or Christians. The Hindu Mahasabha resolved its differences with *sanatani* [orthodox] Hindus over *shuddhi* by stressing the need for Hindu unity and consolidation. It viewed *shuddhi* as a regenerating force 'in order to maximize the Hindu potentialities of moral and ritual purity, physical strength, numerical increase and political power'.[38] Malaviya, who had forged the Mahasabha's alliance with the Arya Samaj on the *shuddhi* programme, stressed the need for Hindu unity, linking *shuddhi* to the *sangathan*ist efforts to reverse the perceived loss of Hindu political power.[39] Hindu society, he argued, was physically, socially and morally feeble. There was a low birth rate and a high death rate. 'When now we are so badly treated with a numerical strength of 22 crores,' he wondered, 'what would be our condition in future with a much reduced Hindu population if we allow this rate of conversion from Hinduism and do not allow reconversion into Hinduism?'[40] At its Nasik session held in February 1924, the Mahasabha amended its constitution to include *shuddhi* among its 'aims and objects', focusing on the reconversion [*shuddhi*] of Hindus from Islam and Christianity.[41] It declared the reintegration of apostates through *shuddhi* into Hinduism, traditionally a non-proselytising religion, to be 'lawful'.[42] *Shuddhi* was to be conducted by the All-India Shuddhi Sabha of the Arya Samaj and actively supported by the Mahasabha, confronting Islam more decisively than Christianity: the Muslims were viewed as a more serious threat to Hindu society. There were relatively fewer Hindu converts to Christianity, the religion of the state.[43] *Shuddhi* was viewed as a pillar of the Hindu community's consolidation, becoming a key initiative to reverse the 'damage done by Muslim conversions' across the centuries in India.[44]

In the United Provinces, the Arya Samaj launched the programme of *shuddhi* on a large scale in 1923, making a determined bid to proselytise the Malkana Rajputs who had converted to Islam.[45] The Malkana Rajputs, claiming descent from the Jadun Rajput caste, were neo-Muslims scattered over a large number of

---

[37] *The Leader*, 8 February 1924, p. 5, Microfilm, NMML.
[38] Home Poll., File No., 6/IX/1924; File No. 140/1925.
[39] Gordon, 'Hindu Mahasabha', p. 170.
[40] Gupta, *Malaviya,* pp. 298-9.
[41] Gordon, 'Hindu Mahasabha', p. 170; Gupta, *Malaviya,* pp. 259, 289-9.
[42] Shraddhanand, *Hindu Sangathan,* p. 113; Kenneth Jones, 'The Arya Samaj in British India, 1875-1947', in Robert Baird [ed.], *Religion in Modern India*, New Delhi, 2005 [2001], pp. 27-54; Thursby, *Hindu-Muslim Relations,* pp. 161-2.
[43] *Varta*, Kanpur, weekly, editor: Pandit Raja Ram, 28, cir: 1,000 copies, 21 August 1923, IOR L/R/5/97, File No. 15, 1923, p. 2; Christophe Jaffrelot, 'The Genesis and Development of Hindu Nationalism in the Punjab: from the Arya Samaj to the Hindu Sabha *[1850-1910]*', *Indo-British Review, Vol. 21, No. 1, 1993, p. 17.*
[44] *The Leader,* Allahabad, 2 August 1923, p. 6, Microfilm, NMML; Kenneth W. Jones, *Arya Dharm: Hindu Consciousness in 19th-Century Punjab*, Berkeley, 1976, rept. New Delhi, 1989, pp. 150-1; J.F. Seunarine, *Reconversion to Hinduism through Shuddhi*, Madras, 1977, pp. 85-6. Muslim leaders countered *shuddhi* with their own *tabligh* [propaganda] and *tanzim* [organisation] in 1922-23. Home Poll, File No. 6/IX, 1924, p. 19, NAI; R.K. Ghai, 'Tabligh and Shuddhi Movements in the Nineteen Twenties in the Punjab', *Past and Present*, Vol. 20, Part I, April 1986, pp. 217-25.
[45] Home Poll., File 140/1925, NAI.

villages in Mathura, Agra, Etah and Mainpuri districts of the western UP.[46] They had become Muslims during the Mughal period, having been converted to Islam in return for land grants given to them by the state: the term 'Malkana' derived from '*milkayat*' – or 'ownership of land'.[47] In February 1923, the Bharatiya Hindu Shuddhi Sabha was founded with its headquarters in Agra with Swami Shraddhananda as its president;[48] and more than 30,000 Malkana Rajputs were stated to have been converted and rehabilitated as Hindu 'kshatriyas' till the end of 1923.[49] The Arya Samaj's drive for Malkana *shuddhi* became an important symbol of the *sangathan* movement with the active support of the Mahasabha and orthodox Hindu groups across the UP.

I. 2. Integration of Untouchables

In the 1920s and 1930s, the Hindu Mahasabha in effect aimed to combat the threat of Islamic conversions as a significant objective of the *sangathan* movement. Nonetheless, a more crucial element of *sangathan* was untouchable uplift. The Mahasabha's ambitious scheme was to forge and unite the disparate castes and tribes of the 'Hindu family' into a greater Hindu political community. It aimed to create a monolithic Hindu identity, underplaying diverse caste identities in its discourse of *sangathan.* However, the crucial dilemma was the incorporation of *antyaja*s [untouchables and tribals] – a category of outcastes outside the *varna* hierarchy. They constituted the *panchama* [the fifth 'estate'], posing a threat to the hierarchically conceived *varnashrama dharma* -- the nobility and purity of upper castes.[50] The Mahasabha underlined the need for solidarity among the different castes of Hindus and amended its constitution at its Hardwar session in April 1921, formally adding the 'lower castes' to its definition of a 'Hindu' and declaring its commitment to ameliorate 'the condition of all classes of the Hindu community'.[51] *Sangathan*ist discourse demanded a 'unified' Hindu community, a necessity that moved the Mahasabha into a position of radical caste reform.

In the early 1920s there were many highly emotional appeals in support of untouchable uplift.[52] The *Leader* strongly pleaded for the uplift of the untouchables: 'No prejudice ought to be allowed to hamper work in this direction.' The 'citadels of orthodoxy and social and religious tyranny', it argued, 'could best be assailed through an All-India Hindu organization', such as the Hindu Mahasabha. It appealed for a '*vyavastha* [decree] from

---

[46] Zavos, *Emergence*, p. 202.

[47] *The Census of India, 1911, UP, Vol. XV, Part I*, Allahabad, 1912, p. 118; Shraddhanand, *Hindu Sangathan,* p. 120.

[48] In March 1923, 'Sanatani Hindu Pandits conducted the formal ceremony of *yaggi [shuddhi]* in the presence of Swami Shraddhananda'. *The Leader,* 11 March 1923, p. 7, Microfilm, NMML; Home Poll., File 140, 1925, NAI.

[49] The Hindu Sabhas carried out a few conversions: the Akhil Bharatiya Hindu Shuddhi Sabha, the Arya Samaj, and the Kshatriya Upakarini Sabha actually did most of the conversions through *shuddhi. Vartman*, 1 August 1925, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 30, 1925, pp. 2-3; Yoginder Sikand and Manjari Katju, 'Mass Conversions to Hinduism among Indian Muslims', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 29, No. 34, 20 August 1994, pp. 2214-18. In the conversion of the Malkanas, the Arya Samaj stressed the giving up of Islamic customs: the burial of the dead, *nikah*, visiting of the *dargah*s and circumcision. Confidential note on *'Communal Friction in the United Provinces, 1924', by Assistant to Deputy Inspector General of Police, Criminal Investigation* Department, UP File No. 140/1925, Home Poll., GOI, NAI.

[50] Kenneth Jones, 'The Negative Component of Hindu Consciousness', *Indo-British Review*, Vol. 19, No. 1, September 1993, pp. 57-72. The *Purusha Sukta* contains the first mention of the four *varna*s, or 'classes' of Hindu society – Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Shudras. The *Manudharmashastra* sanctions caste hierarchy.

[51] Joya Chatterji, *Bengal Divided: Hindu Communalism and Partition, 1932-1947*, Cambridge, 1994, pp. 192-3; Thursby, *Hindu-Muslim Relations,* p. 161.

[52] The *Arya Mitra,* a Hindi weekly published from Agra, served as the organ of the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, seeking the uplift of the untouchables. The *Jatava* of Agra supported the interests of the 'untouchables'. Home Poll. F. 204/IV/25, 1925, NAI.

*sanatani*st pandits of recognised eminence' in favour of the removal of untouchability.[53] The upper-caste Hindus were urged to 'immediately bring lower castes within Hindu fold'; otherwise the latter were becoming Muslims. In turn, the lower castes were urged to ensure that they adopted upper caste manners and customs.[54] The *Madhuri*, a prominent Hindi journal of early twentieth-century Lucknow, viewed the statistics of a decline in the Hindu numbers as an outcome of the 'carelessness of the Hindu *jati* [race]' and its 'abhorrence' of the lower castes.[55] The popular emphasis was on untouchable integration, as a cohesive Hindu community was deemed to be central to *sangathani*st ideology.

The Hindu Mahasabha's campaign to integrate the untouchables into Hindu society was motivated in part by political considerations, too. Under colonial rule, the numerical strength of religious communities would play a decisive role in determining the allocation of seats in India's legislatures. The 1919 Montagu-Chelmsford reforms brought into a sharp focus the issue of the relative numbers of various religious groups, recognising the principle of representation on the basis of communities and classes in the legislatures.[56] In the 1920s, elections to almost all local boards and district councils were contested on community lines, making the support of non-Brahmans and the depressed classes extremely crucial for the Mahasabha.[57] M.R. Jayakar declared: 'Now that the Montagu-Chelmsford Report has put a value on each individual ... [i]f a single Hindu be taken out of his religious faith owing to causes which have nothing to do with religious change of mind – we resent that conversion.'[58] 'Democracy,' argued B.S. Moonje, 'means a government which is based on the counting of heads. In India ... the Moslem heads and the Christian heads are yearly increasing in numbers and are hopefully aspiring to swallow up the majority community of the Hindus or to reduce it to a minority community.'[59] The untouchables numbering over sixty millions in India were numerically important because they proved, if effectively reclaimed to Hinduism, critical to possible Hindu gains in terms of the greater share of provincial power in the country.[60]

In a reform of far-reaching significance, Swami Shraddhananda put the abolition of untouchability at the heart of the *sangathani*st agenda.[61] At the Hindu Mahasabha's Banaras session in August 1923, he called in a resolution for practical measures as 'a prelude to the assimilation of the untouchables into the great body of the Aryan fraternity'.[62] 'The question of uprooting the curse of untuchability,' he declared, 'was the "*sine qua non*" of

---

[53] *The Leader*, 2 April 1923, p. 7; 18 August 1923, p. 5, Microfilm, NMML.
[54] Sukhnandan Prasad Dube, *Chauchut ka Bhut*, Lucknow, 1933, cited in Charu Gupta, *Sexuality, Obscenity, Community: Women, Muslims and the Hindu Public in Colonial India*, Delhi, 2001, p. 323.
[55] *Madhuri*, April 1923, p. 469, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 33, 1923, IOL.
[56] Peter Robb, *The Government of India and Reform: Policies towards Politics and the Constitution, 1916-1921*, Oxford, 1976, pp. 55, 58.
[57] Christophe Jaffrelot [ed.], *Hindu Nationalism: A Reader*, Delhi, 2007, p. 78.
[58] Jayakar Papers, File 437, NAI.
[59] Prakash, *A Review*, pp. i-ii of the preface by B.S. Moonje.
[60] Gyanendra Pandey, *Routine Violence: Nations, Fragments, Histories*, Stanford, 2006, p. 160.
[61] J.T.F. Jordens, *Swami Shraddhananda: His Life and Causes*, Delhi, 1981, p. 135.
[62] The full text of Shraddhananda's resolution stated:

Nationality in India.'[63] The task of Hindu *sangathan* could not become a reality if serious steps were not taken towards the 'abolition of caste barriers and a full integration of the untouchables'.[64] The Mahasabha voted in favour of Shraddhananda's resolution, calling for the untouchables' access to roads, schools, wells, and even temples in Hindu society.[65] Nonetheless, six months later at the Mahasabha's session held at the Kumbh in Allahabad in January 1924, the orthodox *sanatani*sts passed a second resolution on the caste system, largely nullifying Shraddhananda's resolution. The Allahabad resolution stated that it was 'against the scriptures and the tradition to give the untouchables the sacred thread [*yagyopavit*], to teach them the Vedas or to inter-dine with them'. In the interests of unity, it declared, 'Hindu workers would give up these items of social reform'.[66] Owing to a strong opposition from the Arya Samaj, the resolution was amended, reading: 'As the giving of "Yagyopavit" to untouchables, interdining with them and teaching them Veda was opposed to the Scriptures according to very large body of Hindus, i.e. the Sanatanists, these activities should not be carried on in the name of the Mahasabha.'[67] Most *shuddhi* rites conducted by the Arya Samaj amongst the untouchables and lower castes would not be recognised by the Mahasabha. The resolution implied a victory for the old core of the Mahasabha in the UP -- particularly its patrons and leaders hailing from the milieu of orthodox Brahmans, landlords, and princes who were alienated by the caste reform. A strong justification of the caste hierarchy was found in the interpretation of the *Manusmrithi*, which was considered sacred.[68] Shraddhananda was deeply agonised over the *sanatani*st backlash and resigned from the Mahasabha in 1926.[69] Caste, an integral part of the Brahmanical system, sat uneasily with the representations of a homogeneous Hindu community as propagated by the Mahasabha.

The objective of integrating the untouchables into Hindu society still continued to haunt the Hindu Mahasabha, particularly in its efforts to make the Hindu community politically and socially strong and powerful, in the 1920 and 1930s. In his presidential address to the Mahasabha's Nasik session in February 1924, Dr Kurtakoti declared: 'If in these hard times Hindus do not take seriously in hand this holy work of "Conversion" and prevent their brethren from embracing alien faiths through mistaken views, I say here as I stand that within ten decades you shall find no Hindu on the surface of this earth.' The best way to prevent the 'decline' of the

---

'With a view to do justice to the so-called depressed classes in the Hindu community and to assimilate them as part of an organic whole in the great body of the Aryan fraternity, this conference of Hindus of all sects holds:
1. That the lowest among the depressed classes be allowed to draw water from common public wells. That water be served to them at drinking posts freely as is done to the highest among other Hindus.
That all members of the classes be allowed to sit on the same carpet in public meetings and other ceremonies with the higher classes, and that their children [male and female] be allowed to enter frely and, at teaching time, to sit in the same form with other Hindu and non-Hindu children in government, national and denominational institutions.' *The Leader*, 8 August 1923, p. 3, *Microfilm, NMML.*

[63] Shraddhanand, *Hindu Sangathan,* p. 89.
[64] Shraddhanand, *Hindu Sangathan*, p. 136.
[65] *The Leader*, 25 August 1923, p. 3, Microfilm, NMML.
[66] *The Leader,* 8 February 1924, p. 7, Microfilm, NMML.
[67] Home Poll., File No. 66/VI/1924, NAI; Satish Kumar Sharma, 'Shuddhi: A Case Study of Role of a Religious Movement in the Status Improvement of Untouchables', *Indian Journal of Social Research*, Vol. 24, No. 1, April 1983, pp. 70-77.
[68] Louis Dumont, *Homo Hierarchicus: The Caste System and its Implications*, London, 1970, pp. 139-41.
[69] Jordens, *Swami Shraddhananda*, p. 156.

Hindu numbers, he pointed out, was to remove social disabilities on the depressed classes.[70] At a special session held in Belgaum in December 1924, the Mahasabha declared that its chief focus would be on the removal of untouchability. Madan Mohan Malaviya, in his presidential address, argued that the Hindus should oppose caste disabilities 'out of a sense of duty to their brethren Untouchables ...'[71] The Belgaum session amended the Mahasabha's constitution, incorporating a broader definition of 'Hinduism' that recognised all those professing a faith indigenous to India as 'Hindu'.[72] Buddhists, Jains, and Sikhs were deemed integral to the larger Hindu community on the basis that India was the country of their origin.[73] At the Mahasabha's 1926 session, Dr Choithram Gidwani of Sind launched an appeal for the removal of the 'blot of untouchability', as the Muslims and Christian missionaries took advantage of the weakness of India's social system.[74] At its Jabalpur session on 8 April 1928, the Mahasabha reaffirmed its opposition to caste disabilities, passing a resolution on the removal of untouchability. N.C. Kelkar, in his presidential address, insisted that India must remove untouchability in order to justify its claim to *swaraj* [freedom].[75] At the Akola session in Maharashtra in August 1931, the Mahasabha invited the aboriginals to take on caste Hindu names and register their caste as 'Kshatriya' in the census.[76] The Mahasabha's approach signified a new dynamism, combining the untouchables and lower castes in the broad category of 'Hindu' as part of its drive to widen and unify the Hindu community.[77]

By the 1930s, the Hindu Mahasabha had strengthened its reformist resolve on the removal of untouchability. It responded with great alarm to Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar's threat that he would lead the untouchables out of Hinduism.[78] Ambedkar [born in 1891], a Mahar from Maharashtra who had studied for a doctorate at the London School of Economics and a prominent advocate of untouchable rights, stated that he would not die a Hindu, urging the untouchables to renounce Hinduism because there was no likelihood of a reform within the Hindu community, even though he was a strong supporter of the freedom movement.[79] On 13 October 1935 he declared in a speech to the Depressed Classes Conference in Yeola, a weaving town in Nasik district of eastern Maharashtra, that 'it was not my fault that I was born an untouchable ... I am determined that I will not die a Hindu.'[80] His conviction was that religion should promote social justice, not bolster injustice and justify oppression. In an article entitled 'Away from Hinduism', he argued that the right to religion included a right to

---

[70] Cited in Prakash, *A Review,* p. 90.
[71] Cited in S.R. Bakshi, *Madan Mohan Malaviya: The Man and His Ideology,* New Delhi, 1991, p. 131.

[72] *Tribune,* 30 August 1923, p. 6, Microfilm, NMML.
[73] V.D. Savarkar, *Hindutva: Who is a Hindu?,* New Delhi, 2003, p. 95; Jayakar Papers, File 478, Item 130, NMML.
[74] H.N. Mitra [ed.], *Indian Annual Register,* 1926, Vol. I, Calcutta, 1927, January-June, p. 401. Narendra Nath, in his presidential address, declared: 'It is very strange that one belonging to [the] depressed classes has only to embrace Christianity or Islam and *his untouchability in relation to Hindus disappears at once. A more illogical position it is difficult to conceive.' Cited in Prakash, A Review,* p. 97.
[75] Prakash, *A Review,* p. 264.
[76] Chatterji, *Bengal Divided,* p. 194; Jones, 'Politicized Hinduism', p. 254.
[77] V.D. Savarkar, *Samagra Savarkar Wangmaya: Writings of Swatantrya Veer V.D. Savarkar,* Vol. 6, Poona, 1964, rept. New Delhi, 2003, p. 283.
[78] H.N. Mitra [ed.], *Indian Annual Register,* 1935, Vol. 2, Calcutta, 1936, July-December, p. 30.
[79] D. Keer, *Dr Ambedkar: Life and Mission,* Bombay, 1971, p. 168-7.
[80] Cited in Valerian Rodrigues, *Essential Writings of B.R. Ambedkar,* Delhi, 2002, 224.

change one's religion, since 'life and the preservation of life constitute the essence of religion'. Hinduism was responsible for the degradation of the untouchables, he claimed, and even those who denied the existence of untouchability continued to practice it. 'That Hinduism is inconsistent with the self-respect and honour of the Untouchables is the strongest ground which justifies the conversion of the Untouchables to another and nobler faith'.[81] The notion of *varna* [caste], he insisted, denied the masses access to knowledge and worsened the condition of the untouchables, not even touching the 'conscience of caste Hindus'. Ambedkar pointed to the hostility many caste Hindus had shown to the untouchables in an 'unjust' Hindu society, declaring in his 'annihilation of caste' speech: 'They hate me. To them I am a snake in their garden.'[82] Ambedkar called for the rejection of the *shatras* [treatises] that justified the caste system, which was economically harmful because it subordinated the human powers to the crippling social rules in a closed community – a system that was 'resistant to reform and killed public spirit'. [83]

Ambedkar's conversion threat caused consternation among Hindu Mahasabhaites. B.S. Moonje entered into formal negotiations with Ambedkar to end the conversion threat and tried to ensure that if Ambedkar must convert, he should become either a Sikh or a Buddhist but on no account a Muslim or a Christian, which had an alien origin.[84] The Mahasabha's seventeenth session, held in Poona in December 1935, was mostly devoted to countering Ambedkar's conversion threat.[85] It adopted a resolution moved by Dr Kurtkoti, calling for the eradication of untouchability and reaffirming the Mahasabha's 'previous resolutions for giving equal access to all Hindus to all public amenities' irrespective of their caste or creed.[86] The Mahasabha drew several depressed class politicians into its orbit and developed close ties to the leadership of the Depressed Classes Association, the first all-India untouchable association. Two Hindu Mahasabhaites from Nagpur, G.A. Gavai and G.M. Thaware, were for many years the association's general secretary and joint secretary.[87] In December 1938, the Mahasabha amended its constitution at its Nagpur session under V.D. Savarkar's presidentship, declaring that its main objective was to 'remove untouchability and generally to ameliorate and improve the condition of the so-called depressed classes amongst Hindus'.[88] In March 1939, Savarkar formally launched the Mahasabha's untouchable uplift programme, which underlined the importance the party placed on Hindu unity. At a public

---

[81] Cited in Rodrigues, *Essential Writings*, p. 229.

[82] Cited in B.R. Ambedkar *Annihilation of Caste: An Undelivered Speech* [Ed. Mulk Raj Anand], New Delhi, 1990, p. 30. Ambedkar converted to Buddhism with his followers in Nagpur, Maharashtra, in 1938. His interest in Buddha had arisen due to the biography written by K.A. Keluskar given to him as a prize at high school; and he was deeply impressed by Budhha's compassion and efforts for the welfare of the oppressed. Margaret Chatterjee, *Gandhi and the Challenge of Religious Diversity: Religious Pluralism Revisited*, New Delhi, 2005, p. 203.

[83] Rodrigues, *Essential Writings*, pp. 228, 272.

[84] B.S. Moonje's entry for 7 June 1936, Moonje's Diary, Manuscripts, NMML, New Delhi; Keith Meadowcroft, 'The All-India Hindu Mahasabha, Untouchable Politics, and "Denationalising" Conversions: The Moonje-Ambedkar Pact', *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*, Vol. 29, No. 1, April 2006, p. 19.

[85] B.S. Moonje's entry for 5 February 1936, Moonj'se Diary, Manuscripts, NMML.

[86] All-India Hindu Mahasabha: 17th Session Poona, December 1935: Full Text of Resolutions, Jayakar Papers, File 65, NAI.

[87] Meadowcroft, 'All-India Hindu Mahasabha', p. 19.

[88] *'The Hindu Mahasabha [Registered under Act XXI of 1860]: Constitution, Objects and Rules', NMML, New Delhi; Savarkar, Samagra Savarkar,* Vol. 6, p. 283.

meeting in Monghyr in Bengal, he received five Santal [tribal] boys into the Hindu community.[89] In the interwar years 1939-1945, the Mahasabha's sessions routinely passed resolutions, calling for the removal of disabilities on the untouchables and encouraging its leaders and local organisations to dedicate themselves to the emancipation of the untouchables as part of the *sangathan* movement.[90]

II. Caste Hierarchy

The *sangathan*ist programme of untouchable integration failed to represent a radical critique of the caste system and faced resistance from orthodox Hindu classes. In the United Provinces, the high-born Hindus viewed with suspicion any movement that challenged the existing caste structure, viewing untouchable integration as a high degree of 'impurity'.[91] They expressed hostility, especially when the Hindu Mahasabha had voted to raise five lakh rupees to support the untouchable reform in the province in the 1920s.[92] In many areas of the rural UP, entry into temples was accorded 'wherever possible according to *maryada'* [social custom], the untouchables were entitled to a separate well in every settlement but not access to the others, and provisions were made for the education of the untouchables in mixed schools but not in those of Brahmans only. In 1921 at Ujhyani village in Badayun district, a group of Chamars [untouchables] had been dissuaded from converting to Islam by being admitted to the village well; however, after this symbolic gesture, the wells were purified with Ganges water, perpetuating the crisis.[93] The Arya Samaj's plan to use *shuddhi* for raising the status of the untouchables had come under attack from *sanatan*ists, who urged a restraint on the zeal of 'caste-breakers' in Hindu society.[94] The Sanathan Dharm Sabha insisted that the Samaj's reformist efforts were weakening the Hindu feelings of 'nationality and national sympathy'.[95] Din Dayal Sharma, secretary of the Bharat Dharma Mahamandal, asserted that the chief disagreement over untouchability was about the tendency of the Arya Samaj not to follow *shastr*ic injunctions in making the proposed reforms.[96] He called for the need to protect *varnashrama dharma* [caste hierarchy] and for the defence of Hinduism from critics both within the Hindu community and outside of it.[97] In the UP, the drive for the assimilation of the untouchables into Hindu society through reform or *shuddhi* had scarcely succeeded in cultivating their identity as 'Hindu'.

---

[89] Chatterji, *Bengal Divided*, p. 195.
[90] Prakash, *A Review*, pp. 72-3; Meadowcroft, 'All-India Hindu Mahasabha', p. 28.
[91] Jaffrelot [ed.], *Hindu Nationalism*, pp. 13-14.
[92] Gordon, 'Hindu Mahaabha', p. 181.
[93] G.S. Vidyarthi, 'Hindu rahem ya musalman banem?', *Pratap*, 1, June 1925, cited in Francesca Orsini, *The Hindi Public Sphere, 1920-1940: Language and Literature in the Age of Nationalism*, New Delhi, 2002, p. 232.
[94] Nandini Gooptu, *The Politics of the Urban Poor in Early Twentieth-century India*, Cambridge, 2001, p. 157; J.T.F. Jordens, 'Hindu Religious and Social Reform in British India', in A.L. Basham [ed.], *A Cultural History of India*, Oxford, 1975, p. 380. The *shuddhi* rituals included the ceremonies of tonsure *[mundan]*, fire sacrifice *[hom]*, investiture of the sacred thread, and instruction in the sacred *gayatri mantra*. Ghai, *Shuddhi Movement*, pp. 48-9.
[95] J.T.F. Jordens, 'Reconversion to Hinduism: the Shuddhi of the Arya Samaj', in G.A. Oddie [ed.], *Religion in South Asia: Religious Conversion and Revival in South Asia in Medieval and Modern Times*, Delhi, 1977, p. 155.
[96] Walter Anderson, 'The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh II: Who Represents the Hindus?', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 7, No. 12,18 March 1972, p. 634.
[97] Jones, *Socio-religious Reform Movements*, p. 79.

The Hindu nationalist discourse on the construction of a single 'homogenous' Hindu community was fundamentally based on the sanctity of the *varna* [caste] hierarchy, which remained undiminished. Madan Mohan Malaviya, an important figure in initiating caste uplift programmes in the UP, upheld the validity of caste distinctions based on the *varnashrama dharma*, even while opposing the exclusion of the untouchables from public places and affairs, or temples.[98] He argued that the untouchables should be given religious consecration, involving *diksha* [initiation] and *sanskar* [purification and reform]. A person thus consecrated, he believed, would 'become pure and religious' and 'cease to be called and treated as an untouchable'.[99] In particular, he advised the untouchables to acquire proper religious instruction in Hinduism, which would make them 'useful members' of Hindu society.[100] He attached great importance to primary education as 'a *sine qua non* of efficiency and progress', as it would solve the problem of 'ignorance, untouchability and communal bitterness, etc'.[101] However, in Malaviya's reformist vision, the *varna* system was not to be altered. More usually, the reform drive against untouchability was intended to work within the acceptable framework of *varna,* or 'sanskritisation'.[102] The lower castes were encouraged to adopt the ritual practices of the twice-born by giving up some of the ritually 'impure' customs that marked them out as 'degraded'.[103] *Sangathani*sts defended *varna* and preached strict obedience to caste rules, revealing a deep conflict with the radical edge of untouchable consciousness that contested caste distinctions in Hindu society.

The *sangathani*st representation of a 'Hindu nation' in terms of a 'unified and cohesive' Hindu community underplayed deeper conflicts of the caste hierarchy. In his analysis of the boundaries of Hinduism, V.D. Savarkar, himself a Chitpavan Brahman, defended the caste system founded on the hierarchically conceived purity and nobility of upper castes [Vedic-Aryan 'blood']. He rejected the stigma of hierarchical *varna* [caste] oppression through the overriding commonality of 'Hindu blood', viewing the untouchables as an integral feature of Hindutva. 'Santals, Kolis, Bhils, Panchamas, Namashudras and other such tribes and classes', he declared, were 'more emphatically Hindu than the so-called Aryans', even though they practised a rather 'primitive religion'.[104] They 'inherit the Hindu blood and the Hindu culture ... and this Sindhusthan is as emphatically the land of their forefathers as of those of the so-called Aryans'.[105] Savarkar urged the need for the removal of untouchability as a necessary part of Hindu consolidation, campaigning for the opening of public places and

---

[98] Gupta, *Malaviya*, p. 333.
[99] Gupta, *Malaviya*, 334.
[100] Gupta, *Malaviya*, p. 296.
[101] Gupta, *Malaviya*, p. 359.
[102] M.N. Srinivas first formulated the notion of 'sanskritisation' through the emulation of higher-caste practices. M.N. Srinivas, *Social Change in Modern India*, Berkeley, 1968, rept. Delhi, 1972, p. 7.
[103] Susan Bayly, 'Hindu Modernisers and the "Public" Arena: Indigenous Critiques of Caste in Colonial India', in William Radice [ed.]. *Swami Vivekananda and the Modernization of Hinduism*, Delhi, 1998, pp. 159-60.
[104] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, pp. 28, 120-1.
[105] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, pp 98-9; Savarkar, *Samagra Savarkar*, Vol. 6, p.77.

temples for the lower castes.[106] Even so, there were strong limits to Savarkar's vision of Hindutva: he did not propose any form of social and political liberation which might lead to the rejection of Brahmanical authority. He supported B.R. Ambedkar's movement against untouchability, but remained silent on the exploitation of the untouchables by the upper castes.[107] He disagreed with the code of the *Manusmriti*, but criticised the burning of the ancient law book by Ambedkar in 1927. Such acts, he insisted, did not help in 'securing basic human rights to the untouchables'.[108] More alarmingly, Savarkar made a veiled threat to lower caste movements: 'Those of you who in a suicidal fit ... dare to disown the name Hindu will find to their cost that in doing so they have cut themselves off from the very source of our racial Life and Strength.'[109] Savarkar's Hindutva was based on an adherence to the caste hierarchy, reiterating the binding together of the Hindus without disrupting the *varna* system, despite its internal divisions that were potentially disruptive to Hindu 'homogeneity'.

In general, *sangathan*ists visualised the existence of a 'unified' Hindu society within the traditional matrix of the institutional *varna* hierarchy.[110] B.S. Moonje believed that it was important to bring about a total union and solidarity of the four castes *[chaturvarnas]* rather than a complete eradication of the *varna* system, which was 'not detrimental to Hindu unity'. He proposed the creation of a 'unified Hinduism' on the basis of 'common blood relations by promoting intermarriages between various sub-groups *[varnas]*'. A real organic unity among the four sections of Hindu society', he argued, could be brought about through the Vedic marriage custom *[paddhati]* of *anuloma* and *pratiloma* -- where the man's caste is superior to that of his wife and *vice-versa* -- as provided in the *Dharmashastra*s.[111] The Mahasabha would in turn adhere to the 'cause of social reform and abolition of untouchability'.[112] In reality, Moonje's *sangathan*ist narrative sought to preserve the *varna* hierarchy in an amended form through intermarriages as a major pillar of the Hindu identity.[113]

Madhav Sadashiv Golwalkar [1906-1973], the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh's Hindutva ideologue, rejected the view that caste was an evil system or that it was exploitative, praising it as the 'best social system' -- a 'great institution' that served society as 'a bulwark against Islam'.[114] Caste helped to preserve Hindu identity against *mlecchas* [Muslims and Christians], 'who do not subscribe to the social laws dictated by the Hindu religion and culture'.[115] 'A good country ... Nation,' as he put it, '... should have all four classes of society as

---

[106] V.D. Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan: A Collection of the Presidential Speeches Delivered from the Hindu Mahasabha Platform*, Bombay, 1992 [1949], pp. 37, 89.
[107] Lise McKean, *Divine Enterprise: Gurus and the Hindu Nationalist Movement*, Chicago, 1996, pp. 84-5. B.R. Ambedkar wrote to Savarkar: 'If the untouchables are to be a part and parcel of the Hindu society, then it is not enough to eradicate untouchability; for that matter you must destroy Chaturvarnya.' Keer, Dr *Ambedkar*, p. 130.
[108] D. Keer, *Veer Savarkar,* Bombay, 1988 [1966], pp. 477.
[109] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, p. 116.
[110] Sumit Sarkar, *Writing Social History*, Delhi, 1997, p. 368.
[111] B.S. Moonje's letter to Dr Kurtkoti, 14 February 1923, File No. LP-14, Moonje Papers, NMML.
[112] B.S. Moonje's letter to V.D. Shastri, 20 February 1923, File No. LP-14; Moonje's letter to Swami Shraddhananda, 17 June 1923, File No. LP-16, Moonje Papers, NMML.
[113] B.S. Moonje's Press Statement, *Hitavada*, 17 July 1927, cited in Gondhalekar, 'Indian Nationalism', p. 106.
[114] M.S. Golwalkar's interview, *Organiser,* Vol. 22, No. 29, 8 March 1969, pp. 1-2. M.S.
[115] M.S. Golwalkar, *We, or Our Nationhood Defined*, Nagpur, 1939, 4th edition 1947, p. 62.

conceived by Hindu Religion.'[116] However, he affirmed, the RSS 'simply does not recognise' untouchability. He argued for the abolition of untouchability, urging the Hindus to uplift their 'neglected brethren'.[117] The untouchables and tribals were indeed Hindus, he pleaded, even though they had no knowledge of Hinduism as a religion. The 'fault does not lie with them but with the Hindus', who had a responsibility to teach them the traditions and customs of the Hindu community.[118] In Golwalkar's vision, Hindu unity was determined by a concern to remove untouchablity, yet the 'natural order' or the *varna-vyavastha* [caste order] with its underlying notions of purity and pollution was to be preserved. The *sangathan*ist vision of an ideal Hindu society continued to be based on the *varna* system in which different castes served complementary functions integral to Hinduism as a social organism.[119] The Hindu culture which *sangathan*ists championed was that of a higher tradition, bearing the marks of Brahmanical and high caste domination as revealed by the nature of the Mahasabha's organisation and leadership, which was mostly a high caste, middle class preserve of Brahmans. Indeed, *sangathan*ists rejected the lower caste movements and their anti-Brahman ideology as 'divisive and disruptive' to Hinduism in India.

II. 1. Adi Hindu Movement

In the 1920s and 1930s, an anti-Vedic ideology gained popularity among the mass of the untouchables who showed little interest in the upper-caste reform movements across the UP. In search of a new ideology to repudiate Vedic Hinduism based on caste, literate untouchable leaders – chiefly Swami Acchutanand [1879-1933] and Ram Charan [1888-1938], an Adi Hindu leader of Lucknow -- drew upon *bhakti* heritage and formulated the ideology of Adi Hinduism.[120] In 1924, local Adi Hindu Sabhas [associations] were organised in Kanpur, Lucknow, Banaras, and Allahabad to spread the message of Adi Hinduism.[121] The Adi Hindu theory believed that the Aryan invaders had subjugated and imposed Vedic Hinduism on the original Indians [Adi Hindus] and deprived them of their *bhakti* religion, which they had practised prior to the advent of the Aryans.[122] Hinduim with its institutional caste system was rejected as a social creation of the Aryans who called themselves the higher castes: Brahmans, Kshatriyas, and Vaishyas. The central focus of Adi Hindu ideology was the denial of religious rituals and ceremonies prescribed by the higher castes for the untouchables and a strong defiance to the low social duties and labour imposed on them in Indian society.

Adi Hindu narrative found application in reforms spearheaded by various untouchable caste panchayats led by prominent leaders such as Ram Charan and Shiv Dayal Singh Caurasia in the UP from the 1920s onwards.

---

[116] Golwalkar, *We*, p. 62.
[117] M.S. Golwalkar, *Bunch of Thoughts*, Bangalore, 2000 [1966], pp. 358-70.
[118] Golwalkar, *Bunch of Thoughts*, p. 471.
[119] Jaffrelot, *Hindu Nationalist Movement*, p. 45; Bhatt, *Hindu Nationalism*, p. 117.
[120] Gooptu, *Politics of Urban Poor*, pp. 157-8.
[121] An Adi Hindu Samaj was formed in Lucknow in 1919, the Adi Hindu Mahasabha in Kanpur in 1923, and a similar organisation in Allahabad in the 1920s. Gooptu, *Politics of Urban Poor*, p. 159.
[122] Susan Bayly, 'Caste and "Race" in the Colonial Ethnography of India', in P. Robb [ed.], *The Concept of Race in South Asia*, Delhi, 1995, pp. 164-218.

In 1928 during the visit of the Indian Statutory Commission headed by Sir John Simon, Adi Hindu leaders led by the Adi Hindu Depressed Classes Association [1925], contrary to the Congress's policy of boycott, resolved to give evidence to the commission with a view to securing rights for the untouchables in the province.[123] The association put forward demands for separate political rights as well as government jobs and entry to schools and colleges for the untouchables. It demanded preferential treatment, access to education, better employment, and a voice in the representative institutions for the untouchable groups.[124] In 1930-31 during the Round Table Conferences, all the Adi Hindu organisations in the UP campaigned to rally support for separate electorates to the untouchables.[125] Large public meetings were held in Kanpur and Allahabad, where Adi Hindu leaders Swami Acchutanand and Shyam Lal delivered speeches in defence of separate electorates.[126] At some of these meetings, Gandhi and the Congress became the targets of intense criticism for opposing separate electorates to the untouchables.[127] Across the UP, the untouchables pursued the issues of social and economic opportunities for themselves and focused not on the critique of colonialism but of caste. Adi Hindu ideology mounted a powerful critique of the caste system as an instrument of oppression against the untouchables practised by the higher castes in India.

Conclusion

In the early 1920s, the threat of a united and well-organised Muslim militancy against the Hindus as evident in the post-Khilafat riots and the Moplah conversions produced the *sangathan* movement -- a significant force in Hindu nationalist ideology.[128] *Sangathan,* a drive for the acquisition of strength through the consolidation of the Hindu community, became an articulated movement by building on the organisational base provided by the Hindu Mahasabha. It was characterised by the defensive arguments about Hinduism in danger of 'extinction', particularly in view of the conversions carried out by Islam in India.[129] The Mahasabha made *shuddhi* an integral part of *sangathan,* designed *to* reconvert Hindu converts from Islam and Christinanity, in India. It supported the reconversion of the Malkanas in the western UP undertaken by the Arya Samaj. *Shuddhi* mostly targeted Islam, setting a hardening pattern for Hindu militancy against the Muslims.[130] More crucially, the *sangathan* drive was marked by a new urgency to widen and unify the Hindu community by drawing all castes and sects into the Hindu fold: it focused chiefly on untouchable integration.[131] The heavy interlinkage between community representation based on religious affiliations and the demands for more constitutional reforms in part shaped

---

[123] *Police Abstracts of Intelligence [PAI],* Lucknow, UP, No. 15, 21 April 1928; No. 21, 2 June 1928; No. 33, 25 August 1928.
[124] Interview with the Deputation from Depressed Classes, UP, Lucknow, 6 December 1928, *Indian Statutory Commission,* Vol. XVI, Part I, p. 362.
[125] *PAI,* No. 43, 31 August 1931.
[126] *PAI,* No. 39, 3 October 1931; No. 44, 7 November 1931; No. 46, 21 November 1931; No. 38, 24 September 1932.
[127] *PAI,* No. 40, 8 October 1932.
[128] Pandey, 'Hindus and Others', pp. 2996-7.
[129] *Vartman,* 21 September 1923, IOR L/R/5/97, File No. 15, 1923, p. 2; *The Leader,* 22 October 1923, IOR L/R/5/97, File No. 21, 1923, p. 2, IOL.
[130] *Report on the Administration of UP, 1923-24,* Allahabad, 1925, p. 91; 'Statement of Newspapers and Periodicals Published in UP, 1924', Home Poll., File No. 204/IV, 25,1925, NAI.
[131] *Gyan Shakti,* 5 Febuary 1927, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 5, 1927, pp. 3-4; Jones, *Arya Dharm,* p. 308.

the Mahasabha's discourse on untouchable integration, which aimed to strengthen Hindu political power.[132] However, untouchable integration had remained a partial and unfulfilled reform, as it hardly found a consensus in the face of *sanatani* resistance.[133] The *varna* system created in terms of the dominant symbols of purity and pollution had dealt a blow to the Mahasabha's notion of India as a 'unified' Hindu community.[134] The appeals for untouchable uplift in the name of Hindu *sangathan* in particular markedly had an anti-Muslim hostility.[135] The caste hierarchy was tied to the homogeneity of Hindu society from within so as to maximise the differences with the Muslims – the real enemies.[136] The construction of Hindu unity as the chief basis of *sangathan* ideology needed for its sustenance the notion of the Muslims as an ever-present existential threat; and the anti-Muslim hostility was actualised in the recurrent riots that broke out across the UP during the 1920s and 1930s.

---

[132] Chatterji, *Bengal Divided*, p. 193.

[133] At the Central Provinces conference of the Hindu Mahasabha in 1927, Waman Rao Ghorpade, a Mahar leader, moved a resolution, calling for the abolition of castes. Lajpat Rai, who chaired the conference, persuaded Ghorpade to withdraw the resolution, 'as it is against the present policy of the Hindu Mahasabha, though the conference has full sympathy with the resolution'. B.S. Moonje's Diary, 4 April 1927, Reel No. 1, Microfilm, Moonje Papers, NMML.

[134] Jaffrelot [ed.], *Hindu Nationalism*, p. 78.

[135] Sumit Sarkar, 'Indian Nationalism and the Politics of Hindutva', in David Ludden [ed.], *Contesting the Nation: Religion, Community, and the Politics of Democracy in India*, Philadelphia, 1996, p. 288.

[136] Jaffrelot, *Hindu Nationalist Movement*, pp. 13, 31.

5

Hindutva – a Nation of Hindu Race and Culture

The notion of a Hindu *rashtra* [nation] – India as a Hindu nation, the land of Hindus – was first articulated by Vinayak Damodar Savarkar in his theoretical work *Hindutva* -- an ideological text which provided a cultural justification for Hindu nationalism.[1] *Hindutva* was Savarkar's seed text which signified perhaps the first attempt to embody the ideology of a 'Hindu nation' and became the ideological basis of the Hindu Mahasabha, which had adopted it as a 'long-term statement of objectives' in the 1920-1940s.[2] The doctrines and the theorisation of the Mahasabha were coherently defined and articulated in the 1930s, as Savarkar's work had been read. Savarkar's key aim was to provide a comprehensive definition of what constituted 'Hinduness', or 'Hindu identity', defining a 'Hindu' as one to whom India was both a 'fatherland' and a 'holyland'. This definition, if religious, was only one component of Hindutva; and as important were criteria based on territory, race, and culture. Hindutva excluded Muslims and Christians from a 'Hindu nation' because of the radically different nature of their faiths, which were coextensive with their cultural identities. It equated India with a 'Hindu nation', ensuring the primacy of the cultural and political identity and interests of the Hindus in the country.[3] This chapter seeks to examine Hindutva and its ideological implications as the basis of Hindu nationalism, which centred on the goal of creating a 'Hindu nation [*rashtra*]'.

V.D. Savarkar [1883-1966] invented the overarching Hindutva ideology during the anti-British struggle of the early 1920s. He did his initial writing of *Hindutva* in the Andamans from 1910 until 1922, as he had been sentenced to transportation for life in the murder trial of A.M.T. Jackson.[4] It was put into a final shape in Ratnagiri jail in 1923. Savarkar, a non-religious man and a practising atheist himself, defined Hindutva by explicitly denying the role of religion in determining 'Hindu nationhood'.[5] Hindutva, he explained, was only one attribute of 'Hinduness' or 'Hindu identity' and 'not even the most important one'.[6] It was not concerned with dogmas and religious practices associated with Hinduism, but embraced 'all departments of thought and activity

---

[1] V.D. Savarkar, *Hindutva: Who is a Hindu?*, New Delhi, 2003 [1st edition Nagpur, 1923; Poona, 4th edition, 1949], p. 23. The book's first edition was published in 1923 under the pseudonym *A Maratha* by V.V. Kelkar, a Nagpur lawyer.

[2] John Zavos, 'The Shapes of Hindu Nationalism', in Catherine Adeney and Lawrence Saez [eds.], *Coalition Politics and Hindu Nationalism*, London, 2005, p. 39; idem, *The Emergence of Hindu Nationalism in India*, Delhi, 2000, p. 177.

[3] Christophe Jaffrelot [ed.], *Hindu Nationalism: A Reader*, New Delhi, 2007, p. 85; idem, *The Hindu Nationalist Movemen and Indian Politics, 1925 to the 1990s: Strategies of Identity-building, Implantation and Mobilisation [with special reference to Central India]*, London, 1996, p. 25; idem, 'The Idea of Hindu Race in the Writings of Hindu Nationalist Ideologues in the 1920s and 1930s: A Concept between Two Cultures', in Peter Robb [ed.], *The Concept of Race in South Asia*, Delhi, 1997 [1995], p. 333; Chetan Bhatt, *Hindu Nationalism: Origins, Ideologies and Modern Myths*, Oxford, 2001, pp. 99-100.

[4] A.M.T. Jackson, district magistrate of Nasik, was assassinated by Anant Laxman Kanhare in December 1909. Jackson was the judge who had sentenced V.D. Savarkar's bother Ganesh Savarkar to transportation in connection with a bombing attempt on Lord Minto, Viceroy of India. Dhananjay Keer, *Veer Savarkar*, Bombay, 1988 [1966], pp. 52-3.

[5] Savarkar stated in his will that his body after death should be cremated in an electric crematorium without religious ceremonies. Jyotirmaya Sharma, *Hindutva: Exploring the Idea of Hindu Nationalism*, New Delhi, 2003, p. 172.

[6] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, pp. iv, 81.

of the whole *Being* of our Hindu race'.[7] The term 'Hindu' signified both a race and a culture rather than merely a religion in contrast to the discourse of early nationalism propounded by Bankimchandra Chatterji and Aurobindo Ghose to whom 'Hindu' was basically a religious category. In Savarkar's discourse, religion, if it entered at all, was important only for its 'cultural' connotations. Hindutva was a political ideology that centred on the articulation of 'Hindu nationhood' and attempted to create a homogeneous Hindu community in view of the perceived threat of the 'Other' – the Muslims – in India.[8]

I. Hindu 'Self' and Islamic 'Non-self'

Savarkar defined Hindutva as 'the life of a great race and a history', confronting Islam and its 'attacks and betrayals' inflicted on India in the past. He viewed Islam as the 'other' of a 'Hindu nation'. 'Aryavarta' – the land of the Aryans -- existed before the Muslim conquests; and Hindu identity was formed largely as a reaction against the Islamic 'non-self'. Islam and the Muslims constituted the primary definition of the 'non-self' in conflict with the Hindu 'self', both sharing an antagonistic relation, followed by the English and Christianity.[9] Savarkar eventually added Gautam Buddha and Gandhi to the unhappy category of 'non-selves'. He held Buddha's creed of *ahimsa* [non-violence] responsible for the 'decline and degeneration' of the Hindus in the ancient times. [10] The 'first degeneration of the Hindu nation', he argued, had occurred with the expansion of Buddhism and its propagation of the ideals of love, righteousness, and toleration – which 'strangled India'.[11] It was the Buddhist formulas of universalism and non-violence that allowed the invasion of India by 'the Huns and Shakhas', who were superior in 'fire and sword'.[12] After the fall of Buddhism, King Shalivahana in the Vikramaditya era reasserted the identity of Hindu nationhood based on a demarcation between the Aryans and *mlecchas* [aliens/barbarians].[13] After the wars of the Vikramaditya era, 'Sindhustan [India] was left as an undisturbed nation of peace and plenty for nearly a thousand years', followed by a period of wars against the Muslim rulers.[14] In Savarkar's narrative, the Muslim period was a history of resistance by the Indian nation for nearly a thousand years – particularly since its invasion by the Muslim rulers of central Asia in the eleventh century.[15]

---

[7] V.D. Savarkar's presidential address, All-India Hindu Mahasabha session, Ahmedabad, 1937: V.D. Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan: A Collection of the Presidential Speeches Delivered from the Hindu Mahasabha Platform,* Bombay, 1992 [1949], p. 10.
[8] T.C.A. Raghavan, 'Origins and Development of Hindu Mahasabha Ideology: The Call of V.D. Savarkar and Bhai Parmanand', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 18, No. 15, 9 April 1983, p. 597; Daniel Gould, 'Organised Hinduism: From Vedic Truth to Hindu Nation', in Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby [eds.], *Fundamentalisms Observed*, Vol. 1, Chicago, 1994 [1991], pp. 531-93.
[9] Savarkar, *Hindutva,* pp. 9-10, 17-18.
[10] V.D. Savarkar, *Six Glorious Epochs of Indian History*, Bombay, 1985 [1949], 51.
[11] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, p. 16. Savarkar's plays *Bodhivriksha* [which remained incomplete] and *Sanyastha Khadga* [The Renunciate Sword] centring on the life of the Buddha reject *ahimsa*, echoing an attack on Gandhi and non-violence. V.D. Savarkar, *Samagra Savarkar Wangmaya: Writings of Swatantrya Veer V.D. Savarkar,* Vol. 4, Poona, 1964, rept. New Delhi, 2003, pp. 149-87.
[12] Savarkar, *Hindutva,* pp. 12-3
[13] Savarkar, *Hindutva,* p. 34.
[14] Savarkar, *Samagra Savarkar,* Vol. 5, pp. 443-4.
[15] V.D. Savarkar, *The Indian War of Independence 1857*, Bombay, 8th edn. 1970 [1947], p. 542. Savarkar wrote the *Indian War* originally in Marathi in 1907. It was published in London in 1909 and proscribed: the ban was lifted in 1946.

In Hindutva ideology, Hindu identity was forged in a continuing process of the violent struggle against Islam and the Muslim rulers in India.[16] India was 'rudely awakened on the day when Mahmud of Ghazni crossed the Indus, the frontier line of Sindhusthan, and invaded her'. The invasion, Savarkar reflected, signalled 'the day that the conflict of life and death began'. 'Never had Sindhusthan a better chance and a more powerful stimulus to be herself forged into an indivisible whole as on that dire day, when the great iconoclast crossed the Indus.'[17] The 'ghastly conflict', Savarkar noted, had continued 'day after day, decade after decade, century after century till such time as Shivaji established a Hindu Empire, a Hindu-Pad-Padshahi', in western India.[18] The raids into the Punjab during 1001-1027 by Mahmud of Ghazni, the rise of the Delhi Sultanate in north India in the twelfth century, and the establishment of Mughal rule in 1526 decisively influenced the evolution and course of India's history. Savarkar viewed the whole period from the eleventh century until the early decades of the nineteenth century through the logic of a single war between the Hindus and the 'Muslim invaders and tyrants'; and the wars constituted an integral whole based on the defence of Hindutva by the Hindus against the Muslim rulers.[19] Muslim rule in India became 'a period of despotism and anarchy', being the historical justification for British intervention and conquest in the eighteenth century.[20]

The Muslim invasions became a narrative theme, usually the result of a series of 'dreadful religious wars' as well as the struggle of the Hindus against 'Islam and Muhamadan power'.[21] The conflict with the Arabs, the Turks, the Persians, the Tartars, and the Mughals defined Hindu identity and constituted the Hindus as a 'nation'. The struggle was 'monstrously unequal' because India was pitted against 'nearly all of Islam in Asia'.[22] While all other civilisations conquered by Islam were destroyed, argued Savarkar, Hindu India had resisted Islamic rule. 'But here for the first time the sword succeeded in striking but not killing ... Vitality of the victim proved stronger than the vitality of the victor.'[23] The Hindus fought under the banner of Hindutva, transcending the barriers of caste and creed. All castes, creeds and denominations, Savarkar explained, 'suffered as Hindus and triumphed as Hindus', permeated by Hindutva. In the course of the conflict, 'our people became intensely conscious of ourselves as Hindus and we were welded into a nation to an extent unknown in our history'.[24] Although the Aryans had been a *jati*, a nation-community, Savarkar believed, they did not become a *rashtra*, a nation state, until they encountered the Muslim invaders -- the Islamic 'Other'. Only through confrontation with the Islamic 'non-self' could the 'resurrection, renaissance and rejuvenation' of a 'Hindu nation' become a

---

[16] Savarkar, *Hindu Rahtra Darshan*, p. 15.
[17] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, pp. 42-3.
[18] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, p. 35.
[19] *V.D. Savarkar, Hindu-Pad-Padshahi Or A Review of the Hindu Empire of Maharashtra, 4th edition New Delhi, 1971 [Bombay,* 1925], p. 196; Savarkar, *Hindutva*, pp. 45-6, 95.
[20] Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*, Delhi, 1994 [Princeton, 1993], pp. 95, 101, 115; Bipan Chandra, *Communalism in Modern India*, New Delhi, 1987 [1984], pp. 209-36.
[21] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, p. 35.
[22] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, p. 45.
[23] Savarka, *Hindutva*, p. 37.
[24] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, pp. 28, 44-5.

historical reality.[25] What brought about Hindu unity was the presence of the 'enemy' -- the Muslims – in India. Savarkar's politics of integral Hindutva emerged through the antagonistic presence of the Muslims in India, who were internal to his imagination of a Hindu identity. In Hindutva belief, the Muslims were the most important in the league of foreign invaders;[26] and British rule was a prelude to national resurgence: both were equally 'alien'.[27]

In Savarkar's reconstructive project focusing on India's medieval period, the battles against the Muslim invaders comprised Hindu history, demonstrating the struggle of an 'oppressed monolithic nation of the Hindus' against Islam.[28] The early poem *Prithviraja-raso* of Chanbardai recounted the battles of the early 1190s between Mohammed of Ghur and the Gahadavara ruler Jayachandra in alliance with the Rajput Chauhan king Prithviraj III. The battles of the Maratha king Shivaji against Aurangzeb's general Afzal Khan in the mid-1600s were the instances of 'Hindu resistance against Muslim invasion, tyranny and persecution' by the Marathas. Sikh leader Teg Bahadur's resistance and death at the hands of Aurangzeb as well as Guru Gobind Singh's battles against the Muslim governors were the struggles that aimed to defend 'Hindutva and Hindu *dharm* [religion]'.[29] A 'Hindu' consciousness found its expression in the seventeenth century in the empire of Shivaji, the torchbearer of the 'golden age' of Hinduism, and then in the Maratha confederation.[30] Shivaji [1627-1680], the legendary warrior-king and founder of the Maratha state, had overthrown the Muslim invaders, freed Maharashtra from Islamic rule and established *swaraj* [freedom] in India. Under the Maratha confederacy, the forces of 'Hindudom' entered Delhi triumphantly in 1761 and 'the Moslem throne and crown lay hammered at the feet of Bhau and Vishvas'. The establishment in 1761 of Hindu-Pad-Padashahi [Hindu Empire] was an instance of the Hindus regaining a sense of 'freedom and self-possession' *vis-a-vis* the Muslim rulers.[31] In Hindutva narrative, it was important for the Hindus to seek retribution for the wrongs done to them as a 'nation and race' by the Muslim rulers. Hindu unity and nationalism had remained intact all through history, nonetheless.[32]

Hindutva was rooted in a fundamental mistrust and conflict bordering on the hatred of Islam and the Muslims in India. Savarkar rejected the view that the political strife between the Hindus and the Muslims in India was the result of British policies, arguing that it had instead arisen as a reaction to 'Islamic occupation'.[33] All the sectarian conflicts, he explained, 'are but a legacy handed down to us by centuries of a cultural, religious and

---

[25] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, p. 28; Savarkar, *Samagra Savarkar*, Vol. 5, p. 27.
[26] Savarkar, *Six Gorious Epochs*, pp. 21-5.
[27] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, pp. 34-6.
[28] Bhatt, *Hindu Nationalism*, pp. 92-3.
[29] Teg Bahadur was the ninth and Guru Gobind Singh the tenth guru of Sikhism.
[30] Jaffrelot, *Hindu Nationalist Movement*, p. 5.
[31] Savarkar, *Hindu-Pad-Padshahi*, pp. 21-2.
[32] Savarkar, *Hindu-Pad-Padshahi*, p. 21.
[33] Bhatt, *Hindu Nationalism*, p. 90; Sharma, *Hindutva*, p. 128.

national antagonism between the Hindus and the Moslems'.[34] The internal conflicts and discords among the Hindus were the chief cause of disunity, resulting in the nation's inability to maintain a united front against the 'Muslim threat'. The 'centuries of cultural, religious and national antagonism' lay in perpetuity between the Hindus and the Muslims in India.[35]

It was an irony that Savarkar who once demonstrated faith in Hindu-Muslim unity had transformed himself into a Hindutva ideologue since the advent of the 1920s. In his account of the 1857 revolt -- the 'War of Independence of 1857' – written in 1907 while he was in England, Savarkar portrayed the sepoy mutiny as a national revolt 'as much to protect religion [*swadharma*] as to gain independence [*swarajya*]' -- the two aims shared by both the Hindus and the Muslims in the anti-British struggle. The Hindus and the Muslims, Savarkar reflected, were 'blood brothers' who partook of the 'same milk of the breasts of the Motherland' and fought against the British 'hand in hand, shoulder to shoulder' in national unity.[36] Maulvis Ahmadullah Shah and Inayat Ali stood alongside the Rani of Jhansi, Nana Saheb, and Kunwar Singh as the heroes of the 1857 revolt.[37] However, Savarkar's strong admiration for the 'Hindu-Muslim feelings of mutual friendship and unity' in India was supplanted by a hostile critique of the Muslims as the nation's 'traitors and enemies' a decade later in the early 1920s, marking his decisive conversion to Hindutva ideology.[38] The early 1920s signified a radical departure in Savarkar's career as a politician, revealing a seminal shift from an anti-British revolutionary to an anti-Muslim Hindutva crusader.[39] The Muslims -- the threatening 'Other' – replaced the British as the real enemy of India, which Savarkar argued was vulnerable due to a conflict arising from 'Islam and Pan-Islamism'.[40] The anti-Muslim hostility formed a prelude to Savarkar's ferocious denunciations of the Muslims as the 'enemies of the Indian nation' before and after India's independence.

II. A Hindu Fatherland

In Hindutva theory, Savarkar defined India primarily as an ethnic community and a nation possessing first a territory and then sharing a unity of 'Hindu race and culture'. India's three great attributes of geographical unity, racial unity as well as a common culture originated from the mythical reconstruction of its Vedic 'golden age'.[41] The first attribute of India as a 'Hindu nation' was the 'sacred territory' of 'Aryavarta' – the land of the Aryans.[42] The Hindus were pre-eminently the descendants of the 'intrepid Aryans' who made Indian subcontinent their

---

[34] Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan*, p. 26.
[35] V.D. Savarkar's statement, no date, cited in Lise McKean, *Divine Enterprise: Gurus and the Hindu Nationalist Movement*, Chicago, 1996, p. 80.
[36] V.D. Savarkar, 'The War of Independence of 1857', Savarkar, *Samagra Savarkar*, Vol. 5, pp.106, 228-9.
[37] Savarkar, *Indian War of Independence,* p. ix.
[38] V.D. Savarkar, *Mazhi Janmathep*, Bombay, 1950 [1924], pp. 278-81, cited in Nandini Gondhalekar, 'Indian Nationalism and "Hindu" Politics: Maharashtra and the Hindu Mahasabha, 1920-1948', Unpublished PhD Dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1999, p. 79; D.R. Goyal, *Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh,* New Delhi, 2nd edn. 2000 [1979], p. 32.
[39] V.D. Savarkar, *An Echo from the Andamans: Letters Written by Barrister Savarkar to His Brother Dr. Savarkar*, Nagpur, 1928, cited in Savarkar, *Samagra Savarkar*, Vol. 4. p. 281.
[40] Savarkar, *Hindutva,* pp. 115-6.
[41] Savarkar, *Hindutva,* p. 84.
[42] Keer, *Veer Savarkar,* p. 29.

home and lighted their 'first sacrificial fire on the bank of the Indus', a river which was the western border of Hindusthan.[43] The Aryan theory was central to Savarkar's narrative in that the Hindus had descended from the Aryans who had settled at the dawn of history along the Sapta Sindhu [the River Indus].[44] The word Sindhu, Savarkar noted, 'does not only mean the Indus but also the Sea – which girdles the southern peninsula'.[45] The 'whole continental country' girdled by the River Sindhu and the Sindhu, another name for the seas surrounding peninsular India, was 'our whole Motherland' -- a cohesive geographical unit, a 'nation'.[46] This land, explained Savarkar, was ruled by the Aryans, who had been the progenitors of a great 'Hindu nation' in the ancient times.[47]

The term 'Hindu' originally derived from the Aryan name for the Sindhu, the River Indus, and was used successively by the Achaemenids, the Greeks, and the Muslims to denote the population living beyond the Indus.[48] However, it was not appropriated by the Aryans who bore this designation, nor did they use it themselves till the medieval period. The crystallisation of the notion of the 'Hindus' as a race had originated in the 'consciousness of being the amorphous, undefined, subordinate other' in ancient India.[49] Historically, Savarkar wrote, it was the infusion of Aryan blood, ideas and culture that provided the basis of a 'Hindu race and nation' originating in the Sindhu, the Indus.[50] 'The same Hindu people have built the life-values, ideals and culture of this country and, therefore, their nationhood is self-evident.'[51] India emerged as a 'Hindu nation' out of the Vedic past; and the motif of the Aryan age, the original 'golden age', acquired a historical foundation in Hindutva narrative, with territory and ethnic unity being inseparable.[52]

In Hindutva discourse, the most fundamental criterion determining India's nationhood apart from the territory was the inheritance of 'Hindu blood'.[53] Savarkar introduced the notion of 'race' for the identification of the Hindus, representing 'common blood' as the basis of the Indian nation.[54] The term he used for a 'race' was *jati*. 'The Hindus,' he declared, '... are not only a Nation but also a race – *jati* ... a race determined by a common origin and possessing common blood.'[55] All the Hindus had in their veins the 'blood of the Vedic fathers, the Sindhus'. Savarkar explained: 'We *feel* that the same ancient blood that coursed through the veins of Ram and Krishna, Buddha and Mahavir, Nanak and Chaitanya ... courses throughout Hindudom from vein to vein,

---

[43] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, pp. 4-5.
[44] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, p. 82.
[45] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, p. 20.
[46] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, p. 20.
[47] Savarkar, *Samagra Savarkar*, Vol. 5, pp. 3-9.
[48] R.E. Frykenberg, 'The Emergence of Modern Hinduism as a Concept and an Institution: A Reappraisal with Special Reference to South India', in G.D. Sontheimer and H. Kulke [eds.], *Hinduism Reconsidered*, New Delhi, 1989, p. 30.
[49] Romila Thapar, 'Syndicated Moksha?', *Seminar*, No. 313, September 1985, p. 17.
[50] Bhatt, *Hindu Nationalism*, pp. 87-8.
[51] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, p. 9.
[52] Savarkar, *Samgra Savarkar*, Vol. 5, pp. 20-1; Savarkar, *Hindu-Pad-Padshahi*, pp. 246-7, 281.
[53] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, pp. 56-7.
[54] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, pp. 68-9, 102.
[55] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, p. 53.

pulsates from heart to heart.'[56] He justified a view of the Hindus as racially undifferentiated and hence a discrete racial unit: beyond the Hindu community's differences of caste or sect there existed an invisible bond of 'common blood'.[57] A racial unity underlay the social diversity of the Hindus. No people in the world, Savarkar argued, 'can more justly claim to get recognised as a racial unit than the Hindus and perhaps the Jews'.[58] Sanctioned 'intermarriages' -- the system of *anuloma* and *pratiloma* [regular and inverse] alliances – had proliferated through the union of members of different castes; but all the castes were bound by the same blood, the same race. The very presence of caste, Savarkar claimed, demonstrated the 'flow of blood from a Brahmin to a Chandal'; the *anuloma* and *pratiloma* marriages mixed the 'blood within the castes and of the four castes with those outside them'.[59] The 'commingling of the blood' of the Aryans and the people they encountered gave rise to the Vedic-Hindu civilisation. The blood manifested itself as an effective structure in which the Hindus would claim their racial affiliation to their ancestors and hence to all Hindus in India. The notion of common blood as the basis of the 'Hindu race' was one significant component of Savarkar's formula for the identification of the Hindus as a 'nation' – the 'Indian nation'.[60]

In Hindutva ideology, the principle of 'racial purity' or eugenics was absent, nonetheless. Hindutva was more concerned with the social, hierarchical unity of Hindu society, not a biological racism. In India, the *varna* [caste] system had been integrative and assimilative; and insofar as the caste hierarchy represented a system of gradation based on ritual purity, every 'alien' [*mleccha*] group could find a place in it -- at a subordinate rank below the Brahmans. Hinduism of the pre-modern period was not a uniform monolithic religion, but a juxtaposition of flexible 'religious sects'. It recognised the existence of *mlecchas* [aliens/barbarians], who attracted discrimination not on the basis of ethnic criteria but because they did not conform to the Vedic rituals.[61] The frontier between the Aryans and the *mlecchas* was relatively an open one; and the successive invaders such as the Greeks, the Shakas, and the Huns found themselves classed as Kshatriyas [warriors], accepting the ritual practices and authority of the Brahmans. From about the ninth century onwards, references to a large number of *mlecchas* began to decrease.[62] Hindutva in part reflected India's social system by not excluding the Muslims and the Christians – the hostile 'Other' – from Hindu society: they could be integrated, provided they paid allegiance to Hindu culture.[63] 'Hence dear Brethren,' Savarkar stated, 'most of you [Muslims] were Hindus

---

[56] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, pp. 89-90.
[57] Savarkar, *Hindutva,* p. 73.
[58] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, p. 90.
[59] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, p. 85.
[60] Savrakar, *Hindutva*, pp. 86, 90.
[61] Romila Thapar, *A History of India,* New Delhi, 1978 [Harmondsworth, 1970], pp. 165-73; Aloka Parasher, 'Attitudes towards the Mlecchа in Early Northern India – up to c. A.D. 600', *The Indian Historical Review*, Vol. 9, Nos. 1-2, July 1982-January 1983, pp. 1-30; Vasudha Dalmia, '"The Only Real Religion of the Hindus": Vaishnava Self-representation in the Late Nineteenth Century', in Vasudha Dalmia and H. von Stietencron [eds.], *Representing Hinduism: The Construction of Religious Traditions and National Identity,* New Delhi, 1995, p. 176.
[62] Romila Thapar, 'Imagined Religious Communities? Ancient History and the Modern Search for a Hindu Identity', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 23, No. 2, 1989, p. 216.
[63] Jaffrelot, 'Idea of Hindu Race', pp. 342-5.

once and just because you have changed your religion you cannot become foreigners – call yourself proudly Kshatriyas ... I tell you that once you call yourself Kshatriyas, that moment the Hindu-Moslem problem will vanish like mist before the powerful sun.'[64] In Hindutva discourse, the consolidation of Hindu society presented a preliminary stage that could enable the Hindus to absorb the Muslims and the Christians – the descendants of non-Aryan invaders – in India.[65]

*Sangathani*sts used the concept of race as the category of a homogeneous 'ethnic nation' – a 'Hindu nation', not as a eugenic racism of exclusion or extermination. In effect, Hindutva ideology did not represent eugenics based on 'racial purity and hygiene', which had resulted in the extermination of the Jews as an integral pillar of the Nazi doctrine in Germany the 1930s and 1940s.[66] Hindu society was based on the domination by the upper castes, not the racism of a biological kind.[67] The Muslims and the Christians were urged to integrate into Hindu society by renouncing their culture – a rejection of the eugenic programme; but if they chose to remain as 'aliens', as M.S. Golwalkar, the Hindutva ideologue who drove *sangathani*st transformation, argued, they could only occupy a position of inferiority -- 'wholly subordinated to the Hindu nation, claiming nothing, deserving no privileges, far less any preferential treatment – not even citizen's rights'. 'Culturally, linguistically,' insisted Golwalkar, 'they [Muslims and Christians] must become one with the National race ... in short, they must be 'Naturalised' in the country by being assimilated in the Nation wholly ... [they] must ... adopt the Hindu culture and language, must learn to respect and hold in reverence Hindu religion ...' [68] However, the Hindutva theory of 'cultural assimilation' hardly found favour with the Muslims or the Christians, nor did it succeed as a political programme in India.

The crucial defining feature of Hindutva, besides territory and race, was a common civilisation and culture *[sanskriti]*. The Hindus, stated Savarkar, 'are bound together not only by the tie of the love we bear to a common fatherland ... but also by the tie of the common homage we pay to our great civilization – our Hindu culture ...Sanskriti ...'[69] The civilisation shared by the Hindus comprised history, literature and arts, laws, customs, festivals, and rituals. The different places of pilgrimage in India constituted the 'common inheritance' of the Hindu race, a cultural heritage strengthened by the presence of Sanskrit -- 'our mother tongue'.[70] Sanskrit was 'the real mother-tongue of our race' in accordance with the classical Brahmanical texts – 'the tongue in which the mothers of our race spoke and which has given birth to all our present tongues'.[71] Hindi was given the status of the 'eldest daughter' of Sanskrit. *Sangathani*sts urged the recognition of Sanskrit or Hindi as the

---

[64] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, p. 120.
[65] M.S. Golwalkar, *We, or Our Nationhood Defined* [Foreword by Loknayak M.S. Aney], Nagpur,1947 [1939], p. 54.
[66] Michael R. Rose, *Darwin's Spectre: Evolutionary Biology in Modern World,* Princeton, 2000, p. 143.
[67] Jaffrelot, *Hindu Nationalist Movement*, pp. 30-2.
[68] Golwalkar, *We*, pp. 54-6.
[69] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, p. 74.
[70] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, pp. 59-60, 62-3.
[71] Savarkar, *Hindutva,* p. 64.

national language of India.[72] The construction of a homogeneous 'Hindu nation' based on a common culture and history -- a 'cultural unity' -- was at the heart of ideological Hindutva.

In Hindutva narrative, the centrality of Hindu culture was the defining element of Indian nationhood. In a free India, Savarkar explained, there could only be one Hindu culture defining rituals and social roles, in which different communities/castes coexisted in a hierarchical relationship. Nationality did not depend so much on a common geographical territory as on the unity of race and culture. In the formation of nations, Savarkar argued, 'religious, racial, cultural and historical affinities counted immensely more than territorial unity'.[73] He rejected the Indian National Congress's theory of a 'territorial nation' – a composite nation of all communities living as equals within the British India realm – and emphasised the racial and cultural unity of the Hindus as the basis of the Indian nation.[74] The Indian nation was culturally defined and based on culture – perhaps not the territory alone. 'Our ancient and sublime cultural values of life,' Savarkar stated, 'form its [India's] life-breath. And it is only an intense rejuvenation of the spirit of our culture that can give us the true vision of our national life ...'[75] *Sangathani*sts attacked the Congress's theory of territorial nationalism in that it did not recognise that 'here was already a full-fledged ancient nation of the Hindus', and that the Muslims and the Christians were there as 'invaders'. In pursuit of the 'phantom of unity', it was argued, the Congress denied the 'essential reality of India as a Hindu nation', and the time had come to 'enlighten the people on the need for building a Hindu nation rather than a secular state on the western model'.[76] In Hindutva discourse, the Indian nation was coterminous with the Hindu community as a cultural group.

Finally, Savarkar defined 'who is a Hindu', a definition that had radically shaped and influenced the political discourse and programme of the Hindu Mahasabha in north India throughout the 1920-1940s.[77] He defined a 'Hindu' as one 'who regards this land of Bharatvarsha, from the Indus to the Seas, as his Fatherland [*pitribhu*] as well as his Holyland [*punyabhu*] that is the cradle land of his religion'.[78] The definition was territorial [the 'land between the Indus and the Seas'], genealogical ['fatherland'], and religious ['holyland'].[79] The first requisite of Hindutva was citizenship by parental descent within the physically bounded territory of India. However, this was not a sufficient condition, for the term 'Hindu' signified more than a geographical territory. Savarkar proposed an essential requirement for Hindutva, indeed the most important one: the bond of common blood. A Hindu must be a descendant of 'Hindu parents'.[80] The crucial test was thus two-fold -- *pitribhumi* [fatherland] must be the

---

[72] Savarkar, *Hindutva,* p. 26.
[73] Savarkar, *Hindutva,* p. 58.
[74] V.D. Savarkar's 'Presidential Address -- 20th Session of the Akhil Bharatiya Hindu Mahasabha, Nagpur, 1938', Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan*, p. 56.
[75] M.S. Golwalkar, *Bunch of Thoughts*, Bangalore, 2000 [1966], p. 45. To Golwalkar, the Indian nation was composed of the famous 'five unities': geography [territory], race, religion, culture, and language. Golwalkar, *We,* pp. 23-34.
[76] Golwalkar, *Bunch of Thoughts*, p. 182.
[77] Savarkar, *Hindutva,* pp. 68-9.
[78] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, p. 95.
[79] Ashutosh Varshney, *Ethnic Conflic and Civic Life: Hindus and Muslims in India,* New Haven [USA], 2002 [2000], p. 65.
[80] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, p. 110.

same as *punyabhumi* [holyland]. 'To every Hindu, from the Santal to the Sadhu ... this Sindhusthan is at once a Pitribhu and a Punyabhu – a fatherland and a holyland.'[81] The soil and the tie of common 'holyland' proved stronger in Hindutva narrative as the chief elements integral to being a 'Hindu', constituting the basis of Indian nationality.[82]

However, the ideology of Hindutva contained one major obstacle: the integration of the Muslims and the Christians into the Indian nation. The Muslims and the Christians were not part of Hindutva because they did not identify with Hindu culture as a whole, despite sharing the 'territory and race' with the Hindus. They belonged to an alien cultural matrix: their heroes, their objects of worship, and their fairs and festivals had little in common with Hindu culture.[83] Savarkar explained: 'For though Hindusthan is to them [Muslims and Christians] a Fatherland as to any other Hindu, yet it is not to them a Holyland too. Their holyland is far off in Arabia or Palestine. Their mythology and Godmen, ideas and heroes are not the children of this soil ... Their love is divided.'[84] The Islamic reverence for prophets and sacred places outside the geographical territory of India made the Muslims suspect and potential 'traitors' in the eyes of *sangathanists*. 'Look at Mohammedans,' Savarkar argued, 'the Mecca to them is a sterner reality than Delhi or Agra. Some of them do not make any secret of being bound to sacrifice all India if that be to the glory of Islam...'[85] The syncretic communities like the Muslim Bohras and Khojas of Gujarat were originally Hindu castes that had converted to Islam between the eleventh and fifteenth centuries in India. They possessed 'all the essential qualifications of Hindutva', but had to be excluded from a 'Hindu nation', for 'India was not their holyland'.[86] Hindutva excluded the Parsis and the Jews, too: India was not their 'holyland'. In Hindutva discourse, 'foreign religions' were beyond the purview of Indian nationhood: reconversion to Hinduism was the only way to be integrated into Indian nationality.

In Hindutva theory, Savarkar turned to an explicitly religious criterion only once: the meaning of the Hindu religion *[dharm]*. The religion of the majority of Hindus, he explained, could be termed *sanatan dharm*, while the 'remaining Hindus' could continue to call themselves by such names as Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists, or Arya Samajists.[87] The heterodox communities were all Hindu and equally well within their rights to reject the authority of *dharmashastras* [Hindu canonical texts]. The Hindu religion comprised all the Vedic and non-Vedic faiths that had originated in India. It incorporated Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism because India was the land of their 'birth and revelation'.[88] In Hindutva belief, the faiths born in India were accepted as part of Hinduism, and those coming from outside – Islam and Christianity – were excluded as 'foreign' in origin.

---

[81] Savarkar, *Hindutva,* p. 113.
[82] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, p. *100.*
[83] V.D. Savarkar, 'Presidential Address – 19th Session of the Akhil Bharatiya Hindu Mahasabha, Karnavati, Ahmedabad, 30 December 1937', Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan,* pp. 14-5; Savarkar, *Hindutva,* pp. 81-2.
[84] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, p. 113.
[85] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, pp. 100-1.
[86] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, p. 113.
[87] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, p. 67.
[88] Savarkar, *Hindutva,* pp. 61, 81.

III. Hindu Rashtra

The central theme in Savarkar's articulation of Hindutva was the creation of a Hindu *rashtra* [nation]: the *rashtra* meant 'not merely the state but an all-inclusive Hindu society', becoming the basis of Hindutva nationalism.[89] The 'Indian state', Savarkar declared, was a 'Hindu nation' based on the principle of 'one man one vote' and the 'rule of the majority'.[90] The Hindus were the overwhelming majority in India; and there could be no conflict between their communitarian and national duties which in turn were identifiable with the best interests of India as a whole.[91] The Hindus were the 'bedrock on which an independent Indian state could be built'.[92] The foundation of the future Indian polity, Savarkar explained, was to be provided by the Hindus 'whose interests, history and aspirations are most closely bound up with the land and who thus provide the real foundation to the structure of their national state'.[93] India's independence was inextricably linked to 'the independence of our [Hindu] people, our race, our nation'.[94] 'India must be a Hindu land reserved for the Hindus.'[95] Savarkar stated that the Indian state must be 'established under the Hindu flag'. 'This dream would be realized during this or coming generation. If it is not realized, I may be styled a day-dreamer, but if it comes true, I would stand forth as its prophet.'[96] Savarkar's core belief was that the Hindus had to be 'masters' in India, necessitating the establishment of a 'Hindu majority rule'.[97]

Politically, the Hindu Mahasabha defined India as a nation 'primarily for the Hindus'. It resolved in 1936 that 'all the alien faiths must be made to understand that Hindusthan is primarily for the Hindus', and that 'the Hindus live for the preservation and development of the Aryan culture and the Hindu Dharma'.[98] India could not belong to the 'converts, or those who are the descendants of those barbarous invaders who spoiled our very sacred land, demolished our sacred temples ...'[99] Dr Kurtkoti declared in his presidential speech to the Mahasabha's Lahore session 1936: 'I affirm that in Hindusthan the national race, religion and language ought to be that of the Hindus ... in every part and province of the state ...'[100] The Mahasabha adopted a revised constitution at its Ahmedabad session in December 1937, declaring its aim as 'the maintenance, protection and promotion of the Hindu race, Hindu culture and Hindu civilisation and advancement and glory of Hindu Rashtra, and ... to attain

---

[89] Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan*, p. 17.
[90] Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan*, p. 22; Indra Prakash, *A Review of the History and Work of the Hindu Mahasabha and the Hindu Sangathan Movement,* New Delhi, 1952 [1938], p. 151.
[91] Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan*, p. 5.
[92] Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan*, p. 14.
[93] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, p. 87.
[94] Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan*, p. 16.
[95] Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan*, p. 55. See
[96] Cited in Keer, *Veer Savarkar,* p. 556.
[97] Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan*, p. 22; Jose Kuruvachira, *Hindu Nationalists of Modern India: A Critical Study of the Intellectual Genealogy of Hindutva,* Jaipur, 2006, p. 122.
[98] Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan*, pp. 63-4.
[99] Cited in Chandra, *Communalism*, p. 218.
[100] Dr Kurtkoti's presidential address, 18th All-India Hindu Mahasabha session, Lahore, 21 October 1936. Home Poll., FR, Punjab, File No. 18/10/1936, NAI; Prakash, *A Review*, p. 142.

Purna Swaraj, i.e. absolute political independence for Hindustan by legitimate means'.[101] The existence of non-Hindu minorities in India challenged the idea of a homogeneous 'Hindu nation'. The establishment of a Hindu *rashtra* implied that the minorities would have the rights to political representation and citizenship, but commensurate with their numerical strength in the country.[102] In *sangathani*st theory, the Hindus who formed the majority would rule; and the Muslims or the Christians constituted the lost fulcrum of the Indian nation.[103]

In ideological terms, the concept of 'historical enemy' – the Muslims – was implicit in Hindutva theory, which had originated from a deep-rooted hostility against Islam.[104] The Muslims, Savarkar argued, were 'anti-Hindu, anti-Indian' -- too closely tied to 'extra-territorial' loyalties to play a role in the building of the new Indian nation.[105] They would 'not be loyal to India due to their 'perfidy and fanaticism' and had a 'secret urge goading them to transform India into a Moslem state'.[106] Savarkar condemned the Muslim League's 'separatist politics', which he said aimed to 'humiliate the Hindus' and establish 'Muslim domination' in India. If the Hindus in India grew stronger in time, he wondered, 'these Moslem friends of the League will have to play the part of German-Jews'.[107] Savarkar argued that the Muslims had 'betrayed the Hindus through their co-operation with the British'.[108] They were responsible for creating 'obstacles' in the path of achieving independence for India and did not co-operate with the Hindus. It was the Hindu *sangathani*sts alone who had remained the 'vanguard' of the anti-British independence struggle in India.[109] In a public message to the Muslims, Savarkar asserted: 'If you come, with you; if you don't without you; and if you oppose, in spite of you the Hindus will continue to fight for their national freedom.'[110] Savarkar explained that the Hindus were 'at war at once with the Moslems on the one hand and the British on the other'. 'India,' he declared, 'cannot be assumed today to be a ... homogeneous nation ...' 'There are 'two antagonistic nations living side by side in India' ... the Hindu *[sic]* and the Moslems'. He insisted: 'I have no quarrel with Mr Jinnah's two-nation theory. We, Hindus are a nation by ourselves and it is a historical fact that Hindus and Muslims are two nations.'[111] In Hindutva theory, the Hindus and the Muslims were two different racial types locked in a historical conflict, compounded by the impossibility of a 'peaceful coexistence'. Hindutva's hostility to the Muslims had largely influenced Hindu nationalist ideology, emerging as its core feature in India throughout the 1930s and 1940s.

---

[101] Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan,* pp. 55-7.
[102] Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan*, p. 54.
[103] Savarkar, *Hindu Dhwaja*, pp. 232-3.
[104] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, p. 38; A.G. Noorani, *Savarkar and Hindutva: The Godse Connection,* Delhi, 2002, p. 25.
[105] Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan*, p. 49.
[106] Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan*, pp. 53, 89.
[107] Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan*, pp.
[108] Savarkar, *Samagra Savarkar*, Vol. 5, pp. 95-6.
[109] Ainslie T. Embree, 'The Function of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh: To define the Hindu Nation', in Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby [ed.], *Accounting for Fundamentlisms: The Dynamic Character of Movements*, Chicago, 2004, p. 632.
[110] V.D. Savarkar's statement of 9 February 1937, New Delhi, File C 73, AIHMS, Hindu Mahasabha Papers, NMML.
[111] Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan*, p. 14-5, 20, 24.

The two-nation theory was first launched by Mohammad Ali Jinnah in the Lahore Resolution of the Muslim League in 1940 on the basis that the Muslims were a 'separate nation'.[112] Jinnah argued that the cultural distinctiveness of Islam constituted the rationale for a separate nation-state of Pakistan. The differences between the Hindus and the Muslims in India were seen as not merely religious differences, but as entirely different ways of life and thought. The Hindus and the Muslims in India were 'distinct peoples, with different religious philosophies, social customs, literatures, and histories'. 'Islam and Hinduism ...,' Jinnah declared, 'are not religions in the strict sense of the word, but are in fact different and distinct social orders ... [T]hey belong to two different civilizations which are based mainly on conflicting ideas and conceptions ...'[113] It was for more than a thousand years, he insisted, that the bulk of the Muslims had lived in 'a different world, in a different society, in a different philosophy and a different faith'.[114] As such, it was inconceivable that the Muslims could live as a minority in a 'Hindu-dominated' India as a nation. Rather, they must have a state of their own in which they would establish their own constitution and make their own laws. There was one crucial difference, however: Jinnah proclaimed the existence of two nations, but *sangathan*ists held that only one nation -- the 'Hindu nation' – existed in India.

Conclusion

V.D. Savarkar discovered Hindutva, a fusion of Hindu cultural identity and nationalism, in his study of the threatening 'Others', the Muslims, in the early 1920s when a nationwide anti-colonial struggle had been launched in India. Savarkar, not a believer in God but a rationalist himself, articulated the claim that the Hindus constituted an exclusive nation, which had originated from the Vedic past.[115] The Aryans who had settled in India at the dawn of history in the Vedic era formed a nation now embodied in the Hindus. Hindu identity was formed through a conflict with the 'non-self': Islam and the Muslims. India's history became an endlessly repeated tale of 'aggression by the Muslim conquerors and resistance by the Hindus'.[116] The conflict with the Muslim rulers had defined Hindu identity and constituted the Hindus as a 'nation'. For Savarkar, Indian nationality, or Indian nationhood, did not depend so much on a common geographical territory as on the 'unity of Hindu race and culture'. The Hindus were a 'race' [*jati*], possessing a common culture and civilisation. Savarkar explicitly rejected the territorial concept of the Indian nation as championed by the Congress and insisted that India was culturally defined as a nation.[117] Hindutva defined a Hindu as one who inherited the blood of the race of Vedic-Aryan forefathers and who claimed its culture as one's own -- India being both a 'fatherland' and 'holyland'. The Muslims and the Christians could not be incorporated into the Indian nation because India was

---

[112] A. Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan*, Cambridge, 1985, p. 157.
[113] Muhammad ali Jinnah's Presidential Address at the all-India Muslim League, Lahore Session, 23 March 1940, in Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad [ed.], *Some Recent Speeches and Writings of Mr Jinnah*, Lahore, 1942, p. 153.
[114] Cited in Ahmad [ed.], *Some Recent Speeches*, p. 154.
[115] Savarkar, *Samagra Savarkar,* Vol. 4, pp. 121-2.
[116] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, p. 11; Savarkar, *Six Glorious Epochs,* pp. 121- 135.
[117] Savarkar, *Hindutva,* p. 58-9,

not their 'holyland'.[118] India was a Hindu *rashtra* [ntion] to be governed by a 'Hindu majority rule'. In *sangathan*ist narrative, the enemies of the Indian nation were chiefly the Muslims whose inclusion in India was premised on their assimilation to Hindu culture and the acceptance of the social and political centrality of the Hindus as the basis of Indian nationhood.[119]

[118] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, p. 95.

[119] V.D. Savarkar's speech on 29 July 1939, Pune, cited in Marzia Casolari, 'Hindutva's Foreign Tie-up in the 1930s: Archival Evidence', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 22 January 2000, p. 223.

6

Masculine 'Hindu Nation' and the Muslim 'Other'

In the early twentieth century, the Hindu Mahasabha showed an ideological commitment to the strengthening of the Hindu community through *sangathan,* which was viewed as a means of national 'regeneration' in the face of 'demilitarisation and emasculation' perpetrated by the British on Indians. Its *sangathan* discourse was pervaded by the representation of masculinity and physical strength as the chief ideals of a 'Hindu nation' in resistance to the colonial prejudice that the Hindus were 'cowardly' and 'weak'.[1] *Sangathan* configured Hindu 'masculinity' by emphasising the martial prowess, physical strength and patriotic fervour of the Hindus as a defence against the image of the 'powerful' British in India.[2] Nonetheless, the emphasis on Hindu masculinity was not merely a resistance to British rule, but a product of the new and changing context -- the conflict with Muslims -- in the country in the 1920s. The Mahasabha's ideology was driven by an urge to overcome the perceived 'weakness' by expunging the threatening 'Other' -- the Muslims; and its hostility was far more deeply entrenched against the Muslims as the 'enemy within' than the British.[3] It carried out a hostile propaganda, homogenising and stigmatising the Muslims as a 'historical enemy' of the Indian nation.[4] This chapter examines the process by which national 'regeneration' through Hindu masculinity and militancy became a central symbol of the Mahasabha's *sangathan* narrative and was transformed into an anti-Muslim propaganda in the United Provinces in the 1920s and 1930s.

I. Ideal of Hindu 'Masculinity'

The ideal of Hindu 'masculinity' was anchored within the Hindu Mahasabha's discourse of a 'Hindu nation' and remained central to its interpretation of *sangathan* ideology. The Mahasabha's notion of masculinity was drawn from the reformist discourse of Dayananda Saraswati, the founder of the the Arya Samaj, as well as the early nationalists who had stressed physical strength as an essential element in rebuilding the Indian nation.[5] A strong body was the precondition for a healthy nation; and the ideal Hindu male was represented as a 'virile, physically strong and ardent nationalist'.[6] The recuperation of masculinity lay at the heart of a quest for national strength in the face of oppressive colonial rule and its stereotypes.[7] The British criticised the Indians – the

---

[1] Chandkaran Sharda, 'Hindu Jati ki Durdasha ke Karan aur uske Nivaran ke Upaye', *Madhuri*, Vol. 3, Nos. 1, 2, September 1924, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 32, 1924, pp. 290-5, IOL.

[2] G.R. Thursby, *Hindu-Muslim Relations in British India: A Study of Controversy, Conflict and Communal Movements in Northern India, 1923-1928*, Leiden, 1975, p. 158.

[3] Thomas Blom Hansen, 'Recuperating Masculinity', *Critique of Anthropology,* Vol. 16, No. 2, 1996, pp. 137-172.

[4] Christophe Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement and Indian Politics, 1925 to the 1990s: Strategies of Identity-Building, Implantation and Mobilisation [with special refrence to Central India],* London, 1996, pp. 35-6.

[5] Ainslie T. Embree, 'The Function of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh: To Define the Hindu Nation', in M. E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby [eds.], *Accounting for Fundamentalisms: The Dynamic Character of Movements*, Chicago, 2004, p. 627.

[6] Paola Bacchetta, 'Hindu Nationalist Women as Ideologues: The "Sangh", the "Samiti" and their Differential Concepts of the Hindu Nation', in C. Jaffrelot [ed.], *Sangh Parivr: A Reader*, New Delhi, 2005, p. 128.

[7] Joseph S. Alter, 'Celibacy, Sexuality, and the Transformation of Gender into Nationalism in North India', *The Journal of Asian Studies,* Vol. 53, No. 1, February 1994, pp. 45-66.

'martial races' apart – for being 'physically weak, morally soft, effeminate, and lacking in Victorian masculinity', even while the state had depended on their talents as service groups in the administration.[8] The physical organisation of a Hindu, proclaimed Lord Macaulay, 'is feeble even to effeminacy ... His pursuits are sedentary, his limbs delicate, his movement languid.'[9] The state drafted the newly defined 'martial' races into its reorganised armies after the revolt of 1857 in order to combat 'weak elements' in the Indian military. It constructed the martial races -- mainly the Marathas, the Sikhs, the Pathans, and the Rajputs -- in terms of a 'masculine, aggressive and virile' image in contrast to the 'non-martial' ones -- the 'effete' Bengali, or the mercantile *vaishya* [trader] -- who were barred from the army. The negative image of 'effeteness' triggered the nationalist response from the various leaders and reformers who had sought to re-invigorate Indian character through a revival of interest in physical culture and wrestling.[10] In nationalist vision, the Indians were to become 'brave, self-confident, able-bodied and strong citizens' in order to create a healthy and dynamic nation of self-rule.[11]

In the early 1920s, the concern for national 'regeneration' that informed much of Hindu nationalist writing had prompted a search for a glorious national Hindu past. The writings and tracts of this period aimed primarily to inculcate a spirit of national pride and heroic history among the Hindu classes, constructing a past Hindu 'masculinity' in an anti-colonial contestation.[12] There were many tracts and pamphlets written in the United Provinces, highlighting the tradition of Hindu 'masculinity' that once existed in Indian society. Hindi vernacular newspapers emphasised the need for organisation and physical culture among the Hindus. 'The protection of [the] Hindu community,' it was argued, 'is the most important question at present ... We have to stop producing emasculated and weak Hindus ... We have to search for new ways to make the Hindu community powerful ...'[13] In 'physique', stated the *Madhuri*, 'the Hindus are second to none ... the physique of Hindus from the Punjab even matches those of Europeans'.[14] An appeal for volunteers in 1923 urged that 'the first requisite is that Hindu boys should be good athletes and not puny bone bags'.[15] During the Janmasthami festival in 1925, the Hindu press in the UP published articles in all the special numbers, urging military spirit among the Hindus: Krishna's teachings to Arjun asking him to murder his kinsmen mercilessly were specially stressed.[16] Symbolic

---

[8] Mrinalini Sinha, *Colonial Masculinity: The 'Manly Englishman' and the 'Effeminate Bengali' in the Late Nineteenth Century*, Manchester, 1995, pp. 31-55.

[9] Cited in Leonard A. Gordon, *Bengal: The Nationalist Movement 1876-1940*, Delhi, 1974, p. 6.

[10] Sikata Banerjee, *Make Me a Man! Masculinity, Hinduism, and Nationalism in India*, Albany, 2005, pp. 51-5.

[11] Gandhi advocated physical fitness and applauded wrestling ideals -- 'manliness, virility, and a strong physique' – needed for a strong nation. M.K. Gandhi, *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi [CWMG]*, New Delhi, 1988, Vol. 18, p. 505; Vol. 24, p. 118. Motilal Nehru was an advocate of physical education; and B.G. Tilak and G.K. Gokhale actually engaged themselves in exercise.

[12] Indira Chowdhury Sengupta, *The Frail Hero and Virile History: Gender and the Politics of Culture in Colonial Bengal*, Delhi, 1998, p. 57; Chetan Bhatt, *Hindu Nationalism: Origins, Ideologies and Modern Myths*, Oxford, 2001, p. 75.

[13] Swami Satyadev Paribrajak, *Sangathan ka Bigul*, Dehradun, 1926, 3rd edn, p. i, cited in Charu Gupta, 'Articulating Hindu Masculinity and Femininity: *Shuddhi* and *Sangathan* Movements in UP in the 1920s', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 33, No. 13, 28 March 1998, p. 729.

[14] *Madhuri*, November 1926, p. 579, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 18, 1926, p. 5, IOL.

[15] Cited in Thursby, *Hindu-Muslim Relations*, p. 169.

[16] *Hamdam*, 22 August 1925, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 33, 1925, p. 3, IOL.

references in this model included Lord Rama and Hanuman of the *Ramayana*, who represented the evident ideal of 'masculinity'. A speech reportedly made by Guru Govind Singh was published, exhorting the Hindus to bear arms and fight against the Muslim rulers.[17] The heroic Rajputs, the Marathas, and the Sikhs became the common ancestors of the Hindus; and Maharana Pratap, Raja Chattrasaal, and Shivaji – who had resisted the Mughals -- were the icons of a chivalrous Hindu past and models of a militant, aggressive 'Hindu nation'.[18] Nana Sahib, Rani of Jhansi, Tatia Tope bravely embodied the virtues of Hindu soldiers as the heroes of the revolt of 1857.[19] The driving sentiment behind the nationalist urge was patriotic; and the past heroism against the 'alien rulers' was recalled or invented to inspire the Indian nation.[20] The ideal Hindu character was portrayed as 'courageous' and 'strong' -- willing to fight for the nation's freedom.[21] The true Hindu *dharm* [religion], it was stated, was the Kshatriya or warrior *dharm;* and the identity of the Hindus was viewed through characteristics associated with the warrior culture of the Kshatriyas.[22] In the UP, the preoccupation with 'masculinity' and 'Kshatriya' status was evident among the peasants; and a large number of peasant and caste associations had invoked kshatriyahood to assert their martial valour and argue for a higher social status under the British census.[23] Hindu nationalist narrative appropriated the nationalist fervour in a drive to build India's national 'renewal' and envisioned an ancient, virile, manly, unified Hindu community striving to eradicate the country's past 'humiliations' inflicted by the British.

*Sangathani*st ideology articulated a masculinist vision of India, aiming to find the means by which the Indians could become a healthy and strong nation. A self-controlled and healthy nation would have the necessary moral fibre for self-rule; and athletic rhetoric and metaphors were used to portray an image of the state as 'fit, virile and heroic', which was indeed the model for India.[24] The *sangathani*st notion of a resurgent 'Hindu nation' based on the principles of physical training valued the building of muscular youth movements as a front line for *swaraj* [freedom]. The attainment of physical strength and vigour would, it was argued, exorcise the 'feeble and timid' Hindu within and awaken the dormant strength of a 'Hindu nation'.[25] Physical culture and discipline offered a utopian vision of nationalism that made the body, indeed the masculine physique, the primary object of India's struggle to combat the colonial state and it bias of 'Christian manliness' which offered an apologia for English

---

[17] *Pratap*, Kanpur, 22 August 1925, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 33, 1925, p. 3, IOL.

[18] *Chauhani Talwar*, Benaras, 1918 depicts the early struggles of King Prithviraj of Delhi with the Muslim invaders of India. Tod's *Annals in Rajasthan* became so popular that many Hindi works were inspired by it, such as Maithilisharan Gupt's, *Rang Mein Bhang*, Jhansi, 9th edn. 1927. Sudipto Kaviraj, 'Imaginary History', Occasional papers in History and Society, 2nd Series, No. 7, NMML, 1988, pp. 16-7.

[19] V.D. Savarkar, *The Indian War of Independence 1857*, Bombay, 8th edn., 1970 [1947], p. 30.

[20] Joya Chatterji, *Bengal Divided: Hindu Communalism and Partition, 1932-1947,* Cambridge, 1994, pp. 160-1.

[21] Chatterji, *Bengal Divided,* p. 161.

[22] Banerjee, *Make Me a Man!,* pp. 69-71.

[23] Nandini Gooptu, *The Politics of the Urban Poor in Early Twentieth-Century India,* Cambridge, 2001, p. 225; idem, 'The Urban Poor and Militant Hinduism in Early Twentieth-Century UP', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 4, 1997, pp. 130-174: p. 135.

[24] Joseph S. Alter, 'Somatic Nationalism: Indian Wrestling and Militant Hinduism', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 28. No. 3, 1994, pp. 557-88: p. 559.

[24] *Police Abstracts of Intelligence [PAI]*, Lucknow, UP, No. 40, 20 October 1923.

[25] Joseph S. Alter, *Gandhi's Body: Sex, Diet, and the Politics of Nationalism*, Pennsylvania, 2000, p. 139.

rule in India.[26] *Sangathan* repeatedly asked the Hindus to avenge past humiliation, regain courage and become warriors as a proud 'Indian race'.[27] It constantly engaged with the notions of Hindu masculinity, attacking the image of a 'passive, docile, virtuous Hindu' in India.[28] *Shuddhi* was interpreted in terms of 'masculine power' – power for both the Hindu community and the nation – by emphasising the need to draw in Rajputs [Malkanas] who were associated with the culture of Kshatriya prowess.[29] In *sangathan*ist narrative, India was to be energised by masculine Hinduism, which signified martial prowess, military strength, and unquestioning patriotism to the nation.[30]

The Hindu Mahasabha had incorporated the self-strengthening views of the early Hindu nationalists in its *sangathan* programme, emphasising 'virility' and 'masculinity' as the chief ideals of a 'Hindu nation'. Swami Shraddhananda favoured the necessity of physical culture as part of *sangathan* in an attempt to create a 'fighting class' among the Hindus.[31] He proclaimed the virtues of eating meat and prescribed a diet rich in meat for the development of military skills and physical valour among the Hindus.[32] Early marriages and conception, he argued, led to physically weak children in India – hence a source of weakness for the 'Hindu race'. In contrast to the conventional lower minimum age for the marriage of Hindu boys and girls, he urged Dayananda's prescriptions of 25 years for males and 16 years for females to produce 'strong men' in India.[33] The Hindu community was to be a community of 'militant and masculine men – on the model of Brahman and Kshatriya men'.[34] B.S. Moonje insisted that the Hindus must acquire masculine virtues and aggressiveness, which they had lost through the 'centuries of colonial subjugation' in India.[35] V.D. Savarkar evoked the idea of Hinduism as a 'masculine, aggressive and violent' faith, attacking the colonial critique of Indian 'effeminacy' -- the lack of a martial spirit or the absence of patriotism.[36] The Hindus were a 'martial race', he insisted, with a history of great men who had shown the path of manliness in the face of Muslim and colonial aggression.[37] The attempt to establish *swaraj* in India had failed in 1857 due to British superiority in war tactics and the 'treachery of our own countrymen', he explained, but the masculine Hindu spirit temporarily retreated to the background,

---

[26] Banerjee, *Make Me a Man!*, p. 67.
[27] Bacchetta, 'Hindu Nationalist Women', p. 128.
[28] Charu Gupta, 'Obscenity, Sexuality and the "Other": Gender and Hindu Identity in Uttar Pradesh, 1880s-1930s', PhD Dissertation, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 2000, p. 134.
[29] Indra Prakash, *A Review of the History and Work of the Hindu Mahasabha and the Hindu Sangathan Movement*, New Delhi, 1952 [1938], pp. iv-v; William R. Pinch, *Peasants and Monks in British India*, Berkeley, 1996, pp. 81-114.
[30] V.D. Savarkar, *Samagra Savarkar Wangmaya: Writings of Swatantrya Veer V.D. Savarkar,* Vol. 5, Poona, 1964, rept. New Delhi, 2003, p. 230.
[31] Swami Shraddhanand, *Hindu Sangathan: Saviour of the Dying Race*, n.p., 1926, p. 141.
[32] C. Jaffrelot, 'Hindu Nationalism : Strategic Syncretism in Ideology Building', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 20, Nos. 12-13, 20-26 March 1993, p. 520.
[33] Shraddhanand, *Hindu Sangathan,* pp. 46-8.
[34] Shraddhanand, *Hindu Sangathan,* p. 93.
[35] B.S. Moonje a Maratha Brahman, introduced himself as 'a Brahman by caste and by temperament perhaps a Kshatriya': he was a hunter and not a vegetarian. B.S. Moonje's letter to Maharajah Scindia, dated 23 April 1932, Moonje Papers, Microfilm, Reel No. 7; B.S. Moonje's letter to Raja Ichalkarang, dated 18 May 1936, Moonje Papers, Microfilm, Reel No. 11, NMML.
[36] V.D. Savarkar's Presidential Address, 'Akhil Bharatiya Hindu Mahasabha 20th Session', Nagpur, 1938. V.D. Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan: A Collection of Presidential Speeches Delivered from the Hindu Mahasabha Platform,* Bombay, 1992 [1949], p. 104.
[37] V.D. Savarkar, *Hindutva: Who is a Hindu?*, Poona, 4th edn., 1949, rept. New Delhi, 2003, pp. 25-6.

waiting to be resurrected.[38] A 'strong, unified, militarised Hindu nation' would imminently awaken to realise her 'martial spirit and reassert herself'.[39] 'It is in this spirit,' Savarkar declared, 'that I want all Hindus to get themselves re-animated and re-born into a martial race. Manu and Shri Krishna are our law givers and Shri Ram the Commander of our forces. Let us re-learn the manly lessons they taught us and our Hindu Nation shall prove again as unconquerable ...'[40] 'Strength' was a decisive category in *sangathanist* narrative, as it would make the Hindus more 'manly' and help correct the instances of 'slight, injury, or persecution' inflicted by the British.[41] The ideal state of nationhood, implicitly a 'Hindu nation', could only be realised through the cultivation of strength, physical and spiritual.[42] 'The Hindus, grown weak,' it was asserted, 'must become strong again if they are to protect their women, their property and their rights.' The world understood nothing but the language of strength; and the 'true Dharma' was the 'Kshatra [warrior] Dharma'.[43] To the Hindu Mahasabha, the emphasis on physical strength linked 'rejuvenated masculinity' to weapons and violence, equating the revitalisation of the Indian nation with the resurrection of an imagined past masculinity.[44]

I. 1. Akharas

In the 1920s and 1930s, Hindu nationalism became explicitly linked to physical training practised through *akharas* [wrestling gymnasiums], which had promoted body building in order to create strong and heroic men in India.[45] In the United Provinces, Hindu organisations and mercantile notables had made financial donations for the establishment of *akharas* and gymnasiums as a form of expression of Hindu power.[46] The *akharas* proliferated in Banaras, Gorakhpur, and Lucknow as the centres of physical culture, wrestling, sword and club wielding, and *lathi* fighting. An estimated 13 Hindu *akharas* staged displays of arms and drills with 300 participants in the towns of the UP in late 1923.[47] About '150 Hindus in nine *akharas* learnt swordsmanship and wrestling in Allahabad in one week' in 1923. Over 5,000 were involved in the display of swordsmanship in Allahabad in 1924.[48] The *akharas* placed a greater importance on celibacy *[brahmacharya]* – a practice which

---

[38] Savarkar, *Indian War*, p. 179.

[39] V.D. Savarkar, *Hindu-Pad-Paddashahi Or A Review of the Hindu Empire of Maharashtra*, Bombay, 1925, rept. 4th edn. New Delhi, 1971, p. 288.

[40] V.D. Savarkar's Presidential Address, 'Akhil Bharatiya Hindu Mahasabha 22nd Session', Madurai, 1940: Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan*, p. 154.

[41] Gyanendra Pandey, 'Hindus and Others: The Militant Hindu Construction', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 26, No. 52, 28 December 1991, p. 3004; Partha Catterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse*, London, 1986, pp. 91-105.

[42] M.S. Golwalkar, *Bunch of Thoughts*, Bangalore, 2000 [1966], pp. 65-6.

[43] Golwalkar, *Bunch of Thoughts*, pp. 377-8.

[44] Walter K. Anderson and Shridhar D. Damle, *The Brotherhood in Saffron: The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and Hindu Revivalism*, New Delhi, 1987, p. 11.

[45] The *Mallapurana*, a sixteenth-century text, describes and justifies the martial vocation of the Jyesthimallas – a caste of medieval professional Brahmin wrestlers in Gujarat. Joseph S. Alter, *The Wrestler's Body: Identity and Ideology in North India*, Berkeley, 1992, rept. New Delhi, 1997, pp. 73-5.

[46] S. Freitag, *Collective Action and Community: Public Arenas and the Emergence of Communalism in North India*, Berkeley, 1989, pp. 16-17, 91-93, 122; Jaffrelot, *Hindu Nationalist Movement*, p. 35.

[47] PAI, No. 40, 20 October 1923; No. 41, 27 October 1923.

[48] Alter, *Wrestler's Body*, p. 73.

aimed to develop and maintain power *[shakti]* in semen and enhance masculine strength.[49] They became the basic units of mobilisation for a collective action by Hindu volunteer corps -- such as the Bhimsen Dal, the Abhimanyu Dal, and the Mahabir Sena Sangh -- which had grown in the towns of the UP.[50] The name in most common use was the Mahabir Dal [Group of the Brave], which connected physical culture to the epic hero and deity Ram Chandra. In 1923 numerous branches of the Mahabir Dal were formed in the UP, particularly in Banaras and Kanpur. Popular self-assertion by the lower castes [Shudras] in the *akharas* and their active participation in festivals as 'the army of Mahavir' represented a martial and militant image to Hinduism.[51] The *akharas* were often in conflict with the state and suspected by the British as 'dangerous societies', hatching plots 'which have as their object the corruption of youth and spread of revolutionary ideas'.[52] Hindu-Muslim antagonism was sometimes fostered through the *akharas,* which could become the basis for gangs to operate during the clashes of violence as revealed by the implication of many *akhara* members in the Kanpur riot in 1931. Neighbourhood *akhara*-based conflicts overlapped with local Hindu-Muslim rivalries over jobs or land in the towns of the UP.[53] Nevertheless, the *akharas* were implicitly viewed as the centres of revitalisation and salvation for Hindu society, as they emphasised physical culture as a means of promoting self-development and the values of citizenship for a strong Indian nation.

The Hindu Mahasabha adopted the *akharas* as the centres of building Hindu strength and power, defining the aspects of physical culture in the framework of Hindu nationalism. It drew its drive for *akhara* promotion from the Indian National Congress, which had pioneered *prabhat pheris* [drills in groups held each morning] -- the earliest form of nationalist mobilisation – on the model of *akharas* in order to strengthen the Indian nation physically and spiritually in the freedom struggle.[54] The programme of wrestling and gymnastics practised in the *akharas* with an emphasis on the glorification of India's military and religious heroes and selfless service to the nation remained central to the Mahasabha's ideology. The organisation of *akharas* and physical fitness troupes was among the most popular activities undertaken by the local Hindu Sabhas across the UP. The formation of *akharas* and armed volunteer armies was defended as a vital means of building India's 'national strength';[55] and there were appeals for the creation of provincial, district, tahsil and village Hindu Sabhas which would arrange for the 'compulsory physical education of Hindus' in the country.[56] Madan Mohan Malaviya, in his presidential address to the Hindu Mahasabha's Gaya session in 1922, proposed a programme to establish *akharas* and

---

[49] Joseph S. Alter, 'The Celibate Wrestler: Sexual Chaos, Embodied Balance and Competitive Politics in North India', in Patricia Uberoi [ed.], *Social Reform, Sexuality and the State,* New Delhi, 1996, pp. 109-31.
[50] Nita Kumar, *The Artisans of Banaras: Popular Culture and Identity, 1880-1986,* Princeton, 1988, p. 118.
[51] *PAI, No. 35, 8 September 1923; PAI No. 36, 15 September 1923.*
[52] C.H. Pratt, Deputy Inspector General, [Banaras Range], File No. 243, Home Poll., 1915, NAI.
[53] 'Evidence taken before the Commision of Enquiry on the Communal Outbreak of Cawnpore, 1931' ['Evidence'], IOR, L/P&J 7/75, 1931, IOL; Nandini Gooptu, 'The Political Culture of the Urban Poor: The United Provinces between the Two World Wars', PhD Dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1991, p. 122.
[54] Alter, *Wrestler's Body,* p. 17.
[55] Gupta, 'Articulating Hindu Masculinity', p, 730.
[56] *Kartavya* [Etawah, weekly, editor: R.N. Raina, 25, 900 copies], 21 August 1922, IOR L/R/5/97, File No. 14, 1922, p. 4.

local volunteer corps in order to protect the Hindus during riots in the country.[57] At the Mahasabha's Banaras session in 1923, he urged the building of a small Hanuman temple and an *akhara* in each village and *mohalla* [urban quarter] of India.[58] He proposed to establish an All India Central Athletic Association, which would 'organize competitions and plan measures for improving the health of the youth of the country'.[59] He viewed wrestling as a means of national reform, insisting that the Hindus should 'establish *akharas*, listen to the *Mahabharat* and the *Ramayan* and learn to become fighters' in India's struggle for freedom.[60] In 1923 the Mahasabha resolved that Samaj Sewak Dals [Community Service Corps] were to be formed on the model of *akharas* in every village and town of India for 'the social service of the Hindu community and its protection when necessary'.[61] Lajpat Rai made the formation of *akharas* an integral part of the *sangathan* programme as president of the Mahasabha in 1925.[62] In the UP, the Hindu Sabhas actively promoted the ideal of 'defence of community and nation', reinforcing notions about a 'Hindu nation' built on physical strength. The UP Hindu Sabha established the Lajpat Physical Training Camp in Ghazipur in the early 1920s. The Agra Hindu Sabha planned to establish physical training centres in different parts of the UP and appointed Harihar Rao Deshpande to help launch the physical training programmes across the province.[63] In 1928 N.C. Kelkar, [1872-1947], Mahasabha president, proposed that Hanuman be regarded as the presiding deity of the Hindus, and that the Mahasabha encourage the formation of local sports clubs and gymnasiums to revive the strength of the Hindus in the country.[64] Evidently, the new constitution adopted by the Mahasabha at its Ahmedabad session in December 1937 pledged to 'improve the physique of the Hindus and promote martial spirit' by establishing military schools and volunteer corps in India.[65] The Mahasabha emphasised military valour and training as an integral part of *sangathan,* urging *sangathan*ists to whip up military enthusiasm for the promotion of Hindu strength and power in the country.[66] Its commitment to the promotion of physical culture had enhanced its image as an organisation dedicated to the 'improvement and renewal' of Hindu society and the eventual creation of a 'Hindu nation' in India.[67]

---

[57] Shraddhanand, *Hindu Sangathan*, p. 119; Kenneth W. Jones, 'Politicized Hinduism: The Ideology and Program of the Hindu Mahasabha', in Robert D. Baird [ed.], *Religion in Modern India*, New Delhi, 2005 [2001], p. 248.

[58] S.L. Gupta, *Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya: A Socio-political Study,* Allahabad, 1987 [1978], pp. 355-8.

[59] Gupta, *Malaviya,* p. 363.

[60] Madan Mohan Malaviya's speech, Gorakhpur, UP, 21 January 1927. *Najat*, 22 January 1927, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 3, 1927, p. 2, IOL.

[61] *The Leader*, 24 August 1923; Home Poll., File 198/1924; Home Poll., File 140/1925, NAI.

[62] Prakash, *A Review,* p. 168; Home Poll., GOI, File No. 140/1925, NAI.

[63] 'Note on the Volunteer Movement in the United Provinces', P. Biggane, 5 November 1920; 'Note on the Volunteer Movement in the United Provinces', S. O'Connor, 27 May 1922, UPSA; Pandey, *Ascendancy,* pp. 126-7.

[64] Nandini Gondhalekar, 'Indian Nationalism and "Hindu" Politics: Maharashtra and the Hindu Mahasabha, 1920-1948', Unpublished PhD Dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1999, p. 73.

[65] Ram Lal Wadhwa, *Hindu Maha Sabha, 1928-1947,* New Delhi, 1999, p. 132.

[66] Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Dashan*, p. 155; Savarkar, *Samagra Savarkar*, Vol. 5, pp. 385-6.

[67] Stuart Corbridge and John Harris, *Reinventing India: Liberalization, Hindu Nationalism and Popular Democracy*, Cambridge, 2000, p. 185.

II. Muslims – the 'Historical Enemy'

The Hindu Mahasabha's discourse on the building of masculinity and physical strength as a path to India's national 'regeneration' had become an expression of not merely resistance to British rule but a perceived need for defence against the Muslim 'Other' in the country. It conflated the denunciations of 'weakness and cowardice' of the Hindus with the images of the 'cruel and lustful' Muslims in the context of the wider sectarian propaganda of the 1920s in the United Provinces. Hindu masculinity was constructed in opposition to the Muslims -- against whom the Hindus and their women had to be defended and protected. Hindu organisations in the UP had increasingly campaigned to create a self-image of the Hindu community being at 'war over the aggression and rapacity of the Muslims' – 'the enemy within', even though the Muslim community was not homogeneous and split by sects and economic disparities in the country.[68] The Hindus, it was argued, must develop the physical potential so as to protect their 'temples and their women from the insults they are subject to every day' by the Muslims.[69] The Hindus gave in too easily, it was insisted, so Muslim rowdies could 'oppress the Hindus'.[70] Pandit Devaratan Sharma, Mahasabha general secretary, lamented that the Hindus had physically and numerically degenerated in the country. At a public meeting at Ultadinghee, Calcutta, in April 1925, he wondered that 'when calamities like that of Kohat, Saharanpur, Malabar and Ajmer befell them [Hindus], they were defenceless' in conflict with the Muslims.[71] The implication was that the Hindus could no longer resist the Muslims physically and in turn were dying in greater numbers due to 'physical liquidation' in the riots and violence in the country.[72] B.S. Moonje believed that the Hindus had to organise themselves to 'defend their country' -- if not with swords then at least with *lathis* -- against the Muslims.[73] The Muslims had the 'virile vigilance with which they [could] protect their racial interests ... which, alas, is visibly lacking in the present-day Hindu race' in India.[74] Moonje attributed 'Muslim virility, their readiness to kill and to be killed' to their diet of meat and the Islamic practice of sacrifice, urging the rehabilitation of the 'Vedic institution of *yajnathag'* [animal sacrifice] that would accustom a Hindu to the sight of spilling blood and killing.[75] The aim was to remove 'docility and mildness' from the temper of the Hindus and prepare them to counter the 'aggressiveness' of the Muslims.[76] If the Hindu youths improved their physique, Moonje argued, 'they could wrest *swaraj* without the

---

[68] Anil Seal, *The Emergence of Indian Nationalism: Competition and Collaboration in the Later Nineteenth Century*, Cambridge, 1971, p. 300; Gupta, *Malaviya*, pp. 295-300, 326.
[69] *Madhuri*, November 1926, p. 579, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 18, 1926, p. 5, IOL.
[70] *Sudha*, October 1927, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 2, 1927, p. 1, IOL.
[71] Pandit Devaratan Sharma's speech, Calcutta, *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 7 April 1925, p. 4, Microfilm, NMML.
[72] *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 7 April 1925, p. 6, Microfilm, NMML.
[73] Cited in Ayesha Jalal, *Self and Sovereignty: Individual and Community in South Asian Islam since 1850*, London, 2000, p. 309.
[74] *The Maratha*, 18 June 1922, cited in C. Jaffrelot, 'Opposing Gandhi: Hindu Nationaism and Political Violence', in Denis Vidal, Gilles Tarabout, and Eric Meyer [eds.], *Violence/Non-violence: Some Hindu Perspectives*, New Delhi, 2003, p. 306.
[75] B.S. Moonje, 'Forcible Conversions in Malabar', Moonje Papers, 1923, NMML.
[76] Home Poll., File No. 88/1933, RSS, Extract from the Weekly Report of the Director, Intelligence Bureau, 1933, p. 13, NAI.

Muslims'.[77] Military-style training would, it was suggested, help Hindu men in the protection of the Hindu community, which could not become strong unless it was 'fanatical' enough to confront the Muslims more effectively.[78] The celebration of manliness and physical strength expressed in the ties of the larger Hindu community through *sangathan* had manifested itself in the recurrent outbreak of anti-Muslim riots and violence across north India by the 1920s and 1930s.

The ideological development of an anti-Muslim hostility constituted a significant aspect of the formation of Hindu identity that was to become central to *sangathani*st narrative in north India in the 1920s and 1930s. *Sangathani*st ideology was deeply influenced and reinforced by a large body of Hindu propaganda which portrayed the Muslims as 'fanatical and sinister', determined to desecrate Hindu temples and construct mosques on Hindu sacred sites in India. Islam, it was argued, was 'born of violence' and would always remain tied to a 'religious warfare', resulting in the 'slaughter, forced conversion, enslavement and destruction of non-Muslims'.[79] The Muslims had inherited and embodied a 'doctrinal inflexibility and fanaticism' associated with Islam and had a propensity to violence, secrecy and dominance.[80] They were inherently 'intolerant and obscurantist' and did not allow even a 'reasonable criticism of Islam'.[81] Their residence in India of 2,000 years, it was claimed, had not succeeded in removing the 'Islamic prejudice and unkindness', which was a bar to all fellowship between the two races in India.[82] The Quran never enjoined the Muslims to 'forgive and forget' when the Hindu community was ranged against them.[83] The Muslims had often caused the 'ruin and destruction of the Hindus' as evident in the Kohat riots of 1924 when they forced the latter to embrace Islam in the NWFP.[84] An image of the violence and immorality of the Muslims was actively portrayed in the propaganda of Hindu publicists, reinforcing *sangathani*st notions about 'Muslim atrocities on the Hindus, their historical treachery and oppression' in India'.[85]

There were the phenomenal numbers of polemical tracts published in the United Provinces, attacking Islam and the Quran, during the 1920s and 1930s.[86] The Arya Samaj, drawing upon Swami Dayananda's *Satyartha Prakash,* portrayed Islam as a 'religion of slaughter, both animals and men, motivated by brutality and

---

[77] Moonje's Presidential address to the Punjab Hindu Young Men Sammelan meeting, Jallianwalla Bagh, 1929, Moonje Papers, 1929, NMML.

[78] Interview with Gokulchand Narang, Punjab Hindu Mahasabha leader, 13 February 1967, Oral Archives, NMML, Delhi. M.R. Jayakar, a prominent Hindu Mahasabha leader, formed the Swastik League on 10 March 1929 on the model of Nazi military practice as a centre of physical education and paramilitary training for the Hindus to fight the Muslims. *Swastik Herald,* 7 November 1934, Jayakar Papers, Microfilm, Reel No. 13, NAI.

[79] Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya, *The Light of Truth: English Translation of Swami Dayananda's Satyarth Prakash,* Allahabad, 1956, p. 97.

[80] *Anand,* 19 March 1927, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 11, 1927, p. 3, IOL.

[81] *Majma-ul-Bahrain, Ludhiana, 14 October 1871, IOR, L/R/5/48, p. 626, IOL.*

[82] *Benares Akhbar,* 30 April 1874, IOR, L/R/51, p. 179, IOL.

[83] *Sada-i-Muslim,* 15 August 1925, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 32, 1925, p. 3, IOL.

[84] *Bharat Jiwan,* 27 September 1924, IOR l/R/5/98, File No. 38, 1924, p. 2. Jiwan Das's pamphlet, which had precipitated the Kohat riots for attacking Islam, was burnt and Das sent to jail.

[85] *Vartman* [Kanpur], 21 September 1923, IOR L/R/5/97, File No. 4, 1923, p. 5, IOL.

[86] Some of the Arya tracts were: *Yavnon ka Ghor Atyachar, Munh Tor, Jarput, Lal Jhandi, Tarani Shuddhi, Malaksh Tor,* and *Islam ka Bhanda Phut Gaya.* Home Poll., File No. 140/1925, NAI.

sensuality'.[87] The Quran was attacked for its 'bigotry', and the Prophet Mohammad condemned as a 'sensualist, a pleasure-seeker and a cheat'.[88] Islam, argued the Arya Samajists, offered the best example of Muslim 'ruthlessness' as an 'aggressive faith of fanaticism' in India. Beneath the sanctioned brutality of a 'holy war' lay the concept of an 'infidel' -- a person beyond the realm of Islam who should be exterminated.[89] The publications of *Vichitra Jivan* and *Rangila Rasul* in 1923-24, which were the Arya Samaj's caricatures of the Prophet Mohammad, had resulted in court disputes.[90] Swami Shraddhananda was assassinated on 23 December 1926 by Abdul Rashid of Bulandshehar, who was hailed as a *'ghazi'* [destroyer of infidels] in the Muslim press.[91] In the wake of the Punjab High Court's verdict upholding the death sentence for Abdul Rashid in 1927, B.S. Moonje and other Hindu *sangathanists* received threatening letters from Muslim activists.[92] Arya Samaj leaders Badrishah and Bhairo Singh were murdered in Bahraich and Mount Abu in what was believed to be an 'organised Muslim conspiracy' in 1927.[93] The Aryan Conference in November 1927 asked the UP government to unearth the conspiracy behind the 'murders of the Hindu leaders' and initiate action against Muslim threats to the Hindu leaders in north India.[94] The Arya Samajists shared an ideological symbiosis with *sangathanists*; and both were ardently nationalist and revivalist opposed to Islam. In *sangathanist* narrative, Islam was represented as an 'alien faith' external to the all-embracing 'Hindu culture' of India. [95]

One historical trope of *sangathanist* narrative that was a recurrent motif in the reading of national history was that 'Muslim despotism and the corrupting influence of Islam' had resulted in the 'misery and enslavement' of India over the centuries. Muslim rule in the medieval period was represented as a 'disruptive force in Indian society', full of conflicts and persecution.[96] The lust for 'plunder and conquest' was the motivating factor for the Muslim invasions of India in the eleventh century.[97] The Muslims had come to India as 'invaders', it was argued, and carried out a 'systematic destruction of Hindu religion and national honour'. They 'demolished Hindu temples and places of pilgrimage, desecrated Hindu womanhood and converted the large numbers of Hindus to

---

[87] *Arya Mitra*, 26 June 1926, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 25, 1926, p. 2, IOL. Swami Dayananda, in his *Satyarth Prakash* [Light of Truth] published after his death in 1884, devoted about 60 pages in the fourteenth chapter of the book for the refutation of Islam. Kenneth W. Jones, *Arya Dharm: Hindu Consciousnes in 19th-Century Punjab,* New Delhi, 1989 [Berkeley, 1976], pp. 36, 54.
[88] Cited in Harald Fischer-Tine, '"Kindly Elders of the Hindu Biradri": The Arya Samaj's Struggle for Influence and its Effect on Hindu-Muslim Relations, 1880-1925', in Antony Copley [ed.], *Gurus and Their Followers: New Religious Reform Movements in Colonial India*, New Delhi, 2000, p. 109.
[89] *Hindustani*, 23 May 1925, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 20, 1925, p. 2, IOL.
[90] *Rangila Rasul* [Merry Prophet], written by Rajpal, subjected the life of the Prophet Mohammad to a searching criticism: it was first published in Urdu in Lahore in May 1924. Rajpal was acquitted by Justice Kunwar Dalip Singh of the Punjab High Court in June 1927. Home Poll., File No. 10/50/1927; *The Leader*, 25 June 1927, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 25, 1927, p. 1. *Vichitra Jivan* [Strange Life] was written in Hindi by Kalicharan Sharma, an Arya Samaj preacher, and published in Agra in November 1923.
[91] H.N. Mitra [ed.], *Indian Annual Register, 1926,* Vol. 2, Calcutta, 1927, July-December, pp. 335-56.
[92] *Arya Samachar,* 2 July 1927, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 26, 1927, p. 4, IOL.
[93] *Arya Mitra*, 6 August 1927, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 31, 1927, p. 3, IOL.
[94] *Arya Mitra*, 4 June 1927, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 22, 1927, p. 1, IOL.
[95] *Arya Mitra*, 13 June 1925, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 23, 1925, p. 2, IOL.
[96] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, pp. 4-5; Sudhir Chandra, 'Communal Consciousness in Late 19th Century Hindi Literature', in Mushirul Hasan [ed.], *Communal and Pan-Islamic Trends in Colonial India*, Delhi, 1981, pp. 180-1; Partha Chatterjee, 'History and the Nationalization of Hinduism', in Vasudha Dalmia and Heinrich Steitencron [eds.], *Representing Hinduism: The Construction of Religious Traditions and National Identity*, New Delhi, 1995, pp. 103-29.
[97] Sudhir Chandra, *The Oppressive Present: Literature and Social Consciousness in Colonial India*, Delhi, 1992, pp. 31-73.

Islam at the point of sword'.[98] The period of the Delhi Sultanate and Mughal rule was portrayed a story of the 'oppression of the Hindus' in the country. 'Sekandar [Sikander Lodi] destroyed temples' at many places; and the Mughals were 'plunderers and religious fanatics'.[99] Babur was a 'fanatic and an invader', and Aurangzeb 'a butcher of Hindus and a destroyer of Hindu temples', being an 'anti-Hindu zealot' himself.[100] The entire Muslim period was categorised as the 'dark age of unrelieved tyranny', during which the Hindus and their culture had suffered a 'terrible fall – a fall into the depths of slavery and foreign subjection'. It was a period of 'evil, of denationalization of the Hindus and of a great conflict'.[101] Apart from suffering the massacres, it was asserted, the Hindus were subjected to 'wholesale campaigns of forced conversions'.[102] The 'wounds in the heart' were kept 'green by the sight of a mosque' that stood beside the sacred temple of Vishwanath in Varanasi, UP.[103] The 'tyranny and destructiveness' of the Muslim rulers resulting in attacks on Hindu society and its culture, it was argued, did not represent any efflorescence of a 'composite culture', or 'cultural synthesis' as popularly believed. The *bhakti* movement, it was asserted, was an attempt to disarm Islam with a clear message that equality before God was as much part of Hinduism as it was of Islam: it was a form of Hindu resistance to Islamic rule, not an attempt at 'synthesis'.[104] Muslim rule was juxtaposed to the British conquest of India in the eighteenth century. Compared to the 'ruthless and oppressive' Muslim rule which had perpetrated a 'genocide of the Hindus', it was asserted, the British were providential in design to protect the Hindus from the 'Muslim tyrants' -- a construction that denied the association of British rule with the economic exploitation of India.[105] Islam became the history of a 'foreign conquest', its heritage remaining 'external' to India – in effect an 'occupying force'.[106] National history was appropriated into *sangathan*ist narrative through a sectarian approach that played a considerable part in the stigmatisation of the Muslims, echoing a denunciatory attitude towards Islam in India.

In the context of the sectarian conflict and propaganda of the 1920s, *sangathan*ist hostility against the Muslims had deepened and spread to social and political issues through a multiplicity of discourses in north India.[107] The Hindu community as well as the unity of the Indian nation was feared to be under a threat due to the 'moral and social degeneracy' of the Muslims.[108] Madan Mohan Malaviya argued that in every instance the Muslims were the aggressors and the Hindus the victims of 'horrible inhumanities' in the country. The culprits

---

[98] Golwalkar, *Bunch of Thoughts*, p. 209.
[99] *Bhavishya*, 15 August 1925, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 32, 1925, p. 1, IOL.
[100] Tanika Sarkar, 'Imagining a Hindu Nation: Hindu and Muslim in Bankimchandra's Later Writings', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 29. No. 39, 24 September 1994, p. 2553.
[101] M.S. Golwalkar, *We, Our Nation Defined*, Nagpur, 4th edn., 1947 [1939], p. 66; Prakash, *A Review*, p. 4.
[102] Shraddhanand, *Hindu Sangathan*, pp. 30, 34, 38.
[103] Bharatendu Harishchandra [1850-1885] – who represented late nineteenth-century Hindu revivalism in the UP – hailed the supplanting of Muslim rule by the British as a 'termination of centuries of oppression' in India. Cited in Chandra, 'Communal Consciousness', p. 185.
[104] G. Pandey, *Routine Violence: Nations, Fragments, Histories*, Stanford, 2006, p. 145.
[105] Chandra, 'Communal Consciousness', p. 175; Dadabhai Naoroji, *Poverty and Un-British Rule in India*, Delhi, 1962, pp. 19-31.
[106] Chatterjee, 'History and Nationalization of Hinduism', p. 109.
[107] Thursby, *Hindu-Muslim Relations*, pp. 62-7.
[108] Henrik Berglund, *Hindu Nationalism and Democracy*, Delhi, 2004, p. 64.

responsible for sectarian violence were not 'good and gentle Mohammedans', but 'rogues, vagabonds and bad elements of Muslim society'.[109] The most striking expression of the 'Hindu moral decline', he explained, was the failure of the Hindus to defend their own religion and their reluctance to lay down their lives for Hindu *dharm* [religion] against Muslim attacks.[110] B.S. Moonje asserted that the fight for *swaraj* was against not only the British but also the Muslims -- the 'internal aggressors'. It was merely a continuation of the struggle which had been initiated by Prithviraj Chauhan when 'the Hindu Raj, culture, and religion was [*sic*] first assailed under the Muslim impact'.[111] The Hindus, he insisted, should not act on the 'law of love in their relations with the Muslims', but convert 'Hindustan into a Hindu home'.[112] Swami Shraddhananda denounced the 'threat of Islam', arguing that the Hindus should not participate in Muslim religious festivals, venerate Muslim *pir*s [saints], or visit Muslim shrines. The chief task of national survival, he explained, depended on the education of the Hindus in the Hindu religion, a plan begun by the Arya Samaj, in order to counter the 'threat of Islam' in India.[113] M.S. Golwalkar claimed that the Muslims continued to be an 'internal threat' to the Indian nation, as they had schemed for the 'enslavement of India' for more than a millennium. Islam was bound to become a 'disruptive force' in India because the Muslims were the 'old enemies' of the Hindus in the country.[114] India, it was claimed, was a land of warfare, as it was the duty of the Muslims to 'convert' the Hindus to Islam.[115] All the Muslims living in India, declared Ashutosh Lahiry, Hindu Mahasabha general secretary, were not 'true nationals' of the Indian nation.[116] The Muslims who could not approximate themselves to the standard of nationalism were 'aliens'; and the Hindus had to resist the 'aggressive policy of the Muslims', otherwise they would be ruined.[117] The Khilafat movement was portrayed as an act of 'Muslim betrayal', a proof of the 'extra-national loyalties' of the Muslims who had the designs of 'domination over the Hindus' in India.[118] The 'homogeneous' Hindu community threatened 'from within' by the presence of the Muslims became a consistent political imagery in *sangathani*st discourse in north India throughout the 1920s and 1930s.

*Sangathani*st narrative questioned whether Hindu-Muslim unity was possible or desirable, stressing the need to exclude the Muslims from India's freedom struggle.[119] The task of Hindu revival and liberation, it was stated, was interrupted by the British conquest, which was made possible by the help of the Muslims. The Muslims 'did not participate in the freedom struggle', and Hindu-Muslim unity was 'no longer necessary for the attainment of

---

[109] Madan Mohan Malaviya's presidential address to All-India Hindu Mahasabha Session, Benares, 19 August 1923, H.N. Mitra [ed.], *Indian Annual Register, 1923,* Vol. 2, July-December, Calcutta, 1924, p. 131.
[110] Cited in S.R. Bakshi, *Madan Mohan Malaviya: The Man and His Ideology*, New Delhi, 1991, p. 99.
[111] B.S. Moonje's letter to M.R. Jayakar, dated 3 May 1929, Moonje Diaries [1], NMML.
[112] B.S. Moonje's letter N.C. Kelkar, dated 5 July 1937, Moonje Papers, File No. 51, 1939, NMML.
[113] Shraddhanand, *Hindu Sangathan,* p. 138.
[114] Golwalkar, *Bunch of Thoughts*, pp. 184, 219-23.
[115] Bhai Parmanand, *Hindu Sangathan* [Trans. by Lal Chand Dhawan], Lahore, 1936, p. 68.
[116] Cited in Bhatt, *Hindu Nationalism,* p. 109.
[117] L.B. Bhopatkar's Presidential Address, All-India Hindu Mahasabha, Gorakhpur Session, December 1946, Moonje Papers, File No. 74, NMML.
[118] Chatterji, *Bengal Divided,* p. 178.
[119] M.R. Jayakar, *The Story of My Life 1922-1925,* Vol. 2, Bombay, 1959, p. 630.

swaraj'.[120] The Muslims stood in the way of India's united struggle against the British, argued Bhai Parmanand, on account of their 'separatist demands and conspiracies'. By supporting and siding with the British, they had tried to 'monopolise all political power' in India.[121] India had been brought closer to *swaraj* primarily because of the efforts of 'Hindu *sangathan*ists alone'.[122] The Muslim community had become 'a sincere supporter' of the British, V.D. Savarkar stated, and Islam as well as the Muslims was far too 'greater an enemy of India's nationalism'.[123] Lajpat Rai believed that Muslim sectarianism was instrumental in the 'co-operation with the British and opposition to self-rule of Sayyid Ahmed Khan and the Aligarh elite', who had become characteristically 'anti-Hindu and pro-government'.[124] The Non-cooperation movement had been frustrated and defeated because of the 'separatist politics' of the Muslim community, which had not accepted 'our concept of India' and was 'not Indian'.[125] The Muslims needed a 'change of heart', argued Lajpat Rai, and their leaders had to remove the idea that the Hindus were '*kafirs*'.[126] N.C. Kelkar explained that the Hindus not only wished to 'attain political freedom in India, but they also wish to have their proper share of it ... Swaraj will not be worth having if we ... purchase it ... [at] the loss of Hinduism itself.'[127] *Sangathan*ist discourse appropriated Indian nationalism as a specifically 'Hindu essence and virtue', as nationalist awareness and patriotic sentiments were born of a 'higher sensibility, a higher culture' – all possessed by the Hindus. The Muslims, it was contended, were culturally backward and could never be awakened to the nationalist cause because nationalism was foreign to their 'essential nature'. *Sangathan*ists denied the possibility of Muslim participation in India's freedom struggle on the basis that the Muslims could never be the 'true national citizens' of the country.[128]

II. 1. 'Abductions' of Hindu women

In *sangathan*ist ideology, Muslim strength was linked to 'virility' with all its negative associations of 'lust, lechery and debauchery'. Charges over the rape, abduction and kidnapping of Hindu women were rampant in the towns of UP in the 1920s and 1930s. There was an organised campaign by a large section of Hindu publicists in the province about the 'forcible abductions' of Hindu women and children by the Muslims for

---

[120] *Abhyudaya*, 9 May 1925, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 18, 1925, p. 4, IOL; Home Poll., File No. 140/1925, GOI, NAI; Golwalkar, *Bunch of Thoughts*, pp. 177-201.

[121] Parmanand, *Hindu Sangathan,* p. 186. In 1909, Parmanand advocated the partition of north-west India, with the Muslims being granted Sindh and the North West Frontier Province [NWFP]. Bhai Parmanand, *The Story of My Life* [Trans. by N. Sunder Iyer and Lal Chand Dhawan], Lahore, 1938, rept. New Delhi, 1982, p. 36. The Muslim-dominated Independent Party, led by M.A. Jinnah, had supported the Congress's national demand, but pursued a policy of responsive cooperation with the British.

[122] Cited in Keith Alexander Meadowcroft, '"From Hindu-Muslim Unity" to Hindu Raj: The Evolution of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha 1922-1939', Unpublished Masters Dissertation, Concordia University, 1995, p. 76.

[123] V.D. Savarkar, 'The Rise, Fall and Destruction of Muslim Theocracy', in Savarkar, *Samagra Savarkar,* Vol. 5, p. 503.

[124] V.C. Joshi [ed.], *Lalal Lajpat Rai: Writings and Speeches, 1920-1928*, Vol. 2, Delhi, 1966, p. 196.

[125] The Muslim-dominated Independent Party, led by M.A. Jinnah, had supported the Congress's national demand, but pursued a policy of responsive co-operation with the British.

[126] Lala Lajpat Rai, 'On the Hindu-Muslim Problem', in Ravindra Kumar [ed.], *Selected Documents of Lala Lajpat Rai, 1906-1928*, Vol. 3, New Delhi, 1992, p.162. Lajpat Rai proposed in 1923 that the Muslims should have four states [the Pathan province, western Punjab, Sind, and eastern Bengal] as a solution to the Hindu-Muslim problem. Joshi [ed.], *Lala Lajpat Rai,* Vol. 2, p. 213.

[127] N.C. Kelkar's Preidential Speech, All-India Hindu Mahasabha Session, Jabalpur, December 1925, H.N. Mitra [ed.], *Indian Annual Register, 1925*, Vol. 2, July-December, Calcutta, 1924, p. 351.

[128] Chatterji, *Bengal Divided*, p. 179.

conversion to Islam.[129] Madan Mohan Malviya, in his attempt to create a history of 'abductions', claimed that the British had instigated the Muslims to attack the Hindus, and that the first instances of the abduction of Hindu women had occurred during the 1906 Jamalpur riots in Bengal and in the North West Frontier Province [NWFP] in the 1910s.[130] In the UP, rumours and kidnapping scare stories were widely reported in Agra, Pilibhit, Meerut and Unao between 1923 and 1927.[131] Khwaja Hasan Nizami's Urdu pamphlet *Dae-i-Islam* was linked to a conspiracy to 'kidnap Hindu women and children' as part of a plan to convert 'one crore of Hindus' to Islam.[132] At the annual anniversary meeting of the Arya Samaj in Moradabad in 1923, Murali Lal of Bulandshahr urged that every Hindu girl keep a dagger so that no Muslim could dishonour her.[133] The Hindu woman was not to limit herself to 'self-protection', but actually 'commit violence' by herself.[134] The Meerut Hindu Sabha held a meeting in June 1924 attended by some 2,000 to discuss the means of countering an 'organised campaign by the Muslims to kidnap and forcibly convert Hindu women'.[135] The secretary of the Allahabad Hindu Sabha warned the Hindus in July 1925 against the kidnapping activities of 'Muslim goondas' in the towns and villages of the UP.[136] In *sangathanist* narrative, a strategy was urged to counter the threat of 'abductions', as the Hindus were appealed not to allow their women and children to have any dealings with Muslim traders, teachers and servants in the UP.[137]

A special connection was established between Hindu widows and the Muslims, triggering fears that Hindu wombs were producing Muslim progeny in India.[138] The large numbers of Hindu widows, stated a *sangathanist* tract, were now 'entering the homes of *yavanas* and *mlecchas* [Muslims], producing children for them and increasing their numbers'.[139] 'Our sexually unsatisfied widows especially are prone to Muslim hands and by producing Muslim children they increase their numbers and spell disaster for the Hindus...'[140] The Hindu taboo against widow-marriage was attacked as a medieval practice that led to the 'elopements of Hindu widows' with the Muslims, resulting in the 'decline of the Hindu numbers' in India.[141] Swami Shraddhananda proposed that all child widows be allowed to remarry, besides providing various remedies for unconsummated marriages and

---

[129] *Hindustani*, 2 July 1924, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 27, 1924, p. 2, IOL.
[130] M.M. Malaviya's presidential address, All-India Hindu Mahasabha session, Banaras, 1923. Home Poll., File No. 66/VI/1924, NAI; H.N. Mitra [ed.], *Indian Annual Register, 1923*, Vol. 2, July-December, Calcutta, 1924, pp. 130-31.
[131] *Arya Mitra*, 31 May 1924, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 21, 1924, p. 3, IOL.
[132] *Arya Patra*, 2 July 1924, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 27, 1924, p. 4, IOL.
[133] Gupta, 'Obscenity', p. 144.
[134] Jasodhara Bagchi, 'Representing Nationalism: Ideology of Motherhood in Colonial Bengal', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 25, Nos. 42-43, 20-27 October 1990, p. WS 69.
[135] *PAI*, Lucknow, No. 25, 28 June 1924, p. 204.
[136] *Arya Patra*, 8 August 1925, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 31, 1925, p. 3, IOL.
[137] Hindu women venerated Muslim saints' shrines because it was believed they had miraculous powers, especially cures for infertility. W. Crooke, 'Notes on Some Muhammadan Saints and Shrines in the United Provinces', *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. 53, 1924, pp. 97-9.
[138] Vir Bharat Talwar, 'Feminist Consciousness in Women's Journals in Hindi: 1910-20', in Kumkum Sangari and Sudesh Vaid [eds.], *Recasting Women: Essays in Colonial History*, New Delhi, 1989, p. 217.
[139] Cited in Gupta, *Sexuality*, p. 306.
[140] Mannan Dwivedi, *Humara Bhishan Haas*, Kanpur, 1924, 3rd edn, 2,000 copies, pp. 1, 26, 35, cited in Gupta, *Sexuality*, p. 310.
[141] *Pratap, 2 July 1924 IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 27, 1924, p. 5; IOL; Tanika Sarkar, 'Scandal in High Places: Discourses on Chaste* Hindu Woman in Late Nineteenth Century Bengal', in Meenakshi Thapan [ed.], *Embodiment: Essays on Gender and Identity*, Delhi, 1997, pp. 35-73.

widowhood.[142] The abductions and elopements evoked the centuries-long image of the 'sexually powerful' Muslim male and 'Muslim debauchery', revealing the vulnerability of the Hindu community – a significant theme that provided *sangathan*ists with a rationale for the larger mobilisation of the Hindus for unity in north India.[143]

II. 2. Boycott of Muslims

Hindu publicists launched an aggressive campaign to end nearly all the spheres of Hindu-Muslim interaction in parts of the Unite Provinces in the 1920s and 1930s.[144] There were endless lists of suggestions and advice for discipline and a code of conduct for the Hindus to end all dealings with Muslim tailors, milkmen, vegetable-sellers, bangle-sellers, policemen, bhands, washermen, and *nai*s in the towns of the province.[145] On 12 and 13 January 1911, several small meetings of the Hindus were organised by the Arya Samaj in Agra, where it was decided that neither Muslim dancing girls nor musicians would be employed in Hindu weddings. On 18 and 19 January 1911, there were about thirty Hindu marriage processions in Agra, and not a single Muslim dancing girl or bandsman was employed except in one instance.[146] There was an economic boycott of the Muslims in relation to employment in parts of the province. At the District Hindu Conference in Dehradun on 4 March 1924, Kedar Nath, assistant secretary of the UP Hindu Sabha, proposed the boycott of all Muslims and was supported by Swami Vicharanand.[147] At a *nagar kirtan* [town procession] meeting in Gorakhpur on 14 November 1925, the Hindus were advised to boycott all Muslim shops in the town.[148] In June 1926 the Yatri Sabha in Hardwar prevented Hindu pilgrims from engaging *tonga*s driven by the Muslims.[149] Posters were distributed in Badaun in 1926 by the Dharam Rakshini Sabha, advising the Hindus to abstain from social intercourse with the Muslims.[150] The Hindus were asked to take up professions which were exclusively under the domain of the Muslims.[151] Class and caste among the Hindus were combined to demarcate the Muslims and restrict the shared economic arenas of interdependence. The spectre of 'Muslim strength and cohesion' was given as a reason for the active participation of Hindu publicists in the propaganda for the boycott the Muslims in the UP.[152]

---

[142] Shraddhanand, *Hindu Sangathan,* pp. 46-8; J.T.F. Jordens, *Swami Shraddhananda: His Life and Causes,* Delhi, 1981, pp. 140-43.

[143] *Arya Mitra*, 14 August 1926, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 32, 1926, p. 3, IOL; Tanika Sarkar, 'Woman, Community, and Nation: A Historical Trajectory for Hindu Identity Politics', in Patricia Jeffry and Amrita Basu, *Appropriating Gender: Women's Activism and Politicized Religion in South Asia,* London, 1998, pp. 89-104.

[144] Shiva S. Dua, *Society and Culture in Northern India 1850-1900,* Delhi, 1985, pp. 63-74.

[145] Anon, Hindu Sabha, *Alarm Bell urf Khatre ki Ghanti,* Banaras, 1925; Shiv Sharma Updeshak, Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, UP, *Alarm Bigule,* Moradabad, 1924; Mathura Prasad Shiv Hare, *Alarm Bell Arthat Khatre ka Granta,* Hardwar, 1924. It was noted that several copies of *Alarm Bell,* written by one Ramanand, had appeared in Etah in May 1926: PAI, 15 May 1926, no. 18, para 473, p. 261.

[146] Home Poll. B, 1-4/ March 1911, NAI.

[147] *PAI,* 22 March 1924, No. 12, Para 102, p. 111.

[148] *PAI,* 28 November 1925, No. 45, Para 400, p. 495.

[149] *PAI,* 12 June 1926, No 22, Para 553, p. 320.

[150] *PAI,* 18 September 1926, No. 36, Para 838, p. 508.

[151] *PAI,* 5 April 1924, No. 14, Para 116, p. 128.

[152] In the evidence given to the Kanpur Riots Enquiry Committee, the Arya Samaj's depiction of the Muslim community as 'muscular and organised' was a common theme. Written statement of Raghuber Dayal Bhatta, 22 April 1931, 'Kanpur Enquiry Report', IOR L/PJ/7/75, pp. 108-11, IOL.

III. Militancy of Hindu Festivals

By the 1920s and 1930s Hindu revivalism had become an aggressive force, helping to consolidate *sangathan*ist ideology and rhetoric in northern India. Hindu festivals and celebrations sponsored by powerful Hindu mercantile classes and local notables had become increasingly strident and warlike in display, providing the context for Hindu revival in the 'public arena' in the towns of the UP.[153] Regular prayers were introduced with elaborate ceremonials at previously abandoned temples. In Allahabad, stated a police report, '... it is noticeable that in every temple, even those which have been practically disused, "*arti puja*" [religious ceremony] and conch blowing have been restarted with great vigour'.[154] New festivals and more elaborate modes of celebration were introduced. Shivaratri and Janmastami, which had hitherto been minor festivals, were celebrated on a large scale alongside Ramlila and Holi in the province.[155] In 1925 Hindu papers published instructions issued by the All-India Hindu Mahasabha for the proper celebration of Janmastami – the birthday of Lord Krishna.[156] Huge processions began to be organised for the Janmasthami festival for which no such tradition had existed in the past. There was a dynamic pattern in the celebration of Ramlila: an image of Shivaji as the 'defender of Hinduism' featured alongside the images of Ram, Lakshman, and Sita in the 1922 Ramlila in Allahabad.[157] The Ramlila processions, which had been confined to the higher castes, eventually included the lower caste groups, as the patrons of the Ramlila wished to enlarge the scale of festival celebrations with a view to projecting the image of a 'cohesive' Hindu community. During the 1923 Ramlila in Allahabad, the inclusion of the lower caste groups by the Ramlila committees 'had as its motive the raising of a force of men used to handle *lathi*s, in order to impress the Mohammadans'.[158] The lower castes, particularly the Shudras, participated massively in the festivals not because of any greater commitment to Hinduism but in 'their quest to carve out a more prominent position for themselves in urban society'.[159] For *sangathan*ists who began to encourage lower caste participation, the expanding celebration of Ramlila was a means of demonstrating the wider 'unity and physical prowess' of the Hindus. There were organised efforts to exclude the Muslims from Hindu festivals, which had witnessed the recruitment of *akhara*s and self-defence squads in times of riots in the UP.[160] Tension increased due to overlapping festivals -- particularly in the north-western districts of the UP which had a huge Muslim population. Ramlila overlapped with the Muharram in 1924. The religious processions in Allahabad, an observer noted of the festival, '... had been devoted largely to the display of weapons and physical force by both

---

153 C.A. Bayly, 'Patrons and Politics in Northern India', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 3, 1973, pp. 387-8; Freitag, *Collective Action*, pp. 131, 198.

154 *PAI*, No. 8, 27 February 1926.

155 Chief Secretary, UP, to Secretary, GOI, Home Dept., Letter No. 1355-Z, 23 September 1924, File No. 249/X/1924, Home Poll., GOI, NAI.

156 *Bharat Dharm*, 14 December 1925, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 31, 1925, p. 3.

157 S.B. Freitag, 'State and Community: Symbolic Popular Protest in Banaras's Public Arenas', in S.B. Freitag [ed.], *Culture and Power in Banaras: Community, Performance and Environment, 1800-1980*, Berkeley, 1989, pp. 223-4.

158 Confidential note on 'Communal Friction in the United Provinces, 1924', CID, UP, Home Poll., File No. 140/1925, NAI.

159 Gooptu, *The Politics of Urban Poor*, pp. 196-7.

160 'Evidence taken before the Commission of Enquiry on the Communal Outbreak of Cawnpore, 1931' ['Evidence'], IOR, L/P&J 7/75, 1931, IOL.

Mohammedans and Hindus ... Weapons and ammunition were purchased in large quantities by the inhabitants in September [1924].'[161] Violence inevitably broke out, revealing the existing pattern of force and mobilisation, particularly by the Hindus. The ethos and celebration of Hindu festivals frequently became the arena for riots, targeting Muslim groups in the towns of the UP during the 1920s and 1930s.[162]

IV. Hindu Processional Music

The dispute about music before mosques and the routes of religious processions was one of the principal reasons of discord in the UP in the 1920s and 1930s. The issue was whether Hindu processional music could be played outside mosques during the hours of prayer [*namaz*].[163] Under British rule, festivals were regulated on the principle of established 'procedure', a policy of 'non-interference' based on the traditional religious practices of both the Hindus and the Muslims.[164] Queen Victoria's proclamation of 1858 had stated the policy to be one of 'non-interference' in the customs and traditions of Indians. The central problem for the colonial officials was how to uphold the state's pledge of 'non-interference' while determining whether a particular practice was integral to the traditions of one community or another. The Hindus began to take processions past mosques during the time of prayer, claiming it to be their ancient custom; and the Muslims demanded that it was their time-honoured tradition to pray in silence.[165] In Allahabad quarrels over Hindu religious processions were followed by a riot during Ramlila in October 1924 – in which 12 people were killed.[166] In 1924 the holding of a Muslim prayer [*namaz*] at Aminabad Park, Lucknow, resulted in a major riot in the city, as the *namaz* had become an 'obstacle' in the way of every Hindu procession.[167] The All-India Hindu Mahasabha claimed that Muslim opposition to the playing of music near mosques was not based on any 'real religious feelings' but was due entirely to 'communal fervour'. It called upon all the provincial and local Hindu Sabhas to render the necessary guidance and assistance to the Hindus whose religious rites and processions were interrupted by either the Muslims or the government.[168] The playing of music in Hindu processions had often resulted in the display of 'Hindu strength', using the Muslim 'aggressiveness' as a legitimising factor in the UP.[169]

---

[161] 'The Allahabad Disturbances of 1924', IOR L/P&J/6, File No. 4043, 1924, pp. 1, 5, IOL.

[162] *A History of the Hindu-Muslim Problem in India. Being the report of the Committee appointed by the Indian National Congress to enquire into the Cawnpore Riots of March 1931*, in Gerald Barrier [ed.], *Roots of Communal Politics*, New Delhi, 1976, p. 238.

[163] Home Poll, File No. 249/X, 1924, NAI; *Abhyudaya*, Allahabad, 23 March 1918, IOR L/R/5/94, p. 2; John Zavos, *The Emergence of Hindu Nationalism in India*, Oxford, 2000, p. 150.

[164] Katherine H. Prior, 'The British Administration of Hinduism in North India, 1780-1900', Unpublished PhD Dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1990, pp. 68-75.

[165] *The Leader*, 22 May 1926, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 20, 1926, p. 4, IOL.

[166] Report by Crosthwaite, District Magistrate, Allahabad, on the proceedings of a joint Hindu-Muslim committee held at the Collector's house on Saturday, 5 September 1925, UP GAD 680/1925, UPSA, Lucknow, UP.

[167] *Arti*, 11 October 1924, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 40, 1924, p. 4, IOL.

[168] *Indian Daily Telegraph*, 25 October 1925, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 32, 1925, p. 2, IOL.

[169] Confidential Note on Music in Ramlila by H. Crosthwaite, DM, Allahabad, 28 October 1926, File No. 613/1926, Box No. 473, GAD, UP, UPSA.

The UP Hindu Sabha controlled by Madan Mohan Malaviya had opposed any restrictions on Hindu religious processions and aggressively promoted the right of the Hindus to 'honour their gods' as they saw fit.[170] It refused to be bound by the decisions of the Delhi Unity Conference in 1924, which had reached agreement on the question of Hindu processional music. Repeated calls by the Muslim leaders in the UP -- Maulana Vilayat Husain, Zahur Ahmad, and Badruddin -- for a five-ten minute break in music during evening prayers as a compromise were rejected.[171] In 1926 the Hindu Sabha attacked the UP government's orders stopping music outside mosques in Allahabad, Lucknow, and Mussorie as an 'unscientific and inequitable policy'.[172] It accused the government of 'partiality' to the Muslims, claiming that the state had imposed restrictions on the playing of music outside mosques, while the Muslims continued to 'observe Moharram and Bakr-Id joyfully'.[173] In September 1926, Malaviya presided over a protest meeting attended by over 10,000 Hindus in Allahabad and attacked the 'obstructive' attitude of the Muslims. 'Meeting invites attention ...' he declared, 'to deep and universal pain which said attitude [of the authorities] has caused Hindus.'[174] In March 1927 the UP government passed two orders, which were to be enforced in the absence of any clear evidence as to the existing practice or any definite agreement between the Hindus and the Muslims: [1] that processions with music would not pass mosques, temples and churches during the hours of public worship; [2] and that in case of disputes whether a building came within the above categories, it would be referred to the district officer for decision.[175] However, the Hindu Sabha protested against the orders and advised the Hindus not to stop music outside mosques.[176] *Sangathani*sts argued that the demand for the stoppage of music outside mosques on the basis of *shariat* was 'dangerous' and 'reprehensible' – indeed an imposition on non-Muslims, and that it was the duty of the Hindus to make a struggle in defence of their rights.[177] The inflammatory *sangathani*st propaganda over the issue of music had largely precipitated an anti-Muslim hostility and antagonism, contributing to the outbreak of riots in the towns and villages of the UP during the 1920s and 1930s.[178]

---

[170] Smith, Commissioner, Allahabad, to Sir Alexander Muddiman, Chief Secretary, UP, 14 September 1925, UP GAD 680/1925; Confidential Note on Music in Ramlila, by Crosthwaite, DM, Allahabad, 28 October 1926, File No. 613/1926, Box No. 473, UP GAD, UPSA; Gyanendra Pandey, *The Ascendancy of the Congress in Uttar Pradesh, 1926-34: A Study in Imperfect Mobilization*, Delhi, 1978, pp. 80-83.

[171] Note on music outside mosques by H.S. Crosthwaite, District Magistrate, Allahabad, 23 May 1926, UP GAD 246/1926.

[172] *Signal*, 24 April 1926, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 17, 1926, p. 3, IOL. In the Rewari riot case [1926], the magistrate's ruling recognised the right of the Hindus to take out their processions accompanied by music, stating that the Muslims had no right to stop music, and that they had pre-arranged the riot. *Surya*, 29 May 1926, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 21, 1926, p. 6, IOL.

[173] *Abhyudaya*, 5 June 1926, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 22, 1926, p. 3; *The Leader*, 11 September 1926, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 36, 1926, p. 5, IOL. In September 1925, M.M. Malaviya attempted to secure a general ruling on the issue from the government, which had stuck rigidly to 'precedent and custom'. Letter of H.S. Crosthwaite, District Magistrate, Allahabad, to Sir Alexander Muddiman, dated 7 September 1925, Home Poll., 680/1925, NAI; Note by Sir Alexander Muddiman, 21 September 1925, Home Poll., 368/1925, NAI.

[174] M.M. Malaviya to Private Secretary to Governor, UP, telegram, 5 October 1926, UP GAD 613/1926, UPSA.

[175] *A History of the Hindu-Muslim Problem in India [Report of the Cawnpore Riot Enquiry Committee]*, 1932, IOR L/PJ/7/75, p. 222, IOL.

[176] *Abhyudaya*, 9 April 1927, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 14, 1927, p. 4, IOL.

[177] *The Leader*, 22 May 1926, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 20, 1926, p. 4; *Aj*, 26 June 1926, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 25, 1926, pp. 4-5; *Abhyudaya*, 24 July 1926, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 29, 1926, p. 3, IOL.

[178] V.D. Savarkar, *Six Glorious Epochs of Indian History*, Bombay, 1985 [1949], p. 121.

Conclusion

Sangathan provided an ideological cohesion and self-representation of the Hindus by focusing on 'masculinity' -- a 'martial, muscular' creed – as the chief ideal of a 'Hindu nation' in the early twentieth century. It constructed a full bodied Hindu masculine male with the increasing assertions of Hindu community identity in opposition to the image of the 'emasculated and effeminate' Indian created by British prejudice. Its aim was to eradicate the evil effects of the 'emasculated existence' of the Hindus and infuse 'manliness' into them in an anti-colonial contestation against the state. The Hindu Mahasabha stressed 'masculine virtues' and the recovery of the 'martial heritage' of the Hindus as the basis of a strong 'Hindu nation'. It adopted the *akharas* as part of the *sangathan* programme, stressing the need to make the Hindu body more 'masculine' in order to produce citizens who embodied 'national integrity and strength' in India.[179] However, the Mahasabha's fundamentally Hindu characterisation of physical strength conceived to promote unity and rejuvenate the Hindu community had taken shape in defence against not only the British but also the Muslims. In reality, the *sangathanist* battle was waged far more stridently in contestation against the Muslims, seen as 'warlike' and 'fanatical', than British rule.[180] The notion of Hindu-Muslim unity as the essential basis of India's struggle for freedom was denounced.[181] Hindu publicists focused on the Muslim male, who was depicted as a 'rapist, an abductor, and an immediate threat' to Hindu society in India.[182] The Hindu community was mobilised over the 'abductions' of Hindu women; and violence against the Muslims became a necessary condition of redeeming 'Hindu male honour' in the towns and villages of the UP. In the 1920s and 1930s, Hindu festivals became the occasions for militant Hindu resurgence, demonstrating intense hostility against the Muslims in the province. Common participation in religious festivals and organisational activities in the province brought diverse groups, particularly the Shudras, into the public arena and presented an image of the 'martial prowess' of the Hindus *vis-a-vis* the Muslims. In addition, the Muslim grievances over Hindu processional music outside mosques had become a thorny issue, defying a settlement due to *sangathanist* resistance and propaganda. *Sangathan* strategists discovered the Muslims as a common element of 'danger to all the Hindus', intensifying the anti-Muslim campaign across the UP in the 1920s and 1930s.

---

[179] Joseph S. Alter, 'The Body of One Colour: Indian Wrestling, the Indian State and Utopian Somatics', *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 8, No. 1, 1993, pp. 49-72; John Rosselli, 'The Self-Image of Effeteness: Physical Education and Nationalism in Nineteenth-Century Bengal', *Past and Present*, Vol. 86, February 1980, pp. 122-3.

[180] Home Poll., File No. 206/1926, p. 14, NAI; Koenrad Elst, *Nationalism in India: Concealing the Record of Islam*, New Delhi, 1992, p. 136.

[181] *Vartman*, 21 September 1923, IOR L/R/5/97, File No. 4, 1923, p. 5; *Anand*, 12 November 1927, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 45, 1927, pp. 4-5, IOL.

[182] Home Poll., File No. 140/1925, NAI; *Abhaya*, 15 August, 1925, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 31, 1925, p. 3, IOL.

7

The Militarisation of Hindu Society

The Hindu Mahasabha launched a militarisation programme in order to create an assertive militant 'Hindu nation' as part of *sangathan* ideology in the 1920s and 1930s. The new emphasis on the need to strengthen and militarise the Hindu community dominated its ideology as the basis of a Hindu political identity. Hindutva was not only a means of Hinduising the polity but also of militarising the Hindus in India.[1] The Mahasabha's militaristic policy had become radicalised under V.D. Savarkar's leadership by the late 1930s, developing an anti-Muslim orientation in view of the wider and deepening sectarian conflict in north India. Besides the Mahasabha, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh [the National Volunteer Corps] emerged in the mid-1920s as the most successful and articulate institutional voice of Hindutva, attempting to define and defend a 'Hindu nation' with military training. Both the Mahasabha and the RSS were inspired by a goal to unify and build the strength of the Hindus and resurrect a 'Hindu nation'.[2] This chapter attempts to explore the Mahasabha's discourse of militarisation, which was fundamental to its conception of the emergence of a 'Hindu nation' in India.

I. Hindu Militarisation

The Hindu Mahasabha's militarisation drive was pioneered by Dr Balkrishna Shivram Moonje [1872-1948], a *sangathani*st intellectual, in the late 1920s.[3] Moonje, an ophthalmologist by profession and the Mahasabha's working president from 1927 to 1933, had a close affinity to the royal family of Bhonsles, Nagpur: his forefathers had served in the Bhonsle armies.[4] He had worked in the Boer War, South Africa, before returning to join nationalist politics in India in the late 1910s. He became Bal Gangadhar Tilak's most trusted political associate and an influential anti-Gandhi critic in Congress politics in the Central Provinces [CP]. He launched the Nagpur Hindu Sabha in 1923 and subsequently established the Hindu Sabhas in all the three parts of the CP to counter the influence of the Gandhian Congress.[5] A member of the Central Legislative Assembly in the 1920s, he had demanded that a greater number of Indian youths should be given military training and recruited in India's defence services, stressing the need to Indianise the army.[6] The Skeen committee eventually echoed Moonje's demand in 1926, proposing that 'a substantial and progressive scheme for the Indianization of the Indian Army should be adopted without delay'. It recommended an increase in the Indian places at the Royal Military

---

[1] Indra Prakash, *A Review of the History and Work of the Hindu Mahasabha and the Hindu Sangathan Movement*, New Delhi, 1952 [1938], pp. 150-1.

[2] B.V. Deshpande and S.R. Ramaswamy, *Dr Hedgewar -- The Epoch Maker: A Biography*, Bangalore, 1981, p. 119.

[3] Deshpande and Ramaswamy, *Dr Hedgewar*, p. 119.

[4] B.S. Moonje's father told him: 'I should never forget that my bones belong to the ... Bhonsle. I feel I must honour the tradition of military service which I had inherited from my grand-father.' B.S. Moonje's letter, dated 6 January 1935, Microfilm, Reel No. 10, Moonje Papers, NMML.

[5] B.S. Moonje's letter to Chand Karan Sarda, dated 14 November 1923, File No. LP-18, Moonje Papers, NMML; D.E.U. Baker, *Changing Political Leadership in an Indian Province: The Central Provinces and Berar, 1919-1939*, Delhi, 1979, p. 16.

Academy, Sandhurst, England, from ten to 20 in 1928 and the addition of four furher places for Indians each year until 1933. The army would be half-Indianised by 1952![7] Moonje's worldview as well as ideology was determined by an extreme fixation for war and militarism, which had become definitive of his *sangathan*ist discourse.[8] In his belief, only the Mahasabha could fight for the country's freedom, a notion that shaped his vision of the military reorganisation of Hindu society in India.[9]

In Ideology, Moonje was influenced in part by Italian fascism, which had strengthened his goal to militarise Hindu society across the country. He visited important military schools in Italy as part of his Europe tour after attending the First Round Table Conference in London from 12 November to 19 January 1930.[10] He visited the Military College, the Central Military School of Physical Education, and the Balilla and Avanguardist organistions in Rome in March 1931.[11] The Balilla institutions organised the military training and fascist indoctrination of boys from the age of six up to 18.[12] In his meeting with Mussolini on 19 March 1931 in Rome, Moonje revealed the Hindu Mahasabha's commitment to the introduction of militarisation in India. 'During the British Domination of the last 150 years,' he stated, 'Indians have been waived away from the military profession but India now desires to prepare herself for undertaking the responsibility for her own defence and I am working for it.'[13] Moonje's central aim was to introduce militarisation in Indian society and demonstrate Hindu strength on the model of the Italian fascist movement.

In the early 1930s, Moonje initiated the militant reorganisation of Hindu society by creating Hindu para-military organisations and youth movements in Maharashtra, western India.[14] He worked for the foundation of aeroclubs and indeed formed rifle clubs in the province under the auspices of the Hindu Mahasabha. He founded the Central Hindu Military Education Society in the Hindu pilgrimage city of Nasik built on the River Darna in Maharashtra in 1935; and the society aimed to train Hindu youths in the 'science and art of personal and national defence' in India.[15] He subsequently started the Bhonsle Military School in Nasik in June 1937, which was inaugurated by the Scindias of Gwalior in March 1938.[16] The Bhonsles, after whom the school was named, were the first to contribute the funds, as were the Holkars of Indore, the Gaekwads of Baroda, and the

---

[6] *The Mahratta,* April 12, 1931, 'Dr B S Moonje on Round Table Conference': Special interview to *The Mahratta,* paragraph entitled 'National Militia', cited in M.N. Ghatate, 'Dr B S Moonje: Tour of European Countries', in N.G. Dixit [ed.], *Dharmaveer Dr. B.S. Moonje Commeomoration Volume: Birth Centenary Celebrations 1872-1972,* Nagpur, 1972, p. 68.
[7] C.H. Philips [ed.], *The Evolution of India and Pakistan, 1858-1947: Select Documents,* London, 1962, pp. 531-2.
[8] M.B. Niyogy, 'Dharmaveer Dr. Balakrishna Shivram Moonje', in Dixit [ed.], *Dharmaveer,* pp. 59-60.
[9] Nandini Gondhalekar, 'Indian Nationalism and "Hindu" Politics: Maharashtra and the Hindu Mahasabha, 1920-1948', Unpublished PhD Dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1999, p. 52.
[10] Moonje Papers, File No. 23, 1934-36, Microfilm, Reel No. 1, NMML.
[11] Marzia Casolari, 'Hindutva's Foreign Tie-up in the 1930s: Archival Evidence', *Economic and Political Weekly, 22 January 2000, pp. 218-27.*
[12] Ghatate, 'Dr B.S. Moonje', pp. 68-9.
[13] Casolari, 'Hindutva's Foreign Tie-up', p. 220.
[14] Moonje Papes, File No. 3/1939, NMML.
[15] Moonje Papers, File No. 24, 1932-36, NMML.
[16] B.S. Moonje's letter to Appasahib Kelkar, dated 25 February 1936, Microfilm, Reel No. 10, Moonje Papers, NMML.

Maratha states of Dewas and Dhar.[17] The school's chief objective was to give instruction to Hindu youths with a view to arousing and training their 'latent instincts for martial pursuits' across the country.[18] It aimed to impart physical and martial education to Hindu youths based on 'recruitment from all the provinces of India'. Under Moonje's leaderhip, the Mahasabha had demonstrated a strong commitment to the introduction of military education by moblising support for its scheme in India.

The militarisation programme was intensified as an ideological doctrine of the Hindu Mahasabha under the presidentship of V. D. Savarkar in the late 1930s.[19] The revolutionary phase in Maharashtra's history and the anti-imperialist thrust of India's freedom struggle had a deep impact on Savarkar.[20] The major influence on his thinking was the writings of Bal Gangadhar Tilak [1856-1920] and S.M Paranjpe, both nationalists offering a fierce critique of British rule in India. Tilak, a fellow Chitpavan Brahman from Ratnagiri [Maharashtra] like Savarkar, had legitimised the use of violence in the anti-British struggle, rehearsing violence as an ethical philosophy in *Srimad Bhagavadgita-Rahasya* [The Secret Meaning of the Bhagavad Gita], *or Karma Yoga Shastra* written by him in Marathi in 1915.[21] Tilak read the *Gita* in political and activist terms, giving prominence to the philosophy of activism *[karma yoga]* which had become a rallying cry for Indians to 'fight the British by violence, if necessary, in order to regain political supremacy' in the country.[22] Tilak was sentenced to six years' transportation in Mandalay jail, Burma, following his trial in Bombay in July 1908, as several of his articles in the *Kesari* had condoned 'revolutionary acts' against the state.[23] Savarkar, a Tilakite himself, adopted a political culture that combined nationalism with violence in the same vein as his mentor, putting faith in the efficacy of an armed revolution against the state. Similarly, Dr Shivram Mahadeo Paranjpe, Tilak's right-hand man, a prolific writer and editor of the extremist Marathi newspaper *Kal*, exerted a profound influence on Savarkar. Paranjpe argued that when Mahamud of Ghazni had invaded India, the 'Hindu religion' and the 'Indian nation' became weak and suffered a social and political decline. The country's language changed 'from Sanskrit to Urdu', and the people were converted from 'Hinduism to Islam'.[24] The narrative of 'national pride' evident in Paranjpe's historical works, particularly those on the battles fought by the Marathas against the Mughals, lay at the heart of

---

[17] The Bhonsale Military School exists today as the Bhonsale Military Academy, dedicated to instilling in its cadets 'the power of military knowledge'. B.S. Moonje's letter to N.C. Kelkar, dated 10 April 1936, Microfilm, Reel No. 11, Moonje Papers, NMML.

[18] Home Poll., File No. 4-37, I, 1937, NAI.

[19] Christphe Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement and Indian Politics, 1925 to the 1990s: Strategies of Identity-building, Implantation and Mobilisation [with special refrence to Central India]*, London, 1996, pp. 17-8; idem, 'Opposing Gandhi: Hindu Nationalism and Political Violence', in D. Vidal, G. Tarabout, and E. Meyer [eds.], *Violence/Non-Violence: Some Hindu Perspectives*, Delhi, 2003, pp. 299-324.

[20] V.D. Savarkar, *Veer Savarkar's 'Whirl-Wind Propaganda' [Statements, Messages and Extracts from the President's Diary of His Propagandistic Years: Interviews from December 1937 to October 1941]*, Bombay, 1941, p. 51.

[21] B.G. Tilak, *Srimad Bhagavad Gita-Rahasya, or Karma Yoga Shastra, Poona, 1915 [first Marathi edition], English edition, 1935*, cited in Philip H. Ashby, *Modern Trends in Hinduism*, New York, 1974, pp. 96-7.

[22] Stanley Wolpert, *Tilak and Gokhale: Revolution and Reform in the Making of Modern India*, Berkeley, 1977 [1962], pp. 259, 262-3; Mark J.Harvey, 'The Secular as Sacred? – The Religio-political Rationalization of B.G. Tilak', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 20, No. 2, 1986, pp. 321-31: p. 321.

[23] 'Trial of Mr Tilak, Editor of Kesari Newspaper: Conviction and sentence for sedition -- Appeal to Crown', IOR L/P&J/6/877, File No. 2436, 1908, IOL.

[24] Cited in Shabnum Tejani, *Indian Secularism: A Social and Intellectual History, 1890-1950,* Ranikhet, 2007, p. 89.

Savarkar's discourse on revolutionary nationalism. Savarkar was committed to a violent and revolutionary insurrection against British rule, advocating political assassination, sedition, and armed methods in India.

Savarkar and his older brother Ganesh Savarkar started the Mitra Mela, an underground revolutionary organisation, in Nasik in 1903, which had held meetings where members read the biographies of Shivaji, Ramdas, and the works of 'patriotic revolutionists' and debated the means of attaining freedom for India. The Mitra Mela was active until June 1906 when Vinayak Savarkar left for England to study for barristorship at Gray's Inn, London; and it later became the Abhinav Bharat, or Young India Society -- a title borrowed from Giuseppe Mazzini's 'Young Italy' *[Giovane Italia]* movement.[25] The Abhinav Bharat in its meetings discussed 'how the English could be driven out of India ... The means suggested were the collection of arms, killing Englishmen by arms or bombs ... and not to mind the loss of fifteen natives if only one Englishman was killed.'[26] Duing his years in London, Savarkar continued the revolutionary propaganda and activities against British rule.[27] He drew his violent nationalism in part from Giuseppe Mazzini [1805-1872], the revolutionary icon of national liberation, who had theorised and developed the tactics of secret societies and guerrilla warfare in Italy.[28] He wrote a Marathi version of Mazzini's autobiography *Life* and sent it to his older brother Ganesh Savarkar, who published it in Nasik in 1907.[29] Savarkar reiterated his firm belief in revolutionary methods, preaching the necessity of an armed resistance to end British rule in India.[30]

Savarkar's revolutionary propaganda eventually led to the assassination of Lt. Col. Sir William Curzon-Wyllie, aide-de-camp at the India Office, London, by his follower Madanlal Dhingra in 1909. Judge A.M.T. Jackson, district magistrate of Nasik, was later assassinated by Anant Laxman Kanhare, 17, a Chitpavan Brahman and an arts student in Aurangabad, in December 1909.[31] The murder of Jackson revealed a much larger 'revolutionary conspiracy' linked to the Abhinav Bharat, which had 'advocated, prepared for, and conspired to bring about an armed rebellion or revolution and ... to overthrow the Government by criminal force or show of criminal force' in India.[32] The masterminds of the conspiracy were identified as the Savarkar brothers. In his confession to the trial court, Chutterbhuj Jhaverbhai Amin, of India House, London, admitted that Savarkar had instructed him to pack a parcel containing 20 Browning automatic pistols, plus ammunition during his travel to India from London in 1908. It was confirmed that one of these pistols had been used in Jackson's

---

[25] 'From the Judgement of the Savarkar Case, Trial and Conviction and Question of Extradition in case of failure at the Hague': IOR L/P&J/6/1060, File No. 359, 1911, IOL; Keer, *Veer Savarkar,* Bombay, 1988 [1966], pp. 140-51.
[26] Statement of Chutterbhuj Amin: IOR 'L/P&J/6/978, File No. 4762, 1909, IOL.
[27] Home Department [Political], Procedings for the year 1910, IOR L/P&J/9454, 1 April 1910, File No. 847, p. 8713, IOL.
[28] Harindra Srivastava, *Five Stormy Years: Savarkar in London,* New Delhi, 2002, pp. 3-4; Enrico Fasana Trieste, 'From *Hindutva* to Hindu Rashtra: The Social and Political Thought of Vinayak Damodar Savarkar [1883-1966]', 1994, p. 21; D.D. Pattanaik, *Hindu Nationalism in India*, Vol. 2, New Delhi, 1998, p. 71.
[29] Jyotirmay Sharma, *Hindutva: Exploring the Idea of Hindu Nationalism,* New Delhi, 2003, p. 154. Savarkar's first published work -- *Joseph Mazzini Yanche Atmacharitr va Rajkaran* [Autobiography and Politics of Giuseppe Mazzini] -- summarised the political teachings of Mazzini in a 26-page introduction [*Prastavna*].
[30] V.D. Savarkar, *Hindu Pad-Padashahi, Or A Review of the Hindu Empire of Maharashtra*, New Delhi, 1971, p. 31.
[31] Keer, *Veer Savarkar,* pp. 153-4; Srivastava, *Five Stormy Years,* pp. 137-8.

assassination.[33] Savarkar was charged in the Jackson murder trial and sentenced to transportation for life: he was imprisoned in the Cellular Jail of the Andaman Islands in 1910 and denied the barristership at Gray's Inn, London. [34] He appealed for clemency – first in 1911 and then again in 1913.[35] He was finally released unconditionally in 1937 after 27 years in jail and did not participate in any anti-British agitation thereafter, transforming himself from a revolutionary nationalist to a staunch proponent of Hindutva.[36] A scholar, a poet and a historian, Savarkar's anti-British activitism in England had significantly contributed to the ideological development of militarism as a cenral doctrine of the Hindu Mahasabha in the 1930s and 1940s.

Savarkar's militarisation discourse had remained at the heart of *sangathan* ideology since he became the Hindu Mahasabha president in 1937: he led the Mahasabha as its 'supreme dictator' until 1944. Savarkar viewed military power as the foremost goal of a 'Hindu nation': it was 'steel and gun-powder that decide the destinies of nations'. [37] The organised state power was identified to be martial and administrative, with militarisation forming the essential basis of the state. Two military corps -- the Hindu Swayam Sewak Dal and the Hindu Women's Protection Corps -- were organised during Savarkar's presidentship in Nagpur in 1937, which adopted military-style training in Maharashtra. The aim was to build Hindu militancy, which could defend the Hindus from 'external and internal threats' in India's provinces.[38] In 1939 the Mahasabha established a national militia, a uniformed youth corps, which emphasised physical and military training for the 'defence of the Hindus' during riots in the country.[39] B.S. Moonje declared at a meeting in Pune on 8 October 1939: 'I have the pleasure in bringing to your notice a resolution of the Hindu Mahasabha for the organisation of the Hindu Militia in the country for the purpose of taking part in the defence of India both from external and internal aggression ...'[40] The Hindu Militia, better known as the Ram Sena [the Army of Ram], was inaugurated, despite British restrictions against military and paramilitary organisations, in Poona on 17 March 1940; and Moonje was appointed its president for five years.[41] Mahasabha secretary-general J.P. Verma later directed the Ram Sena's operations; and after his untimely death in July 1940, V.G. Deshpande took over the organisation.[42] The provincial Hindu Sabhas were instructed to enrol volunteers for the organisation of the Sena, which pledged loyalty to the British and sought government support for the defence of Hidu interests in anticipation of riots. The

---

[32] 'From the Judgement of the Savarkar Case': Trial and Conviction and Question of Extradition at The Hague, IOR L/P&J/6/1069, File No. 778, 1911, IOL.

[33] 'Assassination of Mr Jackson: Discovery of Conspiracy at Nasik': IOR L/P&J/6/978, File No. 4762, 1909, IOL.

[34] Savarkar was arrested on 13 March 190 in London; and the British courts passed final orders in June 1910, extraditing Savarkar to face trial in Bombay. Cases and counter-cases followed his trial – including his appeal at the Heague, and he was sentenced in 1910. IOR L/P&J/6/1077, File No. 1131, 1911, IOL.

[35] J. Kuruvachira, *Hindu Nationalists of Modern India: A Critical Study of the Intellectual Geneology of Hindutva,* Jaipur, 2006, p. 118.

[36] Keer, *Veer Savarkar,* p. 164.

[37] V.D. Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan: A Collection of the Presidential Speeches Delivered from the Hindu Mahasabha Platform,* Bombay, 1992, p. 152; V.D. Savarkar, *Historic Statements* [Eds. S.S. Savarkar and G.M. Joshi], Bombay, 1967, p. 260.

[38] Gondhalekar, 'Indian Nationalism', p. 113.

[39] B.S. Moonje's letter to K.B. Hedgewar, dated 18 October 1939, Moonje Papers, File No. 51, 1939, NMML.

[40] *B.S. Moonje's circular Letter of 27 September 1939, Moonje Papers, File No. 51, 1939, NMML.*

[41] 'Hindu Militia' [Ram Sena]', File No. 91, M.G. Chitnavis Papers, NMML.

Mahasabha's aim was to counter the 'threat' of the Muslims through the organisation of the Hindu Militia, particularly during the riots in India.[43]

Nonetheless, the Hindu Mahasabha's most organised paramilitary organisation which had eventually eclipsed the Ram Sena was the Hindu Rashtra Dal: it was formed under the leadership of Nathuram Godse, a staunch loyalist of Savarkar, in Poona in 1942.[44] The Rashtra Dal received the support of the 'Tilakites', labelled by the British as the 'Kesari group'; and its objective was to help the Mahasabha in its fight for the protection of the 'Hindu religion and culture' in India.[45] The militant idiom gradually become embedded in the Mahasabha's programme concerning Hindu society and national identity in the 1930s and 1940s.[46]

II. Mahasabha and RSS Nexus

The Hindu Mahasabha's militarisation discourse was most clearly evident in its close relations with the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh [RSS].[47] A 'major influence' on the thinking of Dr Keshav Baliram Hedgewar [1889-1940],[48] revered as the founding father of the RSS, was 'a handwritten manuscript of ... Savarkar's *Hindutva* which advanced the thesis that the Hindus are a nation'.[49] 'One of the early visitors to Savarkar in Ratnagiri,' writes Dhananjay Keer, 'was the great founder of the RSS ... The interview took place in [March] 1925 at Shirgaon, a village on the outskirts of Ratnagiri.' Before starting the RSS, Hedgewar had 'a long discussion with Savarkar over the faith, form and future of the organization'.[50] The RSS was envisioned to propagate Hindutva ideology and infuse new physical strength and power into the Hindu community through military training.

The RSS was established on the Vijaya Dashmi day in 1925 in Nagpur by Hedgewar. The inaugural meeting was attended by Dr B.S. Moonje, Dr L.V. Paranjpe, Dr B.B. Tholkar, and Ganesh Savarkar – all Hindu Mahasabhaites and Tilakites – focusing on the weakness of existing Hindu organisations and the Hindus' role in combating 'Muslim rowdyism' [violence] in India.[51] Hedgewar believed that the struggle against British colonialism lacked 'a sense of moral purpose and Hindu nationalism', and that the Congress had 'no positive vision of a Hindu nation'.[52] He declared: 'It is therefore the duty of every Hindu to do his best to consolidate

---

[42] V.G. Deshpande, 'Brief Life Sketch of Late Mr. J.P. Verma', File No. 91, M.G. Chitnavis Papers, NMML.
[43] *Mahratta*, 16 February 1940, cited in Walter Anderson, 'The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh I: Early Concerns', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 7, No. 11, 11 March 1972, p. 595.
[44] Walter K. Anderson and Sridhar D. Damle, *The Brotherhood in Saffron: The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and Hindu Revivalism*, New Delhi, 1987, pp. 43-4.
[45] Ram Lal Wadhwa, *Hindu Maha Sabha, 1928-1947*, New Delhi, 1999, p. 209.
[46] Henrik Berglund, *Hindu Nationalism and Democracy*, Delhi, 2004, p. 72.
[47] D.E.U. Baker, 'The Muslim Concern for Security: The Central Provinces and Berar, 1919-1947', in Mushirul Hasan [ed.], *Communal and Pan-Islamic Trends in Colonial India*, New Delhi, 1985, pp. 237-9.
[48] *Anderson, 'The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh I', p. 591.*
[49] Anderson and Damle, *Brotherhood*, p. 33.
[50] Keer, *Veer Savarkar*, p. 175.
[51] D.R. Goyal, *Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh*, New Delhi, 2nd edn. 2000 [1979], pp. 59-60; Walter K. Anderson and Shridhar D. Damle, 'RSS: Ideology, Organization, and Training', in C. Jaffrelot [ed.], *The Sangh Parivar: A Reader*, New Delhi, 2005, p. 24.
[52] Cited in Ashby, *Modern Trends in Hinduism*, p. 100.

Hindu society.'[53] Hedgewar's objective was to build a strong nation of the Hindus in India – 'a moral integration in which no other elements came between the nation and the individual'.[54] The RSS aimed to re-create a nation ruled by the Hindus by building a numerically small but devoted and efficient organisation of patriotic men who could provide leadership to the Hindu community in India.

The RSS sought to impart a martial, masculine accent to the spiritual ideals of good and virtuous behaviour *[samskaras]* as well as an ideological training *[baudhik]* through *shakhas* in India.[55] The *shakha,* which had a close affinity to the traditional *akhara,* was the basic unit of the RSS. Hedgewar looked to the *akharas* to rally some of his first recruits in the *shakhas* in 1925. He said: 'Go to the *akharas*, but come to the *shakhas* also.'[56] He introduced the daily *shakhas* in May 1926 as the permanent units of the RSS first in Nagpur city and later in the villages and towns of Maharashtra.[57] The *shakhas* aimed to create 'new men' – the 'patriotic selfless individuals loyal to the Hindu nation' -- who were physically well trained, manly, courageous, self-disciplined and capable of organising the Hindus in India. They concentrated on 'physical exercise and cultivation of the mind', besides acting as the 'building blocks of RSS expansion' in the country.[58] *Swayamsevaks*, referred to as 'Hedgewar's volunteers', pledged – a life oath initiated in 1928 -- to consecrate themselves entirely to the RSS 'with whole body, heart, and money, for in it lies the betterment of Hindus and the country'; and the 'Hindu nation' was identified as the 'living God'.[59] The RSS was developed as a cohesive and disciplined body of *swayamsevaks* and workers on the basis that they would have a broad influence on many areas of Hindu national life in India.[60] A fundamental Hindu characterisation of 'physical culture' by the RSS had largely shaped the formation of armed volunteer groups, which were defined in the framework of Hindu nationalism, across Maharashtra in the 1920s and 1930s.[61]

The Hindu Mahasabha and the RSS belonged to the same political milieu and militaristic background in India.[62] The icon of Shivaji, *bhagwa dhwaj* [the saffron flag – the 'true guru' -- to which Hedgewar demanded that obeisance be paid], and Shivaji's guru Ramdas were prominent in the rituals of both organisations, suggesting a strong influence of military tradition.[63] The *bhagwa dhwaj* – the saffron flag once used by Shivaji

---

[53] Cited in Pralay Kanungo, *RSS's Tryst with Politics: From Hedgwar to Sudarshan*, Delhi, 2002, p. 68.
[54] Ainslie T. Embree, 'The Function of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh: To Define the Hindu Nation', in Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby [eds.], *Accounting for Fundamentalisms: The Dynamic Character of Movements,* Chicago, 2004, p. 619.
[55] Thomas Blom Hansen, *The Saffron Wave: Democracy and Hindu Nationalism in Modern India*, Princeton, 1999, p. 93.
[56] Interview with Nana Deshmukh, RSS leader fom Akola, Maharashtra, 25 February 1994, New Delhi, cited in Jaffrelot, *Hindu Nationalist Movement*, p. 38.
[57] J.A. Curran, *Militant Hinduism in Indian Politics: A Study of the RSS,* New Delhi, 1951, pp. 12, 33-5.
[58] Antony Copley, 'Debating Indian Nationalism and Hindu Religious Belief', in Antony Copley [ed.], *Hinduism in Public and Private: Reform, Hindutva, Gender, and Sampraday*, New Delhi, 2003, p. 12.
[59] Anderson, *'Rashtiya Swayamsevak Sangh I', p. 593.*
[60] Tapan Basu , Pradip Datta, Sumit Sarkar, Tanika Sarkar, and Sambuddha Sen, *Khaki Shorts and Saffron Flags: A Critique of the Hindu Right*, Delhi, 1993, p. 16.
[61] M.S. Golwalkar, *Bunch of Thoughts*, Bangalore, 2000 [1966], pp. 24-5.
[62] Christophe Jaffrelot, 'The RSS: A Hindu Nationalist Sect', in C. Jaffrelot [ed.], *The Sangh Parivar: A Reader,* New Delhi, 2005, p. 58.
[63] Anderson and Damle, *Brotherhood,* p. 36.

and Maharana Pratap -- rather than the tricolour was regarded as the true 'national flag' of India.[64] The Mahasabha and the RSS were centralised command structures, controlled respectively by the president and the Sarsanghchalak [the supreme dictator] who wielded enormous powers. The top leadership was not open to a democratic election; and the leaders were appointed, revealing an 'authoritarian institutional secrecy' that concealed internal working and conflicts in order to project an image of 'Hindu unity' in the country.[65] Both organisations repudiated the Congress's anti-British struggles, abstaining from the anti-Rowlatt agitation, the Non-Cooperation Movement, and the Civil Disobedience Movement in India.[66] The ideal of militant Hindu nationalism became central to the ideology of both the Mahasabha and the RSS in a goal to propagate India as a 'Hindu nation' by constructing a 'defensible and militaristic' Hindu identity.[67]

The RSS maintained an institutional affinity and continuity with the Hindu Mahasabha as a parallel Hindu movement, drawing support from the latter for its expansion and development across India. Most of its patrons belonged to the Mahasabha. In addition to the patronage of M.M. Malaviya, stated the British secret service, the RSS 'owe[d] its growth to Dr Moonje and his journeys in the UP region'.[68] B.S. Moonje, celebrated by the RSS as 'Dharmaveer' [a hero in the religious struggle], had a prominent role in the formation of the RSS, being one of its five founding members and the mentor of Hedgewar. For Moonje, Hedgewar was perhaps the most loyal follower in Nagpur politics throughout the 1920s and 1930s.[69] When the Hindu Sabha had been organised in Nagpur under the presidentship of Raja Laxmanrao Bhonsle of Nagpur, Moonje became its vice-president and Hedgewar the secretary.[70] As Hindu Mahasabha president, Moonje played a crucial role in organising the RSS branches in Maharashtra and the Central Provinces in the late 1920s, even though the organisation's structure was the result of Hedgewar's vision and leadership. Moonje explained: 'Our institution, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh of Nagpur under Dr Hedgewar is of ... kind, though quite independently conceived. I shall spend the rest of my life developing and extending this institution of Dr Hedgewar all throughout Maharashtra and other provinces.'[71] Moonje was instrumental in the expansion of the RSS as a nationwide organisation in India, reinforcing a deeper commitment to *sangathan* ideology. The RSS had penetrated Hindi-speaking north India with the help of the Mahasabha. Ganesh Savarkar brought the RSS in touch with Mahasabha activists in

---

[64] Ramananda Chatterjee, Hindu Mahasabha presiden, first unfurled the saffron flag as a Hindu symbol at its Surat session in 1929; it was adopted by the All-India Hindu Mahasabha as the pan-Hindu flag of the 'Hindu nation' in Lahore in 1936. Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan*, p. 106.

[65] Jaffrelot, *Hindu Nationalist Movement*, p. 45; Anderson and Damle, *Brotherhood*, p. 88.

[66] Basu and Sarkar *et al.*, *Khakhi Shorts*, p. 20.

[67] Christophe Jaffrelot, 'Hindu Nationalism: Strategic Syncretism in Ideology Building', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 20, Nos. 12-13, 20-27 March 1993, p. 521; K.R. Malkani, *The RSS Story*, New Delhi, 1980, p. 25.

[68] 'Note on the Volunteer Movement in India prepared by the Intelligence Bureau – 28 September 1940', IOR L/P&J/17, File No. C81, 1940.

[69] K.B. Hedgewar lost his parents in a plague outbreak in Nagpur when he was 13 in 1902. B.S. Moonje brought up Hedgewar and later sent him to the National Medical College, Calcutta, where the latter joined the Anushilan Samiti. Hedgewar joined the Congress as a follower of Tilak in the Central Provinces – Moonje being his father figure. Narayan Hari Palkar, *Dr K.B. Hedgewar* [Translated from Marathi by Mrinalini Dhavale], Poona, 1964, pp. 36, 41, 59, 117.

[70] *Moonje's Diary 1927: entries on 4 May, 4 June, 11 June, 13 June*, Reel 1, Microfilm, Moonje Papers, NMML.

[71] Moonje Papers, Microfilm, Diary, Reel No. 2, 1932-36, NMML.

Delhi and Banaras; and the influence of the Savarkar family had enabled the RSS's expansion among the upper castes of western Maharashtra. Padam Raj Jain, Mahasabha general secretary, helped Vasant Rao Oke establish an RSS *shakha* in the central office of the Mahasabha in Delhi in 1936.[72] The RSS attracted new patrons due to its association with the Mahasabha, some of them being Hindu princes and rulers anxious to find a counterweight to Muslim paramilitary groups in India.[73] The RSS's links to the Mahasabha had served to introduce it into fairly 'wider and militant circles' in north India in the 1920s and 1930s.[74]

In its organisational activities, the RSS was linked to the Hindu Mahasabha through membership and leadership, though it remained independent of it. Officials in the Home Department noted that the RSS was the 'volunteer organisation of the Hindu Mahasabha'.[75] Sections of the RSS activists were office-holders in the Mahasabha; and many leaders were members of both the Mahasabha and the RSS, as dual membership was common.[76] An early indication of the nexus was the career of Nathuram Godse – who joined the RSS in 1930 and became a prominent organiser of the Sangh. He left the RSS for the Mahasabha two years later because 'Hedgewar refused to make the RSS a political organization'.[77] Lacking in trained youth power, the Mahasbha leadership was anxious to get the support of the RSS cadres. The Mahasabha, at its Delhi session in 1932, passed a resolution, officially recognising the RSS and encouraging provincial Hindu Sabhas to support its expansion and assist in making it a 'strong organization of Hindus'.[78] It commended the RSS as 'the only militant and well-disciplined force of Hindus' in India.[79] Groups of RSS militants gathered at public meetings to celebrate Savarkar's release from jail in 1937.[80] During the RSS officers' training camp held in Pune on 27-29 May 1943, which was attended by M.S. Golwalkar, Ganesh Savarkar, and B.S. Moonje, Savarkar expressed his admiration for the 'display of march and drills by *swayamsevak*s in great numbers'. He was 'proud', he said, 'to see the branches of the Sangh spread throughout India during his visits to various places'.[81] Savarkar instructed Hindu Sabhas throughout India to observe a day of mourning for Hedgewar when the latter died on 30 June 1942.[82] Savarkar died in 1966: an honour guard of 2,000 RSS workers attended his funeral procession in Bombay.[83] The RSS stayed outside political campaigns, insisting that it was strictly a cultural organisation concerned with the renewal and regeneration of a 'Hindu nation' through character building, whereas the

---

[72] Padam Raj Jain's letter to V.D. Savarkar, dated 27 July 1936, Microfilm, Reel No. 3, File No. 1, Savarkar Papers; Padam Raj Jain's letter to V.D. Savarkar, dated 29 November 1936, Savarkar Papers, Reel No. 4, File No. 1, NMML.
[73] *Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Conspiracy to Murder Mahatma Gandhi*, Part I, New Delhi, 1966, pp. 242-3.
[74] Hansen, *Saffron Wave,* pp. 92-95.
[75] Home Poll., I, File 18-4-42, 1938, NAI.
[76] J.D. Malekar's letter to Phadnis, dated 7 November 1938, Savarkar Papers, File No. 4 [March-December 1938], NMML.
[77] Curran, *Militant Hinduism,* pp. 18-19.
[78] McKean, *Divine Enterprise,* p. 70.
[79] The All-India Hindu Mahasabha's statement, 5 December 1938, Savarkar Files, NMML.
[80] Keer, *Veer Savarkar,* pp. 40-2.
[81] Cited in Casolari, 'Hindutva's Foreign Tie-up', p. 228.
[82] A.G. Noorani, *Savarkar and Hindutva: The Godse Connection,* Delhi, 2002, p. 91.
[83] Lise McKean, *Divine Enterprise: Gurus and the Hindu Nationalist Movement,* Chicago, 1996, p. 94.

Mahasabha, a political party, was interested in the role of the state.[84] Nonetheless, both the Mahasabha and the RSS shared an ideological affinity based on Hindu unity and militancy, being committed to the militarissation of Hindu society in India.

III. Radicalisation of Miltarisation

The Hindu Mahasabha's militarisation programme had become radicalised by the late 1930s, particularly during the Second World War period. In the wake of Britain's declaration of war on Germany in September 1939 and the subsequent statement of Viceroy Lord Linlithgow unilaterally committing India to the war, the Indian National Congress's provincial governments resigned *en masse* in protest against the war effort. In contrast, the Muslim League declared support for Britain and celebrated the Congress withdrawal from the government as a 'Day of Deliverance'.[85] The Mahasabha for its part adopted a policy of 'responsive co-operation' with the British in order to secure 'Hindu intersts' under a 'Dominion' status; and it anticipated that Britain would make the war the occasion *inter alia* to 'militarise the Hindus and Indianise the army in entirety'.[86] Savarkar renewed the militarisation drive as a declaration of the reliability of the 'Hindu race' in a situation of war.[87] 'His Majesty's Government,' he explained, 'must now turn to the Hindus and work with their support ... now that our interests were so closely bound together the essential thing was for [Hindusthan] and Great Britain to be friends; and the old antagonism was no longer necessary.'[88] He justified co-operation with the British on the 'nationalist grounds and in the interests of the country' during the war period, even though the government's overall strategy was to create a counterweight to the nationalist opposition and isolate the Congress in the country.[89]

The Hindu Mahasabha's policy of co-operation justified India's participation in the military activities. The Mahasabha declared in September 1939 that the provincial and district Hindu Sabhas would undertake the task of forming Hindu Sainikikaran Mandals [Hindu military boards] across the country.[90] It resolved that the propaganda drive should be carried into the rural areas, particularly those inhabited by the 'martial races'.[91] Regional 'militarisation boards' were formed under the leadership of V.D. Savarkar, Ganesh Savarkar, B.S. Moonje, and N.C. Chatterjee.[92] At the Mahasabha's Calcutta session in December 1939, Savarkar asked all the

---

[84] K.B. Hedgewar's letter [No. 5 of 1929] to Paramarth, dated 2 August 1929; Hedgewar's letter [No. 51 of 1932] to Bhaiya Saheb Tatade, dated 2 December 1932, Moonje Papers, NMML.

[85] Chetan Bhatt, *Hindu Nationalism: Origins, Ideologies and Modern Myths,* Oxford, 2001, p. 101.

[86] Savarkar wrote to the Viceroy: 'In accordance with the seasoned policy of the Hindu Maha Sabha of responsive co-operation ... the Hindu Maha Sabha has decided to participate in and utilise every war effort on the part of the Government which is genuinely calculated to contribute to Indian Defence and to further ... Hindu interests.' V.D. Savarkar's letter to Viceroy, dated 19 August 1940, Savarkar Files, NMML.

[87] V.D. Savarkar's letter to the Viceroy, dated 12 October 1941, IOR L/P&J/8/863, IOL.

[88] Lord Linlithgow's letter to Leopold Amery, Secretary of State for India, dated 7 October 1939, and the report of the meeting in *the postscript on 9 October 1939: IOR MSS Eur. File No. 125/8, 1939, IOL.*

[89] Savarkar's presidential address to Hindu Mahasabha session, Calcutta, December 1939: V.D. Savarkar, *Samagra Savarkar Wangmaya: Writings of Swatantrya Veer V.D. Savarkar,* Vol. 6, Poona, 1964, rept. New Delhi, 2003, p. 383.

[90] Hindu Mahasabha Working Committee meeting, Dadar, Bombay, 10 September 1939: File No. C 30, Hindu Mahasabha Papers, NMML.

[91] William Gould, *Hindu Nationalism and the Language of Politics in Late Colonial India,* Cambridge, 2004, p. 248.

[92] Weekly Report from the Director of Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India, Simla, 22 June 1940, File 230/35, No. 24, IOR L/P&J/12/482, IOL.

universities, colleges, and schools 'to make military training compulsory to students' and 'secure entry into military forces for your youths in any and every way' in the country.[93] At the Mahasabha's session in Madura in December 1940, he outlined the party's policy of 'militarising' Hinduism, encouraging Hindu men to join various branches of the British armed forces *en masse*.[94] He urged the Viceroy to appoint the Mahasabhaites to the advisory councils of the government and the war committees in India.[95] On his fifty-ninth birthday celebrated in conjunction with a Militarisation Week in 1941, Savarkar launched the Mahasabha's rallying cry: 'Hinduise all politics and militarise all Hindudom'.[96] He declared that if the Hindus helped Britain militarily, they would be doing service to 'Hindudom' – to 'defend our hearths in an internal anti-Hindu anarchy'.[97] The Hindu Sabhaites had become members of the war committees set up by the government in the United Provinces, Bengal, and the Bombay Presidency.[98] Such enlistment in the regular army ran parallel to the growth of militias in north India.[99] Intelligence reports expressed alarm about a sudden increase in the two volunteer organisations – the Ram Sena and the Hindu Rashtra Dal -- of the Mahasabha.[100] The Mahasabha was 'building up its armed volunteer forces numbering around 100,000 members' and had links to other 'Hindu groups which possessed firearms'.[101] The UP, which had witnessed the rapid growth and militant sessions of the Mahasabha, faced 'communal anarchy unless very strong ... immediate action is taken to restrain the activities of volunteer bodies'.[102] Throughout the war period, the Mahasabha had shown a strong determination to take the 'fullest advantage' of Britain's war needs as part of its militarisation programme in India.[103]

The war period seemed to offer the Hindu Mahasabha a chance of much greater importance within any constitutional negotiations which might take place involving the British and the Muslim League in India. The Mahasabha hoped to conduct whatever Indian national activities that lay within its scope and hence assume 'the leadership of all political parties in the country'.[104] B.S. Moonje wrote to the Viceroy assuring him of the Mahasabha's co-operation and soliciting the favour of the government. 'Hindustan', he stressed, '... is the one stable factor in its choice of its allies for its permanent safety and prosperity... Thus, Hindustan and Britain are allied together in unshakeable bond of union for long years to come.'[105] Between 'the two communities,' he explained, 'the Hindu Mahasabha ... will be in a position to give immensely large help in men, material and

---

[93] Savarkar, *Samagra Savarkar*, Vol. 6, pp. 383-4.
[94] V.D. Savarkar's Presidential Speech, 22nd Session of All India Hindu Mahasabha, Madura, 1940: File No. C 26, Hindu Mahasabha Papers, NMML.
[95] V.D. Savarkar's letter to Viceroy, dated 19 August 1940, Savarkar Files, NMML.
[96] Savarkar, *Samagra Savarkar*, Vol. 6, pp. 385-6.
[97] 'Statement of V.D. Savarkar Regarding Hindu Militarisation', 7 October 1941: IOR L/P&J/8/683, IOL.
[98] V.D. Savarkar's letter to Viceroy, dated 15 July 1940, Microfilm, Reel No. 6, Savarkar Papers, NMML.
[99] Report on volunteer movements, 4 November 1941, Police CID, Box 82, File No. 1240/1941, UPSA.
[100] 'Internal Situation in India', Top Secret, M.I. Ext. 170, 15 December 1945, WO/208/761A, Public Record Office [PRO], London; 'Report on the Volunteer Movement in India', Part II, File No. 117C-81 V, IOR L/P&J/8/678, IOL.
[101] 'Volunteer Organizations Part I', File No. 117 C-81 V, IOR L/P&J/8/678, IOL.
[102] Report of Intelligence Bureau for October 1946, published by CID, File No. 112/C-2, IOR L/PO/10/24, IOL.
[103] B.S. Moonje's letter to Viceroy, dated 1 July 1940, Microfilm, Reel No. 6, Savarkar Papers, NMML.
[104] Prakash, *A Review*, p. 183.
[105] B.S. Moonje's letter to Viceroy, dated 26 September 1940, IOR L/P&J/8/683, File 117/D-1, 1940, IOL.

intellect than the Muslim League can hope to do'.[106] Moonje advised the Viceroy not to be deceived by the party's 'status and importance' from the mere fact that it did not fare well at the ballot box.[107] Savarkar assured Lord Linlithgow: 'No help the Moslems have given or can ever give to the Government can ever outweigh the help which the Government has already received and is sure to receive in future from Hindudom as a whole in India.'[108] The Mahasabha's strategy of co-operation aimed to establish its hold at the national level and capture the political stage from the Congress as a viable alternative political party in the country.

During the war period, the Hindu Mahasabha was focused in its drive to fight the 'internal enemies' – the Congress and the Muslims – rather than the British whom it wanted to succeed.[109] It vigorously rejected the Congress's claim to represent all Indians or Hindu interests, claiming that it should be recognised by the British as the sole legitimate party representing the whole Hindu population of India. Savarkar condemned the Congress as 'pro-Muslim, anti-Hindu, and anti-national', while fiercely opposing the Muslim League.[110] B.S. Moonje attacked the Congress's politics of self-government as a 'vain talk', as the Hindu community could not protect itself from 'humiliation by the Muslims', wondering 'if, in the mutually antagonistic and clashing ideologies, the *Charka* [the Congress] were to come into conflict with the Rifle' [the Mahasabha]![111] In the programme of the Mahasabha, Hindu sectional interests received the priority, not the anti-colonial struggle.[112] In the wake of the Congress's Quit India Resolution on 8 August 1942, Savarkar instructed the Hindu Sabhaites who happened to be 'members of municipalities, local bodies, legislatures or those serving in the army ... to stick to their posts' across the country.[113] The Mahasabha did not take part in the Quit India movement, even though its rank and file had sympathised with the Congress's struggle.[114] Evidently, the Mahasabha was not considered an adversary or proscribed by the British, as it had shown a clear disavowal of the Congress's nationalist movement.[115]

The Hindu Mahasabha's militarisation programme revealed an aggressive hostility against the Muslims, including a threat of 'civil war' against them.[116] Its drive for militarisation was in part motivated by a plan to increase the number of the Hindus in the military which would eventually help combat take the Muslims -- the 'real enemies' – in the country.[117] Savarkar stated that 'the Muslims [Afghanistan and other Muslim nations]

---

[106] V.D. Savarkar's letter to Viceroy, dated 25 September 1940, Savarkar Files, NMML.
[107] B.S. Moonje's letter to Viceroy, 3 October 1940, IOR: L/P&J/8/683, IOL.
[108] V.D. Savarkar's letter to Viceroy, dated 12 September 1940, Reel No. 6, File No. 13, Savarkar Papes, NMML.
[109] B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, *History of the Indian National Congress*, Vol. 2, Bombay, 1946, rept. Delhi, 1969, pp. 466-7.
[110] Cited in McKean, *Divine Enterprise*, p. 71.
[111] Moonje Papers, Circular Letter of 27 September 1939, File No. 51, 1939; Moonje Papers, File No. 3, 1939, pp. 98-9, NMML.
[112] Tanika Sarkar, 'Woman, Community, and Nation: A Historical Trajectory for Hindu Identity and Politics', in Patricia Jeffery and Amrita Basu [eds.], *Appropriating Gender: Women's Activism and Politicised Religion in South Asia,* London, 1998, p. 95.
[113] Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan*, p. 266.
[114] N.N. Mitra [ed.], *Indian Annual Register,* 1942, Vol. 2, July-December, p. 30.
[115] Bipan Chandra, *Communalism in Modern India*, New Delhi, 1987 [1984], p. 118; Hansen, *Saffron Wave*, p. 94.
[116] Savarkar's speech, 25 April 1941: Savarkar, *Veer Savarkar's 'Whirl-Wind Propaganda'*, p. 368.
[117] *Report from the Director of Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India, 22 June 1940, File 230/35, No. 24,* IOR L/P&J/12/482, IOL; V.D. Savarkar's letter to B.S. Moonje, dated 28 September 1940, Microfilm, Reel No. 6, NMML.

have tacitly declared war on Hindustan' and were likely to 'sabotage the state from within as well as attack from outside'. He continued: 'To forestall and counteract this Islamite peril our state must raise a mighty force exclusively constituted by Hindus alone, must open arms and munitions factories exclusively manned by Hindus alone and mobilize everything on a war scale.'[118] He argued that volunteer armies were necessary for the protection of the Hindus against 'hostile activities of Muslim volunteer groups', such as the Muslim National Guards.[119] The Hindus, stated B.S. Moonje, lived under 'two dominions, the political domination of the British based on their strongest of of machine guns and the domination of Mahomedans based on their aggressive mentality'. He insisted: 'We shall have to fight both the government and the Moslems ...'[120] The Mahasabha justified militarisation on the basis that the Hindus had to prepare for the eventual 'struggle for power' with the Muslims when the British finally departed from India.[121] Ganpat Rai, Mahasabha secretary-general, explained: 'What the Hindus require at this juncture is a regular army, when communal riots break out in the cities of India, Hindus cry out for rescue force ...'[122] Military preparedness was needed in the event of 'internal disorder' in the country.[123] The Mahasabha's militarisation drive ran parallel to its anti-Muslim orientation, evoking fears about the 'conspiracies' of the Muslims against the Indian nation.[124]

However, the Mahasabha's drive to enlist recruits for the army and negotiate with the British for its representation on various government councils was far from a success in India. The British interest in it had proved transitory; and the party's poor performance in the 1937 elections strengthened its rejection by the officials who refused to acknowledge its political claims.[125] Leopold Amery, Secretary of State for India, argued: 'I doubt if it would serve the interests of India to attempt to do business with the Mahasabha and artificially enhance its bargaining status. Its leaders feud among themselves, would merely act as a stalking horse for Congress.'[126] The 'Mahasabha,' remarked new Viceroy Lord Wavell, 'is a curious body; [as] many of its rank and file seem to [be] Congressmen, and on big political issues w[ould] follow Gandhi rather than Syamaprasad Mookherjee or Savarkar'.[127] At the Simla Conference in June 1945, Lord Wavell invited the Congress and the Muslim League for negotiations on power sharing, but not the Mahasabha, believing that it was the Congress

---

[118] Savarkar, *Samagra Savarkar,* Vo. 6, pp. 552-3.
[119] Gwilym Beckerlegge, 'Saffron and Seva: The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh's Appropriation of Swami Vivekananda', in Antony Copley [ed.], *Hinduism in Public and Private: Reform, Hindutva, Gender, and Sampraday,* New Delhi, 2003, p. 40.
[120] Moonje Papers, File No. 51, 1939, NMML.
[121] Walter Anderson, 'The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh II: Who Represents the Hindus?' *Economic and Political Weekly,* Vol. 7, No. 12, 18 March 1972, p. 635.
[122] Ganpat Rai's letter to B.S. Moonje, dated 3 April 1939, Microfilm, Reel No. 4, File No. 8, Savarkar Papers, NMML.
[123] B.S. Moonje's letter to Mr Sinha, dated 18 December 1923, Moonje Dossier [26], Moonje Diaries, NMML.
[124] B.S. Moonje's letter to H. Seth, dated 25 March 1940, File No. 26, Moonje Papers; B.S. Moonje's letter to S.P. Mookherjee, dated 18 March 1947, File No. 97, S.P. Mookherjee Papers, II-IV, NMML.
[125] Extract from a secret letter, dated 5 January 1946, IOR L/P&J/5/167, IOL
[126] Joseph Burke's letter to Curson, dated 6 November 1945, IOR L/P&J/8/683, IOL.
[127] Field Marshal Viscount Wavell's private and secret letter to Leopold Amery, Secretary of State for India, dated 1 July 1945, IOR L/PO/10/22, p. 1182, IOL.

which largely represented the Indians in the country.[128] Despite all of its efforts to establish itself as the main organisation of the Hindus in the war period, the Mahasabha could not overtake the Congress which had remained the most popular party in the country.[129] In the face of a hostile attitude by the government, the Mahasabha continued to favour militarisation: there was little enthusiasm within the party for an anti-British confrontation because of its limited social base across the country.[130] The evident outcome of the Mahasabha's militarisation policy was that the party had tried to secure British favour by further moderating its position on India's independence and distancing itself from the Congress's nationalist movement in the country.

Conclusion

The Hindu Mahasabha began its transition to a profoundly militant Hindutva nationalism which was fixated on militarisation theory and severity in the late 1920s. The militarisation policy became the dominant motif of *sangathan*ist discourse, aiming to consolidate the Hindus into a unified and militant 'Hindu nation'. Parallel to the growth of the Mahasabha, the RSS emerged as a strong Hindu nationalist organisation in the 1920s, inheriting most of its ideology from Savarkar's *Hindutva*. Its paramilitary style reflected an attempt to introduce in Hindu society a drive for physical strength based on militarisation. The Mahasabha perceived the RSS as the embryo of a 'Hindu army', even though the latter showed its divergence by abandoning any involvement in politics.[131] The Mahasabha aimed to capture power as a full-fledged political party, whereas the RSS was more concerned with the socio-political aspects of building a 'Hindu nation' in the country.[132] The Mahasabha's militarisation programme had become radicalised under the leadership of Savarkar, who intensified the process of militaristic training involving collaboration with the British during the Second World War period. The Mahasabha's struggle was for its acceptance as the main representative party of the Hindus in India in conflict with the Congress. The fear of 'internal enemy' was persistent in its narrative, which focused on the fight against the Congress and the Muslims rather than the British.[133] The successful organisation of militarisation helped to sharpen and crystallise *sangathan*ist ideology targeting the Muslims -- the formidable 'antagonists' – in the country.[134] The Mahasabha's vision and activities stressing the importance of national strength and survival through militarisation became extremely crucial in the development and evolution of *sangathan* ideology in India in the 1920s and 1930s.

---

[128] 'Review of the Political Situation: Consequences on the failure of the Simla Conference', IOR L/P&J/R/3/1/106, IOL; Nandini Gondhalekar and Sanjoy Bhattacharya, 'The All India Hindu Mahasabha and the End of British Rule in India, 1939-1947', *Social Scientist*, Vol. 27, Nos. 7-8, July-August 1999, p. 66.

[129] Joya Chatterji, *Bengal Divided: Hindu Communalism and Partition, 1932-1947*, Cambridge, 1994, pp. 144-5.

[130] Rai Bahadur Kunwar Guru Narain's letter to Shyama Prasad Mookerjee, dated 27 August 1945, Savarkar Files, NMML.

[131] Goyal, *Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh*, p. 79.

[132] Golwalkar, *Bunch of Thoughts*, p. 675.

[133] Moonje Papers, Microfilm, Diary, Reel No. 2, 1932-36, NMML.

[134] Report of Intelligence Bureau, dated 13 January 1940, IOR L/P&J/12/482, IOL.

8

Gandhi and Hindu Mahasabhaites

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi gained unprecedented authority over the Indian National Congress in the 1920s and 1930s through a complex process that had brought him into conflict with the Hindu Mahasabha and its elite politics. The Mahasabha's old style of politics had collapsed since Gandhi's emergence as the leader of the mass campaigns in India following the Khilafat-Non-cooperation movement in 1919-1921.[1] The Gandhian Congress was transformed into a mass organisation and strove to attract a wider cross-section of the population to its fold, diverting much of the support that the Mahasabha had received from the Hindu classes.[2] Gandhi"s leadership represented a challenge to the Mahasabha's definition of nationalism – a representation of the Indian nation that excluded Muslims -- by emphasing on an 'inclusive' Indian nation based on the coexistence of diverse creeds and religions. His ideals of *ahimsa* [non-violence] and Hindu-Muslim unity constituted the basis of India's struggle for freedom and conflicted with the Mahasabha's discourse of a majoritarian 'Hindu nation' and militarism. Gandhi's dominance of the national-level politics blunted the Mahasabha's leadership, which had resisted his nationalist stuggles most strongly in India. This chapter examines Gandhi's dialogue and conflict with Hindu Mahasabha leaders over the methods of the freedom struggle and the nature of the future nation-state that was to emerge in India in the twentieth century.

I. Gandhi's Religion

Gandhi courted Hindu nationalist organisations and tried to grapple with the enigma of Hinduism, which had represented his strongest bond and the greatest influence on him. His understanding of Hinduism was 'largely based on reading and reflection, and remained shallow and abstract ... he made up his brand of Hinduism as he went along.'[3] He had read Vivekananda's *Rajayoga*, M.N. Dwivedi's two commentaries on the *Yoga Sutras*, and the *Bhagavadgita* -- the principal scripture that had greatly influenced him with the idea of *aparigraha* [non-possession] and renunciation.[4] He described the Hindus as that branch of the Aryans who had migrated to the trans-Indus region of India. 'Aryanism,' he claimed, 'would have been a better descriptive word than Hinduism.' 'A thousand years ago,' he explained, 'the army of Ghazni invaded India in order to spread Islam. Hindu idols were broken and the invasions carried as far as Somnath ...' 'Thus we have seen how there have been three assaults on Hinduism, coming from Islam and then Christianity, but on the whole it came out of them unscathed.'[5] In an article entitled 'Why I am a Hindu' written in 1927, Gandhi defined Hinduism as the 'most tolerant of all religions known to me' -- in which non-violence found the 'highest expression and application'. 'Its

---

[1] UP Fortnightly Report [FR] I July, I August and I September 1923, GI Home Poll., 25/1923, NAI.
[2] *The Leader*, 16 June 1920, p. 3, Microfilm, NMML; Home Poll., File No. 140, 1925, NAI.
[3] Bhikhu Parekh, *Gandhi,* Oxford, 1997, p. 5.
[4] M.K. Gandhi, *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi [CWMG],* 100 volumes, New Delhi, 1958-1994: Vol. 39, p. 211; D.G. Tendulkar, *Mahatma: Life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi*, New Dehi, 1969, Vol. 1, p. 63.
[5] Gandhi's speech at the Theosophical Society, Johannesburg, South Africa, 1905: Gandhi, *CWMG,* Vol. 4, p. 368.

freedom from dogma ... gives the votary the largest scope for self-expression. Not being an exclusive religion, it enables the followers of that faith not merely to respect all the other religions, but ... to admire and assimilate whatever may be good in the other faiths.'[6] Hinduism 'is as broad as the Universe and takes in its fold all that is good in this world', and 'what of substance is contained in any other religion is always to be found in it'.[7] Gandhi claimed that he was a *sanatani* Hindu, meaning a Hindu who was grounded in the ancient and traditional beliefs and values of Hinduism. 'I am a Hindu not merely because I was born in the Hindu fold, but I am one by conviction and choice.' 'As I know it and interpret it [Hinduism],' he confessed, 'it gives me all the solace I need both here and hereafter.'[8] Gandhi declared: 'I have been born a Hindu and I shall die a Hindu, a Sanatani [orthodox] Hindu. If there is salvation for me, it must be as a Hindu.'[9] He had little interest in the outer forms of the Hindu religion, its rituals or pilgrimages and expressed an outright condemnation of untouchability, animal sacrifice and the *devadasis* system – the custom of 'consecrating' youn girls to God.[10] Placing reason above scripture as authoritative where the two conflicted and relying on an 'inner voice' – the 'still, small voice that must always be the final arbiter', Gandhi represented a tradition of modernity and reform within Hinduism.[11]

Gandhi showed respect for all faiths.[12] He did not regard 'Jainism or Buddhism as separate from Hinduism'.[13] Buddhism, he held, arose in India not as a new religion, but as a reform of Hinduism. 'He [Buddha] taught Hinduism not to take, but to give life. True sacrifice was not of others, but of self.'[14] Similarly, Jainism – the 'most logical of all faiths' -- was the same as Hinduism, part of the Hindu religious universe.[15] Gandhi's family had very close Jain conections; and he found in Rajchandra Mehta [Raychandbhai], a Jain jeweller, a poet, a saint and his religious mentor, great support and spiritual guidance.[16] Outside Buddhism and Jainism there was scarcely any religious tradition that made non-violence the corner-stone of its ethical principle. Gandhi was very positive about Islam, the key doctrine of which was 'its levelling spirit' of equality for all.[17] He had read Shibli Numani's biographies of Muslim heroes, books of Hadith, and Amir Ali's works on Islamic history, admiring the *Koran*'s stress on 'self-surrender, returning good for evil, the need for renunciation' as well as the Prophet Mohammad's fasts and prayers based on heart which was open to the 'small, still voice'.[18] He considered Islam

---

[6] M.K. Gandhi, 'Why I am a Hindu', *Young India*, 21 Ocober 1927, Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 23, p. 20.
[7] Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 34, p. 24
[8] Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 53, p. 396.
[9] Gandhi's speech at Gurukul Anniversary, 20 March 1916: Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 15, p. 203.
[10] Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 16, p. 161; *CWMG*, Vol. 35, p. 104, *CWMG*, Vol. 26, p. 516.
[11] Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 8, p. 112; Judith M. Brown, *Modern India: The Origins of an Asian Democracy*, Oxford, 1994, p.213; Nirmal Kumar Bose, *My Days with Gandhi*, New Delhi, 1974, p. 85.
[12] Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 28, p. 263; *CWMG*, Vol. 24, 105; Stephen Hay, 'Between Two Worlds: Gandhi's First Impressions of British Culture', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 4, 1969, pp. 305-319: p. 308.
[13] *Young India, 20 October 1927*, Gandhi, *CWMG, Vol. 35, p. 166-7.*
[14] Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 24, p. 85; *CWMG*, Vol. 35, p. 312.
[15] Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 24, p. 105; *CWMG*, Vol. 34, p. 24; *CWMG*, Vol. 49, pp. 327-8; *CWMG*, Vol. 67, p. 59.
[16] Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 39, p. 22; J.T.F. Jordens, *Gandhi's Religion: A Homespun Shawl*, Basingstoke, 1998, p. 108.
[17] Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 4, pp. 376-7.
[18] Margaret Chatterjee, *Gandhi and the Challenge of Religious Diversity: Religiois Pluralism Revisted*, New Delhi, 2005, p. 148.

a young religion, 'still ... in the making' and 'still groping for its great secret'.[19] Gandhi believed that Christianity in India had considerable influence, too, as it pointed out some of the glaring defects of Hinduism.[20] 'The spirit of the Sermon on the Mount competes almost on equal terms with the Bhagavad Gita for the domination of my heart.'[21] He urged Christian missionaries, however, to concentrate on philanthropic work in India, rejecting their 'irreligious gamble' for converts. With the help of the Jain doctrine of *syadavada* ['many-sidedness of reality' – the theory of 'relative truth'], Gandhi had 'established long ago the unity of all religions' by discovering their core truths [commonalities rather than differences] and grafting them inwardly onto his own religious aspirations.[22] By religion, he did not mean a formal religion, or a customary religion, but that religion which underlay all religions, which brought them face to face with their Maker.[23] As a Vaishnavite Hindu, his desire was to remove boundaries, underlining his conception of religious pluralism or the principle of the equality of religions, which had formed the basis for the Congress's secular nationalism in that no single religion was to be identified with the state or be promoted by it in India.[24] Gandhi's Hinduism was inclusive and tolerant; and being a good Hindu and having respect for other religions – Islam or Christianity – were not contradictory.[25]

Gandhi's association with the Arya Samaj was perhaps his earliest to develop with a Hindu organisation in India. The first Hindu leader with whom he had come into contact was Bhai Parmanand, a prominent Arya Samajist and later Hindu Mahasabha president. In 1905, Bhai Parmanand visited South Africa as an Arya Samaj missionary. Gandhi praised Parmanand's learning and vigor, but criticised his 'anti-Muslim' sectarianism -- urging him to promote education not religious reform in Africa.[26] He described the Arya Samaj as 'a body that has done most useful and practical work apart from its religious doctrines', lauding its 'patriotism'. The Samaj, he stated, 'does not represent any established orthodox religion of India', but 'is still a cult struggling for existence and catering for converts'.[27] He insisted that the Indians were not yet ready for religious missionary work, exhorting the Samaj not to undertake any missionary work in South Africa.[28] Gandhi did not permit religious proselytisation because the Muslims had been the backbone of his *satyagraha* movements in the Transvaal and Natal, South Africa, and India.[29]

After his return to India, Gandhi attended an Arya Samaj conference in Surat and performed the opening ceremony of its new temple there in 1916. In his speech, he said that even though he was not an Arya Samajist

---

[19] Cited in Rudrangshu Mukherjee [ed.], *The Penguin Gandhi Reader*, New Delhi, 1993, p. 211.
[20] Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 4, p. 407.
[21] Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 8, p. 220.
[22] The Jain principle that deeply influenced Gandhi was *anekantavada* -- the many-sidedness of reality which leads to the epistemology of *syadavada*: the doctrine that every statement only presents a partial view of reality. Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 19, p. 522; *CWMG*, Vol. 23, p. 20.
[23] Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 8, p. 35; Margaret Chatterjee, *Gandhi's Religious Thought*, London, 1983, pp. 21-35.
[24] Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 19, p. 522; *CWMG*, Vol. 23, p. 20; *CWMG*, 31, p. 126.
[25] Cited in Antony Copley, *Gandhi: Against the Tide*, Oxford, 1987, p. 65.
[26] James D. Hunt, *Gandhi in London*, New Delhi, 1978, pp. 65-7, 95.
[27] Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 5, p. 48.
[28] Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 5, p. 48.
[29] Henry S.L. Polak, *M.K. Gandhi: A Sketch of His Life and Work*, Madras, 1918, p. 32.

himself, he admired 'Swami Dayananda, the adored founder of the Arya Samaj', as a 'rare man, and I must acknowledge that I have come under his influence'.[30] Dayananda was 'a grand, lofty and fearless character of impeccable chastity', who had advocated a revival of Hinduism as it existed in Vedic times and rejected the 'accretions of Hinduism': idolatry, caste hierarchy, child marriage, and taboos against widow remarriage.[31] However, Gandhi added, his main work, the *Satyarth Prakash,* was very disappointing. It misrepresented Jainsim, Islam, Christianity, and Hindiuism to a high degree. 'He [Dayananda] has tried to make narrow one of the most tolerant and liberal of the faiths [Hinduism] on the face of the earth.'[32] Gandhi insisted that Arya Samajists could do better work if they reformed themselves and did not enter into 'a violent controversy' to gain conversions in India.[33] An Arya Samaj 'preacher is never so happy as when he is reviling other religions' -- Islam and Christianity – which did 'more harm than good' in the country.[34] In 1924 he strongly attacked the Arymy Samaj in an article entitled 'Hindu-Muslim Tension -- Its Cause and Cure', provoking a stormy reaction from the Arya Samajists.[35] Gandhi showed special respect for the Samaj, however, but rejected its missionary approach as well as its belligerence and sectarianism that were directed against Islam and Christianity in India.

II. Hindu Mahasabha Ties

In the 1920s and 1930s, Gandhi had an evolving relationship with Hindu Mahasabha leaders and managed to rally a significant number of them behind him. He attended the inaugural meeting of the All-India Hindu Sabha in Hardwar in April 1915 and spoke strongly in support of it.[36] His passionate speech made an impact on Swami Shraddhananda, who had collected funds for Gandhi's work while the latter was in South Africa.[37] Gandhi admired Shraddhananda's educational work, but was critical of his aggressive *sangathan* programme that had the 'unjustifiable ambition of bringing all Muslims into the Aryan fold' and 'exacerbated Hindu-Muslim tensions' in India.[38] Shraddhananda threw his support behind Gandhi in the 1919 Non-cooperation movement because the latter's politics was different, being imbued with a 'spirit of religion'.[39] He was a central figure in the 1919 anti-Rowlatt *satyagraha* and often portrayed as a unique symbol of Hindu-Muslim unity because of his preaching of national unity at the Jama Masjid, Delhi.[40] After Shraddhananda's assassination in 1926, Gandhi wrote several times in praise of his work. He deeply admired Shraddhananda's 'bravery and unselfish service',

---

[30] Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 28, p. 51.
[31] Kenneth Jones, *Arya Dharm: Hindu Consciousness in 19th-Century Punjab*, Berkeley, 1976, p. 32.
[32] Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 28, pp. 52-3.
[33] Gandhi's speech at Arya Samaj Annual Celebrations, Surat, 2 January 1916: Gandhi, *CWMG,* Vol. 15, p. 124.
[34] Gandhi, *CWMG,* Vol. 28, pp. 56-7.
[35] Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 24, p. 228-31, 264-6.
[36] Richard Gordon, 'The Hindu Mahasabha and the Indian National Congress, 1915 to 1926', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 2, 1975, p. 161.
[37] J.T.F. Jordens, *Swami Shraddhananda: His Life and Causes,* Delhi, 1981, pp. 92-3.
[38] Gandhi's speech at Gurukul Anniversary, 20 March 1916: Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 15, p. 207.
[39] Jordens, *Swami Shraddhananda,* p. 107.
[40] Jordens, *Swami Shraddhananda,* pp. 61, 109.

appealing to the Hindus and the Muslims to 'purge the atmosphere of mutual hatred and calumny' in the country.[41]

Of the other Hindu Mahasabha leaders, Gandhi showed great admiration for Lajpat Rai and Madan Mohan Malaviya. He rejected the charge that 'Lalaji and Malaviyaji are sworn enemies of Islam'. The Muslim press used 'foul language against these patriots'.[42] He deeply respected Lajpat Rai, a key figure in the pre-Savarkarite Hindu Mahasabha of which he became president in 1925. 'His [Lajpat Rai's] desire to purify and strengthen Hinduism,' Gandhi stated, 'must not be confounded with hatred of Mussalmans or Islam. He was sincerely desirous of promoting and achieving Hindu-Muslim unity.'[43] After Lajpat Rai's death in 1928, he was involved in collections for the proposed Lajpat Rai Memorial. Gandhi had worked closely with Madan Mohan Malaviya, too, whom he called his 'elder brother', praising him as 'a great leader of India and a patriarch of Hinduism'.[44] Malaviya threw his support behind Gandhi, despite his opposition to the Non-cooperation movement in India in 1919. Gandhi stated that 'hatred' was alien to Malaviya. 'He and I are temperamentally different, but love each other like brothers.'[45] Speaking on a resolution passed by the Congress to stop cow-slaughter and music before mosques by mutual consent in 1927, Gandhi declared that 'if there be one Hindu who can guarantee such protection on behalf of the Hindus, it is Malaviyaji'. 'My Mussalman friends have always belittled my faith in his [Malaviya's] *bona fides* and nationalism as against communalism. I have never been able to suspect either even where I have not been able to share his views on Hindu-Muslim questions.'[46] A moderate within the Hindu Mahasabha, Malaviya had remained Gandhi's trusted ally for his entire life, even though his unyielding anti-Muslim hostility was blamed in part for the failure of the Congress's initiative on a settlement of Muslim safeguards. Nonetheless, Gandhi's association was volatile, often bordering on hostility, with the Hindu Mahasabha's hardliners -- chiefly V.D. Savarkar, B.S. Moonje, Bhai Parmanand, and N.C. Kelkar -- who had eternal disagreement and conflict with him over various issues in India.

II. 1. Gandhi and Savarkar Conflict

Of all the Hindu Mahasabha leaders, Gandhi had the most hostile and traumatic relationship with V.D. Savarkar. A Barrister-at-Law in 1888-1891 of the prestigious Inner Temple [London] himself, Gandhi met Savarkar, 22, a student of law at Gray's Inn, London, first on Sunday, 21 October 1906. He had long discussions on the efficacy of revolutionary methods with him, Shyamji Krishnavarma [1857-1930], [47] the founder of India House, and other radical students of India House, north London. Shyamji Krishnavarma, the

---

[41] Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 32, pp. 451, 459-62; David Hardiman, *Gandhi in His Time and Ours: The Global Legacy of His Ideas*, London, 2003, p. 172.
[42] Gandhi's speech at the Gauhati session of the Congress in December 1926: Gandhi, *CWMG,* Vol. 32, p. 460.
[43] *Young India*, 29 May 1924, Gandhi, *CWMG,* Vol. 28, p. 52.
[44] Gandhi's speech at Hindi Sammelan, Bombay, 19 April 1919: Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 17, p. 445.
[45] Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 28, p. 52.
[46] Gandhi, *CWMG,* Vol. 35, p. 436.

founder of the Indian Home Rule Society [London], J.C. Mukerji, who wrote a weekly London letter for Gandhi's *Indian Opinion*, and Savarkar were prominent men of India House at the time. Gandhi was leading a South African Indian deputation in 1906 to London and seemed to be a liberal imperialist: he believed that Indians should have increasing participation in government, and that England and India were to stay joined in the Empire which had an 'admirable effect of English civilization on India'. London, 'the centre of the power' and 'the capital of the greatest empire', he mused, was 'transforming India'.[48] Savarkar, on the contrary, believed in revolutionary nationalism based on the legitimacy of armed and violent insurrection and militarism as part of the struggle to end British rule in India. The India House radicals led by Shyamji Krishnavarma -- a Tilakite, a barrister, a former Reader in Indian languages at Oxford and the editor of *The Indian Sociologist* -- fervently believed that India was to attain freedom from Britain only through violence, including terrorism and assassination. Gandhi labelled the India House radicals as the 'moderns' and 'extremists', but admitted that they were 'earnest spirits possessing a high degree of morality, great intellectual ability and lofty self-sacrifices'.[49] Evidently, there was a conflict in the worldview and ideology of Gandhi and Savarkar over the methods and means of attaining independence for India.

During his second visit to England in 1909, Gandhi and Savarkar had a closer ideological confrontation, even though no evidence exists on the details of the meeting. Gandhi 'accepted unhesitatingly', as he put it in a letter to Henry Polak, a request to speak as the chief guest at a subscription dinner at India House on the Vijayadashami day -- Dasara.[50] On 24 October 1909, he presided over a Dasara Sammelan attended by 125 students celebrating the 'First War of Independence' at India House, where Savarkar spoke. The *Ramayana* was the theme of the celebrations. Savarkar stated: 'Hindus are the heart of Hindustan ... Nevertheless, just as the beauty of the rainbow is not impaired but enhanced by its varied hues, so also Hindustan will appear all the more beautiful across the sky of the future by assimilating all that is best in the Muslim, Parsi, Jewish and other civilizations.'[51] Lord Rama, he stressed, had established his ideal kingdom only after slaying Ravan, the symbol of 'oppression and injustice', and non-violence would be ineffectual without physical force. He put emphasis on the fierce goddess Durga, the avenger in whose honour Navratri -- the nine-day fast which preceded Vijaya Dashami -- was observed. Reporting the Vijayadashami meeting in his *Indian Opinion* of 27 November 1909, Gandhi referred to Savarkar as a 'revolutionary', noting that he had 'delivered a spirited speech on the great excellence of the *Ramayana*'.[52] However, he expressed an alarm that most Indians he had met in London

---

[47] Shyamji Krishnavarma was born at Mandavi in Kutch district of Gujarat in 1857. He did his BA at Cambridge and became the first Indian to recieve an MA degree degree at Oxford. He later served as Diwan to the Indian princely states of Ratlam, Udaipur, and Junagadh. Indulal Yagnik, *Shyamji Krishnavarma: Life and Times of an Indian Revolutionary*, Bombay, 1950, pp. 56-119.
[48] Hunt, *Gandhi in London*, p. 38.
[49] Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 9, p. 508.
[50] Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 9, p. 504.
[51] Cited in Rajmohan Gandhi, *The Good Boatman: A Portrait of Gandhi*, New Delhi, 1995, p. 148.
[52] Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 9, p. 499; Robert Payne, *The Life and Death of Mahatma Gandhi*, London, 1969, pp. 206-07.

believed in violence.[53] He declared: 'I have met practically no one who believes that India can ever become free without resort to violence.' 'I have endeavoured specially,' he explained, 'to come into contact with the so-called extremists who may be better described as the party of violence ... One of them came to me with a view to convince me that I was wrong in my methods and that nothing but the use of violence, covert or open or both, was likely to bring about redress ...'[54] Gandhi argued that violence as well as the armed route to India's independence advocated by Savarkar and the India House revolutionaries stood no chance of success against the apparatus of the British.[55] Admittedly, Savarkar and the India House radicals rejected Gandhi's methods of petition and passive resistance as 'humiliating', but admired his struggle in the Transvaal, South Africa, which was one example of Indians carrying on 'a sustained campaign' against British rule.[56]

The conflict between Gandhi and Savarkar, particularly over the means to achieve India's independence, had continued for the whole of their lives. Gandhi presented *ahimsa* [non-violence] as his answer to violence and projected it as a defining principle, arguing that it was through its adoption that India would be liberated.[57] He argued in *Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule* – written in Gujarati on his voyage from London to South Africa in 1909 and published in 1910 -- that India would never gain true *swaraj* [freedom] by violent means. 'Do you not tremble,' he argued, 'to think of freeing India by assassination? ... Whom do you suppose to free by assassination? The millions of India do not desire it ...'[58] 'The force of arms is powerless', he wrote, 'when matched against the force of love or the soul'. 'Truth-force', or 'soul-force' *[satyagraha]* was not only 'a method of securing rights by personal suffering' but also a 'speciality of India'.[59] The doctrine of *satyagraha,* which had grown from 'passive resistance' as a movement of political protest, meant a 'non-violent non-cooperation' employed to convince an adversay of the truth in consonance with the 'highest law of being' of one's cause.[60] Gandhi viewed *ahimsa* – located in Buddhism, Jainism and the Hindu tradition -- as the 'essence of Hinduism'. His own commitment to *ahimsa,* he insisted, would remain unaffected even 'if I suddenly discovered that the religious books ... bore a different interpretation'.[61] The most distinctive and largest contribution, he explained, of 'Hinduism to India's culture is the doctrine of *ahimsa.* It has given a definite basis to the history of the country for the last three thousand years and over ...'[62] In Gandhi's vision of a political development, *ahimsa* and

---

[53] M.K. Gandhi's letter to G.K. Gokhale, 11 November 1909: Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 9, pp. 531-2.
[54] Gandhi's leter to Lord Ampthill, former governor of Madras, dated 30 October 1909: Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 9, pp. 508-10.
[55] David Arnold, *Gandhi,* London, 2001, p. 65; D. Keer, *Mahatma Gandhi: Political Saint and Unarmed Prophet*, Bombay, 1973, p. 165.
[56] R. Gandhi, *Good Boatman*, pp. 149-50.
[57] Ronald Neufeldt, 'The Hindu Mahasabha and Gandhi', in Harold Coward [ed.], *Indian Critiques of Gandhi,* Albany, 2003, p. 42.
[58] M.K. Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule*, Ahmedabad, 1910, rept. Delhi, 1996, p. 53.
[59] M.K. Gandhi, *An Autobiography: The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, 2nd edn., Ahmedabad, 1940, p. 49.
[60] M.K. Gandhi, *Young India*, 30 March and 29 June 1921, cited in D. Rothermund, 'Constitutional Reforms versus National Agitation in India, 1900-1950', *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 34, 1961-2, p. 511.
[61] Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 13, pp. 296-7.
[62] Cited Bikhu Parekh, *Colonialism, Tradition, and Reform: An Analysis of Gandhi's Political Discourse*, New Delhi, 1989, p. 162.

satyagraha were situated as 'pathways to a moral regeneration' of the Indian nation -- or '*atmashuddhi*' [purification of the soul] of the nation.[63]

Savarkar, a votary of revolutionary nationalism, denounced Gandhi and his doctrine of *ahimsa,* however.[64] He was influenced in part by Herbert Spencer, a philosopher and a naturalist, whose theory was that 'absolute non-resistance or absolute non-violence hurts both altruism and egoism'.[65] Savarkar viewed Gandhi as a significant, if 'misguided', adversary in the struggle for India's freedom -- in which the doctrine of non-violence was a 'weak-kneed response'.[66] His antagonism to non-violence was based on his view, unchanged since his early days, that 'resistance to aggression in all possible and practicable ways is not only justifiable but imperative'. Absolute non-violence in the face of the state's aggression was 'immoral'.[67] 'No masses can ever stand against the organized military strength of a government for a long time.'[68] Savarkar argued that 'the belief in absolute non-violence condemning all armed resistance even to aggression evinces no mahatmaic saintliness but a monomaniacal senselessness'.[69] He declared: 'We denounce the doctrine of absolute non-violence ... Relative non-violence is our creed and therefore, we worship the arms as the symbols of the Shakti, the Kali ... "Hail to Thee Sword".'[70] There could be 'no substitute for force to achieve complete freedom', which could only be done by 'physical force'.[71] The abandonment of arms, Savarkar insisted, was inimical to all public good, risking the destruction of virtue and *dharm* [righteousness] at the hands of the wicked.[72] Only power, authority and the strength of arms could bring about a genuine *ahimsa* in India.[73] The teaching of Gandhi's *satygaraha* creed, Savarkar explained, sought to 'kill the very martial instinct of the Hindu race and had succeeded to an alarming extent in doing so ...'[74] He deplored the 'adverse results' of Gandhi's *satyagraha* in the Chauri Chaura and Jalliawala Bagh crises, claiming that the aim of *satyagraha* was to 'pacify the killers, tyrants and aggressors'.[75] On account of *ahimsa*, he continued, the 'glorious struggle for national freedom' which had lasted one thousand years was 'shamelessly surrended in the 30 years of Gandhi's leadership', and the Hindus were forced to accept the 'unchallenged domination of the aggressor [the Muslims and the British]

---

[63] Cited in Raghavan Iyer, *The Moral and Political Writings of Mahatma Gandhi*, Oxford, 1987, Vol. 1, p. 455.
[64] V.D. Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan: A Collection of Presidential Speeches Delivered from the Hindu Mahasabha Platform, 1938-1941,* Bombay, 1992 [1949], p. 149.
[65] Cited in Chetan Bhatt, *Hindu Nationalism: Origins, Ideologies and Modern Myths,* Oxford, 2001, p. 103.
[66] Savarkarr, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan*, pp. 154, 161.
[67] Savarkar's speech on 'Direct Action', 24 June 1941: Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan,* p. 217.
[68] Cited in Srivastava, *Five Stormy Years,* p. 66.
[69] V.D. Savarkar's presidential speech, All-India Hindu Mahasabha's 21st session, Madura, 1938: Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan,* p. 154.
[70] *V.D. Savarkar's presidential address, All-India Hindu Mahasabha's 22nd session, Madras, 1939: Savarkar, Hindu Rashttra Darrshan*, p. 201.
[71] V.D. Savarkar's letter to Gandhi, dated 8 February 1906, cited in Harindra Srivastava, *Five Stormy Years: Savarkar in London*, New Delhi, 2002 [1983], pp. 64-5.
[72] V.D. Savarkar, *Historic Statements* [Edited by S.S. Savarkar and G.M. Joshi, Bombay], 1967, pp. 64-5.
[73] V.D. Savarkar, *Samagra Savarkar Wangmaya: Writings of Swatantrya Veer V.D. Savarkar,* Poona, 1964, rept. New Delhi, 2003, Vol. 4, pp. 150-51.
[74] Savarkarr, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan*, p. 204.
[75] Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan,* p. 154.

over huge portions of our land'.[76] A believer in assassination as a weapon of political action, Savarkar believed that 'justifiable aggression' defined individual or collective morality, and that the ethical premise of violence represented a dynamic hostility and aggression as the legitimate means of ending British rule in India.

Savarkar imagined of the tradition of violent nationalism as having its roots in the *Gita*. He rejected Gandhi's reading of the *Gita*, which was the main source from which the latter drew his doctrine of *ahimsa*. The moral theory advocated by the *Gita*, Gandhi believed, ruled out violence.[77] However, Savarkar moved more definitely towards militarism, arguing that the *Gita* taught *himsa* [violence] not *ahimsa*, and that military organisation was an 'integral part of Hindu culture'.[78] His ideology of armed revolution was influenced in part by Bal Gangadhar Tilak's advocacy of *karmayoga* [path of action] and his apologia for violent political activism in India.[79] Tilak had strongly opposed Gandhi's doctrine of *ahimsa*, denouncing its syncretism. Savarkar shared Tilak's rejection of non-violence and viewed military strength as a necessary attribute of India if the Hindus were to be welded into a 'single, homogeneous nation'.[80] Dhananjay Keer, a strong Savarkarite himself, writes that Savarkar's narrative was a result of his 'deep reflection and intense reaction' to Gandhi's non-violence and his vision of the nation, which had 'surrendered to the antinational demands of the Muslim reactionaries'. It was 'his righteous duty', Savarkar believed, 'to remove ruthlessly the web of Gandhism that had choked the political life of Hindustan'.[81] Evidently, it was under Savarkar's leadership that the Hindu Mahasabha had expressed by far the most explicit and virulent critique of Gandhi's *ahimsa* in India.

Gandhi was diametrically opposite to Savarkar over the shape of the nation that was to emerge in India, representing a universal vision of nationalism. He refused to accept Hinduism as a singular religious basis to India.[82] 'In reality,' he argued, 'there are as many religions as there are individuals ... In no part of the world are one nationality and one religion synonymous terms ... nor has it been so in India.'[83] In his vision, Hinduism was not a religion but represented a cultural system that had evolved over thousands of years, assimilating new influences throughout its history. Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism had all emerged from within Hindu traditions and their followers were part of the same broad cultural form.[84] But, argued Gandhi, this was no less true of the Muslims and the Christians.[85] Islam may have originated in Arabia, but those who converted to Islam were of the same cultural, ethnic and racial stock as the Hindus.[86] 'Indian culture is therefore Indian. It is neither Hindu,

---

[76] V.D. Savarkar, *Presidential Address at the 22 Session of the Akhil Bharatiya Hindu Mahasabha, Madura, 1940*: Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan*, p. 141.
[77] Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 32, p. 102.
[78] C. Jaffrelot, 'Opposing Gandhi: Hindu Nationalism and Political Violence', in D. Vidal, G. Tarabout, and E. Meyer [eds.], *Violence/Non-Violence: Some Hindu Perspectives*, Delhi, 2003, pp. 299-324.
[79] Shabnum Tejani, *Indian Secularism: A Social and Intellectual History, 1890-1950*, New Delhi, 2007, pp. 81-2.
[80] Keer, *Veer Savarkar*, p. 172.
[81] Cited in Keer, *Veer Savarkar*, p. xx, 162.
[82] Cited in Chatterjee, *Gandhi's Religious Thought*, p. 123.
[83] M.K. Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj and Other Writings* [ed.], Anthony J. Parel, Cambridge, 1997, p. 53.
[84] Anthony J. Parel, *Gandhi's Philosophy and the Quest for Harmony*, Cambridge, 2006, p. 109.
[85] J.T.F. Jordens, *Gandhi's Religion: A Homespun Shawl*, Basingstoke, 1998, pp. 149-153.
[86] Bhikhu Parekh, *Gandhi's Political Philosophy: A Critical Examination*, Basingstoke, 1989, pp. 178-91.

Islamic nor any other, wholly. It is a fusion of all.'[87] Thus Gandhi's prayer meetings were not held in temples, but under the open sky by including recitations from the Hindu, Muslim, Christian and Buddhist scriptures. India was the homeland of all born and bred in it, no matter what religion they professed.[88] In Gandhi's belief, religion was not a basis for Indian nationality, and India was a multi-religious society based on the coexistence of different creeds and faiths, representing unity in diversity.[89]

Gandhi spoke of absorbing the Muslims, the Christians, and others into one 'indivisible nation', having common interests: such absorption or assimilation trancended the realities of religious identities, but did not subordinate the minorities to the Hindus.[90] It moved in the direction of a spiritual unity, meaning 'a brotherhood or a confederation of communities' – a confederation dedicated to the 'non-violent pursuit of truth'.[91] Tolerance was a celebration of diversity – of the richness of alternative ways of religious believing and existence -- between diverse creeds and faiths in India.[92] Differences between the Hindus and the Muslims, Gandhi argued, were a result of the divisive effects of colonial rule in India. Conflicts over cow protection and music before mosques could easily be settled with love and good will on both sides through the mode of *mitrata* [friendship] as well as negotiation.[93] To Gandhi, Hindu-Muslim unity was a prerequisite for *swaraj*. 'I have no doubt,' he declared, 'that one who is an enemy of the Muslims is also an enemy of India.'[94] In the proper strengthening of Muslim bond lay 'the realization of Swaraj'.[95] In 1919-21 he presided over the All-India Khilafat Committee, an institution founded to defend the Khilafat of Turkey for the Muslims; and the Khilafat issue lay at the heart of a movement which was articulated by Gandhi as the first national *satyagraha* in India.[96] India was not to be described as a 'Hindu nation' whether culturally or religiously.[97] Gandhi wrote to the Hindu Mahasabha secretary in 1927 objecting to the use of the national flag on Hindu temples. 'For the service of India,' he wrote to Mahasabha president B.S. Moonje in 1928, 'Mussalmans, Jews, Christians should be Indians, even as Hindus should be Indians.'[98] He rejected the militancy and anti-Muslim rhetoric of the Mahasabhaites as 'vicious'.[99] In his famous speech to the All-India Congress Committee on 8 August 1942, shortly before it passed the Quit India resolution, Gandhi declared: 'Those Hindus who like Dr. Moonje and Shri Savarkar believe in the doctrine of the sword may seek to keep the Mussalmams under Hindu domination. I do not represent that section. I

---

[87] M.K. Gandhi, 'The Lion Cloth', *Young India*, 30 April 1931, Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 52, pp. 8-9.
[88] Hardiman, *Gandhi in His Time*, p. 179.
[89] M.K. Gandhi, 'Hinduism', *Young India*, 6 October 1921, Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 24, pp. 373-4.
[90] Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 56, p. 384.
[91] Jordens, *Gandhi's Religion*, pp. 149-153.
[92] Stanley Wolpert, *Gandhi's Passion: The Life and Legacy of Mahatma Gandhi*, Oxford, 2001, p. 85.
[93] G. Pandey, *Routine Violence: Nations, Fragments, Histories*, Stanford, 2006, pp. 177-81.
[94] Gandhi's speech at Prayer Meeting, 20 January 1948: Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 90, p. 464.
[95] Gandhi's letter to Mahomed Ali, dated 18 November 1918: Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 15, p. 64.
[96] Gail Minault, *The Khilafat Movement: Religious Symbolism and Political Mobilization in India*, New York, 1982, pp. 71-125.
[97] Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 74, p. 350.
[98] Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 38, p. 232.
[99] Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 56, p. 167.

represent the Congress.'[100] After the resolution was passed, he recalled his 'lifelong aspiration' for Hindu-Muslim unity, stating that the Congress wanted independence not for itself or the Hindus alone but 'for all the forty crores of the Indian people'.[101] He explained that his understanding of democracy was not restricted to a majoritatarian rule, and that communal majorities were inevitably prone to become tyrannical, as there would be minorities left behind on the wrong side of the divide.[102] In Gandhi's vision, the value of religious pluralism was paramount, and Hinduism as a religious doctrine could not provide the basis for India's national identity.[103]

Gandhi's universalist definition of the Indian nation clashed with Savarkar's cultural nationalism. Savarkar, defining the nation within Hindu markers, believed in the dominance of Hinduism as a political category and claimed that India was a 'Hindu nation'. He defined *swarajya* as the political independence of the Hindus, insisting that the notion of territorial independence was woefully inadequate for India's future. India once had territorial independence under Aurangzeb, but this had meant 'death for the Hindus'. He declared: 'To the Hindus independence of Hindustan can only be worth having if that insures their Hindutva – their religious, racial and cultural identity.'[104] 'To us Hindus, Hindustan and India mean one and the same thing.'[105] The Congress's idea of the Indian nation was acceptable if it meant that there would be no special provisions for the minorities – the Muslims. Savarkar asserted that the Hindus must be given their due share as a majority, and that the Muslims and the Christians would have to accept the cultural and political dominance of the Hindus in the country.[106] He rejected Gandhi's ideas of religious assimilation, which to him meant assimilation of Islam and Christianity to a single cultural community – the Hindus. The Indian state was to be a 'Hindu state' in which all citizens viewed the nation as their 'fatherland' and 'holyland'.[107] Savarkar's Hindutva advocating the creation of a 'Hindu nation' clashed with Gandhi's 'inclusive' Indian nation; and the confrontation marked a wide rift between Indian nationalism and political Hinduism as competing ideologies in India during the 1920s and 1930s.

III. Opposition of Sangathanists

Gandhi's differences with the Hindu Mahasabha as an organisation of the Hindus had remained irreconcilable throughout the 1920s and 1930s. He shared the Mahasabha's goal of organising and strengthening the Hindu community as a cultural entity, but differed on crucial issues – untouchability and *shuddhi*. Gandhi's denunciation of untouchability and appeal for caste reform had brought him closer to the Mahasabhaites in their drive for Hindu unity, but he was different in that he did not favour the communal arithmetic to boost the Hindu numbers in India. In his belief, the eradication of untouchability was integral to the

---

[100] Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 76, p. 389.
[101] Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 76, p. 166.
[102] Chatterjee, *Gandhi,* pp. 162-9.
[103] Parel, *Gandhi's Philosophy,* p. 108. The Karachi Congress's resolution on fundamental rights affirmed religious freedom and the state's 'neutrality in regard to all religions'. B.R. Nanda, *In Search of Gandhi: Essays and Reflections*, New Delhi, 2002, p. 29.
[104] Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan,* p. 17.
[105] Cited in Jose Kuruvachira, *Hindu Nationalists of Modern India: A Critical Study of the Intellectual Geneology of Hindutva,* Jaipur, 2006, p. 124.
[106] Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan*, p. 18

objective of freedom, being directed towards the moral transformation of caste Hindus and their need for 'repetence'. 'A rigidly orthodox Hindu [myself],' he stated, 'I believe that the Hindu Shastras have no place for untouchability of the type practised now ... [and] the moment I am convinced that untouchability is an essential element of Hindu religion, I would immediately renounce my religion.'[108] Caste distinctions had fossilised and led to the exploitation of the untouchables, Gandhi pointed out, appealing for a transformed 'Hindu conscience' in India. He insisted that all talents should be held in trust, and that all should be subject to the law of bread-labour and do their own scavenging.[109] The untouchables must not be considered as falling 'outside Hinduism', but treated as 'respectable members of Hindu society' and assigned the *varna*s [castes] according to their vocations.[110] Hinduism to Gandhi was to be made 'tolerable and humanistic' through a reform and negation of 'hierarchical oppression' in Hindu society.[111] However, the Mahasabha believed in a compact, closed Hindu society based on the *varna* hierarchy as part of its drive to construct a monolithic Hindu community in opposition to the Muslims. It did not advocate a reform of caste domination in India.

Gandhi's chief criticism was on the Hindu Mahasabha's *shuddhi* movement for the re-conversion of Muslims and Christians to the Hindu religion. He rejected the Mahasabha's aim to link the goal of freedom to Hindu strength by maximising the numerical-political strength of the Hindus through *shuddhi.*[112] He argued that proselytism was alien to the spirit of Hinduism and accused the Mahasabha of imitating the Christian concept of conversion in a way that was contrary to Hindu culture. 'The real *shuddhi* movement,' he explained, 'should consist in each one trying to arrive at perfection in his or her own faith.'[113] It must be a conversion of heart within one's tradition *[atma parivartan]*, not a conversion across religious traditions *[dharmantar].* In response to the Mahasabha's appeal for a memorial for Swami Shraddhananda, Gandhi insisted: 'For my part I still remain unconvinced about the necessity of the *shuddhi* movement ... And I question its use in this age of growing toleration and enlightenment ...'[114] The work of *shuddhi* and conversions would result in 'a great communal division', he argued. [115] The Mahasabhaites, however, denounced Gandhi's views on conversions as 'misconceived', asserting that he was wrong to believe that *shuddhi* formed no part of Hindism. To them, the representation of the Indian nation using 'Hindu culture' could be enforced through religious conversions, and

---

[107] V.D. Savarkar, *Hindutva: Who is a Hindu?* New Delhi, 2003, p. 92.
[108] Gandhi's speech at Bardoli Taluka Conference, 29 January 1922: Gandhi, *CWMG,* Vol. 26, p. 373; Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 28, p. 179.
[109] Chatterjee, *Gandhi,* p. 205-10.
[110] Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 14, pp. 73-4.
[111] To B.S. Moonje's prevarications on untouchability, Gandhi stated that 'my Hinduism does not bind me to every verse because it is written in Sanskrit ... in spite of your literal knowledge of the *shastras*, yours is a distorted kind of Hinduism. I claim in all humility to have lived Hinduism all my life.' M.K. Gandhi's letter to B.S. Moonje, dated 14 May 1927, Gandhi Papers, NMML.
[112] Ravi Kant Mishra, 'Contending Visions of Hinduism: Dayanand, Gandhi, Savarkar', Unpublished MPhil Dissertation, Jawaharlal Nehru University, 2001, pp. 51, 53.
[113] Gandhi, *CWMG,* Vol. 28, p. 56; Gandhi's letter to B.S. Moonje, 14 May 1927: Gandhi, *CWMG,* Vol. 33, pp. 322, 324.
[114] Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 32, p. 515; Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 56, p. 167.
[115] M.K. Gandhi, *Communal Unity,* Ahmedabad, 1949, pp. 56-7.

shuddhi was a prerequisite for freedom in India.[116] N.C. Kelkar reiterated that the Hindus 'have no claim to get *swaraj* so long as they do not obtain all their rights ... and fulfil the object of *shuddhi* and *sangathan*'.[117] In the Mahasabha's narrative, the ideal of national unity based on the construction of a Hindu religious unity through *shuddhi* was a prerequisite for nation-building in India.

III.1. Ahimsa and Hindu-Muslim Unity

Hindu *sangathan*ists rejected the Gandhian principles of *ahimsa* and Hindu-Muslim unity to be the basis of India's struggle for freedom in the 1920s and 1930s. *Sangathan* represented the Hindu nationalist and politically violent ideology of a distinct Tilakite variety that differed strikingly from the Gandhian tradition of *ahimsa*.[118] It deemed the doctrine of *ahimsa* as antithetical to the national interests of the Hindus who needed to arm themselves in order to fight against 'foreign enemies' – both the British and the Muslims – in India. 'Non-violence,' it was claimed, 'is the highest religion. This teaching is, however, unknown in the Vedas, the philosophies, the Upanishads and all other books anterior to the Mahabharata ... To refrain from punishing malignant enemies and allow tyrants to do whatever they like is, however, tantamount to committing serious violence. The Vedas permit us to kill our enemies, both human beings and animals.'[119] And 'between a policy of appeasement or abject surrender, or a policy of resistance even to the extent of last ditch and last drop of blood, they [Hindus] preferred the latter'.[120] *Sangathan*ists believed that 'the sermon of *ahimsa* has emasculated the Hindu nation. We have to follow the teachings of Lord Krishna.'[121] 'As a result of following non-violence, it was asserted, 'Hindus have become so forbearing and non-violent that they remain passive even at the sight of their women being assaulted, houses being looted and burnt ...'[122] *Ahimsa* was believed to have spelled India's 'humiliation', being an impediment in the fulfilment of 'a martial, forward-thrusting, unforgiving and aggressive Hindu nation'.[123] *Sangathan*ists rejected any sanction for *ahimsa* in the Hindu tradition and attacked Gandhi for meeting Muslim 'aggression' with non-violence, urging the Hindus to take up arms in defence of their religion and culture.[124]

Sangathan asserted the primacy of Kshatriya values in opposition to *ahimsa* in a drive to reinvent India's 'golden age': only through strength and military force would freedom come in the country.[125] India's 'real tradition' was that of the 'Kshatriyas', it was stated, and the doctrine of non-violence would 'destroy the

---

[116] William Gould, *Hindu Nationalism and the Language of Politics in Late Colonial India*, Cambridge, 2004, pp. 132-3.
[117] N.C. Kelkar's Presidential Address, All-India Hindu Mahasabha's eleventh session, Jabalpur, 8 April 1928: Mitra [ed.], *Indian Annual Register*, 1928, Vol. 1, January-June, pp. 424-27.
[118] A.G. Noorani, *Savarkar and Hindutva: The Godse Connection*, Delhi, 2002, p. 102.
[119] *Arya Jagat*, 26 September 1924, cited in G.R. Thursby, *Hindu-Muslim Relations in British India: A Study of Controversy, Conflict and Communal Movements in Northern India, 1923-1928*, Leiden, 1975, p. 170.
[120] L.B. Bhopatkar's Presidential Address, All-India Hindu Mahasabha's 31st session, Gorakhpur, December 1946: Moonje Papers, File No. 74, NMML.
[121] *Sudharak*, 27 September 1924, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 32/1924, IOL.
[122] *Bhavishya*, 31 May 1925, p. 7, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 25, 1925, IOL.
[123] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, p. 25.
[124] Christophe Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement and Indian Politics, 1925 to the 1990s: Strategies of Identity-Building, Implantation and Mobilisation [with special refrence to Central India]*, London, 1996, pp. 36, 46.

nation'.[126] B.S. Moonje attacked Gandhi's *ahimsa* as a form of 'renunciation and cowardice', insisting that a martial ethos not *ahimsa* should be introduced among the Hindus in India.[127] Speaking on the occasion of 'Til Sankranti' celebrations in Nagpur on 1 January 1933, Moonje favoured 'offence' rather than 'defence' and advocated a policy of 'strike first'. The readiness of the Hindu community had to be demonstrated in 'self-defence' so that the Hindus were not taken unawares as happened in the Multan and Saharanpur riots.[128] 'In our religion violence in the defence of one's rights is not condemned,' he claimed, urging an end to 'the un-Vedic principle of *ahimsa*'.[129] Moonje declared: 'Hindu Mahasabha wants independence but does not believe that it can be achieved through non-violence. It therefore wants to organise violence on the most up-to-date western scientific lines ... '[130] Lajpat Rai rejected *ahimsa*, claiming that this doctrine was 'a gangrene that poisons the system', and that it was 'lawful to resort to violence in defence of one's own self, family and nation'.[131] Bhai Parmanand argued that the theory of non-violence preached by Gandhi and accepted by the Congress was against the 'culture, tradition and history of the Hindus' in India.[132] N.C. Kelkar -- who had promoted an anti-Gandhi propaganda through the *Kesari* and the *Mahratta,* Tilak's newspapers of which he was editor at different times -- stated that non-violence and *satyagraha* would prove 'to be useless in the longer run' in India. 'When 1921 drew to a close Gandhi's promise to the nation of *sawaraj* [through *ahimsa*] within a year [had] remained unfulfilled.'[133] *Sangathan*ists argued that the experiment in nation-building was almost 'undone by *ahimsa*', which was in conflict with the interests of the 'masculine Hindus' whose vitality it sapped in India. The Hindus should be able to 'defend themselves in times of stress', and the image of a non-violent and unworldly Hindu promoted by Gandhi was a 'myth'.[134] The *Hindu Outlook*, the Hindu Mahasabha's mouthpiece, praised the military brutality of Franco, Mussolini and Hitler – all European dictators – throughout the 1930s.[135] In ideology, *sangathan* favoured a self-reliant and militant Hindu community of Kshatriya virtues, expressing contempt for the image of a non-violent, tolerant and peaceful Hindu as preached by Gandhi.

The *sangathan*ist ethic of violence and militarism was one core element that had dominated the speech of Nathuram Vinayak Godse in Gandhi's murder trial in the Red Fort, echoing a strong repudiation of *ahimsa.* Godse, Hindu Mahasabha secretary, Poona, and a member of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha Committee,

---

[125] Lise McKean, *Divine Enterprise: Gurus and the Hindu Nationalist Movement*, Chicago, 1996, p. 80.
[126] W. Anderson, 'The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh III: Participation in Politics', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 7, No. 13, 25 March 1972, p. 675.
[127] 'Preface to the Scheme of Central Hindu Military Society and Its Military School', File No. 25, 1935, Moonje Papers, NMML.
[128] Moonje Papers, File No. LP-22, 1933, NMML.
[129] *Tribune*, 9 November 1927, in Jayakar Papers, File No. 741, NAI.
[130] B.S. Moonje's letter to M.K. Gandhi, dated 10 September 1945, Miscellanious Section, Moonje Papers, NMML.
[131] Ravindra Kumar [ed.], *Selected Documents of Lala Lajpat Rai, 1906-1928*, Vol. 3, New Delhi, 1992, p. 184.
[132] Bhai Parmanand's statement: Proceedings of Hindu Mahasabha Working Committee's meeting, Bombay, 10 September 1939: Savarkar, *Samagra Savarkar,* Vol. 6, p. 427.
[133] Cited in Nandini Gondhalekar, 'Indian Nationalism and "Hindu" Politics: Maharashtra and the Hindu Mahasabha, 1920-1948', Unpublished PhD Dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1999, p. 35.
[134] Statement of M.V. Joshi, RSS leader, cited in Partha Sarathi Gupta [ed.], *Towards Freedom: Documents on the Movement for Independence in India, 1943-1944*, Vol. 3, Delhi, 1997, p. 3047.

assassinated Gandhi at 5pm on Friday, 30 January 1948. In his trial speech, Gadse claimed that Gandhi's non-violence consisted in enduring 'the blows of the aggressor [Muslims] without showing any resistance either by weapon or by physical force', and that it had led 'the nation towards ruin'.[136] 'I firmly believed,' Godse stated, 'that the teaching of absolute Ahimsa, as advocated by Gandhiji, would ultimately result in the emasculation of the Hindu community and thus make the community incapable of resisting the aggression or inroads of other communities, especially the Muslims.'[137] India needed to become a 'modern nation', 'practical, able to retaliate, and powerful with armed forces'. The Hindus would have to redeem their 'masculinity' by fighting and defeating the Muslims and the British. Godse looked to Savarkar not Gandhi as the true leader of the Hindus in India: Savarkar was his guru and principal inspiration, someone who bore a touch of divinity. 'Millions of Hindu Sangathanists,' he declared, 'looked up to him [Savarkar] as the chosen hero, as the ablest and most faithful advocate of the Hindu cause. I too was one of them.'[138] All the *sangathanists* charged in Gandhi's assassination case -- Narayan Apte, Vishnu Karkareh, Madanlal Pahwa, Gopal Godse, and Dr Dattatray Parchure -- were committed Hindu Mahasabhaites deeply loyal to Savarkar as their leader in the country. Godse's Hindu Rashtra Dal was a semi-volunteer organisation that had aimed to propagate 'unalloyed Savarkarism' in hostility to *ahimsa*;[139] and his Marathi-language newspaper *Agrani* -- later relaunched as the *Hindu Rashtra* -- was violently anti-Gandhian, articulating the Savarkarite belief that Gandhism was 'emasculating' the Hindus through *ahimsa* in the country.[140] Gandhi posed a threat to *sangathanists* and their new political culture of violent Hindu nationalism based on militarism through his rejection of violence and his consistent emphasis on pacifism.[141] In *sagathanist* worldview, *ahimsa* as a doctrine with a claim to tolerance through its ability to coexist with rival religions like Islam and Christianity discredited Gandhi's claim to represent the Hindus in India.

In *sangathanist* narrative, Gandhi's principle of Hindu-Muslim unity was considered the single greatest obstacle in building a strong and militaristic Indian nation. It viewed the prospects for *swaraj* as inconsistent with the goal of Hindu-Muslim unity, stressing the need to exclude the Muslims from India's freedom struggle. *Sangathan*'s claim to unify and protect the Hindu community from the 'threat' of the Muslims was drawn in part from Bal Gangadhar Tilak's nationalist ideology based on the defence of the Hindu religion in India. In Tilak's vision, India was the land of the Aryans whose religion was Hinduism, and India by right belonged to the Hindus. Tilak closed the space between 'Indian' and 'Hindu', as Hindu *dharm* became the historical, philosophical and

---

[135] M. Casolari, 'Hindutva's Foreign Tie-up in the 1930s : Archival Evidence', *Economic and Political Weekly*, January 22, 2000, p. 226.
[136] Nathuram Godse, *May It Please Your Honour: Statement of Nathuram Godse*, Pune, 1977, rept. Delhi, 1989, p. 42.
[137] Godse, *May It Please Your Honour*, p. 42.
[138] Godse, *May It Please Your Honour*, p. 48.
[139] Justice Jivan Lal Kapur's Commision of Inquiry Report: *Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Conspiracy to Murder Mahatma Gandhi*, Part II, Delhi, 1970, p. 69.
[140] Nathuram Godse started the Marathi daily *Agrani* ['The Forerunner'] with Rs 15,000 loan given by his mentor Savarkar on the day of the Hindu New Year: 28 March 1944. On its front page, it bore a picture of Savarkar and a Sanskrit motto: 'Public good, not mere popularity'. Manohar Malgonkar, *The Men Who Killed Gandhi*, Madras, 1978, pp. 19-38.
[141] Ashis Nandy, *At the edge of Psychology: Essays in Politics and Culture*, Delhi, 1990 [1980], p. 78.

social basis for Indian nationality.[142] His aligment of India with Hindu through a re-reading of ancient history served as the foundation for *sangathanists* -- to whom India was essentially a 'Hindu nation' 'betrayed and oppressed' by the Muslims across the centuries.

Gandhi's doctrine of Hindu-Muslim unity as a prerequisite for India's freedom came under a fierce attack from *sangathanists*. V.D. Savarkar blamed Gandhi for 'selling India to the Muslims' and attacked his idea of Hindu-Muslim unity as a 'pipe dream'.[143] M.R. Jayakar asserted that Gandhi had 'aimed at a most artificial and unreal unity between Hindus and Muslims' and in so doing had awakened 'sentiments and impulses in the latter community which like Frankenstein, it is now very difficult to allay'.[144] M.S. Golwalkar argued: 'Those who have declared "No Swaraj without Hindu-Muslim Unity" have thus perpetrated the greatest treason on our society. They have committed the most heinous sin of killing the life-spirit of a great and ancient people.' If the Hindus united, they were 'strong enough to do it [win freedom] alone'.[145] B.S. Moonje believed that Gandhi's life-long mission of achieving Hindu-Muslim unity was thoroughly impracticable, appealing to Gandhi to give up his 'pro-Muslim' mentality. The 'appeasement' policy of the Congress was the 'breeding source of misunderstanding and quarrel between the Hindus and the Congress and those in the Hindu Mahasabha'. Indeed, the Congress's 'favouritism' towards the Muslims had resulted from an 'unnecessary attachment to the *charkha* and non-violence'. Moonje explained: 'Congress believes that Swaraj can't be achieved without the cooperation of the Muslims. We believe that when time will come, we can win Swaraj even in spite of the Muslim opposition.'[146] Gandhi was accused of showing 'partiality' towards the Muslims by not discouraging the revival of the Muslim League and the existence of the Khilafat committees in the country in the 1920s and 1930s.[147] He was seen as a 'pro-Muslim zealot' responsible for instigating Muslim 'obscurantism and bigotry' -- a 'Hindu-hater', a 'Muslim lover', and an 'enemy'.[148] In *sangathanist* thinking, Gandhi's goal of Hindu-Muslim unity and the Congress's 'pandering to the Muslims' had destroyed the opportunity for building an Indian nation with the values of uncompromising Hinduism. The consolidation of the Hindu community was viewed as the true means of achieving *swaraj* in India; and the nation could be served by first looking into practical ways of strengthening the Hindu community, not Hindu-Muslim unity.[149] The main objective of *sangathan* was to organise and strengthen the Hindus, 'first to overcome Mohammedans and finally to oust the British' from India.[150]

---

[142] Richard Cashman, *The Myh of the 'Lokmanya': Tilak and Mass Politics in Maharashtra,* Berkeley, 1975, p. 75; Stanley Wolpert, *Tilak and Gokhale: Revolution and Reform in the Making of Modern India*, Berkeley, 1977, p. 85.
[143] Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darashan,* p. 27.
[144] M.R. Jayakar, *The Story of My Life, 1922-1925,* Vol. 2, Bombay, 1959, p. 130.
[145] M.S. Golwalkar, *Bunch of Thoughts,* Bangalore, 2000 [1966], p. 150.
[146] Moonje Papers, File No. 67, 1940, pp. 6-7, NMML.
[147] B.S. Moonje's presss statement, dated 18 May 1946: File No. 97, Moonje Papers, NMML.
[148] Keer, *Veer Savarkar*, pp. 240-1.
[149] *Gyan Shakti*, 2 July 1924, IOR L/R/5/98, File No. 27, 1924.

Conclusion

Gandhi accepted Hinduism as his religion on the basis of its tolerance and peace, linking it to *satyagraha* and non-violence. *Ahimsa* to him was integral to Hinduism and the Indian soil, rejecting the insurrectionary methods of political opposition in the country.[151] He was in an ideological conflict with the Hindu Mahasabha and its *sangathan* ideology. The doctrine of *ahimsa* was a direct challenge to the Hindu Mahasabha's revolutionary nationalism and violence, which had constituted a greater part of its drive for India's independence.[152] V.D. Savarkar believed that India could never become free without resort to violence, and that *ahimsa* deprived India of all its 'masculinity and strength'. Gandhi and Savarkar were in a conflict over the shape of the nation that would emerge in India after freedom from British rule. Gandhi did not accept the Hindu religion as the basis of Indian nationality; and India to him was a multi-relgious nation. His vision of India was not a 'Hindu nation' but a secular state that included all the diverse races and creeds – the Hindus and the Muslims – existing on an equal basis.[153] Savarkar, on the contrary, envisioned a Hindu *rashtra* [nation] in which the interests of other communities, particularly the Muslims, were subordinate to the Hindus. The dialogue and hostility between Gandhi and Savarkar over the efficacy of revolutionary methods in the struggle for India's independence and the nature of the future Indian nation had continued for the greater part of their lives. Gandhi's core belief was that *ahimsa* and Hindu-Muslim unity were essential to secure independence for India.[154] *Sangathan* ideology was explicitly hostile to these twin Gandhian doctrines that had coalesced as strategies in the Non-cooperation and Civil Disobedience movements against British rule in the 1920 and 1930s. Gandhi's conflict with Hindu *sangathan*ists had remained fundamental and irreconcilable; and his universalist and reformist Hinduism as well as his 'inclusive' Indian nation did not leave much room for them to manouvre in politics in India, leading to his assassination in 1948.

---

[150] M.S. Golwalkar's statement to an RSS camp in 1944: 'Note on the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh training camps held in various provinces during the months of May and June 1944 – followed by Official Comments – dated 29.7.1944', Home Poll., I, File No. 28/3/43, NAI.

[151] Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj*, p. 30; Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 20, pp. 104-5.

[152] Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 74, pp. 9, 75.

[153] M.K. Gandhi's letter to P.G.K. Menon, dated 13 April 1926: Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 30, pp. 226-7.

[154] Judith M. Brown, *Gandhi's Rise to Power: Indian Politics 1915-1922*, Cambridge, 1972, pp. 9-11, 47.

9

Nagari and Cow -- the Symbols of a 'Hindu Nation'

Nagari and the cow constituted the basis for the articulation of a self-aware modern 'Hindu' identity and consciousness as the cultural symbols of India in the early twentieth century. The Hindu Mahasabha adopted and assimilated the Nagari and cow protection movements, which had emerged in the 1860-1870s with the active role of Hindu publicists and organisations, in its *sangathan* discourse for the consolidation of the Hindu community in north India. Its campaign to establish Hindi as the national language of India was one significant element of its ideology that aimed to assert a distinct 'Hindu' identity, redefining Nagari as the symbol of a 'Hindu nation' in conflict with Urdu and Muslims.[1] Also the Mahasabha imagined of a 'Hindu nation' through the metaphor of the cow as a 'sacred symbol'.[2] Cow protection became an important issue in the *sangathan* programme, demonstrating the cow's affiliation to the harmony of Indian culture and tradition as well as the rationale for the assertion of a 'Hindu' identity in an explicit antagonism against the Muslims.[3] This chapter aims to explore the historical context and process in which the issues of Nagari and cow protection were integrated into *sangathan* ideology as the central symbols of a 'Hindu nation' and became integral to the unity and consolidation of the Hindus in north India in the 1920s and 1930s.

I. Hindu Campaign for Nagari

The United Provinces, the core of the 'Hindi heartland' in north India, was an area previously under the rule of the Mughals and the successor states to which Persian had been the court language for more than two centuries from 1526 to 1761. Since the annexation of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh [NWP&O] in 1805, the British had retained Persian-Urdu as the 'official vernacular' in north India. Urdu had the pre-eminence as the language of colonial administration and education, carrying an identity linked to the Muslim past in the UP. Persian-Urdu became as much a part of Muslim identity and cultural heritage as Islam itself.[4] In 1837 India's Governor-General in Council introduced Hindustani in the Perso-Arabic script, which primarily meant Urdu, replacing Persian as the language of the courts and administration in the UP.[5] However, the conflict began in the late 1860s in the eastern cities of Banaras and Allahabad, the core of the 'Aryavarta' [the land of classical Aryan life], which had seen the 'gathering momentum of opinion' in favour of Nagari – a sentiment viewed by the colonial officials as the expression of 'a patriotic feeling on the part of the Hindoos' against Urdu.[6] Banaras was

---

[1] Krishna Kumar, 'Hindu Revivalism and Education in North-Central India', in Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby [eds.], *Fundamentalisms and Society: Reclaiming the Sciences, the Family, and Education*, Chicago, 1993, pp. 536-57.
[2] Anand A. Yang, 'Sacred Symbol and Sacred Space in Rural India: Community Mobilization in the "Anti-Cow Killing" Riot of 1893', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 22, No. 4, October 1980, pp. 582-7.
[3] John Zavos, *The Emergence of Hindu Nationalism in India*, New Delhi, 2000, pp. 81-87.
[4] Paul R. Brass, 'Elite Groups, Symbol Manipulation and Ethnic Identity among the Muslims of South Asia', in David Taylor and Malcolm Yapp [eds.], *Political Identity in South Asia*, London, 1979, p. 51.
[5] Paul R. Brass, *Language, Religion and Politics in North India*, Cambridge, 2005 [1974], pp. 128-9.
[6] Statement of the NWP Government, 1 April 1870. IOR: V/23/129, 1870, pp. 234-5, IOL; Francesca Orsini, 'The Hindi Public Sphere: 1920-1940', *PhD Dissertation, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 1997*, p. 217.

connected for two and a half millennia with a tradition of Hindu pilgrimage, cremation and worship in north India. A centre of Brahmanic learning, the city's Hindu culture had proliferated due to the support of the Hindu maharaja and the newly emerging Hindu middle classes of the region.[7] And Allahabad became the seat of the UP provincial government in 1858, with the High Court moving from Agra to Allahabad in 1868. The *raison d'etre* of the campaign for Hindi in the Banaras-Allahabad region was the dissatisfaction with the colonial education policy based on Urdu, which evoked a specific view of history – a view of Hindu society's 'moral decline' under foreign influence.[8]

Nagari proponents attributed Urdu's popularity in the UP wholly to government patronage, accusing the British of insidiously trying to 'smother and stifle' Hindi by imposing a language [Persian] that was 'almost as foreign to the people as English'.[9] Raja Shivaprasad Singh [1823-1895], an influential official, compiler of textbooks and a prominent advocate of Nagari, argued that the official encouragement given to the study of Urdu and Persian in the province was 'crippling the study of Hindi and the development of primary education', and that Hindi had been the 'language of the country' before the Muslim invasions of India.[10] In a memorandum submitted to the government in 1868, he attacked the British language policy as one which 'thrusts a Semitic element into the bosoms of Hindus and alienates them from their Aryan speech ... and which is now trying to turn all the Hindus into semi-Muhammadans and destroy our Hindu nationality'.[11] It was true that Nagari was in wider usage than Urdu in the general population as revealed by the correspondence from 1796 to 1820 between the officials of the East India Company and diverse writers spread across north India.

Bharatendu Harishchandra [1850-1885], a leading literary figure of Banaras, strongly criticised the British patronage of Urdu, reiterating the autonomous, pre-Muslim existence of the Hindi language in north India. He called on the 'Arya brotherhood' to unite in the cause of Hindi and propagate it for official use in the courts and administration of the UP.[12] In his evidence to the 1882 Education Commission headed by Sir William Hunter,[13] Harishchandra attacked Urdu as 'the language of dancing girls and prostitutes'.[14] He contested Sayyid Ahmad Khan's assertion that 'Urdu is the language of the gentry and Hindi that of the vulgar'. 'The statement is not only incorrect but unjust to the Hindus.'[15] The Hunter commission declined to deal with the language controversy,

---

[7] Diana L. Eck, *Banaras: City of Light*, London, 1983, pp. 4-5; A.L. Basham, *The Wonder that was India: A Survey of the History and Culture of the Indian Sub-Continent Before the Coming of the Muslims*, London, 1967, pp. 165, 200.
[8] Christopher R. King, *One Language, Two Scripts: The Hindu Movement in Nineteenth Century North India*, Bombay, 1994, pp. 50-3; Amrit Rai, *A House Divided: The Origin and Development of Hindi-Urdu*, Delhi, 1984, pp. 91-2.
[9] *Harish Chandra's Magazine,* Anglo-Hindi monthly, Benares, November 1874. IOR: L/R/5/51, 1874, pp. 72-3, IOL.
[10] Shivaprasad, *Memorandum: Court Characters in the Upper Provinces of India*, Benares, 1868, p. 4.
[11] Shivaprasad, *Memorandum*, pp. 5-6.
[12] Vasudha Dalmia, *The Nationalization of Hindu Traditions: Bharatendu Harishchandra and Ninettenth-century Banaras*, Delhi, 1999 [1997], pp. 192-3, 205.
[13] The supporters of Hindi submitted to the Hunter commission 118 memorials from the cities and towns of the North Western Provinces, signed by some 67,000 persons, in 1882. Brass, *Language, Religion*, p. 130.
[14] Cited in Sudhir Chandra, 'Communal Consciousness in Late 19th Century Hindi Literature', in Mushirul Hasan [ed.], *Communal and Pan-Islamic Trends in Colonial India*, Delhi, 1981, pp. 180-195.
[15] Cited Dalmia, *Nationalization*, p. 208.

however.[16] The nationalist writers and publicists in effect claimed Hindi's status as the ancient heritage of the Hindus and appealed to the government to adopt Nagari for use in the courts and administration of the UP.

The turmoil over colonial education was linked to the neglect and inadequacy of teaching in Hindi, justifying the movement for the propagation of Nagari in the UP. Urdu, a prerequisite for government jobs, had displaced Hindi as the core language in the schools of the province.[17] Between 1860-1 and 1872-3, the proportion of Urdu learners was far in excess of the proportion of the Muslims in the schools;[18] and by 1872, no less than 22,074 students had been learning Urdu, Persian, or Arabic, whereas only 4,959 students opted for Hindi or Sanskrit. By 1874, the number of Urdu and Persian learners had multiplied by more than four times to 48,229, whereas the number of Hindi learners increased by a third to 8,820.[19] In 1884 the residents of Kanpur sent a petition to UP Lieutenant-Governor Alfred Lyall, which was backed by Pratap Narain Mishra [1856-95] -- a close associate of Harishchandra and editor of the Hindi journal *Brahman*. The petition pointed to the promise made in Wood's Educational Despatch of 1854 that the people of India would receive education in their own language, insisting that this was precisely what had not happened in north India.[20] The official encouragement given to the study of Urdu and Persian, 'the language of Muslim rule', continued to spread intense discontent and agitation among Nagari activists in the UP.

The Nagari-Urdu conflict represented a competition between the old service elites and the new groups for jobs and status in the United Provinces. Urdu had ensured the monopoly of the Muslim service gentry and a few Hindu Kayastha and Brahman elites on employment in the colonial services, placing many educated Hindus at a serious disadvantage. A shift to Hindi as the official language would, it was argued, greatly benefit Hindu aspirants [educated in Hindi-Sanskrit] in government employment.[21] The education of Hindu women would also receive a 'major stimulus' if the educational system included instruction in Nagari, it was stated. Women's education in Nagari was not intended for employment, but envisaged as an instrument of self-improvement partly due to Hindi's association with 'religion and devotional texts'.[22] The 'mother-tongue' of the Hindus, it was stressed, could only be the language 'spoken and understood' by their women in Indian society.[23] The British patronage of Urdu had remained a strong reminder to the Hindu literate upper castes of their subservient position *vis-a-vis* the Muslim aristocracy in matters of the colonial administration in the UP.

---

[16] *Education Commission Report by the North-Westen Provinces and Oudh Provincial Committee; with Evidence Taken before the Committee, and Memorials Addressed to the Education Commission,* Calcutta, 1884, pp. 390-1.

[17] Report by M. Kempson, director of public instruction, NWP, 12 February 1870. IOR: V/23/129, pp. 234-7, IOL.

[18] M.M. Malaviya, *Court Character and Primary Education in the North-West Provinces and Oudh,* Allahabad, 1897, pp. 20, 28.

[19] Malaviya, *Court Character,* p. 28.

[20] Education Commission Report, pp. 379-81.

[21] The Vaishya Conference [est. 1891] and the Kayastha Conference [est. 1887] passed resolutions in favour of Nagari in 1889 and submitted a memorandum to this effect to NWP&O Governor Anthony MacDonnell.

[22] Evidence of Miss M. Rose Greenfield, Ludhiana, to the Hunter Commission, 1882. Ghulam Husain Zulfiqar [ed.], *Select Documents on National Language*, Vol. I, Islamabad, 1985, pp. 20-2.

[23] Krishna Kumar, 'Quest for Self-identity: Cultural Consciousness and Education in Hindi Region, 1880-1950', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 25, No. 23, 9 June 1990, p. 1247-55; Madhu Kishwar, 'Arya Samaj and Women's Education: Kanya Mahavidyalaya, Jalandhar', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 21, No. 17, 26 April 1986, WS-9-p. 24.

The Hindi-Urdu divide reflected a struggle for cultural self-assertion with several symbolic undertones in the UP.[24] Nagari supporters dismissed Urdu as a spurious offspring of Hindi in Persian guise, which reminded one of the centuries of 'enslavement by alien Muslim rulers' in India.[25] Babu Biseshwar Mittra, a pleader in the High Court of the NWP, told the Hunter commission in 1882 that the people regarded the recognition of Urdu as the court language 'as a pure and simple survival of the old Moslem tyranny' in India.[26] The memorial presented to UP Lieutenant-Governor Sir William Muir in 1873 argued that the Persian script had a foreign origin and facilitated the use of 'incomprehensible' Arabic and Persian words, making court documents 'illegible' and encouraging 'forgery and fraud'.[27] The adoption of Nagari, it was asserted, would quicken the slow pace of the lower judiciary, where legal documents were 'written one way and read in another'.[28] Pandit Gauri Datta, who had founded the Devanagari Pracharini Sabha [Society for the Promotion of Devanagari] in 1882 and published the *Devanagari Gazette*, suggested that Urdu's 'immorality' took several forms, its script leading to a great deal of 'fraud' in society and government.[29] Urdu corrupted the Hindus, noted novelist Sohan Prasad, and led them astray from their own 'religious and cultural heritage' into a 'dark era of Muslim misrule and tyranny'.[30] Hindi, it was asserted, exercised a 'beneficial and positive moral influence' on the people, while Urdu enticed them to lead 'dissolute and immoral lives'. The introduction of Hindi in administration and education would help the public read religious books and avoid 'the immoral effects of so many Urdu love stories'.[31] The common refrain was that the teaching of Persianised Urdu tended to 'degenerate' the Hindus; and that Hindi was in essence a personification of 'Hindu culture and a pride' in India'.[32]

One major Hindu reform movement that had led a campaign to develop Hindi as the medium of modern education in north India was the Arya Samaj. In the Arya Samaj's programme of organising a reformed Hindu society, the development of a *lingua franca* of the Hindus -- or the Aryas -- took an important role. The fifth of the 28 basic rules of the Samaj established Hindi as its public language: 'In the main centre there will be several books in Sanskrit and in Aryabhasha.'[33] Dayananda Saraswati was a great scholar of Sanskrit, which he had used for his discourse until he met Keshub Chandra Sen, Brahmo Samaj leader, in Calcutta in 1872. Sen gave

---

[24] Christopher R. King, 'Forging a New Linguistic Identity: The Hindi Movement in Banaras, 1868-1914', in Sandria B. Freitag, *Culture and Power in Banaras: Community, Performance, and Environment 1800-1980,* Berkeley, 1990, p. 179.
[25] *Education Commission Report,* p. 400.
[26] *Education Commission Report*, p. 400.
[27] 'Memorial Presented to Government in 1873 Praying for the Restoration of Nagri Characters in Courts and Public Offices' to Sir William Muir, LL.D.K.C., S.I., Lieut.-Governor, North-Western Provinces, in Malaviya, *Court Character*, Appendix, pp. 74-5.
[28] *Jagat Samachar*, Meerut [Nagari], 19 April 1869. IOR: L/R/5/46, p. 198, IOL.
[29] Pandit Gauri Datta, *Nagari aur Urdu ka Svang* ['The Melodrama of Nagari and Urdu'], Meerut, N.d. p. 11, cited in Charu Gupta, 'Obscenity, Sexuality and the "Other": Gender and Hindu Identity in Uttar Pradesh, 1880s-1930s', PhD Dissertation, School of *Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 2000, p. 119.*
[30] Sohan Prasad, *Hindi aur Urdu ki Larai,* ['A Quarrel between Hindi and Urdu'], Gorakhpur, 1886, cited in Christopher R. King, 'Images of Virtue and Vice: The Hindi-Urdu Controversy in Two Nineteenth-century Hindi Plays', in Kenneth W. Jones [ed.], *Religious Controversy in British India: Dialogues in South Asian Languages*, Albany, 1992, pp. 124-147.
[31] The Hardoi Union Club's memorial presented to the Hunter commission, 1882: *Education Commission Report*, p. 543.
[32] The opinion of Rev. C.W. Forman, Lahore, to the Hunter Commission, 1882. Zulfiqar [ed.], *Select Documents*, Vol. 1, p. 18.
[33] Cited in Francesca Orsini, *The Hindi Public Sphere, 1920-1940: Language and Literature in the Age of Nationalism,* New Delhi, 2002, p. 112.

Dayananda the inspiration to use Hindi as a medium for the propagation of religious and social reform in India. Two years later, Dayananda gave his first lecture in Hindi in Banaras – in which 'hundreds of words, and even sentences still came out in Sanskrit'.[34] 'If you want freedom,' Dayanand exhorted, 'you must have your language.'[35] He translated the Vedas into Hindi – an act termed by Hindu nationalists 'the boldest act of his life'.[36] *Sangathanists* hailed Dayananda as the 'first Hindu leader' who had given a conscious and definite expression to the view that Hindi should be the national language of India and admired his *Satyartha Prakash* for its use of 'simple and untainted Hindi'.[37] The Arya Samaj was closely associated with the emerging Nagari movement in the late nineteenth century, seeking to transform Hindi from a spoken language into a 'high vernacular of administration, education and public discourse' in north India.[38] The Samaj's influence proved extremely crucial in the *sangathanist* invocation of Hindi as the state language of India as well as its ideological denunciation of Islam and Urdu-Persian in the 1920s and 1930s.

The campaign for Hindi's prominence found institutional support in the Hindu Sabhas that had mushroomed in the towns of the UP by the late nineteenth century.[39] The propaganda in support of Hindi figured as one of the aims of the Prayag Hindu Samaj [1880] and the Madhya Hindu Samaj [1884] of Allahabad -- in which Madan Mohan Malaviya had emerged as a champion of Nagari.[40] Malaviya was the first professional 'Hindi politician' to use Hindi as the language of politics and journalism in the UP by promoting Nagari through the short-lived Hindi political daily *Hindosthan,* which was launched by Raja Rampal Singh of Kalakankar, Allahabad, in 1883. Hindi was one significant element of Malaviya's politics that aimed to unite the Hindus through the Hindu Sabhas, cow-protection societies, and newspapers in the province.[41] The provincial Hindu Sabhas urged the government to substitute the Nagari script for Persian in the courts and offices of the UP, as the introduction of Nagari would lead to 'a simpler style closer to the language of the people' and expedite communications at the all India level.[42]

In the aftermath of the UP government's resolution passed by Lieutenant-Governor Sir Anthony MacDonnell in April 1900, Nagari was given equal status alongside Urdu in the courts and administration of the province.[43] In reality, however, little change had occurred in the dominance of Urdu in the official sphere. The complaints of discrimination against Hindi were galore at the time. Proceedings and orders continued to be written in

---

[34] J.T.F. Jordens, *Dayananda Sarasswati: His Life and Ideas*, New Delhi, 1998 [1978], p.129.
[35] V.D. Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan: A Collection of the Presidential Speeches Delivered from the Hindu Mahasabha Platform*, Bombay, 1992 [1949], p. 108.
[36] Orsini, *Hindi Public Sphere*, p. 227.
[37] Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan*, p. 108.
[38] Home Poll. Deposit, April 1912, File No. 4, NAI; Kenneth W. Jones, *Arya Dharm: Hindu Consciousness in19th- Century Punjab*, Berkeley, 1976, rept. New Delhi, 1989, pp. 90-3; idem, 'Communalism in the Punjab: the Arya Samaj Contribution', *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 1, November 1968, pp. 47-50.
[39] Krishna Kumar, *Political Agenda of Education: A Study of Colonialist and Nationalist Ideas,* New Delhi, 1991, p. 12.
[40] C.A. Bayly, *The Local Roots of Indian Politics: Allahabad 1880-1920,* Oxford, 1975, p. 105.
[41] S. Chaturvedi, *Madan Mohan Malaviya*, New Delhi, 1988 [1972], pp. 1-3; Orsini, Hindi Public Sphere, p. 121.
[42] Malaviya, *Court Character*, pp. 40-55. Malaviya founded the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan [Society for Hindi Literature] of Allahabad in 1910 to actively lobby in favour of Hindi as official vernacular. Bayly, *Local Roots,* pp. 105-6.

Persianised Urdu in the courts for the next four decades.[44] The courts persisted in the practice of using Urdu characters where Hindi ought to have been used;[45] and 'secret efforts' were allegedly made against the use of Hindi in the Allahabad High Court.[46] Babu Madan Mohan Seth, the munsif of Bisauli in Badaun district, was transferred to Etawah for recording the evidence of witnesses and allowing petitions in Hindi; and his transfer was challenged by the Nagari Pracharini Sabha in the High Court.[47] Gorakhpur deputy collector Saiyid Iltija Husain had allegedly 'declined' to accept statements or applications written in Hindi, despite their being repeatedly submitted to him by Chandi Prasad, a vakil.[48] Court summonses were published in the *District Gazettes* in 'unintelligible Urdu' in parts of the UP.[49] The legislative proceedings were still conducted mostly in 'English or Persianised Urdu' in many municipalities of the province.[50] The draft rules of the municipalities were often published in Urdu;[51] and the municipal boards had issued orders 'prohibiting the use of Hindi' in the reports of some municipal schools in the province.[52] The unreasonable 'prejudice' shown against the use of Nagari was attacked as a violation of the 'feelings of all lovers of Hindi' across the UP.[53]

By the early 1900s, however, the Hindi movement had achieved its significant literary status due to an upsurge of pro-Hindi activity by the newly emerging Hindu middle class in the UP. The Hindi Sahitya Sammelan of Allahabad [1910] and the Nagri Pracharini Sabha of Banaras [1893] led the drive for the promotion of Nagari by launching a campaign to strengthen the work of missionaries and textbook writers in Hindi across the province.[54] Newspapers and journals like the *Chand*, by far the most celebrated Hindi magazine in the UP, and the *Abhyudaya* became the means of literary and linguistic expression for the assertion of 'Hindu' identity in the province.[55] The champions of Hindi included Shivanath Sharma,[56] Rupnarayan Pandey, Dularelal Bhagava, Newal Kishore,[57] Mahavir Prasad Dwivedi,[58] novelist and journalist Ratan Nath Sarshar, and politician and editor Ganga Prasad Varma.[59] They constituted a vocal and influential section of the Hindu middle class trying

---

[43] NWP&O Gen. Admn. Deptt., October 1900, pp. 117-118, NAI.

[44] *The Report of the Nagari-Pracharini Sabha, Benares, from 1893-1902*, Banaras, 1902, p. 14.
[45] *Abhyudaya,* Allahabad, 9 November 1918, IOR L/R/5/94, File No. 46, 1918, p. 71, IOL.
[46] *Arya Mitra* [Agra, weekly, editor: Pandit Sarvanand, cir: 1,800 copies], 27 April 1916, IOR L/R/5/91, p. 360, IOL.
[47] *Abhyudaya* [Alllahabad, weekly, editor: Krishna Kant Malaviya, 29], 15 January 1916: IOR L/R/5/91, p. 68, IOL.
[48] *Pratap,* Kanpur, 9 December 1918, IOR L/R/5/94, File No. 50, 1918, p. 721, IOL.
[49] *Veda Prakash*, Meerut, April 1918, IOR L/R/5/94, File No. 22, 1918, p. 361; *Arya Mitra*, Agra, 6 June 1918, IOR L/R/5/94, File No. 24, 1918, p. 407, IOL.
[50] *Avadhbasi* [Lucknow, weekly, editor – Sheo Bihari Lal, 45; 2,000 copies], 4 April 1916, IOR L/R/5/91, p. 291, IOL.
[51] *Arya Mitra* [Agra, weekly, Pandit Sarvanand, Brahman, 29, 1,800 copies], IOR L/R/5/92, 1916, p. 835, IOL.
[52] *Anand*, Lucknow, 14 January 1918, IOR L/R/5/94, File No. 31, 1918, p. 60, IOL.
[53] *Abhyudaya*, Allahabad, 6 July 1918, IOR L/R/5/94, file No. 43, 1918, p. 473, IOL.
[54] Naresh Prasad Bhokta, 'Marginalization of Popular Languages and Growth of Sectarian Education in Colonial India', in Sabyasachi Bhattacharya [ed.], *The Contested Terrain: Perspectives on Education in India*, New Delhi, 1998, pp. 201-17.
[55] Nandi Bhatia, 'Twentieth Century Hindi Literature', in Nalini Natarajan [ed.], *Handbook of Twentieth Century Literature of India,* Westport, 1996, p. 137; Sanjay Joshi, *Fractured Modernity: Making of a Middle Class in Colonial North India,* Delhi, 2001, p. 39.
[56] Shivanath Sharma [b. 1895], publisher and editor of the *Anand,* was a crusader for the promotion of Hindi and the Devanagari script. Initially he had edited the Hindi journal *Vasundhara,* owned by Jwalaprasad Shama.
[57] Newal Kishore was the publisher of the *Oudh Akbar* – the first daily vernacular newspaper of the UP.
[58] M.P. Dwivedi was editor of the *Saraswati,* a Hindi magazine published from Allahabad, in the early 1900s.
[59] Ganga Prasad Varma [b. 1863], a founding member of the Congress in the UP, edited and published the *Advocate*- an English-language bi-weekly paper in Lucknow, and followed it with the *Hindustani* in Urdu.

to fashion a new collective 'Hindu' identity around Hindi in the UP. The Malaviya group based in Allahabad – Purshottam Das Tandon, Gauri Shankar Misra, and Shiva Prasad Gupta – had been actively involved in the work of Hindi propaganda and journalism in the province.[60] A vocal section of the Congress nationalists was at the centre of explosion in Hindi literary writing in this period. Sampurnanand, a champion of Hindi, emphasised that Urdu was 'unacceptable' and certainly 'not ... suitable for adoption as a national language' of India.[61] The growing interest in Hindi was reflected in the increase in the number of Hindi periodicals – which by the 1920s had exceeded those in other vernaculars across the UP.[62] The new Hindu middle class began to speak of the mass aspirations in favour of Hindi, which was transformed into a symbol of a distinctive 'Hindu' identity in north India.

For Hindu leaders, educational enterprise had become a favourite sphere of mobilisation for Hindi in the UP. The foundation of the Banaras Hindu University [BHU] by M.M. Malaviya on 6 February 1916 as a modern institution with a religio-cultural agenda gave considerable strength to the self-image of the Hindi literati in entire north India. Gandhi attended the inauguration of the university, where he admitted in English that it was 'a shame that I am compelled this evening under the shadow of this great college, in this sacred city, to address my countrymen in a language that is foreign'.[63] English was introduced as the medium of instruction at the BHU, but the location of the only Hindu university of the country on the banks of the Ganges in the heart of Banaras had an obvious cultural significance for the growth of Hindi. The university produced the overwhelming majority of literary writers and critics of Hindi as well as trained teachers all over the Hindi region. The educational institutions like the Kashi Vidyapeeth and Allahabad University helped to promote interest in Hindi through the standardisation of syllabi and textbooks in the schools and colleges of the UP. A process of cultural homogenisation had occurred by the 1920s, inducing a new and broader sense of the 'Hindu community' and a movement for the popularisation of Hindi as the language of the nation. In view of the growing support for Hindi among intellectuals and its politicisation on the wave of the Congress struggle in the 1920s, a strong consensus had emerged in the ranks of the nationalist leaders, particularly Gandhi and Bal Gangadhar Tilak, that Hindi was 'the language of the people' and the national language *[rashtra bhasha]* of India.[64]

I.1. Hindi – India's National Language

In the 1920s and 1930s, the Hindi movement reached its culmination in the 'Hindu unity' discourse of the Hindu Mahasabha -- which adopted Nagari as an integral part of *sangathan* ideology.[65] The Punjab Hindu

---

[60] P.D. Tandon, former editor of M.M. Malaviya's *Abhyudaya*, was the founder and prime organiser of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan and the Provincial Hindi Conference in the UP.
[61] Sampurnanand's speech to the Kashi Nagri Pracharini Sabha in August 1938, cited in Orsini, *Hindi Public Sphere*, pp. 235-6.
[62] William Gould, *Hindu Nationalism and the Language of Politics in Late Colonial India*, Cambridge, 2004, p. 60.
[63] Gandhi's speech at Banaras Hindu University, 6 February 1916: M.K. Gandhi, *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi [CWMG]*, 100 volumes, New Delhi, 1958-1994: Vol. 13, pp. 210-16.
[64] Gandhi's speech at Common Language Conference, Lucknow, 29 December 1916: Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 13, p. 321.
[65] Benedict Anderson explains that a print language creates the base for the emergence of national consciousness and the nation. B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London, 2006 [1983], p. 45.

Sabha, at the Lahore Hindu conference convened by on 21-22 October 1909, had first passed a resolution to promote Hindi and Sanskrit, emphasising the need to re-write the history of the 'Hindu period' with a view to reinforcing the 'cultural unity' of the Hindus in India.[66] Lal Chand, the founding Hindu Sabha leader, argued that Persian and Urdu were 'alien to the genius' of the Indian people. 'Thousands and tens of thousands of Hindus who ought to be familiar with the truths of the Upanishads and *Bhagavat Gita*' were irretrievably committed to the knowledge of Urdu, he lamented, making an appeal for the development of 'Hindi and indigenous literature' in the country.[67] The later Hindu Mahasabha appropriated the concept of Hindi as the language of the Hindus, drawing its strength from the earlier history of the Hindi movement and the increasing interest shown in Nagari by Hindu organisations in north India. Nagari became a crucial issue in its discourse of the 'progress and reform' of the Hindu community in the country. Swami Shraddhananda urged the introduction of a uniform Devanagari script and Hindi as a 'vital necessity' in India, emphasising that Nagari was part of the *sangathan* programme on the 'progress and reform' of the country.[68] Lajpat Rai was eloquent in his support for a Sanskritised form of Hindi, insisting that Nagari should be introduced in the UP, while the Persian script might be used in the courts and schools of Sindh, the Punjab, and the North-West Frontier Province.[69] *Sangathani*sts urged all the papers in the different provinces of India to publish parts of their vernaculars in the Nagari script.[70] In *sangathani*st ideology, Nagari as well as Sanskritised Hindi was propagated and hailed as the national script and *lingua franca* of India.

In the Hindu Mahasabha's discourse, the primacy of territory, a common race or blood, and the unity of culture and language constituted the main tenets of a 'Hindu nation'.[71] The paramount attribute of a 'Hindu nation', V.D. Savarkar declared, was the 'coherence and unity' of the language – first Sanskrit and later modern Hindi -- which was viewed as the carrier of the 'cultural essence' of India.[72] He explained: 'As the growth and development of ... our genuine national tongue was parallel to and almost simultaneous with the revival and popularization of the ancient names Sindusthan or Sindhu, or Hindusthan ... it was but a matter of course that language being the common possession of the whole nation should be called ... Hindi.'[73] The Hindus who alone constituted the Indian nation, *sangathani*sts argued, were 'the original inhabitants and sole creators of its society and culture'.[74] The growth of the national language was but an 'outward expression of this inward unity

---

[66] *The Tribune*, 21 October 1909. IOR: L/R/5/56, 1909, p. 291, IOL.
[67] R.B. Lal Chand, *Self-Abnegation in Politics*, Lahore, 1938, pp. 35, 39.
[68] Swami Shraddhanand, *Hindu Sangathan: Saviour of the Dying Race*, N.p., 1926, p. 138.
[69] *Cawnpore Gazette*, 1 May 1918. IOR: L/R/5/94, 1918, p. 329, IOL.
[70] Indra Prakash, *A Review of the History and Work of the Hindu Mahasabha and the Hindu Sangathan Movement*, New Delhi, 1952 [1938], p. 144.D; Keer, *Veer Savarkar*, Bombay, 1988 [1966], p. 172.
[71] Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan*, pp. 8-10; Thomas Blom Hansen, *The Saffron Wave: Democracy and Hindu Nationalism in Modern India*, Princeton, 1999, p. 78.
[72] V.D. Savarkar's presidential speech to Mahasabha's 21st session, Calcutta in 1939: Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan*, p. 107.
[73] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, p. 33.
[74] M.S. Golwalkar, *We or Our Nationhood Defined*, Nagpur, 1939 [4th edn. 1947], p. 18.

of our national life'.[75] Hindi was inextricably woven into the 'all-round life of the Hindu race' and became an 'ingredient of great importance' in India's history. It was a symbol of the 'mythologised Hindu past' -- 'original Hinduism' -- in India.[76] India as a nation found expression in Hindi literature, which had become a cultural symbol tied to the writing of its 'national history'; and the country was to keep her 'mother tongue alive, its heritage undefiled, and its values unaffected'.[77] In *sangathani*st narrative, Hindi reflected 'the ancient traditions of the Hindus' – their culture, religion, and history – in India.[78]

The Hindu Mahasabha's central aim was to make Hindi the national language of India. Savarkar viewed Hindi as the 'richest and most cultured of all the ancient languages', and Nagari – the 'script of the Hindu scriptures' -- as phonetically by far the 'most perfect in the world'.[79] 'Long before either the English or even the Moslems stepped into India,' he stated, Hindi in its general form had already come to occupy the position of 'a national tongue throughout Hindustan'.[80] Hindi was the language used by 'the Hindu pilgrim, the tradesman, the tourist, the soldier, the Pandit' in the country.[81] The notion of Hindi as the state language provided a basis to re-compact the Hindus educated in regional vernaculars into a homogeneous 'Hindu community'. In India, every province had its own language; yet Hindi provided 'a linguistic unity' across the country. 'Sanskrit ... is common to all from the Himalayas to ... [the] South ...'[82] Hindi, drawn from Sanskrit, was potent enough to communicate with the entire, multilingual nation, being a product of the 'nationalist feelings'.[83] *Sangathani*sts argued that the provincial languages in India would grow and flourish in an affinity and relationship with Hindi.[84] The projection of Hindi as the national language represented the 'inner life of the nation' and was determined by a process of internal cohesion, whereby Hindi appropriated the space of the vernacular languages -- Brajbhasha, Avadhi, Bengali, Marathi, Tamil, and Telugu – which were regarded as 'not autonomous' in cultural tradition but 'deviations from sanatan *dharm*'.[85] In *sangathani*st thinking, Hindi's 'territorial communication and 'homogenisation' was a strong source of the national solidarity of the Hindus in India.

The Hindu Mahasabha's propagation of Hindi as the national language of India involved an attack on Urdu, which was considered a 'threat' to Nagari. Urdu's status as the official language in British administration rendered it unsuitable for a role in India's freedom struggle. The Mahasabha emphasised the Aryan Hindu identity, demarcating Hindi as the Aryabhasha [the language of the Aryans] from Urdu, the language of the

---

[75] V.D. Savarkar, *Hindutva: Who is a Hindu?*, Poona, 1949, rept. New Delhi, 2003, p. 34.
[76] Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan*, pp. 108-10; Golwalkar, *We*, pp. 27, 51.
[77] M.P. Dwivedi, '*Desvyapak bhasa*', *Sarasvati*, November 1903. IOR: L/R/5/92, File No. 46, 1903, p. 490.
[78] Golwalkar, *We*, p. xii; Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan*, pp. 108-10.
[79] Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan*, p. 108.
[80] Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan*, p. 107.
[81] Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan*, p. 107.
[82] Golwalkar, *We*, p. 43.
[83] Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan*, p. 107; Golwalkar, *We*, p. 43.
[84] Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan*, pp. 106, 110.
[85] Dalmia, *Nationalization*, p. 221.

Muslims.[86] It viewed Urdu as the legacy of Muslim rule in India -- alien to Hindu culture and urged the removal of Urdu and Persian words from Hindi and their replacement with words derived from Sanskrit.[87] Savarkar rejected any attempt of 'our Mahommedan zealots' to thrust on the Hindus the Urdu script. 'We must not,' he insisted, 'allow the influx of alien words into our language without ... testing their necessity.' 'But as mother-tongue and national language it [Urdu] had no place in Hindu culture...'[88] 'It is our bounden duty,' he argued, 'to oust out ... all unnecessary alien words whether Arabic or English from every Hindu tongue, whether provincial or dialectical.'[89] An exclusively Indian language and literature could be derived by systematically excluding all alien, mainly Muslim, vocabulary as well as all the literary production of Muslim writers in the country. The purity of the Hindi language was emphasised as the purity of 'Hindu culture'. The *sangathani*st drive to make Hindi India's national language sought to strengthen a Hindu cultural unity by removing Urdu and hence 'Muslim' influence from the country.

The Hindu Mahasabha launched a drive for the 'Sanskrit Nistha' Hindi, disowning any affinity to the 'hybrid' 'Hindusthani' proposed under Gandhi's Wardha scheme. *Sangathani*sts denounced Gandhi's appeal for the re-merging of Hindi and Urdu into 'Hindustani' -- a fusion of Persian-Arabic, Sanskrit, and Hindi -- as a common language of the masses in the country. Support for 'Hindustani' among the Hindi literati was scarce: Premchand was the only major writer who supported 'Hindustani'.[90] The two powerful institutions working for the promotion of Hindi -- the Nagri Pracharini Sabha and the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan -- vigorously opposed 'Hindustani'. The Mahasabha attacked 'Hindustani' as a 'linguistic monstrosity', a 'language of the bazaar' which could hardly fulfil the requirements of a state language.[91] Only Sanskritic Hindi could become India's national language, it was asserted. As an outcome, in the UP Urdu publishing had gradually declined under the impact of the *sangathani*st campaign by the 1920s and 1930s; and writers like Premchand found it difficult to get Urdu publishers and shifted to Hindi writing. In 1925 Urdu books amounted to just one-sixth of Hindi publications and even decreased in absolute numbers: there were over 33 Hindi vernacular newspapers in the UP with a total circulation of 7,509.[92] A dichotomy between Hindi and Urdu was established in the public sphere; and Hindi gained autonomy, while Urdu was excluded as the language of the Muslims. In *sangathani*st ideology, the severance of a historical and cultural link with Urdu and the Muslims was paramount, demarcating Hindi sharply from the 'alien' which Urdu had come to represent in India.

---

[86] Dalmia, *Nationalization*, p. 151.
[87] Keer, *Savarkar*, p. 174.
[88] Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan*, p. 109.
[89] V.D. Savarkar's presidential speech to Mahasabha's 21st session, Calcutta, 1939: Savarkar, *Hindu Rahtra Darshan*, p. 108.
[90] David Arnold, *Gandhi*, London, 2001, p. 113; Kumar, 'Hindu Revivalism', p. 547.
[91] Savarkar, *Hindu Rahtra Darshan*, p. 108.
[92] *Report on the Administration of UP, 1923-24*, Allahabad, 1924, p. 91; King, *One Language*, pp. 38-9, 43-5.

II. Cow Protection Movement

Cow protection was a central pillar of the Hindu reform movements in north India in the late nineteenth century.[93] The issue of cow slaughter rose to prominence in the 1890s when cow protection societies [gaurakshini sabhas] had become the feature of a broader Hindu nationalist agenda in the country.[94] In the *Satyartha Prakash* ['The Light of Truth'] published in 1875 and a later pamphlet *Gokarunanidhi* ['Ocean of Mercy of the Cow'] written in 1881, Dayananda Saraswati linked the protection of cows to his critique of Hindu society and attacks on the British and the Muslims, making an emotional appeal to the Hindus to devote themselves to cow protection in the country.[95] He used the networks of the Arya Samaj to disseminate an imagery of the cow as the 'mother' of a 'Hindu nation' and included cow protection among the practices needed to strengthen India. Most importantly, he explained, there was a pressing need to combat 'malnutrition and physical degeneration' brought about by a scarcity of milk in the country. For this he blamed cow slaughter and called for its immediate end.[96] A ban on all animal slaughter was an ethical ideal, he argued in *Gokarunanidhi*.[97] Dayananda established his first *gaushala* [cattle sanctuary] in Rewari in 1879; and a cow protection society was formed in Agra in 1881.[98] In 1882, a year before his death, he had set up a committee in Calcutta in co-operation with the Maharaja of Banaras to seek all-India Hindu involvement in an agitation to prevent cow-killing. Eventually, the Society for the Preservation of Horned Cattle was established in Bombay in 1887 and engaged in the building of *gaushalas* in Gujarati and Marathi areas.[99] By 1892 cow protection societies had spread to the eastern UP, followed by an outbreak of cow protection riots at Azamgarh, Ballia, and Mhow in the province in 1893.[100] By the early 1900s, the colonial officials had held the Arya Samaj responsible for cow protection riots across the province.[101] The strong presence of the Arya Samaj in the UP was a potent factor in the emergence of a Hindu revivalist movement that aimed to prevent the killing of cows in north India.

In the UP, the cow protection societies produced petitions and memorials addressed to the local officials, urging that cow slaughter be prohibited on the grounds of public health.[102] Many argued that cow slaughter, particularly since the advent of Muslim and British rule, had devastated India's economy and resulted in the

---

[93] Anthony Parel, 'The Political Symbolism of the Cow in India', *Journal of Commonwealth Political Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 3, November 1969, p. 181.

[94] John R. McLane, *Indian Nationalism and the Early Congress,* Princeton, 1977, pp. 273, 326-27; G.R. Thursby, *Hindu-Muslim Relations in British India: A Study of Controversy, Conflict and Communal Movements in Northern India, 1923-1928,* Leiden, 1975, pp. 76-88.

[95] Swami Dayananda's *Gokarunanidhi* was first published in 1880 and then widely reprinted. Jordens, *Dayananda Saraswati,* pp. 220-2.

[96] Jones, *Arya Dharm,* p, 32.

[97] Dayananda Saraswati, *Satyarth Prakash: The Light of Truth*, translated by Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya, Allahabad, 1960, *chapter 10, part 18, pp. 377-8*; Dayanand Saraswati, *Gokarunanidhi: Ocean of Mercy for the Cow*, translated by Rai Bahadur Ratan Lal, Delhi, 1996, p. 19.

[98] Parel, 'Political Symbolism', p. 183.

[99] Bombay CID, SAPI, 14 November 1891 and 5 November 1892, cited in Richard Cashman, The *Myth of the 'Lokamanya': Tilak and Mass Politics in Maharashtra*, Berkeley, 1975, p. 67.

[100] 'Note on the Cow Protection Agitation in the Gorakhpur District', Home Public A, December 1893, Nos. 212-213, NAI.

[101] Home Poll. Deposit, April 1912, File No. 4, NAI.

undernourishment of its vegetarian population, representing a grievous attack on the Hindu religion.[103] Protecting cattle from slaughter, it was argued, 'increased the resources of the country and protected and improved agriculture'.[104] Petitioners strove to present the societies as 'purely philanthropical and in no way political' for fear of their being banned as 'seditious'.[105] In terms of the social composition, the patrons of the cow protection societies -- Hindu princes, zamindars, merchants and rural-based notables – had constituted the social elite that was prominent in the leadership of local Hindu Mahasabha networks co-ordinating anti-Muslim violence across the UP in the early twentieth century.[106]

In north India, cow slaughter signified simultaneously the 'illegitimacy' of British rule and the 'threat' of the Muslims to Hindu society: both were targeted.[107] The nature of anti-cow killing appeals and riots explicitly brought the Muslims into the picture alongside the British. Hindu publicists first made appeals to the British to curb cow-killing by the Muslims, and the riots were almost all anti-Muslim before they had become anti-British. Katherine Prior argues that the colonial officials intervened in cow protection disputes as a means of establishing the 'local custom' in the country;[108] but in reality, such interference to regulate cow sacrifice often sparked Hindu reprisals.[109] Peter Robb explains that the government feared that cow protection provided a 'common platform' on which all the Hindus could unite, and that the objective, as of the Congress, was 'the overthrow of English rule' from India.[110] The movement represented a form of disloyalty towards the British, even though it was ostensibly directed against the Muslims.[111] The consensus among the British officials was that the Hindus were the 'aggressors', resulting in the policy of repression directed against them; and there was a shift in the British alliance to the Muslims who had begun to insist on their social rights in India.[112] In the end, cow protection eventually led to a resistance to all colonial intervention in Hindu practices, reviving regularly as a way of opposition and dissent against British rule in the country.[113]

---

[102] Chief Secretary, NWP&O, to Chief Secretary, Government of India, Home Dept., 28 August 1893, Home Public, IOR: L/P&J/365, File No. 169, November 1893, p. 5.

[103] Christophe Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement and Indian Politics, 1925 to the 1990s: Strategies of Identity-building, Implantation and Mobilization [with special reference to Central India]*, London, 1996, pp. 17, 67.

[104] 'Note on the Cow-Protection Agitation', IOR: L/P&J/365, File No. 84, 1894, p. 3, IOL.

[105] Kenneth W. Jones, *The New Cambridge History of India III.1: Socio-Religious Reform Movements in British India*, Cambridge, 1994 [1989], pp. 90-4.

[106] *Aj* [Benares, daily, editor: Babu Rao Vishnu Paratkar], 11 January 1921, IOR: L/R/5/96, File No. 3, 1921, p. 36.

[107] Van der Veer, *Religious Nationalism*, p. 90.

[108] K. Prior, 'Making History: The State's Intervention in Urban Religious Disputes in the North Western Provinces in the Early Nineteenth Century', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 1, 1993, pp. 179-204: pp. 191-203.

[109] Gyanendra Pandey, 'Rallying Round the Cow: Sectarian Strife in the Bhojpur Region, c. 1888-1917', in Ranajit Guha [ed.], *Subaltern Studies II – Writings on South Asian History and Society*, Delhi, 1983, pp. 89-95.

[110] Peter Robb, 'The Challenge of Gau Mata: British Policy and Religious Change in India, 1880-1916', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 20, No. 2, 1986, pp. 285-319: p. 292.

[111] 'Note on the Agitation Against Cow Killing', 24 January 1894, L/P&J/3/96, File No. 257, IOL.

[112] Robb, 'Challenge of Gau Mata', pp. 293, 300-2.

[113] The Age of Consent Bill [1891] provoked a committee of cow protectionists and Bharat Dharma Mahamandal members to meet at the Hardwar Kumbha Mela in 1892. At this meeting, it was 'decided to attack with increased vigour the Muhammedan practice of kine-killing as a mark of the displeasure at the new [Age of Consent] Act and also to prevent further interference in Hindu religious matters'. McLane, *Indian Nationalism*, p. 299.

The cow protection movement appealed alike to the orthodox, traditionalistic and reformist Hindus across north India. The movement's organisational structure, Sandria Freitag argues, united the urban centres and their rural surroundings', with the cow providing a popularly revered symbol that could be mobilised in the name of a putative 'Hindu community'.[114] Cow protection centred on the tenets of high-caste Hinduism, including vegetarianism, temperance, and the norms of purity and pollution.[115] The festivals, public meetings, and pamphlets that had proliferated over cow protection provided meanings and a common ground between the elite and popular cultures in Indian society. The untouchables and lower castes – the former ate beef – also participated in the cow protection campaigns, making a shift in their self-conception as the 'Hindus'. Gyanendra Pandey emphasises that the colonial archive classified cow protection riots as part of the wider 'sectarian conflict' between the Hindus and the Muslims in north India; but those who had participated in the riots 'did not embrace the idea of themselves as Hindus'.[116] The lower caste participation in the cow protection campaigns implied an alignment with the upper-caste Hindu idiom, nonetheless. The cow protection movement on the whole made a successful impact in the UP -- chiefly due to the predominance of Brahmanical culture with its popular emphasis on cow worship in the region.[117]

II. 1. Cow – the Mother of a 'Hindu Nation'

The Hindu Mahasabha adopted the cow protection campaign as part of *sangathan* ideology with one major effect, targeting initially the British and then most prominently the Muslims in India. The Delhi session of the Hindu Sabha, which was presided over by Raja Rampal Singh on 26-28 December 1918, passed a formal resolution for the first time against cow slaughter in India.[118] The Mahasabha eventually lobbied the Indian National Congress to pass a resolution banning cow slaughter, stressing the economic necessity of protection in the country. However, the Congress refused to incorporate cow protection in its nationalist programme – particularly as the basis of Hindu-Muslim unity against British rule.[119] Gandhi condemned the protectionists' calls for an end to the Muslim slaughter of cows in return for Hindu support during the Khilafat-Non-cooperation movement in 1920-21.[120] 'The Hindus' participation in the Khilafat,' he stated, 'is the greatest and the best movement for cow-protection.'[121] 'As soon as the Muslims realize that for their sake the Hindus are ready to lay down their lives, they will desist from cow-slaughter ...'[122] The conservative Muslim press insisted that cow

---

[114] Sandria B. Freitag, *Collective Action and Community: Public Arenas and the Emergence of Communalism in North India,* Berkeley, 1989, pp. 148-76; Freitag, 'Sacred Symbol', p. 606.
[115] Freitag, *Collective Action*, pp. 163-5.
[116] Pandey, *Construction,* p. 180.
[117] Peter van der Veer, *Religious Nationalism: Hindus and Muslims in India,* Berkeley, 1998 [1994], pp. 65-91.
[118] Shraddhanand, *Hindu Sangathan,* p. 107.
[119] AICC Papers, File No. 12/1922, pp. 29-31, NMML; McLane, *Indian Nationalism*, pp. 280, 404-5; Sumit Sarkar, *Modern India 1885-1947*, Delhi, 1989 [1983], p. 60.
[120] Gail Minault, *The Khilafat Movement: Religious Symbolism and Political Mobilization in India*, New Delhi, 1999, pp. 121-47.
[121] Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 20, p. 192.
[122] Gandhi's 'Speech at Public Meeting, Vadtal', 6 December 1921: Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 19, p. 254. The Muslim League, at its 1919 meeting, passed a resolution recommending the substitution of 'the sacrifice of other animals in place of cows'. Francis Robinson, *Separatism Among Indian Muslims: The Politics of the United Provinces' Muslims, 1860-1923,* London, 1974, p. 299;

protection should not be made a condition of Hindu-Muslim unity, and that the Hindus could not expect the Muslims to give up what was enjoined by Islam.[123] For the Mahasabha, the cow had emerged as a symbol of Hindu unity in its drive to promote a specifically *sangathanist* form of nationalism through the defence of traditional Hindu religious practices against Islam and Christianity in India.[124]

In the early 1920s, the Hindu Mahasabha focused chiefly on the colonial state's failure to respond to the Hindu demands for cow protection in India. At the Banaras session in October 1921, the Mahasabha criticised the government for not bringing in legislation for the prevention of cow slaughter, demanding the import of beef for the army in order to end slaughter in the country.[125] At the Gaya session held under the leadership of Madan Mohan Malaviya in 1922, it launched an appeal against the 'slaughter of cows for the military and the export of beef to other countries', resolving on non-cooperation against British rule until cow slaughter ended in the country.[126] The propaganda of *sangathanists* against the 'destruction of cattle' highlighted the magnitude of the government's 'cruelty'.[127] Lala Sukhbir Sinha, leader of the UP Hindu Sabha, stated in April 1921: 'There are 70,000 British troops in India and 7,000 tons of beef are supplied to them in one year.'[128] The colonial rule was viewed as a threat to the 'stability and natural order' of Hindu society.[129] The Brahmanical ideals and popular Hindu associations with vegetarianism were evoked to explain the 'decadence' of British rule, which had perpetrated 'meat-eating and forms of consumption' in the country.[130] Overwhelmingly, though, the cow imagery proved important in mobilising the Hindu community in the context of slaughter in which the state was held to be complicit in India.[131]

By the mid-1920s, the Hindu Mahasabha had imparted a definite Hindu nationalistic meaning to the cow symbol, making a departure from its apparent anti-British hostility. It incorporated cow protection, a resistance to the accretion of non-Hindu beliefs and practices, in its *sangathanist* discourse – which was characterised by an anti-Muslim hostility and antagonism. The Muslims sacrificed cows during Bakr-Id festival, even though it is disputed whether cow sacrifice was essential to the Muslim religious ritual in the country.[132] Cow slaughter was emphasised as an outcome of the 'evil practices' of the Muslims; and the Hindu religion as well as culture was

---

A.M. Zaidi [ed.], *Evolution of Muslim Political Thought in India, Vol. II: Sectarian Nationalism and Khilafat*, New Delhi, 1975, p. 217.

[123] *Al Bureed* [Kanpur, bi-weekly, editor: Fazl Hasan, Shaikh, 43, cir: 1,050 copies], 7 June 1922, IOR: L/R/5/97, File No. 5, 1922, p. 3; *Oudh Akhbar* [Lucknow, daily, editor: Naubat Rai, Kayasth, 42, cir: 500 copies], 13 July 1922, IOR L/R/5/97, File No. 5, 1922, p. 3, IOL.

[124] McLane, *Indian Nationalism*, pp. 275, 280, 282-4.

[125] *Oudh Akhbar*, 11 November 1921, IOR: L/R/5/96, File No. 47, 1921, p. 482, IOL.

[126] M.M. Malaviya's presidential address to All-India Mahasabha's Gaya session, 30 December 1922: cited in D.D. Pattanaik, *Hindu nationalism in India*, Vol. 3, New Delhi, 1998, p. 125.

[127] Speech of Anand Prakash, 14 April 1921, 'Anti cow-killing movement in UP', 1920, GAD Box 138 File No. 214/1921, UPSA.

[128] Speech of Lala Sukhbir Sinha, 10 April1921: 'Anti cow-killing movement in UP', 1920, GAD Box 138File 214/1921, UPSA.

[129] Therese O'Toole, 'Secularising the Sacred Cow: The Relationship between Religious Reform and Hindu Nationalism', in Antony Copley [ed.], *Hinduism in Public and Private: Reform, Hindutva, Gender, and Sampraday*, New Delhi, 2003, pp. 89-90.

[130] *Pratap* [Kanpur, weekly, editor: G.S. Vidyarthi], 4 December 1920, IOR L/R/5/95, File No. 50, 1920, p. 487, IOL.

[131] Gould, *Hindu Nationalism*, p. 79.

[132] Robinson, *Separatism Among Indian Muslims*, p. 285.

seen to be 'vitiated not only by the British but by the Muslims through cow-slaughter' in India.[133] The Muslims, it was claimed, had not only increased the suffering of the Hindus, but dispossessed them of their chief wealth, the cow. Cow slaughter began with the coming of the 'foreign invaders [Muslims] ... They took to various types of barbarism such as conversion, demolishing [of] our temples and ... cow-slaughter.'[134] Pandit Lekh Ram, an Arya Samajist, stated: 'Islam indulged in *jihad* [holy war], Hindus were converted to Islam forcibly, temples demolished, and cows slaughtered.'[135] In view of the wide prevalence of ritual slaughter in north India, *sangathan*ists targeted Islam, urging the Hindus to protect the cow from the 'threat of Muslims', the 'enemy of the nation'.

Historically, the cow protection propaganda had proved effective in the mobilisation of the large sections of the Hindu community against the Muslims in the UP during the 1910s and 1920s.[136] The cow protection campaigns were particularly influenced by the anti-Muslim sentiments as evident in the village campaigns of the gaurakshini sabhas in the province.[137] There was a build-up of anti-Muslim tension over cow slaughter in many places in 1915 and 1916 in the eastern UP.[138] Before the outbreak of the riots in Shahabad, Bihar, in 1917, the gaurakshini sabhas had distributed *patia*s [chain letters] in the villages by urging the Hindus to take direct action against the Muslims, which often culminated in physical attacks on the Muslims and their property. [139] In Rasra tahsil of Gorakhpur district, UP, the Muslims 'did not observe Muharram' in 1918 due to the 'aggressive attitude' of the Hindus over cow-slaughter.[140] A serious riot broke out at Kattarpur village, Hardwar, during Bakr-Id in September 1918 over the issue of cow sacrifice; and the 'burnt corpses of 30 Muslim males, 10 females and 7 children [i.e., 47 in all]' were discovered in the village after the violence.[141] In the late 1920s, it was a regular occurrence, especially during Bakr-Id, for riots to flare up in the UP.[142] In 1926 there were four separate riots over cow slaughter in Allahabad, Fatehpur and Barabanki districts of the UP.[143] The cow defiled those Muslims who believed in the necessity of cow sacrifice during Bakr-Id.[144] To prevent cow sacrifice at Bakr Id, the Muslims were subjected to boycott and compelled by Hindu groups to sign agreements *[ikrarnamas]* promising

---

[133] Pattanaik, *Hindu Nationalism,* Vol. 3, p. 125.
[134] Golwalkar, *Bunch of Thoughts*, p. 648.
[135] Lekh Ram, *A Treatise on Waging War, or the Foundation of Muhammedan Religion,* Lahore, 1892,cited in O'Toole, 'Secularizing the Sacred Cow', p. 92.
[136] Gyanendra Pandey, *The Construction of Communalism in Colonial North India*, New Delhi, 2006 [1990], p. 200.
[137] Home Poll., *Proceedings of the Home Department*, Political A, 13 December 1913, Nos. 1-4, p. 43; Home Poll., File No. B 88-91 and B 78, December 1912; Home Poll., File No. A 1-4, December 1913, NAI.
[138] *Abhyudaya*, 4 February 1915, IOR L/R/5/90, File No. 6, 1915, p. 123, IOL; 'Not on the Anti Cow Killing Agitation in the UP, 1913-16', Home Poll. D, November 1916, p. 52, NAI.
[139] '*Information about communal riots during last 10-15 years*', IOR: L/P&J/7/132, 1917, pp. 43-61, IOL; Peter Robb, '*10 Officilas* and non-Officials as Leaders in Popular Agitations: Shahabad 1917 and other Conspiracies', in B.N. Pandey [ed.], *Leadership in South Asia*, New Delhi, 1977, pp. 195-7.
[140] *Mashriq*, Gorakhpur, 28 November 1918, IOR: I/R/5/94, File No. 1918, 49, p. 712, IOL.
[141] *Al-Khalil*, Bijnor, 1 October 1918, IOR: L/R/5/94, File No. 41, 1918, p. 624, IOL.
[142] *The Leader,* 23 August 1924, IOR: L/R/5/98, File No. 33, 1924, p.3; *Indian Daily Telegraph*, 23 August 1924, IOR: L/R/5/98, File No. 32, 1924, p. 3, IOL.
[143] 'Statement of Communal Riots in the UP, 1922-1927', IOR L/P&J/6/1890, IOL.
[144] Home Poll. File No. B 88-91, November-December 1912, NAI.

not to sacrifice cows in the towns of the UP.[145] A form of social and physical coercion was deployed against Hindus who sold cattle to the Muslims.[146] In Gorakhpur the Naths, Banjaras and especially Chamars [the untouchables] were targeted.[147] A language of 'morality, purity, civilisation, and religion' was deployed and the 'demonic' character of the Muslim butcher highlighted. In almost all the riots in the UP, an anti-Muslim identification was a marked feature, even though the rifts between the Hindus and the Muslims were often healed after the outbreaks of violence in the province.[148]

In *sangathani*st discourse, the cow was linked to the building of a strong nation – a nation of Hindu men who had grown 'weak and poor' for lack of milk in India.[149] The life-giving, pure quality of cow milk was associated with the 'purity and strength' of the nation.[150] The decline in the physical strength of the Hindus and an increase in child mortality were linked to the decline of cows in the country. The 'indiscriminate slaughter' of cows was interpreted as a 'grave injury' caused to agriculture and national health.[151] In appeals to ban cow-killing in towns like Mathura and Ayodhya, religious and emotional arguments were extensively deployed. Mathura was seen as the birth-place of Krishna, the 'keeper and protector of cows'. Kriparam Mishra, general secretary of the Garhwal Radha-Krishna Gaushala, Mathura, stated: 'Today our mother cow is being slain by the infidels in innumerable numbers ... Our helplessness, mental weakness and physical impotency *[sic]* is explicitly telling us that among the many reasons for such changes, the main one is the decline of cow wealth.'[152] *Sangathani*sts defended cow protection as a 'powerful factor' in creating the 'physical development and strength of the Hindu community' in India.[153] Bhai Parmanand insisted that cow protection should be promoted for the 'greater strength and welfare' of a 'Hindu nation'; and K.B. Hedgewar fiercely opposed any harm to the cow, which was needed for the 'well-being of India' as a nation.[154] In *sangathani*st belief, the cow's utility rested in producing brave and strong men who could build and defend a strong nation; and the cow – which gave sanctity to family, community and the nation – was turned into the symbol of a 'strong Hindu nation'.[155]

In *sangathani*st narrative, the crucial theme was the metaphor of the 'sacred cow' – which was synonymous with Hindu society and the Indian nation. The degree to which the sacredness of the cow was affirmed signified at once a judgment of the moral character of the state as well as the stability of Hindu society in India. The cow

---

[145] *Anand*, 10 July 1926, IOR: L/R/5/98, File No. 27, 1926, p.3, IOL.
[146] McLane, *Indian Nationalism*, p. 313; Pandey, *Construction*, p. 262.
[147] Home Public A 210-213, December 1893, NAI; 'Note [by Hoey] on the Cow-protection Agitation in the Gorakhpur District', IOR, L/P&J/6/365, File 55 for 1894, pp. 2-4, IOL.
[148] Pandey, 'Rallying Around the Cow', p.
[149] Speech of Anand Prakash, 14 April 1921, 'Anti cow-killing movement in UP', 1920, GAD Box 138 File 214/1921, UPSA.
[150] 'Anti cow-killing movement in UP', GAD Box 138 File No. 214/1921, UPSA.
[151] *Pratap*, Kanpur, 14 January 1918, IOR L/R/5/94, p. 59, IOL; Pandey, *Construction*, p. 185.
[152] Home Poll., File No. A 71-73, January 1912; File No. B 86-104, February 1912; File No. B 7-13, May 1912, NAI.
[153] Swami Shraddhanand, *Hindu Sangathan*, n.p., 1926, p. 138.
[154] Pattanaik, *Hindu Nationalism*, Vol. 3, p. 125.
[155] Achalram Maharaj, *Hindu Dharma Rahasya*, Agra, 1939, 2nd edn, p. 255; C.A. Bayly, *Origins of Nationality in South Asia: Patriotism and Ethical Government in the Making of Modern India*, New Delhi, 2001, p.115.

became the mother of a 'Hindu nation'.[156] The body of the cow was invested with the divine; and she herself became a 'proto-nation'. [157] The cow's body was viewed as more sacred than the real – the 'physical, birth-giving mother'.[158] The cow's sacredness meant 'inviolability, non-slaughterability'; and the Aryan race was called upon to protect her in India.[159] The emotional appeal of the cow symbol turned cow-killing into a 'matricide'.[160] The sacred cow was associated with Hindu patriarchy and conceptions of the female body. The sacred object to be recuperated and protected was a feminine figure – the cow, the abducted Hindu woman, and the motherland.[161] In *sangathanist* campaigns, the cow became a symbol of the fragility and vulnerability of the Hindu community – a notion that was linked to the fears about the 'strength and integrity' of the Hindus in a conflict with the Muslims in India.

Conclusion

In the early twentieth century, Nagari and the cow emerged as the rallying symbols in the formation and articulation of Hindu nationalist ideology in India. The Nagari campaign began first as a movement to replace the Persian script with Hindi in the courts and administration of the UP in the late nineteenth century.[162] The Hindu Mahasabha adopted the Nagari movement, which was started by Hindi intellectuals and fostered by Hindi institutions and the Arya Samaj, as an issue of the identity and cultural self-assertion of the Hindu community: it centred its attack on Urdu.[163] The strong support for Nagari as well as the attack on Urdu's predominance became an important element of *sangathanist* narrative, strengthening the Mahasabha's drive for the creation of a self-conscious 'Hindu nation' in India. Hindi was projected as the language of the national and cultural descendants of the ancient Hindus and the mother tongue of the masses of the country with an Aryan ancestry.[164] Urdu, on the contrary, was seen as a symbol of the 'dominance of the Muslim elite' and an instrument of the preservation of 'Muslim tyranny' in India. *Sangathanists* favoured an 'independent progress' of Hindi, insisting on its cultural separateness from the Perso-Urdu tradition. By the late 1920s, the *sangathanist* campaign had helped to accelerate the transformation of Hindi from a spoken language into a dialect of political and educational communication, more so with Congress nationalist support: it dealt a blow to the dominance of Urdu writing in the UP.[165]

---

[156] 'Report on Azamgarh', by H.E.L.P. Dupernex, Officiating Magistrate of Azamgarh, to Commissioner, Gorakhpur Division, 1894, IOR: L/P&J/6/365, File No. 55, 1894, p. 9

[157] Christopher Pinney, 'Indian Magical Realism: Notes on Popular Visual Culture', in Gautam Bhadra, Gyan Prakash and Susie Tharu [eds.], *Subaltern Studies X: Writings on South Asian History and Society*, Delhi, 1999, pp. 221-4, 230-33.

[158] Poem on the cover of *Gaudharma Prakash*, 1, 5, December 1886; Home Poll., File No. A 71-73, January 1912, NAI.

[159] *Home Poll 71-73, January 1912, A, NAI.*

[160] *Dinkar Prakash,* June 1888, IOR L/P&J/365, File No. 84, 1894, p. 419; Home Public., File No. A 210-213, Dec. 1893, NAI.

[161] Charu Gupta, 'The Icon of Mother in Late Colonial North India: "Bharat Mata", "Matri Bhasha" and "Gau Mata"', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 24 November 2001, pp. 2261-5.

[162] Report by M. Kempson, director of public instruction, NWP, 12 February 1870. IOR L/P&J/V/23/129, 1870, p. 31, IOL.

[163] Brass, *Language, Religion,* p. 159.

[164] Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan*, pp. 108-9.

[165] *Sammelan Patrika*, V, 2, October-November 1917. IOR L/R/5/99, p. 41, IOL.

The Hindu Mahasabha incorporated in its *sangathani*st discourse the long-existing movement for cow protection, which had been launched by the Arya Samaj in the late nineteenth century in India.[166] In the 1920s, the cow became a key theme in the Mahasabha's programme for community mobilisation in avowed hostility against the Muslims in the UP.[167] The struggle to restore the sanctity of the cow and the linking of cow protection to the strength and integrity of the nation were central to *sangathani*st discourse on the creation of a 'Hindu nation'.[168] The cow emerged as a metaphor for a strong 'Hindu nation', helping to homogenise Hindu society in a conflict with the Muslims. The Mahasabha represented the cow as the 'mother of a Hindu nation' -- targeting the Muslims more intensely than the British in its campaigns in the UP during the 1920s and 1930s.

[166] *Pratap*, Kanpur, 14 January 1918, IOR: L/R/5/94, 1918, p. 59, IOL; Jones, *Arya Dharm*, pp. 51-3.
[167] *Bhavishya*, Allahabad, 7 August 1920, IOR L/R/5/95, File No. 33, 1920, p. 262, IOL.
[168] All-India Congress Committee Papers, File No. 1/1919, Pt II, p. 519, NMML.

PART III

Hindu Nation

10

Hindu Mahasabha and Congress Conflict

In early twentieth-century India, the notion that secular nationalism and Hindu nationalism formed two distinct ideologies had little meaning, as it was difficult to define 'secular' in functional terms. The boundaries between a secular imagination of the nation and a more sectarian vision of it as constituted by religious communities were blurred and overlapping. In a political context dominated by Hindus, writes Richard Gordon, there was little distinction between a 'secular political association' and an involvement in 'religious or caste organisations' in north India.[1] A simultaneous participation in a secular organisation and a religious body was possible because of the communitarian-nationalist perspective of Indian politics in the early phase of British rule. The Indian National Congress at the local level was indistinguishable from the movement for the 'protection of cattle' or the 'propaganda of Hinduism', even though this may have been contrary to its secular protestations.[2] Political leaders could combine Congress membership with sectarian associations or religious organisations by working at multiple levels – town, district, and province – across the religious and secular divides in the country.[3] The Hindu Mahasabha's social roots were drawn largely from the groups that had supported the Congress in the United Provinces. Its political distinction from the Congress had been quite vague since its emergence in 1915, as both organisations were not seen to be antagonistic to each other in the province. Hindu leaders occupied both 'secular' and 'Hindu' positions in a close proximity, performing political functions in the Congress and cultural and social work in the Mahasabha. However, by the early 1920s Hindu and Muslim identity politics had become the chief basis of most Indian groups – in part a result of the British policy of 'divide and rule' and the resultant riots that occurred in north India in the post-Non-cooperation period.[4] There was a deliberate manipulation of religious symbols by the Hindu and Muslim leaders and publicists, resulting in the development of sectarian consciousness and propaganda.[5] In ideological terms, the Mahasabha contested the Congress's secular idiom in politics and developed a Hindu interpretation of nationalism in India. It began to imagine of a homogenous, unified 'Hindu nation', claiming that the spirit of India was Hindu'.[6] It ended its association with the Congress and became a political party in the late 1930s. This chapter revisits the extent and limitations of the Mahasabha's relations with the Congress as well as their breakdown, focusing on its Hindu politics and rhetoric in the UP.

---

[1] R.Gordon, 'The Hindu Mahasabha and the Indian National Congress, 1915 to 1926', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 9,1975, p. 151.
[2] C.A. Bayly, *The Local Roots of Indian Politics: Allahabad 1880-1920*, Oxford, 1975, p. 132.
[3] William Gould, *Hindu Nationalism and the Language of Politics in Late Colonial India*, Cambridge, 2004, p. 161.
[4] Gyanendra Pandey, *The Construction of Communalism in Colonial North India*, New Delhi, 2006 [1990], pp. 210, 235.
[5] David Page, *Prelude to Partition: The Indian Muslims and the Imperial System of Control, 1920-1932*, Delhi, 1982, pp. 73-84.
[6] K.L. Tuteja, 'The Punjab Hindu Sabha and Communal Politics, 1906-1923', in Indu Banga [ed.], *Five Punjab Centuries*, New Delhi, 1997, p. 133.

I. Malaviya's 'Hindu' Congress

The early Hindu Mahasabha was not a political party in its own right, but decisively tied to its links with the Congress and often described as a 'pressure group' within the latter.[7] Its relationship with the Congress was characterised by a vast complexity in the United Provinces. There were three political groupings in the UP: the advanced 'secular' group controlled by Motilal Nehru, the centre 'Hindu' party led by Madan Mohan Malaviya, and the moderates who had quit the Congress in 1918 to form the Liberal Party. The UP Congress was in effect dominated by two rival factions -- Nehru's 'secular' group and Malaviya's 'Hindu wing' -- in the province throughout the 1920s and early 1930s.[8]

M.M. Malaviya, a Congressman since 1886, became president of the all-India Congress in 1909 and 1918 and simultaneously established his leadership of the Hindu Mahasabha. He was the most influential leader of the Mahasabha in this period, its president in the period 1922-1924, and a leading force to revive it in the 1920s. The Mahasabha's organisational growth and development followed typically the path of Malaviya's constitutional politics, which had focused on petitioning the government for reforms in India. During the course of the Congress's Non-co-operation, Malaviya had become vocal in opposition to the movement and lost control of the UP Congress. He found himself at odds with the leadership of the UP Congress, controlled by Motilal Nehru.[9] In political conflict with Non-cooperation, most of Malaviya's 'Hindu wing' entered the UP Legislative Counil in the November-December 1920 elections as independents or in association with the Liberal Party, as the Congress had boycotted the elections.[10] Malaviya's followers -- Gauri Shankar Misra, Siva Prasad Gupta, Iqbal Narayan Gurtu, H.N. Kunzru, and Iswar Saran -- used the Mahasabha as a factional tool against Motilal Nehru's faction, their main rivals in the UP Congress Committee, in a bid to reassert the 'Hindu wing's' authority over the Congress organisation.[11]

In the 1920s, Motilal Nehru did not have the local support and influential connections that Malaviya had built up through his Hindi work, Seva Samitis, and Kisan Sabhas in the UP. However, he asserted his decisive authority over the UP Congress Committee [UPCC].[12] In the post-Non-cooperation period, Nehru organised new Kisan Sabhas, took active part in political agitations and went to jail; and his stature grew enormously among the nationalist circles in the UP. In 1923 with the Non-cooperation movement at an end, Nehru and C.R. Das – the 'pro-changers' -- launched the Swaraj Party which was able to use both the organisation and prestige of the Congress in the anti-British agitations in north India. In contrast to the Gandian boycott of the councils,

---

[7] Gordon, 'Hindu Mahasabha', pp. 145-203.
[8] Gordon, 'Hindu Mahasabha', pp. 180-91.
[9] *The Leader,* 4 February 1922, p. 5, Microfilm, NMML; .Christophe Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement and Indian Politics, 1925 to the 1990s: Strategies of Identity-building, Implantation and Mobilisation*, London, 1996, p.33.
[10] Rampal Singh, Sukhbir Sinha, and Moti Chand Gupta were elected to the central Council of States; Iswar Saran, Girdhari Lal Agarwala, Radha Kishen Das, Bishambhar Nath, Mahadeo Prasad, Suraj Baksh Singh, and Sankata Prasad Bajpai to the central Legislative Assembly; and K.K. Malaviya, H.N. Kunzru, Iqbal Narayan Gurtu, and Anand Swarup to the UP Council.
[11] *The Leader*, 27 August 1923, p. 4, Microfilm, NMML.
[12] Home Poll, D, August 1918, 28, NAI.

the Swaraj Party sought elections and attempted to overthrow the Montford constitution through non-coperation from within the councils. It refused to accept official office and resolved to vote down government measures, especially the finance bills, as part of its demand for *swaraj* [freedom]. The party's immediate object was to secure the right to frame a dominion constitution for India. After Das's death in 1925, Nehru had become the undisputed leader of the Swaraj Party; and the adoption of the party's programme by the Congress added to his influence in north India.

In the UP Congress, Motilal Nehru faced a challenge to his leadership of the party. At the Kanpur Congress in December 1925, Nehru proposed a resolution, reaffirming the faith of the Congress in civil disobedience in India. The resolution insisted on the non-acceptance of office as the Congress's programme, calling for the withdrawal of Swarajists from the legislatures if the national demand of *swaraj* had not been met by February 1926. Nehru's main agenda, the non-acceptance of office, was dictated by his concern to preserve a strong national alliance against the British. However, Malaviya proposed an amendment, urging the Congress to work the reforms to the best possible advantage and deleting all reference to civil disobedience in the country. He did not approve of the alliance with the Khilafatists and was no longer willing to support the Muslim issues in the nationalist struggle. However, Nehru won support over Malaviya at the Kanpur Congress.[13] The political battle continued to be fought by the Nehru and Malaviya factions for the control of the UP Congress in the entire decade of the 1920s.

In the elections to the Legislative Councils and the central legislature in 1926, the main arena of political campaign was dominated by the Nehru and Malaviya groups in north India. The Hindu Mahasabha held its ninth session in Delhi on 13 March 1926: one important issue before the session was the question of setting up candidates in the elections. Motilal Nehru, in an attempt to capture the UP Hindu Sabha, declared in a statement read in his absence at the Mahasabha's session that the Congress was and had always been, except during the brief period of Non-cooperation, predominantly a Hindu organisation. 'The true remedy,' he suggested, 'lies in the Hindu Sabha as a body joining the Indian National Congress and thereby influencing the whole programme of work in the Councils.'[14] He encouraged the Mahasabhaites to remain in the Congress in the hope of securing a victory for its anti-British alliance based on civil disobedience in India.[15] The Mahasabha rejected Nehru's offer, however, reaffirming its decision to set up candidates in the elections in the UP and at the national level where necessary. A large segment of the party from the Punjab led by Bhai Parmanand and Rajendra Nath, the Mahasabha's working president, was adamant that the organisation should field candidates in the elections in opposition to the Congress. The Congress, they argued, had brought the Hindu community to the 'brink of a ruin' by sacrificing Hindu interests in pursuit of 'Hindu-Muslim unity'. In his presidential address to

---

[13] N.N. Mitra [ed.], *Indian Annual Register,* Vol. II, 1925, July-December, pp. 331-40.
[14] *The Leader,* 17 March 1926, p. 6, Microfilm, NMML.
[15] Motilal Nehru's letter to Dev Ratan Sharma, dated 22 May 1926, File No. 24/1926, AICC Papers, NMML.

the Delhi session, Narendra Nath called for a vigorous assertion of 'Hindu interests' in the country. He declared: 'We cannot refrain from devoting serious thought to the consideration of those [Hindu] interests simply out of fear that such a course ... may delay the achievement of the goal of Swaraj.'[16] In a bitter tirade against the Congress, Bhai Parmamanand called on the Hindus to suspend the 'struggle for *swaraj* and all other activities' for five years in order to strengthen the communal organisation of the Hindus in India. 'Let us protect our rights and stand against ... the National Congress,' he insisted.[17] A compromise was finally reached: the Mahasabha decided not to participate in the elections as a political party but to oppose the candidates who were 'inimical to Hindu interests'. A resolution was passed, urging the Hindus to oppose candidates who were likely to 'prejudice Hindu interests' in the elections planned in India for November 1926.[18] The Mahasabha did not wish to become an explicitly political organisation at this juncture – particularly before the start of the 1926 election campaign in north India.

Nonetheless, the Hindu Mahasabha had eventually made a radical departure from its non-political role and decided to nominate candidates on its own behalf across north India. The party's Working Committee – comprising M.M. Malaviya, Deva Ratan Sharma, Rampal Singh, Narendra Nath, Lala Ram Saran Das, and Neki Ram Sharma -- decided on 10 May 1926 to undertake the election work and authorised the provincial Hindu Sabhas to to take all proper steps 'which included the running of its own candidates, where necessary, to safeguard Hindu interests' in the country. The provincial Hindu Sabhas could nominate candidates in consultation with the Reforms Committee of the Mahasabha, or support the candidates of other parties whom they endorsed; and the Mahasabha's Working Committee ultimately assumed control of the election work in entire north India.[19] In the UP, the Malaviya group supported a move by the provincial Hindu Sabhas to set up 'election boards' in August 1926. These boards would not only nominate their own candidates but support candidates nominated by others who were prepared to sign the Hindu Mahasabha's pledge binding them to abide by the decision of either the majority of Hindu members in the legislature, or the Hindu Sabhas. The Agra Provincial Hindu Sabha formed an election board at its annual conference in Allahabad on 1 August 1926; and a similar board was established by the Oudh Provincial Hindu Sabha.[20] Krishna Kant Malaviya, nephew of Malaviya and his right-hand man in the election campaign, issued a notice to all the candidates seeking election

---

[16] I. Prakash, *A Review of the History and Work of the Hindu Mahasabha and the Hindu Sangathan Movement*, Delhi, 1952, p.21.
[17] N.N. Mitra [ed.], *Indian Annual Register*, 1926, Vol. 1, Calcutta, 1927, p. 401; Jayakar Papers, File 435, Item 141, NMML.
[18] B. Cleghorn, 'Religion and Politics: The Leadership of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha --Punjab and Maharashtra, 1920-1939', in B.N. Pandey [ed.], *Leadership in South Asia*, New Delhi, 1977, p. 403.
[19] The Mahasabha Reforms Committee comprised: Punjab – Narendra Nath and Lajpat Rai; UP – Rampal Singh, C.Y. Chintamani, and Sukhbir Sinha; Bihar – Rajendra Prasad, Dwarka Nath, and Kumar Ganganand Sinha; Bengal – Yatindra Nath Chaudhuri and Braj Kishore Chaudhrui; CP – M.S. Aney and B.S. Moonje; Maharashtra – N.C. Kelkar and Karandikar; Madras – Satyamurthi; Andhra – T. Prakasam; Bombay – M.R. Jayakar and D.V. Belvi; Gujarat – Dr S.B. Mehta; Sind – Jairamdas. *The Leader*, 14 May 1926, p. 6; 15 May 1926, p. 7, Microfilm, NMML; AICC Papers, File F24 of 1926, NMML.
[20] The Agra Hindu Sabha election board comprised: Rampal Singh, M.M. Malaviya, C.Y. Chintamani, Mukat Behari Lal Bhargava, Durga Narayan Singh, K.K. Malaviya, Narmada Prasad Singh, Bhagwat Sahai Bedar, and Raghava Das. The Oudh Hindu Sabha election board included, among others: Raja Prithvipal Singh, Hari Krishna Dhaon, Harish Chandra Bajpai, Sankat Prasad Bajpai, and Ram Charan Vidyarthi. *The Leader*, 11 August 1926, p. 5; 25 August 1926, p. 4, Microfilm, NMML.

with Mahasabha support in the UP to submit their names and statements of political opinions, which were to be forwarded to the election boards across the province.[21] The Mahasabha as an organisation had launched itself more openly and fully into the elections, with its political role becoming irreversible; and its avowed policy was to prepare the Hindu electorate to vote for Hindu *sangathan*ists who pledged to safeguard 'Hindu interests' in India.

The 1926 elections precipitated a political realignment against the Congress in north India. The old Congressmen in the leadership of the Hindu Mahasabha – M.M. Malaviya, Lajpat Rai and the Tilakites – were all united in a coalition against the Congress-Swaraj Party.[22] The Mahasabha's entry into the electoral arena came at a time when the Congress had officially passed into the control of the Swaraj Party. The All-India Congress Committee [AICC], at its Patna session in late March 1926, formally entrusted the Swaraj Party with the responsibility of conducting the elections on behalf of the Congress in India.[23] Malaviya launched the Independent Congress Party [ICP] in association with Lajpat Rai in September 1926 to further the aims of the radical Hindu *sangathan.*[24] The ICP adopted a policy of responsive co-operation with the government and aimed to contest the provincial and central assembly elections against the Congress-Swaraj Party controlled by Motilal Nehru. Its programme included the working of the reforms, the acceptance of office, and freedom to vote on sectarian issues in the central legislature. The ICP was the electoral front of the Hindu Mahasabha, carrying the representation of commercial and landed notables in north India. An election board -- comprising Malaviya, Narendra Nath, and Lajpat Rai -- was set up to select candidates for the provincial councils and the central assembly in consultation with the Hindu Sabhas of the UP, the Punjab, Bihar, and the Central Provinces [CP] - Hindustani. Among the ICP candidates in the UP were big landlords like Rai Rajeshwar Bali, Raja Durga Narain Singh of Tirwa, Raja Vishwanath Singh of Tiloi, and Raja Raghuraj Singh of Mankapur, commercial magnates like Lala Prag Narayan of Agra, Jwala Prasad Jigyasu of Aligarh, Chunnilal Garg of Kanpur, and Calcutta business magnate G.D. Birla, the party's chief financier.[25] The leading members of the ICP were mostly Mahasabhaites, and the executive committees of the ICP and the Hindu Sabhas were largely identical.[26] The Mahasabha gave its formal support to the ICP and its *sangathan* candidates in the elections due in north India in late 1926.

In the UP, the protection of 'Hindu interests' dominated the 1926 elections, which were marked by direct appeals to sectarian issues spearheaded by the revived Hindu Mahasabha. Hindu sectarian concerns and

---

[21] Letter of Krishna Kant Malaviya, Convenor of the Election Board, *The Leader,* 16 August 1926, p. 4, Microfilm, NMML.
[22] Motilal Nehru's letters to Jawaharlal Nehru, March-September 1926, Vol. XII; AICC G-57/ [IV], Pt. I/1926, NMML.
[23] Home Poll, File 112 of 1925, NAI; *Hindu,* 11 March 1926, p. 6, Microfilm, NMML.
[24] M.M. Malaviya launched the abortive Responsivist Cooperation Party, later named the Indian Nationalist Party, in March 1926. Its leaders were N.C. Kelkar, B.S. Moonje, and M.R. Jayakar. The party, an organised wing within the Congress, was a non-starter. *The Leader,* 27 March 1926, p. 3, Microfilm, NMML.
[25] The ICP president was Lajpat Rai, general secretary, Malaviya, joint secretaries, E. Raghavendra Rao [C.P. Hindustani] and Lala Ram Prasad [Bihar]. *The Leader,* 28 February, 1926, p. 7; 27 March 1926, p. 6; 7 April 1926, p. 7; 12 May 1926, p. 5; 28 August 1926, p. 4; 15 September 1926, p. 6, Microfilm, NMML; GI Home Poll., H2/X/1926: UP FR I November 1926.
[26] *The Leader,* 4 August 1926, p. 5, Microfilm, NMML; Gaya Prasad Singh's letter to A. Rangaswamy Iyengar, dated 1 October 1926, File G57[IV] of 1926, AICC Papers, NMML.

community issues became central to the campaign of Malaviya, who used the elections as a means of undermining Nehru's credibility and defeating the Swaraj Party in the UP.[27] A correspondent from Bijnor, UP, reported on 5 November 1926 that Malaviya and Bhai Parmanand were trying to 'create and fan the communal fire among the electorate' against the Swarajists in the province.[28] Motilal Nehru and his Swarajist colleagues launched the campaign with the clear avowal of a secular policy in India, arguing that the rights and interests of the Hindu and Muslim communities were identical, and that the Congress stood for complete freedom and protection of all the communities in matters of religion.[29] Sampurnanand, Swaraj Party candidate for Banaras, claimed that while the Mahasabha performed a vital role in the sphere of social and religious affairs, it had little reason to enter politics because the Congress would protect the interests of all – the Hindus and the Muslims.[30] The Swarajists strongly denounced the Mahasabha's involvement in the 1926 election campaign, attacking its role as 'sectarian' and a 'Hindu-centred politics' in north India.[31]

Nevertheless, the Swaraj Party was defeated in the elections and lost ground almost everyhere in north India, suffering such heavy losses that Motilal Nehru spoke of a 'disaster' and a 'veritable rout' and seriously considered 'retiring from politics'. 'Publicly,' Nehru stated, 'I was denounced as an anti-Hindu and pro-Mohammedan ...' 'I have been fully denounced as a beef-eater and destroyer of cows, an opponent of prohibition, of music before mosques ... I could only contradict this in public meetings but they permeated hamlets and villages which I could not reach.'[32] The sectarian propaganda of the 1920s as well as the outbreak of the riots took a heavy toll on the Swaraj Party's electoral chances in the UP, the Central Provinces, and the Bombay Presidency. In the UP, the Swarajists lost seats to the Independent Congress Party, winning only 16 seats in 1926 -- compared with 31 in 1923. Motilal Nehru was routed by Malaviya in Oudh. The ICP on the whole performed well in the elections, as the majority of the elected council members were those who had contested on the ticket of Hindu *sangathan*.[33] 'Swarajism', it was claimed, had become synonymous with the 'betrayal of just and legitimate Hindu interests' in the country.[34] The protection of 'Hindu interests' was the principal campaigning issue, which had worked against the Congress-Swarajist efforts to woo the Muslims in

---

[27] GI Home Poll., UP FR June-September 1926, 112/IV/1926, NAI. In the municipal elections of 1925, the Malaviya family had defeated Nehru's Swarajist alliance and resumed control of the Allahabad Municipal Board. Home Poll, 112/1925, UP Fortnightly Report I, September 1925, NAI.

[28] AICC Papers, File No. 21/ Part 2, 1926, NMML; Home Poll. 1926, File No. 26, NAI.

[29] Motilal Nehru's statement to press, 10 December 1926, 'Statements', Motilal Nehru Papers, NMML.

[30] Motilal Nehru's telegram to the manager, *Aj*, Benares, 26 November 1926, p. 5; File No. 10/1926, AICC Papers, NMML.

[31] Motilal Nehru's telegram to Rangaswami Iyengar, dated 5 September 1926, File No. G 57 [IV]/1926, AICC Papers, NMML; Motilal Nehru's letter to Raja Indrajit Pratab Bahadur Sahai, dated 18 September 1926, File 10 of 1926, AICC Papers; Motilal Nehru's letter to Sri Prakasa, dated 15 February 1927, Sri Prakasa Papers, NMML.

[32] *Motilal Nehru's letter to Jawaharlal, dated 2 December 1926, cited in Jawaharlal Nehru, A Bunch of Old Letters, London, 1960,* rept. New Delhi, 2005, pp. 49-50, 52.

[33] In the Punjab, the Swarajist Party lost six seats, only two of Nehru's nominees being elected compared with nine of Lajpat Rai's candidates. In the CP, from the strength of 35 in 1923, the Swarajist Party was reduced to 17 members in 1926. The Responsivists won nine seats and Malaviya's Independent Congress Party ten. Both these parties formed the government in the CP on 11 January 1927. Letter of Secretary, GI Home [Public], to Secretary, Public and Judicial Department, dated 20 January 1927, IOR L/P&J/6/267/1927, IOL.

[34] *The Leader*, 19 April 1926, p. 6, Microfilm, NMML.

north India. In the post-1926 period, Malaviya's 'Hindu wing' and Motilal Nehru's 'secular group' continued to compete for the capture of the UP Congress, which represented a coexistence of the rival streams of politics in the province.

II. Mahasabha and Congress Nexus

In the 1920s and 1930s, the Congress had maintained informal contacts and nexus, despite its ideological differences, with the Hindu Mahasabha in the towns and districts of north India. Several leaders connected with the Congress -- prominently Gokaran Nath Misra, Iqbal Narayn Gurtu, Hriday Nath Kunzru, Gauri Shankar Misra, Shivprasad Gupta, and Iswar Saran – had been involved in the Hindu Mahasabha movement in the UP. A majority of the incipient UP Hindu Sabha Committee members had been associated with the Congress: seven members attended the Congress session in Bombay in 1915.[35] On three occasions between December 1922 and December 1926, the Mahasabha had held its special sessions simultaneously at the same venue as the Congress. In August 1923, the Mahasabha was relaunched in Banaras by M.M. Malaviya; and the session was attended by prominent Congressmen -- Jawaharlal Nehru, Rajendra Prasad, Purushottam Das Tandon, Bhagwan Das, and Ghanshyam Das Birla.[36] In 1924 Malaviya presided over the Mahasabha's session held at the Congress venue in Belgaum, which was attended by Gandhi, Muhammad and Shaukat Ali, and Motilal Nehru.[37] In this period, it was possible and even encouraged by the Mahasabha for its members to be associated with the Congress in north India. Neki Ram Sharma, Hindu Mahasabha secretary, stated that the Mahasabha had not been created as a rival to the Congress, but to facilitate the 'establishment of *swaraj*' in the country.[38] Congress leaders retained less formal associations with the Mahasabha, believing that the Congress worked as the main political organisation, whereas the Mahasabha dealt with the social issues of Hindu society.[39] Sections of the Hindu Mahasabhaites had held dual membership, working for the protection of Hindu interests within the Congress in north India during the 1920s and 1930s.

At the national level, sections of the Hindu Mahasabha leaders had simultaneously become part of the Congress, utilising its affiliation to expand the Mahasabha in north India. A substantial number of old Congressmen had shifted to the Mahasabha in the UP, the Central Provinces, and Maharashtra by the 1920s and 1930s. Lajpat Rai, the Punjabi Congress 'extremist' leader, had presided over the Calcutta session of the Congress in September 1920, which proposed the boycott of the new councils as part of the Non-cooperation movement in the country. He subsequently worked together with M.M. Malaviya at the helm of the Mahasabha organisation, continuing his association with the party until his death in Lahore in 1928.[40] Swami Shraddhananda was an important *sangathan* leader associated with both the Congress and the Mahasabha in

---

[35] *Report of the Proceedings of the 30th Indian National Congress*, 1915, Bombay 1916, p. 10.
[36] *The Leader,* 22 August 1923, p. 3, Microfilm, NMML; Gordon, 'Hindu Mahasabha', p. 151-73.
[37] Craig Baxter, *The Jana Sangh: A Biography of an Indian Political Party*, Pennsylvania, 1969, p. 14.
[38] *The Tribune*, 24 July 1923, p. 6, Microfilm, NMML.
[39] The statement of Satyapal, Congress leader from the Punjab: *The Tribune,* 13 October 1926, p. 4, Microfilm, NMML.

the 1920s. K.B. Hedgewar, who became Mahasabha general secretary before founding the RSS in 1925, had first joined Congress politics and was elected to the Central Provinces Congress Committee as its joint secretary: he quit the Congress along with other Tilakites over its support for the Khilafat movement in 1920-21.[41] T. Prakasham, later Congress chief minister of Andhra, and Jairamdas Daulatram, Congress leader in Maharashtra, had been involved in the Mahasabha's activities and programmes durig its formative period. For the Congress old guard dissatisfied with Gandhi's leadership, the Mahasabha had evolved itself as an alternative platform to express an ideology of nationalism and regional loyalties steeped in Hindu idiom.[42] *Sangathan* as well as Hindu revivalist rhetoric in defence of Hindu society was closely identified with the Congress 'extremist' leader Bal Gangadhar Tilak's nationalist vision and deployed against the Gandhian Congress. The Congressmen who had been Tilak's close associates mostly took control of the Mahasabha in north India. The most prominent of the Tilakites were: B.S. Moonje, the leading figure in the Central Provinces Congress; M.S. Aney, Congress politician in Berar; N.C. Kelkar, the Swarajist legislator in Poona; and M.R. Jayakar, the Swarajist Party leader in Bombay.[43] The majority of the Tilakites – including L.B. Bhopatkar in Poona, Chandragupta Vedalankar, Ganpat Rai, and Indra Prakash -- had once been Congressmen before becoming the Mahasabha's hardliners. The Mahasabha served as a means of challenging the Gandhian Congress whose mass campaigns had displaced the Tilakites from the positions of prominence in north India. There had been a distinct opposition to Gandhi form the Hindu right due to his alliance with the Muslim elites during the Non-cooperation movement. Inevitably, several prominent Congress leaders became important personalities in the Mahasabha after the organisation had been re-launched in the early 1920s.

In the UP, the Congress's associations with the Hindu Mahasabha had persisted well into the late 1930s. There were a number of Congressmen influenced by the Mahasabha's nationalist rhetoric in the province. A strong advocacy of India's need to end Britsh rule was central to the Mahasabha and the Congress, both urging self-rule and the struggled for an 'undivided India'. However, the presence of the Muslims in the Congress worried the Mahasabha, which had held a more restrictive attitude towards them.[44] B.S. Moonje suggested that all the Mahasabhaites should join the Congress as 'a prophylactic against the Muslim contamination and influx' of the latter party.[45] In the UP, political activity in both the Congress and the Mahasabha was merely one aspect of 'public work' and an extension of the activities of interest groups and leaders.[46] Several members of the Congress were active in the Mahasabha and on the executive committees of the Hindu Sabhas in the province. The UP Congress group, headed by Raja Bahadur of Tiloi and Pandit Jyoti Shankar Dikshit, had retained its

---

[40] V.C. Joshi [ed.], *Lala Lajpat Rai: Writings and Speeches 1920-1928*, Vol. II, Delhi, 1966, p. 27.
[41] Narayan Hari Palkar, *Dr B.K. Hedgewar* [Translated from Marathi by Mrinalini Davale], Poona, 1964, pp. 79, 104.
[42] Nandini Gondhalekar, 'Indian Nationalism and "Hindu" Politics: Maharashtra and the Hindu Mahasabha, 1920-1948', Unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1999, p. 23; Prakash, *A Review*, pp. 54-5
[43] N.C. Kelkar presided over the Hindu Mahasabha's session in Jabbalpore in 1928; Cleghorn, 'Religion and Politics', p. 409.
[44] Henrik Berglund, *Hindu nationalism and Democracy*, Delhi, 2004, pp. 63-4.
[45] Gondhalekar, 'Indian Nationalism', p. 108.

loyalty to the Mahasabha till the early 1930s.[47] Conversely, the UP Hindu Sabha clique -- led by Raja Maheshwar Dayal Seth, J.P. Srivastava, and Krishna Gurtu Narain -- had proposed to set up an 'All-India Hindu League' to revive the Mahasabha's political activities in the province; but it also attempted to forge an alliance with the Congress and conducted a propaganda for the latter party in the province, a line that repeatedly brought it into conflict with the Mahasabha's central leadership.[48] Prominent members of the Mahasabha held responsible positions in Congress organisations and were permitted to join the Congress reception committees in Agra, Oudh, Aligarh, Badaun, and Bundelkhand, UP.[49] K.M. Ashraf, a Congress socialist, complained to the secretary of the UP Congress Committee that prominent Hindu Mahasabha members were allowed to occupy 'responsible positions' in the Congress in the UP.[50] However, the inability of the provincial Congress to overcome the Mahasabha cadres pointed to the presence of a strong Hindu ideological influence among the party ranks; and Congress radicalism in a way co-existed with the elements of Hindu politics across the UP in the 1920s and 1930s.

There was a strong Hindu Mahasabha association with the Hindu 'right wing' of the Congress in the UP. In Banaras city, the Swaraj Party, the Hindu Sabha and the Kshatriya Sabha were virtually the same organisation. 'Often the Secretary of the Kshatriya Sabha takes the chair at meetings of the Hindu Sabha.'[51] The Banaras Hindu Sabha kept an affiliation with Dharm Deo Shastri, a Congress leader.[52] Sri Prakash, a dominant figure in the Banaras Congress organisation, associated himself with Hindu *sangathan* in the early 1930s.[53] Purushottam Das Tandon, a patron of the Arya Samaj with an active involvement in Hindu volunteer organisations, was a supporter of the movements associated with Hindu revivalism, advocating Sanskritised Hindi in India.[54] Sampurnanand, the first Congress 'dictator' of Banaras, maintained close Hindu Sabha connections and was involved in the organisation of a Hindu Sabha meeting to mobilise support for Gandhi's harijan campaign in October 1932.[55] He showed admiration for the ideals of the Arya Samaj and persistently championed the causes of Hindi versus Urdu and Hindu social reform, depicting the Indian nation as an Aryan one -- faced with the threats of Islam and Christianity.[56] In Kanpur there had been a strong institutional overlap and affiliation between the city Hindu Sabha and the Congress by the early 1930s. In the city the Hindu Sabha's membership was drawn from urban middle-class educated supporters who were not only members of the Congress but

---

[46] Gould, *Hindu Nationalism*, pp. 67, 75.
[47] Home Poll, File 25 of 1923, NAI; Gould, Hindu Nationalism, p. 246.
[48] 'UP Hindu Sangathan Committee', 12 October 1940, All-India Hindu Mahasabha Papers, File No. P-13/1940, NMML.
[49] Gould, *Hindu Nationalism*, p. 228.
[50] K.M. Ashraf's letter to Mahavir Tyagi, dated 5 March 1938, AICC Papers, B-9, 1938, NMML.
[51] *The Leader*, 20 July 1925, p. 7, Microfilm, NMML.
[52] *Police Abstracts of Intelligence [PAI]*, Lucknow, UP, 4 March 1933.
[53] *The Leader*, Allahabad, 8 August 1923, p. 6, Microfilm, NMML.
[54] Gould, *Hindu Nationalism*, p. 271.
[55] Gould, *Hindu Nationalism*, pp. 178.
[56] *The Leader*, Allahabad, 23 October 1932, p. 6, Microfilm, NMML.

patrons of many religious and cultural movements.[57] In 1926 Dr Murarilal Rohatgi and other Congresss leaders of Kanpur city joined the local Hindu Sabha in an effort to gain control of it, even though they were critical of its ideology and objectives.[58] After the Kanpur riot in 1930, witness statements pointed to a covert relationship between the city Hindu Sabha and the local Congress bodies, leading to the Muslim League's charge that the Congress was 'under the thumb of the Hindu Maha Sabhaites' in the UP.[59] There were accusations in the Urdu press that local Congressmen had worked in alliance with the Hindu Mahasabha to oust the Muslims from the positions of power across the province. The organised 'legal attack' on the mosques in Kanpur district, the 'calculated harassment and impoverishment' of the Muslims in the UP towns, and the exclusion of the Muslims from power were termed 'deliberate and communally inspired' and linked to the Mahasabhaites.[60] In Allahabad, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, a Congress leader, was a protégé of Malaviya and a member of the UP Hindu Mahasabha committee.[61] In the city, Narmada Prasad Singh, a prominent Hindu Sabha leader and a general secretary of the Agra Hindu Sabha in 1929, was also a well-known Congressman, a member of the UP Congress Committee in 1925-26, and a leader of the Malaviya group in the Allahabad Congress in 1926 and 1927.[62] In many instances, the Hindu Sabhas and the Congress right-wing shared resources and personnel in the towns of the UP, with their active organisational overlap continuing well into the 1920s and 1930s.

However, an outright opposition to the Congress had developed within the Hindu Mahasabha organisation by the late 1920s.[63] B.S. Moonje initiated a more militant approach and rejected Congress politics during his presidentship of the Mahasabha in the period 1927-1933, largely withdrawing the organisation from the mass nationalist struggles launched by Gandhi. He argued: 'Due to the Congress mentality, a misguided tendency towards generosity ... has created obstacles in the path of Hindu life and progress ... Faced with the British bureaucracy's promotion of Muslims on the one hand, and with the Congress' conciliatory and yielding mentality on the other, the Hindu race is being strangled to death ...'[64] The radical Hindu Mahasabha started the process of establishing itself as a political party, competing with the Congress in the central legislature and provincial council elections in the late 1920s. Its overt militancy converged into a strong anti-Congress political opposition under the leadership of Bhai Parmanand, who succeeded B.S. Moonje as party president at the Ajmer session in October 1933.[65] In Parmanand's *sangathan* programme, India was to be a Hindu country with 'one language,

---

[57] Nandini Gooptu, *The Politics of the Urban Poor in Early Twentieth-Century India*, Cambridge, 2001, pp. 192-3.
[58] Gould, *Hindu Nationalism*, p. 192.
[59] 'Evidence of Zafarul Mulk', Commission of Inquiry Report on the Cawnpore Riot of 1931', 'Evidence', IOR L/P&J/7/75, 1931, p. 592, IOL.
[60] Testimony of Syed Zakir Ali, 4 May 1930, 'Evidence', IOR L/P&J/7/75, 1931, p.592, IOL; *Siyasat*, Lahore, 17 April 1931, cited in A. Jalal, *Self and Sovereignty: Individual and Community in South Asian Islam since 1850*, London, 2000, p. 344.
[61] G. Pandey, *The Ascendancy of the Congress in Uttar Pradesh, 1926-34: A Study in Imperfect Mobilization*, Delhi, 1978, p. 125.
[62] *Abhyudaya*, 23 November 1929, p. 5, Microfilm, NMML; Gould, *Hindu Nationalism*, p. 229.
[63] Jayakar Papers: File 436, Items 262, 264, 267 and 272, NMML.
[64] Cited in Joya Chatterji, *Bengal Divided: Hindu Communalism and Partition, 1932-1947*, Cambridge, 1994, p. 136.
[65] Indra Prakash, *Hindu Mahasabha: Its Contribution to Indian Politics*, New Delhi, 1966 [1938], pp. 36-44. Bhai Parmanand [1874-1948] was associated with the section of Lala Lajpat Rai and Hans Raj in the Arya Samaj. He worked with Ghadar Party in America in 1915. He joined the Hindu Mahasabha in 1923. Prakash, *Hindu Mahasabha*, pp. 41-9.

one religion, and one culture' – a vision that clashed with the Congress's secular ideology.[66] A vocal advocate of the *sangathani*st break with the Congress, Paramanand oriented the Mahasabha's programme to a strong commitment to Hindu unity, calling for the promotion of 'Hindu politics' in India.[67] He demanded that the Mahasabha contest elections as a separate party with its own *sangathani*st candidates and become a true political party in the country, for it was the only hope for the 'salvation of the Hindu community'. He declared: 'I think the most important weapon which could be of service to us [Hindus] in this work is the capturing of the Legislative Assembly and Councils.'[68] However, Parmanand's dream of making the Mahasabha a political party potent enough to challenge the Congress was far from a success, as the party had not yet become 'a fully developed organisation' in the country.[69] The Mahasabha did not participate in the 1930 Civil Disobedient movement as an organisation – a position that tarnished its national image among the people. And there had been little progess on the recruitment front in India.[70] There were the divergences of approach among the Mahasabha leaders on the anti-British struggles in India, but the majority insisted that the party ought not to be accommodating and break with the Congress in its programmes and politics in the country.

The existing institutional overlap between the Hindu Mahasabha and the Congress, if informal, had declined completely by the late 1930s. The Congress's success in the 1937 elections in the provinces that were once considered the 'Hindu strongholds' challenged the Mahasabha's claim to be the sole representative of 'Hindu interests', making it appear as 'politically irrelevant' in India.[71] The election defeat established that the Mahasabha had little influence among the masses: it had a narrow political base, while the support from the masses was limited and sporadic in the country. It did not create an effective party organisation at the grassroots, or broaden its appeal as a political party in the country. The party had little monoeuvrablity in linking the local concerns to those of the province and the nation due to its domination by the conservative elites and the aristocracy.[72] The Congress, on the contrary, appealed for the 'organic unity' of all the classes and religions as well as the advantages of a 'secular state', mobilising political support in the towns and villages of India. It had broadened its mass base following an effective organisational and branch structure and the strengthening

---

[66] Keith Alexander Meadowcroft, '"From Hindu-Muslim Unity" to Hindu Raj: The Evolution of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha 1922-1939', Unpublished Masters Dissertation, Concordia University, Montreal, 1995, pp. 76-7.

[67] Bhai Parmanand's Presidential Address, All-India Hindu Mahasabha Session, Ajmere, December 1933, cited in Prakash, *A Review*, p. 134.

[68] Cited in Prakash, *A Review*, p. 135.

[69] Kenneth W. Jones, 'Politicized Hinduism: The Ideology and Program of the Hindu Mahasabha', in Robert D. Baird [ed.], *Religion in Modern India*, New Delhi, 2005 [2001], pp. 256-7.

[70] M.M. Malaviya, B.S. Moonje, and M.S. Aney broke the salt law and pledged support for Civil Disobedience. B.S. Moonje's letter to M.R. Jayakar, enclosed wire sent to Gandhi, dated 20 April 1930, File No. 63, Moonje Papers NMML; Judith Brown, *Gandhi and Civil Disobedience: The Mahatma in Indian Politics, 1928-34*, Cambridge, 1977, p. 150.

[71] In the 1937 elections, the Hindu Mahasabha was mostly defeated: it won 11 seats in the UP and the Punjab, two in Bengal, one in Bihar, one in the Central Provinces, four in Sind, and one in Bombay. The Congress got majority in six out of eleven provinces, including the UP, the CP, Madras, Bihar, and Orissa. Home Poll., FR, Punjab, File No. 18/2/1937, NAI.

[72] Home Poll., FR, UP, File No. 18/10/1936; Walter Anderson, 'The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh II: Who Represents the Hindus?', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 7, No. 12, 18 March 1972, p. 634.

of control from the top since the adoption of its new constitution in 1934.[73] By the 1930s, the Mahasabha-Congress confrontation had deepened in the struggle for electoral gains and popular support in the country. The Hindu Sabhas in the UP began to detach themselves from the Congress from the time of the latter's ministry formation in July 1937.[74] The Hindu Sabhas of Agra and Oudh condemned the UP Congress ministry for its 'pro-Muslim' policy; and there were a series of complaints about the deliberate 'negligence of Hindu rights' by the Congress government, particularly in Farrukabad and Mathura, UP.[75] The final break-up came when the Congress Working Committee, through a historic resolution of 16 December 1938, blacklisted the Hindu Mahasabha and the Muslim League as the 'communal' organisations and banned Congress members from holding a duel membership with a 'communal organisation' in the country.[76] The ban was forced by those who were anxious to maintain the 'secular' character of the Congress in India. The Congress subsequently tightened its organisation, ending the close and informal connexions between the district Congress committees and the Hindu Sabhas across the country. However, the Mahasabha protested, declaring that 'it is the only national organisation in the country', and that 'there is no other national politics than that of the Hindu Mahasabha for the country as a whole and for the Hindus particularly'.[77] The break-up was obviously probable because the Congress no longer needed the Mahasabha's support electorally; and the ban had resulted in a definite Mahasabha policy to move away from the Congress.

III. Savarkarite Mahasabha

The Hindu Mahasabha formally transformed itself into a full-fledged political party under V.D. Savarkar's leadership in the late 1930s, ending its ties to the Congress in north India. Savarkar, who succeeded Bhai Parmanand as president in 1937, made the institutional difference between the Mahasabha and the Congress extremely radical, providing a philosophy and charisma as well as 'new vigour and fresh hope' to the organisation.[78] The Mahasabha's power base shifted from the UP and the Punjab to central India, especially the Bombay Presidency, the Central Provinces and Berar, where B.G. Tilak had prepared the ground for the development of Hindu nationalist politics.[79] It acquired a more centralised decision-making process dominated by the president with little space for a democratic election unlike in the Congress: its overall programme was dominated by Savarkar's advocacy of a Hindu *rashtra* [nation] and *sangathan*.[80] Savarkar resolved to build the

---

[73] Paul R. Brass, *Factional Politics in an Indian State: The Congress Party in Uttar Pradesh*, Berkeley, 1965, p. 229.
[74] Mushirul Hasan [ed.], *India's Partition: Process, Strategy and Mobilization,* Delhi, 1993, p.13.
[75] PAI, 29 April, 20 May 1939.
[76] Gould, *Hindu Nationalism*, p. 162; Wadhwa, *Hindu Maha Sabha*, p. 125.
[77] Resolution passed at 20th All India Hindu Mahasabha Session, Nagpur, 30 December 1938, Hindu Mahasabha Papers, 1938-39, File No. 50, NMML.
[78] V.D. Savarkar, beginning his leadership in 1937 at Ahmedabad session, was elected president of the Hindu Mahasabha for seven consecutive years: Nagpur, 1938; Calcutta, 1939; Madurai, 1940; Bhagalpur, 1941; Kanpur, 1942; and Amritsar, 1943. Baxter, *Jana Sangh,* pp. 20-1.
[79] Nandini Gondhalekar and Sanjoy Bhattacharya, 'The All India Hindu Mahasabha and the End of British Rule in India, 1939-1947', *Social Scientist*, Vol. 27, Nos. 7-8, July-August 1999, pp. 49-66.
[80] V.D. Savarkar's speech, Poona, 15 January 1961: V.D. Savarkar, *Thus Spoke the Prophet! Warnings that were Overlooked: A Collection of Writings and Speeches of Veer Savarkar,* Bombay, 1952, p. 13.

Mahasabha into a political party in order to represent the Hindus of India as much as the Muslim League did for the Muslims in the country. He declared: 'The Mahasabha is not in the main a Hindu-Dharma Sabha but is pre-eminently a Hindu Rashtra Sabha and is a pan-Hindu organisation shaping the destiny of the Hindu Nation in all its social, political and cultural aspects.'[81] He emphasised the need to gain political power by challenging the Congress in the electoral field. Savarkar explained: 'If Hindu voters voted at the next election for Hindu candidates standing on the ticket of the Mahasabha they would come into power.'[82] He proposed to expand the Mahasabha's organisational network, encouraging the formation of new branches of the party all over India in a plan to make it a 'progressive and living organisation'.[83] He stated: 'Whoever does an act helping Hindu Sangathan deserves our backing up on that particular point whatever be our differences or even animosities ...'[84] The Mahasabha adopted its new constitution in 1938, pledging to protect 'Hindu interests' not only in 'religious but also in political spheres'. Its central aim was to supplant the Congress in the political arena across the country.[85] Savarkar urged Hindu *sangathan*ists to capture political power wherever possible – municipal boards, legislatures, provincial and central governments. He demanded that the tricolour be rejected as the national flag. 'Gerva [saffron] Flag shall be the Flag of the Hindu Nation. With its Om, the Swastik and the Sword, it appeals to the sentiments cherished by our race since the Vaidik days.'[86] In the 1930s and 1940s, Savarkar's ideological goal centred on transforming the Mahasabha into a credible political challenger of the Congress at the all-India level.[87]

Savarkar's *sangathan* programme aimed to distinguish the Hindu Mahasabha's ideology from the stated policies of the Congress in India. Savarkar urged all the different Hindu organisations to unite under the banner of the Mahasabha, which consciously carried the motto of protecting 'Hindu interests' in the country.[88] This union would, he asserted, help the Mahasabha maintain a central fund at its disposal as well as the press which would enable it to continue its determined fight against the 'pseudo-nationalists' [Congress] and the Muslims.[89] In an appeal to the Hindus, Savarkar urged a strong resistance to the policies and programmes of the Congress and Gandhi. He warned about the 'unstable nature' of the Congress policies in the country. 'Prepare the Hindu electorate,' he insisted, 'to the utmost measure possible to vote only for those Hindu Sangathanists who openly

---

[81] V.D. Savarkar's Presidentiall Address, 19th All India Hindu Mahasabha Session, Ahmedabad, 1937: V.D. Savarkar, *Samagra Savarkar Wangamaya: Writings of Veer V.D. Savarkar,* Vol. 6, Pune, 1964, rept., New Delhi, 2003, p. 283.
[82] Savarkar's Presidential Address, 21st Hindu Mahasabha Session, Calcutta, 1939: Savarkar, *Samagra Savarkar,* Vol. 6, p. 344.
[83] Cited in Ian Copland, 'Crucibles of Hindutva? V.D. Savarkar, the Hindu Mahasabha, and the Indian Princely States', in John McGuire and Ian Copland [eds.], *Hindu Nationalism and Governance*, New Delhi, 2007, p. 257.
[84] Savarkar's letter to Indra Prakash, dated 18 February 1940, File C 26, AIHMS, NMML, New Delhi.
[85] All India Hindu Mahasabha Session, Nagpur, December 1938: Report of Chief Secretary, Central Provinces, December 1938, IOR L/P&J/8/683, IOL.
[86] V.D. Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan: A Collection of Presidential Speeches Delivered from the Hindu Mahasabha Platform, 1938-1941*, Bombay, 1992 [1949], p. 106.
[87] Report of Deputy Director General of Police CID., H.E.H. Nizam's Government, Hyderabad, 14 April 1938. IOR R/1/1/3089, IOL.
[88] Savarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan,* p. 63.
[89] Savarkar's Presidential Address, 20th All India Hindu Mahasabha Session, Nagpur, 1938: Savarkar, *Samagra Savarkar,* Vol. 6, p. 334.

pledged to safeguard Hindu interests' and not the Congress.[90] Savarkar insisted: 'I warn the Hindu Electorate categorically for the thousandeth [*sic*] time that that unless they remove these Pseudo-nationalist leaders from the helm of our state, the Gandhistic Indianism will allow Moslems inside India to capture key posts in the army, the police, the state.'[91] 'As ... neither the Gandhistic ideology nor the pseudo-nationalistic ideology of the Congress,' he emphasised, 'can ever cope with this Islamic offensive and as the Hindu Sangathanist ideology alone can and will be able to fight out this danger successfully, the Government should consist of such Ministers alone who are pledged to the Hindu Sangathanist ideology alone.'[92] He explained: 'If in spite of our efforts that the Hindu Electorate persists in its suicidal folly and votes the Congress ... [the Mahasabha] shall acknowledge the defeat and share the humiliation.'[93] Savarkar's plan to carve out a political constituency and ensure electoral support for the Mahasabha had represented a crucial *sangathani*st challenge to the Congress in India in the 1930s and 1940s.

However, Savarkar's ambitious vision fell far short of achieving the much publicised goal of transforming the Hindu Mahasabha into a political party potent enough to challenge the Congress in the country. The Mahasabha could not build an extensive network of support such as the Congress had acquired under Gandhi's leadership during the 1930s.[94] The lack of support for *sangathan* programmes in the mofussil areas of the country forced the Mahasabha to launch a membership drive in the towns and villages in the late 1930s; and the occasions were often used to denounce the Congress. Shyama Prasad Mookherjee suggested that the Mahasabha open its ranks to non-Hindus in order to stage a revival, but the party hardliners rejected the plan.[95] There was no realistic prospect of the party securing a majority through elections in the immediate future. The Mahasabha had remained inflexible in its *sangathan* ideology and was oriented towards a Hindu brand of politics, failing to be truly represented in the elective institutions of India during the 1930s.

The ideologies and programmes of the Hindu Mahasabha and the Congress were in a deep divide and conflict, despite all the weight of expediency and political calculation to maintain an informal association between them in the 190s and 1930s. Personalities, more so the Mahasabha hardliners, played their part, too. The Mahasabha's ideology was markedly different from the Congress's goal of secularism as well as its principles of freedom by constitutional advance.[96] The party demanded a religiously-defined 'Hindu state' much in the same pattern as the Muslim League and started to see the Congress as an enemy of the nation due to

---

[90] V.D. Savarkar's Presidential Address, All India Hindu Mahasabha's session, Madura, 1940: Savarkar, *Samagra Savarkar*, Vol. 6, pp. 395-396..

[91] V.D. Savarkar, *Historic Statements* [Eedited by S.S. Savarkar and G.M. Joshi], Bombay, 1967, pp. 1, 21-22.

[92] Cited in Jose Kuruvachira, *Hindu Nationalists of Modern India: A Critical Study of the Intellectual Geneology of Hindutva,* Jaipur, 2006, p. 124.

[93] V.D. Savarkar's Presidential Address, 21st All India Hindu Mahasabha Session, Calcutta, 28 December 1939: Savarkar, *Samagra Savarkar,* Vol, 6, pp. 388-9.

[94] Anderson, 'The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh II', p. 635.

[95] Bruce Graham, *Hindu Nationalism and Indian Politics: The Origins and Development of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh*, Cambridge, *1990, p. 13.*

the latter's alleged 'pro-Muslim' bias and 'appeasement' of the Muslims.[97] The Congress's nationalist programme bore a distinct stamp of Gandhi's ideology based on *ahimsa* and Hindu-Muslim unity, which clashed with the Mahasaba's search for a Hindu political constituency in India. The Mahasabha rejected the Congress's ideal of secular nationalism based on the equality of religions and communities and instead sought to capture the Hindu sentiment for the one-nation cause of a Hinutva *rashtra* [nation] on the basis of *sangathan* in the country.

Conclusion

In the early twentieth century, the early Congress represented a coexistence of secular idiom and Hindu nationalism; and the division between its secular discourse and the idiom adopted by its orators had remained ambiguous and indistinct in north India.[98] It maintained an informal relationship with the Hindu organisations due to its loose and informal style of politics, particularly in the 1920s and early 1930s. Since the Hindu Mahasabha's emergence in 1915, there had existed a nexus and informal associations between the Congress and the Hindu Sabhas at the local level in north India. The overlapping membership and association created a conducive climate in which both organisations strengthened and reinforced each other, more so in the UP. The Mahasabha's association with the Congress had persisted in more informal forms into the late 1930s until the blacklisting and rejection of the former as a 'communal' party in 1938. The Mahasabha became a full-fleged political party under the leadership of V.D. Savarkar, who advocated an overt and militant Hindu nationalism in opposition to the Congress's secular ideology. Savarkar's advocacy of a 'Hindu nation' became the central tenet of the Mahasabha's *sangathan* ideology, resulting in the breakdown of its ties to the Congress. The ideal of national unity based on the construction of a 'Hindu nation' emerged as the Mahasabha's chief ideological doctrine, clashing with the Congress's secularism as well as its anti-British struggle predicated on non-violence and Hindu-Muslim unity in India.[99]

---

[96] Gopal Krishna, 'The Development of the Indian National Congress as a Mass Organization, 1918-1923', *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 25, No. 3, May 1966, p. 425.
[97] Chatterji, *Bengal Divided*, pp. 137-41; Jaffrelot, *Hindu Nationalist Movement*, p. 33.
[98] Bayly, *Local Roots*, p. 153.
[99] Chetan Bhatt, *Hindu Nationalism: Origins, Ideologies and Modern Myths*, Oxford, 2001, p. 100.

11

Sangathanist Plan for Hindu Majority Nation

In the early decades of the twentieth century, the Indian National Congress made concerted efforts to negotiate a settlement on Hindu-Muslim representation as the basis of a renewed struggle for independence from Britain. The Hindu Mahasabha questioned the Congress's legitimacy to negotiate on behalf of the Hindus, insisting that it and not the Congress was the principal spokesman of the Hindu community. It rejected separate electorates for the Muslims and proposed joint electorates and the rule of the majority -- a political system strongly opposed by the Muslim elite. The 1928 Nehru report, which accepted joint electorates as the basis of a settlement, was rejected by the Muslim parties; and the Round Table Conferences in London in 1930-31 had failed to break the impasse in the country. This chapter argues that the Mahasabha's resistance to the Muslim demands for safeguards in India's legislatures and its campaign for a permanent 'Hindu majority rule', besides the irreconcilability of the Muslim demands, had precipitated the crisis on Hindu-Muslim power sharing, eventually leading to the Muslim League's demand for Pakistan in the 1940s. It focuses on the Mahasabha's role in the breakdown of negotiations on the Muslim demands for concessions in the legislatures during the 1920s and 1930s.

I. Separate Electorates

British rule in India was based on a strategy to win the collaboration of a wide range of native notables, rural and urban, and religious communities. In taking a new direction, the state granted separate electorates for the Muslims, besides 'weightage', in the provincial legislative councils under the Indian Councils Act of 1909 -- the Minto-Morley reforms. In addition to separate electorates, the Muslims were eligible to enter candidates and vote in general electorates and thereby could control additional seats in the councils of the country.[1] Separate electorates introduced the notion of the Muslim community *[qaum]* as the unit of political representation, which had become a rationale for the British to meet the Muslim anxieties about the threat of electoral marginalisation in a majoritarian 'Hindu state'. The Muslim League emphasised most strongly the value it placed on the principle of separate representation in order to assure the security of the Muslim community.[2] In the British calculation, the reforms were intended to secure the loyalty of the Muslims through its elite and effectively break the Congress's nationalist struggle in the country. For the state, religion had become the basis of the reforms as well as the defining principle of Indian identity, history and culture.[3]

---

[1] S.S. Pirzada [ed.], *Foundations of Pakistan: All-India Muslim League Documents 1906-1947*, Vol. I, Karachi, 1990, p.129.
[2] S.R. Wasti, *Lord Minto and the Indian Nationalist Movement, 1905 to 1910*, Oxford, 1964, pp. 129-31.
[3] John Morley, Secretary of State for India, presenting the 1909 Act in the British Parliament on 23 February 1909, stated that 'the difference between Mahmedanism and Hinduism is ... a difference in life, in tradition, in history, in C.H. Philips [ed.], *The Evolution of India and Pakistan 1858-1947: Select Documents*, Vol. 4, London 1962, p. 86.

The grouping of the Muslims into an all-India political category was a watershed event with disastrous implications for the Congress's vision of inclusionary nationalism in the country. Congress moderates opposed separate electorates, protesting against the grave risks involved in Muslim over-representation and the resultant sectarian cleavage between the Hindus and the Muslims in India.[4] Surendranath Banerjea moved a resolution carried by the Congress unanimously in 1910, objecting to the 'excessive and unfairly preponderant share of representation given to the followers of one particular religion [Muslims] ...'[5] Bishan Narain Dar attacked the unfairness of separate representation for the Muslims and supported the formation of new Hindu Sabhas by Hindu publicists in north India.[6] Gopal Krishna Gokhale had initially supported separate Muslim electorates, but conceded that the Muslim demands were 'unreasonable', expressing a grave concern that the 'weightage' being accorded to the Muslims in the councils was so excessive as to be 'monstrously unjust'.[7] The Congress nationalists feared that separate electorates were a potential threat to damage the unity of the Indian nation with crippling effects on social relations between the Hindus and the Muslims.

In the United Provinces, the home territory of the Muslim League and for long the heartland of Muslim separatism, the Muslim elite had gained most from separate electorates and 'weighted' representation in the provincial Legislative Council, thereby adversely affecting the political sphere of Hindu leaders.[8] Hindu publicists attacked separate electorates as a threat to reduce the influence of 'lawyer politicians' by adversely affecting the election of the Hindus to the council.[9] Madan Mohan Malaviya deplored that separate electorates tended to set one religion against the other, reducing the non-official majority provided under the 1909 Act to a 'farce'.[10] The 'Hindus,' he stated, 'should protest against their [Muslims] being given a number of seats in excess of what they would be entitled to by virtue of their proportion of the total population.'[11] Four out of the 20 elective seats in the UP Legislative Council went to the Muslims as of right after 1909, he pointed out, even though they were only 14.5 per cent of the population in the province. The Muslims were sure to secure two more seats from the mixed electorates in the UP; and two non-official appointed members were also to be Muslims, which ensured that out of the 26 non-official members, eight were to be Muslim in the province. In the Legislative Council, controversial amendments could always be defeated by a combination of official members and conservatives, despite the formal majority of non-officials.[12] For Hindu leaders and publicists, separate electorates threatened to spell a

---

[4] *Report of the 25th Indian National Congress Session, Calcutta, 1909,* Calcutta, 1910, p. 47.
[5] *Report of the 26th Indian National Congress Session, Bombay, 1910,* Calcutta, 1911, p. 84.
[6] B.N. Dar's Presidential Address, India National Congress Session, Calcutta, 1911: Bishan Narain Dar, *Collected Speeches and Writings of Pt. Bishan Narain Dar,* Vol. 1 [Editor: H.L. Chatterjee], Lucknow, 1921, p. 325.
[7] G.K. Gokhale's letter to W. Wedderburn, 3 December 1909, File No. 203, Part II, No. 159, Gokhale Papers, NAI. Sir William Wedderburn [1838-1918] founded the Indian National Congress along with A.O. Hume and was its president in 1889 and 1910.
[8] Francis Robinson, *Separatism Among Indian Muslims: The Politics of the United Provinces' Muslims 1860-1923,* Cambridge, 2n edn. 1993, [1975], pp. 98-104.
[9] Home Public 'A', August 1909, File No. 182-4, October 1909, pp. 44-8, 51-5, NAI.
[10] M.M. Malaviya's Presidential Address, *Report of the 25th Indian National Congress Session, 1909,* p. 31.
[11] M.M. Malaviya's letter to G.K. Gokhale, dated 4 March 1909, Gokhale Papers, NAI.
[12] Home Education, Municipal A, April 1914, 22-31, NAI.

regressive impact on provincial politics with a potential to heighten conflicts and sharply define the religious divide in the towns and districts of the UP.

More significantly, 'weighted' representation for the Muslims was also introduced in the municipal boards of the UP in 1916, followed by generous representation on district boards after 1922.[13] Under the UP Municipalities Act of 1916, separate representation was extended to the municipalities with the 'weightage' of up to three-tenths for the minorities – chiefly the Muslims.[14] Congress leaders Motilal Nehru, Tej Bahadur Sapru, Jagat Narain Mulla, and Ishwar Saran had backed the Act as part of the Congress's initiative to secure Muslim support in a united front for reforms from the British.[15] The Act accorded a disproportionately larger representation of 38.5 per cent to the Muslims in the UP municipalities.[16] The Muslim groups taking power under the Act could control not only the posts of the subordinate bureaucracy but also civil institutions which supported the overall networks of local influence in the towns of the province.[17] The municipalities Act had created a deep discontent among the Hindu publicists, driving them into a vigorous opposition over the 'grievous injustice' to the non-Muslims.[18] The fear was that the Hindus might be placed in a minority on the municipal boards, seriously affecting their representation in the UP Legislative Council and the central legislature.[19]

To the Hindu right, the 1916 Act had become a rallying cry in its agitation against separate representation to the Muslims across the UP. M.M. Malaviya and C.Y. Chintamani, editor of the *Leader*, led an agitation against the Act in Allahabad;[20] and the stir was supported by Hindu Sabha men – Babu Bhagwan Das, Sundar Lal, Rai Bahadur Anand Swarup, and Lala Sukhbir Sinha, 'who', T.B. Sapru told a friend, 'every now and again reminds me that the Municipal Act has "ruined" [he uses no other word] the Hindus ...'[21] Twelve Hindu members of the Allahabad Municipal Board and all the Hindu members of Lucknow municipality resigned in July 1916.[22]

---

[13] Letter of Sir James Meston, Lieutenant Governor of UP, to Secretary, Legislative Department, Government of India, dated 21 March 1916, Home Public 'B', September 1916, 70-72, NAI.

[14] The Act, which incorporated the Jehangirabad amendment moved by the Raja of Jehangirabad, was passed on 26 March 1916 in the UP Legislative Council with the dissent of three Hindu members, including Pandit Radha Krishna Das. *Proceedings of the Council of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, Assembled for the Purpose of Making Laws and Regulations, 1916*, Allahabad, 1917, p. 218; *The Leader* [Allahabad, daily, editor – C.Y. Chintamani], 29 March 1916, IOR L/R/5/91, 1916, pp. 272-73; *Abhyudaya* [Allahabad, weekly, editor: K.K. Malaviya], 29 March 1916, IOR L/R/5/91, 1916, p. 322; *Advocate* [Lucknow, tri-weekly, 1,100 copies], 30 March 1916, IOR L/R/5/91, p. 273, IOL.

[15] Francis Robinson, 'Municipal Government and Muslim Separatism in the United Provinces, 1883-1916', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 3, 1973, pp. 428-41.

[16] Under Sections 11 and 12 of the Act, when the Muslims formed less than 25 per cent of the municipal population, they would receive 30 per cent of the seats, and they would get 38 per cent of the seats, or above when they constituted 25 to 38 per cent of the population. UP Municipal, File No. 230 E, 1916, UPSA; Home Poll., April 1916, No. 19, p. 7, NAI.

[17] Rajnarayan Chandavarkar, *Imperial Power and Popular Politics: Class, Resistance and the State in India c. 1850-1950*, Cambridge, 1998, p. 181.

[18] *Pratap* [Kanpur, weekly, editor – Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi, 2,000 copies], 17 April 1916, IOR L/R/5/91, 1916, p. 342; *Anand* [Lucknow, weekly, editor: Pandit Shiva Nath, Brahmin, 48, 200 copies], 22 April 1916, IOR L/R/5/91, 1916, p. 362; *Abhyudaya*, 3 August 1916, IOR L/R/5/92, 1916, p. 329, IOL.

[19] *Pratap*, 10 April 1916, IOR L/R/5/91, 1916, p. 233; *Abhyudaya*, 22 July 1916, IOR L/R/5/92, 1916, File No. 31, p. 695, IOL.

[20] Home Poll, FR, UP, June 1916, File No. 25, 1916, NAI; C.A. Bayly, *The Local Roots of Indian Politics: Allahabad 1880-1920*, Oxford, 1975, p.205.

[21] T.B. Sapru's letter to Sita Ram, dated 10 August 1916, Sita Ram Papers, NAI.

[22] Home Poll. Dep. June 1916, No. 25, NAI; UP Proceedings of the Municipal Department, File No. RB 81, Block, 1916, UPSA.

Similarly, the Hindu members of Bijnor municipality resigned, while those in Unao, Ayodhya and Etawah district boards threatened to quit in protest.[23] A protest meeting, attended by nearly 6,000 Hindus, was held in Allahabad on 16 July 1916, where M.M. Malaviya condemned separate electorates for the Muslims.[24] The local Hindu Sabhas led the protest against the municipalities Act across the province.[25] At its conference held in Banaras on 20 August 1916 under the presidentship of Raja Sir Rampal Singh, the UP Hindu Sabha strongly attacked the Act and rejected separate electorates altogether.[26] Evidently, it was feared, an alliance existed between the British and the Muslims in order to 'limit the political power of the Hindu community' in the country.[27] At its annual meeting in Lucknow in December 1916, the All-India Hindu Sabha condemned the Act and the Congress's 'sell out' to the Muslims, urging the Hindus to keep aloof from the Congress, as 'it could not protect the Hindu rights against the Muslim demands'.[28] The Hindu right was apprehensive about the negative implications of a decline in Hindu representation in the municipal councils and district boards of the UP under the 1916 Act.

I. 1. Lucknow Pact

In a historic reappraisal of its policy and reconciliation, the Congress formally conceded separate electorates to the Muslims under the Lucknow Pact in 1916 after having consistently opposed them since 1909. Moderates like Motilal Nehru and Tej Bahadur Sapru had persuaded the Congress to adopt separate electorates in the interests of securing a joint programme for reform and self-government in India.[29] Under the pact which the Congress had concluded with the Muslim League as part of an initiative led by Annie Besant and Bal Gangadhar Tilak, separate electorates were conceded to the Muslims [21 per cent of the population against 68 per cent Hindus in Indian subcontinent], besides a 'weightage' of seats in excess of their population in areas where they were in a minority in the country.[30] The Muslims were accorded substantial weightage in the Hindu majority provinces of the UP, Bihar, Bombay, Madras, and the Central Provinces. In the UP, the Muslims [14.5

---

[23] *Abhyudaya*, 24 June 1916, IOR L/R/5/91, 1916, p. 580, IOL.
[24] *The Leader*, 19 July 1916, IOR L/R/5/92, 1916, p. 691, IOL; Home Poll., 'D', 2 August 1916, File No. 25, UP, NAI.
[25] Extract from the diary of the SP, Cawnpore, 8 April 1916, Municipal 1916, File No. 230 E. No. 70, UPSA.
[26] Letter of H.V. Lovett, D.M., Lucknow, to James Meston, dated 27 August 1916, Meston Papers, MSS. Eur. F. 136, Vol. IV, IOL.
[27] *Saddharm Pracharak* [Kangri, Bijnor], 1 July 1916, IOR L/R/5/92, 1916, p. 612; *Oudh Akhbar*, Lucknow [daily, editor: Lala Naubat Rai, 52, 550 copies], 23 July 1915, IOR L/R/5/90, File No. 31, 1915, p. 753.
[28] *The Leader*, 30 August 1916, IOR L/R/5/92, File No. 37, 1916, p. 821.
[29] F.C.R. Robinson, 'Municipal Government and Muslim Separatism in the United Provinces 1883 to 1916', in John Gallaghe, Gordon Johnson and Anil Seal [eds.], *Locality, Province and Nation*, Cambridge, 1973, pp. 69-121.
[30] The All India Congress Committee [AICC] members [34] who met from 22 to 24 April 1916 and discussed the schemes of reforms were: UP: M.M. Malaviya, Motilal Nehru, Dr. T.B. Sapru, Samiullah Beg, Gokaran Nath Misra, C.Y. Chintamani, Pt. Jagat Narain, Munshi Ishwar Saran, H.N. Kunzru; Madras: Annie Besant, N. Sabbarau Pantulu, L.A. Govindaraghava Aiyer, B.N. Sarma, V.V.S. Sastri, C.P. Ramaswami Aiyer, A.P. Patro; Bengal: Bhupendranath Basu, P.C. Roy; Bihar: M. Haque, S. Sinha, C.B. Sahay; Bombay: N.M. Samarth; Punjab: Lala Harkishen Lal; CP: N.A. Dravid; and Berar: 1.
The Muslim League reforms committee comprised Maulvi Abdul Majid, Syed Ali Nabi, Syed Raza Ali and A.A. Khan from the UP; Nawab Ali Chaudhuri, Mujibur Rahman, Abdul Rasul, and Fazlul Haq from Bengal; Zulfiqar Ali Khan, Mohammad Shafi, Malik Barkat Ali, and Syed Mohsin Shah from the Punjab; Ibrahim Rahimtullah, the Aga Khan, Jinnah, Bhugri, Faiz Tyabji, and Abdul Husain Adamjee Peerbhoy from Bombay and Sind; Ali Imam, Mazharul Haque, Wasi Ahmad, and Maulvi Fakhruddin from Bihar. Besides, there were three representatives from madras, one from the Central Provinces, and two from Burma. Home Poll., *January 1916, File No. 540*, NAI.

per cent of the population] were given 30 per cent of the seats in the provincial Legislative Council.[31] In Bihar and Orissa [10.9 per cent of the population], the Muslims were to receive 25 per cent of the seats, in the Central Provinces [4.4 per cent] 15 per cent of the seats, in Bombay [19.8 per cent] 33.3 per cent of the seats, and in Madras [6.7 per cent] 15 per cent of the seats. The Muslim League in turn gave up its claim to legislative majorities in the Muslim-majority provinces of the Punjab and Bengal: the Muslims received 50 per cent of the seats [54.8 per cent of population] in the Punjab, and 40 per cent in Bengal [52.7 per cent].[32] The pact provided that one-third of the elected members in the central Legislative Assembly should be Muslims elected by separate electorates in the country.[33] No bill affecting a community could be passed by a legislature if three-quarter of that community's legislators opposed it -- a safeguard given to the Muslims in Hindu-dominated provinces.[34] The pact proposed a Dominion status for India and demanded that India be granted a representative government elected on a broader franchise.[35] The 1919 Montford reforms had implemented in substance the Lucknow Pact's scheme of representation, even though the proposal for a communal veto on legislation was rejected. The Congress viewed the pact as a reasonable price to pay for Muslim co-operation in the larger goal of securing self-rule in India.[36] For the Muslim League, particularly Mohammad Ali Jinnah, Zafar Ali Khan, and Wazir Hasan who had pressed for closer co-operation with the Congress, the pact signified a decisive step towards the definition of a common 'nationalist' programme for self-rule in the country.[37] The pact's true significance lay in the formal recognition of the League as the authoritative spokesman of the Muslims or, as Jinnah put it, 'the chief representative of Muslim India'.[38] It recognised a 'distinct Muslim entity' whose representation was deemed to be the Muslim League's 'exclusive responsibility' in the country.[39]

However, the Hindu Mahasbha attacked the Lucknow Pact as 'surrender' by the Congress, opposing separate representation and 'weightage' granted to the Muslims in the country.[40] At its third conference held in Lucknow in December 1916, it expressed a strong opposition to separate electorates, rejecting the Muslim League's claim as an equal partner in shaping India's future.[41] V.P. Madhav Rao, in his presidential address, claimed that the concessions made to the Muslims by the Congress were at the expense of the Hindus, and that the Mahasabha and not the Congress should negotiate on behalf of the Hindus. The object of the Mahasabha,

---

[31] UP Government, GAD, 1917, File No. 140, UPSA; Home Poll., FR, UP, 6 January 1917, File No. 540, NAI.
[32] Home Poll B, November 1916, File No. 452-53, NAI.
[33] Home Poll., FR, UP, 6 January 1917, File No. 540, NAI.
[34] Weekly report of the Director of Central Intelligence, 25 November 1916, Home Poll. B, November 1916, File No. 452-53, NAI.
[35] Letter of Sir James Meston, Lt. Governor of UP, to Lord Chelmsford, Viceroy, dated 11 January 1917, Chelmsford Papers, IOR MSS. Eur. E. 264, Vol. 28, IOL.
[36] *Report of the 31st Indian National Congress Session, Lucknow, 1916,* Allahabad, 1917, p. 70; B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, *History of the Indian National Congress,* Vol. 1, New Delhi, 1969, pp. 202-3.
[37] F. Shaikh, *Community and Consensus in Islam: Muslim Representation in Colonial India, 1860-1947,* Cambridge, 1989, p. 170.
[38] Jinnah's speech at the League's Lucknow session on 1 January 1916, Pirzada [ed.], *Foundations of Pakistan,* Vol. 1, p. 354.
[39] The Raja of Mahmudabad's address to the All India Muslim Leagu, 30 December 1917, Pirzada [ed.], *Foundations of Pakistan,* Vol. 1, p. 431.
[40] Letter of Deva Ratan Sharma, Secretary, All-India Hindu Sabha, to Mrs A. Besant, dated 28 December 1917, cited Hugh F. Owen, 'Negotiating the Lucknow Pact', *The Journal of Asian Studies,* Vol. 32, No. 3, May 1972, p. 561.
[41] Home Poll., January 1917, Deposit 42, p. 44, NAI.

he explained, was to 'educate the public mind on the evils likely to follow from [the] recognition of this principle [separate electorates] and giving effect to it in the coming reforms'.[42] Lajpat Rai repudiated the pact as a 'negation of nationalism' on the basis that separate electorates would deal 'severe blow' to India's nationhood.[43] In a circular to prominent Hindus of all the provinces in India, he condemned the Congress's role in the negotiation of the Lcknow Pact and urged them to make the Hindu Mahasabha their 'political mouthpiece' in the country.[44] Bhai Parmanand condemned the pact as a 'sectarian curse' and reiterated that separate Muslim electorates resulted in an 'injustice to the legitimate rights of the Hindus'.[45] An electoral policy based on 'one man, one vote' was the Mahasabha's ideological principle that in effect rejected separate electorates in entirety in the country.[46] The Congress's acceptance of separate electorates under the Lucknow Pact had a galvanising effect on the Mahasabha's ideology, making Hindu identity and rights an entrenched feature of its *sangathan* discourse in north India.

In the UP, the discontent over the Lucknow Pact was most acute among the Hindu right. The UP Hindu Sabha bitterly rejected the pact, attacking it as 'anti-Hindu'.[47] M.M. Malaviya and C.Y. Chintamani, who had taken part in the negotiations on the pact, bitterly resented the reduction in Hindu representation resulting from the 'weightage' conceded to the Muslims in the province. The Hindu Sabhas of Allahabad, Banaras, and Kanpur denounced excessive representation given to the Muslims under the pact.[48] The protest had gained legitimacy in view of the fact that the Muslims were far more advanced than the Hindus in the administration and economy of the UP. Since the early twentieh century, the British had actively sought to employ far too numerous Muslims in the administration of the province, which contained the best educated and most articulate leaders of all-India Muslim politics. The Muslims had held 41.94 per cent of government positions across the province by 1911. In the 1920s, they made up roughly 44 per cent of the deputy collectors of the province, 38 per cent of superintendents of police, 50 per cent of the vets, and 52 per cent of the constables.[49] The Muslims outnumbered the Hindus in the army and police; and in liberal professions and arts, they were well represented as lawyers, doctors and teachers. In industry and commerce, they were clearly over-represented in both the census of 1911 and 1921.[50] In contrast, the proportion of the Muslims engaged in agriculture was very small, but they were over-represented in the rent-receiving category of landlords across the province.[51] The Hindu right was in uproar against the Lucknow Pact on the basis that the Muslims were accorded separate

---

[42] Home Poll., FR, UP, February 1917, File No. 26, NAI.
[43] Cited in Ravindra Kumar [ed.], *Selected Documents of Lala Lajpat Rai 1906-1928*, Vol. 3, New Delhi, 1992, pp. 149-56.
[44] Purushothamdas Thakurdas Papers, 40: Circular letter, 13 December 1924, NMML.
[45] *Bhai Parmanand, The Story of My Life, Lahore, 1938, rept. New Delhi, 1982, p. 168.*
[46] B.S. Moonje's letter to Gandhi, dated 5 August 1929, File No. 437, B.S. Moonjwe Papers, NMML.
[47] Home Poll., D, March 1916; File No. 49, NAI; *The Leader*, 6 January 1917, IOR L/R/5/92, 1917, p. 11,IOL.
[48] *The Leader*, 6 January 1917, IOR L/R/5/92, 1917, p. 11; *Anand*, 8 January 1917, IOR L/R/5/92, 1917, pp. 26-7, IOL.
[49] *Census of India, 1921: United Provinces of Agra and Oudh*, Vol. 16, Part II, Allahabad, 1923, p. 413.
[50] Anil Seal, *The Emergence of Indian Nationalism: Competition and Collaboration in the Later Nineteenth Century*, Cambridge, 1968, p. 118.
[51] William Gould, *Hindu Nationalism and the Language of Politics in Late Colonial India*, Cambridge, 2004, p. 209.

representation, despite the fact that they had been over-represented compared to the Hindus in the services and economy of the UP.

The British policy on the council reforms in India had come under a review by 1917-1918. There was a strong argument in favour of territorial constituencies as the basis of representation for the communities in India. It was put forward most forcibly by William S. Marris, Commissioner of the Reforms Office, Government of India, in drafting the Montagu-Chelmsford report in 1918. Viceroy Edwin Montagu and Secretary of State for India Lord Chelmsford reviewed the option of 'wiping out' the Morley-Minto reforms and making 'a new start' with territorial constituencies in the country; but they concluded that they had 'no alternative for practical and political reasons, but to follow the path already set out'.[52] Territorial representation was seen to favour the urban professional elite, which was deemed unrepresentative of Indian society; and it would work best with adult franchise which had not yet been proposed. Communal representation as revealed in separate electorates was seen as a way not only to ensure the representation of different interests but also as a potential leveller, exposing communities hitherto uninitiated in the ways of liberal democracy in India. It was logical that separate electorates were extended under the Government of India Act of 1919 -- the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms.

In the early 1920s, the Muslim League dominated Muslim politics and sought to achieve for the Muslims in India the goals of political representation that had been set by the ideologues of the Aligarh movement. It expressed an opposition to the elective principle based on 'western' representation in India.[53] The final sanction of the 'Muslim consensus', it argued, did not lie in numerical configurations or a majority rule, but the charismatic community predicated on the notions of 'Islamic solidarity'.[54] The League's assumption was that Indian society was rigidly divided into immovable political blocs consisting of the Muslims and the non-Muslims, and that only a Muslim could represent the Muslims as a community in any constituency of the country.[55] It stated that religion and politics were not to be divided – an ideal that strengthened the Muslim community as the basis of political representation in contrast to representation by the individuals on the western model. It viewed with alarm the possible introduction of territorial constituencies that threatened to undermine Muslim interests in India.[56] Sayyid Amir Ali, the founder of the National Mohammedan Association that advocated separate electorates, feared that the institution of territorial constituencies implied by 'western' representation would enable the Hindus to dominate the outcome of elections to the legislatures in the country.[57] M.A. Jinnah

---

[52] *Report on Indian Constitutional Reforms, 1918*, Part VIII, London, 1919, pp. 256-7, 307-10; Peter Robb, *The Government of India and Reform: Policies towards Politics and the Constitution, 1916-1921*, Oxford, 1976, p. 87.

[53] Farzana Shaikh, 'Muslims and Political Representation in Colonial India: The Making of Pakistan', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 20, No. 3, 1986, pp. 539-557: p. 539.

[54] Francis Robinson, 'Islam and Muslim Separatism', in David Taylor and Malcolm Yapp [eds.], *Political Identity in South Asia*, London, 1979, pp. 78-107; S.A. Wolpert, *Morley and India 1906-1910*, Berkeley, 1967, pp. 185-200.

[55] Francis Robinson, 'The Congress and the Muslims', in Paul R. Brass and F. Robinson [eds.], *The Indian National Congress and Indian Society, 1885-1985: Ideology, Social Structure and Political Dominance*, Delhi, 1987, pp. 176-77.

[56] Z.H. Zaidi, 'Aspects of the Development of Muslim League Policy, 1937-1947', C.H. Philips and Mary Doren Wainwright [eds.], *The Partition of India: Policies and Perspectives, 1935-1947*, London, 1970, p. 254.

[57] Shaikh, *Community and Consensus in Islam*, p. 111.

underlined the supremacy of the 'Muslim consensus' that was not open to democratic criteria based on the arithmetic of fluid majorities and minorities. The true expression of the Muslims demands, he argued, was not always to be found in the sum of votes cast, or the application of arithmetic in representation. 'The counting of heads,' he declared, 'may be a very good thing, but it is not the final arbiter of the desiny of nations.'[58] 'You may think that the counting of heads is the final judgement ... But let me tell you ... You will never be able to destroy the culture we have inherited, the Islamic culture.'[59] In the Muslim League's theory, the Muslims were a permanently defined, distinct social category that enabled it to claim a parity of status and representation *vis-a-vis* the Hindus in India. The demand was for a representative parity independent of numerical proportions or a majority rule, which consisted of the Muslim League as the sole representative of the substantative 'Muslim consensus' in the country.[60] The League's campaign had centred on the important issues of exclusive Muslim representation in India: the proportion of seats to be allotted to the Muslims in the legislatures, the creation of Muslim-majority provinces, and the retention of separate electorates.[61]

By the mid-1920s, the Congress had launched the 'National Demand' for a representative government in India. It sought the revision of the 1919 Act with a view to establishing a full responsible government, a representative round table conference to frame a constitution, and the presentation of the new constitution to parliament for enactment. The demand, stated by Motilal Nehru in February 1924, was not for a full responsible government 'in a bundle' but the recognition of India's right to 'self-determination' and a round table conference to revise the constitution.[62] The official response was the appointment of the 'all white' Simon Commission in November 1927, which was charged with the task of evolving a constitution to grant full Dominion status to India.[63] The commission had no Indian representative. The Congress protested that Britain had acted contrary to the national will and urged all the parties in the country to boycott the commission.[64] The Muslim League boycotted the seven-man commission, and so, too, did the other nationalist parties.[65] The Hindu Mahasabha, at its Madras session in December 1927, decided to follow the Congress's policy of boycott in protest against the government's 'pro-Muslim policy' based on 'imperial considerations'.[66] The prospects for unity and a common national front had seemed positive by the end of 1927 when the different strands of political opinion came

---

[58] M.A. Jinnah's address to the All India Muslim League, 26 December 1938, in Pirzada [ed.], *Foundations of Pakistan*, Vol. II, p. 307.

[59] M.A. Jinnah's sppech to the Central Legislative Assembly on 22 March 1939, in Jamil-ud-din Ahmad [ed.], *Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah*, Vol. 1, p. 84.

[60] Shaikh, 'Muslims and Political Representation', pp. 543-5.

[61] S.S. Pirzada [ed.], *Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah's Correspondence*, Karachi, 1966, pp. 443-9.

[62] R.J. Moore, *The Crisis of Indian Unity 1917-1940*, Oxford, 1974, pp. 17-8.

[63] R.J. Moore, 'The Making of India's Paper Federation, 1927-1935', in C.H. Philips and M.D. Wainwright [eds.], *The Partition of India: Policies and Perspectives, 1935-1947*, London, 1970, pp. 54-76.

[64] S.R. Bakshi, *Simon Commission and Indian Nationalism*, Delhi, 1977, pp. 31-5.

[65] David Page, *Prelude to Partition: The Indian Muslims and the Imperial System of Control, 1920-1932*, Delhi, 1987 [1982], pp. 150-7; Mushirul Hasan, *Nationalism and Communal Politics in India, 1916-1928*, New Delhi, 1991, p. 94.

[66] Home Poll, UP FR February 1928, File No. 130/1929, NAI. The Punjab Hindu Sabha rejected the boycott and co-operated with the Simon Commission in the hope of securing 'exclusive Hindu rights' like the collaborationist Punjab Muslim League, led by Fazl-i-Husain. Home Poll., File No. 32/1927; Home Poll., File No. 18/1/1928, Punjab FR, NAI.

together in an outcry against the Simon Commission.[67] Intense negotiations took place among the parties and leaders on Hindu-Muslim representation because an agreement was required that would be incorporated into a new constitution for India.[68]

II. Jinnah's Delhi Proposals

In the negotiations leading up to a draft constitution for India in the late 1920s, the Muslim League declared that further constitutional advance was not possible unless the Muslim demands for safeguards could be fulfilled. At its Lahore session in1925, the League reiterated the strategy of a federation, provincial autonomy, and separate electorates – which was representative of most shades of the Muslim opinion: nationalists [M.A. Jinnah], British loyalists [Muhammad Shafi], and Khilafatists [the Ali brothers].[69] Nonetheless, a Muslim overture was made in 1927. Under the 'Delhi Muslim Proposals' which M.A. Jinnah had helped draft on 20 March 1927, the League offered to give up separate electorates – a keystone of Muslim constitutional politics since 1909 – in favour of joint electorates if four demands could be guaranteed. The demands were: one-third Muslim representation in the central Legislative Assembly; the reservation of seats in proportion to population in the provincial legislatures, including the Punjab and Bengal, with minorities receiving 'weightage'; the creation of a new Muslim-majority province of Sind;[70] and the extension of the 1909 reforms [separate electorates] to the North-West Frontier Province [NWFP] and Baluchistan, raising both to the same administrative status as the other full-fledged provinces.[71] The League's plan was to develop provincial autonomy by expanding the number of Muslim provinces to five [the Punjab, Bengal, Sind, the NWFP, and Baluchistan] as a counterweight to Hindu majority provinces in the country. In a press statement on 29 March 1927, Jinnah declared that the 'four proposals' had to be accepted or rejected *in toto.* The Muslims, he explained, 'should be made to feel that they are secure and safe-guarded against any act of oppression on the part of the majority' during the transitional stage towards the development of a national government.[72] The Congress accepted all the Delhi proposals at its Calcutta session on 26 December 1927, giving full assurance that the legitimate Muslim interests would be secured by 'the reservation of seats in joint electorates on the basis of population in the provinces and the central legislature'. It agreed to the elevation of the NWFP and Baluchistan to the full status of governors' provinces and the creation of linguistic provinces, including Sind.[73] The Muslim community, it was believed, had

---

[67] The Simon Commission, in its 1928 report, recommended the continuation of separate electorates with 'weghtage' in the provincial legislatures. *Report of the Indian Statutory Commission Recommendations, 1928,* Vol. 2, London, 1930, pp. 33-4, 44-8.
[68] Uma Kaura, *Muslims and Indian Nationalism: The Emergence of the Demand for India's Partition, 1928-40*, New Delhi, 1977, p. 20.
[69] Ayesha Jalal, *Self and Sovereignty: Individual and Community in South Asian Islam since 1850*, London, 2000, p. 299.
[70] Sind, now part of Pakistan, was occupied by the British and became part of the Bombay Presidency in 1843. In 1921, the Muslims accounted for 75 per cent of its 3.5 million population. David Cheesman, *Landlord Power and Rural Indebtedness in Colonial Sind, 1865-1901*, Richmond, Surrey, 1997, pp. 35-6.
[71] The 1909 Minto-Morley reforms [separate electorates] were not introduced in Baluchistan and the NWFP – the Muslim-majority provinces. In 1924 the Muslim League urged the government to introduce the reforms in these provinces. Hasan, *Nationalism and Communal Politics,* p. 267.
[72] Cited in Stanley Wolpert, *Jinnah of Pakistan*, New York, 1984, pp. 54-5.
[73] *Report of the Indian National Congress, Forty-second Session, Madras, 1927,* Calcutta, 1928, p. 61.

in away become a political force, if a minority, by representing persistent political interests in the country.[74] The Muslim League's proposals signalled a drive for a *rapprochement* with the Congress, paving the way for a new constitution for India.

However, the Hindu Mahasabha rejected the Delhi proposals *in toto.* At its session held in Patna in April 1927 under the presidentship of B.S. Moonje, the Mahasabha categorically demanded the abolition of 'weightage' in Muslim-minority provinces and condemned the proposals to create legislative majorities in the Punjab and Bengal. If there was to be community representation, it insisted, it should be strictly according to population and available only to the minorities. 'In no circumstances, however, shall there be any reservation of seats in favour of any majority community.'[75] The Mahasabha rejected the separation of Sind, the Muslim-majority region, from the Bombay Presidency, as it would create an 'Islamic empire from Angora to Karachi'. Baluchistan and the NWFP were 'too backward' for the 1909 reforms, it argued, and time was 'not ripe for the discussion of such a question' in the country.[76] Moonje warned the Congress that it should confine itself to ratifying agreements negotiated by leaders of the communities. He wrote to the Congress Working Committee: 'I have to request you on behalf of the Hindu Mahasabha to confine your resolutions at present only to what has been mutually accepted by the Hindus and the Moslem leaders ... if the Congress were to adopt any resolutions concerning these details before the differences on them are reconciled the Congress may not only fail in achieving its object but I am afraid undesirable complications may arise.'[77] The Muslims faced a threat of boycott, Moonje warned, if they did not prove subservient to the Hindus. 'Leave the Muslims severely alone,' he counselled, so they might 'realize their folly, and in dejection ... throw themselves at our feet ...'[78] The Mahasabha rejected any reconciliation with the Muslim League and firmly resolved to intensify an agitation against Jinnah's Delhi proposals in the country.

The Hindu Mahasabha put forward counter-proposals, demanding constitutional safeguards for the representation of the Hindus in India. On 21 April 1927, M.M. Malaviya on behalf of the Mahasabha proposed: joint electorates for all legislatures throughout the country; the reservation of seats on population basis in the legislatures; safeguards for the protection of religious and quasi-religious rights; and the issue of the re-distribution of provinces on linguistic and other criteria to be left open for consideration in the future. He proposed elections to elective bodies on the basis of joint electorates, besides seeking a uniformity of franchise for all communities in India. A uniform franchise, if coupled with joint electorates, would increase the political leverage of the Hindus in the Muslim-majority provinces. The Mahasabha's position was how best to secure the

---

[74] Paul R. Brass, 'Elite Groups, Symbol Manipulation and Ethnic Identity among the Muslims of South Asia', in David Taylor and Malcolm Yapp [eds.], *Political Identity in South Asia,* London, 1979, pp. 58-63.
[75] *Proceedings of the 10th All India Hindu Mahasabha Session,* Patna, 16-18 April 1927, New Delhi, 1927, p. 16.
[76] *Proceedings of the 10th All India Hindu Mahasabha Session,* p. 17.
[77] Cited in Indra Prakash, *Hindu Mahasabha: Its Contribution to Indian Politics,* New Delhi, 1966 [1938], p. 61.
[78] Cited in N.G. Dixit [ed.], *Dharmaveer Dr. B.S. Moonje Commemoration Volume: Birth Centenary Celebrations 1872-1972,* Nagpur, 1972, pp. 130-1.

sectional interests of the Hindus.[79] The lack of the advocacy of a 'single nation' -- the Congress's goal which was imperfectly pursued due to its loss of political courage -- was the underlying problem in the negotiations on Hindu-Mulim power sharing in India.

However, the Congress negotiated an amended version of Jinnah's Delhi proposals. In the All-India Congress Committee meeting in Bombay on 15 May 1927, a truce -- the Delhi-Bombay Compromise -- was adopted: reforms for the NWFP became conditional on the provision of suitable judiciary, and the separation of Sind conditional on the separation of Andhra. The Hindu Mahasabha opposed the compromise, nevertheless. B.S. Moonje, in a press statement, 'clarified' the Mahasabha's protest, dissenting from the Delhi-Bombay Compromise 'clause by clause'. He declined to accept the terms set for the separation of Sind from the Bombay Presidency and made a strong appeal in a circular to the Hindu Sabhas across the country to oppose the Congress's resolution on the Delhi proposals.[80] In the Mahasabha's programme, provinces were not to be reorganised to produce statutory religious majorities for the Muslims, while the residuary powers lay with the centre in India.

III. All-Parties Conference

In 1928 the Congress convened an All-Parties Conference as part of an independent effort to resolve the deepening disagreement over Hindu-Muslim representation and draft a constitution for India. The conference was the nationalists' answer to the claim made by conservative Secretary of State for India Lord Birkenhead that India was 'reliant on British rule' and incapable of devising a constitution for itself.[81] The conference was attended by the representatives of the Congress, the Hindu Mahasabha, the Independent Congress Party, the Liberal Party, the Muslim League, and the Khilafatists. It opened in Delhi on 12 February 1928 and reconvened again in Bombay in May 1928. In all the conference meetings, the Mahasabha categorically rejected the reservation of seats for the Muslim majority in the Punjab and Bengal. On this point, it was supported by Sardar Mangal Singh, secretary of the Central Sikh League, as well as Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru, and other Congress leaders. The Mahasabha resisted the creation of new Muslim provinces as 'a price for securing joint electorates' and rejected the Congress resolution on Sind. B.S. Moonje, M.R. Jayakar, and N.C. Kelkar issued a manifesto, condemning the 'attempts to constitute new provinces in India in which a particular community [the Muslims] is in a majority'.[82] In view of the Mahasabha's formidable 'opposition and hostility', the Muslim League had decided to boycott the subsequent meetings of the All-Parties Conference planned in 1928. Motilal Nehru expressed an alarm over the role of the Mahasabha and blamed it for the failure of the meetings of the All-Parties Conference.[83] The negotiations faced a threat of deadlock over almost all the substantive issues of

---

[79] I.Prakash, *A Review of the History and Work of Hindu Mahasabha and Hindu Sangathan Movement*, Delhi, 1952, p.104.
[80] Jayakar Papers, File No. 436, Item 91, NMML.
[81] Cited in Kaura, *Muslims and Indian Nationalism*, p. 41.
[82] *The Leader*, 13 February 1928, p. 7, Microfilm, NMML.
[83] Motilal Nehru's letter to Purshottamdas, dated 23 May 1928, Motilal Nehru Papers [G-1], File No. 58, p. 47, NMML.

concessions to the Muslims, deepening the Congress's difficulty and dilemma in evolving a formula on Hindu-Muslim representation in India.

III. 1. Nehru Constitution

In the deepening row over Hindu-Muslim power sharing, the All-Parties Conference appointed a committee to settle all issues related to representation as part of its plan to draft a new constitution for India.[84] Motilal Nehru, who was appointed the committee chairman with Jawaharlal as secretary, emphasised the need for achieving a unanimous formula, as 'an agreed report would be a strong weapon to carry on a campaign in the country against the [British] Government'.[85] He declared: 'The support of the Hindu Maha Sabha is most essential, specially as there is no knowing how the Muslim opinion will finally shape itself ...[86] However, at the Lucknow session of the Nehru committee held in August 1928, the Mahasabha's opposition to the Muslim demands had remained insurmountable – particularly over the reservation of one-third of seats to the Muslims in the central legislature and the separation of Sind.[87] The Mahasabha condemned these demands as a 'strategy' to isolate it and the Hindus by getting the Congress to 'agree to the Muslim claims'. In its discourse, the Muslim demands were sectarian in nature and ought to be opposed as 'injurious' to Hindu interests in the country.[88]

The Nehru committee unveiled its constitution on 15 August 1928. The Nehru report -- chiefly the work of Motilal Nehru and T.B. Sapru -- stated its goal as 'Dominion' status instead of full independence – which meant something indistinguishable from independence, except for the link with the British Crown. The report accepted joint electorates and eliminated separate Muslim electorates, removing the 'weightage' fixed for the Muslims under the Minto-Morley and Montagu-Chelmsford reforms. It offered the Muslims reservations in provinces where they were in a minority, but rejected the reservation of seats for the Muslim majority in the Punjab and Bengal.[89] The real blow to the Muslims was that the report restricted Muslim quota in the central assembly to a fourth [25 per cent] instead of a third [33 per cent] as demanded, thereby denying the Muslims a share of power which would ensure them a status at the centre virtually equal to the Hindus. The report argued that the overwhelming opinion in Sind was in favour of separation, but that it rejected the demands for its creation as a separate province in India. The reorganisation of states would only take place on linguistic grounds and, in the case of Sind, when it was deemed to be in an economically viable proposition. Any suggestion for the creation of further Muslim-majority provinces was rejected. The report proposed an Indian federation based on a unitary

---

[84] The ten-member Nehru committee was formed in Bombay on 19 May 1928 and included: Sir Ali Imam and Shuaib Qureshi [Muslim group]; M.R. Jayakar and M.S. Aney [Hindu Mahasabha]; Sardar Mangal Singh [Sikh League]; Tej Bahadur Sapru [Liberals]; G.R. Pradhan [non-Brahmins]; M.M. Joshi [trade unionist]; and Subhash Chandra Bose [Bengal].

[85] Motilal Nehru's letter to Gandhi, dated 11 June 1928, Motilal Nehru Papers [G-I], File No. 51, p. 42, NMML.

[86] Motilal Nehru's letter to M.S. Aney, dated 18 August 1928, M.S. Aney Papers, NMML.

[87] Shuaib Qureshi's letter to Motilal Nehru, dated 2 July 1928, Motilal Nehru papers [G-1], File No.59, p. 21, NMML.

[88] M.R. Jayakar's letter to M.M. Malaviya, dated 31 July 1929, File No. 436, Jayakar Papers, NMML.

[89] *All Parties Conference 1928: Report of the Committee appointed by the Conference to determine the principles of the Constitution together with a proceeding of the Lucknow Conference*, Allahabad, 1928, pp. 23, 50.

government at the centre and called for all the departments of the central government -- including defence, finance, foreign affairs, and relations with the Indian states -- to be made responsible to Indian legislatures.[90] The decentralisation of power was to be extended no further than in the Montford constitution, while residual powers lay with the centre. In reality, the Nehru report, which was perhaps the first significant attempt of the Indian parties to draft a constitution for a free India, demonstrated how intractable the problem of Hindu-Muslim representation had become in all-India terms.[91]

The Nehru constitution had come under the scrutiny of the parties and their leaders in a drive for its ratification by the end of 1928. The National All-Parties Convention, meeting in Lucknow on 28 August 1928, resolved that India should have a responsible government, 'that is to say a government in which the executive should be responsible to a popularly elected legislature' -- a status no lower than that of a self-governing dominion in the country.[92] The conference accepted the separation of Sind with two provisos: that after inquiry the new province was found to be financially viable, and that the Hindu minority obtained 'weightage' similar to the Muslims in the Muslim-majority provinces. Sind's status as a separate province was to be specifically dependent upon the establishment of a 'dominion' in India. The conference accepted the NWFP and Baliuchistan demands and the principle of general electorates without the reservation of seats in the Punjab and Bengal.

The All-Parties Convention's second session opened in Calcutta on 28 December 1928, where Jinnah on behalf of the Muslim League offered to endorse the Nehru report, inclusive of joint electorates, if a few amendments were made, but they were fundamental: one-third of the seats reseved for the Muslims at the centre, reserved seats for the Muslims in the Punjab and Bengal until adult suffrage was established, that the separation of Sind should not depend upon the achievement of dominionhood in India, and the vesting of residual powers in the provinces. Jinnah's demands met with a hostile opposition from the Hindu Mahasabha. The Mahasabhaites bitterly attacked the demand for 33 per cent of the seats in the central legislature and condemned the demand for the reservation of seats for the Muslim majority in the Punjab and Bengal as 'irrelevant'. 'We do not,' they insisted, 'contemplate any such contingency.'[93] The demand that the residuary powers should be vested with the provinces and the claim for the separation of Sind were rejected. The most formidable opposition came from M.R. Jayakar, Mahasabha Working Committee member, who attacked Jinnah's demands as 'incompatible with a national constitution'. If one word was changed in the Nehru report regarding the Hindu-Muslim question, he warned, the Mahasabha would withdraw its support to it. 'If you accede to Mr Jinnah's demands,' he insisted, 'the report will be torn to pieces and will be rejected by important

---

[90] *All Parties Conference 1928,* pp. 48, 52; Kaura, *Muslims and Indian Nationalism,* pp. 44-51.
[91] The Calcutta Congress in December 1928 accepted the Nehru report's 'dominion status' objective, provided the British granted it by 1929. M.K. Gandhi, *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi [CWMG],* Vol. 38, New Delhi, 1999, pp. 283-96.
[92] Moore, *Crisis of Indian Unity,* p. 36.
[93] *The Proceedings of All Parties National Convention,* Allahabad, 1928, pp. 13, 73-4, 78-9.

communities who have now accepted it as the final word in the matter.'[94] The Calcutta convention rejected Jinnah's offer. Jinnah, in an interview with the Associated Press, blamed the Mahasabha for the failure of the negotiations on Hindu-muslim representation, terming December 1928 the 'parting of the ways' for the Muslims in India. He called for Muslim unity and solidarity. Only through organisation and unity, he argued, could the Muslim minority protect its 'rights and interests' against 'a permanent Hindu majority' in India.[95] The debate on the Muslim demands had become highly contested, as there was disagreement over how far the reservations for the Muslims protected the unity and integrity of the Indian nation.

By early 1929 Jinnah had drafted the historic Fourteen Points as part of the Muslim League's programme, which formed the basis of a settlement on joint electorates in India. The Fourteen Points, which were unveiled on 3 March 1929, chiefly reiterated the old demands on the provision for a federal constitution and provincial autonomy, but also reintroduced the demand for separate electorates for the Muslims until the Hindus were willing to reconsider the Muslim position in the country.[96] The League's demands embodied the essential principle of a constitutional strategy that it had evolved since the early 1920s on Muslim representation: autonomous provinces within a federal structure in which the Muslims would have weighted representation. The League demanded a weak federation of autonomous provinces in which the provinces and not the centre had the real power.[97] The Congress rejected the Fourteen Points as 'preposterous'.[98] In its view, the only circumstance in which provincial autonomy could be conceded was if its divisive influence was counterbalanced by the unifying effect of a strong centre in the country. If progressive concessions were made to the Muslims, it was argued, little would remain of India's unity. The Congress's predicament had deepened, and the Muslim League' bargaining position left little room for agreement on Hindu-Muslim representation in the country.

The Nehru report had failed to satisfy the majority of Muslim parties and their leaders in India. The Muslim opposition to the report grew in volume and intensity, with calls demanding the retention of separate electorates and 'weightage' for the Muslims. The report was attacked as a 'Hindu document' designed to establish a 'Hindu Raj' under British protection in the country. For the Muslims, it was claimed, 'the maintenance of separate electorates is a necessity, as without them the Mahasabhaite mentality of the Hindus cannot be countered'. Joint electorates would eliminate 'Muslim representation', it was asserted, and the Muslims elected from such electorates would be 'tools in the hands of the Hindus'.[99] Mohamed Ali said that the Hindus would establish a 'legalised tyranny of numbers' in India.[100] Shafa'at Ahmad Khan, a member of the UP Legislative Council, claimed that because the number of non-Muslim voters in certain mixed constituencies was large, Muslim

---

[94] *The Proceedings*, p. 86.
[95] Cited in Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad [ed.], *Some Recent Speeches and Writings of Mr Jinnah*, Lahore, 1942, pp. 30, 41, 87.
[96] Anil Chandra Banerjee [ed.], *The Constitutional History of India*, Vol. 3, Delhi, 1977, pp. 245-7.
[97] Fazl-i-Husain to Sir Malcolm Hailey, 22 September 1928, Hailey Collection, MS EUR. E220/23, IOL.
[98] Cited in Page, *Prelude to Partition*, p. 200.
[99] *Nizam-i-Alam*, 1 September 1928, IOR L/R/5/99, 1928, IOL.
[100] *Medina*, 14 April 1928, IOR L/R/5/99, 1928, IOL.

candidates failed to get elected in the legislatures of the country.[101] Shaukat Ali, the elder of the famous Ali Brothers and president of the UP Congress Committee [UPCC] in 1925-26, blamed Motilal Nehru for making concessions to the Hindu Mahasabha and denounced those Muslim leaders, especially M.A. Ansari, who supported Nehru, calling them the 'Congress stooges'.[102] Muhammad Yakub, president of Jinnah's Muslim League [1927], protested against the 'poor' treatment of the Muslim claims in India. Saifuddin Kitchlew, a Congress Khilafatist, rejected the Nehru report as 'a mere scrap of paper meant to compromise ignorant people' – the Muslims. Ataullah Shah Bukhari, a Deobandi alim, condemned the report, 'deprecat[ing] the attitude of Malaviya, Moonje and Gandhi who had never advised their co-religionists to play fair with Muhammadans'. He rejected any 'conciliatory attitude towards the Hindus' in future India.[103] The large majority of the Muslims had little use for the constitution as outlined by the Nehru report, which threatened to widen the gulf between the Hindus and the Muslims in the country.[104]

The All India Muslim Conference – organised by Fazl-i-Husain who had assumed the leadership of the Muslim League after Jinnah – was held in Delhi from 31 December 1928 to 1 January 1929 under the presidentship of the Aga Khan. It reaffirmed its right to 'speak authoritatively on behalf of the Muslims of India', demanding separate Muslim electorates, statutory Muslim majorities, 'weightage' for the Muslim minority, and 'a federal system with complete autonomy and residuary powers vested in the states' of India.[105] It revived the demand for one third of the seats for the Muslims at the centre as well as the concession of the state status to Sind, the NWFP, and Baluchistan. The conference declared that 'as long as Musalmans are not satisfied that their rights and interests are adequately safeguarded in the constitution, they will in no way consent to the establishment of joint electorates, whether with or without conditions', in the country.[106] More crucially, the Muslim conference had demonstrated a decisive rejection of the Nehru report by claiming to represent the Muslim opinion and parties across the country.

However, the Hindu Mahasabha hailed the Nehru report as a 'bold, outspoken and fearless exposition of the national demand' in India. In an emergency meeting presided over by B.S. Moonje in Simla on 26 December 1928, it accepted through a unanimous resolution the recommendations of the report, terming it an 'epoch-making constitution'.[107] It was euphoric on the abolition of separate electorates and 'weightage' for the Muslims in India. 'Personally,' declared M.R. Jayakar, 'I am inclined to agree with the Nehru Committee's Report not perhaps as an ideal arrangement, yet on the whole being more beneficial to the Hindus than any scheme so far

---

[101] *Al Khalil*, 25 August 1928, IOR L/R/5/99, 1928, IOL.
[102] Home Poll., File No. 1/1928, FR, Delhi, 1 September 1928, NAI.
[103] Home Poll., GOI, 25/1928, FR, Punjab, 1 September 1928, NAI; *Medina*, 14 April 1928, IOR L/R/5/99, IOR L/R/5/99, 1928.
[104] Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan*, Cambridge, 1985, p. 110.
[105] K.K. Aziz [ed.], *The All India Muslim Conference, 1928-1935: A Documentary Record*, Karachi, 1972, pp. 46, 53-6.
[106] Philips [ed.], *Evolution of India and Pakistan*, Vol. 4, p. 234.
[107] Prakash, *Hindu Mahasabha*, p. 87.

suggested on the Congress side.'[108] M.M. Malaviya welcomed the report, giving full support to its proposals.[109] Lajpat Rai urged his followers to accept the report, endorsing its verdict on joint electorates in the country. He feared, however, that the Congress might make concessions to the Muslim League and declared in late October 1928, shortly before his death, that the Mahasabha would not accept any substantive changes in the report. If the Muslims persisted in seeking to amend the report, he warned, 'the Hindus will be perfectly justified in rescinding their support'.[110] If the Muslims did not accept the Nehru report, Ramanand Chatterjee asserted, the Hindus would then return to 'pure nationalism', meaning that there would be no reservation of seats for the Muslims anywhere in India.[111] The Mahasabha was jubilant over the Nehru report primarily because the privileged position of the Hindus had not been disturbed in India's legislatures under the provisions of the new constitution.

More fundamentally, the Hindu Mahasabha's plan was to stop any further negotiations on the Nehru report. At its Surat session on 30 April 1929, a motion moved by B.S. Moonje and seconded by Bhai Parmanand threatened to withdraw the Mahasabha's support to the report if any changes were made in it. Moonje declared that if Jinnah would any moment consent to accept the Nehru constitution, the Mahasabha would be prepared to do so. 'The situation, therefore,' he explained, 'is entirely in the hands of our Muslim brothers ... If the Muslims are pleased to give up their narrow communalism and accept the Nehru Report, I am sure the Hindu Mahasabha will respond suitably.' The Mahasabha claimed to stand uncompromisingly by the report, insisting that it should not be altered by one 'jot', or 'tittle'.[112] In the Mahasabha's belief, the Muslims would eventually come to accept the Nehru report as the 'second best' constitution for India.

Gandhi was keen on reaching a Hindu-Muslim settlement on representation and asked the Congress to stick to its pledge on the reservation of seats for the Muslims until an alternative formula was devised in the country. Motilal Nehru urged Gandhi to make the Hindu Mahasabha agree to the main Muslim demands so that the whole scheme of the Nehru report would be adopted by the Muslim League. But this could not be achieved. Gandhi wrote to Motilal Nehru: 'How that can be done or whether it should be done, you know best. My mind is in a whirl in this matter. The atmosphere is too foggy for me to see clearly.'[113] Gandhi's views had remained unheeded: he had no alternative but to wait on God for 'a solution'. At the Jamiat-ul-Ulema conference in Delhi on 2 March 1931, Gandhi declared: 'As a Congressman and as a Hindu, I say that I wish to give the Muslims what they want. I do not wish to act like a Bania. I wish to leave everything to the honour of the Muslims. I would

---

[108] M.R. Jayakar's letter to N.C. Kelkar, dated 28 August 1928, File No. 442, Jayakar Papers, NMML.
[109] Home Poll., FR Punjab, 30 August 1928, NAI.
[110] Lajpat Rai's letter to Motilal Nehru, n.d. File No. 108 [Supplementary], AICC Papers, NMML.
[111] R. Chatterjee, Presidential Address to 12th session of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha, 30 March 1929, Surat. *The Leader*, Allahabad, 1 April 1929, p. 12, Microfilm, NMML.
[112] N.N. Mitra [ed.], *Indian Annual Register*, 1929, Vol. 1, January-June, p. 359.
[113] Gandhi's letter to Motilal Nehru, dated 23 August 1929, Motilal Nehru Papers, NMML; Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 26, p. 232.

like you to put down whatever you want on a blank sheet of paper and I shall agree to it.'[114] In a speech to a public meeting in Delhi on 7 March 1931, he advised the Hindus to concede whatever the Muslims wanted.[115] In Gandhi's plan, the Congress had a commitment to give the Muslims all that they wanted as the price of securing a united nation in India.

Nonetheless, there were apprehensions and alarm in the Hindu Mahasabha that Gandhi would fall a victim to the 'intrigues of the Muslims' under Jinnah's leadership to accept their demands on representation in the country. At an emergency meeting on 23 March 1931, the Mahasabha discussed the threat contained in Gandhi's conciliatory speeches and issued a statement that it had no intention of following Gandhi's suggestion of 'unilateral gesture of generosity'. If Gandhi yielded to the Muslims, it warned, he would lose 'Hindu support' in the country.[116] B.S. Moonje wrote to Gandhi urging him not to agree to any concessions in order to conciliate the Muslims. He asserted: 'If you want to find a radical solution of the Hindu-Muslim relation, so far as the public administration of the country is concerned, I think there could be no safer position than that taken by the Hindu Mahasabha which is one of pure unalloyed nationalism ... [I]f the Musalmans cannot trust and remain in the Congress and give up their separatist mentality, let us leave them alone ...'[117] Moonje insisted that nationalism not reservations was the answer to the representation of the communities in India. M.R. Jayakar urged Gandhi not to yield to the Muslim demands because the government would deliberately make these concessions part of a constitution which would be entirely different from the Nehru report. He warned: 'My purpose in writing this letter to you is to make you acquainted with the apprehensions of a very large body of the Hindus that any attempt at this time to vary the solution of the Hindu-Muslim question adopted in the Nehru Committee's Report is fraught with the far-reaching consequences ...'[118] The Hindu leaders from the NWFP, the Punjab, and Sind, in a joint conference held in Lahore in early May 1931 under the auspices of the Hindu Mahasabha, asserted that they would not conciliate the Muslims at their own expense in India. B.S. Moonje, presiding over the conference, personally conveyed their misgivings and fears to Gandhi. A deputation of the Hindu Mahasabha led by Bhai Parmanand had met Gandhi in Delhi and warned him not to give concessions to the Muslims. If Gandhi did so, Parmanand insisted, the Mahasabha would oppose him tooth and nail across the country.[119] It was part of the Mahasabha's plan that Gandhi would not to be allowed to give concessions to the Muslims in the negotiations on representation in India.

By 1929, the Congress had abandoned the Nehru report and decided not to accept any settlement on representation without the concurrence of the Muslims in the country.[120] The Congress's failure to achieve unity

---

[114] *The Times of India*, 3 March 1931, p. 3, Microfilm, NMML.
[115] Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 46, pp. 269-74.
[116] Hindu Mahasabha working Committee's statement, dated 23 March 1931, AICC Papers, File No. G-85/1931, NMML.
[117] B.S. Moonje's letter to Gandhi, dated 5 August 1929, Jayakar Papers, File No. 437, NMML.
[118] M.R. Jayakar's letter to Gandhi, dated 23 August 1929, Jayakar Papers, Reel 57, File No. 407, Part I, Item 83, NAI.
[119] Home Poll., File No. 18/6/1931, NAI; Ram Lal Wadhwa, *Hindu Maha Sabha, 1928-1947*, New Delhi, 1999, pp. 82-3.
[120] Congress Working Committee's resolution on 'Communal Problem', 1929, File No. G-37/1929, AICC Papers, NMML.

in 1928 had proved irreversible, resulting in the abandonment of any significant initiative for agreement on Hindu-Muslim power sharing until Independence for India in 1947.

IV. Round Table Conferences

The problem of Hindu-Muslim representation was finally taken up for negotiations in England. The first Round Table Conference was held in London from 12 November 1930 to 19 January 1931. It comprised 89 members: 16 from the three British parties, one from each of the 20 native states, and 53 members from the different Indian parties, including the Hindu Mahasabha [B.S. Moonje and M.R. Jayakar], the Liberals [T.B. Sapru and C.Y. Chintamani], the depressed classes [B.R. Ambedkar and Rao Bahadur Srinivasan], the Muslims [the Aga Khan, Fazl-i-Hussain, M.A Jinnah, Muhammad Shafi, and Fazl-ul-Haq], the Sikhs [Sardar Ujjal Singh], and the Indian Christians [K.T. Paul]. The Congress, which had launched the Civil Disobedience movement in India, boycotted the conference. The conference had collapsed and failed to reach agreement on representation, nevertheless.

The Second Round Table Conference began in London in late 1931. It differed significantly from the first, this time with the Congress represented and Gandhi participating as its sole representative. It was during the second round of negotiations in September 1931 that the issues of federation and reservations and safeguards for the minorities were fully taken up in an effort to reach agreement on representation in India. The Congress's position was that 'except for the Sikhs and the Muslims, for historical reasons no other communities should be recognised as separate political entities'. In other words, the other communities -- the Christians and the Anglo-Indians - were excluded from the 'minority' status. Gandhi presented the 'Congress formula' at the conference, echoing the 1916 Lucknow Pact that had made a commitment to separate electorates for the Muslims in India. 'Now,' Gandhi insisted, 'it was a point of honour ... not to recede from the position.' In an open support to the Muslim demands, he declared: 'I will surrender to the Muslims. Hindus form the majority and as such I will laddle *[sic]* out with generous hands, I will be satisfied with what is left behind.'[121] The 'Congress formula' stated that joint electorates should form the basis of representation in the future constitution, and that seats should be reserved in the central and provincial legislatures for the Hindus, the Sikhs and the Muslims in any province where they were less than 25 per cent of the population, with the right to contest additional seats. The formula rejected the reservation of seats for the Muslim majority in the Punjab and Bengal, but offered to constitute Sind into a separate province if the province was to bear its financial costs.[122] The 'Congress formula' fell through at the conference, however.

The Muslim League rejected the 'Congress formula' as 'more harmful and destructive than even the Nehru report' on representation in India. In the negotiations in London, Fazl-i-Husain directed the Muslim League to

---

[121] 2-3 October 1931, B.S. Moonje's Diaries and Letter Pads, Reel 1, NMML.

[122] Sir Maurice Gwyer and A. Appadorai [eds.], *Speeches and Documents on the Indian Constitution, 1921-47*, Vol.1, Bombay, 1957, p. 251.

secure a weak federal centre and autonomous constituent units in order to counter the potential threat of a permanent 'Hindu majority' in India.[123] Under Husian's 'Punjab thesis', the constituent units of the federation were to receive the fullest autonomy in the country: the provinces were to be created on an equal footing with the Indian states and given all the residuary powers as well as the right of secession from India at all times.[124] In particular, the Muslim League demanded the retention of separate electorates, secure Muslim majorities in the Punjab and Bengal, the creation of Sind province, and the elevation of the NWFP to the status of a governor's province.[125] If the Congress was 'not willing to recognise the Muslim demands,' warned Shaukat Ali, prominent Congress leader from the UP, 'they [Muslims] would ask the Government to satisfy them and make the peace'.[126] The opposition meant that the Muslim League had held tightly on to the constitutional safeguards that established much of the structure of interests on which the subsequent emergence of Pakistan was to be based. The Hindu Mahasabha denounced the 'Congress formula' as 'unacceptable' to the Hindus, too. It expressed its loss of faith in the 'credibility of Gandhi and the Congress' in negotiating a settlement on representation. It did not trust the British, too, because the colonial state was definitely 'pro-Muslim'.[127] B.S. Moonje made it clear that the Mahasabha's sole objective was to protect Hindu interests from 'Muslim communalism', declaring that the Hindus would not make any concessions to the Muslims unless the latter backed the demand for India's dominion status.[128] In a moment of historic defeat, Gandhi confessed to British prime minister Ramsay MacDonald that 'it is with deep sorrow and deep humiliation that I have to announce utter failure on my part to secure an agreed solution of the communal question through informal conversations among and with the representatives of different groups'. However, he noted, the failure was temporary. He explained: 'I have not a shadow of a doubt that the iceberg of communal differences will melt under the warmth of the sun of freedom.'[129] The hopes for a settlement on Hindu-Muslim representation had collapsed, despite Gandhi's efforts at a 'blank sheet', at the end of the the multi-party negotiations in London.

In a final arbitration, Britain had unveiled the Communal Award, echoing Fazl-i-Husain's 'Punjab thesis' on provincial autonomy in India. The award announced by Ramsay MacDonald on 16 August 1932 was the result of Britain's decision to divide power in the provinces among the rival communities and social groups which, in its view, constituted Indian society.[130] It recommended that the Muslims, the Sikhs, the Europeans, the Christians,

---

[123] Fazl-i-Husain's letter to Shafaat Ahmad Khan, dated 2 November 1931, cited in Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad [ed.], *Historic Documents of the Muslim Freedom Movement*, Lahore, 1970, p. 284.
[124] Ayesha Jalal and Anil Seal, 'Alternative to Partition: Muslim Politics Between the Wars', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 3, 1981, pp. 436-8.
[125] Jalal and Seal, 'Alternative to Partition, p. 435.
[126] Indian Round Table Conference [Second Session], 7 September 1931 to 1 December 1931, *Proceedings of Federal Structure Committee and Minorities Committee*, London, 1932, p. 528.
[127] B.S. Moonje's letter to Padmaraj Jain, dated 19 August 1931, File No. 63, Moonje Papers, NMML.
[128] B.S. Moonje's statement in London, 14 November 1930, File No. 63, Moonje Papers, NMML.
[129] Indian Round Table Conference [Second Session], *Proceedings*, ninth sitting, 8 October 1931, p. 530.
[130] Joya Chatterji, *Bengal Divided: Hindu Communalism and Partition, 1932-1947*, Cambridge, 1994, pp. 18-9; idem, *The Spoils of Partition: Bengal and India, 1947-1967*, Cambridge, 2007, p. 12.

and the depressed classes were all to receive separate electorates in the country.[131] It granted substantial powers to the provinces and guaranteed the Muslims not only separate electorates but more seats than any other community in the Punjab and Bengal: the Muslims received 49 per cent of the reserved seats in the Punjab, and 48 per cent in Bengal.[132] The Congress vociferously opposed the award, and so did the Hindu Mahasabha, even though the Muslim League accepted it. The day after the declaration of the award, 18 August 1932, Gandhi wrote to MacDonald declaring his decision to undertake a 'perpetual fast unto death', demanding the withdrawal of the scheme for separate electorates for the depressed classes.[133] The outcome was the Poona Pact under which representatives of the depressed classes would be elected by the general electorate under the common franchise in India.

In the negotiations on Hindu-Muslim representation, the central problem lay in the inability to determine the place of the Muslims in the future Indian nation. The Hindu Mahasabha insisted that reservations and legislative concessions for the Muslims would fragment the unity of the nation, reiterating the idea of a democratic majority that was effectively 'Hindu'.[134] Its notion of democracy was based on a 'Hindu majority rule', posing a potential threat to wreck any constitutional agreement conciliating the Muslim demands for safeguards in the country. Its campaign put extreme pressure on the Congress, complicating the latter's bargaining position on the future distribution of power between the Hindus and the Muslims. The conflict was in part an outcome of the irreconcilability of the Muslim demands, too, which had come full circle. The crisis was intimately tied to the failure of the Congress to pursue a 'single nation': it had faced obstacles as it strove to win Muslim support for the nationalist movement and hold them within it. The Mahasabha's opposition to the Muslim demands was formidable and proved to be a central factor that had deepened the crisis, which remained unresolved throughout the period of negotiations in the 1920s and 1930s. A decade later, in March 1940, the Muslim League under Jinnah's leadership called in a resolution, if ambiguous in its particulars, for a sovereign Muslim state of 'Pakistan'.

Conclusion

Eearly twentieth-century India witnessed a conflict and political antagonism between the Hindus and the Muslims due to the grant of separate electorates to the latter, a safeguard demanded by the Aligarh elite, under the Morley-Minto reforms. The Congress accepted separate electorates and 'weightage' for the Muslims under the 1916 Lucknow Pact as part of its efforts to enlist Muslim support for the nationalist struggle in India. The Hindu Mahasabha rejected the pact and demanded its abrogation, disputing the Congress's claim to represent the Hindu community. It reiterated its insistence on unconditional joint electorates as its core principle and

---

[131] Moore, *Crisis of Indian Unity*, p. 121.

[132] 'General Appreciation of the Communal Award', statement of the Prime Minister, Para 7, Home Poll., File No. 41-47, 1932, NAI; B.R. Tomlinson, *The Indian National Congress and the Raj, 1929-1942: The Penultimate Phase*, London, 1976, p. 19.

[133] M.K. Gandhi's letter to Ramsay MacDonald, dated 18 August 1932. Gandhi, *CWMG*, Vol. 50, pp. 383-4.

[134] B.S. Moonje's letter to Raja Narendra Nath, dated 25 June 1929, Jayakar Papers, File No. 436, NMML.

supported the 'one-man one-vote' system that favoured the Hindu majority in the country. In the negotiations leading up to the draft of the 1928 Nehru report, the Congress and the Muslim League had come close to an agreement based on joint electorates, but were unable to bridge differences over the Punjab and Bengal and the percentage of Muslim seats in the central legislature. The collapse of unity in 1928 marked the end of the Congress's last initiative for a settlement on Hindu-Muslim representation in the country. At the 1931 Round Table Conference in London, Gandhi made the offer as part of the 'Congress formula' to accept a substantial part of the Muslim demands, provided the Muslims endorsed the demand of *swaraj* and agreed to a referendum on the possibility of joint electorates when the new constitution came into operation. The 'Congress formula' failed to win Muslim support, resulting in the collapse of the multi-party negotiations in England. The Mahasabha sought to overturn Gandhi's initiative and took a formidably tough position against any concessions to the Muslims in the legislatures of the country.[135] The fallout which attended the Mahasabha's hostile campaign was the Congress's inability to surmount the opposition to the Muslim demands that had remained inflexible and irreconcilable throughout the period of negotiations, precipitating the crisis on the path to the Muslim League's Pakistan movement in the 1940s.

[135] Letter of Padmaraj Jain to B.S. Moonje, dated 12 April 1931, File No. 21-VI, Hindu Mahasabha Papers, NMML.

12

Conclusion

A central theme of this study has been the development and evolution of Hindu nationalist ideology through *sangathan* that expressed extreme hostility and conflict with the Congress's secular nationalism in India. The 1920s constitute the point at which Hindu nationalism emerged as a persistent feature of political life in north India; and its narrative targeted chiefly the Muslims in contrast to the Congress's nationalist struggle against British rule in the country.[1] Hindu nationalism developed as an ideological discourse in the context of issues connected to the representation of the Hindus in colonial politics. It was first formulated by the middle class Hindu elites in the Punjab against the backdrop of constitutional reforms, particularly separate electorates, introduced by the colonial state in India in the early twentieth century. The Hindu Mahasabha, the institutional voice of Hindu nationalism and revivalism, was founded as an ideological representative of Hindu politics in 1915 in the United Provinces, a province which had become the crucible of India's anti-colonial movement in the 1920s and 1930s.[2]

V.D. Savarkar first articulated the ideology of Hindu nationalism in the 1920s, theorising the construction of a 'Hindu nation [*rashtra*]' as the chief doctrinal component of Hindutva. Hindutva expressed deep-rooted hostility against Islam and the Muslims, echoing an ethnic criterion of the Indian nation. It portrayed India as the 'sacred territory' of Aryavarta [the land of the Aryans], defining a 'Hindu' as one to whom India was both a 'fatherland' and a 'holyland'.[3] For Hindutva, the Hindu majority embodied the nation, whereas the religious minorities – the Muslims and the Christians -- were 'un-Indian' as well as 'outsders' who must show an adherence and assimiliation of Hindu culture, which was the national culture in India.[4]

The Hindu Mahasabha represented a movement for Hindu unity and consolidation, inheriting its articulation of a 'Hindu nation' from the late nineteenth-century revivalism developed by the Arya Samaj. At the heart of its narrative was the promotion of *sangathan* – the assertion of Hindu unity and organisation as the principal ideal of a 'Hindu nation'.[5] *Sangathan* in essence articulated the 'homogeneous' and 'pure' elements of Hindu culture as well as the rationale of a unified Hindu community as a means of consolidating Hindu society in response to the spectre of Muslim 'strength' and 'cohesion'.[6] The Muslims were depicted as a 'unified political force' and a

---

[1] John Zavos, *The Emergence of Hindu Nationalism in India*, New Delhi, 2000, pp. 99-100.
[2] Indra Prakash, *A Review of the History and Work of the Hindu Mahasabha and the Hindu Sangathan Movement*, New Delhi, 2nd.edn. 1952 [1938], pp. xv-xvi.
[3] V.D. Savarkar, *Hindutva: Who is a Hindu?*, New Delhi, 2003, p. 33.
[4] Christophe Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement and Indian Politics, 1925 to the 1990s: Strategies of Identity-building, Implantation and Mobilisation [with special reference to Central India]*, London, 1996, p. 25.
[5] Zavos, *Emergence*, pp. 167, 176.
[6] Swami Shraddhanand, *Hindu sangathan: Saviour of the Dying Race*, N.p., 1926, pp. 29-31.

'threat' because of their 'pan-Islamism' as well as their 'aggressiveness' in opposition to the Hindus in India.[7] The conscious articulation of *sangathan*, including the Malkana *shuddhi* campaign in the western UP, was intimately linked to the ascendance of the Hindu Mahasabha as a political force in north India in the 1920s. The path to *sangathan* as well as the idealised vision of Hindu society was supplemented by a defence of the *varna* [caste] system: caste was perceived as essential to Hindu identity primarily as a category of Hindu differentiation from *mlecchas* [foreigners/barbarians] -- the Muslims.[8] Hindu publicists attempted to project Hindu unity and coherence by integrating into Hindu society the untouchables and lower castes, as caste oppression and disunity had resulted in conversions to Islam or Christianity across the centuries in India.[9] However, the projection of Hindu homogeneity stood in conflict with the caste hierarchy, failing to overcome the realities of upper caste values and practices. The integration of the untouchables into Hindu society was a persistent problem for *sangathan* ideology, which in its 'Hindu' orientation had become an apologia for the reinforcement of the *varna* hierarchy and the Brahmanical order; and the relationship of the untouchables to caste Hindus had become increasingly problematic to the parameters of Hindu unity based on caste as advocated by *sangathan*ists in India.[10]

The chief aim of this study has been to explore the ideological trajectory in which the Hindu Mahasabha attempted to contest the Indian National Congress's principle of territorial nationalism which cut across the communities in India. The Mahasabha developed an alternative political culture to the dominant secular idiom in Indian politics and rejected the Congress's secular nationalism. Ideologically, it was in conflict with the Congress's conception of the Indian nation, which was secular, inclusive and universalist. The Mahasabha gave primacy to a 'Hindu' identity in India's history and culture and, like the Muslim League, rejected the universalist view of nationalism articulated by the Congress.[11] Its *sangathan* narrative also clashed with the Congress's doctrines of 'non-violence' and 'Hindu-Muslim unity' that constituted the legitimate *modus operandi* of the struggle against British rule in India. Inevitably, the Mahasabha had failed to join the Congress's anti-colonial struggles, or launch any mass movement in the country. More crucially, the Mahasabha's *sangathan* programme could not make an impact in India because of the prevailing political system dominated by the Congress. The Mahasabha had remained a political force confined to north India; and its narrow social base and the uneven spread of its movement in geographical terms challenged its claim to be the representative of the Hindus in the country.

---

[7] C. Jaffrelot [ed.], *Hindu Nationalism: A Reader*, New Delhi, 2007, pp. 15-6.
[8] Jaffrelot, *Hindu Nationalist Movement*, p. 45.
[9] Joya Chatterji, *Bengal Divided: Hindu Communalism and Partition, 1932-1947*, Cambridge, 1994, pp. 261-8.
[10] Zavos, *Emergence*, p. 149; Jaffrelot, *Hindu Nationalist Movement*, pp. 13, 522.
[11] G. Pandey, *The Construction of Communalism in Colonial North India*, Delhi, 1990, pp. 210-11; Antony Copley, 'Introduction: Debating Indian Nationalism and Hindu Religious Belief', in Antony Copley [ed.], *Hinduism in Public and Private: Reform, Hindutva, Gender, and Sampraday*, New Delhi, 2003, p. 6.

The ideological fallout of the Mahasabha's *sangathan* doctrine was a political battle to explicitly set out the connection between Hindutva and the Indian nation based on a 'Hindu-majority rule' in the country. In the crucial multi-party negotiations of the 1920s and 1930s on constitution-making, the Mahasabha resisted the Muslim demands for reservations in the legislatures of India; and its formidable opposition had a regressive impact on the Congress's all-India bargaining position, contributing in part to the loss of a settlement on Hindu-Muslim representation and hence a 'single nation' in India. The *sangathan*ist crusade for a Hindu majoritarian rule and its anti-Muslim antagonism had become central to the Mahasabha's movement for the ideological construction of a 'Hindu nation' – which was based on the centrality of Hindu culture and rights in India during the 1920s and 1930s.[12]

[12] Jaffrelot, *Hindu Nationalist Movement*, pp. 6-7, 19.

Bibliography

Government Archival Records

Oriental and India Office Collections [IOL], British Library, London

Archer Papers, Mss. Eur. F. 236, IOL.
Butler Papers, Mss. Eur. F. 116, IOL.
John Morley Papers, Mss. Eur. D. 573, IOL.
Harry Haig Papers, Mss. Eur. F. 115, IOL.
Linguistic Survey of India Records, c. 1900-1930, S/1/5.
Malcolm Hailey Papers.
Native Newspaper Reports, 1910-1930 [L/R/5] for the United Provinces [UPNNR].
Public and Judicial Department Papers, 1910-1930 [L/P&J/6].

National Archives of India, New Delhi

Home, Political Proceedings, 1900-1930 [Home Poll].
Home Department, including Public, Judicial, Sanitary, Education and Police Depts., 1900-1930.
Proceedings and Files of the Government of UP in GAD, Judicial, Police and Municipal Deptts, 1891-1933.
Files of Foreign and Political Deptts, 1928.
Padmakant Malaviya Papers.

Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi [NMML]

All-India Congress Committee Papers.
All India Hindu Mahasabha Papers.
B.S. *Moonje Papers.*
C.Y. Chintamani Papers.
Jawaharlal Nehru Papers.
Madan Mohan Malaviya Papers [Microfilm].
Motilal Nehru Papers.
M.R. *Jayakar Papers.*
M.S. Aney Papers.
S.P. Mookherjee Papers.
V.D. Savarkar Papers.

Jawaharlal Nehru University Library

Archives on Contemporary History of India [P.C. Joshi Archives].
Transfer of Power Papers.

UP State Archives, Lucknow

General Administration Department, UP, 1910-1930 [GAD].
Education Department, 1910-1930.
Judicial, Police and Municipal Deptts, 1900-1933.

Criminal Investigation Department Office, Lucknow

Police Abstracts of Intelligence, 1910-1930.
Weekly Appreciation of the Political Situation, 1900-1930.

Official Publications

Annual Report of the Director of Public Health of UP, Allahabad, 1923-35.
Census of India, 1901, NWP, Part I, Report, Allahabad, 1902.
Census of India, 1911, UP, Vol. XV, Part I, Report, Allahabad, 1912.
Census of India, 1921, UP, Vol. XVI, Part I, Report, Allahabad, 1923
Census of India, 1931, UP, Vol. XVIII, Part I, Report, Allahabad, 1933.
Cochrane, A.W.R., *Triennial Report of Civil Hospitals and Dispensaries of UP, years 1920, 1921 and 1922,* Allahabad, 1923.
Committee of the Exhibition, *Sanyukt Prant ki Pradarshini* [Exhibition of UP], Allahabad, 1911.
General Report on Public Instruction in UP [also called *Annual Report on the Progress of Education*], Allahabad, 1860-1939.
General Report on Public Instruction in the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, Allahabad, 1920-1930.
Hoey, William, *A Monograph on Trade and Manufactures in Northern India,* Lucknow, 1880.
Indian Cinematograph [Rangachariar] Committee, 1927-1928, Evidence, Vol. II [Includes Lucknow], Calcutta, 1928.
Indian Law Reports, Allahabad, Vol. 28, Allahabad, 1906.
Legislative Assembly Debates, Official report, IV, 62, 15 September 1927.
Report of the Muslims of the Native Newspaper Reports of UP, 1870-1940 [also called *Selections from Vernacular Newspapers* and *Notes on the Press* for certain periods and compiled weekly], IOL and NAI.
Nevill, H.R., *Allahabad: a Gazetteer, Vol. XXIII of the District Gazetteers of UP,* Allahabad, 1928.
_____, *Bahraich: A Gazetteer, Vol. XLV of the District Gazetteers of UP,* Allahabad, 1903.
_____, *Bijnor: A Gazetteer, Vol. XIV of the District Gazetteers of UP,* Allahabad, 1928.
_____, *Cawnpore: A Gazetteer, Vol. XIX of the District Gazetteers of UP,* Allahabad, 1909.
_____, *Meerut: A Gazetteer, Vol. IV of the District Gazetteers of UP,* Lucknow 1922.
NWP Municipalities Act, 1900, Allahabad, 1901.
Official Handbook, *UP Exhibition, Allahabad, 1910-1911,* 2nd edn, Allahabad, 1911.
Primary Education for Every Boy and Girl in UP, Allahabad, 1928.
Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly of United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, Allahabad, 1920-1930.
Report on the Administration of UP, Allahabad, 1905-1926.
Report of the Department of Industries in UP, Allahabad, 1925-37.
The Report of the Nagari-Pracharini Sabha, Benares, 1893-1902, Benares, 1902.
Report of the United Provinces Provincial Banking Enquiry Committee, Allahabad, 1929.
Report on the Working of the Local and District Boards in UP, Allahabad, 1900-1930.
Royal [Whitley] Commission of Labour in India, Evidence, Vol. III, Part I [Includes UP], London, 1931.

Selections from the Records of Government, NWP, Vol. II, Allahabad, 1866.
Selections from the Records of the Government, V/23/121-131, IOL, London.
Shilberrad, C.A., *A Monograph on Cotton Fabrics Produced in NWP*, Allahabad, 1898.
Statement of Particulars regarding Books and Periodicals published in UP, 1900-1930 [Office of the Director of Public Instruction], IOL and NAI.
Statistics of British India, Calcutta, 1879-1927.
UP Jails Inquiry [Stuart] Committee, 1928-29, Report, Allahabad, 1929.
UP Unemployment [Sapru] Committee, 1935, Report, Allahabad, 1936.
Walton, H.G., *A Monograph on Tanning and Working in Leather in UP*, Allahabad, 1903.
White, Edmund, *Report on the Census of NWP, Preliminary Dissertation*, Allahabad, 1882.

Unofficial Reports

AIWC, Annual Report, Calcutta, 1934.
AIWC, Annual Report, Twelfth Session, Ahmedabad, 1937.
Bajpei, Lakshmidhar [ed.], *Ekadesh Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, Part II* [Proceedings of the Eleventh Hindi Sahitya Sammelan], Prayag, 1926.
Bhartiya Hindu Shuddhi Sabha, *Pratham Varshik Report* [First Yearly Report], Agra, 1923.
Pancham Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, Part I [Proceedings of the Fifth Hindi Sahitya Sammelan], Lucknow, 1928, 2nd edn.
Report of the All India Khatri Conference, 18th Session, Lucknow, 1937.
Report of Ninth National Social Conference, Allahabad, 1892.
Sanatan Jatiya Sabha ki Dwitiya Varshik Report [Second Annual Report of the Sanatan Jatiya Sabha], Agra, 1895.

Magazines, Journals and Newspapers

Aaj, Banaras, 1920-1936, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library [NMML], New Delhi.
Abhyudaya, Allahabad, 1907-1927, Oriental and India Office Library, [IOL], London.
Advocate, Lucknow, 1907-1910, NMML, New Delhi.
Amrita Bazar Patrika, Calcutta, 1921-1928, NMML, New Delhi.
Bombay Chronicle, Bombay, 1921-1926, NMML, New Delhi.
Chand, Allahabad, 1924-1936, IOL, London.
Civil and Military Gazette, Lahore, 1920-1928, IOL, London.
Hindi Pradip, Allahabad, 1877-1903, IOL, London.
Hindu, Madras, 1920-1928, NMML, New Delhi.
Hindustani, Allahabad, 1931-1934, IOL, London.
Independent, Allahabad, 1912-1921, IOL, London.
The Indian Annual Register, Bombay, 1915-1935, NMML, New Delhi.
Kartavya, Etawah, 1910-1930, IOL, London.
The Leader, Allahabad, 1910-1939, IOL, London.
Madhuri, Lucknow, 1921-1927, IOL, London.
Milap, 1921-1926, IOL, London.
Muslim Outlook, 1921-1924, IOL, London.
The Pioneer, Lucknow, 1922-1930, NMML, New Delhi.
Pratap, Kanpur, 1920-1938, IOL, London.

The Punjabee, Lahore, 1900-1920, NMML, New Delhi.
Saraswati, Allahabad, 1900-1938, IOL, London.
Statesman, Delhi, 1900-1930, NMML, New Delhi.
Sudha, Lucknow, 1921-1927, IOL, London.
The Times of India, Delhi, 1920-1932, NMML, New Delhi.
Tribune, Chandigarh, 1921-1928, NMML, New Delhi.
Vartman, Kanpur, 1924-1939, IOL, London.

Hindi Tracts [Pre-1947]

Agarwal, Kamlnath [comp.], *Pavitra Holi*, n.p. 1940.
Agnihotri, Angan Lal, *Lodha Rajput Mimansa* [A Treatise on Lodh Rajputs], Bulandshahr, 1905.
Anon. [A Home Ruler], *Dussehra mein Muharram* [the Hindu Version of the Moslem-Hindu Fracas of Allahaba], Allahabad, 1917.
Anon. [Hindu Dharma Rakshak], *Musalmani Andher Khata* [Black Deeds of Muslims], Awadh, 1928.
Anon. [Hindu Sabha], *Alarm Bell urf Khatre ki Ghanti* [Alarm Bell meaning the Bell of Danger], Banaras, 1925.
Anon, *Hindu-Muslim Ekta ka Sawal* [A Dialogue Between Shri Bhagwandass and Maulana Azad Sobhani on Hindu-Muslim Unity], Kashi, 1923.
Baijnath, Lala, *Dharma Shiksha* [Teachings on Religious Duties], Meerut, 1910.
Bais, Bhagvan Vats Singh, *Bais Kshatriyatihas* [History of Bais Kshatriyas], Lucknow, 1931.
Bandhusamaj, *Hinduon ki Tez Talwar* [The Sharp Sword of Hindus], Kanpur, 1927.
Banprasthi, Premanand, *Ghazi Kaun Hai* [Who is Ghazi], Awadh, 1927.
_____, *Musalmani Gorakh Dhanda* [Frauds of Muslims], Awadh, 1927.
Bhagwandass, Babu, *Hinduon ka Sangrakshan aur Atmarakshan* [Protection and Self-Defence of Hindus], Kashi, 1922.
Bharat Dharma Mahamandal, *Brahmacharyashram* [Stage of Brahmacharya], Kashi, n.d.
Bhargav, Dularelal [ed.], *Sahitya Sumen*, Collection of Essays by late Balkrishna Bhatt [Flowers of Literature], Lucknow, 1937, 5th edn.
Bhargav, Rameshar Sahai, *Pavitra Holi* [An Exhortation to Purify the Social Observance of the Holi Festival of all Obscenities and Intemperance], Bulandshahr, 1925.
Chandrikaprasad, *Hinduon ke Sath Vishwasghat* [Treachery with Hindus], Awadh, 1917.
Chaudhry, Gaurishankar Shukl, *Kya Swami Shraddhanand Apradhi The?* [Was Swami Shraddhanand a Culprit?], Kanpur, 1928.
Das, Ayodhya, *Gaumata ka Sandesh: Gaurakharth Harek Vastu Hinduon se hi Kharidiye* [Message from Mother-Cow: For the Protection of the Cow, Buy Every Item from Hindus Alone], Kashi, 1933.
'Das', Ayodhya Prasad Goyaliya, *Sangathan ka Bigul* [Trumpet of *Sangathan*], Delhi, 1926.
Datta, Pandit Gauri, *Nagari aur Urdu ka Swang* [A Mime of Hindi and Urdu], Meerut, 1900.
Dayalu, Raguvar, *Chand Musalmanon ki Harkaten* [Deeds of Some Muslims], Kanpur, 1928.
Deshraj, Thakur, *Jat Itihas* [History of Jats], Agra, 1934.
Dube, Mannan, *Hindu Vidhwayen*, Mathura, 1924.
Dube, Sukhnandan Prasad, *Chauchut ka Bhut*, Lucknow, 1933.
Hare, Mathura Prasad Shiv, *Alarm Bell Arthat Khatre ka Ghanta* [Alarm Bell Meaning the Bell of Danger], Haridwar, 1924.
Gupt, Maithilisharan, *Padya Prabandh*, Part I, Prayag, 1912.

Gupta, Sannulal, *Strisubodhni,* Lucknow, 1905, rept. 1954.
Jaiswal, Nandkishore, *Ghazi Mian Arthat Masood Ghazi ka Sacca Jivan Charitr* [Ghazi Mian Meaning the True Life Sketch of Masood Ghazi], Allahabad, 1916.
_____, *Hindu aur Tazia* [A Tract Denouncing Hindu Worship of Tazia], Allahabad, 1919.
Jha, Brijmohan, *Saiyid Salar Masud ka Jivan Charitr* [The True Life Story of Ghazi Mian], Etawah, 1925.
_____, *Hinduon Jago* [Hindus Awake], Etawah, 2nd edn, 1926.
Joshi, Badrinath, *Vidhwodvah Mimansa,* Prayag, 1928, 2nd edn.
Krishnanand, *Hinduon Cheto* [Hindus Awake], Agra, 1929.
Lakshmanacharya, Goswami, *Bhishan Bhavishya* [Terrible Future],Allahabad, 1909.
Lal, Kanhaiya, *Muhammad Jivan Charitr* [A Tract Attacking Prophet Muhammad], Banaras, 3rd edn, 1911.
Lal, Shib Lal Ganeshi, *Dayanand Charitr* [A Tract Attacking Dayanand], Moradabad, 1906.
Madansingh, Kunwar, *Hinduon Kab Tak Chetoge* [Hindus, When Will You Awaken], Mathura, 1923.
Maharaj, Achalram, *Hindu Dharma Rahasya* [Secret of Hindu Religion], Agra, 2nd edn, 1939.
Mishra, Suraj Prasad, *Hindu Auraton ki Loot* [The Loot of Hindu Women], Lucknow, 1924.
_____, *Musalman Gundon ke Hinduon par Ghor Atyachar, Part I* [The Extreme Excesses Committed by Muslim Goondas on Hindus] Kanpur, 1924.
Narayan, Badri, *Bhajan Gauraksha Gopal Darpan* [Songs on Cow Protection], Lucknow, 1917.
Paribrajak, Swami Satyadev, *Sangathan ka Bigul* Trumpet of *Sangathan*], Dehradun, 3rd edn, 1926.
Parmanand, Bhai, *Hindu sangathan* [Hindu Sangathan], Lahore, 1936.
Premanand, Mahatma, *Musalmani Andher Khata* [The Dark Deeds of Muslims], Awadh, 1928.
Rama Tirtha, Swami, *Sanatan Dharma,* Lucknow, n.d.
Sampurnanand, *Kuchh Smritiyan Aur Kuchh Sfhut Vichar,* Kashi, 1962.
Sanyasi, Swami Alaram, *Bhajan Gauraksha Updesh Manjari* [Songs on Cow Protection], Prayag, 1892.
Sanyasi, Swami Chidananda, *Shuddhi Vyavastha* [The Working of *Shuddhi*], Delhi, 1928.
Sharma, Bishan, *Malabar ka Drishya No. 1: Drin Sankalp Vir* [The Scene at Malabar No. 1: The Hero's Firm in His Resolve], Meerut, 1923.
Sharma, Bumitra, *Niyoga Mardana ka Vimardana,* Meerut, 1917.
Sharma, Jagatnarayan, *Ghazi Mian ki Puja: Hinduon ko Kya Sujha* [A Tract Attacking the Worship of Ghazi Mian], Etawah, 1905.
Sharma, Kalicharan, *Vichitra Jivan* [Strange Life], Moradabad, 2nd edn., 1925.
Sharma, Rameshwar, *Gauraksha Prachar Natak* [Poems on Cow-protection Propaganda], Moradabad, 1919.
Sharma, Ramswarup, *Malkanon ki Pukar* [The Cry of Malkanas], Agra, 1924.
Sharma, Satyavrat, *Malabar aur Arya Samaj* [Malabar and Arya Samaj], Agra, 3rd edn, 1923.
Sharma, Shivanath, *Mister Vyas Ki Katha,* Lucknow, 1927.
Shraddhanand, Swami, *Khatre ka Ghanta Arthat Muhammadi Shadyantra ka Rahasyabhed* [Alarm Bell Meaning the Discourse of Muslim Conspiracy], Delhi, 1923.
Siddhantalankar, Deveshwar, *Swami Shraddhanandji ki Hatya aur Islam ki Shiksha* [Murder of Swami Shraddhanand and the Teachings of Islam], Banaras, 1927.
Singh, Brajesh, *Ghazi Mian ka Bhanda Phor* [The Disclosure of the Hollowness of Ghazi Mian], Allahabad, 1927.
Singh, Thakur Rajkishore, *Hindu Sangathan,* Bhallia, 1924.
Swami, Chuttanlal, *Arya Samaj ke Upkar* [Foavours of Arya Samaj], Meerut, 1918.
Tirtha, Swami Rama, *Sanatan Dharma,* Lucknow, n.d.
Tiwari, Harisharad, *Bharat ka Saccha Sanyasi Swami Shraddhanand* [Shraddhanand, the True Sanyasi of India], Kanpur, 2nd edn, 1927.

Upadhyaya, Ganga Prasad, [ed.], *Vidhwa Vivah Mimamnsa,* Allahabad, 1927.
_____[ed.], *Hindu Striyon ki Loot ke Karan* [The Causes of the Plunder of Hindu Women], Allahabad, 1927.
Vidyalankar, Satyadeva, *Swami Shraddhananda,* Delhi, 1933.

Hindi Books and Articles [Post-1947]

Awasthi, Lalit Mohan, *Khari Boli Hindi ka Samajik Itihas* [Social History of Khari Boli Hindi], Bombay, 1977.
Desh Khatre Mein [Country in Danger], Delhi, 1990.
Bhartiya Hindu Shuddhi Sabha ka Sankshipt Itihas tatha Vivran: 1923-1950 [A Brief History and Description of the Bhartiya Hindu Shuddhi Sabha], New Delhi, n.d.

Brahmanand, *Bhartiya Swatantrata Andolan aur UP ki Hindi Patrakarita* [Indian Independence Movement and Hindi Journalism of UP], Delhi, 1986.
Krishnanath [ed.], *Rashtraratn Shivprasad Gupt* [National Jewel Shivprasad Gupt], Varanasi, 1971.
Lajpat Rai, *Punjab Kesari Swarqiya Lala Lajpat Rai Ji Ki Atmakatha,* Lahore, 1915.
Motichandra, *Kashi ka Itihas* [A History of Banaras], Bombay, 1962.
Sharma, Ramvilas, *Mahavir Prasad Dwivedi aur Hindi Navjagran* [Mahavir Prasad Dwivedi and Hindi Renaissance], New Delhi, 1977.
Upadhyay, Deen Dayal, *Akhand Bharat Aur Muslim Samasya*, New Delhi, 1992.

English Books [Pre-1947]

Aney, M.S. and Malaviya, M.M., *The Congress Nationalist Party: What It Stands For and Why Every Indian Should Support It*, Allahabad, 1934.
Arora, Jagnath Prasad, *Pernicious Influence of the West*, Banaras, 1930.
Arya Samaj, *Devotional Songs of a National Complexion*, Ghazipur, 1937.
Baijnath, Lala, *Social Reform for NWP: Proceedings of Public Meetings, With Two Papers and a Preface*, Bombay, 1886.
Blunt, E.A.H. [ed]., *Social Service in India: An Introduction to Some Social and Economic Problems of the Indian People*, London, 1938.
_____, *The Caste System of Northern India: With Special Reference to UP*, London, 1931.
Butler, S.H., *Oudh Policy: The Policy of Sympathy,* Allahabad, 1906.
Chitragupta, *Life of Barrister Savarkar* [updated by Indra Prakash], N.P., 1926, rept. Bombay, 1987.
Crooke, W., 'Notes on Some Muhammadan Saints and Shrines in the United Provinces', *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. 53, 1924.
Dar, Bishan Narain, *Collected Speeches and Writings of Pt. Bishan Narain Dar,* Vol. 1 [Ed: H.L. Chatterjee], Lucknow, 1921.
_____, *An Appeal to the English Public on Behalf of the Hindus of Northwestern Province and Oudh,* Lucknow, 1893.
Gandhi, Mohandas K., *An Autobiography: The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, Ahmedabad, 1929.
_____, *Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule*, Ahmedabad, 1910, rept. [Delhi] 1996.
Gokhale, G.K., *Speeches of Gopal Krishna Gokhale*, Madras, 1916.
Hitchcock, R.H., *Peasant Revolt in Malabar: A History of the Malabar Rebellion 1921,* Madras, 1925, rept. New Delhi, 1983.

Lal Chand, R.B., *Self-Abnegation in Politics* [foreword by Bhai Parmanand], Lahore, 1938.
Malaviya, M.M., *Court Character and Primary Education in the North-West Provinces and Oudh,* Allahabad, 1897.
Mukherji, Upendra Nath, *Hinduism and the Coming Census: Christianity and Hinduism,* Calcutta, 1911.
_____, *Hindus: A Dying Race*, Calcutta, 1909.
Parmanand, Bhai, *The Story of My Life* [trans. N. Sunder Iyer and Lal Chand Dhawan], Lahore, 1938, rept. New Delhi, 1982.
_____, *Hindu Sangathan* [Trans. Lal Chand Dhawan], Lahore, 1936.
Polak, Henry S.L., *M.K. Gandhi: A Sketch of His Life and Work*, Madras, 1918.
Prakash, Indra, *A Review of the History and Work of the Hindu Mahasabha and the Hindu Sangathan Movement* [Foreword by Bhai Parmanand], New Delhi, 1938 [2nd.edn. 1952].
_____, *Hindu Mahasabha: Its Contribution to Indian Politics,* New Delhi, 1938, rept. 1966.
Rai, Lajpat, *The Arya Samaj: An Account of its Origins, Doctrines and Activities, with a Biographical Sketch of the Founder,* Delhi, 1915, rept. 1967.

Sarda, Har Bilas, *Hindu Superiority: An Attempt to Determine the Position of the Hindu Race in the Scale of Nations*, Delhi, 1906, rept. 1975.
Savarkar, V.D., *Hindutva: Who is a Hindu?,* 1st edn. Nagpur, 1923, 4th edn. Poona, 1949, rept. New Delhi, 2003.
_____, *Hindu Sangathan: Its Ideology and Immediate Programme*, Bombay, 1940.
_____, *Veer Savarkar's 'Whirl-Wind Propaganda' [Statements, Messages and Extracts from the President's Diary of His Propagandistic Years: Interviews from December 1937 to October 1941],* Bombay, 1941.
_____, *Hindu Pad-Padshahi Or A Review of the Hindu Empire of Maharashtra*, Bombay, 1925, rept. 4th edn., New Delhi, 1971.
_____, *The Story of My Transportation for Life,* Bombay, Bombay, 1984 [1929].
_____, *An Echo from the Andamans: Letters Written by Barrister Savarkar to His Brother Dr. Savarkar,* Nagpur, 1928.
Shivaprasad, *Memorandum: Court Characters in the Upper Provinces of India*, Benares, 1868.
Shraddhanand, Swami, *Hindu Sangathan: Saviour of the Dying Race*, N.p., 1926.
_____, *Inside Congress* [Foreword by Deshbandhu Gupta], Bombay, 1946, rept. New Delhi, 1984.

English Books and Articles [Post-1947]

Agarwal, P., 'Savarkar, Surat and Draupadi: Legitimising Rape as a Political Weapon', in T. Sarkar and U. Butalia [eds.], *Women and Right-wing Movements: Indian Experiences,* London, 1995.
Ahmad, Aziz, *Studies in Islamic Culture in the Indian Environment*, 1964, rept, Oxford, 1994.
Ahmad, Imtiaz, [ed.], *Ritual and Religion among Muslims in India*, New Delhi, 1981.
_____, 'Caste Mobility Movements in North India', *Indian Economic and Social History Review*, Vol. 8, No. 2, 1971.
_____, Secularism and Communalism, *Economic and Political Weekly,* Special Number, July 1969.
Ahmed, Jamil-ud-Din [ed.], *Historic Documents of the Muslim Freedom Movement*, Lahore, 1970.
_____[ed.], *Speeches and Writings of Mr Jinnah*, Lahore, 1960.
Ali, Daud [ed.], *Invoking the Past: The Uses of History in South Asia,* Delhi, 1999.

Alter, Joseph S., *Gandhi's Body: Sex, Diet, and the Politics of Nationalism*, Pennsylvania, 2000.
_____, *The Wrester's Body: Identity and Ideology in North India*, Berkeley, 1992, rept. New Delhi, 1997.
_____, 'The Celibate Wrestler: Sexual Chaos, Embodied Balance and Competitive Politics in North India', in Patricia Uberoi [ed.], *Social Reform, Sexuality and the State*, New Delhi, 1996.
_____, 'Celibacy, Sexuality, and the Transformation of Gender into Nationalism in North India', *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 53, No. 1, February 1994.
_____, 'Somatic Nationalism: Indian Wrestling and Militant Hinduism', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 3, 1994.
_____, 'The Body of One Color: Indian Wrestling, the Indian State and Utopian Somatics', *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 8, No. 1, 1993.
Ambedkar, B.R., *Annihilation of Caste: An Undelivered Speech* [Ed. Mulk Raj Anand], New Delhi, 1990.
Amin, Shahid, *Event, Metaphor, Memory: Chauri Chaura, 1922-1992*, Berkeley, 1995.
_____, 'Gandhi as Mahatma: Gorakhpur District, Eastern UP, 1921-22' in R. Guha [ed.], *Subaltern Studies III: Writings on South Asian History and Society*, Delhi, 1984.
Anand V.S., *Savarkar: A Study in the Evolution of Indian Nationalism*, London, 1967.
Anderson, Benedict, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London, 2006 [1983].

Anderson, Walter K., 'The Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh I: Early Concerns', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 7, No. 11, 11March 1972.
_____, 'The Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh II: Who Represents the Hindus?', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 7, No. 12, 18 March 1972.
_____, 'The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh III: Participation in Politics', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 7, No. 13, 25 March 1972.
Anderson, Walter K. and Shridhar D. Damle, 'RSS: Ideology, Organization, and Training', in C. Jaffrelot [ed.], *The Sangh Parivar: A Reader*, New Delhi, 2005.
Anderson, Walter K. and Shridhar D. Damle, *The Brotherhood in Saffron: The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and Hindu Revivalism*, New Delhi, 1987.
Appadurai, Arjun, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, London, 1996.
Arnold, David, *Gandhi*, London, 2001.
_____[ed.], *Imperial Medicine and Indigenous Societies*, Manchester, 1988.
Ashby, Philip H., *Modern Trends in Hinduism*, New York, 1974.
Aziz, K.K., *Muslims under Congress Rule, 1937-1939: A Documentary Record*, Vol. I, Islamabad, 1978.
_____ [ed.], *The All India Muslim Conference, 1928-1935: A Documentary Record*, Karachi, 1972.
Bacchetta, Paola, 'Hindu Nationalist Women as Ideologues: The "Sangh", the "Samiti" and their Differential Concepts of the Hindu Nation', in C. Jaffrelot [ed.], *The Sangh Parivar: A Reader*, Delhi, 2005.
Bagchi, Jasodhara, 'Representing Nationalism: Ideology of Motherhood in Colonial Bengal', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 25, Nos. 42-43, 20-27 October 1990.
Bhatia, Nandi, 'Twentieth Century Hindi Literature', in Nalini Natarajan [ed.], *Handbook of Twentieth Century Literature of India*, Westport, 1996.
Baker, C.J., *The Politics of South India: 1920-1937*, Cambridge, 1986.
_____, 'The Congress at the 1937 Elections in Madras', *Modern Asian Studies*, 10, 4, 1976.

Baker, C.J., G. Johnson and Anil Seal [eds.], 'Power, Profit and Politics: Essays on Imperialism, Nationalism and Change in Twentieth-Century India', Special Issue, *Modern Asian Studies,* Vol. 15, No. 3, 1981.

Baker, D.E.U., 'The Muslim Concern for Security: The Central Provinces and Berar, 1919-1947', in Mushirul Hasan [ed.], *Communal and Pan-Islamic Trends in Colonial India*, New Delhi, 1985.

_____, *Changing Political Leadership in an Indian Province: The Central Provinces and Berar, 1919-1939*, Delhi, 1979.

Bakshi, S.R., *Simon Commission and Indian Nationalism*, Delhi, 1977.

Banerjee, Anil Chandra [ed.], *The Constitutional History of India*, Vol. 3, Delhi, 1977.

Banerjee, Sikata, *Make Me a Man! Masculinity, Hinduism, and Nationalism in India*, Albany, 2005.

Barrier, N.G. [ed.], *The Census in British India: New Perspectives*, New Delhi, 1981.

_____[ed.], *Roots of Communal Politics*, New Delhi, 1976.

_____, *The Nehru Report: An Anti-Separatist Manifesto,* New Delhi, 1975.

_____, *Banned: Controversial Literature and Political Control in British India*, Missouri, 1974.

_____, 'The Arya Samaj and Congress Politics in the Punjab 1894-1908', *The Journal of Asian Studies,* Vol. 26, No. 3, 1971.

_____,'The Punjab Government and Communal Politics, 1870-1900', *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 3, May 1968.

_____, 'The Punjab Disturbances of 1907: The Response of the British Government in India to Agrarian Unrest', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 4, 1967.

_____, *The Punjab Alienation of Land Bill of 1900*, Durham, 1966.

Basham, A.L., *The Wonder that was India: A Survey of the History and Culture of the Indian Sub-Continent Before the Coming of the Muslims*, London, 1967.

Basu, Tapan, Pradip Datta, Sumit Sarkar, Tanika Sarkar, and Sambuddha Sen, *Khaki Shorts and Saffron Flags: A Critique of the Hindu Right*, Delhi, 1993.

Baxter, Craig, *The Jana Sangh: A Biography of an Indian Political Party*, Pennsylvania, 1969.

Bayly, C.A., *Origins of Nationality in South Asia: Patriotism and Ethical Government in the Making of Modern India,* New Delhi, 2001.

_____, *Empire and Information: Intelligence Gathering and Social Communication in India, 1780-1870*, Cambridge, 1996.

_____, 'Knowing the Country: Empire and Information', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 1, 1993.

_____, 'The Pre-History of "Communalism"? Religious Conflict in India, 1700-1860', *Modern Asian Studies*, 19, 2, 1985.

_____, *Rulers, Townsmen and Bazaars: North Indian Society in the Age of British Expansion, 1770-1870*, Cambridge, 1992 [1983].

_____, 'The Small Town and Islamic Gentry in North India: The Case of Kara', in K. Ballhatchet and J. Harriosn [eds.], *The City in South Asia: Pre-modern and Modern*, London, 1980.

_____, *The Local Roots of Indian Politics: Allahabad 1880-1920*, Oxford, 1975.

_____, 'Patrons and Politics in Northern India', *Modern Asian Studies,* Vol. 7, No. 3, 1973.

_____, 'Local Control in Indian Towns: The Case of Allahabad 1880-1920', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 4, 1971.

Bayly, Susan, 'Caste and "Race" in the Colonial Ethnography of India', in P. Robb [ed.], *The Concept of Race in South Asia*, Delhi, 1995.

_____, *Saints, Goddesses and Kings: Muslims and Christians in South Indian Society 1700-1900*, Cambridge, 1989.

Beckerlegge, Gwilym, 'Saffron and Seva: The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh's Appropriation of Swami Vivekananda', in Antony Copley [ed.], *Hinduism in Public and Private: Reform, Hindutva, Gender, and Sampraday*, New Delhi, 2003.

Berglund, Henrik, *Hindu Nationalism and Democracy*, Delhi, 2004.

Bhadra, Gautam, Gyan Prakash and Susie Tharu [eds.], *Subaltern Studies X: Writings on South Asian History and Society*, Delhi, 1999.

Bhatt, Chetan, *Hindu Nationalism: Origins, Ideologies and Modern Myths,* Oxford, 2001.

Bhatia, Nandi, 'Twentieth Century Hindi Literature', in Nalini Natarajan [ed.], *Handbook of Twentieth Century Literature of India*, Westport, 1996.

Bhattacharya, Sabyasachi [ed.], *The Contested Terrain: Perspectives on Education in India*, New Delhi, 1998.

Bhokta, Naresh Prasad, 'Marginalization of Popular Languages and Growth of Sectarian Education in Colonial India, in S. Bhattacharya [ed.], *The Contested Terrain: Perspectives on Education in India*, New Delhi, 1998.

Bilgrami, Akeel, 'What Is A Muslim? Fundamental Commitment and Cultural Identity', in Gyanendra Pandey [ed.], *Hindus and Others: The Question of Identity in India Today*, New Delhi, 1993.

Birla, G.D., *In the Shadow of the Mahatma: A Personal Memoir,* Calcutta, 1953.

Bose, Nirmal K, *My Days with Gandhi,* New Delhi, 1974.

Bose, Sugata and Ayesha Jalal, *Modern South Asia: History, Culture, Political Economy*, Delhi, 1999.

_____[eds.], *Nationalism, Democracy and Development: State and Politics in India*, Delhi, 1997.

Brass, Paul R., *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Theory and Comparison*, New Delhi, 1991.

_____, *Politics of India since Independence*, Cambridge, 1990.

_____,'Elite Groups, Symbol Manipulation and Ethnic Identity among the Muslims of South Asia', in David Taylor and M. Yapp [eds.], *Political Identity in South Asia*, London, 1979.

_____, *Language, Religion and Politics in North India*, Cambridge, 2005 [1974].

_____, *Factional Politics in an Indian State: The Congress Party in Uttar Pradesh*, Berkeley, 1965.

Brass, Paul and Francis Robinson [eds.], *Indian National Congress and Indian Society, 1885-1985: Ideology, Social Structure and Political Dominance*, Delhi, 1987.

Breman, Lance, 'The Illusion of Security: The Background to Muslim Separatism in the United Provinces', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 2, 1984.

Broomfield, J.H., *Elite Conflict in a Plural Society: Twentieth Century Bengal*, Berkeley, 1968.

Brown, Emile Clarke, *Har Dayal: Hindu Revolutionary and Rationalist*, Arizona [USA], 1975.

Brown, Judith M, *Modern India: The Origins of an Asian Democracy*, Oxford, 1994 [1985].

_____, *Gandhi and Civil Disobedience: The Mahatma in Indian Politics, 1928-34*, Cambridge, 1977.

_____, 'The Role of a National Leader: Gandhi, Congress and Civil Disobedience, 1929-34', in D.A. Low [ed.], *Congress and the Raj: Facets of the Indian Struggle, 1917-47*, London, 1977.

_____, *Gandhi's Rise to Power: Indian Politics 1915-1922*, Cambridge, 1972.

Butalia, Urvashi, *The Other Side of Silence: Voices from the Partition of India*, New Delhi, 1998.

Carroll, Lucy, 'Colonial Perceptions of Indian Society and the Emergence of Caste[s] Associations', *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 37, No. 2, February 1978.

_____, 'Caste, Social Change, and the Social Scientist: A Note on the Ahistorical Approach to Indian Social History', *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 1, November 1975.

Cashman, Richard, *The Myth of the 'Lokamanya': Tilak and Mass Politics in Maharashtra*, Berkeley, 1975.

Casolari, Marzia, 'Hindutva's Foreign Tie-up in the 1930s: Archival Evidence', *Economic and Political Weekly,* 22 January 2000.

Chadha, Yogesh, *Rediscovering Gandhi,* London, 1997.
Chakravarty, Papia, *Hindu Response to Nationalist Ferment: Bengal 1909-1935,* Calcutta, 1992.
Chakravarti, Uma, *Rewriting History: The Life and Times of Pandita Ramabai,* New Delhi, 1998.
Chanana, Karuna [ed.], *Socialisation, Education and Women: Explorations in Gender Identity,* New Delhi, 1988.
Chandavarkar, Rajnarayan, *Imperial Power and Popular Politics: Class, Resistance and the State in India c. 1850-1950,* Cambridge, 1998.
Chandra, Bipan, *India's Struggle for Independence,* Delhi, 1988.
_____, *Communalism in Modern India,* New Delhi, 1987 [1984].
_____, *Nationalism and Colonialism in Modern India,* Delhi, 1979.
_____, *Rise and Growth of Economic Nationalism in India,* New Delhi, 1966.
Chandra, Sudhir, *The Oppressive Present: Literature and Social Consciousness in Colonial India,* Delhi, 1992.
_____,'Communal Consciousness in Late 19th Century Hindi Literature', in Mushirul Hasan [ed.], *Communal and Pan-Islamic Trends in Colonial India,* Delhi, 1981.
Chatterji, Margaret, *Gandhi and the Challenge of Religious Diversity: Religious Pluralism Revisited,* New Delhi, 2005.
_____, *Gandhi's Religion,* London, 1983.
Chatterjee, Partha, [ed.], *Texts of Power: Emerging Disciplines in Colonial Bengal,* Minneapolis, 1995.
_____, 'History and the Nationalization of Hinduism', in Vasudha Dalmia and Heinrich Streitencron, *Representing Hinduism: The Construction of Religious Tradition and National Identity,* New Delhi, 1995.
_____, 'Secularism and Toleration', *Economic and Political Weekly,* Vol. 29, No. 28, 1994.
_____, *The Nation and its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories,* Delhi, 1994 [Princeton, 1993].
_____, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse,* London, 1986.
_____, 'Transferring a Political Theory: Early Nationalists in India', *Economic and Political Weekly,* Vol. 21, No, 3, 18 January 1986.
Chatterjee, Partha and Gyanendra Pandey [eds.], *Subaltern Studies VII: Writings on South Asian History and Society,* Delhi, 1992.
Chatterji, Joya, *The Spoils of Partition: Bengal and India, 1947-1967,* Cambridge, 2007.
_____, *Bengal Divided: Hindu Communalism and Partition, 1932-1947,* Cambridge, 1994.
Chatterji, Suniti Kumar, *Languages and Literatures of Modern India,* Calcutta, 1963.
Chaturved, Sitaram, *Madan Mohan Malaviya,* New Delhi, 1988 [1972].
Chitragupta, *Life of Barrister Savarkar* [rev. Indra Prakash], N.P., 1926., rept. Bombay, 1987.
Cleghorn, Bruce, 'Religion and Politics: The Leadership of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha -- Punjab and Maharashtra, 1920-1939', in B.N. Pandey [ed.], *Leadership in South Asia,* New Delhi, 1977.
Cohn, Bernard S., *Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India,* Princeton, 1996.
_____, *An Anthropologist among the Historians and Other Essays,* Delhi, 1987.
_____, 'The Command of Language and the Language of Command', in Ranajit Guha [ed.], *Subaltern Studies IV: Writings on South Asian History and Society,* Delhi, 1985.
Copland, Ian, 'Crucibles of Hindutva? V.D. Savarkar, the Hindu Mahasabha, and the Indian Princely States', in John McGuire and Ian Copland [eds.], *Hindu Nationalism and Governance,* New Delhi, 2007.
_____, *The Indian Princes in the End-Game of Empire, 1917-1947,* Cambridge, 1997.
_____, 'Communalism in Princely India: The Case of Hyderabad, 1930-1940', *Modern Asian Studies,* Vol. 22, No. 4, 1988.

Copley, Antony R.H, 'Debating Indian Nationalism and Hindu Religious Belief', in Antony Copley [ed.], *Hinduism in Public and Private: Reform, Hindutva, Gender, and Sampraday,* New Delhi, 2003.

_____[ed.], *Gurus and Their Followers: New Religious Reform Movements in Colonial India*, New Delhi, 2000.

_____, *Religions in conflict: Ideology, Cultural Contact and Conversion in Late-Colonial India*, Delhi, 1997.

_____, *Gandhi: Against the Tide,* Oxford, 1993 [1987].

Corbridge, Stuart and John Harris, *Reinventing India: Liberalization, Hindu Nationalism and Popular Democracy*, Cambridge, 2000.

Coward, Harold [ed.], *Indian Critiques of Gandhi,* Albany [USA], 2003.

Curran, J.A., *Militant Hinduism in Indian Politics: A Study of the RSS*, New Delhi, 1951.

Dalmia, Vasudha, *The Nationalization of Hindu Traditions: Bharatendu Harishchandra and Nineteenth-century Banaras*, Delhi, 1999 [1997].

_____, '"The Only Real Religion of the Hindus": Vaishnava Self-representation in the Late Nineteenth Century', in Vasudha Dalmia and Heinrich von Stietencron [eds.], *Representing Hinduism: The Construction of Religious Traditions and National Identity*, New Delhi, 1995.

Das, M.N., *Indian National Congress versus the British*, Delhi, 1978.

_____, *India under Morley and Minto*, London, 1964.

Das, Suranjan, *Communal Riots in Bengal: 1905-1947*, Delhi, 1991.

Das, Veena [ed.], *Mirrors of Violence: Communities, Riots and Survivors in South Asia*, Delhi, 1990.

_____[ed.], *The Word and the World: Fantasy, Symbol and Record*, Delhi, 1986.

Datta, P.K., *Carving Blocs: Communal Ideology in Early Twentieth-Century Bengal*, New Delhi, 1999.

_____, '"Abductions" and the Constellation of a Hindu Communal Bloc in Bengal of the 1920s', *Social History*, Vol. 14, No. 1, 1998.

_____, '"Dying Hindus": Production of Hindu Communal Common Sense in Early 20th-Century Bengal', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 28, No. 25, 19 June 1993.

Dhanagare, D.N., *Peasant Movements in India 1920-1950,* Delhi, 1983.

_____, 'Agrarian Conflict, Religion and Politics: The Moplah Rebellions in Malabar in the 19th and 20th Centuries', *Past and Present*, February 1977.

De Reincourt, Amaury, *The Soul of India,* New York, 1960.

Desai, Mahadev, *Day-to-Day with Gandhi,* Vol. 3, Banaras, 1968.

Deshpande, B.V. and S.R. Ramaswamy, *Dr Hedgewar -- The Epoch Maker: A Biography*, Bangalore, 1981.

Devalle, Susan B.C., 'Social Identities, Hindu Fundamentalism, and Politics in India' in D.N. Lorenzen, *Bhakti Religion in North India: Community Identity and Political Action*, New York, 1995.

Devanesen, Chandran, *The Making of the Mahatma,* New Delhi, 1969.

Dixt, N.G. [ed.], *Dharmaveer Dr. B.S.Moonje Commemoration Volume: Birth Centenary Celebrations 1872-1972*, Nagpur, 1972.

Dua, Shiva S., *Society and Culture in Northern India 1850-1900*, Delhi, 1985.

Dube, Saurabh, *Untouchable Pasts: Religion, Identity and Power among a Central Indian Community, 1780-1950*, Albany, 1998.

Dumont, Louis, *Homo Hierarchicus: The Caste System and its Implications* [trans. Mark Sainsbury], London, 1970, rept. Delhi, 1998.

Eaton, Richard M., *The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier, 1204-1760*, Berkeley, 1993.

Eck, Diana L., *Banaras: City of Light*, London, 1983.

Edney, Matthew H., *Mapping an Empire: The Geographical Construction of British India, 1765-1843*, Chicago, 1997.

Elst, Koenrad, *Negationism in India: Concealing the Record of Islam*, New Delhi, 1992.

Embree, Ainslie T., 'The Function of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh: To Define the Hindu Nation', in Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby [eds.], *Accounting for Fundamentalisms: The Dynamic Character of Movements*, Chicago, 2004.

Farquhar, J.N., *Modern Religious Movements in India*, New York, 1981.

Fischer-Tine, Harald, '"Kindly Elders of the Hindu Biradri": The Arya Samaj's Struggle for Influence and its Effect on Hindu-Muslim Relations, 1880-1925', in Antony R.H. Copley [ed.], *Gurus and Their Followers: New Religious Reform Movements in Colonial India*, New Delhi, 2000.

Fischer, Louis, *The Life of Mahatma Gandhi*, New York, 1962.

Foucault, Michel, *Power-Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-77* [trans. Colin Gordon], Brighton, 1980.

_____, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* [trans. Alan Sheridan], Hamondsworth, 1979.

_____, *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1: An Introduction* [trans. Robert Hurley], New York, 1978.

_____, *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception* [trans. Alan Sheridan], London, 1973.

_____, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* [trans. Alan Sheridan], London, 1972.

_____, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, London, 1970.

Fox, Richard G., *Gandhian Utopia: Experiments with Culture*, Boston, 1989.

_____, From *Zamindar to Ballot Box: Community Change in a North Indian Market Town*, New York, 1969.

Freitag, Sandria B., 'Crime in the Social Order of Colonial North India', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 25, No. 2, 1991.

_____, *Collective Action and Community: Public Arenas and the Emergence of Communalism in North India*, Berkeley, 1989.

_____, 'State and Community: Symbolic Popular Protest in Banaras's Public Arenas', in S.B. Freitag [ed.], *Culture and Power in Banaras: Community, Performance and Environment, 1800-1980*, Berkeley, 1989.

_____, 'Sacred Symbol as Mobilizing Ideology: The North Indian Search for a "Hindu" Community', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 22, No. 4, October 1980.

Frykenberg, Robert, 'The Emergence of Modern Hinduism as a Concept and an Institution: A Reappraisal with Special Reference to South India', in Gunther D. Sontheimer and Hermann Kulke [eds.], *Hinduism Reconsidered*, New Delhi, 1989.

Fuller, C.J., *The Camphor Flame: Popular Hinduism and Society in India*, Princeton, 1992.

Gallagher, J, Gordon Johnson and Anil Seal [eds.], *Locality, Province and Nation: Essays on Indian Politics 1870-1940*, Cambridge, 1973.

Gandhi, Mohandas K., *Hind Swaraj and Other Writings*, ed. Anthony J. Parel, Cambridge, 1997.

_____, *Communal Unity*, Ahmedabad, 1949.

_____, *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi [CWMG]*, 100 volumes, New Delhi, 1958-1999.

Gandhi, Rajmohan, *The Good Boatman: A Portrait of Gandhi*, New Delhi, 1995.

_____, *Understanding the Muslim Mind*, Delhi, 1987.

Geertz, Clifford [ed.], *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*, New York, 2000 [1973].

Ghai, R.K., *Shuddhi Movement in India: A Study of its Socio-political Dimensions*, Delhi, 1990.

_____, 'Tabligh and Shuddhi Movements in the Nineteen Twenties in the Punjab', *Past and Present*, Vol. 20, Part I, April 1986.

Ghatate, M.N., 'Dr B S Moonje: Tour of European Countries', in N.G. Dixit [ed.], *Dharmaveer D.r B.S. Moonje Commemoration Volume: Birth Centenary Celebrations 1872-1972*, Nagpur, 1972.

Ghose, Sankar, *Indian National Congress*, New Delhi, 1975.

Ghosh, Papiya, 'The Virile and the Chaste in Community and Nation Making: Bihar 1920s to 1940s', *Social Scientist*, Vol. 22, Nos. 1-2, January-February 1994.

_____, 'Articulating Community Rights: The Muslim League and Hindu Mahasabha in Congress Bihar, 1937-39', *South Asia*, Vol. 14, No. 2, 1991.

Godse, Gopal, *Gandhiji's Murder and After*, Delhi, 1989.

Godse, Nathuram, *Why I Assassinated Mahatma Gandhi*, Delhi, 2003.

_____, *May It Please Your Honour: Statement of Nathuram Godse*, Pune, 1977, rept. Delhi, 1989.

Gokhale, B.G., *The Making of the Indian Nation,* Bombay, 1958.

Golwalkar, M.S., *We, or Our Nationhood Defined,* Nagpur, 4th edition 1947 [1939].

_____, *Bunch of Thoughts*, Bangalore, 2000 [1966].

Gondhalekar, Nandini and Sanjoy Bhattacharya, 'The All India Hindu Mahasabha and the End of British Rule in India, 1939-1947', *Social Scientist*, Vol. 27, Nos. 7-8, July-August 1999.

Gooptu, Nandini, *The Politics of the Urban Poor in Early Twentieth-Century India,* Cambridge, 2001.

_____, 'The Urban Poor and Militant Hinduism in Early Twentieth-Century UP', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 4, 1997.

_____,'"Problem" of the Urban Poor Policy and Discourse of Local Administration: A Study of UP in the Interwar Period', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 31, 50, 14 December 1996.

Gordon, Leonard A., *Bengal: The Nationalist Movement 1876-1940,* Delhi, 1974.

Gordon, Richard, 'The Hindu Mahasabha and the Indian National Congress, 1915 to 1926', *Modern Asian Studies,* Vol. 9, No. 2, 1975.

_____, 'Non Co-operation and Council Entry, 1919 to 1920', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 3, 1973.

Gould, Daniel, 'Organized Hinduism: From Vedic Truth to Hindu Nation', in Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby [eds.], *Fundamentalisms Observed*, Vol. 1, Chicago, 1994 [1991].

Gould, William, *Hindu Nationalism and the Language of Politics in Late Colonial India*, Cambridge, 2004.

Goyal, D.R., *Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh,* New Delhi, 2nd edn. 2000 [1979].

Graham, Bruce, D., *Hindu Nationalism and Indian Politics: The Origins and Development of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh*, Cambridge, 1990.

_____, 'The Congress and Hindu Nationalism', in D.A. Low [ed.], *The Indian National Congress: Centenary Highlights,* Oxford, 1988.

_____, 'Syam Prasad Mookherjee and the Communist Alternative', in D.A. Low [ed.], *Soundings in Modern South Asian History*, London, 1968.

Guha, Ranajit [ed.], *Subaltern Studies II: Writings on South Asian History and Society*, Delhi, 1983.

Gupta, Charu, *Sexuality, Obscenity, Community: Women, Muslims and the Hindu Public in Colonial India*, Delhi, 2001.

_____, 'The Icon of Mother in Late Colonial North India: "Bharat Mata", "Matri Bhasha" and "Gau Mata", *Economic and Political Weekly*, 24 November 2001.

_____, 'Articulating Hindu Masculinity and Femininity: *Shuddhi* and *Sangathan* Movements in UP in the 1920s', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 33, No. 13, 28 March 1998.

_____, 'Politics of Gender: Women in Nazi Germany', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 26, No. 17, 1991.

_____, 'Portrayal of Women in Premchand's Stories: A Critique', *Social Scientist*, 1Vol. 9, Nos. 5-6, May-June 1991.

Gupta, Partha Sarathi [ed.], *Towards Freedom: Documents on the Movement for Independence in India, 1943-1944*, Vol. 3, Delhi, 1997.
Gupta, S.L., *Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya: A Socio-political Study*, Allahabad, 1987 [1978].
Habermas, Jurgen, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger, Great Britain, 1989.
Gwyer, Sir Maurice and A. Appadorai [eds.], *Speeches and Documents on the Indian Constitution, 1921-47*, Vol. 1, Bombay, 1957.
Hansen, Thomas Blom, *The Saffron Wave: Democracy and Hindu Nationalism in Modern India*, Princeton, 1999.
_____, 'Recuperating Masculinity', *Critique of Anthropology*, Vol. 16, No. 2, 1996.
Hardgrave, R.L, jr., 'The Mappilla Rebellion 1921: Peasant Revolt in Malabar', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 11, No. 1, 1977.
Hardiman, David, *Gandhi in His Time and Ours: The Global Legacy of His Ideas*, London, 2003.
_____, 'The Indian "Faction": A Political Theory Examined' in R. Guha [ed.], *Subaltern Studies I: Writings on South Asian History and Society*, Delhi, 1982.
_____, *Peasant Nationalities of Gujarat: Kheda District, 1917-1934*, Delhi, 1981.
Hardy, P., *The Muslims of British India*, Cambridge, 1972.
Harvey, Mark J., 'The Secular as Sacred? -- The Religio-Political Rationalization of B.G. Tilak', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 20, No. 2, 1986.
Hasan, Mushirul, *Legacy of a Divided Nation: India' Muslims since Independence*, London, 1997.
_____, [ed.], *Forging Identities: Gender, Communities and the State in India*, Delhi, 1994.
_____, [ed.], *India's Partition: Process, Strategy and Mobilization*, Delhi, 1993.
_____, The Muslim Mass Contacts Campaign: An Attempt at Political Mobilization', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 21, No. 2, 27 December 1986.
_____, *Mohamed Ali: Ideology and Politics*, New Delhi, 1981.
_____, *Nationalism and Communal Politics in India, 1916-1928*, New Delhi, 1979 [rept. 1991].

Hay, Stephen, 'Between Two Worlds: Gandhi's First Impressions of British Culture', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 4, 1969.
Hees, Peter, *Nationalism, Terrorism, Communalism: Essays in Modern India*, New Delhi, 1998.
Heimsath, Charles H., *Indian Nationalism and Hindu Social Reform*, Princeton, 1964.
Heredia, Rudolf C., 'Let Us Rethink Conversion', *The Times of India*, 22 November 2008.
Hobsbawm, E.J., *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth and Reality*, Cambridge, 1990.
Imam, Zafar [ed.], *Muslims in India*, New Delhi, 1975.
Hunt, James D., *Gandhi in London*, New Delhi, 1978.
Inden, Ronald, *Imagining India*, Oxford, 1990.
Iyer, Raghavan, *The Moral and Political Writings of Mahatma Gandhi*, Oxford, 1987.
Jaffrelot, Christophe [ed.], *Hindu Nationalism: A Reader*, New Delhi, 2007.
_____, 'The RSS: A Hindu Nationalist Sect', in C. Jaffrelot [ed.], *The Sangh Parivar: A Reader*, New Delhi, 2005.
_____, 'Opposing Gandhi: Hindu Nationaism and Political Violence', in Denis Vidal, Gilles Tarabout, and Eric Meyer [eds.], *Violence/Non-violence: Some Hindu Perspectives*, New Delhi, 2003.
_____, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement and Indian Politics, 1925 to the 1990s: Strategies of Identity-building, Implantation and Mobilisation [with special reference to Central India]*, London, 1996.

_____, 'The Idea of Hindu Race in the Writings of Hindu Nationalist Ideologues in the 1920s and 1930s: A Concept between Two Cultures', in Peter Robb [ed.], *The Concept of Race in South Asia*, Delhi, 1997 [1995].
_____, 'The Genesis and Development of Hindu Nationalism in the Punjab: from the Arya Samaj to the Hindu Sabha [1875-1910]', *Indo-British Review*, Vol. 21, No. 1, 1993.
_____, 'Hindu Nationalism: Strategic Syncretism in Ideology Building', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 20, Nos. 12-13, 20-26 March 1993.
Jalal, Ayesha, *Self and Sovereignty: Individual and Community in South Asian Islam since 1850*, London, 2000.
_____, 'Nation, Reason and Religion: Punjab's Role in the Partition of India', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 8 August, 1998.
_____, 'Exploding Communalism: The Politics of Muslim Identity in South Asia', in Sugata Bose and Ayesha Jalal [eds.], *Nationalism, Democracy and Development: State and Politics in India*, Delhi, 1997.
_____, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan*, Cambridge, 1985.
Jalal, Ayesha and Anil Seal, 'Alternative to Partition: Muslim Politics Between the Wars', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 3, 1981.
Jayakar, M.R., *The Story of My Life, 1922-1925*, Vol. 2, Bombay, 1959.
Johnson, Gordon, *Provincial Politics and Indian Nationalism: Bombay and the Indian National Congress, 1880 to 1915*, Cambridge, 1973.
_____, 'Chitpavan Brahmins and Politics in Western India in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries', in E.R. Leach and S.N. Mukherjee [eds.], *Elites in South Asia*, Cambridge, 1970.
Jones, Kenneth W., 'Politicized Hinduism: The Ideology and Program of the Hindu Mahasabha', in Robert Baird [ed.], *Religion in Modern India*, New Delhi, 2005 [2001].
_____, 'The Arya Samaj in British India, 1875-1947', in Robert Baird [ed.], *Religion in Modern India*, New Delhi, 2005 [2001].
_____, *The New Cambridge History of India III.1: Socio-Religious Reform Movements in British India*, Cambridge, 1994 [1989].
_____, 'The Negative Component of Hindu Consciousness', *Indo-British Review*, Vol. 19, No. 1, September 1993.
_____, [ed.], *Religious Controversy in British India: Dialogues in South Asian Languages*, Albany, 1992.
_____, 'Religious Identity and the Indian Census', in N.G. Barrier [ed.], *The Census in British India: New Perspectives*, Delhi, 1980.
_____, *Arya Dharm: Hindu Consciousness in 19th-Century Punjab*, Berkeley, 1976, rept. New Delhi, 1989.
_____, 'Communalism in the Punjab: The Arya Samaj Contribution', *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 1, November 1968.
Jordens, J.T.F., *Gandhi's Religion: A Homespun Shawl*, Basingstoke, 1998.
_____, *Swami Shraddhananda: His Life and Causes*, Delhi, 1981.
_____, *Dayananda Saraswati: His Life and Ideas*, New Delhi, 1998 [1978].
_____,'Reconversion to Hinduism: the Shuddhi of the Arya Samaj', in G.A. Oddie [ed.], *Religion in South Asia: Religious Conversion and Revival in South Asia in Medieval and Modern Times*, Delhi, 1977.

_____, 'Hindu Religious and Social Reform in British India', in A.L. Basham [ed.], *A Cultural History of India*, Oxford, 1975.

Joshi, Barbara R., *Democracy in Search of Equality: Untouchable Politics and Indian Social Change*, Delhi, 1982.

Joshi, Sanjay, *Fractured Modernity: Making of a Middle Class in Colonial North India*, Delhi, 2001.

Joshi, Shashi and Bhagwan Josh, *Struggle for Hegemony in India 1920-1947: Culture, Community and Power, 1941-1947*, Vol. 3, New Delhi, 1994.

Joshi, Vijay Chandra [ed.], *Lala Lajpat Rai: Writings and Speeches, 1888-1919*, Vol. 1, Delhi, 1966.

_____[ed.], *Lala Lajpat Rai: Writings and Speeches, 1920-1928*, Vol. 2, Delhi, 1966.

Kakar, Sudhir, *The Colors of Violence: Cultural Identities, Religion and Conflict*, Chicago, 1996.

_____, *Intimate Relations: Exploring Indian Sexuality*, New Delhi, 1989.

Kanungo, Pralay, *RSS's Tryst with Politics: From Hedgewar to Sudarshan*, Delhi, 2002.

Karve, D.G., and D.V. Ambekar [eds.], *Speeches and Writings of Gopal Krishna Gokhale*, Vol. 2, Bombay, 1966.

Kaura, Uma, *Muslims and Indian Nationalism: The Emergence of the Demand for India's Partition, 1928-40*, New Delhi, 1977.

Kaviraj, Sudipta, *The Unhappy Consciousness: Bankimchandra Chattopadhyay and the Formation of Nationalist Discourse in India*, Delhi, 1995.

_____, 'Imaginary History', Occasional Papers in History and Society, 2nd Series, No. 7, NMML, 1988.

Keer, Dhananjay, *Veer Savarkar*, Bombay, 1988 [1966].

_____, *Mahatma Gandhi: Political Saint and Unarmed Prophet*, Bombay, 1973.

_____, *Dr Ambedkar: Life and Mission*, Bombay, 1971 [1954].

Khaliquzzaman, Chaudhuri, *Pathway to Pakistan*, Lahore, 1961.

King, Christopher R., *One Language, Two Scripts: The Hindi Movement in Nineteenth-century North India*, Bombay, 1994.

_____, 'Images of Virtue and Vice: The Hindi-Urdu Controversy in Two Nineteenth-century Hindi Plays', in Kenneth W. Jones [ed.], *Religious Controversy in British India: Dialogues in South Asian Languages*, Albany, 1992.

_____, 'Forging a New Linguistic Identity: The Hindi Movement in Banaras, 1868-1914', in Sandria B. Freitag [ed.], *Culture and Power in Banaras: Community, Performance, and Environment 1800-1980*, Berkeley, 1990.

Kishwar, Madhu, 'Arya Samaj and Women's Education: Kanya Mahavidyalaya, Jalandhar', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 21, No. 17, 26 April 1986.

_____, 'Gandhi on Women', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 20, Nos. 40-41, 5 October, 12 October 1985.

Kothari, Rajni, 'Class and Communalism in India', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 23, No. 49, December 1988.

Kovacs, Anja, 'You Don't Understand, We are at War! Refashioning Durga in the Service of Hindu Nationalism', *Contemporary South Asia*, Vol. 13, No. 4, 2004.

Krishna, Gopal, 'Communal Violence in India: A Study of Communal Disturbances in Delhi', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 20, No. 2, 12 January 1985.

_____, 'The Development of the Indian National Congress as a Mass Organization, 1918-1923', *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 25, No. 3, May 1966.

Kumar, Krishna, 'Hindu Revivalism and Education in North-Central India', in Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby [eds.], *Fundamentalisms and Society: Reclaiming the Sciences, the Family, and Education, Chicago*, 1993.
_____, *The Political Agenda of Education: A Study of Colonialist and Nationalist Ideas,* New Delhi, 1991.
_____, 'Quest for Self-Identity: Cultural Consciousness and Education in Hindi Region, 1880-1950', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 25, No. No. 23, 9 June 1990.
Kumar, Nita, *The Artisans of Banaras: Popular Culture and Identity, 1880-1986*, Princeton, 1988.
Kumar, Ravindra [ed.], *Selected Documents of Lala Lajpat Rai 1906-1928*, Vol. 3, New Delhi, 1992.
_____, 'From Swaraj to Purna Swaraj: Nationalist Politics in the City of Bombay, 1920-32' in D.A. Low [ed.], *Congress and the Raj: Facets of the Indian Struggle, 1917-47*, London, 1977.
_____, [ed.], *Essays in Gandhian Politics: The Rowlatt Satyagraha of 1919*, Oxford, 1971.
Kuruvachira, Jose, *Hindu Nationalists of Modern India: A Critical Study of the Intellectual Genealogy of Hindutva*, Jaipur, 2006.
Low D.A., *Britain and Indian Nationalism: The Imprint of Ambiguity 1929-1942*, Cambridge, 1997.
_____, [ed.], *Indian National Congress: Centenary Hindsights*, Oxford, 1988.
_____, [ed.], *Congress and the Raj: Facets of the Indian Struggle, 1917-47*, London, 1977.
_____, [ed.], *Soundings in Modern South Asian History*, London, 1968.
Low D.A. and Brasted H. [ed.], *Freedom, Trauma, Continuities: Northern India and Independence*, Delhi, 1998.
Ludden, David [ed.], *Contesting the Nation: Religion, Community, and the Politics of Democracy in India*, Philadelphia, 1996.
_____, *Making India Hindu: Religion, Community and the Politics of Democracy in India*, Delhi, 1996.
Lutgendorf, Philip, *The Life of a Text: Performing the Ramcharitmanas of Tulsidas,* Berkeley, 1991.
MacDonald, Ellen E., 'The Growth of Religious Consciousness in Maharashtra', *Indian Economic and Social History Review*, Vol. 5, No. 3, September 1968.

Madan, T.N., *Modern Myths, Locked Minds: Secularism and Fundamentalism in India*, Delhi, 1997.
_____, [ed.], *Religion in India*, Delhi, 1991.
_____, 'Secularism in its Place', *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 46, No. 4, 1987.
Madhok, Balraj, *Indian Nationalism*, New Delhi, 1969.
_____, *Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee*, Delhi, 1954.
McKean, Lise, *Divine Enterprise : Gurus and the Hindu Nationalist Movement*, Chicago, 1996.
McLane, John R., *Indian Nationalism and the Early Congress*, Princeton, 1977.
_____, 'The Early Congress, Hindu Populism and Wider Society', in R. Sisson and Stanley Wolpert [eds.], *The Congress and Indian Nationalism: The Pre-Independence Phase*, New Delhi, 1988.
Malgaonkar, Manohar, *The Men Who Killed Gandhi*, Madras, 1978.
Malkani, K.R., *The RSS Story*, New Delhi, 1980.
Mansergh, Nicholas and E.W.R. Lumby [eds.], *Constitutional Relations between Britain and India: Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 2, London, 1970.
Masselos, Jim [ed.], *Struggling and Ruling: The Indian National Congress, 1885-1985*, London, 1987.
Mathur, Sobhag., *Hindu Revivalism and the Indian National Movement: A Documentary Study of the Ideas and Policies of the Hindu Mahasabha, 1939-45*, Jodhpur, 1996.
Mathur, Y.B., *Growth of Muslim Politics in India*, Delhi, 1979.
_____, *Muslims and Changing India*, New Delhi, 1972.

Mayaram, Shail, *Resisting Regimes: Myth, Memory and the Shaping of a Muslim Identity*, Delhi, 1997.
Mehrotra, S.R., *A History of the Indian National Congress*, New Delhi, 1995.
Menon, Ritu and Kamla Bhasin, *Borders and Boundaries: Women in India's Partition*, Delhi, 1998.
Metcalf, Thomas R., *Land, Landlord, and the British Raj: Northern India in the Nineteenth Century*, Delhi, 1979.
_____, *Ideologies of the Raj*, Cambridge, 1994.
Meadowcroft, Keith, 'The All-India Hindu Mahasabha, Untouchable Politics, and "Denationalising" Conversions: The Moonje-Ambedkar Pact', *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*, Vol. 29, No. 1, April 2006.
Middleton, Peter, *The Inward Gaze: Masculinity and Subjectivity in Modern Culture*, London, 1992.
Miller, Roland, *Mappila Muslims of Kerala*, Delhi, 1992.
Minault, Gail, *The Khilafat Movement: Religious Symbolism and Political Mobilization in India*, New York, 1982, rept. New Delhi, 1999.
_____, *Secluded Scholars: Women's Education and Muslim Social Reform in Colonial India*, Delhi, 1998.
Mookerjee, Shyama Prasad, *Leaves from a Diary*, 1993.
Moore, R.J., *Endgames of Empire: Studies of Britain's Indian Problem*, Delhi, 1988.
_____, *The Crisis of Indian Unity, 1917-1940*, Oxford, 1974.
_____, 'The Making of India's Paper Federation, 1927-1935', in C.H. Philips and M.D. Wainwright [eds.], *The Partition of India: Policies and Perspectives, 1935-1947*, London, 1970.
Mukherjee, Meenakshi, 'Rhetoric of Identity: History and Fiction in Nineteenth Century India', in Alok Bhalla and Sudhir Chandra [eds.], *Indian Responses to Colonialism in the Nineteenth Century*, New Delhi, 1989.
_____, *Realism and Reality: The Novel and Society in India*, Delhi, 1985.
Mukherjee, Rudrangshu [ed.], *The Penguin Gandhi Reader*, New Delhi, 1993.
Nanda, B.R., *In Search of Gandhi: Essays and Reflections*, New Delhi, 2002.
_____, [ed.], *Gandhi: Pan-Islamism, Imperialism and Nationalism in India*, Bombay 1989.
_____, *Nehrus: Motilal and Jawaharlal*, London, 1965.
Nandy, Ashis, *At the Edge of Psychology: Essays in Politics and Culture*, Delhi, 1990 [1980].
_____, *The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self under Colonialism*, Delhi, 1988 [1983].
Naoroji, Dadabhai, *Poverty and Un-British Rule in India*, Delhi, 1962.
Nath, Trilok, *Politics of the Depressed Classes*, Delhi, 1987.
Nehru, Jawaharlal, *An Autobiography*, Delhi, 1982 [1946].
_____, *The Discovery of India*, New Delhi, 1982 [1946].
_____, *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru*, Vol. 6, New Delhi, 1972.
_____, *A Bunch of Old Letters [being mostly written to Jawaharlal Nehru and some written by him]*, London, 1960, rept., New Delhi, 2005.
Neufeldt, Ronald, 'The Hindu Mahasabha and Gandhi', in Harold Coward [ed.], *Indian Critiques of Gandhi*, Albany, 2003.
Nigam, Aditya, *The Insurrection of Little Selves: The Crisis of Secular-Nationalism in India*, New Delhi, 1996.
Niyogy, M.B., 'Dharmaveer Dr. Balakrishna Shivram Moonje', in N.G. Dixit [ed.], *Dharmaveer Dr. B.S. Moonje Commemoration Volume: Birth Centenary Celebration, 1872-1972*, Nagpur, 1972.
Noorani, A.G., *Savarkar and Hindutva: The Godse Connection*, Delhi, 2002.

Oberoi, Harjot, *The Construction of Religious Boundaries: Culture, Identity and Diversity in the Sikh Tradition,* Delhi, 1994.
_____, 'Brotherhood of the Pure: The Poetics and Politics of Cultural Transgression', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 1, 1992.
O'Hanlon, Rosalind, 'Historical Approaches to Communalism: Perspectives from Western India', in Peter Robb [ed.], *Society and Ideology: Essays in South Asian History presented to Professor K.A. Ballhatchet,* Delhi, 1993.
_____, 'Acts of Appropriation: Non-Brahman Radicals and the Congress in Early Twentieth Century Maharashtra', in M. Shepperdson and C. Simmons [eds.], *The Indian National Congress and the Political Economy of India, 1885-1985*, Avebury, 1988.
_____, *Caste, Conflict and Ideology: Mahatma Jotirao Phule and Low Caste Protest in Nineteenth Century Western India*, Cambridge, 1985.
Omvedt, Gail, *Cultural Revolt in a Colonial Society: The Non-Brahmin Movement in Western India, 1873-1930*, Bombay, 1976.
Orsini, Francesca, *The Hindi Public Sphere, 1920-1940: Language and Literature in the Age of Nationalism,* New Delhi, 2002.
O'Toole, Therese, 'Secularizing the Sacred Cow: The Relationship between Religious Reform and Hindu Nationalism', in Antony Copley [ed.], *Hinduism in Public and Private: Reform, Hindutva, Gender, and Sampraday*, New Delhi, 2003.
Owen, Hugh, *The Indian Nationalist Movement, c. 1912-22: Leadership, Organisation and Philosophy*, Delhi, 1990.
_____, 'The Non-Brahman Movements and the Transformation of the Congress, 1912-1922' in J. Masselos [ed.], *Struggling and Ruling: The Indian National Congress, 1885-1985*, London, 1987.
_____, 'Negotiating the Lucknow Pact', *The Journal of Asian Studies,* Vol. 32, No. 3, May 1972.
Page, David, *Prelude to Partition: The Indian Muslims and the Imperial System of Control, 1920-1932*, Delhi, 1987 [1982].
_____, *The Partition Omnibus: Prelude to Partition: The Indian Muslims and the Imperial System of Control 1920-32*, New Delhi, 2002.
Palkar, Narayan Hari, *Dr K.B. Hedgewar* [Translated from Marathi by Mrinalini Dhavale], Poona, 1964.
Pandey, B.N., *A Centenary History of the Indian National Congress*, New Delhi, 1985.
_____[ed.], *Leadership in South Asia*, New Delhi, 1977.
_____[ed.], *The Indian National Movement 1885-1947: Select Documents*, New York, 1979.
Pandey, Gyanendra, *Routine Violence: Nations, Fragments, Histories,* Stanford, 2006.
_____, 'Which of US are Hindus?' in G. Pandey [ed.], *Hindus and Others: The Question of Identity in India Today*, New Delhi, 1993.
_____, 'Hindus and Others: The Militant Hindu Construction', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 26, No. 52, 28 December 1991.
_____, *The Construction of Communalism in Colonial North India*, New Delhi, 2006 [1990].
_____, 'Rallying Round the Cow: Sectarian Strife in the Bhojpur Region, c. 1888-1917', in Ranajit Guha [ed.], *Subaltern Studies II – Writings on South Asian History and Society*, Delhi, 1983.
_____, *The Ascendancy of the Congress in Uttar Pradesh, 1926-34: A Study in Imperfect Mobilization*, Delhi, 1978.
_____, 'Congress and Muslim League', *Modern Asian Studies,* Vol. 12, No. 4, 1978.
Panikkar, K.N., *Culture, Ideology, Hegemony*, New Delhi, 1998.
_____, [ed.], *Communalism in India: History, Politics and Culture*, Delhi, 1991.
_____, [ed.], *Peasant Protests and Revolts in Malabar*, New Delhi, 1990.

_____, *Against Lord and State: Religion and Peasant Uprisings in Malabar, 1836-1921*, Delhi, 1989.

Parasher, Aloka, 'Attitudes towards the Mlecchа in Early Northern India – up to c. A.D. 600', *The Indian Historical Review*, Vol. 9, Nos. 1-2, July 1982-January 1983.

Parekh, Bhikhu, *Gandhi*, Oxford, 1997.

_____, *Colonialism, Tradition and Reform: An Analysis of Gandhi's Political Discourse*, New Delhi, 1989.

_____, *Gandhi's Political Philosophy: A Critical Examination*, Basingstoke, 1989.

Parel, Anthony J., *Gandhi's Philosophy and the Quest for Harmony*, Cambridge, 2006.

_____, The Political Symbolism of the Cow in India', *Journal of Commonwealth Political Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 3, November 1969.

Pattanaik, D.D., *Hindu Nationalism in India*, Vols. 2, 3, New Delhi, 1998.

Philips, C.H. [ed.], *The Evolution of India and Pakistan 1858-1947: Select Documents*, Vol. 4, London, 1962.

Philips, C.H. and Mary Doren Wainwright [eds.], *The Partition of India: Policies and Perspectives, 1935-1947*, London, 1970.

Pinch, William R., *Peasants and Monks in British India*, Berkeley, 1996.

Pinney, Christopher, 'Indian Magical Realism: Notes on Popular Visual Culture', in Gautam Bhadra, Gyan Prakash and Susie Tharu [eds.], *Subaltern Studies X: Writings on South Asian History and Society*, Delhi, 1999.

_____, 'The Nation [Un]Pictured? Chromolithography and "Popular" Politics in India, 1878-1995', *Critical Inquiry*, 23, Summer, 1997.

Pirzada, Syed Sharifuddin [ed.], *Foundations of Pakistan: All-India Muslim League Documents 1906-1947*, Vol. 1, Karachi, 1990.

_____[ed.], *Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah's Correspondence*, Karachi, 1966

Prakash, Gyan [ed.], *After Colonialism: Imperial Histories and Postcolonial Displacements*, Princeton, 1995.

Prasad, Ram, 'Hindutva Ideology: Extracting the Fundamentals', *Contemporary South Asia*, Vol. 2, No. 3, 1993.

Prior, Katherine, 'Making History: The State's Intervention in Urban Religious Disputes in North Western Provinces in the Early Nineteenth Century', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 1, 1993.

Pyarelal, N.P., *Mahatma Gandhi: The Last Phase*, Vol. 1, Ahmedabad, 1965.

Qureshi, M. Naeem, *Pan-Islamism in British Indian Politics: A Study of the Khilafat Movement 1918-1924*, Leiden, 1999.

Radice, William [ed.], *Swami Vivekananda and the Modernisation of Hinduism*, Delhi, 1998.

Radway, Janice A., *Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy, and Popular Literature*, London, 1984.

Raghavan, T.C.A., 'Origins and Development of Hindu Mahasabha Ideology: The Call of V.D. Savarkar and Bhai Parmanand', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 18, No. 15, 9 April 1983.

Matiur Rahman, *From Consultation to Confrontation: A Study of the Muslim League in British Indian Politics, 1906-1912*, London, 1970.

Rahman, Matiur, Rai, Amrit, *A House Divided: The Origin and Development of Hindi-Urdu*, Delhi, 1984.

Rai, Lajpat, *A History of the Arya Samaj* [Ed. Sri Ram Sharma], Bombay, 1967.

_____, *Autobiograhical Writings* [Ed. Vijay Chandra Joshi], Jullundur, 1965.

Reeves, D. Peter, *Landlords and Governments in the United Province: A Study of Their Relations until Zamindari Abolition*, Delhi, 1991.

_____, 'The Politics of Order', *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 25, No. 2, February 1966.

Robb, Peter, *Empire, Identity, and India: Liberalism, Modernity, and Nation*, Oxford, 2007.
_____, *A History of India*, Basingstoke, 2002.
_____[ed.], *The Concept of Race in South Asia*, Delhi, 1995.
_____[ed.], *Society and Ideology: Essays in South Asian History*, Delhi, 1993.
_____[ed.], *Dalit Movements and the Meanings of Labour in India*, Delhi, 1993.
_____[ed], *Rural South Asia: Linkages, Change and Development*, London, 1983.
_____, *The Evolution of British Policy towards Indian Politics, 1880-1920: Essays on Colonial Attitudes, Imperial Strategies, and Bihar*, New Delhi, 1992.
_____, 'The Challenge of Gau Mata: British Policy and Religious Change in India, 1880-1916', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 20, No. 2, 1986.
_____, *The Government of India and Reform: Policies towards Politics and the Constitution, 1916-1921*, Oxford, 1976.
Robinson, Francis, *Separatism Among Indian Muslims: The Politics of the United Provinces' Muslims 1860-1923*, Cambridge, 2nd edn. 1993 [1974].
_____, 'The Re-emergence of Lucknow as a Major Political Centre, 1899 -- early 1920s', in Violette Graff [ed.], *Lucknow: Memories of a City*, New Delhi, 2002 [1997].
_____, 'The Congress and the Muslims', in Paul Brass and Francis Robinson [eds.], *Indian National Congress and Indian Society, 1885-1985: Ideology, Social Structure and Political Dominance*, Delhi, 1987.
_____, 'Islam and Muslim Separatism', in David Taylor and Malcolm Yapp [eds.], *Political Identity in South Asia*, London, 1979.
_____, 'Municipal Government and Muslim Separatism in the United Provinces, 1883-1916', in J. Gallaghar, Gordon Johnson, and Anil Seal [eds.], *Locality, Province and Nation: essays on Indian Politics 1870-1940*, Cambridge, 1973.
_____, 'Municipal Government and Muslim Separatism in the United Provinces, 1883-1916', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 3, 1973.
Rose, Michael, R., *Darwin's Spectre: Evolutionary Biology in Modern World*, Princeton, 2000.
Rosselli, John, 'The Self-Image of Effeteness: Physical Education and Nationalism in Nineteenth-Century Bengal', *Past and Present*, Vol. 86, February 1980.
Said, Edward, *Orientalism*, London, 1995 [1978].
Sampurnanand, *Memories and Reflections*, Bombay, 1962.
Sangari, Kumkum and Sudesh Vaid [eds.], *Recasting Women: Essays in Colonial History*, New Delhi, 1989.
Sarkar, Sumit, *Beyond Nationalist Frames: Postmodernism, Hindu Fundamntalism, History*, Bloomington [UK], 2002.
_____, *Writing Social History*, Delhi, 1997.
_____, 'Indian Nationalism and the Politics of Hindutva', in David Ludden [ed.], *Contesting the Nation: Religion, Community, and the Politics of Democracy in India*, Philadelphia, 1996.
_____, *Modern India 1885-1947*, Delhi, 1989 [1983].
_____, 'The Logic of Gandhian Nationalism: Civil Disobedience and the Gandhi-Irwin Pact, 1930-31', *Indian Historical Review*, Vol. 3, No. 1, July 1976.
Sarkar, Tanika, *Hindu Wife and Hindu Nation: Gender, Religion and the Prehistory of Indian Nationalism*, London, 2001.
_____, 'Woman, Community, and Nation: A Historical Trajectory for Hindu Identity Politics', in Patricia Jeffery and Amrita Basu [eds.], *Appropriating Gender: Women's Activism and Politicized Religion in South Asia*, London, 1998.

_____, 'Scandal in High Places: Discourses on Chaste Hindu Woman in Late Nineteenth Century Bengal', in Meenakshi Thapan [ed.], *Embodiment: Essays on Gender and Identity*, Delhi, 1997.
_____, *'Heroic Women, Mother Goddesses: Family and Organisation in Hindutva Politics'*, in Tanika Sarkar and Urvashi Butalia [eds.], *Women and Right-wing Movements: Indian Experiences,* London, 1995.
_____, 'Imagining a Hindu Nation: Hindu and Muslim in Bankimchandra's Later Writings', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 29, No. 39, 24 September 1994.
_____, *'Rhetoric against Age of Consent: Resisting Colonial Reason and Death of a Child Wife'*, *Economic and Political Weekly,* Vol. 28, No. 36, 4 September 1993.
_____, 'The Hindu Wife and the Hindu Nation: Domesticity and Nationalism in Nineteenth Century Bengal', *Social History*, Vol. 8, No. 2, 1992.
_____, 'The woman as Communal Subject: Rashtrasevika Samiti and Ram Janmabhoomi Movement', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 26, No. 35, 31 August 1991.
_____, Nationalist Iconography: Image of Women in Nineteenth Century Bengali Literature', *Economic and Political Weekly,* Vol. 22, No. 47, 21 November 1987.
Savarkar, V.D., *The Story of My Transportation for Life*, Bombay, 1984 [1950].
_____, *Historic Statements* [Eds., S.S. Savarkar and G.M. Joshi], Bombay, 1967.
_____, *Samagra Savarkar Wangmaya: Writings of Swatantrya Veer V.D. Savarkar,* Vols. 4, 5, 6, Poona, 1964, rept. New Delhi, 2003.
_____, *Six Glorious Epochs of Indian History,* Bombay, 1985 [1949].
_____, *The Indian War of Independence 1857,* Bombay, 8th edn.1970, rept. New Delhi, 1980 [1947].
_____, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan: A Collection of the Presidential Speeches Delivered from the Hindu Mahasabha Platform,* Bombay, 1992 [1949].
_____, *Hindu Dhwaja: Sword is the Symbol of Abhyudaya and Kundalini is the Symbol of Nihshreyas,* Bombay, N.d.
_____, *Thus Spoke the Prophet! Warnings that were Overlooked: A Collection of Writings and Speeches of Veer Savarkar,* Bombay, 1952.
Schaler, J., 'Sanskritization, Caste Uplift, and Social Dissidence in the Sant Ravidas Panth' in D. Lorenzen [ed.], *Bhakti Religion in North India: Community Identity and Political Action*, New York, 1995.
Seal, Anil, *The Emergence of Indian Nationalism: Competition and Collaboration in the Later Nineteenth Century*, Cambridge, 1968.
_____, 'Imperialism and Nationalism in India', John Gallagher, Gordon Johnson and Anil Seal [eds.], *Locality, Province and Nation: Essays on Indian Politics 1870-1940,* Cambridge, 1973.

Sen, Amartya, *The Argumentative Indian: Writings on Indian History, Culture and Identity*, London, 2005.
_____, 'Secularism and Its Discontents', in Kaushik Basu and Sanjay Subrahmanyam [eds.], *Unravelling the Nation: Sectarian Conflict and India's Secular Identity*, Delhi, 1996.
Sen, Amiya P., *Hindu Revivalism in Bengal, 1872-1905: Some Essays in Interpretation*, Delhi, 1993.
Sengupta, Indira Chowdhury, *The Frail Hero and Virile History: Gender and the Politics of Culture in Colonial Bengal*, Delhi, 1998.
_____, 'Mother India and Mother Victoria: Motherhood and Nationalism in Nineteenth Century Bengal', *South Asia Research*, Vol. 12, 1992.
Seunarine, J.F., *Reconversion to Hinduism through Shuddhi*, Madras, 1977.
Shah, Ghanshyam, 'Identity, Communal Consciousness and Politics', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 29, No. 19, 7 May 1994.

Shaikh, Farzana, 'Muslims and Political Representation in Colonial India: The Making of Pakistan', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 20, 3, July 1986.
_____, *Community and Consensus in Islam: Muslim Representation in Colonial India 1860-1947*, Cambridge, 1989.
Sharma, Jyotirmaya, *Hindutva: Exploring the Idea of Hindu Nationalism*, New Delhi, 2003.
Sharma, Satish Kumar, 'Shuddhi: A Case Study of Role of a Religious Movement in the Status Improvement of Untouchables', *Indian Journal of Social Research*, Vol. 24, No. 1, April 1983.
Siddiqi, Majid Hayat, *Agrarian Unrest in North India: The United Provinces, 1918-1922*, New Delhi, 1978.
Sikand, Yoginder and Manjari Katju, 'Mass Conversions to Hinduism among Indian Muslims', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 29, No. 34, 20 August 1994.
Singh, Anita Inder, *The Origins of the Partition of India, 1936-1947*, Delhi, 1987.
Sinha, Mrinalini, *Colonial Masculinity: The 'Manly Englishman' and the 'Effeminate Bengali' in the Late Nineteenth Century*, Manchester, 1995.
Sisson, R. and Stanley Wolpert [eds.], *The Congress and Indian Nationalism, the Pre-Independence Phase*, California, 1988.
Sitaramayya, Pattabhi B., *History of the Indian National Congress*, Vols. 1, 2, Bombay, 1946, rept. New Delhi, 1969.
Srinivas, M.N., *Social Change in Modern India*, Berkeley, 1968, rept. Delhi, 1972.
Srivastava, Harindra, *Five Stormy Years: Savarkar in London*, New Delhi, 2002 [1983].
Stietencron, Heinrich von, 'Religious Configurations in Pre-Muslim India and the Modern Concept of Hinduism', in Vasudha Dalmia and H. von Stietencron [eds.], *Representing Hinduism: The Construction of Religious Traditions and National Identity*, New Delhi, 1995.
Stokes, Eric, *The Peasant and the Raj: Studies in Agrarian Society and Peasant Rebellion in Colonial India*, Cambridge, 1978.
Subrahmanyam, Sanjay, 'Before the Leviathan: Sectarian Violence and the State in Pre-Colonial India', in Kausik Basu and Sanjay Sabrahmanyam [eds.], *Unraveling the Nation: Sectarian Conflict and India's Secular Identity*, Delhi, 1996.
Sundaram, V.A [ed.], *Benares Hindu University 1905-1915*, Benares, 1936.
_____, [ed.], *Benares Hindu University 1916-1942*, Benares, 1942.
Talbot, Cynthia, 'Inscribing the Other, Inscribing the Self: Hindu-Muslim Identities in Pre-colonial India', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 37, 4, 1995.
Talwar, Vir Bharat, 'Feminist Consciousness in Women's Journals in Hindi: 1910-20', in Kumkum Sangari and Sudesh Vaid [eds.], *Recasting Women: Essays in Colonial History*, New Delhi, 1989.
Tejani, Shabnum, *Indian Secularism: A Social and Intellectual History, 1890-1950*, Ranikhet, 2007.
Tendulkar, G.D., *Mahatma: Life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi*, Vols. 2, 6, Bombay, 1951, rept. New Delhi, 1969.
Thapar, Romila, *A History of India*, New Delhi, 1978 [Harmondsworth, 1970].
_____, *Ancient Indian Social History: Some Interpretations*, London, 1996 [New Delhi, 1978].
_____, 'Imagined Religious Communities? Ancient History and the Modern Search for a Hindu Identity', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 23, No. 2, 1989.
_____, 'Which of Us are Aryans?', *Seminar*, No. 364, December 1989.
_____, 'Syndicated Moksha', *Seminar*, No. 313, September 1985.
Thapar, Romila, Harbans Mukhia and Bipan Chandra, *Communalism and the Writing of Indian History*, New Delhi, 1987.
Thursby, G.R., *Hindu-Muslim Relations in British India: A Study of Controversy, Conflict and Communal Movements in Northern India, 1923-1928*, Leiden, 1975.

Tomlinson, B.R., *The Indian national Congress and the Raj, 1929-42: The Penultimate Phase*, London, 1976.

Trehan, Jyoti, *Savarkar: Thought and Action of Vinayak Damodar Savarkar*, Delhi, 1991.

Trieste, Enrico Fasana, 'From *Hindutva* to Hindu Rashtra: The Social and Political Thought of Vinayak Damodar Savarkar [1883-1966]', British Library of Political and Economic Science, LSE.

Tucker, Richard, 'Hindu Traditionalism and Nationalist Ideologies in Nineteenth-Century Maharashtra', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 3, 1976.

Tuteja, K.L., 'The Punjab Hindu Sabha and Communal Politics, 1906-1923', in Indu Banga [ed.], *Five Punjab Centuries*, New Delhi, 1997.

Tuteja, K.L. and O.P. Grewal, 'Emergence of Hindu Communal Ideology in Early Twentieth Century Punjab', *Social Scientist*, Vol. 20, No. 7-8, July-August 1992.

Uberoi, Patricia [ed.], *Social Reform, Sexuality and the State*, New Delhi, 1996.

Upadhyaya, Ganga Prasad, *Satyarth Prakash: The Light of Truth* [English translation], Allahabad, 1981.

Upadhyaya, Prakash Chandra, 'The Politics of Indian Secularism', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 4, 1992.

Varshney, Ashutosh, *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life: Hindus and Muslims in India*, New Haven [USA], 2002 [2000].

Veer, Peter van der, *Religious Nationalism: Hindus and Muslims in India*, Berkeley, 1998 [1994].

_____, 'Hindu Nationalism and the Discourse of Modernity: The Vishwa Hindu Parishad', in M. Marty and R. Scott Appleby [eds.], *Accounting for Fundamentalisms*, Chicago, 1993.

_____, *Gods on Earth: The Management of Religious Experience and Identity in a North Indian Pilgrimage Centre*, London, 1988.

Viswanathan, Gauri, *Masks of Conquest: Literary Study and British Rule in India*, New York, 1989.

_____, *Outside the Fold: Conversion, Modernity and Belief*, Princeton, 1998.

Wadhwa, Ram Lal, *Hindu Maha Sabha, 1928-1947*, New Delhi, 1999.

Washbrook, David, *The Emergence of Provincial Politics: The Madras Presidency 1880-1920*, Cambridge, 1976.

_____, 'The Development of Caste Organisation in South India, 1880 to 1925, in C.J. Baker and D. Wasbrook [eds.], *South India: Political Institutions and Political Change 1880-1940*, Delhi, 1975.

_____, 'Gandhian Politics: A Review of Judith Brown's Gandhi's Rise to Power', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 1, 1973.

Wasti, S.R., *Lord Minto and the Indian Nationalist Movement, 1905 to 1910*, Oxford, 1964.

Weintraub, Jeff and Krishna Kumar [eds.], *Public and Private in Thought and Practice*, Chicago, 1997.

Wolpert, Stanley A., *Gandhi's Passion: The Life and Legacy of Mahatma Gandhi*, Oxford, 2001.

_____, *Jinnah of Pakistan*, New York, 1984.

_____, *Tilak and Gokhale: Revolution and Reform in the Making of Modern India*, Berkeley, 1977 [1962].

_____, *Morley and India 1906-1910*, Berkeley, 1967.

Yagnik, Indulal, *Shyamji Krishnavarma: Life and Times of an Indian Revolutionary*, Bombay, 1950.

Yang, Anand A., 'Sacred Symbol and Sacred Space in Rural India: Community Mobilization in the "Anti-Cow Killing" Riot of 1893', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 22, No. 4, October 1980.

Z.H. Zaidi, 'Aspects of the Development of Muslim League Policy, 1937-1947', in C.H. Philips and Mary Doren Wainwright [eds.], *The Partition of India: Policies and Perspectives, 1935-1947*, London, 1970.

Zavos, John, 'The Shapes of Hindu Nationalism', in Catherine Adeney and Lawrence Saez [eds.], *Coalition Politics and Hindu Nationalism*, London, 2005.
_____, *The Emergence of Hindu Nationalism in India*, New Delhi, 2000.
_____, 'Searching for Hindu Nationalism in Modern Indian History: Analysis of Some Early Ideological Developments', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 23, No. 4, 7 August 1999.
Zelliot, Eleanor, *From Untouchable to Dalit: Essays on the Ambedkar Movement*, Delhi, 1996.
_____, *The Emergence of Hinduism: Essays on Religion in Maharashtra*, New York, 1988.
_____, 'Gandhi and Ambedkar: A Study in Leadership', in J.M. Mahar [ed.], *The Untouchables i Contemporary India*, Tucson, USA, 1972.
Zulfiqar, Ghulam Husain [ed.], *Select Documents on National Language*, Vol. 1, Islamabad, 1985.

Lectures, Unpublished Papers, Theses

Bapu, Prabhu N., 'Hindu-Muslim Conflict and British Policy in United Provinces, 1920-1929', South Asia History Seminar, SOAS, University of London, October 2004.
_____, 'Separate Electorates and National Politics 1909-1916', Unpublished MPhil Dissertation, Jawaharlal Nehru University, 1999.
_____, 'Cow-slaughter and the Dilemmas of British Policy in India, 1880-1916', Unpublished MSc Dissertation, London School of Economics and Political Science, 2002.
Chaturvedi, Abhishek, 'Politics and Cultural Nationalism: A Case Study of Madan Mohan Malaviya, Unpublished MPhil Dissertation, Jawaharlal Nehru University, 2000.
Freitag, Sandria B., 'Religious Rites and Riots: From Community Identity to Communalism in North India, 1870-1940, PhD Dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1980.
Gondhalekar, Nandini, 'Indian Nationalism and "Hindu" Politics: Maharashtra and the Hindu Mahasabha, 1920-1948', Unpublished PhD Dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1999.
Gooptu, Nandini, 'The Political Culture of the Urban Poor: UP between the Two World Wars', PhD Dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1991.
Gould, William, 'Hindu Nationalist Ideologies in the Politics of the Congress in the United Provinces, 1930-1947', PhD Dissertation, University of Cambridge, 2000.
Gupta, Charu, 'Obscenity, Sexuality and the "Other": Gender and Hindu Identity in Uttar Pradesh, 1880s-1930s', PhD Dissertation, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 2000.
Meadowcroft, Keith A., '"From Hindu-Muslim Unity" to Hindu Raj: The Evolution of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha 1922-1939', Unpublished Masters Dissertation, Concordia University, Qubec, Canada, 1995.
Mishra, Ravi Kant, 'Contending Visions of Hinduism: Dayanand, Gandhi, Savarkar', Unpublished M.Phil Dissertation, Jawaharlal Nehru University, 2001.
Orsini, Francesca, 'The Hindi Public Sphere: 1920-1940', PhD Dissertation, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 1997.
Prior, Katherine H., 'The British Administration of Hinduism in North India, 1780-1900', Unpublished PhD Dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1990.
Thursby, Gene Robert, 'Aspects of Hindu-Muslim Relations in British India: A Study of Communal Conflict in the Period 1923-1928', PhD Dissertation, Duke University, 1972.

Zavos, John, 'Sangathan: 'The Pursuit of a Hindu Ideal in Colonial India – the Idea of Organisation in the Emergence of Hindu Nationalism, 1870-1930', PhD Dissertation, University of Bristol, 1997.

Interviews

Interview with Ganpat Rai by S.L. Manchanda on 7 July 1974, Oral History Transcript, No. 330, NMML.

Interview with Kshem Chandra Sumen by Hari Dev Sharma on 17 September 1971, Oral History Transcript, No. 210, NMML.

Interview with Sri Prakasha by H.D. Sharma on 18 December 1967, Oral History Transcript, No. 103, NMML.