

**Past and Present of an Identity: A Study on the
Rise of Hindu Nationalism in India**

*Dissertation submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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Declaration

This dissertation entitled **“Past and Present of an Identity: A Study on the Rise of Hindu Nationalism in India”** submitted by YeonJin Sang in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of **MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**, of Jawaharlal Nehru University. This Dissertation has not been previously submitted for any other degree of this University or any other University and is his original work.

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This is to certify that the dissertation title **Past and Present of an Identity: A Study on the Rise of Hindu Nationalism in India** submitted by **YEONJIN SANG** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy in Jawaharlal Nehru University. This dissertation to the best of our knowledge is her original work and has not been submitted for any other degree in any other University.

We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

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(Chairperson)

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Dedicated to my Parents

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Abbreviations

BJP	- Bharatiya Janata Party
BJS	-Bharatiya Jana Sangh
NCERT	- National Council of Education, Research and Training
RSS	- Rashtriyaswayamsevak Sangh
UGC	- University Grants Commision
VHP	- Vishwa Hindu Parishad

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Introduction

Nationalism can be seen as a specific type of ethnocentrism at the level of the national group, since both share the characteristic referred to as “in-group favouritism” (Brock and Atkinson, 2008). This means having a positive attitude towards an in-group and a negative attitude towards out-groups.

According to Tajfel’s social identity theory (Tajfel, 1981), an individual’s self-esteem can be enhanced by comparing their in-group and out-groups. If individuals recognise that a group identity boosts self-esteem, they identify with the group. Furthermore, individuals use intergroup bias to enhance their self-esteem. This theory can be applied to the psychology of nationalism. With religion, each religious group creates religious intergroup bias to fulfil their in-group superiority, and this develops into religious nationalism.

Hindu nationalism is a form of religious nationalism, which refers to the ideological combination of religion and nationalism. Its supporters equate it with Indian nationalism, while its opponents equate it with communalism (Zavos, 1999, p.2000). Some scholars argue that Hindu nationalism and communalism should be distinguished in terms of ideology, although the terms are often used interchangeably in modern Indian politics. It has been subject to considerable debate from the time of its emergence in India.

Hindu nationalism dates back to the late 19th century under British rule, when intellectuals were interested in the formation of modern Hindu identities. It became a distinctive ideology in the early 20th century, but according to Jaffrelot (1999), it was not clearly ‘codified’ until the 1920s. After the 1920s, Hindu nationalism developed into a form of communalism. More specifically, the communal riot emerged as a feature of Indian politics. The dialectic between Indian nationalism and communalism arose during the 1920s, and the difference between them was more clearly defined from the 1930s when Savarkar began his activities (Bhatt, 2001). This process of the transformation of Hindu nationalism into communalism involved a change from moderate to radical nationalism (Zavos, 1999, p.2000).

Hindu nationalism experienced a boom in the 1980s and 1990s, with its militant form developing and emerging successfully in the political arena, culminating in the BJP forming a minority government in 1998. In 1992, the BJP helped the Sangh Parivar succeed in Ayodhya and thus came to occupy a key position in the political arena, while Lord Rama and his epic became political icons. Subsequently, Hindu nationalism has affected Indian politics, media and popular culture (Ludden, 2005).

In other words, Hindu nationalism became a specific ideology and the base for animating contemporary Hindu nationalism from the 1920s, and it developed into its powerful militant form starting in the 1980s.

More specifically, the beginning of the Hindu nationalist ideology in the 19th and early 20th century was an elite-led Indian nationalist ideology in colonial India. At that time, the idea of Hindu nationalism was based on primordialist conceptions of Indian nationalism. Entering the 1920s, the ambiguous boundary between ‘Indian’ and ‘Hindu’ nationalism started to become distinct as the ideology of ‘Hindutva’ emerged. The birth of ‘Hindutva’ in this period is significant in the history of Hindu nationalism, since it introduced the idea that Indian nationality is based on sharing a “common” Hindu civilisation, culture, religion and race (Bhatt, 2001, p. 4).

In these early stages, the birth of Hindu nationalism was seen as an extension of the development of Indian nationalist ideology, since it was related to the national movement for liberation from British rule from the 19th to early 20th century. Therefore, the differences between these two ideologies were not so clear during this period. Jaffrelot (1999) refers to ‘ethnicity’, while other scholars argue that ‘territorial’ or ‘cultural’ nationalism can be a standard by which to distinguish between ‘Indian’ and ‘Hindu’ nationalism.

It is since the 1980s that Hindu nationalism has developed its militant form, going beyond this early and rather simply-presented ideology. More recently, Hindu nationalism has presented its project as being based on an imagined nation set against other religious communities, particularly the Indian Muslims (Zavos, 1999, p. 2270).

As has been noted by virtually every commentator, Hindu nationalism was constructed as a result of fear of external threats – before Independence, the major threats were Christian missionaries, the impact of British rule and the Mughal Empire, while they are now Muslims and globalisation. Such a construction of Hindu nationalism is not only related to a psychological process of stigmatising others, but also represents a defensive strategy. This Hindu psychology includes the process of redefining Hindu identity against these ‘threatening others’, while assimilating those cultural features of the others into “our” culture in order to regain self-esteem and resist the others (Jaffrelot, 1999, p.6).

Although many enemies have existed in history, the strongest and most threatening enemy for Hindu nationalists is Islam. Making India Hindu by treating Islam as an enemy and as foreign is the most important task for them.

In this way, the main objective of Hindu nationalists is to make India a nation with a homogeneous Hindu identity. They assert that an Indian is a Hindu who belongs to the nation of Hindustan, in the terminology of Hindutva (Kinvall, 2006). Their desire is to be recognised in the flow of Western influence through emphasis on the difference between “us” and “them”.

This serious antagonism between Hindus and Muslims increased after the Ayodhya incident, which was carried out by saffron power including the Sangh Parivar, VHP, RSS and BJP. Since then, the impact of Hindu nationalism on Indian politics, culture and society has grown even further, reaching unprecedented levels.

In this sense, the cause of the sudden rise of Hindu nationalism since the Ayodhya incident can be analysed from two perspectives. Domestically, the effort to resurrect a movement focused on Hinduism has been made by right-wing forces such as the coalition of the Sangh Parivar, BJP, RSS and VHP, while the persistent conflict resulting from historical wounds between Hindus and Muslims has brought about an increase in paramilitary forms of Hindu nationalism.

Externally, ethno-religious conflict in many countries in the 1980s and 1990s, combined with a feeling of loss and the threat of globalisation, enabled Hindu nationalists to boost Hindu consciousness among the Indian public. In this period, minorities were suppressed in the name of majoritarianism in many countries and religion played an important role in world politics (Ludden, 2005, p.2-3). This neo-fascist vision of Hindu nationalism was inspired by this international situation and the forces of globalisation.

With this background in mind, this study focuses on examining the construction of Hindu nationalism and Hindu identity from a psychoanalytical perspective. More particularly, it attempts to provide a psychoanalytic account of factors that have aroused Hindu nationalism and the strategy Hindu nationalists have employed to bring about group cohesion since the 1980s.

Psychoanalysis is employed since psychological factors have played a role in the construction of Hindu nationalism. Furthermore, it is difficult to understand religious identity formation and nationhood without serious consideration of socio-psychological aspects. For this reason, the main purpose of this study is to look into the psychological factors behind Hindutva-invoking fanatic religious chauvinism and the process by which its adherents attempt to form a Hindu identity in the nation.

This theme has been chosen due to the immense leverage Hindu nationalism has acquired in current Indian politics, society and culture. Indeed, it has become the most sensitive and important controversy in India. Hindu nationalism is behind a major Indian political party for the last thirty years and it has constantly triggered communal conflict between Hindus and Muslims due to its ideology of extreme religious nationalism. Accordingly, it is assumed that understanding the construction of Hindu nationalism is essential not only to grasp the current trajectory of Indian society but also to understand the contemporary history of India. Psychology is employed in analysing this theme is because this enables the identification of the key factor in the arousal of the conflict between Hindus and Muslims.

Accordingly, two hypotheses have been established. Firstly, the motivation and reason for increasing violence between Hindus and Muslims, as compared to other religious

communities, is because Hindus have strong animosity towards Muslims. Furthermore, behind this explanation, psychological factors have as much of an effect as social and political factors.

Secondly, the sudden rise of Hindu nationalism from the 1980s is the strategy of Hindu nationalists to cope with the threat of globalisation. This hypothesis has come from the argument that the aggressive contemporary Hindutva is a form of cultural nationalism responding to emerging global capitalism, which is characterised by the collapse of communism, the propagation of consumption economies, information technology, deregulated, globalised economies, and a global cultural hegemony mainstreamed from the West (Bhatt, 2001, p.150).

The main body of the study constitutes an analysis of these hypotheses and is divided into three parts.

In Chapter One, the focus is put on the historical background to the sudden rise of Hindu nationalism, by examining the origin, organisation and development of Hindu nationalism over time. Firstly, it looks at the beginnings of Hindu nationalism in the 19th century to the 1920s, including the Arya Samaj, the Bengal Renaissance, Bal Gangadhar Tilak. This period was influenced by the impact of Orientalism and primordial nationalism from European thinking. Hindu revivalist movements such as the Arya Samaj, which was the most influential movement of its time, have provided the base on which current saffron power has been built up by consolidating people along religious lines.

Secondly, by examining the Hindu Mahasabha and Savarkar's Hindutva, the study looks at the limited influence of Hindu nationalism from the 1920s to the 1980s. The ideology of Hindutva and the perception of Muslims as the main threat, which Savarkar first introduced to the Hindu nationalist movement, have established a foothold in contemporary militarised Hindu nationalism.

Lastly, the study considers the sudden rise of Hindu nationalism in a militant form from the 1980s to the present day, by analysing saffron waves like the RSS, Sangh Parivar, VHP and BJP and their effect on the political arena. Religion and politics have been combined seriously since this time and saffron parties have presented a renewed Hindu identity to the Indian public.

Chapter Two deals with psychological factors behind the conflict and communal riots between Hindus and Muslims. To analyse this, the study presents psychological factors related to the historical background that have provoked the conflict between the two groups. The key question asked in this chapter is why dissension between Hindus and Muslims is more serious than among other religious groups and what are the psychological causes of their conflict. In this sense, the most prominent factor is 'Chosen Trauma'. This chosen trauma, which refers to the mental recollection of a fearful past, is verified historically, especially in the Indian situation, with the Muslim conquest and India-Pakistan Partition being the chosen trauma of Hindus. As discussed above, Partition resulted in increasing Hindu animosity towards Muslims, which was a crucial cause of the Ayodhya incident.

The second factor is proximity. This can explain why the strongest hostility has existed between Hindus and Muslims, as compared to among other religious groups, since nationalistic hostility is more strongly directed against larger, nearer and more powerful out-groups than against smaller, more distant and weaker ones (Rosenblatt, 1964, p.133).

Besides these factors, several other factors have contributed to the build-up of tension between Hindus and Muslims. Muslim assaults on Hindu idols, such as Muslims eating beef or the government's amicable attitude towards Muslims, can be examples of explanations for the increasingly aggravated feelings between the two groups. This chapter looks at Hindu psychology in relation to this animosity against Muslim onslaughts on Hindu idols and the Shah Bano case resulting from the government's cordial position with respect to Muslims.

Chapter Three discusses the strategy of Hindu nationalist groups, focusing on the psychology behind their attempts to enhance Hindu group cohesion in the context of modernisation and globalisation.

The Sangh Parivar uses psychological strategies in achieving their strong group cohesion, based on human instinct against the forces of globalisation. These include promoting intergroup bias by making clear a boundary between “us” and “them” and enhancing strong group loyalty and group superiority in constructing nationalism. Demonising the “other” and strengthening in-group loyalty are natural processes in boosting their self-esteem and this is still furthered when they suffer economic or social insecurity, such as in a period of crisis that diminishes their self-esteem.

This theory can also be applied to Hindu nationalist psychology. It can explain the rise of the paramilitary form of Hindu nationalism to overcome the increasing feeling of loss and insecurity under the threat of globalisation from the 1980s. Hindu nationalists have used strategies of manipulating history and myths to fortify their group cohesion in the face of globalisation, based on the theory that sharing a common culture and symbols can help in ensuring social stability. Right-wing political groups such as the Sangh Parivar, the VHP (Vishwa Hindu Parishad), the RSS (Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh) and the BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party) have put forward to the Indian public a new Hindu identity with these strategies, and they have raised Hindu consciousness based on a neo-fascist vision of constructing a homogeneous Hindu *rashtra*.

In developing this framework, the main purpose of this dissertation is to analyse the psychological factors acting on the construction of Hindu nationalism and the new Hindu identity from the 1980s. A diagnosis of the risks and problems of Hindutva is attempted through the study of the Hindu-Muslim religious conflict from the psychological perspective. The study aims to develop a clear insight into the emotional construction of Hindu nationalism and the new Hindu identity by focusing on psychological aspects, adding to existing studies that rely on social and political aspects.

In its concluding analysis, the study tries to work out how to relieve the tension and violence between Hindus and Muslims, by making a diagnosis of the attitudes of Hindu nationalists that cause the problem.

Chapter I

The Rise of Hindu Nationalism and Hindu Identity

In the last two decades of the 20th century, Hindu nationalism emerged as a force to be reckoned with in Indian politics due to the sudden rise of the BJP as the national opposition party. The main aim of the Sangh Parivar, which includes the BJP-RSS-VHP coalition, is to inject its cultural nationalistic ideology into both Indian politics and public opinion. Due to the leverage of this ideology in different fields, Hindu nationalism has been referred to variously as Hindutva, the saffron wave, Hindu majoritarianism, Hindu communalism and Hindu fundamentalism.

Although it has become a prominent concern only in the last 30 years, the ideology of the movement dates from the 19th century. However, the direct foundation of the ideology of contemporary Hindu nationalism has been constructed from the 1920s. One of its features is the perception that it is the same as communalism. This dialectic can be traced back to the 1920s since communalism and more specifically the communal riot emerged as a systematic characteristic of politics in northern India from this period (Zavos, 2000, p.4).

Accordingly, this chapter will seek to explain the ideologies, origin and history of the Hindu nationalist movement from the 19th century to the present day. This process of examining the background and ideologies of Hindu nationalism is essential to understanding the main argument of the dissertation.

The chapter is divided into three parts. The first examines the formation and main ideologies of Dayananda Saraswati's Arya Samaj movement, the 'Bengal Renaissance' and Bal Gangadhar Tilak's movement from the late 19th to the early 20th century. In the second part, the main ideologies of the troubled period of the 1920s are discussed, with special focus on the Hindu Mahasabha movement and Savarkar's Hindutva. Finally, the third part of the chapter reviews the ideologies and strategies of the contemporary saffron wave, including the RSS, VHP and BJP under the name of the Sangh Parivar.

1. Beginning of the Movement in the 19th Century up to the 1920s

The period encompassing the 19th and early 20th century saw the emergence of the basic ideologies of Hindu nationalism. The concept of Hindu nationalism dates only from the 19th century. According to Zakaria (1970), there was no communal violence between Hindus and Muslims prior to the colonial era. Hindu nationalism in this period should be regarded as part of the wider nationalism resisting British colonial power rather than as a form of communalism. The paramilitary communalist form of Hindu nationalism grounded in fascist ideology established itself after the 1920s. In fact, the form of Hindu nationalism in this period can be seen as Hindu revivalism, because its main characteristic was to homogenise Hindus according to the Hindu religion (Ko et al., 2006, p.42), while one of the period's themes was Hindu reform by improving Hindu weaknesses generated from the threat of 'foreign rule' - first by Muslims and then by the British (Van der Veer, 1994, p.64). Therefore, the emergence of Hindu nationalism in the 19th century was inextricably bound up with the development of Indian nationalism.

European nationalist ideas significantly affected and shaped both secular and religious nationalism in this period of India's history. Nineteenth century nationalism in India can be defined as an "Orientalist mode of production of the people" (Hansen, 1999, p. 60). Hindu revivalism, based on primordialist thinking, was also influenced by European nationalist ideas, especially British and German Orientalism in 19th century colonial India (Bhatt, 2001). Owing to the influence of this Orientalist epistemology, nationalists during this time believed that the Indian community, which was then divided by religion, caste and custom, could be consolidated by means of a Hindu reform movement.

In the same vein, primordialist thinking was stimulated during the British colonial period since Hindu nationalists believed that the nation could be united by rediscovering the archaic Hindu civilisation. A fundamental element of primordial nationalism in this period was Aryanism, which was generated in processes of 'upper' caste, religious, regional and vernacular elite consolidation in colonial India (Ibid.). Hindu nationalists in the mid-19th century tried to achieve national unity by glorifying the Hindu past and

tracing India's archaic memory. They focused on the discovery of Vedic-Aryanism based on archaic religious texts like the Vedas, Upanishads, Puranas and the Epics, which suggest the greatness of the Hindu civilisation not only culturally and morally but also in its political and ethical system (Ibid, 12). Aryanism was used in manipulating ancient history to assert the idea of India as a 'Hindu Rashtra' for Hindu nationalists and developed with elite-led Indian nationalist ideology. Besides verifying ancient Hindu history on their terms, the Vedic Aryanist paradigm presented its superiority by showing southern Dravidians and tribal populations to be inferior to Hindu Aryans (Ibid, 15).

This strategy proved the superiority of the culture and religion and boosted the self-esteem of Hindus. These primordialist ideologies also were used in vernacular and regional elite formation during the second half of the 19th century. Some scholars argue that Hindu nationalism from the 19th to the early 20th century was an elite-led, middle class ideology because it developed with Aryanism and primordialism, which were both led by elite and middle class Indians.¹

The following section discusses three major early Hindu nationalist movements and their ideological development in the 19th century and early 20th century.

1.1 The Arya Samaj

The Arya Samaj, which means 'Society of Aryans', was founded in 1875 in Punjab by Dayananda Saraswati. It is referred to as the most influential, first modern movement to aim at reform and revival or 'Hindu renaissance' in the 19th century.

The core of the Arya Samaj ideology emphasised the Aryan-Vedic tradition. According to Dayananda, the Aryans were the original human inhabitants of the world and they worshipped only one God and accepted the Vedic religion. He clearly delimited his definition of the Aryans with regard to territorial and xenological considerations and

¹ Zavos (1999) regards the initial stage of Hindu nationalism as a middle class ideology and Chandra (1987) defines communalism as a modern political concept developed by each religious colonial elite group who pursued communal and secular interests.

claimed that not every Indian could become Aryan. He also emphasised the importance of the four Vedas and regarded the God in the Vedas as the ancient Aryans. Based on this primacy of the Aryan race, he thought a national revival could be achieved by uniting the nation with the popular and claimed that it was necessary to inculcate Hindu ideals represented in the Vedas to Hindus in order to unite the nation (Hansen, 1999, p.72). Such reverence for Vedic authority on the part of the Arya Samaj seems to have been affected by the Orientalism of the 19th century (Van der Veer, 1994, p.65).

With regard to the caste system, while rejecting the jati system, Dayananda accepted varnashramadharma and the varna system, arguing that this ideal method of social organisation existed in the Vedic Period. This emphasis of the Arya Samaj on the Aryan-Vedic tradition has had an impact on the contemporary Hindutva movement (Bhatt, 2001, p.18).

The most important innovation of the Arya Samaj was the shuddhi or conversion ritual. When it was first created, the aim was “purification” of the faith (Ibid, p.50), as well as putting a stop to conversions of lower caste Hindus to Islam and Christianity and working to reconvert Christians and Muslims to Hinduism. This shuddhi movement has influenced later Hindutva organisations such as the VHP’s homecoming campaigns among Muslims, Christians and tribal groups. The censuses of 1901 and 1911 accelerated the shuddhi movement because they showed an increasing number of Christians and Muslims, making Hindu nationalists feel they were under threat of extinction. From this period, the demographic threat has become one of the main stimuli for Hindu nationalists' strong antipathy towards Muslims over the last century.

The most important motto in the Arya Samaj was “Back to the Veda”. It took a closed stance with respect to other religions, holding the ideal that only the Aryans were Indian and stressing only the authority of the Vedas. This exclusivism against the ‘other’ chimed with primordialism in European thinking in this period.

As regards the religious aspect, the Arya Samaj tried to recover the purity of the Hindu faith, while aiming to make India an autonomous nation free from the British in the political aspect (Cho, 1994, p.440). Their most important contribution was in building up the communication of Hindu nationalism. The Arya Samaj initiated the Cow Protection Movement, which focused on religious nationalism rather than aiming to reform (Van der Veer, 1994, p. 66). The closed and nationalist attitude characteristic of the Hindu revival movement became part of the foundation of the Hindu Mahasabha and RSS ideology. Many leaders and activists of the RSS and the Hindu Mahasabha emerged from these milieus (Hansen, 1999, p.74).

1.2 The Bengal Renaissance

In the latter half of the 19th century, there was a revolutionary nationalism led by the regional and vernacular intelligentsia in Bengal. Bengali nationalist ideologies spread rapidly after the Partition of Bengal in 1905 and they are well represented in the writings of Bankimchandra Chattopadhyaya. There was an effort to amalgamate the ideas of Hindu cultural nationalism with those of Indian nationalism in the 'Bengal Renaissance'. This happened in the aftermath of two consecutive splits in the original Brahmo Samaj established in Calcutta in 1828 by Rammohan Roy. The first split in 1850, led by Debendranath Tagore (1815-1905), was based on the need for internal reform within Hinduism, while the second split in 1866, led by Keshab Chandra Sen (1838-84), attempted to 'Christianise' Hinduism (Bhatt, 2001, p.23).

The fundamental elements of the nationalist ideas in the Bengal Renaissance were also based on Hindu superiority and exclusivity in much the same way as in other Hindu nationalist movements. Rajnarain Basu (1826-99) and Nabagopal Mitra (1840-94), who were Debendranath's colleagues, were core representatives of this trend in Bengal. Hinduism appeared in regional nationalism based on the British Orientalist study of ancient India. It was led by elite Bengalis and occurred in an environment in which Christians emerged as opponents of Hindus (Ibid).

The most prominent theme for Bengali elite nationalists was the concept of India as the 'motherland' and the need to show dedication to and love for motherland. This theme, which was popular among Indian nationalists and Hindu nationalists in the late 19th century, has influenced many revolutionary nationalists since this period. Bankim, often referred to as the father of the modern Bengali novelist, is the most well known figure to have used this metaphor in his writings. In his novels, he articulated Hindu nationalism through the symbolisation of the Hindu nation as the motherland in gendered and religious terms. This represented 'the imagined historical injury to the nation' through symbolisation that the motherland was suffering from foreign invasion (Ibid, p.28).

1.3 Bal Gangadhar Tilak

Bal Gandadhar Tilak (1856-1920) was one of the key figures in the nationalist movement to recapture the glorious past of the Hindus. His argument in support of Hindu supremacy and traditionalism was the genesis of later Hindu fundamentalism. Also, the Hindu Mahasabha and RSS adopted Tilak's ideology and then became amongst the most powerful organisations in triggering the ideology of 'Hindutva'.

Tilak was one of the first and strongest supporters of 'Swaraj' (self-rule) and the boycott, which are famous campaigns of economic resistance to colonialism. He joined the Indian National Congress in 1890, but criticised its moderate attitude. Standing against the moderates, he organised a separate extremist faction in Congress. Tilak was one of the most crucial leaders of the nationalist movement and famous for his radicalism.

He also asserted that Hindu society had a capacity for self-renewal, which could be achieved by underlining the glorified Vedic civilisation. According to him, the Vedic civilisation was the oldest in the world, the most cultured and the mother of all civilisations (Hansen, 1999, p.76). Such emphasis on the archaic Indian civilisation also derived from Orientalist primordialism. His chauvinistic view of the Hindu civilisation can be seen in his distortion of ancient history. Tilak argued that the Aryans were the first creators of civilisation in the world, claiming that the Aryan civilisation dated to earlier than 8,000 BC and was more refined than the later Bronze and Iron Age civilisations (Bhatt, 2001, p.35).

Another of his achievements was the drawing of Hindu traditions and symbols into Indian nationalism. In his efforts to develop two 'ideological configurations' – the gods Ganesh and Shivaji – to resist British rule, we can see the process of “transfiguration of symbols of Hindu religious devotionism – the religious pantheon – into a nationalist pantheon”. Also, his employment of Shivaji as the symbol of Hindu militancy related to the struggle against not only colonial rule but also medieval Muslim 'invaders' (Ibid., p.34). Therefore, Tilak's depiction of Shivaji in justifying the use of violence can be seen as the forerunner of the strategy used by contemporary Hindu nationalism against Muslims.

As seen from the above, Hindu nationalism from the 19th to the early 20th century can be referred to as a Hindu revivalism movement, which emerged as a part of Indian nationalism in the British colonial period because Hindu nationalists believed that the nation could be united by restoring the Hindu civilisation of thousands of years ago.

This Hindu revivalism movement was grounded in claims of the superiority of the Aryan civilisation, based on Hindu-Aryan primordialism from the Vedic text on the Hindus. It expressed religious exclusivism against other religions and showed signs of manipulating ancient history, which has continued since this period. This suggests that the Hindu revivalist movement served as the foundation of later Hindu nationalism, since it is clear that this strategy has been reused in militant Hindu nationalism.

2. Influence from the 1920s to the 1980s

The period from the 1920s to the 1930s was one of great confusion in the political field of colonial India. In particular, the province of Bengal was partitioned into the largely Muslim eastern areas and the largely Hindu western areas in 1905, and then reunited again in 1911. The process of protest for the partition of Bengal marked its importance in the history of the Indian nationalist movement because it not only promoted the *swadeshi* movement and boycott campaign but also fostered the emergence of two oppositional groups – moderate and extremist – in the Congress. Therefore, during this time, the existing ideology of Indian nationalism in the Congress was confronted with the growth

of the 'extremist' group (Zavos, 1999). Accordingly, there were tendencies towards both criticism of the boycott movement against the British and loyalty to the British government in this period. Gandhi started his non-cooperation movement in the 1920s.

Alongside these wider developments, the main characteristic of this period is the emergence of communalism in Indian politics and the dialectic between Indian nationalism and communalism (Zavos, 1999, 2000). The dialectic between Hindu nationalism and Indian nationalism was always present in this troubled period. More specifically, the coexistence of Hinduised versions of Indian nationalism and the specific ideology of Hindutva emerged (Bhatt, 2001, p.4). With regard to the dialectic, Jaffrelot says ethnicity distinguishes Hindu nationalism from the Indian nationalist ideology, while Zavos (1999) argues that the distinguishing factors are history and culture. From this period, the idea of Hindu nationalism started to change from its moderate to more radical nationalism.

Another feature of the 1920s was the appearance of political mobilisation in Hindu nationalism. The ideology of Hindu nationalism slowly became involved in Indian politics.

Comparing post-1920s Hindu nationalism and pre-1920s Hindu revivalism, the marked distinguishing difference is the Hindu attitude toward Muslims. Hindutva, a concept first developed in the 1920s by Savarkar, clearly defined Muslims as foreign and exterior, while the Hindu revivalism of the 19th century did not. This attitude towards Muslims has intensified since the 1980s due to influences from this period. Therefore, it would not be wrong to say "the key political ideas of the contemporary Hindutva movement were being articulated by Savarkar and the Hindu Mahasabha" (Bhatt, 2001, p.77) because post-1980s militant Hindutva ideology and its activity is directly based on 'Savarkarism' and his Hindu Mahasabha. Consolidating Hindus by strengthening their ties under the threat of extermination, aroused by conversions of Hindus to Islam or Christianity, was their most prominent objective during the period between the 1920s and the 1980s.

In other words, criticism of so-called ‘pseudo-secularists’ (Zavos, 1999, 2000), the militarisation of Hindus and the view of Muslims as ‘others’ were key features of Hindu nationalism in this period.

2.1 The Hindu Mahasabha

The Hindu Mahasabha is a Hindu nationalist political party founded in 1915. It represented Hindus who did not agree with the secular Indian National Congress ideology and who were opponents of the Muslim League.

Before discussing the Hindu Mahasabha, it is important to consider Lala Lajpat Rai. Lajpat Rai (1865-1928) was one of the most important figures of Hindu nationalism in this period as an ‘extremist’ within Congress and as a revolutionary nationalist who took an active part in both the pre-Savarkarite Hindu Mahasabha and the Hindu Sangathan movement.

Influenced by a conception of the Arya Samaj that emphasised the ‘purification’ of Hinduism, he stated that ‘Hindus are a nation in themselves, because they represent a civilisation all their own’ in his article for the Indian National Congress in *the Hindustan Review* (Mathur, 1996, 1). In this way, he raised the argument of ‘Hindu weakness’ and the need to strengthen Hinduism by conquering foreigners and treating them as others. He enunciated Indian nationality as Hindu nationalism. These central thoughts of Lajpat Rai came to form the basis of the later ideology of Hindu identity in Savarkarism and the RSS.

In 1906, following the foundation of the All-India Muslim League in Dacca, a Hindu Sabha (society) was established in Punjab with the aim of “protecting the interests of the Hindus by stimulating in them the feelings of self-respect, self-help and mutual co-operation so that by a combined effort there would be some chance of promoting the moral, intellectual, social and material welfare of the individuals of which the nation is composed.”(Zavos, 1999, p.2273). Also, it developed to stand for the interests of a Hindu constituency and it became a powerful symbol of the united community (Ibid.). The

Hindu nationalist movement intervened in the Indian political field for the first time with the emergence of the Hindu Sabha.

In April 1921, the Hindu Sabha was renamed the 'All-India Hindu Mahasabha'. After this renaming, its earlier objective of loyalty to the British government was changed to the aim of 'a united and self-governing Indian nation', while the initial agenda of the Hindu Mahasabha was sangathan, organisation and movement. These notions developed into major principles of Hindu nationalism (Ibid, p.2275).

From the early 1920s, the All-India Hindu Mahasabha gave importance to the *shuddhi* movement to boost the number of Hindus, under the threat of an increasing number of Christians and Muslims. Its targets were largely two groups. It tried to reconvert Christians and Muslims to Hinduism and to encourage untouchable or adivasi (tribal) groups to return to the Hindu fold (Bhatt, 2001). This Hindu Mahasabha conversion movement, influenced by the Arya Samaj, is a key issue for Hindu communalists today.

Another important activity of the Hindu Mahasabha was the Hindu Sangathan² movement. Swami Shradhanand (1856-1926) was well known for playing a key role in the Sangathan movement of the early 1920s and warning of the threat of Hindu extinction.

The Hindu Sangathan is also evidence of the effect of the Arya Samaj since it was based on neo-Vedic ideology from the late 19th century. Its main aim was strengthening the demographic status of Hindus by bringing outcasts into a hierarchical system of caste. In fact, when the 1901 and 1911 censuses showed an increasing population of Muslims and Christians, Hindus felt that they would become extinct. To remove the fear of Hindus losing their status, Shradhanand proposed to strongly oppose conversions to Islam and Christianity. This Sangathan movement can be seen as a product of the consolidation of Hindu nationalist ideology in the 1920s. It has become a key characteristic of today's Hindutva movement (Ibid, p.63, 67).

² Sangathan is derived from the Sanskrit prefix *sam*, 'together', and the verbal root *ghat*, 'to form or mould'. This is evident in the more strict Sanskrit use of *sangathan*, 'organisation, formation, constitution, composition' (Zavos, 2000, p.16).

The Hindu Sangathan movement and the Hindu Mahasabha became influential in the national political field from the mid-1920s under the leadership of Madan Mohan Malaviya, Lajpat Rai and B.S. Moonje, coinciding with the end of Gandhi's mass satyagraha campaigns (Ibid, p.69).

When Savarkar reached the leadership of the Hindu Mahasabha in 1937, the Hindu nationalist ideology in the subcontinent became more aggressive and militaristic. It suggested that the Indian government give Hindus military training in all high schools and colleges (Savarkar, 1941 as cited in Bhatt, 2001). This Mahasabha policy of Hindu militarisation implies that Hindu nationalism started to set up a strategy to protect Hindus from external threats from this period.

In conclusion, Lajpat Rai and Swami Shraddhanand recommended the same remedies to reform Hindus, including the abolition of sub-castes and the conversion of 'untouchables' and tribals to Hinduism. In this respect, we can say that the ideology of this period was the legacy and extension of that of the Arya Samaj of the previous century. Furthermore, it became the foundation for non-Gandhite ideologies for both Hindu internal reform and Hindu political assertion within and around the Congress, the non-cooperation movement and the national movement (Bhatt, 2001, p.75).

2.2 Savarkar's Movement

Vinayak Damodar Savarkar (1883-1966), who is famous for coining the term 'Hindutva', is revered as a revolutionary hero by Hindu nationalists. It is no exaggeration to say that the Hindutva ideology was not definitively articulated until this period. His ideology of Hindutva, as explained in his article "*Hindutva: Who is a Hindu?*" in 1923, lit up contemporary militant Hindu nationalism. Certainly, contemporary usage of the word 'Hindutva' derives from Savarkar (Bhatt, 2001, p.77). According to Zavos (1999) and Jaffrelot (1999), Hindu nationalism was not 'codified' until the birth of his Hindutva ideology.

Savarkar introduced the ideology of Hindutva after the Partition of Bengal and in the political whirlpool of the 1920s. His main objective was to provide an answer to questions such as ‘What is Hinduness’ and ‘What constitutes Hindu identity’ and to consolidate the idea of the unitary nation with Hindu identity. He highlighted the problem presented by this ‘lack’ on the part of Hindus, constructing as solutions Hindutva and the sharing of ‘Hinduness’ by all Hindus. Such eagerness for a strong and culturally homogenous nation by means of the Hindutva idea was due to the impression made on Savarkar by the writings of Giuseppe Mazzini. In Mazzini, Savarkar found an ideological framework and a political philosophy that combined cultural pride, national self-assertion and a view of the culturally homogenous nation (Hansen, 1999, p.77).

Based on Mazzini’s thoughts about the nation, Savarkar explained the five elements that constituted unitary nationality: territory; emotional attachment; coherence and unity of languages; shared blood; and race.³ According to this definition, he asserted that Hindus were those who inherited the blood of the Vedic-Aryan race and the Sanskrit culture and those who considered ‘Sindhusthan’ as their ‘Holyland’ (Bhatt, 2001, p.99).

Among these elements, Savarkar particularly emphasised the racial inheritance of Hindu blood from their Vedic forefathers in characterising Hindutva (Savarkar, 1989). Accordingly, he denied the theory of the Aryan invasion of the subcontinent and stated that the ancient land of “Sindhu”⁴ comprised the entire subcontinent. In this way, his sense of Indian nationality was based on the “Vedic nation” that was already present four thousand years ago with the development of a common language, Sanskrit, and a common body of philosophy and ritual practices (Hansen, 1999, p.78).

3 Savarkar reiterated a number of these tenets. According to him, “the first tenet in forming a nationality was territory and praise of the unique and supreme qualities of each nation. The second tenet was a common emotional attachment to the nation. The third tenet was the coherence and unity of languages as the medium of cultural essence and feeling. The fourth tenet denoted the holistic concept of culture as a uniting whole by shared blood and race. Savarkar praised caste endogamy as a mechanism keeping the blood of the nation pure” (Savarkar, 1969 quoted in Hansen, 1999, p. 78).

4 According to Savarkar, “the term ‘Hindu’ is basically a territorial denomination of the civilization developed through millennia on the eastern side of the river Indus, ‘Sindhu’, which gradually became known as ‘Hindu’”(Ibid 1999)

With this strong assertion of the need for common blood to make a unitary nation, others who were not Hindu such as Christians and Muslims could not be included in the Indian nationality in Savarkar's thought. Accordingly, he sharply distinguished foreigners from Hindus. He continuously stressed that Christians and Muslims should abandon their faith and adopt the Hindutva ideology. It seems that this strategy of demarcating a clear boundary between us and them appeared in the psychology of nationalism from this time:

For though Hindusthan is to them 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. Consequently their names and their outlook smack of a foreign origin. Their love is divided. (Savarkar, 1989, p.113).

This Hindu majoritarian ideology started by Savarkar brought up issues of war, militarism and minorities from the 1930s. He introduced his militarised Hindu nationalism to the Hindu Mahasabha from the mid-1930s as its president. From that time, the difference between Hindu nationalism and the anti-colonial national movement became very clear (Bhatt, 2001).

In this way, Savarkar's activities influenced not only several ideological currents within and outside the Indian freedom movement in his own time, but also the principles of the contemporary saffron wave.

The form of Hindu nationalism after the 1920s is easily distinguishable from that of the previous period. Hindu nationalist organisations like the Hindu Mahasabha extended from the Hindu Sabha started to intervene in the political field, while the political maelstrom involving events such as the Partition of Bengal and the conflict between 'moderate' and 'radical' groups within Congress swept through the 1920s. Hindu nationalists in this period tried to reform Hindus based on the tenets of the Arya Samaj and went on to develop ideas beyond the Arya Samaj ideology. However, the contemporary militarised ideology of Hindu nationalism has been developed since the definition of Hindutva by Savarkar. Therefore, it would be true to say that the emergence of the Hindutva ideology from this period is the immediate background of the propagation of majoritarian group rights by later saffron communities from the 1980s.

3. Sudden rise of Hindu Nationalism from the 1980s to the Present

Hindu nationalism in the period from the 1980s to the present day has presented a further developed form of its previous ideology and has taken a more aggressive form in the political field. Over the past three decades, the Hindutva ideology has become a prominent issue in Indian politics not only because saffron waves have created a new environment in politics in which religion and politics are combined but also because nationalists have felt under threat from globalisation. Since the 1990s, Hindutva has spread at the state and local levels, as well as at the national and international levels, as the leverage of globalisation has increased rapidly. Hindu nationalists in this period have attempted to raise consciousness of Hindu cultural nationalism, bringing an anti-pluralist and neo-fascist vision to the Indian public and politics.

With the hope of establishing a homogenous cultural nation, the Sangh Parivar has introduced a renewed sense of Hindu identity to Indian politics (Chirmuley, 2004, p.2) and created a violent public environment based on a strongly exclusivist principle.

3.1 The Sangh Parivar

The Sangh Parivar – the family of Hindu nationalist organisations – is regarded as a group of several right wing organisations.

In the period 1949-1965, the Rashtriya Swamayamsevak Sangh (RSS) launched several national organisations, including the Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS) and the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP). This process accelerated from the late 1970s, and the Sangh Parivar has developed into the concept of a Hindu family and spread at the national and local levels with its organisations forming an ‘alternative civil society’⁵.

⁵ The Sangh Parivar in Pune almost constitutes an ‘alternative civil society’, with separate schools, its own banks, a large number of colleges, its own organisations for youth, students, women, children, informal networks, frequent marriages between RSS-affiliated families and its own informal communication channels and structures of authority, both reproduced on a daily basis in the shakhas (Hansen, 1999, p.117).

This development of the Sangh Parivar since the 1970s is related to the lack of a central leadership after the decline of the 'Congress system' and the fading of left power. Concomitant with this situation, the Parivar has intervened in politics with a renewed sense of Hindu identity (Chirmuley, 2004).

Between the 1980s and 2002, the Parivar expanded to a very great extent thanks to its cultural nationalist project and manipulation of the 'communal card' to extreme levels (Ibid, p.4).

3.2 The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS)

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS, the 'National Volunteer Corps') was established in 1925 by K.B. Hedgewar (1889-1940), a physician from Maharashtra. It arose in Nagpur (in Maharashtra state) within the town's Brahmin community. For that reason, the organisation has long been dominated by Maharashtrian Brahmins. In the 1930s, the RSS gradually spread out from Nagpur to western Maharashtra – where Pune became a major centre – and to northern and western India and indeed the entire Hindi-speaking region.

Throughout the 1930s, the RSS maintained close relations with the Hindu Mahasabha, which provided profound inspiration for the ideology and organisation of the RSS. However, after Savarkar became the president of the Hindu Mahasabha in 1937, there were indications of a separation between the RSS and the Hindu Mahasabha. In 1939, the gap widened even further and the Hindu Mahasabha established its own uniformed youth corps, the Ram Sena (Ram's Army). When Golwalkar became the supreme leader after Hedgewar, they completely broke up in the early 1940s (Hansen, 1999, p.94). By the 1940s, the RSS had expanded their influence beyond the provinces of northern India to south India as well (Goyal, 1979 as cited in Bhatt, 1999, p.121).

The fact that the ideology of the RSS was inspired by Savarkar's book *Hindutva* is clear because both Hedgewar and Golwalkar's main aim was 'man-moulding' and 'character-

building'. This 'man-moulding' and 'character-building' means imprinting the RSS worldview in the *shakha*⁶ based on Hindu identity (Bhatt, 2001, p.142).

For their 'character building', the RSS attempted several strategies that show some such characteristics. First, the RSS has emphasised the importance of education to raise consciousness of the Muslim as an enemy and other. In other words, provoking Muslims is a key characteristic of the RSS. They have ceaselessly attempted to implant a dehumanising characterisation of the Indian Muslim. The reason for stressing moulding and educating 'Hindu consciousness' is because Hedgewar believed that 'lack of cohesion' and 'Hindu disunity' were the most serious problems facing Hindu society, in addition to 'foreign domination of Hindus', as a result of 'Hindu failings' (Ibid, p.118)

The second characteristic of the RSS is the full-scale emergence of militarised Hindu nationalism, inspired by Mussolini's fascism and descended from Savarkar's Hindutva ideology since the 1920s. As we have noted before, fascist Italy was already a source of inspiration for Hindu nationalist movements in the 1920s and 1930s, especially in their desire to express the organised Hindu strength and militarise the Hindu nation (Bhatt, 2001)

In fact, the RSS started military and ideological training in its youth corps according to its ideas of physical strength and spiritual purity as soon as it was established. The training includes a daily routine of physical exercise, military drills and marches, weapons training and ideological inculcation (Ibid, p.119). To organise its 'martial tradition', the RSS organises its military camps according to its hierarchical leadership principle based on the traditional idea of a 'model Hindu family'.⁷

6 "Shakha" is Hindi for "branch". Most of the organizational work of the RSS is done through the activities of *shakhas*. In 2004, more than 60,000 *shakhas* were performed throughout India (<http://www.rediff.com/news/2004/jul/23rss.htm>, accessed on 5th May, 2012). The *shakhas* carry out various activities for its volunteers which include not only physical fitness activities through yoga, exercises and games but also emphasise on qualities like civic sense, social service, community living and patriotism (Malkani, K.R., 1980).

7 The RSS claimed that the inspiration for its hierarchical leadership principle was not derived from any 'perverted foreign model' such as Mussolini's fascism, but was based on the traditional idea of a 'model Hindu family' (Curran, 1951; Dexhpande and Ramaswamy, 1981 quoted in Bhatt, 2001, p.120). It includes typical traditional hierarchy like led by order men and recruiting young boys, founded on the

Lastly, the key terms of the RSS based on Aryanism and the history of the Vedic times are racism, making a homogenous nation and majoritarianism.

Golwalkar, who became the second supreme leader of the RSS after Hedgewar's death in 1940, emphasised the 'Vedic period', like other previous Hindu nationalists. He stated that the 'Vedic period' was the oldest civilisation and Hindu-Aryans were indigenous and the forebears of Indians.⁸ According to this view, Golwalkar tried to spread the view that the 'nation should consist of pure race'. This xenophobic view, inspired by Fascism and Nazism, created a strong exclusivity towards minorities. For him, minorities could not be other than 'foreign', but nor should they exist in the Hindu nation unless they became Hindus. With regard to this strong repulsion of minorities, he used somatic metaphors – the healthy body of the 'Hindu nation' threatened by a minority 'cancer' (Ibid, p.130). His ignorance of any rights of minorities under the pretext of uniting his 'one nation' is representative of Hindu nationalists, full of intolerance and closed attitudes. For Golwalkar, minorities could:

Live only as outsiders, bound by all the codes and conventions of the Nation, at the sufferance of the Nation and deserving of no special protection, far less any privilege or rights. That is the only logical and correct solution.The non-Hindu peoples of Hindusthan must either adopt the Hindu culture and language, must learn to respect and hold in reverence Hindu religion, must entertain no ideas but those of the glorification of the Hindu race and culture.....They must cease to be foreigners, or may stay in the country wholly subordinated to the Hindu nation, claiming nothing, deserving no privileges (Golwalkar, 1944, quoted from Bhatt, 2001, p.130).

Although such a view of minorities as foreigners and foes was influenced by Fascism and Nazism, Golwalkar also considered communism to be 'foreign' and 'anti-national'. His vigorous anti-communism was a key constituent of RSS ideology in the post-independence period (Bhatt, 2001). With this contradictory ideology, the RSS has changed from a non-political organisation to a political organisation after the experience of being banned⁹ in the period 1948-1949.

institutional absence of women and in which one leader holds absolute leadership and requires compliable and devotional respect from members (Bhatt, 2001, p.120).

⁸ Golwalkar said "we were one nation"- 'Over all the land from sea to sea one Nation!' is the trumpet cry of the ancient Vedas!' (Bhatt, 2001, p.127)

⁹ Following Mahatma Gandhi's assassination in 1948 by a former member of the RSS, Nathuram Godse, many of the main leaders of the RSS were imprisoned and the RSS was banned on February 4, 1948 (Larson, 1995, p.132).

3.3 The Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP)

The VHP (Vishwa Hindu Parishad) was founded in Bombay on 29 August 1964 at the instigation of Golwalkar. One hundred and fifty religious leaders were present at the meeting, including not just Hindus but also Sikhs, Buddhists and Jains, with the aim of representing all Hindus, led by Swami Chinmayananda. Golwalkar explained that "all faiths of Indian origin need to unite", saying that the word "Hindu" applied to followers of all the above religions (Smith, 2003, p.189).

In the meeting, it was decided that the organisation would have the following objectives: (1) to take steps to raise the consciousness and to consolidate and strengthen Hindu society; (2) to protect, develop and spread Hindu life values, both ethical and spiritual; (3) to establish and reinforce contacts with and help for all Hindus living abroad; (4) to welcome back all who had left the Hindu fold and to rehabilitate them as part and parcel of the Universal Hindu Society; (5) to render social service to humanity at large, initiating welfare projects for the 170 million downtrodden brethren who had been suffering for centuries, including schools, hospitals, libraries, etc.; (6) to establish the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, the World Organisation of the six hundred million Hindus at present residing in 80 countries aspiring to revitalise the eternal Hindu Society by rearranging the code of conduct of our age-old Dharma to meet the needs of the changed times; (7) to eradicate the concept of untouchability from Hindu Society (VHP pamphlet, 1982, cited from Vander Veer, 1994, p.130).

With these aims of consolidating Hindus with other religions that emerged from Hinduism, several characteristics differentiated the VHP from other right wing organisations.

First, the VHP has tried to strengthen the solidarity of Hindus overseas. The VHP has organised its branches not only at the level of the nation state, but also at the international level. Internationally, the VHP has reported affiliated bodies in eighteen countries (Bhatt, 2001, p.183).

Second, the VHP has focused on setting up a programme to bring tribals and untouchables into the Hindu fold. This strategy could come from concerns about Hindu extinction. Hindu nationalists are under the delusion that Muslims will be majority in India in the future because of their higher fertility rate and the practice of polygamy. This imagined fear also results in Hindus worrying about a shortage of resources in the future based on 'Malthusian' theory.¹⁰ From the early 1980s, the VHP began in earnest mass conversion campaigns among syncretic Hindu-Muslim groups and among Christian tribals. These so-called 'homecoming' campaigns emphasised that those who had other religions were to 'come back' to their 'original', 'natural' faith, Hinduism, and hence their homeland (Ibid, p.198). The most famous shuddhi activity in the VHP was the Meenakshipuram conversion in 1981. In this conversion movement, the VHP encouraged lower caste Hindus and untouchables to offer devotion to and bathe the idols and continuously resist conversion to Islam among them (Ibid, p.188).

Third, the VHP started to use the iconic representations of 'Ram' and the media effect with their involvement in the Ram Janmabhomi campaign. The destruction of Babri Masjid at Ayodhya to construct a Ram temple was the most remarkable working in the VHP's role. During its Ram Janmabhomi campaign, the VHP elevated the *Ramayana* as the privileged text of Hinduism by broadcasting 'Ramayana' series. The strategy of the VHP during the Ram Janmabhomi campaign included making a clear demarcation of the other to appeal to the majority of Hindus through the utilisation of devotional symbol.

The VHP was a non-political organisation at the time of its foundation, but it has started to influence the politics since the BJP adopted the Hindutva themes of the VHP document issued in 1997 referred to as *Hindu Agenda* as its 1998 general election manifesto. Therefore, the development of a national Hinduism which aims to spread the VHP's version of Hinduism as the standard and mainstream Hinduism to the nation is the most significant of the activities of the VHP (Hansen, 1999, p.102).

¹⁰ According to Bhatt (2001, p.197-8), Malthusian theory has characterised Hindu nationalism since the 20th century.

3.4 The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)

In 1951, senior RSS activists created a national party, the Jana Sangh, and Mookherjee was elected president. Its political strategy was based on RSS ideology and organisation. The Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS), the political arm of Hindu nationalism, initially regarded post-Independence India as 'Bharatiya Rashtra'. This changed to 'Hindu Rashtra' in 1956, with the Jana Sangh claiming that both were equivalent and coextensive with 'Indian' nationalism (Baxter, 1971, p.133).

With its objective of spreading Hindu nationalism, including campaigns against Urdu, for the banning of cow-slaughter and for a militarily strong India, the Jana Sangh emerged from the late 1960s, a period that included the death of Nehru, war with Pakistan and the development of the 'multi-party system' at the national as well as state level (Bhatt, 2001, p.154).

The crucial motivation for examining the Jana Sangh is the fact that the contemporary Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) manifesto is derived from the main principle of the Jana Sangh.

Under the principle of 'one nation, one culture, one people', the Jana Sangh was against the partition of India, which it believed should be 're-united'. It also strongly opposed Nehruvian secularism because the latter was seen as a policy of 'appeasement' of Indian Muslims (Ibid). However, the most influential ideology was Deendayal Upadhyaya's 'Integral Humanism'. This ideology has since had considerable influence on the BJP.

During the Emergency period of 1975-1977, RSS and Jana Sangh leaders and activists were arrested. Later, Indira Gandhi's Congress Party lost the general election and the Janata coalition headed by Moraji Desai won. The Janata coalition formed a slight majority in the Lok Sabha. The founders of Jana Sangh, RSS members Advani and Vajpayee, were also key members of the Janata coalition. This was the first time since just after Independence that Hindu nationalists held political power at the centre, as key members of a ruling coalition (Ibid, p.168).

In 1980, the leaders and workers of the former Jana Sangh formed the BJP, with Vajpayee as its first president. In 1982 during state elections, the BJP formed alliances with other smaller parties and stood in an anti-Congress front. Two years after the 1984 general election, Vajpayee resigned from his position as president due to the disastrous result of the Lok Sabha polls, following which Lal Krishnan Advani became BJP president in 1986. The BJP under Advani started to adopt Upadhyaya's Integral Humanism philosophy as its ideology to fortify its idea of 'cultural nationalism' from 1985. In its 1989 general election campaign, the BJP formed electoral alliances mainly with V.P. Singh's new Janata Dal party, as part of the National Front alliance created by Narasimha Rao in 1988.

In August 1990, L.K. Advani launched his *rath yatra*, a mass march through some ten northern Indian states, sparking serious communal tension and violence. His motivation was seen as relating to the mobilisation of the Hindu vote bank, since it was threatened by the problem of caste loyalties after the implementation of the Mandal report¹¹. In the *rath yatra*, Hindutva forces were trying to bring the issue of caste discrimination to the fore by integrating those outside the caste system into Hinduism. In this sense, the *yatra* could be interpreted as an anti-Mandal strategy (Bhatt, 2001, p.169, 170&171). After the initiation of the *rath yatra*, Advani was imprisoned in Bihar, leading to the fall of the V.P. Singh National Front coalition government in late 1990.

In the 1991 election campaign, the BJP began to express its 'Hindutva' manifesto, based on Savarkar's definition of Hindutva. Its slogan was 'Towards Ram Rajya' (the mythological 'Rule of Ram') (Ibid., p.172).

From the Himalayas to Kanya Kumari, this country has always been one. We have had many States, but we were always one people. We always looked upon our country as Matribhoomi, Punyabhoomi [Motherland and Holyland]. (Bharatiya Janata Party, 1991 quoted in Bhatt, 2001, p.172).

11 In September 1990, the V.P. Singh government announced about implementation of the Mandal Commission's recommendation of 27% reservation of educational seats and government jobs for OBC (backward) communities. This resulted in an 'upper' caste strong resistance and the public self-immolation of Brahmin and 'upper' caste students in the summer of 1990 (Hansen, 1999, p.164).

This 1991 BJP manifesto seems to be some kind of preparation to achieve Hindu cohesion before embarking on the destruction of the Babri Masjid in 1992. The BJP claimed that their planning of the reconstruction of the Ram temple at Ayodhya was a means of rectifying historical wrongs between Hindus and Muslims. In other words, its manifesto was intended to trigger Hindus' old wounds received during the Mughal period.

During the 1996-1998 election, the BJP reiterated its ideology of 'one nation, one people, one culture' with the addition of the ancient cultural heritage of India as 'Hindutva', as well as emphasising the civilisational superiority of the Vedic times. In addition, they tried to legitimise the Ramjanbhoomi movement as the greatest mass movement since Independence.

Hindutva is unifying principle which alone can preserve the unity and integrity of our nation. It is a collective endeavour to protect and re-energise the soul of India, to take us into the next millennium as a strong and prosperous nation...On coming to power, the BJP government will facilitate the construction of a magnificent Shri Rama Mandir at Janmasthan in Ayodhya which will be a tribute to Bharat Mata. This dream moves millions of people in our land; the concept of Rama lies at the core of their consciousness (Bharayiya Janata Party, 1996 quoted in Bhatt, 2001, 174).

Although the BJP stressed its Hindutva manifesto, it has also attempted to appeal to a non-Hindu constituency under its aim of projecting moderation and inclusivity. This dual strategy of the BJP has come about in response to the changing economic and political global environment.

However, this attempt by the BJP to address globalisation has shown up differences in the ideology of the RSS. More particularly, the RSS advocated 'economic nationalism' based on swadeshi and redistributivism, while the BJP supported 'economic globalisation' based on deregulation.

In the late 1990s, these differences became apparent following renewed attacks by the Sangh Parivar on the BJP for apparently abandoning its Hindutva agenda in the coalition government, as well as disagreements about the nature, pace and direction of 'calibrated

globalisation' (Bhatt, 2001, p.177). However, this does not mean that the BJP gave up its Hindutva cultural nationalism slogan as its philosophy. It ceaselessly stressed the view that enhancing India's ancient cultural heritage is important.

Examining the core philosophies of the BJP, first, it has succeeded from Jana Sangh's ideology of 'Integral Humanism'. 'Integral Humanism' was based on a rejection of large-scale technologies and advocated swadeshi (Indian manufacture and consumption) and small-scale industrialisation. It was similar to Gandhian thought with respect to using swadeshi and sarvodaya (welfare for all) concepts.

Secondly, the BJP has declared 'Gandhian Socialism' to be its constitutional political ideology. This theory is inspired by Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule written by Gnadhi. Its features include decentralisation of political and economic power, opposition to technology and large scale industrialisation, and emphasis on self-employment and self-reliance.

Thirdly, it has adopted 'positive secularism'. With regard to 'positive secularism', Vajpayee has stated that:

Mahatma Gandhi describes the correct attitude towards religion as 'Sarva Dharma Sambhava', equal respect to all religions. The concept of 'Sarva Dharma Sambhava' is somewhat different from European secularism which is independent of religion ... We may say that the Indian concept of secularism is that of Sarva Dharma Sambhava ... Sarva Dharma Sambhava is not against any religion. It treats all religions with equal respect. And therefore it can be said that the Indian concept of secularism is more positive (Vajpayee, quoted from Jaffrelot, 2007, p.327).

'Positive secularism' includes the view that the state should consider all India's religions as equal, implying that Hindus should not be treated any differently to minority religions (Malik and Singh, 1994, p. 62).

In conclusion, the beginning of Hindu nationalism from the 19th to the early 20th century can be seen as "Hindu Revivalism" based on Aryanism, which emerged as a form of

nationalism against British colonial rule. Through the introduction of Western Orientalism and primordialism in the late 19th century, nationalists attempted to build up a number of socio-religious movements, mainly among Hindus, in the name of uniting the nation. Accordingly, Hindu nationalists tried to rediscover the history and origins of Hindus under the influence of these two epistemologies – primordialism and Orientalism from Europe. Therefore, Hindu nationalism in this period can be seen as preparation for the construction of contemporary Hindutva.

From the 1920s, Hindu nationalism has started to intervene in politics, with Savarkar introducing the concept of 'Hindutva' amidst the political turmoil of this time in India. Savarkar's 'Hindutva' was an ideology based on Nazism and Fascism. This narrow-minded view, which involves the acceptance only of 'us', has become the fundamental idea of contemporary right wing nationalism.

The sudden rise of the military form of Hindu nationalism since the 1980s has been more apparent in the political field with the strategy of making a clear demarcation of Muslims as others or enemies. Accordingly, right wing forces have used military tactics, including training and education, to unite India under a homogenous Hindu identity. This Hindu-Muslim communal violence was most obviously sparked in the destruction of the Babri Masjid in 1992.

Based on this background of Hindu nationalism, the following chapter will analyse the psychological reasons making Hindu nationalists invoke conflict and violence towards Muslims.

Chapter II

Psychology of the Conflict between Hindus and Muslims

In colonial India, as the idea of nationalism gained ground amongst Indians in the late 19th century, the British government embarked upon a policy of divide and rule. It tried to aggravate the conflict between Hindus and Muslims by offering political rights to Muslims. Muslims formed the Muslim League to overcome their feeling of inferiority, and this in turn contributed to the rise of Hindu communalism. Eventually, the policy resulted in the Partition of India and Pakistan in 1947.

Partition most starkly exposed the hostility between Hindus and Muslims. It was the moment when the wound that Hindus had received in the Mughal era – when Muslims conquered Hindus – stood revealed.

Partition provided the opportunity to emphasise the definition of Muslims as ‘others’. Although Indian Muslims have lived in India for centuries, they are regarded by many Hindu nationalists as foreigners. This perception is derived from a fear that their real loyalties lie with Pakistan and the Middle East rather than with India (Kakar, 1995).

The purpose of this chapter is to analyse the psychological factors behind the serious communal conflicts and strong antagonism between Hindus and Muslims in India. The most prominent of these psychological factors is Chosen Trauma, a wound received by Hindus in Indian history. The depth of this wound is related to the historical background in which Hindus and Muslims were intertwined with each other. In explaining Hindu animosity towards Muslims, it is important to examine this history from the moment Hindus and Muslims met to their current collision.

The most significant wound received by Hindus in Indian history is first the period of Muslim conquest over Hindus and second the Partition of India and Pakistan in 1947.

The first part of the chapter will look into the event of the destruction of the Babri Masjid, which it will be argued took place as a result of these two historical events, through their impact as Chosen Trauma on the Hindu psyche.

The second part will discuss psychological factors that can explain what makes Hindus feel so much anger towards Muslims when the British also dominated India. It will be suggested that the answer is the 'proximity factor', which refers to the tendency to feel more threatened by and therefore also more hostile towards a nearer and larger group than towards a distant and smaller group. These feelings have been handed down the generations through education by families and relatives.

In last part of the chapter, Hindu resentment of Muslims due to the breaking of taboos such as eating beef and slaughtering cows, and from the favourable attitude of the Indian government, will be explained.

1. Chosen Trauma

History is sometimes portrayed as a memory of a wound or glory of the past, and it is sometimes used as a means for someone who belongs to that history to justify an action today. This part of the chapter will examine one of the ways in which such psychological methods have been used by Hindus to justify their actions by reigniting a historical wound or glory.

For Hindu nationalists, the Mughal era and the Partition of India and Pakistan are fundamental injuries or trauma that are a cause of ceaseless communal conflict between Hindus and Muslims. In the Hindu consciousness, these wounds were inflicted when their dream of India as a homogeneous 'Hindu rashtra' was destroyed by the invasion and partition of the country by Muslims, regarded as foreigners or others. For Hindus, Muslims are the main party to be blamed. In addition, Hindus are nervous about decreasing Hindu numbers and the possible extinction of the Hindu race.

This definition of Muslims as others or foreigners can be understood with psychoanalysis. The 'other' is constructed in the process of "the securitisation of subjectivity", which according to Kinvall (2006, p.47) means "the search for one stable identity", while the other turns into an abject as the unwanted parts of the self are projected onto the other. This is also a concern with Chosen Trauma, which are mental recollections of a wounded past, where historical memory becomes an important factor in a successful projection process.

Chosen Trauma can easily occur when people feel some new threat, such as globalisation or the threat of the extinction of the race. In other words, Chosen Trauma is increased in a situation of insecurity and anxiety. When people feel their identity is disturbed in a context in which the system or order is changing, abjection occurs. The abject is a key part of group formation when the familiar 'stranger' is suddenly recognised as a threat (Babur, 1952; Kinvall, 2006). This includes the process of securitising one's identity by demonising the other, in which the self is sanctified. In dehumanising the other, the other is usually regarded as dirty. This construction of the self and the other will be discussed in more detail in the third chapter.

Chosen Trauma refers to the mental recollection of a tragedy in a group's history and includes "information, fantasised expectations, intense feelings and defences against unacceptable thought" (Kinvall, 2006, p.56). The feeling of hate generated from the past wound becomes the link between the present, past and future, and this is passed down through successive generations. It is possible because a specific calamity influences the psychology of individuals as well as that of the group. According to Volkan (1997, p.36-49), large groups also mourn. This process includes building mental defences against painful and unacceptable feelings and thoughts. Humiliation becomes trauma and this Chosen Trauma is rediscovered, reinterpreted and reused, sometimes in a mythologised and intertwined form, by later generations.

To reignite Chosen Trauma means attempting to trace the lineage of a group back to a specific place, time and ancestor in order to establish an ideological heritage and to

suggest a direction for future actions. This is accomplished through the use of symbols, memories, myths and heritage, with the objective of discovering the 'original' event. Political leaders often invoke Chosen Trauma as a way of justifying their actions by reigniting ancient injuries or glories, using remodelled symbols and myths (Kinvall, 2006, p.56-59).

Both Chosen Traumas and Chosen Glories are closely related to images of the nation and religion. Traumas emerge at times when nationalism is strong, when there is a need to search for the nation since the nation is lost, such as following colonisation. In this situation, nationalists want to look for and draw images of their glorified past before colonisation, and this process is often rooted in religious discourse. Here, religion plays a powerful role in turning the abstract symbols on which religion draws into physical objects and tangible events. All religious revelations are connected to the nation – for example, religious miracles become national feasts and holy scriptures are reinterpreted as national epics. In this sense, religious and cultural rituals and ritualistic anniversaries can sustain the trauma and show the demonization of the other while sanctifying the self. In other words, by turning history into a Chosen Trauma or Chosen Glory, it becomes a 'naturalised' part of an identity group's definition of the self and the other (Ibid, p.58, 59).

The use of Chosen Trauma in relation to discourse about religion and the nation can be seen in the actions of contemporary saffron waves and the Ayodhya event. This chapter will analyse the trauma that have been chosen in Hindu consciousness from their history – the Mughal Era and the Partition of India and Pakistan – and discuss how these Chosen Trauma have become a psychological factor in provoking conflict between Hindus and Muslims.

It is argued that the demolition of the Babri Masjid resulted from the emotional wound received by Hindus based on the historical events of the Mughal era and the Partition of 1947, their Chosen Trauma.

1.1 Mughal Era

The first Chosen Trauma for Hindus is the Muslim invasion of the subcontinent from the beginning of the 8th century to the 19th century and the Indian Rebellion of 1857¹².

Broadly speaking, Muslim rule in India had six phases: (i) Arab rule in Sindh and Multan up to the 10th century; (ii) the Delhi Sultanate from Mohammed Ghori to Ibrahim Lodhi from the 11th to the 15th centuries; (iii) the Mughal empire from Babar to Jalaluddin Akbar; (iv) Jehangir to Aurangzeb from the 16th to the 17th centuries; (v) the Bahmani and other Shia Kingdoms in the South; and (vi) the post-Mughal period after Aurangzeb and the rise of Maratha, Sikh and European powers in India (Gopal, 1994, p.10).

According to Kakar (1995, p.25, 27) Hindu nationalists have tended to exaggerate the impact of ten centuries of Muslim domination. He also claims that Hindu nationalists tend to overemphasise the difference between Hindu and Muslim religious identities as well as doctrinal beliefs in India's pre-colonial past.

Indeed, Hindutva describes the Muslim invasion as a history full of wounds, because Hindus were severely exploited by Muslims and many Hindu temples were destroyed – their religion was strongly oppressed during that period. For that reason, Muslims are usually depicted as aggressive fundamentalists and regarded as having inherited the blood of their ancient dictatorial medieval rulers who demolished temples and forcibly converted Hindus to Islam (Hasan, 2005). Hindu nationalists narrate only their suffered suppression and damage in the Mughal period, without mentioning any Muslim dynasty that tried to harmonise relations between Hindus and Muslims or the golden age during the Mughal era.

20 The Indian Rebellion of 1857 emerged as a mutiny of sepoys of the British East India Company's army on 10 May 1857 in the town of Meerut, and soon developed into other mutinies and civilian rebellions, largely in the upper Gangetic plain and central India (Bandyopadhyay, 2004, pp.169-172). The rebellion is also referred as India's First War of Independence, the Great Rebellion, the Indian Mutiny, the Revolt of 1857, the Uprising of 1857, the Sepoy Rebellion, and the Sepoy Mutiny.

Similarly, there are many Hindu literary writers who describe the fate of Hindus oppressed during the Mughal era and who express concern at the harmful influence of Islam on their society by contrasting the glory of pre-medieval India with the cruel character of Muslim dynasties (Ibid., p.200). For example, Gopal Ganesh Agarkar, Gopal Hari Deshmukh, and Vishnushastri Chitambar state with one voice: “Muslims were bullies and fanatics, because violence and aggression was the essence of their civilization” (Hasan, 2005, p.200). Tilak, an extreme Hindu nationalist during the early 20th century, tried to strengthen the Maratha identity with reference to memories of Muslim repression and exploitation. His continuous effort to denounce Muslim rulers including Mahmud of Ghazna, Alauddin Khalji, Timur, Aurangzeb, and Ahmad Shah Abdali as tyrannical dynasties created a religious divide in Maharashtra society and influenced the core ideology of the Hindu Mahasabha and the RSS, which includes regarding Muslims as enemies (Bhatt, 2001; Hasan, 2005).

Hindi writers like Bharatendu Harishchandra, Pratap Narain Misra and Radha Charan Goswami expressed the same idea, portraying medieval rule as an atrocious period, referring to evidence of the rape and conquest of Hindu women, the slaughter of sacred cows, and the demolition of Hindu temples. Bharatendu even expresses their ‘wounds in the heart’, lamenting the fact that Aurangzeb’s mosque stood beside the sacred Vishwanath temple in Varanasi (Hasan, 2005, p.200). He also makes a strong comparison between the characters of Hindus and Muslims, depicting Hindus as subjugated, long-suffering, modest, and acting with courage and honour, while Muslims are shown as dominant, acting with brutality and cowardice, and intolerant (Ibid). Misra and Radha Charan also depreciate Muslim rulers with expressions such as “those mad elephants” or “those who trampled to destruction the flourishing lotus-garden of India”. They bitterly criticise Muslim brutality in slaughtering cows and show wariness about Hindu religious processions being kept under guard (Chandra, 1987, cited in Hasan, 2005,p.201).

The most well known Bengali writer, Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, is another critic of the Mughal era. His strong resentment of Muslims is clear from the following: “He was born to hate the Hindus, he found Hindu offences unpardonable” (Ibid., p.182). He

asserts that medieval India was a period of bondage and that Muslim rule failed to bring any development to India. He sees Islam as loaded with the deceptive, ridiculous, avaricious and immoral, and most of all, he thinks of it as a threat to the Hindu religion (Chatterjee, 1986, p.77). Nirad C. Chaudhuri, a member of the Bengali intelligentsia, agrees that Muslims tried to oppress the Hindu religion to spread their religion with the Quran. In addition, he reveals strong antagonism towards Muslims in his criticism of Aurangzeb's ruthlessness: "As we grew older we read about the Rajputs, the Marathas, and the Sikhs against Muslims, and of the intolerance and oppression of Aurangzeb" (N.C. Chaudhuri, 1987, p.226).

It is clear then that many Hindu writers during the late 19th century tried to create the impression amongst Indians that the Mughal era was a dark age of Muslims raping Hindu women and destroying Hindu temples and sacred places. As a result of their efforts, the Mughal era has become a "historical wound", and this trauma has had an effect in bringing about the destruction of Babri Masjid – the climax of the conflict between Hindus and Muslims.

In the contemporary age, the damage Hindus suffered during the Mughal era has become one of the saffron wave's key foundations, with the intention of justifying the demolition of the Babri Masjid.

After the destruction of the Babri Masjid, the BJP tried to legitimise their actions by highlighting the atrocities committed by Muslim rulers and indoctrinating Hindus with images of the violent invasion of the Muslims:

This historical background of the Mohamedan invasion and the provocative ocular reminders of that violent and barbaric invasion were completely ignored even after the partition of India. This neglect resulted in the failure to evolve a sound basis for Indian nationalism and durable relationships between Hindus and Muslims (BJP, 1993, quoted in Berglund, 2004, p.1069)

In the 'BJP's White Paper on Ayodhya and The Rama Temple Movement', the party also condemned Muslims with its description "Muslims are violent and barbaric" and its

characterisation of the Muslim period on the subcontinent as “...probably the bloodiest story in History”(quoted in Berglund, 2004, p.1069). In addition, it asserted that due to the advent of Islam in the subcontinent, the ancient harmony had been destroyed. It stated: “It is the invasion by fanatic religious statecraft that intervened and introduced inter-religious disharmony and hatred towards all indigenous faiths” (BJP, 1993, quoted in Davis, 2005, p.36).

In this way, the Sangh Parivar has sought to find a rationalisation for the demolition of the Babri Masjid by bringing up Babar, the founder of the Mughal dynasty. When the Sangh Parivar describes Babar, he is connected to his act of conquering iconoclasm and this action is regarded as an expression of indigenous principles in Islam, not as his personal act (Davis, 2005, p.36). As a result, Babar has become a symbol of the historical legacy of Muslim conquest and Hindus have used him to construct their antagonism towards Islam.

The ultimate purpose of the Sangh Parivar is to make a clear division of two communities in India – Hindus and Muslims – and to aggravate the relations between them. Towards this end, they contrast the golden age of the pre-Muslim period with medieval India in which there was a historical collapse as a result of the activities of Babar and the Muslim invasion. For this reason, they claim that Babar’s mosque had to be destroyed because it was the vestiges of this ancient historical wrong (Ibid, p.37).

As already discussed, Hindu nationalists from the late 19th century – the period in which Hindu nationalism began – to the contemporary saffron waves, have derogated the Mughal era as an indelible historical disgrace and memory of defeat. This effort by Hindu nationalists to make the Mughal era a historical wound for Hindus has become a Chosen Trauma and this Chosen Trauma has appeared in Hindus' dread of a “revival of medieval Muslim rule” (Kakar, 1995, p.53) and in the action of the demolition of the Babri Masjid, which is considered the physical residue of Muslim rule.

1.2 Partition

The partition of India and Pakistan in 1947 offended the Hindu mind and became one of their biggest historical trauma, since their dream of constructing one nation – a Hindu rashtra – after Independence from the British was destroyed.

India and Pakistan were created on the basis of the so-called two nation theory¹³, which came about as a result of Muslim desire to form a separate nationality and homeland with a distinct culture.

After the creation of these two new states, communal tensions and riots immediately engulfed the subcontinent. The communal violence after Partition not only killed thousands of people but also displaced many people from their homeland. This meant that many victims had to look for a new home some distance away (Raychaudhury, 2000, p.5653). Partition made their homeland hostile and this was a source of distress for them. It became an unforgettable trauma, not only for the victims who experienced severe cruelty such as physical violence, insult and sexual assault, but also for Hindus in general, who felt miserable due to the division of the Bharat Mata.¹⁴

The violence of Partition is the most shocking memory for Hindus and Muslims alike because of its scale and intensity. It has fixed the relation with a clear division between them. Undoubtedly, the partition of the nation into India and Pakistan strongly affected the Hindu consciousness.

Therefore, it cannot be denied that Partition has worked as a Chosen Trauma, which has had an impact on later riots – the destruction of the Babri Masjid and the Gujarat massacre (Kinvall, 2006, p.105).

13 The two-nation theory is the ideology that the primary identity of Indian Muslims is based on their religion, rather than their language or ethnicity, and therefore Indian Hindus and Muslims identity are separated-two distinct nationalities- regardless of ethnic or other commonalities (Winks W. Robin, Low M. Elaine M ,2001).

14 “Bharat Mata” (explained in Chapter III).

In fact, deeply rooted emotional trauma created by the division of India and Pakistan has given momentum to the development of stereotypes of the Indian Muslim as foreign and alien to India for Hindus. Van der Veer (1994) states that the 1947 Partition brought about the cognition among Hindu nationalists of the construction of the Muslim as other – not truly Indian – and gave this construction a strongly realistic aspect (Van der Veer, 1994, p.10).

This strong perception of Indian Muslims as others has even created hostility towards the Middle East, because Hindu nationalists believe that Pakistan has been Islamicized and the heartland of Muslims is the Middle East – not South Asia. The following Hindu narrative shows this Hindu fear:

The Muslims have weakened the Hindus because they have damaged a lot of temples. This happened already during the Moghuls...The construction of Pakistan destroyed India and now we are threatened by both the Middle East and the West. Only a stronger India can save us (interview of a Hindu male, quoted in Kinvall, 2006, p.161).

For this reason, when contemporary Hindu nationalists emphasise the role of the Muslim minority, they often bring up the trauma of Partition. Hindus force Indian Muslims to devote their loyalty towards India:

When the country was partitioned what did the Muslims say?...It was for them to decide at that time whether they wanted to live here, peacefully with Hindus or they wanted to go to Pakistan. If they have decided to live here they must respect the sentiments of the Hindus (quoted in Berglund, 2004, p.1069).

If we analyse the Chosen Trauma of Partition with reference to the Hindu psyche, it is related to Indian mythology because Indian mythology cannot be easily distinguished from the Hindu religion. Hindu feelings about Partition should be understood in this context. In their mind, it was not regarded simply as a division between the Muslim majority areas and Hindu majority areas, but as a ripping apart of Mother India. This perception was a spiritual and emotional shock to the Hindu consciousness and hence Partition remained an unforgivable and unforgettable humiliation for Hindus (Puri, 1993, p.2145).

The traumatic experience of Partition encouraged the rise of a potent feeling of distrust of each other as well as severe communal conflict between Hindus and Muslims thereafter. Needless to say, it has become a significant event in India, leading to a series of riots and hostilities involving Muslims (Puri, 1993; Van der Veer, 1994).

1.3 Result (Destruction of the Babri Masjid : Ayodhya Event)

The destruction of the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya is significant in the contemporary history of India for its social, political and religious aspects. This event can be said to have been the starting point of the rise of the communal Hindutva movement. It generated considerable social agitation, political trouble and public dispute in the subcontinent.

It was intended as retaliation for historical 'humiliations'. The Ram janmabhoomi movement aimed to reinforce the stature of Ram as a god, prophet, and national hero and of Ayodhya as a Hindu religious centre (Puri, 1993, p.2146). In addition, their message to the public was that the site of the Babri Masjid belonged to Hindus, so Hindus had the right to take it over from Muslims (Berglund, 2004, p.1067). Hindu nationalists tried to provoke an emotional reaction and aimed to mobilise feelings of solidarity among Hindus.

The Ramjanbhoomi movement had been in existence for several years. In April 1984, the VHP summoned Hindu religious figures to plan the liberation of three temple sites in north India – at Mathura, Varanasi and Ayodhya.

In 1990, BJP president L. K. Advani suggested a *rath yatra* to garner support for building a Ram temple in Ayodhya. The procession with Rama's chariot began in Somnath, on the Gujarat coast in western India on September 25, and covered some ten thousand kilometres across eight states over the next 35 days, reaching Ayodhya on October 30. On the way, the procession encountered considerable agitation and Advani and other leaders were arrested by the chief minister of Bihar on October 23. On October 30, a Hindu militia under the leadership of the VHP broke into the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya and caused some damage. On November 7, the BJP withdrew its support for the coalition

government led by the National Front and headed by Prime Minister V.P. Singh, which resulted in the fall of the government. With the success of Advani's *rath yatra*, the BJP became the main opposition party to the declining Congress and eventually came to power in Uttar Pradesh.

The final demolition of the Babri Masjid occurred two years later. It is from this time that communal riots began in earnest.

When the saffron wave planned to destroy this site and called for its return from Muslims, their actions were based on three primary beliefs. First, the god Rama was actually and physically born at that exact place. Secondly, an ancient Hindu temple marking Rama's birthplace formerly stood on the site. Thirdly, the Mughal conqueror Babar destroyed the temple in the early 16th century and constructed a mosque on the ruins (Davis, 2005, p.34).

These reinterpreted and uncertain myths and memories have become Chosen Trauma and have reinforced the perception of Muslims.

More particularly, for Hindu nationalists, the presence of the Babri Masjid was a reminder of the violence and intolerance of Muslims, their celebration of the Muslim conquest of Hindus, and the oppression and disunity of Hindus, all of which was ancient history that Hindu nationalists wanted to erase. This thinking of the Sangh Parivar was also expressed by the BJP, which described the Babri Masjid as follows: "purely and simply a symbol not of devotion and of religion but of conquest" (Berglund, 2004, p.1068).

This Hindu anger at Muslims is also visible in two publications that aimed to justify the destruction of Babri Masjid: the book *Ayodhya Guide* and the pamphlet *Angry Hindu! Yes, Why Not?*

Yes, certainly I am angry. And I have every reason to be angry. And it is also right for me to be so. Otherwise I would be no man. Yes for too long I have

suffered insults in silence. Until now I have been at the receiving end....My people have been kidnapped by the enemies. My numbers have dwindled...my goddess-like motherland has been torn asunder... My traditional rights have been snatched away from me (quoted in Nandy et al., 1995, 54).

Each step taken by the Ram janmabhoomi movement had symbolic value, taken not only with the intention of taking revenge for the humiliation of Hindus at the hands of foreign invaders but also to awaken a historical trauma.

Looking more closely at the *rath yatra*, the choice of Somnath as the starting point for the procession had meaning since it was also related to the Chosen Trauma of the Mughal period. It was the site of the most famous event of Muslim temple destruction in India by Muhmud of Ghazna in 1026. Somnath was understandably a target for the VHP (Davis, 2005, p.43).

The erection of the Rama temple also had symbolic meaning for Hindu nationalists. According to Kakar (1995), “The Rama temple is a response to the mourning of Hindu society: a mourning for lost honor, lost self-esteem, lost civilization, lost Hinduness”. More particularly, the Rama temple was an object for the projection of individual and group experiences of mourning. Historical places are often turned into sacred and national sites and serve as Chosen Trauma (Kinvall, 2006, p.59). Relating monuments and history is to some extent a natural instinct, according to Peter Homans (Kakar, 1995, p.202).

Engage the immediate conscious experience of an aggregate of egos by representing and mediating to them the lost cultural experiences of the past; the experiences of individuals, groups, their ideas and ideals, which coalesce into what can be called a collective memory. In this the monument is a symbol of union because it brings together the particular psychological circumstances of many individual’s life courses and the universals of their otherwise lost historical past within the context of their current or contemporary social processes and structures (quoted in Kakar, 1995, 202).

As already mentioned, Chosen Trauma denotes “an event which causes a community to feel helpless and victimised by another and whose mental representation becomes

embedded in the group's collective identity" (Kakar, 1995, p. 63). In India, Chosen Trauma is the result of the anger and hate Hindus feel towards their Muslim enemy or other.

In the formation of this Chosen Trauma, the construction of Muslims as others and alien is necessary. Prejudice is used as a means of differentiating one group from the other in order to maintain group identity.¹⁵ Dehumanisation also takes place, so that the enemy is gradually dehumanised over time (Kinvall, 2006, p.55). The tendency of Hindu nationalists to brand Muslims as dirty vermin, with reference to features such as facial hair and clothing type, or as aggressive sexualised beings, is related to this process of dehumanisation. Traits are sometimes exaggerated to connect unrelated habits like cow slaughter, crime, drugs and terrorism.

This construction of dehumanisation is accomplished through 'mythic discourse', as shown with the destruction of the Babri Masjid. The grounds on which Hindu nationalists justify their action of destroying the mosque are that they believe the Islamic ruler Babur destroyed a Ram temple and built a mosque on its ruins, based on the Indian mythology of Ram. This 'mythic discourse' can be seen as a strategy to unify a pan-Indian homogeneous identity in India by connecting the Hindutva version of Hinduism to Indian history and Indian national identity (Ibid., p.147). In addition, Hindu nationalists have used this mythic discourse to account for Partition as well as Muslim atrocities in the Mughal era.

Hindutva in the Ram janmabhoomi movement used a manipulated trauma of the past – their victimisation at the hands of Muslim conquerors and the partition of the country – with the objective of strengthening Hindu cohesiveness. After instigating the Ayodhya event, Hindu nationalists justified their communal violence, connecting their glorified and romanticised version of India's past with the elimination of Muslim history in India to the present.

¹⁵ This theory will be explained in Chapter IV in detail.

As has been shown, Chosen Trauma is the main psychological explanation for Hindu enmity towards Muslims. The collected memories of the Muslim conquest and the division of the country that was expected to unite after Independence are historical injuries in the Hindu mind and have become indelible trauma for them. Ultimately, these trauma caused the Ayodhya event, which was the culmination of the Hindu-Muslim conflict.

2. Proximity Factor

In fact, it was a policy of the British government that resulted in Partition and the creation of India and Pakistan, as has already been mentioned. British colonial rule also resulted in an increase in Christianity in the subcontinent. Why is Hindu animosity towards Muslims or Islam stronger than towards the British and Christianity? This part of the chapter analyses the psychological factors behind this curious eventuality.

Examining the difference in Hindu perception of the British colonial period and the medieval period of Mughal rule, it is clear that the former is regarded as relatively gentle, civilised and moral in character, while the latter is depicted as brutal, barbarous and ruthlessly oppressive of Hindus (Bhatt, 2001, p. 53).

Kakar agrees with this conclusion. In his opinion, the reason is that religion is a more important issue than political subjugation or economic exploitation in determining the reaction of Hindus (Kakar, 1995). In this way, the wound received by Hindus in the period of the Mughal Empire is deeper than that of the British period because Hindus think that the Hindu religious identity was more severely subjugated by Muslims as compared to the British.

Where has this difference come from? Kakar (1995, p. 28) suggests that proximity is the cause of “occasional simmering resentment and nagging friction” between Hindus and Muslims. The British remained strangers, while Muslims became others owing to their geographical position.

There is a related theory in the psychology of nationalism – inter-group hostility tends to be stronger with larger, nearer, and more powerful outgroups than with smaller, more distant and weaker ones (Rosenblatt, 1964, p.135). In the same way, nationalist or ethnocentric hostility more easily occurs in groups that are frequently encountered – near neighbours living within the group's territory – than in rarely encountered groups. Neighbouring groups are more likely to block goal responses than non-neighbouring groups (Ibid, p.138).

This theory is analysed in more detail by Freud. He says that the proximity factor determines the nature of emotional relations between men in general. He supports this idea with reference to Schopenhauer's famous simile of the freezing porcupine, which indicates that no one can tolerate too intimate an approach to his neighbour (Freud, 1960, p.33).

Neighbours always feel rivalry towards each other. Two families connected by a marriage or two neighbouring towns or countries often think themselves superior and the other inferior and their main rival. South and North Germans, the English and the Scots, Spaniards and Portuguese are good examples of this tendency for neighbours to feel hostility and contempt for each other (Ibid)

Dollard explains that when an in-group searches for the object of hostility of an out-group, that group will become the "favourite" out-group and the source of the most frustration. This will most likely be an adjacent group. In Campbell and Levine's study of intergroup relations (1961) correlated with ethnocentrism, they also mention intergroup hostility and stereotypes related to proximity. When the dominant group selects scapegoats, there is a high probability of targeting the group towards which the most guilt is felt and needs repressing. They say that this would probably be the most oppressed subordinate group, or the most infringed-against territorial neighbour – in other words, most likely an adjacent group.

This proximity theory can explain the relationship between Hindus and Muslims.

Moreover, due to strong family and kinship ties amongst Hindus, enmity felt by parents becomes a heritage that is handed down from the period of infancy and childhood (Kakar, 1995, p.39).

Such handed down Hindu antagonism toward Muslims is shown in Kakar's book, *The Color of Violence*. In this book, he shows his age-old feeling of strangeness towards Muslims in narratives such as the following: "I became aware that within myself 'the Muslim' was still somewhat of a stranger."

In this way, the hostility between Hindus and Muslims is constructed over a long period, being transmitted in teaching from parents, relatives and schools. As Campbell and LeVine explain, when in-groups want to present a bad-example of groups to children, the most effectively usable example in teaching can be a tangible, nearby group of customs (Campbell and Levine, 1961, p.94). This is because we can find and experience easily and immediately the bad or infringed aspects of adjacent groups.

The negative things in ourselves that we find in the other's character and that adjacent groups have are projected onto the other and then handed down to the next generation and transformed into an exaggerated rumour thanks to its rapid spread.

Proximity is one of the factors aggravating Hindu hostility towards Muslims, since this is in the nature of emotions between individuals as well as groups.

3. Other factors

The factors invoking conflict between Hindu and Muslims include various other factors like

3.1 Muslim Assault on Hindu Idols

The cow has often been the factors of stirring up communal violence in the modern era in India (Korom, 2000, p.189). Hindus are sensitive to the theme of the cow because it is

deeply embedded in the Hindu psyche. The cow has long been a symbol that deifies faith and belief in Hindu practice, and it has thereby become one of the most well-represented idols of the Hindu religion.

The symbolic importance of the cow in India can be traced back to the Vedic period. In a Vedic creation myth, cows are related to water, which is considered to be sacred and purifying. In other words, water has a holy image and the cow takes on this holiness. The depiction of the cow during this period is that she was identified with whole of the universe. This relationship between the cow and the universe is referred to many times in the *Rigveda* as well (Jacobi, 1914, quoted in Korom, 2000, p.187). In addition, the cow was seen as complete and self-contained in the *Atharvaveda* (Korom, 2000, p.187). Therefore, the cow also represented perfection for Hindus (Ibid., p.192). Due to her pure and sacred image, cows were offered as oblations for Vedic sacrifice. In particular, the five products of the cow (i.e., milk, curd, clarified butter, urine and dung) were used as the purest substances available for ritual. With these images, it is clear that the tendency for cows to be revered as deities or inhabited by deities started to emerge a long time ago (Korom, 2000, p. 187, 192; Van der Veer, 1994, p.88).

However, the cow was still being eaten. The idea that harming or slaughtering a cow should be considered a crime arose only in the fifth century BCE – the period of the emergence of Buddhism and Jainism – because of the notion of *ahimsa* (Korom, 2000, p.188).¹⁶

From 1880 to 1920 during the colonial period, the Hindu Cow Protection Movement grew up because there was a need to use the sacred image of the cow to unite the community. Right wing Hindu nationalists highlighted the importance of the cow, depicting Muslims as barbaric and dirty due to their consumption of beef.

16 Ahimsa is a term meaning to do no harm, non harming or nonviolence http://www.sanskrit.org/www/Hindu%20Primer/nonharming_ahimsa.html (accessed on 24th July, 2012). Ahimsa means kindness and non-violence towards all living things including animals. It became an basis of important tenet of Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism. Mohandas Gandhi strongly emphasized on this principle http://news.blaze.com/story/20071014111738_kuma.nb/topstory.html, (accessed on 24th July, 2012)

A publication of the VHP emphasises the importance of the cow, not only from the religious point of view as an object of worship and a symbol of Mother India but also from a practical point of view as a useful tool in agriculture and nutrition, thus promoting the cow as a means of developing the country (Hansen, 1999, p.104). Such efforts on the part of the VHP to promote the cow can also be seen in their tribal missionary activities. By teaching the usefulness of cow products such as milk and dung, they want to convince tribals to start to have faith. This missionary activity can be seen as a kind of cultural narcissism (Ibid).

Cows are a taboo in the Hindu psyche, registering on an emotional level. Because of its universality, taboo belongs to a deep level of the psyche and it can take many forms (O'Doherty, 1960, p.131). For example, there is a taboo on certain foods. According to Fortes (1966), the taboo on eating the totem animal is fundamental and is commonly presented in all the literature of the area. Therefore, a taboo on certain foods and related myths has come down through the generations. The ban on eating often functions as a daily reminder of identity with respect to other individuals and to society in general (Ibid).

In this respect, the Muslim habit of eating beef and slaughtering cows could be one of the most crucial factors in Hindu resentment of Muslims. According to Kakar (1995), Muslim beef eating and Hindu repulsion of the practice creates a prominent barrier between the two communities. Hindus cannot share a meal with Muslims and consider their eating habits disgusting, making it difficult for them to be close to each other. Due to their strong aversion towards eating forbidden and tabooed foods, Hindus make an image of Muslims as animals, with characteristics including ferocity, uncontrolled sexuality and a dirtiness by inner pollution.

In 1924, the British army psychiatrist Owen Berkeley-Hill explained two main factors behind the Hindu-Muslim conflict. The first was the 'motherland complex' of Hindus, referring to the rape of the motherland – Bharat Mata – during the Muslim conquest of India. The second obstacle he mentioned was the Muslim slaughter of cows. According to Berkeley, the acts of Muslims violate Hindu taboo; cow slaughter is understood as

showing off Muslim victories, and it could be a major factor behind Hindu hatred of Muslims (Ibid, p.140). In other words, Hindu anger is derived basically from this Muslim assault on their lifestyle and on their idols (Ibid, p.27).

This Hindu disgust at Muslim eating of beef is shown in many Hindus narratives. For Pardis, beef eating is the most grave sin – over and above marriage to a Muslim or conversion to Islam (Kakar, 1995, p.139). In Pardis' interview:

Bada gosht (beef) is their favorite dish. If any of us even touches it he must have a bath. All Muslims eat bada ghost. That is why we keep ourselves away from them. We do not even drink water in their homes (quoted in Kakar, 1995, p.139).

In fact, from the 19th century, there has been a ceaseless effort against cow slaughter in the Hindu nationalist movement. Similarly, during the Ramjanmabhoomi movement, the following slogan was written on the wall: 'It is the religious duty of every Hindu to kill those who kill cows' (Nandy et al., 1995, p.53). Whenever Hindus face a crisis, they recall the importance of the close relationship between Hindus and the cow and thereby increase the feeling of fury in Hindu emotions regarding Muslim eating of beef and slaughtering of cows.

However, Hindus do not feel as much hostility towards Christians – who also kill cows – as towards Muslims. This is because they do not think Christians kill cows with the intention of insulting Hindus (Kakar, 1995, p.141). This shows Hindus' hatred of and bias against Muslims has been deep-seated for a long time in their intertwined history.

3.2 The Government's Attitude Towards Muslim

The Government's pro-Muslim attitude also increases Hindu anxiety and indignation because it makes Hindus feel left out in their homeland.

In April 1985, an important judgement by the Supreme Court of India – the so-called Shah Bano case – gave Hindus a shock. It resulted in social reverberations and sectarian debate on the position of the Muslim minority in Indian society.

The story began with a Muslim woman Begum Shah Bano who had been divorced by her husband in 1975 after 43 years of marriage. She filed a suit claiming her right to maintenance under Section 125 of the Criminal Procedure Code, which applies to all communities regardless of their separate personal laws. The case was finally decided by the Supreme Court in April 1985 in favour of Begum Shah Bano. This Supreme Court judgement triggered a country-wide reaction and also questioned the legal practice which allows separate civil laws for the various religious communities and argued for a uniform civil code (Berglund, 2004, p.1067). In fact, there have been few issues on which Indian Muslims have reacted so strongly since Independence (Hasan, 1989, p.44). There were strong protests by the Muslim community in support of Muslim civil laws, especially by the religious leadership. Many sections of Muslim society, including Jamait-ul-Ulema-i-Hind, the Jamait-e-Islami and the Muslim League, condemned the judgement and formed a movement in the name of interference in Muslim Personal Law. Their basic argument was that no legislative or executive authority could alter Muslim Personal Law because it was based on the Shariah, which is divine and immutable. By referring to the Shariah as a central symbol, they intended to preserve Muslim identity and make an idiom for integration (Ibid, p.44, 45). Through this movement, Muslim aimed to protect their identity and minority position. In fact, the Muslim demand for restoring Muslim Personal Law was a moment that showed their ability to maintain solidarity in the community. For this reason, Hindus could not help feeling threatened, observing Muslims' immediate group cohesion.

At the same time, Hindu nationalists acclaimed the Supreme Court's decision and fiercely criticised the Rajiv Gandhi government when it nullified the verdict by introducing The Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act 1986, which upheld Muslim Personal Law.

This intervention by the Indian government was based on the assumption that the majority of Muslims were unhappy with the judgement made by the Supreme Court, considering it to be a threat to their religious identity. This effort to appease Muslim indignation was made under the ideology of secularism, which intends to protect all religions (Ibid, p.47, 48).

It provoked strong resistance among Hindus. Hindus condemned the Government's decision, describing it as "abject surrender to Muslim fundamentalism"(Puri, 1993, p.2146). Most of the backlash was led by the BJP. The BJP attempted to mobilise Hindu sentiment by arguing that the Shah Bano episode would reopen Muslims reservations about joining the mainstream in India and by saying that the Government's policy demonstrated partiality for the appeasement of Muslims (Ibid.).

The party argued that its demands were not related to its anti-Muslim propensity, but that they were based on the need for the principle of equal treatment. However, its argument just presented the intolerant attitude of Hindus – who cannot accept minorities – and the Hindu nationalist ideal of cultural nationalism (Berglund, 2004, p.1067).

This Hindu sentiment in the Shah Bano case was also seen in interviews of Hindus. They expressed this “unfair treatment” as “behaving like a stepmother toward the other” (Kakar, 1995, p.136). According to Kakar, the bitter complaints of Hindus about the Government are connected to the psychology of “collective sibling rivalry, of the group-child’s envy and anger at the favoring of an ambivalently regarded sibling by the parent” (Ibid., p.137).

The threat felt by Hindus also included the fear of fast growing Muslim power in the subcontinent. Hindus felt it was unfair because Muslims were favoured and supported by the state in India as well as in Pakistan. In other words, the growing assertion of Muslims within the country and the Islamic resurrection in the Muslim world increased Hindu resentment in their consciousness (Puri, 1993, p.2146).

Therefore, the Shah Bano case strengthened Hindu determination to continue Hindu-Muslim riots so long as the Government continues to mollify Muslims and makes rules against the Hindu majority.

In conclusion, this chapter has looked into the causes of the conflict between Hindus and Muslims by analysing the reasons behind the strong Hindu hostility towards Muslims.

The most prominent psychological factor is Chosen Trauma. Hindu nationalists have constantly talked about how they were hurt in the Mughal era referring to how many people were killed by Muslims and how they indiscriminately destroyed Hindu temples. In addition, it has also been argued that their wound derived from their idea that Bharat Mata was ripped up by Partition in 1947. They have argued that Partition was unfair to Hindus, saying “we gave Pakistan to Muslims, but the remainder is for us” (Ko et al., 2006).

These historical wounds have become Chosen Trauma and this has been one of the crucial factors in bringing about constant communal violence, which reached its peak with the demolition of the Babri Masjid. The correlation between the destruction of the Babri Masjid and the trauma of the past was well presented in Hindu use of historical myth and symbols.

They legitimised their action and strengthened Hindu group cohesion in the Ramjanabhoomi movement and the construction of the Rama temple, depicting Muslims as barbaric foreigners and others, as well as despising the past of Muslims. In this process, historical places have been turned into holy and mythologised venues, and these myths have been romanticised and a fabricated past has become truth.

The use of historical trauma has not just ended in lamentation or grief for the old days, but has instead become a means of enhancing their political position. The Ayodhya event, which was the climax of the conflict between Hindus and Muslims, broke out as a result of this situation.

However, it is not only Muslims who are alien to Hindus. India was ruled by the British and actually Partition of India and Pakistan occurred under the influence of British colonial policy. So why do Hindus have the most serious antagonism toward Muslims and Islam, not towards Christians and the British?

It is suggested that the proximity factor provides an answer to this question from the psychological perspective. In the psychology of nationalism, nearer and larger groups are more threatening than more distant and smaller groups in intergroup relations. Applying this argument to the relationship between Hindus and others, it would be expected that Hindus would feel more threatened by Muslims and Islam than by Christianity and the British because geographically Muslims live closer than the British and they have interacted closely with Hindus for a much longer time. In this way, the existence of Muslims in the homeland is the biggest intimidatory factor for Hindus because it is easier to counter the influence or bad aspects of Muslim.

Hindu consideration of Muslims as iconoclast because of their habit of eating beef and killing cows and the Indian government's pro-Muslim attitude were offered as additional factors provoking Hindu enmity. This psychology created by particular historical events as described above means that Hindus cannot help being more hostile towards Muslims than towards others. Undoubtedly this hostility has been main culprit in evoking serious communal violence between the two communities.

The question then is what psychology Hindus use for mobilising their group appeal and achieving their goal – to defeat Muslims – in the militarised communal conflict between them that has been going on since the 1980s? The next chapter will examine how Hindus defend and secure their identity in the globalised context.

Chapter III

Using Psychology to Enhance Hindu Group Identity in the Context of Modernisation and Globalisation

Personality changes with the onset of modernisation and globalisation, especially with regard to the security of identity and identity formation, since globalisation and modernisation can be menacing forces for individuals – they may feel previously inexperienced threats in this new environment.

According to Barker (1999, p.35), modernity is ‘an uncontrollable engine of enormous power that sweeps away all that stands before it’. With regard to characteristics in the changed situation between the pre-modern and modern, Vanaik (1997) questions the relationship between communalism and modernity. We may find an answer in the construction of contemporary Hindu nationalism. Kakar (1995) claims that the current religious revivalism or fundamentalism in India is a phenomenon that results from a reaction against modernity. During the modernisation process, many people feel new emotions while adjusting to the new environment. Among these new emotions, the feeling of loss is the most common. Individuals can easily experience the feeling of loss because modernisation eliminates old attachments as a result of population movements including continuous migration and wipes out traditional identities.

Globalisation also contributes to making people feel the emotion of alienation. As society changes rapidly and the boundaries of territories become vague, people want to secure their identity to get rid of existential anxiety about global forces. Modernisation and globalisation give rise to feelings of insecurity and people try to overcome such feelings of insecurity by searching for new secure identities (Kinvall, 2006).

The sudden rise of Hindu nationalism since the 1980s is also related to the influence of globalisation and modernisation. With the maelstrom of domestic politics resulting from

the misuse of ethnic and religious identities in party politics, Hindu nationalism has tried to firmly establish Hindu identity in the context of globalisation and modernisation. In other words, the socio-psychological change processes of individuals and groups as a consequence of modernisation and globalisation are closely related to the reason for mobilising and creating a new Hindu identity. Therefore, we can say that the emergence of forceful and militant Hindu nationalism is one way of strengthening the security of their identity in a rapidly changing world.

From the perspective of nationalism, the more a group's members share – such as language, religion and common historical origin – the greater is the nationalism of the group. Also, the greater the group nationalism: 1) the greater is the group homogeneity of attitudes, beliefs and ways of behaving; 2) the greater is the group cohesiveness; and 3) the greater are the pressures for homogeneity and cohesiveness (Rosenblatt, 1964, p.137, 140).

In accordance with this general theory about nationalism and group cohesiveness, Hindu nationalists in the context of globalisation since the 1980s have attempted to firm up their identity to increase group cohesiveness – dreams of creating a homogeneous India as a Hindu nation – using various psychological strategies. The most important of these strategies is the clear demarcation between the self and the other by abjection of the other, which will be discussed in the first part of this chapter. Deepened Hindu hostility towards Muslims as a result of Chosen Trauma is sharpened as a result of the boundary between the Hindu-self and the Muslim-other. The definite distinction between the self and the other is a natural process in the formation of individual and group identity. Hindu nationalists use this psychology to assert their group identity.

The second part will consider Hindu nationalists' strategy of emphasising group superiority and group loyalty to increase self-esteem, by inculcating prejudice and implanting bad images of the other in the process of drawing a distinction between the self and the other.

Finally, we will examine the Sangh Parivar's method of mobilising Hindu group solidarity through the reinterpretation of history and myth, and through the mythical and historical invention of symbols, as expressed in events related to the destruction of the Babri Masjid – in which they drastically showed their homogeneous ideology of cultural nationalism.

In this way, this chapter aims to look into how Hindu nationalists protect their identity from the new threat of globalisation, with reference to the historical events we have already dealt with in the previous chapter, especially in terms of their psychological strategies such as the abjection of the other and the manipulation of history.

1. Clear Boundary between “Us” and “Other”

Category formation in the construction of identity is a natural instinct for all human beings. Examining the process of the construction of the self and the other in detail, firstly, the individual accepts and creates the self by defining himself or herself in relation to others, perceiving similarities and differences between the self and the other. This process of division between the self and the other in the individual is also adopted and proceeds to the production of group formation (Kinvall, 2002, 2006).

This psychology of category formation to resist the other is also used by Hindu nationalists in strengthening group identity in the context of globalisation. Many narratives and propaganda works prove their intention to clearly divide the Hindu-self and the Muslim-other.

According to Tajfel's (1981) social identity theory, individuals tend to favour their own group (in-group) in relation to other groups (out-group) because groups offer their members self-esteem by giving group members a sense of belonging. For that reason, group members try to elevate the status of the in-group in relation to the out-group. In this way, the group in relation to the other and the role the other plays in its discourse is important for group existence (Hogg and Abrams, 1988; Kinvall, 2006, Tajfel and Turner, 1979).

As has already been mentioned, the formation of the other is an innate process for human beings and group members inherently tend to classify groups as in-groups and out-groups through learning from their birth and early experience. Individuals move from self to other-orientation over time, meaning that individuals are socialised. In this regard, Ross (1991, p.177) states that "sociality promotes ethnocentric conflict, furnishing the critical building block for in-group amity and out-group hostility."

In this process, what the self experiences as negative and unfavourable is projected onto the other and this makes the image of the other dehumanised, strange, alien and externalised from us. It means that the stranger or the foreigner is commonly perceived as negative. George Simmel (1971), refers to the stranger as the sociologically marginal (cited in Kinvall, 2006, p. 44)

Like Simmel, Oommen (1994), (as cited by Kinvall, 2006, p.46) also refers to the foreigner and the stranger, classifying others in four categories. The first is 'the equal other', who is different but not subservient to the self. The second category is 'the internal other', which refers to marginalised groups such as women or certain established immigrants. The third group consists of 'unacceptable' societal groups like homosexuals or particular religious groups. Finally, 'the outsider, the non-equal other' constitutes the fourth category, which may include non-established immigrants or religious groups of foreign origin. The last category is considered to be essentially different from the other three categories because the members of the other three categories are likely to exist within the system, while members of the last are not.

It seems as though this fundamental prejudice against the foreigner and the stranger stems from differences in religion and culture. This prejudice, derived from differences in cognition, mostly brings about xenophobia, ethnocentrism, anti-semitism and racism, even more so when one group holds more power and resources and uses 'differences' to control and marginalise others (Ibid, p.47).

From the 1920s, which is the period of the emergence of the Hindutva ideology and the creation of the Sangh Parivar, this stigmatisation of the other has been a key means of mobilising Hindu identity and group power. Hindu militants including the VHP and the RSS have taken the lead in generating strong feelings of hostility towards the ‘threatening other’ as well as in stigmatising it (Jafflerot, 1999, p.201).

Speeches of BJP members during the *rath yatra* also demonstrate the clear boundary between Hindus and Muslims, referencing hostility derived from the historical past:

“Are you children of Babar or Ram, Akbar or Rana Pratap, Auranzeb or Shivaji? Those who do not answer this question properly have no right to be in this country”. (Padmanabhan and Sidhva, 1990, Quoted in Davis, 2005, p.37).

Although over 90 percent of Indian Muslims are in fact descendants of indigenous converts, we can see from the above that Hindu nationalists try to totally exclude Muslims from national citizenship (Ludden, 2005, p.37). On further examination, it is clear that this Hindu clear-cut demarcation of the Muslim as the other is influenced by families and by their own group from childhood while accumulating the in-group’s ‘emotional investment’ in bad images of Muslims (Kakar, 1995, p.54).

The construction of the other is becoming more necessary in the context of globalisation because people feel their identity is under greater threat. In these new circumstances, abjection becomes the main process in collective identity formation because when the familiar stranger is suddenly recognised as a threat, it occurs more easily (Kinvall, 2006, p.78). The process of ‘othering’ is essential to feel security and protection in times of rapid change such as globalisation. Nationalism and religion help in the process by debasing the other (Ibid). Furthermore, “nationalism and religion both provide the idea of a ‘home’, it is easy to give protection and security from the stranger and the abject-other” (Kinvall, 2006, p.79). Therefore, nationalism and religion become more powerful in times of crisis by providing unity, security and a sense of belonging and thereby arouse deep attachments towards religious and national identity (Ibid, p.79).

In this sense, the emergence of militant Hindu nationalism since the 1980s can be seen as the result of strengthening Hindu solidarity to cope with threat of globalisation. In this process, Hindu extremists have accused those who are not included in the Hindu family – especially Muslims – of being foreigners and not of Indian origin, as well as projecting their unwanted features onto them. Ultimately, they have tried to construct a majoritarian religious nationalism, which is always defined in negative terms, by stressing only ‘Hindu’ identity as a trump card identity and ignoring other identity construction (Ibid., p.105). Such a pursuit of Hindu majoritarianism is accomplished through the clear demarcation of the self and the demonised other.

Summing up, as was discussed in the first chapter, Hindu nationalists started drawing clear boundaries with Muslims from the 1920s when the ideology of Hindutva was created by Savarkar. The perception of the Muslim as the other and a stranger has been developed since they feel intimidated by Muslims as a result of the trauma of the Mughal conquest and the Partition of India and Pakistan. This is based on the theory that the othering process in the formation of individual and group identity is more present in moments of crisis. Accordingly, Hindu nationalists have fixed stronger boundaries between the Hindu-self and the Muslim-other since the 1980s as threats to both society and politics have emerged due to domestic and international changes, including globalisation and modernisation.

This clear boundary between Hindus and Muslims was a useful psychological strategy during the destruction of the Babri Masjid, which represents the climax of the conflict between Hindus and Muslims. They intensified fear and hatred towards Muslims by dredging up trauma from the Mughal Empire in addresses during the procession to Ayodhya and presented savagery and brutality as traits of Muslims as well as of Islam itself, in particular criticising Muslim consumption of beef. This Hindu nationalist demonisation of Muslims is associated with the theory that when group leaders want to increase group nationalism, they often exploit fear or hatred of out-groups.

In this way, the demarcation of the self and the other by ceaselessly comparing tolerant Hindus and intolerant, barbarous Muslims has been the most effective psychological strategy in strengthening Hindu group cohesion in Hindu nationalism in the rapid changes of the globalisation context.

2. Intense Group Loyalty and Group Superiority

Group narcissisms, a feeling of civilisational superiority and the different religious faiths have also contributed to amplifying the quarrel between Hindus and Muslims. Hindus are anxious that Muslim loyalty is to Islam rather than the Indian state, as we can assume from its slogans “Babar ki santan, jao Pakistan (children of Babar, go to Pakistan)”. The rise of Muslim power in the subcontinent makes Hindu nationalists fear for their status, so they have attempted to intensify Hindu group loyalty and build themselves up.

The Sangh Parivar is an example of the attempt to create a vision of the “grandiose self” of Hindu culture and spirit, while degrading that of Muslims. The saffron flag and saffron colour are regarded as the symbols of the Hindu nationalist movement and also means of expressing their superiority by marking Hindu areas and also putting them on Muslim tombs and mosques. They have shown their veneration of the flag in religious rituals and processions, considering it a symbol of ideological integration (Hansen, 1999, p.108).

Such group superiority and group loyalty arises from feelings of attachment towards the group. These feelings are important psychological constituents in the construction of nationalism because they strengthen the sense of belonging and thereby increase group superiority and loyalty (Druckman, 1994,; Brock & Atkinson, 2008).

For this reason, group leaders desire to increase the nationalism of the group and share more in-group members to enhance attachment to the group. One Hindu nationalist strategy is also associated with this theory – their promotion of Sanskrit as a national symbol. Since language is one of the most important factors in delimiting a national or ethnic group (Rosenblatt, p.137; Freud, 1960, p.65), they have used Sanskrit as a tool to demarcate Hindus and Muslims as well as a symbol of unity and devotion. The prayers of the RSS *shakhas* are performed in Sanskrit and they consistently stress the significance of “harmony, culture, *dharma*, self-perfection through selfless service to society”. In the colloquial style of the RSS, they express affection for the nation and the Hindu group

using words like “devotion”, “love”, “attachment”, “commitment”, and “service” (Hansen, 1999, p.109).

It seems as though this Hindu nationalist strategy comes from the theory that the more alike people are, the easier it is to engender loyalty and cohesion. Also, conversely, the stronger the loyalty, the more people have similar views and support similar strategies (Druckman, 1994, p.50), so they have also tried to increase loyalty to unite the group as well as to make Hindus more homogeneous.

Group loyalty and cohesion increase “group-think”. Members of the group start to excessively protect their group and not accept any facts counter to their own image of the group (Ibid, p.56). This can make in-group members have narrow views and thereby create out-group bias as well as overestimations of and overconfidence in their own vis-à-vis the other group. Furthermore, it arouses emulation and animosity towards the other group. This in-group bias encourages in-group members to create their own world and place themselves in that world.

According to Tajfel’s social identity theory (1981), an individual’s self-esteem is more enhanced by making a positive comparison between his or her own and another group. In this process, they think they are better than another group. In other words, to distinguish one’s own group from others is the most essential process in increasing self-esteem and loyalty. This process makes people feel positive about themselves and provides a reason why one belongs to a particular group (Brock & Atkinson, 2008).

An individual’s social identity is intimately connected to the status of the groups to which he or she belongs. Nationalism links an individual’s self-esteem to the esteem in which the nation is held because people can obtain a sense of identity and self-esteem through their national identification (Brock & Atkinson, 2008; Druckman, 1994). Accordingly, people are motivated to support the goal of the country and want to increase the value of the nation in order to increase their self-esteem. Therefore, since an individual’s self-identity is determined depending on to which group he or she belongs, in-group members

strive to increase self-esteem by projecting bad images onto other groups and creating prejudice.

Such an individual's loyalty to a group is important because it leads to collective action and antagonism towards other groups. According to Druckman (1994, p.49, 57), group loyalty can cause intergroup conflict, justification of one's own behaviour and a lack of good thoughts about others. In addition, in-group bias, competition and hostility can also follow. When members of a group arrive at a consensus on the strategy or goal, these groups become more hostile and competitive towards other groups.

In particular, in the case of militant groups, they are often formed in two situations: when an existing group experiences a sense of loss of identity in times of rapid change like war, urbanisation, migration or modernisation; and when leaders can transform this experience into a positive if desperate projection of affection onto themselves and an ideological cause that can produce a collective 'grandiose self' – a community organised around the enjoyment of a shared secret, an inexpressible core or spirit (Hansen, 1999, p.107, 108). Militant groups need stronger cohesion, so they tend to more strongly demonise others.

The militant Hindu nationalism that has emerged since the 1980s, as is clear in the strategy and narratives of the Sangh Parivar, has stressed the 'grandiose of self' and 'superior to other' by means of the projection of prejudices onto the other and a clear demarcation of Muslims. Although the feeling of group superiority and the grandiosity of the self is part of the natural process of individual and group identity formation, this strategy in militant Hindu nationalism is not just used to increase self-esteem but also exploited as a weapon to justify their violence against Muslims.

In this way, the emphasis on group superiority and group loyalty is a crucial psychological tactic for Hindu nationalists with the desire to create a homogeneous Hindu identity as well as to establish a stable status for Hindus in the face of the threat embodied by the scramble – accelerated since the onset of globalisation – for resources.

3. Re-interpretation of History and Myth

The Sangh Parivar has steadily drawn the past of history and myth into its efforts to unite Hindu identity using a clear demarcation of the other and emphasising group superiority and loyalty by discriminating against the other. This strategy of the Sangh Parivar can clearly be seen both before and after the destruction of the Babri Masjid in 1992.

As seen in many debates on Indian history between secular and Hindu-front historians, since the emergence of Hindu nationalism in the 19th century, Hindu nationalists have constantly made an effort to reinterpret the past by fostering historians and archaeologists who can support their assertions officially. Debates on Indian history are especially problematic in elementary and high school texts. The BJP has tried to write textbooks with the aim of glorifying the Hindu past and denouncing the Mughal era in Indian history, renaming Indian cities and regions, and forging a relationship between the Hindu religion, national identity and citizenship (Kinvall, 2006, p.139).

The purpose of manipulating history is to make their history splendid through searching for chosen glory and glorifying their cultural, historical memory.

Myths are frequently used not only for constructing and mobilising an identity group, but also for constructing the other (Ibid, 59). According to Hansen (1999, p.90), the purpose of the founding myth is first to demonstrate to followers and potential supporters that the movement is still worth endorsing, and secondly to realise and perform the vision the movement is seeking permanently and thus create “a sort of counterculture, a counterlanguage, a counterinterpretation of history” (Ibid, p. 90).

As argued by Coningham and Lewer (2000, as cited in Kinvall, 2006, p.59), verifying archaeology and historical evidence is a key process when the solidarity of an identity is needed. For this reason, more manipulation and reinterpretation of historical and archaeological evidence to advocate claims and rights for some identity group occurs in situations of violent conflict. Such manipulation is more viable if mass education and

mass media of communication exist. Therefore, many nationalist leaders often interfere in the field of education or mass communication to consolidate their group identity (Hayes, 1926), and Hindu nationalists are no exception.

This section will show how Hindu nationalists manipulate and reinterpret history, myth and symbols through mass education and mass media to consolidate their group identity. It will look first at the strategy of the VHP/RSS using symbols in the *yatra* processions that preceded the demolition of the Babri Masjid, and second at Hindu nationalists' new application of old symbols of "Bharat Mata". Finally, this section will consider the broadcast of the "*Ramayana*" in 1987.

3.1 The Strategy of the VHP and the RSS

Militant Hindu nationalist forces such as the VHP and the RSS have attempted to create a homogeneous Hindu identity by means of the distortion of history and the transformation of the ordinary into national symbols in *yatra* processions. In this strategy of history distortion, the ultimate aim has been to enhance self-esteem and thereby justify their present and future actions, by removing a blot and recreating their glorious past.

With relation to their aim for redescribing the past, Sen (2005, p.62-3) finds two specific characteristics of contemporary Hindu politics. The first is that Hindutva forces have become keenly aware of the importance of gathering dispersed power in their various components and mobilising fresh loyalty from potent recruits. In his opinion, their effort at creating India's history as a 'Hindu civilisation' is intended to increase the cohesiveness of the diverse members of the Sangh Parivar. The second reason is because they want to receive support from the Indian diaspora who have a general Indian nationalist attachment, particularly in North America and Europe. Hindu nationalists believe that reinventing history from a Hinduised point of view helps in mobilising support from the Indian diaspora and that their power would be the foundation from which they could change a narrow Hindu identity into a more general Indian identity.

With this purpose of rewriting history, Hindu communal forces have tried to extend their influence not only in public organisations such as the bureaucracy, police, media, the education system and the judiciary, but also at the grassroots level among children (Mukherjee et al., 2008, p.18). For many years, the RSS has taken the lead in perverting the truth of history in primary and secondary school textbooks, with its Saraswati Shishu Mandirs¹⁷ and Vidya Bharati primary and secondary schools, and its *shakhas*. The major content of their history distortions include disparagement of Muslims and Christians and descriptions of the medieval period as one of the great dark ages in Indian history, while elevating the Hindu civilisation. For example, one of the textbooks in use at the primary level portrays the rise of Islam in the following manner:

Wherever they went, they had a sword in their hand. Their army went like a storm in all the four directions. Any country that came that was destroyed. Houses of prayers and universities were destroyed. Libraries were burnt. Religious books were destroyed. Mothers and sisters were humiliated. Mercy and justice were unknown to them (Extracts from Gaurav Gatha Gatha for Class IV, 1992, quoted in Mukherjee et al., 2008, p.23)

Delhi's Qutb Minar is even today famous in his (Qutbuddin Aibak's) name. This had not been built by him. He could not have been able to build it. It was actually built by emperor Samudragupta. Its real name was Vishnu Stambha...This Sultan actually got some parts of it demolished and its name was changed (Ibid.)

In this way, Hindu communal groups have spread groundless untruths, such as that the Qutab Minar was built by Samudragupta, in the name of spreading patriotism. Looking into this matter, the National Steering Committee on Textbook Evaluation came to the conclusion that "the main purpose which these books would serve is to gradually transform the young children into...bigoted morons in the garb of instilling in them patriotism" (Mukherjee & Mukherjee, 2001, p.33).

Another example of the Vidya Bharati Sansthan publications also shows the efforts of Hindu forces to spread communal and chauvinistic cultural nationalism, and the

¹⁷ The influence of Saraswati Shishu Mandirs, the first of which was started in 1952 in the presence of the RSS chief, M.S. Golwalkar, has now multiplied manifold. It will be in order, to first examine what these 'Mandirs' or 'temples' of learning dish out in the name of education (Mukherjee et al., 2008, 20).

legitimation of the policies of the RSS among the young generation. In these books, India is portrayed with narcissistic expressions such as the 'original home of world civilisation' (Mukherjee et al., 2008, p.25).

India is the most ancient country in the world. When civilization had not developed in many countries of the world, when people in those countries lived in jungles naked or covering their bodies with the bark of trees or hides of animals, Bharat's Rishis-Munis brought the light of culture and civilization to all those countries. (extracts from the report on the publications of Vidya Bharati No.9, quoted in Mukherjee et al., 2008, p.25)

The following are some of the examples of their illogical claims of 'Hindu civilisation as the cradle of world civilisation':

- i) India is the mother country of ancient China. Their ancestors were Indian Kshatriyas...
- ii) The first people who began to inhabit China were Indians.
- iii) The first people to settle in Iran were Indians (Aryans).
- iv) The popularity of the great work of the Aryans-Valmiki's *Ramayana*- influenced Yunan (Greece) and there also the great poet Homer composed a version of the *Ramayana*.
- v) The languages of the indigenous people (Red Indians) of the northern part of America were derived from ancient Indian languages.
(extracts from the report on the publications of Vidya Bharati No.9, quoted in Mukherjee et al., 2008, p.25)

This chauvinistic view is also presented with regards to the origin of Aryans. In order to separate Muslims and Christians from "us" and treat them as strangers, the RSS argues in these textbooks that 'Aryans', whom the RSS regards as true Indians, did not migrate from outside India but originated in India (Mukherjee et al., 2008, p.31).

This attack by Hindu nationalists on the view of secular history began after 1977, when the Jana Sangh took power for the first time in the Indian government. They tried to prohibit the contributions of some respected historians to school textbooks for the National Council of Education, Research and Training (NCERT), but these moves were defeated thanks to a national protest movement (Mukherjee & Mukherjee, 2001, p.33). However, on the coming to power of the BJP as leaders of the coalition government at the

Centre in 1998, the RSS achieved their goal not only in 14,000 Vidya Bharati schools with 80,000 teachers and 1,800,000 students but also in other institutions such as universities, schools, colleges and even the University Grants Commission (UGC) (Mukherjee et al., 2008, p. 28-9).

Besides these distortions of history in school textbooks, the VHP/RSS have attempted another strategy to mobilise Hindu identity in the destruction of the Babri Masjid by using symbols and historical distortions related to the event.

Regarding the forgotten issue of the Ayodhya site, the VHP wanted to reignite the old dispute of the liberation of Rama's birthplace as one of national significance (Ludden, 2005, p.39). Instead of the general religious belief that the mosque occupies the place on which Rama was born, the VHP went further by asserting that a temple on the birthplace had been demolished by Muslims and replaced by a mosque. They attempted to make the local tradition that Babar's general had destroyed a temple built on Rama's birthplace into the real history of the Hindu_nation (Van der Veer, 1994, p.160). Such a strategy of clear demarcation of Muslims as foreigners and demonised aggressors is expressed in Ludden's narrative that "Rama and the original temple represented a dehistoricized Hindu utopia, while Babar and his mosque represented the Muslim invasions that brought the Rama-rajya to an end and began a series of oppressive foreign occupations" (Davis, 2005, p.48-9). In this way, in the temple liberation project, the VHP constantly employed anti-Muslim rhetoric, at the same time as trying to develop Hindu unity.

In 1983, under the leadership of the VHP, with its slogan of "sacrifice for unanimity", the Ekatmata Yatra launched three processions with the aim of ethno-religious mobilisation. These covered vast swathes of the country – from Kathmandu in Nepal to Rameshwaram in Tamil Nadu, from Gangasagar in Bengal to Somnath in Gujarat, and from Hardiwar in Uttar Pradesh to Kanyakumari in Tamil Nadu – distributing water from the Ganges and refilling their tanks with holy water. These actions were intended to symbolise Hindu unity (Jaffrelot, 1999, p.360).

Until then, the only symbol that had been used for political mobilisation was the cow (Ibid, p.361). However, with the Ekatmata Yatra, the VHP intended to invent new symbols associated with traditional religious rituals, texts and gods for the purpose of mobilising larger Hindu unity. One epoch-making icon the VHP created was a depiction of the baby Rama in which the cherubic child was held prisoner in a Muslim religious institution on the site of his birth. It was intended to arouse “maternal devotion from those who would nurture the young reincarnation of Hindu nationhood”, while “the aggressive warrior young Rama served as a militant role model for Hindus taking control of their homeland” (Davis, 2005, p.41). The creation of the new symbol of the baby Rama seems to be important from the point of view of arousing devotional sentiment by dragging in family imagery as a metaphor (Ibid.).

In the Ekatmata Yatra, the VHP utilised two other tangible symbols – the Ganges and Mother India – in the form of divinities. According to the statement of the senior VHP official in charge of this programme, these two figures were very carefully selected (Jaffrelot, 1999, p.360). The VHP tried to make the selected symbols be seen as deities – in the case of the Ganges, her water contains the power to purify from sin and to give salvation. Before this *yatra*, the Ganges had hardly been used as a venerated symbol by Hindus. However, it became a symbol of national unity as a “sacred geographical entity” (Davis, 2005, p.40) as well as a “pan-Indian reservoir of holy water” (Ibid.), identified with the figure of Mother India (Jaffrelot, 1999, p.361).

The VHP also resurrected *bhakti* rituals and the fundamental text of Hinduism – the *Bhagavad Gita* – to integrate all Hindus regardless of caste and sects by arousing devotionalism (Ibid). During the processions of the temple chariots, the VHP made brand new trucks symbolising the militant war chariot of Arjuna in the *Bhagavad Gita*, while each of the three main processions was named after its chariots referred to as gods and saints (Van der Veer, 1994, p.125).

In this way, the RSS/VHP have striven for the consolidation of Hindu identity and the extension of its power through interference in education at the grassroots level and

utilising symbols with the intention of integrating all castes and sects. Their selected symbols are mainly taken from nature, traditional religious myth or Mother India to represent geographical and genealogic unity.

In the next section, we will look into the metaphor of Mother India, which is often used as a symbol in the strategy of Hindu nationalists.

3.2 Metaphor of the body

Embodying India as Mother is an old tradition in the subcontinent. This is the way India was presented in newspapers and novels at the time of the emergence of Indian nationalism, and it has become common practice thereafter (Chakrabarty, 1999, p.205).

The link with Mother has deep psychological and cultural roots (Bose, 1997, p.54). According to the British army psychiatrist Owen Berkeley-Hill's paper in 1924, as explained briefly in Chapter Two, one of the causes of the residual bitter feelings between Hindus and Muslims is Hindus' motherland complex, according to which their motherland – Bharat Mata – was violated by the Muslim conquest of India (Kakar, 1995, p.140). In effect, the relationship between nation and gender has been involved in nationalism for a long time. Therefore, we need to take into account the metaphor of Bharat Mata as well as religious nationalism discourse and the female body.

The image of Bharat Mata was first used with the start of nationalism in the colonial period. However, its primary aim has been changed to the form of exploitation of communal forces with the intention of mobilising resources from nationalism (Jha, 2004). The metaphoric feminisation of the nation became well known with the cow protection movement between 1880 and 1920, in which the mother cow became an object of veneration and a new symbol of the Hindu nation. Also, Bankim Chattopadhyay contributed to popularising the image of Bharat Mata by expressing the Hindu nation as mother, an object of worship, benevolence and protection (Hansen, 1999, p.112). In his text, he expressed the changing figure of mother over time, from 'mother as she was in

the past' to 'mother in the present' and 'mother as she will become in the future'. He alluded to the figure of mother as a religious goddess – her present form is Kali, a benevolent mother goddess, and the final image is Durga, the ten-armed mother and the representative of feminine power.

This embodiment of the nation as mother emerged against colonisation from the late 19th century, but has become much more complex in the 20th century. After the *swadeshi* period, the image of Bharat Mata changed from a goddess figure to a housewife and mother, as has been presented in various novels and plays. The popular Hindi novel *Maila Anchal* shows the most well presented image of the mother suffering because of her infringed-upon national identity during the pre-and post colonial period.

The mother's feet were torn and bloodied. After seeing the mother's agony, listening to Ramkishan babu's words and hearing Tiwari ji's songs, he could not stop himself. Who could resist that pull? Tears flowing from her eyes like the waters of the Ganges and the Yamuna. Mother India sorrowing over the fate of her children? Straightaway he went to Ramkishan babu and said, "Put my name on the Suraji list" (Phaniswarnath Renu, *Maila Anchal*, 1953, quoted in Jha, 2004)

Also, Sumitranandan Pant's famous poem *Bharat Mata* offers a different vision of romantic nationalism. He considered Mother India as a woman of the soil and the Ganges and Yamuna as rivers of tears, metaphors for the sorrow of the nation (Jha, 2004).¹⁸

The symbolisation of Bharat Mata in the relationship between gender and nation was mentioned by several nationalists including Jawaharlal Nehru during the pre and post colonial period. In the era of globalisation since the 1980s, the metaphor of Bharat Mata has changed from its original aim of arousing nationalism to the exclusive usage of Hindu forces for mobilising religious nationalism.

18 This relation between the Ganges and the Mother India is used for the strategy of the VHP in the *Ekatmata yatra*, as we have seen in the previous section.

During the Ekatamat Yatra in 1983, the VHP brought the image of Bharat Mata in their chariots. In addition, it also built a Bharat Mata temple in Haridwar. This temple contains an anthropomorphic statue of its deity. Here, Bharat Mata holds a milk urn in one hand and sheaves of grain in the other, which the temple guidebook explains as "signifying the white and green revolution that India needs for progress and prosperity". The guidebook also says, "The temple serves to promote the devotional attitude toward Bharat Mata, something that historians and mythological story teller may have missed" (Jha, 2004).

These exertions of the VHP to employ the image of Bharat Mata look as though they are meant to satisfy their desire to mobilise Hindu forces and justify their violence by calling on the old nationalist tradition.

The RSS has also exploited the image of Bharat Mata, as is clearly indicated in their stressing the idiom of "rape of the Motherland" by a potent and dangerous enemy – Muslim invaders. In this ideology, only RSS cadre, the "sons of Bharat", can protect the weak and powerless mother nation by organising on military lines, which makes them true males (Hansen, 1999, p.112-113). Hindu nationalists seem to bring back the symbolisation of Bharat Mata from the old nationalist tradition because they want to rationalise their actions against Muslims by giving Hindus an extreme shock like "rape of the Motherland by Muslims". This is an essential process for them to fight against and drive out Muslims, their permanent enemy, who violated the mother who gave endless and unconditional love to her children-citizens.

Such a metaphor of the nation as mother that emerged with the development of nationalism during the colonial period in India is seen as being taken from the general expression of the colonised nation, which combined nation and gender.

With the militant communalism of the Sangh Parivar, adopting this image of Bharat Mata is seen as an effective method of uniting Hindu identity by demarcating Muslims as others and enemies. Because of the continuous underpinning and displaying of these reinterpreted traditional metaphors, the embodiment of the Indian geography as Mother,

Muslims as having raped the Mother, and the RSS cadre as protecting the Mother – the Mother not as a limitless provider for her children, but as a weak woman who needs the protection of strong men – are crucial strategies employed by Hindu nationalists in ensuring their survival in periods of crisis.

3.3 Media Effect

In critical situations for the nation, nationalist leaders often use the mass media as a tool in inspiring nationalism. Hindu nationalists tried to mobilise and unite Hindu identity by broadcasting the *Ramayana* in 1987. The *Ramayana* is the story of Rama, and it is the earliest and most influential text of Hinduism, supposedly written in the first few centuries BC (Van der Veer, 1994, p.172).

Its long-standing influence on Indian literature can be seen in the fact that many authors have produced new versions or interpretations of the *Ramayana*. The earliest major vernacular retelling of the story was written in Tamil by the 12th century author Kampan. The famous poet Tulsi Das also recreated a North Indian vernacular version of the *Ramayana*. It became the Bible of North India as it was revered as the main authoritative and honourable text among Hindus (Sarkar, 2005, p.173).

During the colonial period, Gandhi also repeatedly mentioned the *Ramcharitmanas*¹⁹ in support of his political views. He urged Indians to live according to the lessons from this text to overcome poverty, untouchability and foreign rule. Gandhi's continuous emphasis on Rama and his rule greatly affected Hindus at that time (Van der Veer, 1994, p.174).

In the South also its leverage has been proved, as the leader of the Dravidian movement used the text of the *Ramayana* to attack Brahmanical hegemony (Ibid). In addition,

¹⁹ *Ramcharitmanasa*, is an epic poem in Awadhi (Indo-Aryan language) which is composed by the 16th-century Indian poet, Goswami Tulsidas (1532–1623). *Ramcharitmanas* literally means the "lake of the deeds of Rama." (Jindal 1955). The work focuses on a poetic retelling of the events of the Sanskrit epic *Ramayana*, centered on the narrative of Rama.

Aurobindo also mentioned the relationship between the influence of the *Ramayana* and Hindu nationalism: "the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* constitute the essence of Indian literature. This orientalist notion was foundational for the Hindu nationalisation of Indian civilisation." (quoted in Van der Veer, 2001, p.132).

With such authority among Hindus, a seventy-eight episode serialisation of the *Ramayana* was broadcast on national television between January 1987 and July 1988. It not only recorded the highest viewing rate ever seen on Indian television, but also had a great ripple effect in Indian society. Twenty-six video cassettes were sold worldwide, with exaggerated advertisements such as "The Greatest Indian Epic. Treasured for over 10,000 years. Enshrining Ideals That Are Ageless. Teaching Lessons That Are Timeless." (Van der Veer, 1994, p.175).

The influence of this broadcast was tremendous. It was watched by 80 to 100 million people, including people who do not understand Hindi. According to newspaper reports, Indian life looked as though it was 'on hold' during the hours the series was aired. Even untouchable sweepers in North India asserted that they inherited their spirit from Valmiki who is the alleged composer of the Sanskrit *Ramayana* and the guru of Rama (Ibid). In this way, the broadcast of the *Ramayana* on Durdarshan inspired religious belief among Hindus all over the country. The broadcast also resulted in homogenisation of understanding of the *Ramayana*, since it swept aside the different regional and political interpretations that had existed until then.

Many Indian scholars have argued that the televised version of the *Ramayana* was planned to elevate the old religious text as a national text. Undoubtedly, Hindu nationalists intended the broadcast to be used for their political objectives, in particular their desire to create a "Hindu nation" (Ibid, p.177).

Above all, it helped in achieving the VHP's long cherished wish of liberating Rama's birthplace. Even people who do not know the exact location of Ayodhya have gradually recognised it as the birthplace of Rama as well as a town in Uttar Pradesh. The broadcast

made this sacred place and Rama's life in popular imagination appear real (Kinvall, 2006, p.149). Indeed, its success produced a great emotional stir among Hindus. As they watched the *Ramayana*, they could not help becoming angry at the manipulated history of their sacred place – the birthplace of Rama – which had been demolished by Muslims. In this way, the broadcast of the *Ramayana* and the Ayodhya affair are closely connected, showing how history has been manipulated and reinterpreted through the mass media and how this has had an impact on the viewer's emotions and ideas. According to Van der Veer (1994), the surprising sensation of the broadcast made it possible to unite many millions at the same time and thereby form a religious gathering. Hence, we can assume that it is closely connected to the recent rise of Hindu religious nationalism.

As we can see from the above, the mass media including television can be used as a tool for instilling nationalist ideology in citizens, thanks to its characteristic of diffusion. Throughout the 1980s, television certainly functioned as a medium for achieving the communal ends of the saffron waves. L.K. Advani, Hindu nationalist leader of the BJP, stressed the cultural significance of the *Ramayana* (Farmer, 2005, p.108) and finally exploited the imagery of Rama as he postured like Rama in the *rath yatra* in October 1990 after the broadcast of the series. It seems as though he was conscious of the need for Hindu votes and thereby intended to unite Hindu identity by taking advantage of the tremendous success of the televised *Ramayana* for communal purposes to criticise the legitimacy of the government's secular stance.

Such an exploitation of the mass media by Hindu groups seems to indicate that political intentions are associated with the relationship between media and communalism. This also shows that the mass media is a useful means of manipulating dispersed groups.

Many scholars have argued that the serialisation of the *Ramayana* on Durdarshan played a major role in mobilising Hindu communal forces, by creating a “shared symbolic lexicon” (Van der Veer, 1994, p.177-78). With its enormous influence, people have accepted the story of the *Ramayana* as a truth rather than as a myth. In this way, the broadcast became an opportunity to pursue the building of Ram's temple. It mobilised

communal forces and legitimised the subsequent event of the destruction of the Babri Masjid by promoting a religious myth to the level of national culture and myth.

This chapter has examined the psychological strategies of Hindu nationalists in strengthening their identity in the face of globalisation and modernisation, under the assumption that the sudden rise of militant Hindu nationalism since the 1980s is related to the rapidly changing environment. In this context, people can easily get the feeling of loss or loss of attachment because various physical changes are occurring. Accordingly, nationalist leaders have tried to secure their identity by fortifying group cohesiveness and to enhance nationalism by increasing group sharing.

To this end, Hindu nationalists have employed diverse tactics. Most importantly, they have drawn clear boundaries between Hindus and non-Hindus, especially Muslims. This othering process includes attitudes such as accepting only the majority-self and not the minority-other, achieved by creating prejudices and projecting bad images onto them.

The attempt to intensify group loyalty and superiority is also one of the main strategies in enhancing Hindu group cohesiveness. Their promotion of Sanskrit is one of good example of the way in which group sharing has been increased to build up group attachment. Also, they construct prejudices of the other by applying the bad traits of the in-group to the out-group so as to increase the self-esteem of their own group. In the case of militant groups, the tendency towards demonisation of the other is more excessively present in group relations. The current Hindu nationalism has also shown this tendency towards communal conflict between Hindus and Muslims.

In addition, reinterpreted history, myth and symbol, diffused by means of education and the mass media, is always manipulated in their desire to spread chauvinistic religious nationalism. This manipulation is mainly intended to be used at the grassroots level, such as to alter textbooks in elementary schools, or to influence low castes and untouchables through the mass media.

In this sense, these strategies used by Hindu nationalists seem to be based on their intolerance and artfulness, since they only pursue majoritarianism as denying the minority and they exploit symbols which are taken from the old tradition of Indian nationalism to mobilise religious nationalism and legitimise their violence.

Chapter V

Conclusion

The dissertation has analysed psychological factors affecting the emergence of an extreme form of Hindu nationalism since the 1980s.

This aggressive and militant phenomenon, which has been known in Indian politics in the last thirty years as ‘Hindutva’ or ‘communalism’, did not appear overnight. Ever since Hindus and Muslims met with the Muslim conquest of a thousand years ago, Hindus seem to have felt hostility towards Muslims.

According to Sen (2005), Hinduism is a liberal, tolerant and receptive tradition. These characteristics are amongst the original tenets of Hinduism, so the question is why Hindu nationalists in the present day incessantly aggravate communal conflicts with Muslims rather than making an effort to narrow the distance between the two communities.

Of course, Hindu nationalism is a combination of religion and nationalism, so it cannot help but represent the traits of nationalism as well as those of religion.

The psychology of nationalism is based on “in-group favouritism”. The construction of nationalism is in large part similar and related to individual and group identity formation. In the process of constructing identity, individuals firstly cognise themselves as the ‘self’, then perceive the ‘other’ through socialisation, by means of the transmission of ways of acting and reacting learned from education and relationships with others. In this process of socialisation of individuals, people necessarily form groups and group membership becomes one of the salient traits in the definition of the self. It is referred to as individual’s ‘social identity’. People equate their status with the status of their in-group, and thus strive to increase the status of this group to enhance their own self-esteem. In-group members impute bad features to other groups, which are considered as different, and thereby create prejudices against them. These prejudices lead to and reinforce the stigmatisation of the other and an awareness that ‘us’ and ‘them’ are fundamentally different.

Such a psychology of nationalism can also be seen in the current Hindu nationalism. The background to the boom in contemporary Hindutva lies in the 19th century. Hindu nationalism originally emerged in opposition to British colonial power. It was closely linked to 'Hindu revivalism', which aimed at national integration through the rediscovery of the archaic Hindu civilisation.

Even though this period is of only indirect relevance to the current militarised Hindu nationalism, the features of the latter had already appeared then. These features include Aryanism based on primordialist thinking and an emphasis on the Vedas. The Vedic Aryanist paradigm advocated by the Arya Samaj stressed that only the descendants of Aryans were true Indians and obeyed the authority of the Vedas. Moreover, the symbol of Mother India articulated by Bankimchandra Chattopadhyaya in the Bengal renaissance was also created in this period. Thus, the manipulation of history in which today's saffron wave engages has its roots in the earliest period of Hindu nationalism from the 19th to the early 20th century.

It is from the 1920s that Hindu nationalism began to show signs of communalism, in the political chaos of colonial India. Hinduised versions of Indian nationalism and the ideology of Hindutva coexisted during this period. With such a radical form of Hindu nationalism altered from the previous period, it began to enter politics. Above all, the birth of the concept of Hindutva by Savarkar in this period could be considered crucial groundwork in the development of the ideology of later Hindu nationalism. His homogeneous nation theory was influenced by Mazzini and Fascism, and was in effect based on racism. According to this theory, if the same blood is not shared within the nation, they are foreigners or others – Muslims thus cannot become Indian. Since the emergence of Savarkar's idea, the division between the Hindu-self and Muslim-other has become clear.

Hindu nationalism from the 1980s has boosted this element of communalism with a neo-fascist and anti-pluralist vision, albeit based on the previous ideologies. This is concretely shown in the Sangh Parivar – the huge family of Hindu nationalist organisations – and

their religious nationalist project in Indian politics, culture and society. This project has been more systematically presented with globalisation. In the context of globalisation and modernisation, which replaces the old with the new, Hindus have felt keenly aware of the security of their identity and thus have displayed violent and paramilitary forms of religious nationalism.

Such a contemporary neo-fascist version of Hindu nationalism revealed its ultimate character in the destruction of the Babri Masjid in 1992. In this sense, it is worth considering the features of this event from various perspectives. Hindu communalists used diverse strategies to expose their bare resentment towards Muslims and to solidify their identity.

First, the demolition of the Babri Masjid was a ventilation of a Hindu trauma from the past. The Mughal empire of a thousand years ago remains a sore point for Hindus. Their indelible hurt has been expressed in the literature of numerous Hindu nationalists. They have highlighted the intolerant behaviour of medieval rulers to depict Muslims as a savage race, stressing only the fact that medieval rulers, including Mahmud of Ghazna or Aurangzeb, suppressed Hindus and demolished Hindu temples.

Another important historical trauma for Hindus with regard to Muslims is the Partition of Indian and Pakistan in 1947. This Hindu shock came when their idea of India as Bharat Mata, which they thought could become a Hindu rashtra after independence from the British, was destroyed.

With these Chosen Trauma, the Sangh Parivar has employed different strategies to reach its goals. Its tactics are mostly based on the exploitation of history and myth, focusing on history distortions and the expression of recreated religious symbols. Its reinterpretation of history has placed emphasis on the Aryan-Vedic paradigm started in the 19th century. Furthermore, it has attempted to disseminate rewritten history that includes disparagement of the Mughal era and only focuses on Hindus' glorified past.

Emphasis on religious symbols has also been seen, both before and after the Ayodhya incident. Due to the broadcast of the *Ramayana* in 1987, the myth of Rama has become the truth, and thereby the destruction of the Babri Masjid, which stood for the oppression and intolerance of the medieval period, and the construction of the Ram temple has been legitimised. In the *yatra*, various religious symbols including the baby Rama, the Ganges and the *Bhagavad Gita* were used. Above all, the symbolisation of Bharat Mata, which came up with Indian nationalism, was exploited with the propagation of the “rape of the Motherland by Muslims”. In this way, Hindu nationalists have used various symbols to spread the idea that “India is the country of Hindus”.

This fascistic idea seems to have resulted from intolerant thinking. In the first place, the obvious demarcation between the Hindu-self and Muslim-other demonstrates narrow-mindedness. Our consciousness instinctively includes the feeling of “otherness” because it is by constantly defining the self in relation to others that we feel stable (Weinstein and Platt, 1973). With the awareness of the other, the feeling of ambivalence also emerges from the unconscious (Babur, 1952, p.68). We perceive the other and our feeling of ambivalence depends on who we unconsciously judge to be similar to or different from us. This feeling of ambivalence and otherness in life is more clearly manifested in periods of crisis (Ibid). In this sense, the current sudden rise of Hindu nationalism, accompanied by serious communal conflict, can be seen as a means for Hindus to secure their identity against the threat of globalisation. In this process, Hindu communalists form a definite dividing line between the self and the other and instigate hatred and prejudice towards the other to improve their own self-esteem as well as to strengthen Hindu group cohesion.

Secondly, majoritarianism, which involves the complete exclusion of minority, also demonstrates intolerance. In fact, majoritarianism is the result of the wrong classification of the nation. Although a majority could be defined according to different criteria, such as class, language or political beliefs, the Hindutva family only categorises majority and minority according to a single classification – based on religion. In this way, what constitutes the ‘Indian majority’ changes with the standards adopted to classify the nation (Sen, 2005, p.55). This can be linked to what Sen refers to the ‘illusion of singularity’,

which implies perceiving a person as a member of one particular collectivity that gives one distinctive identity, rather than as a member of many different groups with diverse identities (Sen, 2006, p.45). In other words, to instigate and cultivate a singular specific identity in a group can be a weapon to instigate violence and terrorism towards another group (Sen, 2006).

In conclusion, the Hindu nationalist insistence on 'Identifying India as a mainly Hindu country' seems to have developed into an extreme form in order to solidify Hindu identity in the face of the threat of globalization that has emerged from the 1980s. On the pretext of historical agony, denunciations of the Muslim as other, without any effort to develop an in-depth understanding of them, exposes their cliquey, xenophobic and intolerant attitude. These attitudes will inevitably result in unceasing communal conflict, which will not only impede the development of the nation but also court isolation in the world.

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**Past and Present of an Identity: A Study on the
Rise of Hindu Nationalism in India**

*Dissertation submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the award of the degree of*

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

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Declaration

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We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

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Dedicated to my Parents

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YeonJin Sang

Abbreviations

BJP	- Bharatiya Janata Party
BJS	-Bharatiya Jana Sangh
NCERT	- National Council of Education, Research and Training
RSS	- Rashtriyaswayamsevak Sangh
UGC	- University Grants Commision
VHP	- Vishwa Hindu Parishad

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Introduction

Nationalism can be seen as a specific type of ethnocentrism at the level of the national group, since both share the characteristic referred to as “in-group favouritism” (Brock and Atkinson, 2008). This means having a positive attitude towards an in-group and a negative attitude towards out-groups.

According to Tajfel’s social identity theory (Tajfel, 1981), an individual’s self-esteem can be enhanced by comparing their in-group and out-groups. If individuals recognise that a group identity boosts self-esteem, they identify with the group. Furthermore, individuals use intergroup bias to enhance their self-esteem. This theory can be applied to the psychology of nationalism. With religion, each religious group creates religious intergroup bias to fulfil their in-group superiority, and this develops into religious nationalism.

Hindu nationalism is a form of religious nationalism, which refers to the ideological combination of religion and nationalism. Its supporters equate it with Indian nationalism, while its opponents equate it with communalism (Zavos, 1999, p.2000). Some scholars argue that Hindu nationalism and communalism should be distinguished in terms of ideology, although the terms are often used interchangeably in modern Indian politics. It has been subject to considerable debate from the time of its emergence in India.

Hindu nationalism dates back to the late 19th century under British rule, when intellectuals were interested in the formation of modern Hindu identities. It became a distinctive ideology in the early 20th century, but according to Jaffrelot (1999), it was not clearly ‘codified’ until the 1920s. After the 1920s, Hindu nationalism developed into a form of communalism. More specifically, the communal riot emerged as a feature of Indian politics. The dialectic between Indian nationalism and communalism arose during the 1920s, and the difference between them was more clearly defined from the 1930s when Savarkar began his activities (Bhatt, 2001). This process of the transformation of Hindu nationalism into communalism involved a change from moderate to radical nationalism (Zavos, 1999, p.2000).

Hindu nationalism experienced a boom in the 1980s and 1990s, with its militant form developing and emerging successfully in the political arena, culminating in the BJP forming a minority government in 1998. In 1992, the BJP helped the Sangh Parivar succeed in Ayodhya and thus came to occupy a key position in the political arena, while Lord Rama and his epic became political icons. Subsequently, Hindu nationalism has affected Indian politics, media and popular culture (Ludden, 2005).

In other words, Hindu nationalism became a specific ideology and the base for animating contemporary Hindu nationalism from the 1920s, and it developed into its powerful militant form starting in the 1980s.

More specifically, the beginning of the Hindu nationalist ideology in the 19th and early 20th century was an elite-led Indian nationalist ideology in colonial India. At that time, the idea of Hindu nationalism was based on primordialist conceptions of Indian nationalism. Entering the 1920s, the ambiguous boundary between ‘Indian’ and ‘Hindu’ nationalism started to become distinct as the ideology of ‘Hindutva’ emerged. The birth of ‘Hindutva’ in this period is significant in the history of Hindu nationalism, since it introduced the idea that Indian nationality is based on sharing a “common” Hindu civilisation, culture, religion and race (Bhatt, 2001, p. 4).

In these early stages, the birth of Hindu nationalism was seen as an extension of the development of Indian nationalist ideology, since it was related to the national movement for liberation from British rule from the 19th to early 20th century. Therefore, the differences between these two ideologies were not so clear during this period. Jaffrelot (1999) refers to ‘ethnicity’, while other scholars argue that ‘territorial’ or ‘cultural’ nationalism can be a standard by which to distinguish between ‘Indian’ and ‘Hindu’ nationalism.

It is since the 1980s that Hindu nationalism has developed its militant form, going beyond this early and rather simply-presented ideology. More recently, Hindu nationalism has presented its project as being based on an imagined nation set against other religious communities, particularly the Indian Muslims (Zavos, 1999, p. 2270).

As has been noted by virtually every commentator, Hindu nationalism was constructed as a result of fear of external threats – before Independence, the major threats were Christian missionaries, the impact of British rule and the Mughal Empire, while they are now Muslims and globalisation. Such a construction of Hindu nationalism is not only related to a psychological process of stigmatising others, but also represents a defensive strategy. This Hindu psychology includes the process of redefining Hindu identity against these ‘threatening others’, while assimilating those cultural features of the others into “our” culture in order to regain self-esteem and resist the others (Jaffrelot, 1999, p.6).

Although many enemies have existed in history, the strongest and most threatening enemy for Hindu nationalists is Islam. Making India Hindu by treating Islam as an enemy and as foreign is the most important task for them.

In this way, the main objective of Hindu nationalists is to make India a nation with a homogeneous Hindu identity. They assert that an Indian is a Hindu who belongs to the nation of Hindustan, in the terminology of Hindutva (Kinvall, 2006). Their desire is to be recognised in the flow of Western influence through emphasis on the difference between “us” and “them”.

This serious antagonism between Hindus and Muslims increased after the Ayodhya incident, which was carried out by saffron power including the Sangh Parivar, VHP, RSS and BJP. Since then, the impact of Hindu nationalism on Indian politics, culture and society has grown even further, reaching unprecedented levels.

In this sense, the cause of the sudden rise of Hindu nationalism since the Ayodhya incident can be analysed from two perspectives. Domestically, the effort to resurrect a movement focused on Hinduism has been made by right-wing forces such as the coalition of the Sangh Parivar, BJP, RSS and VHP, while the persistent conflict resulting from historical wounds between Hindus and Muslims has brought about an increase in paramilitary forms of Hindu nationalism.

Externally, ethno-religious conflict in many countries in the 1980s and 1990s, combined with a feeling of loss and the threat of globalisation, enabled Hindu nationalists to boost Hindu consciousness among the Indian public. In this period, minorities were suppressed in the name of majoritarianism in many countries and religion played an important role in world politics (Ludden, 2005, p.2-3). This neo-fascist vision of Hindu nationalism was inspired by this international situation and the forces of globalisation.

With this background in mind, this study focuses on examining the construction of Hindu nationalism and Hindu identity from a psychoanalytical perspective. More particularly, it attempts to provide a psychoanalytic account of factors that have aroused Hindu nationalism and the strategy Hindu nationalists have employed to bring about group cohesion since the 1980s.

Psychoanalysis is employed since psychological factors have played a role in the construction of Hindu nationalism. Furthermore, it is difficult to understand religious identity formation and nationhood without serious consideration of socio-psychological aspects. For this reason, the main purpose of this study is to look into the psychological factors behind Hindutva-invoking fanatic religious chauvinism and the process by which its adherents attempt to form a Hindu identity in the nation.

This theme has been chosen due to the immense leverage Hindu nationalism has acquired in current Indian politics, society and culture. Indeed, it has become the most sensitive and important controversy in India. Hindu nationalism is behind a major Indian political party for the last thirty years and it has constantly triggered communal conflict between Hindus and Muslims due to its ideology of extreme religious nationalism. Accordingly, it is assumed that understanding the construction of Hindu nationalism is essential not only to grasp the current trajectory of Indian society but also to understand the contemporary history of India. Psychology is employed in analysing this theme is because this enables the identification of the key factor in the arousal of the conflict between Hindus and Muslims.

Accordingly, two hypotheses have been established. Firstly, the motivation and reason for increasing violence between Hindus and Muslims, as compared to other religious

communities, is because Hindus have strong animosity towards Muslims. Furthermore, behind this explanation, psychological factors have as much of an effect as social and political factors.

Secondly, the sudden rise of Hindu nationalism from the 1980s is the strategy of Hindu nationalists to cope with the threat of globalisation. This hypothesis has come from the argument that the aggressive contemporary Hindutva is a form of cultural nationalism responding to emerging global capitalism, which is characterised by the collapse of communism, the propagation of consumption economies, information technology, deregulated, globalised economies, and a global cultural hegemony mainstreamed from the West (Bhatt, 2001, p.150).

The main body of the study constitutes an analysis of these hypotheses and is divided into three parts.

In Chapter One, the focus is put on the historical background to the sudden rise of Hindu nationalism, by examining the origin, organisation and development of Hindu nationalism over time. Firstly, it looks at the beginnings of Hindu nationalism in the 19th century to the 1920s, including the Arya Samaj, the Bengal Renaissance, Bal Gangadhar Tilak. This period was influenced by the impact of Orientalism and primordial nationalism from European thinking. Hindu revivalist movements such as the Arya Samaj, which was the most influential movement of its time, have provided the base on which current saffron power has been built up by consolidating people along religious lines.

Secondly, by examining the Hindu Mahasabha and Savarkar's Hindutva, the study looks at the limited influence of Hindu nationalism from the 1920s to the 1980s. The ideology of Hindutva and the perception of Muslims as the main threat, which Savarkar first introduced to the Hindu nationalist movement, have established a foothold in contemporary militarised Hindu nationalism.

Lastly, the study considers the sudden rise of Hindu nationalism in a militant form from the 1980s to the present day, by analysing saffron waves like the RSS, Sangh Parivar, VHP and BJP and their effect on the political arena. Religion and politics have been combined seriously since this time and saffron parties have presented a renewed Hindu identity to the Indian public.

Chapter Two deals with psychological factors behind the conflict and communal riots between Hindus and Muslims. To analyse this, the study presents psychological factors related to the historical background that have provoked the conflict between the two groups. The key question asked in this chapter is why dissension between Hindus and Muslims is more serious than among other religious groups and what are the psychological causes of their conflict. In this sense, the most prominent factor is 'Chosen Trauma'. This chosen trauma, which refers to the mental recollection of a fearful past, is verified historically, especially in the Indian situation, with the Muslim conquest and India-Pakistan Partition being the chosen trauma of Hindus. As discussed above, Partition resulted in increasing Hindu animosity towards Muslims, which was a crucial cause of the Ayodhya incident.

The second factor is proximity. This can explain why the strongest hostility has existed between Hindus and Muslims, as compared to among other religious groups, since nationalistic hostility is more strongly directed against larger, nearer and more powerful out-groups than against smaller, more distant and weaker ones (Rosenblatt, 1964, p.133).

Besides these factors, several other factors have contributed to the build-up of tension between Hindus and Muslims. Muslim assaults on Hindu idols, such as Muslims eating beef or the government's amicable attitude towards Muslims, can be examples of explanations for the increasingly aggravated feelings between the two groups. This chapter looks at Hindu psychology in relation to this animosity against Muslim onslaughts on Hindu idols and the Shah Bano case resulting from the government's cordial position with respect to Muslims.

Chapter Three discusses the strategy of Hindu nationalist groups, focusing on the psychology behind their attempts to enhance Hindu group cohesion in the context of modernisation and globalisation.

The Sangh Parivar uses psychological strategies in achieving their strong group cohesion, based on human instinct against the forces of globalisation. These include promoting intergroup bias by making clear a boundary between “us” and “them” and enhancing strong group loyalty and group superiority in constructing nationalism. Demonising the “other” and strengthening in-group loyalty are natural processes in boosting their self-esteem and this is still furthered when they suffer economic or social insecurity, such as in a period of crisis that diminishes their self-esteem.

This theory can also be applied to Hindu nationalist psychology. It can explain the rise of the paramilitary form of Hindu nationalism to overcome the increasing feeling of loss and insecurity under the threat of globalisation from the 1980s. Hindu nationalists have used strategies of manipulating history and myths to fortify their group cohesion in the face of globalisation, based on the theory that sharing a common culture and symbols can help in ensuring social stability. Right-wing political groups such as the Sangh Parivar, the VHP (Vishwa Hindu Parishad), the RSS (Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh) and the BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party) have put forward to the Indian public a new Hindu identity with these strategies, and they have raised Hindu consciousness based on a neo-fascist vision of constructing a homogeneous Hindu *rashtra*.

In developing this framework, the main purpose of this dissertation is to analyse the psychological factors acting on the construction of Hindu nationalism and the new Hindu identity from the 1980s. A diagnosis of the risks and problems of Hindutva is attempted through the study of the Hindu-Muslim religious conflict from the psychological perspective. The study aims to develop a clear insight into the emotional construction of Hindu nationalism and the new Hindu identity by focusing on psychological aspects, adding to existing studies that rely on social and political aspects.

In its concluding analysis, the study tries to work out how to relieve the tension and violence between Hindus and Muslims, by making a diagnosis of the attitudes of Hindu nationalists that cause the problem.

Chapter I

The Rise of Hindu Nationalism and Hindu Identity

In the last two decades of the 20th century, Hindu nationalism emerged as a force to be reckoned with in Indian politics due to the sudden rise of the BJP as the national opposition party. The main aim of the Sangh Parivar, which includes the BJP-RSS-VHP coalition, is to inject its cultural nationalistic ideology into both Indian politics and public opinion. Due to the leverage of this ideology in different fields, Hindu nationalism has been referred to variously as Hindutva, the saffron wave, Hindu majoritarianism, Hindu communalism and Hindu fundamentalism.

Although it has become a prominent concern only in the last 30 years, the ideology of the movement dates from the 19th century. However, the direct foundation of the ideology of contemporary Hindu nationalism has been constructed from the 1920s. One of its features is the perception that it is the same as communalism. This dialectic can be traced back to the 1920s since communalism and more specifically the communal riot emerged as a systematic characteristic of politics in northern India from this period (Zavos, 2000, p.4).

Accordingly, this chapter will seek to explain the ideologies, origin and history of the Hindu nationalist movement from the 19th century to the present day. This process of examining the background and ideologies of Hindu nationalism is essential to understanding the main argument of the dissertation.

The chapter is divided into three parts. The first examines the formation and main ideologies of Dayananda Saraswati's Arya Samaj movement, the 'Bengal Renaissance' and Bal Gangadhar Tilak's movement from the late 19th to the early 20th century. In the second part, the main ideologies of the troubled period of the 1920s are discussed, with special focus on the Hindu Mahasabha movement and Savarkar's Hindutva. Finally, the third part of the chapter reviews the ideologies and strategies of the contemporary saffron wave, including the RSS, VHP and BJP under the name of the Sangh Parivar.

1. Beginning of the Movement in the 19th Century up to the 1920s

The period encompassing the 19th and early 20th century saw the emergence of the basic ideologies of Hindu nationalism. The concept of Hindu nationalism dates only from the 19th century. According to Zakaria (1970), there was no communal violence between Hindus and Muslims prior to the colonial era. Hindu nationalism in this period should be regarded as part of the wider nationalism resisting British colonial power rather than as a form of communalism. The paramilitary communalist form of Hindu nationalism grounded in fascist ideology established itself after the 1920s. In fact, the form of Hindu nationalism in this period can be seen as Hindu revivalism, because its main characteristic was to homogenise Hindus according to the Hindu religion (Ko et al., 2006, p.42), while one of the period's themes was Hindu reform by improving Hindu weaknesses generated from the threat of 'foreign rule' - first by Muslims and then by the British (Van der Veer, 1994, p.64). Therefore, the emergence of Hindu nationalism in the 19th century was inextricably bound up with the development of Indian nationalism.

European nationalist ideas significantly affected and shaped both secular and religious nationalism in this period of India's history. Nineteenth century nationalism in India can be defined as an "Orientalist mode of production of the people" (Hansen, 1999, p. 60). Hindu revivalism, based on primordialist thinking, was also influenced by European nationalist ideas, especially British and German Orientalism in 19th century colonial India (Bhatt, 2001). Owing to the influence of this Orientalist epistemology, nationalists during this time believed that the Indian community, which was then divided by religion, caste and custom, could be consolidated by means of a Hindu reform movement.

In the same vein, primordialist thinking was stimulated during the British colonial period since Hindu nationalists believed that the nation could be united by rediscovering the archaic Hindu civilisation. A fundamental element of primordial nationalism in this period was Aryanism, which was generated in processes of 'upper' caste, religious, regional and vernacular elite consolidation in colonial India (Ibid.). Hindu nationalists in the mid-19th century tried to achieve national unity by glorifying the Hindu past and

tracing India's archaic memory. They focused on the discovery of Vedic-Aryanism based on archaic religious texts like the Vedas, Upanishads, Puranas and the Epics, which suggest the greatness of the Hindu civilisation not only culturally and morally but also in its political and ethical system (Ibid, 12). Aryanism was used in manipulating ancient history to assert the idea of India as a 'Hindu Rashtra' for Hindu nationalists and developed with elite-led Indian nationalist ideology. Besides verifying ancient Hindu history on their terms, the Vedic Aryanist paradigm presented its superiority by showing southern Dravidians and tribal populations to be inferior to Hindu Aryans (Ibid, 15).

This strategy proved the superiority of the culture and religion and boosted the self-esteem of Hindus. These primordialist ideologies also were used in vernacular and regional elite formation during the second half of the 19th century. Some scholars argue that Hindu nationalism from the 19th to the early 20th century was an elite-led, middle class ideology because it developed with Aryanism and primordialism, which were both led by elite and middle class Indians.¹

The following section discusses three major early Hindu nationalist movements and their ideological development in the 19th century and early 20th century.

1.1 The Arya Samaj

The Arya Samaj, which means 'Society of Aryans', was founded in 1875 in Punjab by Dayananda Saraswati. It is referred to as the most influential, first modern movement to aim at reform and revival or 'Hindu renaissance' in the 19th century.

The core of the Arya Samaj ideology emphasised the Aryan-Vedic tradition. According to Dayananda, the Aryans were the original human inhabitants of the world and they worshipped only one God and accepted the Vedic religion. He clearly delimited his definition of the Aryans with regard to territorial and xenological considerations and

¹ Zavos (1999) regards the initial stage of Hindu nationalism as a middle class ideology and Chandra (1987) defines communalism as a modern political concept developed by each religious colonial elite group who pursued communal and secular interests.

claimed that not every Indian could become Aryan. He also emphasised the importance of the four Vedas and regarded the God in the Vedas as the ancient Aryans. Based on this primacy of the Aryan race, he thought a national revival could be achieved by uniting the nation with the popular and claimed that it was necessary to inculcate Hindu ideals represented in the Vedas to Hindus in order to unite the nation (Hansen, 1999, p.72). Such reverence for Vedic authority on the part of the Arya Samaj seems to have been affected by the Orientalism of the 19th century (Van der Veer, 1994, p.65).

With regard to the caste system, while rejecting the jati system, Dayananda accepted varnashramadharma and the varna system, arguing that this ideal method of social organisation existed in the Vedic Period. This emphasis of the Arya Samaj on the Aryan-Vedic tradition has had an impact on the contemporary Hindutva movement (Bhatt, 2001, p.18).

The most important innovation of the Arya Samaj was the shuddhi or conversion ritual. When it was first created, the aim was “purification” of the faith (Ibid, p.50), as well as putting a stop to conversions of lower caste Hindus to Islam and Christianity and working to reconvert Christians and Muslims to Hinduism. This shuddhi movement has influenced later Hindutva organisations such as the VHP’s homecoming campaigns among Muslims, Christians and tribal groups. The censuses of 1901 and 1911 accelerated the shuddhi movement because they showed an increasing number of Christians and Muslims, making Hindu nationalists feel they were under threat of extinction. From this period, the demographic threat has become one of the main stimuli for Hindu nationalists' strong antipathy towards Muslims over the last century.

The most important motto in the Arya Samaj was “Back to the Veda”. It took a closed stance with respect to other religions, holding the ideal that only the Aryans were Indian and stressing only the authority of the Vedas. This exclusivism against the ‘other’ chimed with primordialism in European thinking in this period.

As regards the religious aspect, the Arya Samaj tried to recover the purity of the Hindu faith, while aiming to make India an autonomous nation free from the British in the political aspect (Cho, 1994, p.440). Their most important contribution was in building up the communication of Hindu nationalism. The Arya Samaj initiated the Cow Protection Movement, which focused on religious nationalism rather than aiming to reform (Van der Veer, 1994, p. 66). The closed and nationalist attitude characteristic of the Hindu revival movement became part of the foundation of the Hindu Mahasabha and RSS ideology. Many leaders and activists of the RSS and the Hindu Mahasabha emerged from these milieus (Hansen, 1999, p.74).

1.2 The Bengal Renaissance

In the latter half of the 19th century, there was a revolutionary nationalism led by the regional and vernacular intelligentsia in Bengal. Bengali nationalist ideologies spread rapidly after the Partition of Bengal in 1905 and they are well represented in the writings of Bankimchandra Chattopadhyaya. There was an effort to amalgamate the ideas of Hindu cultural nationalism with those of Indian nationalism in the 'Bengal Renaissance'. This happened in the aftermath of two consecutive splits in the original Brahmo Samaj established in Calcutta in 1828 by Rammohan Roy. The first split in 1850, led by Debendranath Tagore (1815-1905), was based on the need for internal reform within Hinduism, while the second split in 1866, led by Keshab Chandra Sen (1838-84), attempted to 'Christianise' Hinduism (Bhatt, 2001, p.23).

The fundamental elements of the nationalist ideas in the Bengal Renaissance were also based on Hindu superiority and exclusivity in much the same way as in other Hindu nationalist movements. Rajnarain Basu (1826-99) and Nabagopal Mitra (1840-94), who were Debendranath's colleagues, were core representatives of this trend in Bengal. Hinduism appeared in regional nationalism based on the British Orientalist study of ancient India. It was led by elite Bengalis and occurred in an environment in which Christians emerged as opponents of Hindus (Ibid).

The most prominent theme for Bengali elite nationalists was the concept of India as the 'motherland' and the need to show dedication to and love for motherland. This theme, which was popular among Indian nationalists and Hindu nationalists in the late 19th century, has influenced many revolutionary nationalists since this period. Bankim, often referred to as the father of the modern Bengali novelist, is the most well known figure to have used this metaphor in his writings. In his novels, he articulated Hindu nationalism through the symbolisation of the Hindu nation as the motherland in gendered and religious terms. This represented 'the imagined historical injury to the nation' through symbolisation that the motherland was suffering from foreign invasion (Ibid, p.28).

1.3 Bal Gangadhar Tilak

Bal Gandadhar Tilak (1856-1920) was one of the key figures in the nationalist movement to recapture the glorious past of the Hindus. His argument in support of Hindu supremacy and traditionalism was the genesis of later Hindu fundamentalism. Also, the Hindu Mahasabha and RSS adopted Tilak's ideology and then became amongst the most powerful organisations in triggering the ideology of 'Hindutva'.

Tilak was one of the first and strongest supporters of 'Swaraj' (self-rule) and the boycott, which are famous campaigns of economic resistance to colonialism. He joined the Indian National Congress in 1890, but criticised its moderate attitude. Standing against the moderates, he organised a separate extremist faction in Congress. Tilak was one of the most crucial leaders of the nationalist movement and famous for his radicalism.

He also asserted that Hindu society had a capacity for self-renewal, which could be achieved by underlining the glorified Vedic civilisation. According to him, the Vedic civilisation was the oldest in the world, the most cultured and the mother of all civilisations (Hansen, 1999, p.76). Such emphasis on the archaic Indian civilisation also derived from Orientalist primordialism. His chauvinistic view of the Hindu civilisation can be seen in his distortion of ancient history. Tilak argued that the Aryans were the first creators of civilisation in the world, claiming that the Aryan civilisation dated to earlier than 8,000 BC and was more refined than the later Bronze and Iron Age civilisations (Bhatt, 2001, p.35).

Another of his achievements was the drawing of Hindu traditions and symbols into Indian nationalism. In his efforts to develop two 'ideological configurations' – the gods Ganesh and Shivaji – to resist British rule, we can see the process of “transfiguration of symbols of Hindu religious devotionism – the religious pantheon – into a nationalist pantheon”. Also, his employment of Shivaji as the symbol of Hindu militancy related to the struggle against not only colonial rule but also medieval Muslim 'invaders' (Ibid., p.34). Therefore, Tilak's depiction of Shivaji in justifying the use of violence can be seen as the forerunner of the strategy used by contemporary Hindu nationalism against Muslims.

As seen from the above, Hindu nationalism from the 19th to the early 20th century can be referred to as a Hindu revivalism movement, which emerged as a part of Indian nationalism in the British colonial period because Hindu nationalists believed that the nation could be united by restoring the Hindu civilisation of thousands of years ago.

This Hindu revivalism movement was grounded in claims of the superiority of the Aryan civilisation, based on Hindu-Aryan primordialism from the Vedic text on the Hindus. It expressed religious exclusivism against other religions and showed signs of manipulating ancient history, which has continued since this period. This suggests that the Hindu revivalist movement served as the foundation of later Hindu nationalism, since it is clear that this strategy has been reused in militant Hindu nationalism.

2. Influence from the 1920s to the 1980s

The period from the 1920s to the 1930s was one of great confusion in the political field of colonial India. In particular, the province of Bengal was partitioned into the largely Muslim eastern areas and the largely Hindu western areas in 1905, and then reunited again in 1911. The process of protest for the partition of Bengal marked its importance in the history of the Indian nationalist movement because it not only promoted the *swadeshi* movement and boycott campaign but also fostered the emergence of two oppositional groups – moderate and extremist – in the Congress. Therefore, during this time, the existing ideology of Indian nationalism in the Congress was confronted with the growth

of the 'extremist' group (Zavos, 1999). Accordingly, there were tendencies towards both criticism of the boycott movement against the British and loyalty to the British government in this period. Gandhi started his non-cooperation movement in the 1920s.

Alongside these wider developments, the main characteristic of this period is the emergence of communalism in Indian politics and the dialectic between Indian nationalism and communalism (Zavos, 1999, 2000). The dialectic between Hindu nationalism and Indian nationalism was always present in this troubled period. More specifically, the coexistence of Hinduised versions of Indian nationalism and the specific ideology of Hindutva emerged (Bhatt, 2001, p.4). With regard to the dialectic, Jaffrelot says ethnicity distinguishes Hindu nationalism from the Indian nationalist ideology, while Zavos (1999) argues that the distinguishing factors are history and culture. From this period, the idea of Hindu nationalism started to change from its moderate to more radical nationalism.

Another feature of the 1920s was the appearance of political mobilisation in Hindu nationalism. The ideology of Hindu nationalism slowly became involved in Indian politics.

Comparing post-1920s Hindu nationalism and pre-1920s Hindu revivalism, the marked distinguishing difference is the Hindu attitude toward Muslims. Hindutva, a concept first developed in the 1920s by Savarkar, clearly defined Muslims as foreign and exterior, while the Hindu revivalism of the 19th century did not. This attitude towards Muslims has intensified since the 1980s due to influences from this period. Therefore, it would not be wrong to say "the key political ideas of the contemporary Hindutva movement were being articulated by Savarkar and the Hindu Mahasabha" (Bhatt, 2001, p.77) because post-1980s militant Hindutva ideology and its activity is directly based on 'Savarkarism' and his Hindu Mahasabha. Consolidating Hindus by strengthening their ties under the threat of extermination, aroused by conversions of Hindus to Islam or Christianity, was their most prominent objective during the period between the 1920s and the 1980s.

In other words, criticism of so-called ‘pseudo-secularists’ (Zavos, 1999, 2000), the militarisation of Hindus and the view of Muslims as ‘others’ were key features of Hindu nationalism in this period.

2.1 The Hindu Mahasabha

The Hindu Mahasabha is a Hindu nationalist political party founded in 1915. It represented Hindus who did not agree with the secular Indian National Congress ideology and who were opponents of the Muslim League.

Before discussing the Hindu Mahasabha, it is important to consider Lala Lajpat Rai. Lajpat Rai (1865-1928) was one of the most important figures of Hindu nationalism in this period as an ‘extremist’ within Congress and as a revolutionary nationalist who took an active part in both the pre-Savarkarite Hindu Mahasabha and the Hindu Sangathan movement.

Influenced by a conception of the Arya Samaj that emphasised the ‘purification’ of Hinduism, he stated that ‘Hindus are a nation in themselves, because they represent a civilisation all their own’ in his article for the Indian National Congress in *the Hindustan Review* (Mathur, 1996, 1). In this way, he raised the argument of ‘Hindu weakness’ and the need to strengthen Hinduism by conquering foreigners and treating them as others. He enunciated Indian nationality as Hindu nationalism. These central thoughts of Lajpat Rai came to form the basis of the later ideology of Hindu identity in Savarkarism and the RSS.

In 1906, following the foundation of the All-India Muslim League in Dacca, a Hindu Sabha (society) was established in Punjab with the aim of “protecting the interests of the Hindus by stimulating in them the feelings of self-respect, self-help and mutual co-operation so that by a combined effort there would be some chance of promoting the moral, intellectual, social and material welfare of the individuals of which the nation is composed.”(Zavos, 1999, p.2273). Also, it developed to stand for the interests of a Hindu constituency and it became a powerful symbol of the united community (Ibid.). The

Hindu nationalist movement intervened in the Indian political field for the first time with the emergence of the Hindu Sabha.

In April 1921, the Hindu Sabha was renamed the 'All-India Hindu Mahasabha'. After this renaming, its earlier objective of loyalty to the British government was changed to the aim of 'a united and self-governing Indian nation', while the initial agenda of the Hindu Mahasabha was sangathan, organisation and movement. These notions developed into major principles of Hindu nationalism (Ibid, p.2275).

From the early 1920s, the All-India Hindu Mahasabha gave importance to the *shuddhi* movement to boost the number of Hindus, under the threat of an increasing number of Christians and Muslims. Its targets were largely two groups. It tried to reconvert Christians and Muslims to Hinduism and to encourage untouchable or adivasi (tribal) groups to return to the Hindu fold (Bhatt, 2001). This Hindu Mahasabha conversion movement, influenced by the Arya Samaj, is a key issue for Hindu communalists today.

Another important activity of the Hindu Mahasabha was the Hindu Sangathan² movement. Swami Shradhanand (1856-1926) was well known for playing a key role in the Sangathan movement of the early 1920s and warning of the threat of Hindu extinction.

The Hindu Sangathan is also evidence of the effect of the Arya Samaj since it was based on neo-Vedic ideology from the late 19th century. Its main aim was strengthening the demographic status of Hindus by bringing outcasts into a hierarchical system of caste. In fact, when the 1901 and 1911 censuses showed an increasing population of Muslims and Christians, Hindus felt that they would become extinct. To remove the fear of Hindus losing their status, Shradhanand proposed to strongly oppose conversions to Islam and Christianity. This Sangathan movement can be seen as a product of the consolidation of Hindu nationalist ideology in the 1920s. It has become a key characteristic of today's Hindutva movement (Ibid, p.63, 67).

² Sangathan is derived from the Sanskrit prefix *sam*, 'together', and the verbal root *ghat*, 'to form or mould'. This is evident in the more strict Sanskrit use of *sangathan*, 'organisation, formation, constitution, composition' (Zavos, 2000, p.16).

The Hindu Sangathan movement and the Hindu Mahasabha became influential in the national political field from the mid-1920s under the leadership of Madan Mohan Malaviya, Lajpat Rai and B.S. Moonje, coinciding with the end of Gandhi's mass satyagraha campaigns (Ibid, p.69).

When Savarkar reached the leadership of the Hindu Mahasabha in 1937, the Hindu nationalist ideology in the subcontinent became more aggressive and militaristic. It suggested that the Indian government give Hindus military training in all high schools and colleges (Savarkar, 1941 as cited in Bhatt, 2001). This Mahasabha policy of Hindu militarisation implies that Hindu nationalism started to set up a strategy to protect Hindus from external threats from this period.

In conclusion, Lajpat Rai and Swami Shraddhanand recommended the same remedies to reform Hindus, including the abolition of sub-castes and the conversion of 'untouchables' and tribals to Hinduism. In this respect, we can say that the ideology of this period was the legacy and extension of that of the Arya Samaj of the previous century. Furthermore, it became the foundation for non-Gandhite ideologies for both Hindu internal reform and Hindu political assertion within and around the Congress, the non-cooperation movement and the national movement (Bhatt, 2001, p.75).

2.2 Savarkar's Movement

Vinayak Damodar Savarkar (1883-1966), who is famous for coining the term 'Hindutva', is revered as a revolutionary hero by Hindu nationalists. It is no exaggeration to say that the Hindutva ideology was not definitively articulated until this period. His ideology of Hindutva, as explained in his article "*Hindutva: Who is a Hindu?*" in 1923, lit up contemporary militant Hindu nationalism. Certainly, contemporary usage of the word 'Hindutva' derives from Savarkar (Bhatt, 2001, p.77). According to Zavos (1999) and Jaffrelot (1999), Hindu nationalism was not 'codified' until the birth of his Hindutva ideology.

Savarkar introduced the ideology of Hindutva after the Partition of Bengal and in the political whirlpool of the 1920s. His main objective was to provide an answer to questions such as ‘What is Hinduness’ and ‘What constitutes Hindu identity’ and to consolidate the idea of the unitary nation with Hindu identity. He highlighted the problem presented by this ‘lack’ on the part of Hindus, constructing as solutions Hindutva and the sharing of ‘Hinduness’ by all Hindus. Such eagerness for a strong and culturally homogenous nation by means of the Hindutva idea was due to the impression made on Sarvarkar by the writings of Giuseppe Mazzini. In Mazzini, Savarkar found an ideological framework and a political philosophy that combined cultural pride, national self-assertion and a view of the culturally homogenous nation (Hansen, 1999, p.77).

Based on Mazzini’s thoughts about the nation, Savarkar explained the five elements that constituted unitary nationality: territory; emotional attachment; coherence and unity of languages; shared blood; and race.³ According to this definition, he asserted that Hindus were those who inherited the blood of the Vedic-Aryan race and the Sanskrit culture and those who considered ‘Sindhusthan’ as their ‘Holyland’ (Bhatt, 2001, p.99).

Among these elements, Savarkar particularly emphasised the racial inheritance of Hindu blood from their Vedic forefathers in characterising Hindutva (Savarkar, 1989). Accordingly, he denied the theory of the Aryan invasion of the subcontinent and stated that the ancient land of “Sindhu”⁴ comprised the entire subcontinent. In this way, his sense of Indian nationality was based on the “Vedic nation” that was already present four thousand years ago with the development of a common language, Sanskrit, and a common body of philosophy and ritual practices (Hansen, 1999, p.78).

3 Savarkar reiterated a number of these tenets. According to him, “the first tenet in forming a nationality was territory and praise of the unique and supreme qualities of each nation. The second tenet was a common emotional attachment to the nation. The third tenet was the coherence and unity of languages as the medium of cultural essence and feeling. The fourth tenet denoted the holistic concept of culture as a uniting whole by shared blood and race. Savarkar praised caste endogamy as a mechanism keeping the blood of the nation pure” (Savarkar, 1969 quoted in Hansen, 1999, p. 78).

4 According to Savarkar, “the term ‘Hindu’ is basically a territorial denomination of the civilization developed through millennia on the eastern side of the river Indus, ‘Sindhu’, which gradually became known as ‘Hindu’”(Ibid 1999)

With this strong assertion of the need for common blood to make a unitary nation, others who were not Hindu such as Christians and Muslims could not be included in the Indian nationality in Savarkar's thought. Accordingly, he sharply distinguished foreigners from Hindus. He continuously stressed that Christians and Muslims should abandon their faith and adopt the Hindutva ideology. It seems that this strategy of demarcating a clear boundary between us and them appeared in the psychology of nationalism from this time:

For though Hindusthan is to them 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. Consequently their names and their outlook smack of a foreign origin. Their love is divided. (Savarkar, 1989, p.113).

This Hindu majoritarian ideology started by Savarkar brought up issues of war, militarism and minorities from the 1930s. He introduced his militarised Hindu nationalism to the Hindu Mahasabha from the mid-1930s as its president. From that time, the difference between Hindu nationalism and the anti-colonial national movement became very clear (Bhatt, 2001).

In this way, Savarkar's activities influenced not only several ideological currents within and outside the Indian freedom movement in his own time, but also the principles of the contemporary saffron wave.

The form of Hindu nationalism after the 1920s is easily distinguishable from that of the previous period. Hindu nationalist organisations like the Hindu Mahasabha extended from the Hindu Sabha started to intervene in the political field, while the political maelstrom involving events such as the Partition of Bengal and the conflict between 'moderate' and 'radical' groups within Congress swept through the 1920s. Hindu nationalists in this period tried to reform Hindus based on the tenets of the Arya Samaj and went on to develop ideas beyond the Arya Samaj ideology. However, the contemporary militarised ideology of Hindu nationalism has been developed since the definition of Hindutva by Savarkar. Therefore, it would be true to say that the emergence of the Hindutva ideology from this period is the immediate background of the propagation of majoritarian group rights by later saffron communities from the 1980s.

3. Sudden rise of Hindu Nationalism from the 1980s to the Present

Hindu nationalism in the period from the 1980s to the present day has presented a further developed form of its previous ideology and has taken a more aggressive form in the political field. Over the past three decades, the Hindutva ideology has become a prominent issue in Indian politics not only because saffron waves have created a new environment in politics in which religion and politics are combined but also because nationalists have felt under threat from globalisation. Since the 1990s, Hindutva has spread at the state and local levels, as well as at the national and international levels, as the leverage of globalisation has increased rapidly. Hindu nationalists in this period have attempted to raise consciousness of Hindu cultural nationalism, bringing an anti-pluralist and neo-fascist vision to the Indian public and politics.

With the hope of establishing a homogenous cultural nation, the Sangh Parivar has introduced a renewed sense of Hindu identity to Indian politics (Chirmuley, 2004, p.2) and created a violent public environment based on a strongly exclusivist principle.

3.1 The Sangh Parivar

The Sangh Parivar – the family of Hindu nationalist organisations – is regarded as a group of several right wing organisations.

In the period 1949-1965, the Rashtriya Swamayamsevak Sangh (RSS) launched several national organisations, including the Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS) and the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP). This process accelerated from the late 1970s, and the Sangh Parivar has developed into the concept of a Hindu family and spread at the national and local levels with its organisations forming an ‘alternative civil society’⁵.

⁵ The Sangh Parivar in Pune almost constitutes an ‘alternative civil society’, with separate schools, its own banks, a large number of colleges, its own organisations for youth, students, women, children, informal networks, frequent marriages between RSS-affiliated families and its own informal communication channels and structures of authority, both reproduced on a daily basis in the shakhas (Hansen, 1999, p.117).

This development of the Sangh Parivar since the 1970s is related to the lack of a central leadership after the decline of the 'Congress system' and the fading of left power. Concomitant with this situation, the Parivar has intervened in politics with a renewed sense of Hindu identity (Chirmuley, 2004).

Between the 1980s and 2002, the Parivar expanded to a very great extent thanks to its cultural nationalist project and manipulation of the 'communal card' to extreme levels (Ibid, p.4).

3.2 The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS)

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS, the 'National Volunteer Corps') was established in 1925 by K.B. Hedgewar (1889-1940), a physician from Maharashtra. It arose in Nagpur (in Maharashtra state) within the town's Brahmin community. For that reason, the organisation has long been dominated by Maharashtrian Brahmins. In the 1930s, the RSS gradually spread out from Nagpur to western Maharashtra – where Pune became a major centre – and to northern and western India and indeed the entire Hindi-speaking region.

Throughout the 1930s, the RSS maintained close relations with the Hindu Mahasabha, which provided profound inspiration for the ideology and organisation of the RSS. However, after Savarkar became the president of the Hindu Mahasabha in 1937, there were indications of a separation between the RSS and the Hindu Mahasabha. In 1939, the gap widened even further and the Hindu Mahasabha established its own uniformed youth corps, the Ram Sena (Ram's Army). When Golwalkar became the supreme leader after Hedgewar, they completely broke up in the early 1940s (Hansen, 1999, p.94). By the 1940s, the RSS had expanded their influence beyond the provinces of northern India to south India as well (Goyal, 1979 as cited in Bhatt, 1999, p.121).

The fact that the ideology of the RSS was inspired by Savarkar's book *Hindutva* is clear because both Hedgewar and Golwalkar's main aim was 'man-moulding' and 'character-

building'. This 'man-moulding' and 'character-building' means imprinting the RSS worldview in the *shakha*⁶ based on Hindu identity (Bhatt, 2001, p.142).

For their 'character building', the RSS attempted several strategies that show some such characteristics. First, the RSS has emphasised the importance of education to raise consciousness of the Muslim as an enemy and other. In other words, provoking Muslims is a key characteristic of the RSS. They have ceaselessly attempted to implant a dehumanising characterisation of the Indian Muslim. The reason for stressing moulding and educating 'Hindu consciousness' is because Hedgewar believed that 'lack of cohesion' and 'Hindu disunity' were the most serious problems facing Hindu society, in addition to 'foreign domination of Hindus', as a result of 'Hindu failings' (Ibid, p.118)

The second characteristic of the RSS is the full-scale emergence of militarised Hindu nationalism, inspired by Mussolini's fascism and descended from Savarkar's Hindutva ideology since the 1920s. As we have noted before, fascist Italy was already a source of inspiration for Hindu nationalist movements in the 1920s and 1930s, especially in their desire to express the organised Hindu strength and militarise the Hindu nation (Bhatt, 2001)

In fact, the RSS started military and ideological training in its youth corps according to its ideas of physical strength and spiritual purity as soon as it was established. The training includes a daily routine of physical exercise, military drills and marches, weapons training and ideological inculcation (Ibid, p.119). To organise its 'martial tradition', the RSS organises its military camps according to its hierarchical leadership principle based on the traditional idea of a 'model Hindu family'.⁷

6 "Shakha" is Hindi for "branch". Most of the organizational work of the RSS is done through the activities of *shakhas*. In 2004, more than 60,000 *shakhas* were performed throughout India (<http://www.rediff.com/news/2004/jul/23rss.htm>, accessed on 5th May, 2012). The *shakhas* carry out various activities for its volunteers which include not only physical fitness activities through yoga, exercises and games but also emphasise on qualities like civic sense, social service, community living and patriotism (Malkani, K.R., 1980).

7 The RSS claimed that the inspiration for its hierarchical leadership principle was not derived from any 'perverted foreign model' such as Mussolini's fascism, but was based on the traditional idea of a 'model Hindu family' (Curran, 1951; Dexhpande and Ramaswamy, 1981 quoted in Bhatt, 2001, p.120). It includes typical traditional hierarchy like led by order men and recruiting young boys, founded on the

Lastly, the key terms of the RSS based on Aryanism and the history of the Vedic times are racism, making a homogenous nation and majoritarianism.

Golwalkar, who became the second supreme leader of the RSS after Hedgewar's death in 1940, emphasised the 'Vedic period', like other previous Hindu nationalists. He stated that the 'Vedic period' was the oldest civilisation and Hindu-Aryans were indigenous and the forebears of Indians.⁸ According to this view, Golwalkar tried to spread the view that the 'nation should consist of pure race'. This xenophobic view, inspired by Fascism and Nazism, created a strong exclusivity towards minorities. For him, minorities could not be other than 'foreign', but nor should they exist in the Hindu nation unless they became Hindus. With regard to this strong repulsion of minorities, he used somatic metaphors – the healthy body of the 'Hindu nation' threatened by a minority 'cancer' (Ibid, p.130). His ignorance of any rights of minorities under the pretext of uniting his 'one nation' is representative of Hindu nationalists, full of intolerance and closed attitudes. For Golwalkar, minorities could:

Live only as outsiders, bound by all the codes and conventions of the Nation, at the sufferance of the Nation and deserving of no special protection, far less any privilege or rights. That is the only logical and correct solution.The non-Hindu peoples of Hindusthan must either adopt the Hindu culture and language, must learn to respect and hold in reverence Hindu religion, must entertain no ideas but those of the glorification of the Hindu race and culture.....They must cease to be foreigners, or may stay in the country wholly subordinated to the Hindu nation, claiming nothing, deserving no privileges (Golwalkar, 1944, quoted from Bhatt, 2001, p.130).

Although such a view of minorities as foreigners and foes was influenced by Fascism and Nazism, Golwalkar also considered communism to be 'foreign' and 'anti-national'. His vigorous anti-communism was a key constituent of RSS ideology in the post-independence period (Bhatt, 2001). With this contradictory ideology, the RSS has changed from a non-political organisation to a political organisation after the experience of being banned⁹ in the period 1948-1949.

institutional absence of women and in which one leader holds absolute leadership and requires compliant and devotional respect from members (Bhatt, 2001, p.120).

⁸ Golwalkar said "we were one nation"- 'Over all the land from sea to sea one Nation!' is the trumpet cry of the ancient Vedas!' (Bhatt, 2001, p.127)

⁹ Following Mahatma Gandhi's assassination in 1948 by a former member of the RSS, Nathuram Godse, many of the main leaders of the RSS were imprisoned and the RSS was banned on February 4, 1948 (Larson, 1995, p.132).

3.3 The Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP)

The VHP (Vishwa Hindu Parishad) was founded in Bombay on 29 August 1964 at the instigation of Golwalkar. One hundred and fifty religious leaders were present at the meeting, including not just Hindus but also Sikhs, Buddhists and Jains, with the aim of representing all Hindus, led by Swami Chinmayananda. Golwalkar explained that "all faiths of Indian origin need to unite", saying that the word "Hindu" applied to followers of all the above religions (Smith, 2003, p.189).

In the meeting, it was decided that the organisation would have the following objectives: (1) to take steps to raise the consciousness and to consolidate and strengthen Hindu society; (2) to protect, develop and spread Hindu life values, both ethical and spiritual; (3) to establish and reinforce contacts with and help for all Hindus living abroad; (4) to welcome back all who had left the Hindu fold and to rehabilitate them as part and parcel of the Universal Hindu Society; (5) to render social service to humanity at large, initiating welfare projects for the 170 million downtrodden brethren who had been suffering for centuries, including schools, hospitals, libraries, etc.; (6) to establish the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, the World Organisation of the six hundred million Hindus at present residing in 80 countries aspiring to revitalise the eternal Hindu Society by rearranging the code of conduct of our age-old Dharma to meet the needs of the changed times; (7) to eradicate the concept of untouchability from Hindu Society (VHP pamphlet, 1982, cited from Vander Veer, 1994, p.130).

With these aims of consolidating Hindus with other religions that emerged from Hinduism, several characteristics differentiated the VHP from other right wing organisations.

First, the VHP has tried to strengthen the solidarity of Hindus overseas. The VHP has organised its branches not only at the level of the nation state, but also at the international level. Internationally, the VHP has reported affiliated bodies in eighteen countries (Bhatt, 2001, p.183).

Second, the VHP has focused on setting up a programme to bring tribals and untouchables into the Hindu fold. This strategy could come from concerns about Hindu extinction. Hindu nationalists are under the delusion that Muslims will be majority in India in the future because of their higher fertility rate and the practice of polygamy. This imagined fear also results in Hindus worrying about a shortage of resources in the future based on 'Malthusian' theory.¹⁰ From the early 1980s, the VHP began in earnest mass conversion campaigns among syncretic Hindu-Muslim groups and among Christian tribals. These so-called 'homecoming' campaigns emphasised that those who had other religions were to 'come back' to their 'original', 'natural' faith, Hinduism, and hence their homeland (Ibid, p.198). The most famous shuddhi activity in the VHP was the Meenakshipuram conversion in 1981. In this conversion movement, the VHP encouraged lower caste Hindus and untouchables to offer devotion to and bathe the idols and continuously resist conversion to Islam among them (Ibid, p.188).

Third, the VHP started to use the iconic representations of 'Ram' and the media effect with their involvement in the Ram Janmabhomi campaign. The destruction of Babri Masjid at Ayodhya to construct a Ram temple was the most remarkable working in the VHP's role. During its Ram Janmabhomi campaign, the VHP elevated the *Ramayana* as the privileged text of Hinduism by broadcasting 'Ramayana' series. The strategy of the VHP during the Ram Janmabhomi campaign included making a clear demarcation of the other to appeal to the majority of Hindus through the utilisation of devotional symbol.

The VHP was a non-political organisation at the time of its foundation, but it has started to influence the politics since the BJP adopted the Hindutva themes of the VHP document issued in 1997 referred to as *Hindu Agenda* as its 1998 general election manifesto. Therefore, the development of a national Hinduism which aims to spread the VHP's version of Hinduism as the standard and mainstream Hinduism to the nation is the most significant of the activities of the VHP (Hansen, 1999, p.102).

¹⁰ According to Bhatt (2001, p.197-8), Malthusian theory has characterised Hindu nationalism since the 20th century.

3.4 The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)

In 1951, senior RSS activists created a national party, the Jana Sangh, and Mookherjee was elected president. Its political strategy was based on RSS ideology and organisation. The Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS), the political arm of Hindu nationalism, initially regarded post-Independence India as 'Bharatiya Rashtra'. This changed to 'Hindu Rashtra' in 1956, with the Jana Sangh claiming that both were equivalent and coextensive with 'Indian' nationalism (Baxter, 1971, p.133).

With its objective of spreading Hindu nationalism, including campaigns against Urdu, for the banning of cow-slaughter and for a militarily strong India, the Jana Sangh emerged from the late 1960s, a period that included the death of Nehru, war with Pakistan and the development of the 'multi-party system' at the national as well as state level (Bhatt, 2001, p.154).

The crucial motivation for examining the Jana Sangh is the fact that the contemporary Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) manifesto is derived from the main principle of the Jana Sangh.

Under the principle of 'one nation, one culture, one people', the Jana Sangh was against the partition of India, which it believed should be 're-united'. It also strongly opposed Nehruvian secularism because the latter was seen as a policy of 'appeasement' of Indian Muslims (Ibid). However, the most influential ideology was Deendayal Upadhyaya's 'Integral Humanism'. This ideology has since had considerable influence on the BJP.

During the Emergency period of 1975-1977, RSS and Jana Sangh leaders and activists were arrested. Later, Indira Gandhi's Congress Party lost the general election and the Janata coalition headed by Moraji Desai won. The Janata coalition formed a slight majority in the Lok Sabha. The founders of Jana Sangh, RSS members Advani and Vajpayee, were also key members of the Janata coalition. This was the first time since just after Independence that Hindu nationalists held political power at the centre, as key members of a ruling coalition (Ibid, p.168).

In 1980, the leaders and workers of the former Jana Sangh formed the BJP, with Vajpayee as its first president. In 1982 during state elections, the BJP formed alliances with other smaller parties and stood in an anti-Congress front. Two years after the 1984 general election, Vajpayee resigned from his position as president due to the disastrous result of the Lok Sabha polls, following which Lal Krishnan Advani became BJP president in 1986. The BJP under Advani started to adopt Upadhyaya's Integral Humanism philosophy as its ideology to fortify its idea of 'cultural nationalism' from 1985. In its 1989 general election campaign, the BJP formed electoral alliances mainly with V.P. Singh's new Janata Dal party, as part of the National Front alliance created by Narasimha Rao in 1988.

In August 1990, L.K. Advani launched his *rath yatra*, a mass march through some ten northern Indian states, sparking serious communal tension and violence. His motivation was seen as relating to the mobilisation of the Hindu vote bank, since it was threatened by the problem of caste loyalties after the implementation of the Mandal report¹¹. In the *rath yatra*, Hindutva forces were trying to bring the issue of caste discrimination to the fore by integrating those outside the caste system into Hinduism. In this sense, the *yatra* could be interpreted as an anti-Mandal strategy (Bhatt, 2001, p.169, 170&171). After the initiation of the *rath yatra*, Advani was imprisoned in Bihar, leading to the fall of the V.P. Singh National Front coalition government in late 1990.

In the 1991 election campaign, the BJP began to express its 'Hindutva' manifesto, based on Savarkar's definition of Hindutva. Its slogan was 'Towards Ram Rajya' (the mythological 'Rule of Ram') (Ibid., p.172).

From the Himalayas to Kanya Kumari, this country has always been one. We have had many States, but we were always one people. We always looked upon our country as Matribhoomi, Punyabhoomi [Motherland and Holyland]. (Bharatiya Janata Party, 1991 quoted in Bhatt, 2001, p.172).

11 In September 1990, the V.P. Singh government announced about implementation of the Mandal Commission's recommendation of 27% reservation of educational seats and government jobs for OBC (backward) communities. This resulted in an 'upper' caste strong resistance and the public self-immolation of Brahmin and 'upper' caste students in the summer of 1990 (Hansen, 1999, p.164).

This 1991 BJP manifesto seems to be some kind of preparation to achieve Hindu cohesion before embarking on the destruction of the Babri Masjid in 1992. The BJP claimed that their planning of the reconstruction of the Ram temple at Ayodhya was a means of rectifying historical wrongs between Hindus and Muslims. In other words, its manifesto was intended to trigger Hindus' old wounds received during the Mughal period.

During the 1996-1998 election, the BJP reiterated its ideology of 'one nation, one people, one culture' with the addition of the ancient cultural heritage of India as 'Hindutva', as well as emphasising the civilisational superiority of the Vedic times. In addition, they tried to legitimise the Ramjanbhoomi movement as the greatest mass movement since Independence.

Hindutva is unifying principle which alone can preserve the unity and integrity of our nation. It is a collective endeavour to protect and re-energise the soul of India, to take us into the next millennium as a strong and prosperous nation...On coming to power, the BJP government will facilitate the construction of a magnificent Shri Rama Mandir at Janmasthan in Ayodhya which will be a tribute to Bharat Mata. This dream moves millions of people in our land; the concept of Rama lies at the core of their consciousness (Bharayiya Janata Party, 1996 quoted in Bhatt, 2001, 174).

Although the BJP stressed its Hindutva manifesto, it has also attempted to appeal to a non-Hindu constituency under its aim of projecting moderation and inclusivity. This dual strategy of the BJP has come about in response to the changing economic and political global environment.

However, this attempt by the BJP to address globalisation has shown up differences in the ideology of the RSS. More particularly, the RSS advocated 'economic nationalism' based on swadeshi and redistributivism, while the BJP supported 'economic globalisation' based on deregulation.

In the late 1990s, these differences became apparent following renewed attacks by the Sangh Parivar on the BJP for apparently abandoning its Hindutva agenda in the coalition government, as well as disagreements about the nature, pace and direction of 'calibrated

globalisation' (Bhatt, 2001, p.177). However, this does not mean that the BJP gave up its Hindutva cultural nationalism slogan as its philosophy. It ceaselessly stressed the view that enhancing India's ancient cultural heritage is important.

Examining the core philosophies of the BJP, first, it has succeeded from Jana Sangh's ideology of 'Integral Humanism'. 'Integral Humanism' was based on a rejection of large-scale technologies and advocated swadeshi (Indian manufacture and consumption) and small-scale industrialisation. It was similar to Gandhian thought with respect to using swadeshi and sarvodaya (welfare for all) concepts.

Secondly, the BJP has declared 'Gandhian Socialism' to be its constitutional political ideology. This theory is inspired by Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule written by Gnadhi. Its features include decentralisation of political and economic power, opposition to technology and large scale industrialisation, and emphasis on self-employment and self-reliance.

Thirdly, it has adopted 'positive secularism'. With regard to 'positive secularism', Vajpayee has stated that:

Mahatma Gandhi describes the correct attitude towards religion as 'Sarva Dharma Sambhava', equal respect to all religions. The concept of 'Sarva Dharma Sambhava' is somewhat different from European secularism which is independent of religion ... We may say that the Indian concept of secularism is that of Sarva Dharma Sambhava ... Sarva Dharma Sambhava is not against any religion. It treats all religions with equal respect. And therefore it can be said that the Indian concept of secularism is more positive (Vajpayee, quoted from Jaffrelot, 2007, p.327).

'Positive secularism' includes the view that the state should consider all India's religions as equal, implying that Hindus should not be treated any differently to minority religions (Malik and Singh, 1994, p. 62).

In conclusion, the beginning of Hindu nationalism from the 19th to the early 20th century can be seen as "Hindu Revivalism" based on Aryanism, which emerged as a form of

nationalism against British colonial rule. Through the introduction of Western Orientalism and primordialism in the late 19th century, nationalists attempted to build up a number of socio-religious movements, mainly among Hindus, in the name of uniting the nation. Accordingly, Hindu nationalists tried to rediscover the history and origins of Hindus under the influence of these two epistemologies – primordialism and Orientalism from Europe. Therefore, Hindu nationalism in this period can be seen as preparation for the construction of contemporary Hindutva.

From the 1920s, Hindu nationalism has started to intervene in politics, with Savarkar introducing the concept of 'Hindutva' amidst the political turmoil of this time in India. Savarkar's 'Hindutva' was an ideology based on Nazism and Fascism. This narrow-minded view, which involves the acceptance only of 'us', has become the fundamental idea of contemporary right wing nationalism.

The sudden rise of the military form of Hindu nationalism since the 1980s has been more apparent in the political field with the strategy of making a clear demarcation of Muslims as others or enemies. Accordingly, right wing forces have used military tactics, including training and education, to unite India under a homogenous Hindu identity. This Hindu-Muslim communal violence was most obviously sparked in the destruction of the Babri Masjid in 1992.

Based on this background of Hindu nationalism, the following chapter will analyse the psychological reasons making Hindu nationalists invoke conflict and violence towards Muslims.

Chapter II

Psychology of the Conflict between Hindus and Muslims

In colonial India, as the idea of nationalism gained ground amongst Indians in the late 19th century, the British government embarked upon a policy of divide and rule. It tried to aggravate the conflict between Hindus and Muslims by offering political rights to Muslims. Muslims formed the Muslim League to overcome their feeling of inferiority, and this in turn contributed to the rise of Hindu communalism. Eventually, the policy resulted in the Partition of India and Pakistan in 1947.

Partition most starkly exposed the hostility between Hindus and Muslims. It was the moment when the wound that Hindus had received in the Mughal era – when Muslims conquered Hindus – stood revealed.

Partition provided the opportunity to emphasise the definition of Muslims as ‘others’. Although Indian Muslims have lived in India for centuries, they are regarded by many Hindu nationalists as foreigners. This perception is derived from a fear that their real loyalties lie with Pakistan and the Middle East rather than with India (Kakar, 1995).

The purpose of this chapter is to analyse the psychological factors behind the serious communal conflicts and strong antagonism between Hindus and Muslims in India. The most prominent of these psychological factors is Chosen Trauma, a wound received by Hindus in Indian history. The depth of this wound is related to the historical background in which Hindus and Muslims were intertwined with each other. In explaining Hindu animosity towards Muslims, it is important to examine this history from the moment Hindus and Muslims met to their current collision.

The most significant wound received by Hindus in Indian history is first the period of Muslim conquest over Hindus and second the Partition of India and Pakistan in 1947.

The first part of the chapter will look into the event of the destruction of the Babri Masjid, which it will be argued took place as a result of these two historical events, through their impact as Chosen Trauma on the Hindu psyche.

The second part will discuss psychological factors that can explain what makes Hindus feel so much anger towards Muslims when the British also dominated India. It will be suggested that the answer is the 'proximity factor', which refers to the tendency to feel more threatened by and therefore also more hostile towards a nearer and larger group than towards a distant and smaller group. These feelings have been handed down the generations through education by families and relatives.

In last part of the chapter, Hindu resentment of Muslims due to the breaking of taboos such as eating beef and slaughtering cows, and from the favourable attitude of the Indian government, will be explained.

1. Chosen Trauma

History is sometimes portrayed as a memory of a wound or glory of the past, and it is sometimes used as a means for someone who belongs to that history to justify an action today. This part of the chapter will examine one of the ways in which such psychological methods have been used by Hindus to justify their actions by reigniting a historical wound or glory.

For Hindu nationalists, the Mughal era and the Partition of India and Pakistan are fundamental injuries or trauma that are a cause of ceaseless communal conflict between Hindus and Muslims. In the Hindu consciousness, these wounds were inflicted when their dream of India as a homogeneous 'Hindu rashtra' was destroyed by the invasion and partition of the country by Muslims, regarded as foreigners or others. For Hindus, Muslims are the main party to be blamed. In addition, Hindus are nervous about decreasing Hindu numbers and the possible extinction of the Hindu race.

This definition of Muslims as others or foreigners can be understood with psychoanalysis. The 'other' is constructed in the process of “the securitisation of subjectivity”, which according to Kinvall (2006, p.47) means “the search for one stable identity”, while the other turns into an abject as the unwanted parts of the self are projected onto the other. This is also a concern with Chosen Trauma, which are mental recollections of a wounded past, where historical memory becomes an important factor in a successful projection process.

Chosen Trauma can easily occur when people feel some new threat, such as globalisation or the threat of the extinction of the race. In other words, Chosen Trauma is increased in a situation of insecurity and anxiety. When people feel their identity is disturbed in a context in which the system or order is changing, abjection occurs. The abject is a key part of group formation when the familiar ‘stranger’ is suddenly recognised as a threat (Babur, 1952; Kinvall, 2006). This includes the process of securitising one’s identity by demonising the other, in which the self is sanctified. In dehumanising the other, the other is usually regarded as dirty. This construction of the self and the other will be discussed in more detail in the third chapter.

Chosen Trauma refers to the mental recollection of a tragedy in a group’s history and includes “information, fantasised expectations, intense feelings and defences against unacceptable thought” (Kinvall, 2006, p.56). The feeling of hate generated from the past wound becomes the link between the present, past and future, and this is passed down through successive generations. It is possible because a specific calamity influences the psychology of individuals as well as that of the group. According to Volkan (1997, p.36-49), large groups also mourn. This process includes building mental defences against painful and unacceptable feelings and thoughts. Humiliation becomes trauma and this Chosen Trauma is rediscovered, reinterpreted and reused, sometimes in a mythologised and intertwined form, by later generations.

To reignite Chosen Trauma means attempting to trace the lineage of a group back to a specific place, time and ancestor in order to establish an ideological heritage and to

suggest a direction for future actions. This is accomplished through the use of symbols, memories, myths and heritage, with the objective of discovering the 'original' event. Political leaders often invoke Chosen Trauma as a way of justifying their actions by reigniting ancient injuries or glories, using remodelled symbols and myths (Kinvall, 2006, p.56-59).

Both Chosen Traumas and Chosen Glories are closely related to images of the nation and religion. Traumas emerge at times when nationalism is strong, when there is a need to search for the nation since the nation is lost, such as following colonisation. In this situation, nationalists want to look for and draw images of their glorified past before colonisation, and this process is often rooted in religious discourse. Here, religion plays a powerful role in turning the abstract symbols on which religion draws into physical objects and tangible events. All religious revelations are connected to the nation – for example, religious miracles become national feasts and holy scriptures are reinterpreted as national epics. In this sense, religious and cultural rituals and ritualistic anniversaries can sustain the trauma and show the demonization of the other while sanctifying the self. In other words, by turning history into a Chosen Trauma or Chosen Glory, it becomes a 'naturalised' part of an identity group's definition of the self and the other (Ibid, p.58, 59).

The use of Chosen Trauma in relation to discourse about religion and the nation can be seen in the actions of contemporary saffron waves and the Ayodhya event. This chapter will analyse the trauma that have been chosen in Hindu consciousness from their history – the Mughal Era and the Partition of India and Pakistan – and discuss how these Chosen Trauma have become a psychological factor in provoking conflict between Hindus and Muslims.

It is argued that the demolition of the Babri Masjid resulted from the emotional wound received by Hindus based on the historical events of the Mughal era and the Partition of 1947, their Chosen Trauma.

1.1 Mughal Era

The first Chosen Trauma for Hindus is the Muslim invasion of the subcontinent from the beginning of the 8th century to the 19th century and the Indian Rebellion of 1857¹².

Broadly speaking, Muslim rule in India had six phases: (i) Arab rule in Sindh and Multan up to the 10th century; (ii) the Delhi Sultanate from Mohammed Ghori to Ibrahim Lodhi from the 11th to the 15th centuries; (iii) the Mughal empire from Babar to Jalaluddin Akbar; (iv) Jehangir to Aurangzeb from the 16th to the 17th centuries; (v) the Bahmani and other Shia Kingdoms in the South; and (vi) the post-Mughal period after Aurangzeb and the rise of Maratha, Sikh and European powers in India (Gopal, 1994, p.10).

According to Kakar (1995, p.25, 27) Hindu nationalists have tended to exaggerate the impact of ten centuries of Muslim domination. He also claims that Hindu nationalists tend to overemphasise the difference between Hindu and Muslim religious identities as well as doctrinal beliefs in India's pre-colonial past.

Indeed, Hindutva describes the Muslim invasion as a history full of wounds, because Hindus were severely exploited by Muslims and many Hindu temples were destroyed – their religion was strongly oppressed during that period. For that reason, Muslims are usually depicted as aggressive fundamentalists and regarded as having inherited the blood of their ancient dictatorial medieval rulers who demolished temples and forcibly converted Hindus to Islam (Hasan, 2005). Hindu nationalists narrate only their suffered suppression and damage in the Mughal period, without mentioning any Muslim dynasty that tried to harmonise relations between Hindus and Muslims or the golden age during the Mughal era.

20 The Indian Rebellion of 1857 emerged as a mutiny of sepoys of the British East India Company's army on 10 May 1857 in the town of Meerut, and soon developed into other mutinies and civilian rebellions, largely in the upper Gangetic plain and central India (Bandyopadhyay, 2004, pp.169-172). The rebellion is also referred as India's First War of Independence, the Great Rebellion, the Indian Mutiny, the Revolt of 1857, the Uprising of 1857, the Sepoy Rebellion, and the Sepoy Mutiny.

Similarly, there are many Hindu literary writers who describe the fate of Hindus oppressed during the Mughal era and who express concern at the harmful influence of Islam on their society by contrasting the glory of pre-medieval India with the cruel character of Muslim dynasties (Ibid., p.200). For example, Gopal Ganesh Agarkar, Gopal Hari Deshmukh, and Vishnushastri Chitambar state with one voice: “Muslims were bullies and fanatics, because violence and aggression was the essence of their civilization” (Hasan, 2005, p.200). Tilak, an extreme Hindu nationalist during the early 20th century, tried to strengthen the Maratha identity with reference to memories of Muslim repression and exploitation. His continuous effort to denounce Muslim rulers including Mahmud of Ghazna, Alauddin Khalji, Timur, Aurangzeb, and Ahmad Shah Abdali as tyrannical dynasties created a religious divide in Maharashtra society and influenced the core ideology of the Hindu Mahasabha and the RSS, which includes regarding Muslims as enemies (Bhatt, 2001; Hasan, 2005).

Hindi writers like Bharatendu Harishchandra, Pratap Narain Misra and Radha Charan Goswami expressed the same idea, portraying medieval rule as an atrocious period, referring to evidence of the rape and conquest of Hindu women, the slaughter of sacred cows, and the demolition of Hindu temples. Bharatendu even expresses their ‘wounds in the heart’, lamenting the fact that Aurangzeb’s mosque stood beside the sacred Vishwanath temple in Varanasi (Hasan, 2005, p.200). He also makes a strong comparison between the characters of Hindus and Muslims, depicting Hindus as subjugated, long-suffering, modest, and acting with courage and honour, while Muslims are shown as dominant, acting with brutality and cowardice, and intolerant (Ibid). Misra and Radha Charan also depreciate Muslim rulers with expressions such as “those mad elephants” or “those who trampled to destruction the flourishing lotus-garden of India”. They bitterly criticise Muslim brutality in slaughtering cows and show wariness about Hindu religious processions being kept under guard (Chandra, 1987, cited in Hasan, 2005,p.201).

The most well known Bengali writer, Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, is another critic of the Mughal era. His strong resentment of Muslims is clear from the following: “He was born to hate the Hindus, he found Hindu offences unpardonable” (Ibid., p.182). He

asserts that medieval India was a period of bondage and that Muslim rule failed to bring any development to India. He sees Islam as loaded with the deceptive, ridiculous, avaricious and immoral, and most of all, he thinks of it as a threat to the Hindu religion (Chatterjee, 1986, p.77). Nirad C. Chaudhuri, a member of the Bengali intelligentsia, agrees that Muslims tried to oppress the Hindu religion to spread their religion with the Quran. In addition, he reveals strong antagonism towards Muslims in his criticism of Aurangzeb's ruthlessness: "As we grew older we read about the Rajputs, the Marathas, and the Sikhs against Muslims, and of the intolerance and oppression of Aurangzeb" (N.C. Chaudhuri, 1987, p.226).

It is clear then that many Hindu writers during the late 19th century tried to create the impression amongst Indians that the Mughal era was a dark age of Muslims raping Hindu women and destroying Hindu temples and sacred places. As a result of their efforts, the Mughal era has become a "historical wound", and this trauma has had an effect in bringing about the destruction of Babri Masjid – the climax of the conflict between Hindus and Muslims.

In the contemporary age, the damage Hindus suffered during the Mughal era has become one of the saffron wave's key foundations, with the intention of justifying the demolition of the Babri Masjid.

After the destruction of the Babri Masjid, the BJP tried to legitimise their actions by highlighting the atrocities committed by Muslim rulers and indoctrinating Hindus with images of the violent invasion of the Muslims:

This historical background of the Mohamedan invasion and the provocative ocular reminders of that violent and barbaric invasion were completely ignored even after the partition of India. This neglect resulted in the failure to evolve a sound basis for Indian nationalism and durable relationships between Hindus and Muslims (BJP, 1993, quoted in Berglund, 2004, p.1069)

In the 'BJP's White Paper on Ayodhya and The Rama Temple Movement', the party also condemned Muslims with its description "Muslims are violent and barbaric" and its

characterisation of the Muslim period on the subcontinent as “...probably the bloodiest story in History”(quoted in Berglund, 2004, p.1069). In addition, it asserted that due to the advent of Islam in the subcontinent, the ancient harmony had been destroyed. It stated: “It is the invasion by fanatic religious statecraft that intervened and introduced inter-religious disharmony and hatred towards all indigenous faiths” (BJP, 1993, quoted in Davis, 2005, p.36).

In this way, the Sangh Parivar has sought to find a rationalisation for the demolition of the Babri Masjid by bringing up Babar, the founder of the Mughal dynasty. When the Sangh Parivar describes Babar, he is connected to his act of conquering iconoclasm and this action is regarded as an expression of indigenous principles in Islam, not as his personal act (Davis, 2005, p.36). As a result, Babar has become a symbol of the historical legacy of Muslim conquest and Hindus have used him to construct their antagonism towards Islam.

The ultimate purpose of the Sangh Parivar is to make a clear division of two communities in India – Hindus and Muslims – and to aggravate the relations between them. Towards this end, they contrast the golden age of the pre-Muslim period with medieval India in which there was a historical collapse as a result of the activities of Babar and the Muslim invasion. For this reason, they claim that Babar’s mosque had to be destroyed because it was the vestiges of this ancient historical wrong (Ibid, p.37).

As already discussed, Hindu nationalists from the late 19th century – the period in which Hindu nationalism began – to the contemporary saffron waves, have derogated the Mughal era as an indelible historical disgrace and memory of defeat. This effort by Hindu nationalists to make the Mughal era a historical wound for Hindus has become a Chosen Trauma and this Chosen Trauma has appeared in Hindus' dread of a “revival of medieval Muslim rule” (Kakar, 1995, p.53) and in the action of the demolition of the Babri Masjid, which is considered the physical residue of Muslim rule.

1.2 Partition

The partition of India and Pakistan in 1947 offended the Hindu mind and became one of their biggest historical trauma, since their dream of constructing one nation – a Hindu rashtra – after Independence from the British was destroyed.

India and Pakistan were created on the basis of the so-called two nation theory¹³, which came about as a result of Muslim desire to form a separate nationality and homeland with a distinct culture.

After the creation of these two new states, communal tensions and riots immediately engulfed the subcontinent. The communal violence after Partition not only killed thousands of people but also displaced many people from their homeland. This meant that many victims had to look for a new home some distance away (Raychaudhury, 2000, p.5653). Partition made their homeland hostile and this was a source of distress for them. It became an unforgettable trauma, not only for the victims who experienced severe cruelty such as physical violence, insult and sexual assault, but also for Hindus in general, who felt miserable due to the division of the Bharat Mata.¹⁴

The violence of Partition is the most shocking memory for Hindus and Muslims alike because of its scale and intensity. It has fixed the relation with a clear division between them. Undoubtedly, the partition of the nation into India and Pakistan strongly affected the Hindu consciousness.

Therefore, it cannot be denied that Partition has worked as a Chosen Trauma, which has had an impact on later riots – the destruction of the Babri Masjid and the Gujarat massacre (Kinvall, 2006, p.105).

13 The two-nation theory is the ideology that the primary identity of Indian Muslims is based on their religion, rather than their language or ethnicity, and therefore Indian Hindus and Muslims identity are separated-two distinct nationalities- regardless of ethnic or other commonalities (Winks W. Robin, Low M. Elaine M ,2001).

14 “Bharat Mata” (explained in Chapter III).

In fact, deeply rooted emotional trauma created by the division of India and Pakistan has given momentum to the development of stereotypes of the Indian Muslim as foreign and alien to India for Hindus. Van der Veer (1994) states that the 1947 Partition brought about the cognition among Hindu nationalists of the construction of the Muslim as other – not truly Indian – and gave this construction a strongly realistic aspect (Van der Veer, 1994, p.10).

This strong perception of Indian Muslims as others has even created hostility towards the Middle East, because Hindu nationalists believe that Pakistan has been Islamicized and the heartland of Muslims is the Middle East – not South Asia. The following Hindu narrative shows this Hindu fear:

The Muslims have weakened the Hindus because they have damaged a lot of temples. This happened already during the Moghuls...The construction of Pakistan destroyed India and now we are threatened by both the Middle East and the West. Only a stronger India can save us (interview of a Hindu male, quoted in Kinvall, 2006, p.161).

For this reason, when contemporary Hindu nationalists emphasise the role of the Muslim minority, they often bring up the trauma of Partition. Hindus force Indian Muslims to devote their loyalty towards India:

When the country was partitioned what did the Muslims say?...It was for them to decide at that time whether they wanted to live here, peacefully with Hindus or they wanted to go to Pakistan. If they have decided to live here they must respect the sentiments of the Hindus (quoted in Berglund, 2004, p.1069).

If we analyse the Chosen Trauma of Partition with reference to the Hindu psyche, it is related to Indian mythology because Indian mythology cannot be easily distinguished from the Hindu religion. Hindu feelings about Partition should be understood in this context. In their mind, it was not regarded simply as a division between the Muslim majority areas and Hindu majority areas, but as a ripping apart of Mother India. This perception was a spiritual and emotional shock to the Hindu consciousness and hence Partition remained an unforgivable and unforgettable humiliation for Hindus (Puri, 1993, p.2145).

The traumatic experience of Partition encouraged the rise of a potent feeling of distrust of each other as well as severe communal conflict between Hindus and Muslims thereafter. Needless to say, it has become a significant event in India, leading to a series of riots and hostilities involving Muslims (Puri, 1993; Van der Veer, 1994).

1.3 Result (Destruction of the Babri Masjid : Ayodhya Event)

The destruction of the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya is significant in the contemporary history of India for its social, political and religious aspects. This event can be said to have been the starting point of the rise of the communal Hindutva movement. It generated considerable social agitation, political trouble and public dispute in the subcontinent.

It was intended as retaliation for historical 'humiliations'. The Ram janmabhoomi movement aimed to reinforce the stature of Ram as a god, prophet, and national hero and of Ayodhya as a Hindu religious centre (Puri, 1993, p.2146). In addition, their message to the public was that the site of the Babri Masjid belonged to Hindus, so Hindus had the right to take it over from Muslims (Berglund, 2004, p.1067). Hindu nationalists tried to provoke an emotional reaction and aimed to mobilise feelings of solidarity among Hindus.

The Ramjanbhoomi movement had been in existence for several years. In April 1984, the VHP summoned Hindu religious figures to plan the liberation of three temple sites in north India – at Mathura, Varanasi and Ayodhya.

In 1990, BJP president L. K. Advani suggested a *rath yatra* to garner support for building a Ram temple in Ayodhya. The procession with Rama's chariot began in Somnath, on the Gujarat coast in western India on September 25, and covered some ten thousand kilometres across eight states over the next 35 days, reaching Ayodhya on October 30. On the way, the procession encountered considerable agitation and Advani and other leaders were arrested by the chief minister of Bihar on October 23. On October 30, a Hindu militia under the leadership of the VHP broke into the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya and caused some damage. On November 7, the BJP withdrew its support for the coalition

government led by the National Front and headed by Prime Minister V.P. Singh, which resulted in the fall of the government. With the success of Advani's *rath yatra*, the BJP became the main opposition party to the declining Congress and eventually came to power in Uttar Pradesh.

The final demolition of the Babri Masjid occurred two years later. It is from this time that communal riots began in earnest.

When the saffron wave planned to destroy this site and called for its return from Muslims, their actions were based on three primary beliefs. First, the god Rama was actually and physically born at that exact place. Secondly, an ancient Hindu temple marking Rama's birthplace formerly stood on the site. Thirdly, the Mughal conqueror Babar destroyed the temple in the early 16th century and constructed a mosque on the ruins (Davis, 2005, p.34).

These reinterpreted and uncertain myths and memories have become Chosen Trauma and have reinforced the perception of Muslims.

More particularly, for Hindu nationalists, the presence of the Babri Masjid was a reminder of the violence and intolerance of Muslims, their celebration of the Muslim conquest of Hindus, and the oppression and disunity of Hindus, all of which was ancient history that Hindu nationalists wanted to erase. This thinking of the Sangh Parivar was also expressed by the BJP, which described the Babri Masjid as follows: "purely and simply a symbol not of devotion and of religion but of conquest" (Berglund, 2004, p.1068).

This Hindu anger at Muslims is also visible in two publications that aimed to justify the destruction of Babri Masjid: the book *Ayodhya Guide* and the pamphlet *Angry Hindu! Yes, Why Not?*

Yes, certainly I am angry. And I have every reason to be angry. And it is also right for me to be so. Otherwise I would be no man. Yes for too long I have

suffered insults in silence. Until now I have been at the receiving end....My people have been kidnapped by the enemies. My numbers have dwindled...my goddess-like motherland has been torn asunder... My traditional rights have been snatched away from me (quoted in Nandy et al., 1995, 54).

Each step taken by the Ram janmabhoomi movement had symbolic value, taken not only with the intention of taking revenge for the humiliation of Hindus at the hands of foreign invaders but also to awaken a historical trauma.

Looking more closely at the *rath yatra*, the choice of Somnath as the starting point for the procession had meaning since it was also related to the Chosen Trauma of the Mughal period. It was the site of the most famous event of Muslim temple destruction in India by Muhmud of Ghazna in 1026. Somnath was understandably a target for the VHP (Davis, 2005, p.43).

The erection of the Rama temple also had symbolic meaning for Hindu nationalists. According to Kakar (1995), “The Rama temple is a response to the mourning of Hindu society: a mourning for lost honor, lost self-esteem, lost civilization, lost Hinduness”. More particularly, the Rama temple was an object for the projection of individual and group experiences of mourning. Historical places are often turned into sacred and national sites and serve as Chosen Trauma (Kinvall, 2006, p.59). Relating monuments and history is to some extent a natural instinct, according to Peter Homans (Kakar, 1995, p.202).

Engage the immediate conscious experience of an aggregate of egos by representing and mediating to them the lost cultural experiences of the past; the experiences of individuals, groups, their ideas and ideals, which coalesce into what can be called a collective memory. In this the monument is a symbol of union because it brings together the particular psychological circumstances of many individual’s life courses and the universals of their otherwise lost historical past within the context of their current or contemporary social processes and structures (quoted in Kakar, 1995, 202).

As already mentioned, Chosen Trauma denotes “an event which causes a community to feel helpless and victimised by another and whose mental representation becomes

embedded in the group's collective identity" (Kakar, 1995, p. 63). In India, Chosen Trauma is the result of the anger and hate Hindus feel towards their Muslim enemy or other.

In the formation of this Chosen Trauma, the construction of Muslims as others and alien is necessary. Prejudice is used as a means of differentiating one group from the other in order to maintain group identity.¹⁵ Dehumanisation also takes place, so that the enemy is gradually dehumanised over time (Kinvall, 2006, p.55). The tendency of Hindu nationalists to brand Muslims as dirty vermin, with reference to features such as facial hair and clothing type, or as aggressive sexualised beings, is related to this process of dehumanisation. Traits are sometimes exaggerated to connect unrelated habits like cow slaughter, crime, drugs and terrorism.

This construction of dehumanisation is accomplished through 'mythic discourse', as shown with the destruction of the Babri Masjid. The grounds on which Hindu nationalists justify their action of destroying the mosque are that they believe the Islamic ruler Babur destroyed a Ram temple and built a mosque on its ruins, based on the Indian mythology of Ram. This 'mythic discourse' can be seen as a strategy to unify a pan-Indian homogeneous identity in India by connecting the Hindutva version of Hinduism to Indian history and Indian national identity (Ibid., p.147). In addition, Hindu nationalists have used this mythic discourse to account for Partition as well as Muslim atrocities in the Mughal era.

Hindutva in the Ram janmabhoomi movement used a manipulated trauma of the past – their victimisation at the hands of Muslim conquerors and the partition of the country – with the objective of strengthening Hindu cohesiveness. After instigating the Ayodhya event, Hindu nationalists justified their communal violence, connecting their glorified and romanticised version of India's past with the elimination of Muslim history in India to the present.

¹⁵ This theory will be explained in Chapter IV in detail.

As has been shown, Chosen Trauma is the main psychological explanation for Hindu enmity towards Muslims. The collected memories of the Muslim conquest and the division of the country that was expected to unite after Independence are historical injuries in the Hindu mind and have become indelible trauma for them. Ultimately, these trauma caused the Ayodhya event, which was the culmination of the Hindu-Muslim conflict.

2. Proximity Factor

In fact, it was a policy of the British government that resulted in Partition and the creation of India and Pakistan, as has already been mentioned. British colonial rule also resulted in an increase in Christianity in the subcontinent. Why is Hindu animosity towards Muslims or Islam stronger than towards the British and Christianity? This part of the chapter analyses the psychological factors behind this curious eventuality.

Examining the difference in Hindu perception of the British colonial period and the medieval period of Mughal rule, it is clear that the former is regarded as relatively gentle, civilised and moral in character, while the latter is depicted as brutal, barbarous and ruthlessly oppressive of Hindus (Bhatt, 2001, p. 53).

Kakar agrees with this conclusion. In his opinion, the reason is that religion is a more important issue than political subjugation or economic exploitation in determining the reaction of Hindus (Kakar, 1995). In this way, the wound received by Hindus in the period of the Mughal Empire is deeper than that of the British period because Hindus think that the Hindu religious identity was more severely subjugated by Muslims as compared to the British.

Where has this difference come from? Kakar (1995, p. 28) suggests that proximity is the cause of “occasional simmering resentment and nagging friction” between Hindus and Muslims. The British remained strangers, while Muslims became others owing to their geographical position.

There is a related theory in the psychology of nationalism – inter-group hostility tends to be stronger with larger, nearer, and more powerful outgroups than with smaller, more distant and weaker ones (Rosenblatt, 1964, p.135). In the same way, nationalist or ethnocentric hostility more easily occurs in groups that are frequently encountered – near neighbours living within the group's territory – than in rarely encountered groups. Neighbouring groups are more likely to block goal responses than non-neighbouring groups (Ibid, p.138).

This theory is analysed in more detail by Freud. He says that the proximity factor determines the nature of emotional relations between men in general. He supports this idea with reference to Schopenhauer's famous simile of the freezing porcupine, which indicates that no one can tolerate too intimate an approach to his neighbour (Freud, 1960, p.33).

Neighbours always feel rivalry towards each other. Two families connected by a marriage or two neighbouring towns or countries often think themselves superior and the other inferior and their main rival. South and North Germans, the English and the Scots, Spaniards and Portuguese are good examples of this tendency for neighbours to feel hostility and contempt for each other (Ibid)

Dollard explains that when an in-group searches for the object of hostility of an out-group, that group will become the "favourite" out-group and the source of the most frustration. This will most likely be an adjacent group. In Campbell and Levine's study of intergroup relations (1961) correlated with ethnocentrism, they also mention intergroup hostility and stereotypes related to proximity. When the dominant group selects scapegoats, there is a high probability of targeting the group towards which the most guilt is felt and needs repressing. They say that this would probably be the most oppressed subordinate group, or the most infringed-against territorial neighbour – in other words, most likely an adjacent group.

This proximity theory can explain the relationship between Hindus and Muslims.

Moreover, due to strong family and kinship ties amongst Hindus, enmity felt by parents becomes a heritage that is handed down from the period of infancy and childhood (Kakar, 1995, p.39).

Such handed down Hindu antagonism toward Muslims is shown in Kakar's book, *The Color of Violence*. In this book, he shows his age-old feeling of strangeness towards Muslims in narratives such as the following: "I became aware that within myself 'the Muslim' was still somewhat of a stranger."

In this way, the hostility between Hindus and Muslims is constructed over a long period, being transmitted in teaching from parents, relatives and schools. As Campbell and LeVine explain, when in-groups want to present a bad-example of groups to children, the most effectively usable example in teaching can be a tangible, nearby group of customs (Campbell and Levine, 1961, p.94). This is because we can find and experience easily and immediately the bad or infringed aspects of adjacent groups.

The negative things in ourselves that we find in the other's character and that adjacent groups have are projected onto the other and then handed down to the next generation and transformed into an exaggerated rumour thanks to its rapid spread.

Proximity is one of the factors aggravating Hindu hostility towards Muslims, since this is in the nature of emotions between individuals as well as groups.

3. Other factors

The factors invoking conflict between Hindu and Muslims include various other factors like

3.1 Muslim Assault on Hindu Idols

The cow has often been the factors of stirring up communal violence in the modern era in India (Korom, 2000, p.189). Hindus are sensitive to the theme of the cow because it is

deeply embedded in the Hindu psyche. The cow has long been a symbol that deifies faith and belief in Hindu practice, and it has thereby become one of the most well-represented idols of the Hindu religion.

The symbolic importance of the cow in India can be traced back to the Vedic period. In a Vedic creation myth, cows are related to water, which is considered to be sacred and purifying. In other words, water has a holy image and the cow takes on this holiness. The depiction of the cow during this period is that she was identified with whole of the universe. This relationship between the cow and the universe is referred to many times in the *Rigveda* as well (Jacobi, 1914, quoted in Korom, 2000, p.187). In addition, the cow was seen as complete and self-contained in the *Atharvaveda* (Korom, 2000, p.187). Therefore, the cow also represented perfection for Hindus (Ibid., p.192). Due to her pure and sacred image, cows were offered as oblations for Vedic sacrifice. In particular, the five products of the cow (i.e., milk, curd, clarified butter, urine and dung) were used as the purest substances available for ritual. With these images, it is clear that the tendency for cows to be revered as deities or inhabited by deities started to emerge a long time ago (Korom, 2000, p. 187, 192; Van der Veer, 1994, p.88).

However, the cow was still being eaten. The idea that harming or slaughtering a cow should be considered a crime arose only in the fifth century BCE – the period of the emergence of Buddhism and Jainism – because of the notion of *ahimsa* (Korom, 2000, p.188).¹⁶

From 1880 to 1920 during the colonial period, the Hindu Cow Protection Movement grew up because there was a need to use the sacred image of the cow to unite the community. Right wing Hindu nationalists highlighted the importance of the cow, depicting Muslims as barbaric and dirty due to their consumption of beef.

16 Ahimsa is a term meaning to do no harm, non harming or nonviolence http://www.sanskrit.org/www/Hindu%20Primer/nonharming_ahimsa.html (accessed on 24th July, 2012). Ahimsa means kindness and non-violence towards all living things including animals. It became an basis of important tenet of Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism. Mohandas Gandhi strongly emphasized on this principle http://news.blaze.com/story/20071014111738_kuma.nb/topstory.html, (accessed on 24th July, 2012)

A publication of the VHP emphasises the importance of the cow, not only from the religious point of view as an object of worship and a symbol of Mother India but also from a practical point of view as a useful tool in agriculture and nutrition, thus promoting the cow as a means of developing the country (Hansen, 1999, p.104). Such efforts on the part of the VHP to promote the cow can also be seen in their tribal missionary activities. By teaching the usefulness of cow products such as milk and dung, they want to convince tribals to start to have faith. This missionary activity can be seen as a kind of cultural narcissism (Ibid).

Cows are a taboo in the Hindu psyche, registering on an emotional level. Because of its universality, taboo belongs to a deep level of the psyche and it can take many forms (O'Doherty, 1960, p.131). For example, there is a taboo on certain foods. According to Fortes (1966), the taboo on eating the totem animal is fundamental and is commonly presented in all the literature of the area. Therefore, a taboo on certain foods and related myths has come down through the generations. The ban on eating often functions as a daily reminder of identity with respect to other individuals and to society in general (Ibid).

In this respect, the Muslim habit of eating beef and slaughtering cows could be one of the most crucial factors in Hindu resentment of Muslims. According to Kakar (1995), Muslim beef eating and Hindu repulsion of the practice creates a prominent barrier between the two communities. Hindus cannot share a meal with Muslims and consider their eating habits disgusting, making it difficult for them to be close to each other. Due to their strong aversion towards eating forbidden and tabooed foods, Hindus make an image of Muslims as animals, with characteristics including ferocity, uncontrolled sexuality and a dirtiness by inner pollution.

In 1924, the British army psychiatrist Owen Berkeley-Hill explained two main factors behind the Hindu-Muslim conflict. The first was the 'motherland complex' of Hindus, referring to the rape of the motherland – Bharat Mata – during the Muslim conquest of India. The second obstacle he mentioned was the Muslim slaughter of cows. According to Berkeley, the acts of Muslims violate Hindu taboo; cow slaughter is understood as

showing off Muslim victories, and it could be a major factor behind Hindu hatred of Muslims (Ibid, p.140). In other words, Hindu anger is derived basically from this Muslim assault on their lifestyle and on their idols (Ibid, p.27).

This Hindu disgust at Muslim eating of beef is shown in many Hindus narratives. For Pardis, beef eating is the most grave sin – over and above marriage to a Muslim or conversion to Islam (Kakar, 1995, p.139). In Pardis' interview:

Bada gosht (beef) is their favorite dish. If any of us even touches it he must have a bath. All Muslims eat bada ghost. That is why we keep ourselves away from them. We do not even drink water in their homes (quoted in Kakar, 1995, p.139).

In fact, from the 19th century, there has been a ceaseless effort against cow slaughter in the Hindu nationalist movement. Similarly, during the Ramjanmabhoomi movement, the following slogan was written on the wall: 'It is the religious duty of every Hindu to kill those who kill cows' (Nandy et al., 1995, p.53). Whenever Hindus face a crisis, they recall the importance of the close relationship between Hindus and the cow and thereby increase the feeling of fury in Hindu emotions regarding Muslim eating of beef and slaughtering of cows.

However, Hindus do not feel as much hostility towards Christians – who also kill cows – as towards Muslims. This is because they do not think Christians kill cows with the intention of insulting Hindus (Kakar, 1995, p.141). This shows Hindus' hatred of and bias against Muslims has been deep-seated for a long time in their intertwined history.

3.2 The Government's Attitude Towards Muslim

The Government's pro-Muslim attitude also increases Hindu anxiety and indignation because it makes Hindus feel left out in their homeland.

In April 1985, an important judgement by the Supreme Court of India – the so-called Shah Bano case – gave Hindus a shock. It resulted in social reverberations and sectarian debate on the position of the Muslim minority in Indian society.

The story began with a Muslim woman Begum Shah Bano who had been divorced by her husband in 1975 after 43 years of marriage. She filed a suit claiming her right to maintenance under Section 125 of the Criminal Procedure Code, which applies to all communities regardless of their separate personal laws. The case was finally decided by the Supreme Court in April 1985 in favour of Begum Shah Bano. This Supreme Court judgement triggered a country-wide reaction and also questioned the legal practice which allows separate civil laws for the various religious communities and argued for a uniform civil code (Berglund, 2004, p.1067). In fact, there have been few issues on which Indian Muslims have reacted so strongly since Independence (Hasan, 1989, p.44). There were strong protests by the Muslim community in support of Muslim civil laws, especially by the religious leadership. Many sections of Muslim society, including Jamait-ul-Ulema-i-Hind, the Jamait-e-Islami and the Muslim League, condemned the judgement and formed a movement in the name of interference in Muslim Personal Law. Their basic argument was that no legislative or executive authority could alter Muslim Personal Law because it was based on the Shariah, which is divine and immutable. By referring to the Shariah as a central symbol, they intended to preserve Muslim identity and make an idiom for integration (Ibid, p.44, 45). Through this movement, Muslim aimed to protect their identity and minority position. In fact, the Muslim demand for restoring Muslim Personal Law was a moment that showed their ability to maintain solidarity in the community. For this reason, Hindus could not help feeling threatened, observing Muslims' immediate group cohesion.

At the same time, Hindu nationalists acclaimed the Supreme Court's decision and fiercely criticised the Rajiv Gandhi government when it nullified the verdict by introducing The Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act 1986, which upheld Muslim Personal Law.

This intervention by the Indian government was based on the assumption that the majority of Muslims were unhappy with the judgement made by the Supreme Court, considering it to be a threat to their religious identity. This effort to appease Muslim indignation was made under the ideology of secularism, which intends to protect all religions (Ibid, p.47, 48).

It provoked strong resistance among Hindus. Hindus condemned the Government's decision, describing it as "abject surrender to Muslim fundamentalism"(Puri, 1993, p.2146). Most of the backlash was led by the BJP. The BJP attempted to mobilise Hindu sentiment by arguing that the Shah Bano episode would reopen Muslims reservations about joining the mainstream in India and by saying that the Government's policy demonstrated partiality for the appeasement of Muslims (Ibid.).

The party argued that its demands were not related to its anti-Muslim propensity, but that they were based on the need for the principle of equal treatment. However, its argument just presented the intolerant attitude of Hindus – who cannot accept minorities – and the Hindu nationalist ideal of cultural nationalism (Berglund, 2004, p.1067).

This Hindu sentiment in the Shah Bano case was also seen in interviews of Hindus. They expressed this “unfair treatment” as “behaving like a stepmother toward the other” (Kakar, 1995, p.136). According to Kakar, the bitter complaints of Hindus about the Government are connected to the psychology of “collective sibling rivalry, of the group-child's envy and anger at the favoring of an ambivalently regarded sibling by the parent” (Ibid., p.137).

The threat felt by Hindus also included the fear of fast growing Muslim power in the subcontinent. Hindus felt it was unfair because Muslims were favoured and supported by the state in India as well as in Pakistan. In other words, the growing assertion of Muslims within the country and the Islamic resurrection in the Muslim world increased Hindu resentment in their consciousness (Puri, 1993, p.2146).

Therefore, the Shah Bano case strengthened Hindu determination to continue Hindu-Muslim riots so long as the Government continues to mollify Muslims and makes rules against the Hindu majority.

In conclusion, this chapter has looked into the causes of the conflict between Hindus and Muslims by analysing the reasons behind the strong Hindu hostility towards Muslims.

The most prominent psychological factor is Chosen Trauma. Hindu nationalists have constantly talked about how they were hurt in the Mughal era referring to how many people were killed by Muslims and how they indiscriminately destroyed Hindu temples. In addition, it has also been argued that their wound derived from their idea that Bharat Mata was ripped up by Partition in 1947. They have argued that Partition was unfair to Hindus, saying “we gave Pakistan to Muslims, but the remainder is for us” (Ko et al., 2006).

These historical wounds have become Chosen Trauma and this has been one of the crucial factors in bringing about constant communal violence, which reached its peak with the demolition of the Babri Masjid. The correlation between the destruction of the Babri Masjid and the trauma of the past was well presented in Hindu use of historical myth and symbols.

They legitimised their action and strengthened Hindu group cohesion in the Ramjanabhoomi movement and the construction of the Rama temple, depicting Muslims as barbaric foreigners and others, as well as despising the past of Muslims. In this process, historical places have been turned into holy and mythologised venues, and these myths have been romanticised and a fabricated past has become truth.

The use of historical trauma has not just ended in lamentation or grief for the old days, but has instead become a means of enhancing their political position. The Ayodhya event, which was the climax of the conflict between Hindus and Muslims, broke out as a result of this situation.

However, it is not only Muslims who are alien to Hindus. India was ruled by the British and actually Partition of India and Pakistan occurred under the influence of British colonial policy. So why do Hindus have the most serious antagonism toward Muslims and Islam, not towards Christians and the British?

It is suggested that the proximity factor provides an answer to this question from the psychological perspective. In the psychology of nationalism, nearer and larger groups are more threatening than more distant and smaller groups in intergroup relations. Applying this argument to the relationship between Hindus and others, it would be expected that Hindus would feel more threatened by Muslims and Islam than by Christianity and the British because geographically Muslims live closer than the British and they have interacted closely with Hindus for a much longer time. In this way, the existence of Muslims in the homeland is the biggest intimidatory factor for Hindus because it is easier to counter the influence or bad aspects of Muslim.

Hindu consideration of Muslims as iconoclast because of their habit of eating beef and killing cows and the Indian government's pro-Muslim attitude were offered as additional factors provoking Hindu enmity. This psychology created by particular historical events as described above means that Hindus cannot help being more hostile towards Muslims than towards others. Undoubtedly this hostility has been main culprit in evoking serious communal violence between the two communities.

The question then is what psychology Hindus use for mobilising their group appeal and achieving their goal – to defeat Muslims – in the militarised communal conflict between them that has been going on since the 1980s? The next chapter will examine how Hindus defend and secure their identity in the globalised context.

Chapter III

Using Psychology to Enhance Hindu Group Identity in the Context of Modernisation and Globalisation

Personality changes with the onset of modernisation and globalisation, especially with regard to the security of identity and identity formation, since globalisation and modernisation can be menacing forces for individuals – they may feel previously inexperienced threats in this new environment.

According to Barker (1999, p.35), modernity is ‘an uncontrollable engine of enormous power that sweeps away all that stands before it’. With regard to characteristics in the changed situation between the pre-modern and modern, Vanaik (1997) questions the relationship between communalism and modernity. We may find an answer in the construction of contemporary Hindu nationalism. Kakar (1995) claims that the current religious revivalism or fundamentalism in India is a phenomenon that results from a reaction against modernity. During the modernisation process, many people feel new emotions while adjusting to the new environment. Among these new emotions, the feeling of loss is the most common. Individuals can easily experience the feeling of loss because modernisation eliminates old attachments as a result of population movements including continuous migration and wipes out traditional identities.

Globalisation also contributes to making people feel the emotion of alienation. As society changes rapidly and the boundaries of territories become vague, people want to secure their identity to get rid of existential anxiety about global forces. Modernisation and globalisation give rise to feelings of insecurity and people try to overcome such feelings of insecurity by searching for new secure identities (Kinvall, 2006).

The sudden rise of Hindu nationalism since the 1980s is also related to the influence of globalisation and modernisation. With the maelstrom of domestic politics resulting from

the misuse of ethnic and religious identities in party politics, Hindu nationalism has tried to firmly establish Hindu identity in the context of globalisation and modernisation. In other words, the socio-psychological change processes of individuals and groups as a consequence of modernisation and globalisation are closely related to the reason for mobilising and creating a new Hindu identity. Therefore, we can say that the emergence of forceful and militant Hindu nationalism is one way of strengthening the security of their identity in a rapidly changing world.

From the perspective of nationalism, the more a group's members share – such as language, religion and common historical origin – the greater is the nationalism of the group. Also, the greater the group nationalism: 1) the greater is the group homogeneity of attitudes, beliefs and ways of behaving; 2) the greater is the group cohesiveness; and 3) the greater are the pressures for homogeneity and cohesiveness (Rosenblatt, 1964, p.137, 140).

In accordance with this general theory about nationalism and group cohesiveness, Hindu nationalists in the context of globalisation since the 1980s have attempted to firm up their identity to increase group cohesiveness – dreams of creating a homogeneous India as a Hindu nation – using various psychological strategies. The most important of these strategies is the clear demarcation between the self and the other by abjection of the other, which will be discussed in the first part of this chapter. Deepened Hindu hostility towards Muslims as a result of Chosen Trauma is sharpened as a result of the boundary between the Hindu-self and the Muslim-other. The definite distinction between the self and the other is a natural process in the formation of individual and group identity. Hindu nationalists use this psychology to assert their group identity.

The second part will consider Hindu nationalists' strategy of emphasising group superiority and group loyalty to increase self-esteem, by inculcating prejudice and implanting bad images of the other in the process of drawing a distinction between the self and the other.

Finally, we will examine the Sangh Parivar's method of mobilising Hindu group solidarity through the reinterpretation of history and myth, and through the mythical and historical invention of symbols, as expressed in events related to the destruction of the Babri Masjid – in which they drastically showed their homogeneous ideology of cultural nationalism.

In this way, this chapter aims to look into how Hindu nationalists protect their identity from the new threat of globalisation, with reference to the historical events we have already dealt with in the previous chapter, especially in terms of their psychological strategies such as the abjection of the other and the manipulation of history.

1. Clear Boundary between “Us” and “Other”

Category formation in the construction of identity is a natural instinct for all human beings. Examining the process of the construction of the self and the other in detail, firstly, the individual accepts and creates the self by defining himself or herself in relation to others, perceiving similarities and differences between the self and the other. This process of division between the self and the other in the individual is also adopted and proceeds to the production of group formation (Kinvall, 2002, 2006).

This psychology of category formation to resist the other is also used by Hindu nationalists in strengthening group identity in the context of globalisation. Many narratives and propaganda works prove their intention to clearly divide the Hindu-self and the Muslim-other.

According to Tajfel's (1981) social identity theory, individuals tend to favour their own group (in-group) in relation to other groups (out-group) because groups offer their members self-esteem by giving group members a sense of belonging. For that reason, group members try to elevate the status of the in-group in relation to the out-group. In this way, the group in relation to the other and the role the other plays in its discourse is important for group existence (Hogg and Abrams, 1988; Kinvall, 2006, Tajfel and Turner, 1979).

As has already been mentioned, the formation of the other is an innate process for human beings and group members inherently tend to classify groups as in-groups and out-groups through learning from their birth and early experience. Individuals move from self to other-orientation over time, meaning that individuals are socialised. In this regard, Ross (1991, p.177) states that "sociality promotes ethnocentric conflict, furnishing the critical building block for in-group amity and out-group hostility."

In this process, what the self experiences as negative and unfavourable is projected onto the other and this makes the image of the other dehumanised, strange, alien and externalised from us. It means that the stranger or the foreigner is commonly perceived as negative. George Simmel (1971), refers to the stranger as the sociologically marginal (cited in Kinvall, 2006, p. 44)

Like Simmel, Oommen (1994), (as cited by Kinvall, 2006, p.46) also refers to the foreigner and the stranger, classifying others in four categories. The first is 'the equal other', who is different but not subservient to the self. The second category is 'the internal other', which refers to marginalised groups such as women or certain established immigrants. The third group consists of 'unacceptable' societal groups like homosexuals or particular religious groups. Finally, 'the outsider, the non-equal other' constitutes the fourth category, which may include non-established immigrants or religious groups of foreign origin. The last category is considered to be essentially different from the other three categories because the members of the other three categories are likely to exist within the system, while members of the last are not.

It seems as though this fundamental prejudice against the foreigner and the stranger stems from differences in religion and culture. This prejudice, derived from differences in cognition, mostly brings about xenophobia, ethnocentrism, anti-semitism and racism, even more so when one group holds more power and resources and uses 'differences' to control and marginalise others (Ibid, p.47).

From the 1920s, which is the period of the emergence of the Hindutva ideology and the creation of the Sangh Parivar, this stigmatisation of the other has been a key means of mobilising Hindu identity and group power. Hindu militants including the VHP and the RSS have taken the lead in generating strong feelings of hostility towards the ‘threatening other’ as well as in stigmatising it (Jafflerot, 1999, p.201).

Speeches of BJP members during the *rath yatra* also demonstrate the clear boundary between Hindus and Muslims, referencing hostility derived from the historical past:

“Are you children of Babar or Ram, Akbar or Rana Pratap, Auranzeb or Shivaji? Those who do not answer this question properly have no right to be in this country”. (Padmanabhan and Sidhva, 1990, Quoted in Davis, 2005, p.37).

Although over 90 percent of Indian Muslims are in fact descendants of indigenous converts, we can see from the above that Hindu nationalists try to totally exclude Muslims from national citizenship (Ludden, 2005, p.37). On further examination, it is clear that this Hindu clear-cut demarcation of the Muslim as the other is influenced by families and by their own group from childhood while accumulating the in-group’s ‘emotional investment’ in bad images of Muslims (Kakar, 1995, p.54).

The construction of the other is becoming more necessary in the context of globalisation because people feel their identity is under greater threat. In these new circumstances, abjection becomes the main process in collective identity formation because when the familiar stranger is suddenly recognised as a threat, it occurs more easily (Kinvall, 2006, p.78). The process of ‘othering’ is essential to feel security and protection in times of rapid change such as globalisation. Nationalism and religion help in the process by debasing the other (Ibid). Furthermore, “nationalism and religion both provide the idea of a ‘home’, it is easy to give protection and security from the stranger and the abject-other” (Kinvall, 2006, p.79). Therefore, nationalism and religion become more powerful in times of crisis by providing unity, security and a sense of belonging and thereby arouse deep attachments towards religious and national identity (Ibid, p.79).

In this sense, the emergence of militant Hindu nationalism since the 1980s can be seen as the result of strengthening Hindu solidarity to cope with threat of globalisation. In this process, Hindu extremists have accused those who are not included in the Hindu family – especially Muslims – of being foreigners and not of Indian origin, as well as projecting their unwanted features onto them. Ultimately, they have tried to construct a majoritarian religious nationalism, which is always defined in negative terms, by stressing only ‘Hindu’ identity as a trump card identity and ignoring other identity construction (Ibid., p.105). Such a pursuit of Hindu majoritarianism is accomplished through the clear demarcation of the self and the demonised other.

Summing up, as was discussed in the first chapter, Hindu nationalists started drawing clear boundaries with Muslims from the 1920s when the ideology of Hindutva was created by Savarkar. The perception of the Muslim as the other and a stranger has been developed since they feel intimidated by Muslims as a result of the trauma of the Mughal conquest and the Partition of India and Pakistan. This is based on the theory that the othering process in the formation of individual and group identity is more present in moments of crisis. Accordingly, Hindu nationalists have fixed stronger boundaries between the Hindu-self and the Muslim-other since the 1980s as threats to both society and politics have emerged due to domestic and international changes, including globalisation and modernisation.

This clear boundary between Hindus and Muslims was a useful psychological strategy during the destruction of the Babri Masjid, which represents the climax of the conflict between Hindus and Muslims. They intensified fear and hatred towards Muslims by dredging up trauma from the Mughal Empire in addresses during the procession to Ayodhya and presented savagery and brutality as traits of Muslims as well as of Islam itself, in particular criticising Muslim consumption of beef. This Hindu nationalist demonisation of Muslims is associated with the theory that when group leaders want to increase group nationalism, they often exploit fear or hatred of out-groups.

In this way, the demarcation of the self and the other by ceaselessly comparing tolerant Hindus and intolerant, barbarous Muslims has been the most effective psychological strategy in strengthening Hindu group cohesion in Hindu nationalism in the rapid changes of the globalisation context.

2. Intense Group Loyalty and Group Superiority

Group narcissisms, a feeling of civilisational superiority and the different religious faiths have also contributed to amplifying the quarrel between Hindus and Muslims. Hindus are anxious that Muslim loyalty is to Islam rather than the Indian state, as we can assume from its slogans “Babar ki santan, jao Pakistan (children of Babar, go to Pakistan)”. The rise of Muslim power in the subcontinent makes Hindu nationalists fear for their status, so they have attempted to intensify Hindu group loyalty and build themselves up.

The Sangh Parivar is an example of the attempt to create a vision of the “grandiose self” of Hindu culture and spirit, while degrading that of Muslims. The saffron flag and saffron colour are regarded as the symbols of the Hindu nationalist movement and also means of expressing their superiority by marking Hindu areas and also putting them on Muslim tombs and mosques. They have shown their veneration of the flag in religious rituals and processions, considering it a symbol of ideological integration (Hansen, 1999, p.108).

Such group superiority and group loyalty arises from feelings of attachment towards the group. These feelings are important psychological constituents in the construction of nationalism because they strengthen the sense of belonging and thereby increase group superiority and loyalty (Druckman, 1994,; Brock & Atkinson, 2008).

For this reason, group leaders desire to increase the nationalism of the group and share more in-group members to enhance attachment to the group. One Hindu nationalist strategy is also associated with this theory – their promotion of Sanskrit as a national symbol. Since language is one of the most important factors in delimiting a national or ethnic group (Rosenblatt, p.137; Freud, 1960, p.65), they have used Sanskrit as a tool to demarcate Hindus and Muslims as well as a symbol of unity and devotion. The prayers of the RSS *shakhas* are performed in Sanskrit and they consistently stress the significance of “harmony, culture, *dharma*, self-perfection through selfless service to society”. In the colloquial style of the RSS, they express affection for the nation and the Hindu group

using words like “devotion”, “love”, “attachment”, “commitment”, and “service” (Hansen, 1999, p.109).

It seems as though this Hindu nationalist strategy comes from the theory that the more alike people are, the easier it is to engender loyalty and cohesion. Also, conversely, the stronger the loyalty, the more people have similar views and support similar strategies (Druckman, 1994, p.50), so they have also tried to increase loyalty to unite the group as well as to make Hindus more homogeneous.

Group loyalty and cohesion increase “group-think”. Members of the group start to excessively protect their group and not accept any facts counter to their own image of the group (Ibid, p.56). This can make in-group members have narrow views and thereby create out-group bias as well as overestimations of and overconfidence in their own vis-à-vis the other group. Furthermore, it arouses emulation and animosity towards the other group. This in-group bias encourages in-group members to create their own world and place themselves in that world.

According to Tajfel’s social identity theory (1981), an individual’s self-esteem is more enhanced by making a positive comparison between his or her own and another group. In this process, they think they are better than another group. In other words, to distinguish one’s own group from others is the most essential process in increasing self-esteem and loyalty. This process makes people feel positive about themselves and provides a reason why one belongs to a particular group (Brock & Atkinson, 2008).

An individual’s social identity is intimately connected to the status of the groups to which he or she belongs. Nationalism links an individual’s self-esteem to the esteem in which the nation is held because people can obtain a sense of identity and self-esteem through their national identification (Brock & Atkinson, 2008; Druckman, 1994). Accordingly, people are motivated to support the goal of the country and want to increase the value of the nation in order to increase their self-esteem. Therefore, since an individual’s self-identity is determined depending on to which group he or she belongs, in-group members

strive to increase self-esteem by projecting bad images onto other groups and creating prejudice.

Such an individual's loyalty to a group is important because it leads to collective action and antagonism towards other groups. According to Druckman (1994, p.49, 57), group loyalty can cause intergroup conflict, justification of one's own behaviour and a lack of good thoughts about others. In addition, in-group bias, competition and hostility can also follow. When members of a group arrive at a consensus on the strategy or goal, these groups become more hostile and competitive towards other groups.

In particular, in the case of militant groups, they are often formed in two situations: when an existing group experiences a sense of loss of identity in times of rapid change like war, urbanisation, migration or modernisation; and when leaders can transform this experience into a positive if desperate projection of affection onto themselves and an ideological cause that can produce a collective 'grandiose self' – a community organised around the enjoyment of a shared secret, an inexpressible core or spirit (Hansen, 1999, p.107, 108). Militant groups need stronger cohesion, so they tend to more strongly demonise others.

The militant Hindu nationalism that has emerged since the 1980s, as is clear in the strategy and narratives of the Sangh Parivar, has stressed the 'grandiose of self' and 'superior to other' by means of the projection of prejudices onto the other and a clear demarcation of Muslims. Although the feeling of group superiority and the grandiosity of the self is part of the natural process of individual and group identity formation, this strategy in militant Hindu nationalism is not just used to increase self-esteem but also exploited as a weapon to justify their violence against Muslims.

In this way, the emphasis on group superiority and group loyalty is a crucial psychological tactic for Hindu nationalists with the desire to create a homogeneous Hindu identity as well as to establish a stable status for Hindus in the face of the threat embodied by the scramble – accelerated since the onset of globalisation – for resources.

3. Re-interpretation of History and Myth

The Sangh Parivar has steadily drawn the past of history and myth into its efforts to unite Hindu identity using a clear demarcation of the other and emphasising group superiority and loyalty by discriminating against the other. This strategy of the Sangh Parivar can clearly be seen both before and after the destruction of the Babri Masjid in 1992.

As seen in many debates on Indian history between secular and Hindu-front historians, since the emergence of Hindu nationalism in the 19th century, Hindu nationalists have constantly made an effort to reinterpret the past by fostering historians and archaeologists who can support their assertions officially. Debates on Indian history are especially problematic in elementary and high school texts. The BJP has tried to write textbooks with the aim of glorifying the Hindu past and denouncing the Mughal era in Indian history, renaming Indian cities and regions, and forging a relationship between the Hindu religion, national identity and citizenship (Kinvall, 2006, p.139).

The purpose of manipulating history is to make their history splendid through searching for chosen glory and glorifying their cultural, historical memory.

Myths are frequently used not only for constructing and mobilising an identity group, but also for constructing the other (Ibid, 59). According to Hansen (1999, p.90), the purpose of the founding myth is first to demonstrate to followers and potential supporters that the movement is still worth endorsing, and secondly to realise and perform the vision the movement is seeking permanently and thus create “a sort of counterculture, a counterlanguage, a counterinterpretation of history” (Ibid, p. 90).

As argued by Coningham and Lewer (2000, as cited in Kinvall, 2006, p.59), verifying archaeology and historical evidence is a key process when the solidarity of an identity is needed. For this reason, more manipulation and reinterpretation of historical and archaeological evidence to advocate claims and rights for some identity group occurs in situations of violent conflict. Such manipulation is more viable if mass education and

mass media of communication exist. Therefore, many nationalist leaders often interfere in the field of education or mass communication to consolidate their group identity (Hayes, 1926), and Hindu nationalists are no exception.

This section will show how Hindu nationalists manipulate and reinterpret history, myth and symbols through mass education and mass media to consolidate their group identity. It will look first at the strategy of the VHP/RSS using symbols in the *yatra* processions that preceded the demolition of the Babri Masjid, and second at Hindu nationalists' new application of old symbols of "Bharat Mata". Finally, this section will consider the broadcast of the "*Ramayana*" in 1987.

3.1 The Strategy of the VHP and the RSS

Militant Hindu nationalist forces such as the VHP and the RSS have attempted to create a homogeneous Hindu identity by means of the distortion of history and the transformation of the ordinary into national symbols in *yatra* processions. In this strategy of history distortion, the ultimate aim has been to enhance self-esteem and thereby justify their present and future actions, by removing a blot and recreating their glorious past.

With relation to their aim for redescribing the past, Sen (2005, p.62-3) finds two specific characteristics of contemporary Hindu politics. The first is that Hindutva forces have become keenly aware of the importance of gathering dispersed power in their various components and mobilising fresh loyalty from potent recruits. In his opinion, their effort at creating India's history as a 'Hindu civilisation' is intended to increase the cohesiveness of the diverse members of the Sangh Parivar. The second reason is because they want to receive support from the Indian diaspora who have a general Indian nationalist attachment, particularly in North America and Europe. Hindu nationalists believe that reinventing history from a Hinduised point of view helps in mobilising support from the Indian diaspora and that their power would be the foundation from which they could change a narrow Hindu identity into a more general Indian identity.

With this purpose of rewriting history, Hindu communal forces have tried to extend their influence not only in public organisations such as the bureaucracy, police, media, the education system and the judiciary, but also at the grassroots level among children (Mukherjee et al., 2008, p.18). For many years, the RSS has taken the lead in perverting the truth of history in primary and secondary school textbooks, with its Saraswati Shishu Mandirs¹⁷ and Vidya Bharati primary and secondary schools, and its *shakhas*. The major content of their history distortions include disparagement of Muslims and Christians and descriptions of the medieval period as one of the great dark ages in Indian history, while elevating the Hindu civilisation. For example, one of the textbooks in use at the primary level portrays the rise of Islam in the following manner:

Wherever they went, they had a sword in their hand. Their army went like a storm in all the four directions. Any country that came that was destroyed. Houses of prayers and universities were destroyed. Libraries were burnt. Religious books were destroyed. Mothers and sisters were humiliated. Mercy and justice were unknown to them (Extracts from Gaurav Gatha Gatha for Class IV, 1992, quoted in Mukherjee et al., 2008, p.23)

Delhi's Qutb Minar is even today famous in his (Qutbuddin Aibak's) name. This had not been built by him. He could not have been able to build it. It was actually built by emperor Samudragupta. Its real name was Vishnu Stambha...This Sultan actually got some parts of it demolished and its name was changed (Ibid.)

In this way, Hindu communal groups have spread groundless untruths, such as that the Qutab Minar was built by Samudragupta, in the name of spreading patriotism. Looking into this matter, the National Steering Committee on Textbook Evaluation came to the conclusion that "the main purpose which these books would serve is to gradually transform the young children into...bigoted morons in the garb of instilling in them patriotism" (Mukherjee & Mukherjee, 2001, p.33).

Another example of the Vidya Bharati Sansthan publications also shows the efforts of Hindu forces to spread communal and chauvinistic cultural nationalism, and the

¹⁷ The influence of Saraswati Shishu Mandirs, the first of which was started in 1952 in the presence of the RSS chief, M.S. Golwalkar, has now multiplied manifold. It will be in order, to first examine what these 'Mandirs' or 'temples' of learning dish out in the name of education (Mukherjee et al., 2008, 20).

legitimation of the policies of the RSS among the young generation. In these books, India is portrayed with narcissistic expressions such as the 'original home of world civilisation' (Mukherjee et al., 2008, p.25).

India is the most ancient country in the world. When civilization had not developed in many countries of the world, when people in those countries lived in jungles naked or covering their bodies with the bark of trees or hides of animals, Bharat's Rishis-Munis brought the light of culture and civilization to all those countries. (extracts from the report on the publications of Vidya Bharati No.9, quoted in Mukherjee et al., 2008, p.25)

The following are some of the examples of their illogical claims of 'Hindu civilisation as the cradle of world civilisation':

- i) India is the mother country of ancient China. Their ancestors were Indian Kshatriyas...
- ii) The first people who began to inhabit China were Indians.
- iii) The first people to settle in Iran were Indians (Aryans).
- iv) The popularity of the great work of the Aryans-Valmiki's *Ramayana*- influenced Yunan (Greece) and there also the great poet Homer composed a version of the *Ramayana*.
- v) The languages of the indigenous people (Red Indians) of the northern part of America were derived from ancient Indian languages.
(extracts from the report on the publications of Vidya Bharati No.9, quoted in Mukherjee et al., 2008, p.25)

This chauvinistic view is also presented with regards to the origin of Aryans. In order to separate Muslims and Christians from "us" and treat them as strangers, the RSS argues in these textbooks that 'Aryans', whom the RSS regards as true Indians, did not migrate from outside India but originated in India (Mukherjee et al., 2008, p.31).

This attack by Hindu nationalists on the view of secular history began after 1977, when the Jana Sangh took power for the first time in the Indian government. They tried to prohibit the contributions of some respected historians to school textbooks for the National Council of Education, Research and Training (NCERT), but these moves were defeated thanks to a national protest movement (Mukherjee & Mukherjee, 2001, p.33). However, on the coming to power of the BJP as leaders of the coalition government at the

Centre in 1998, the RSS achieved their goal not only in 14,000 Vidya Bharati schools with 80,000 teachers and 1,800,000 students but also in other institutions such as universities, schools, colleges and even the University Grants Commission (UGC) (Mukherjee et al., 2008, p. 28-9).

Besides these distortions of history in school textbooks, the VHP/RSS have attempted another strategy to mobilise Hindu identity in the destruction of the Babri Masjid by using symbols and historical distortions related to the event.

Regarding the forgotten issue of the Ayodhya site, the VHP wanted to reignite the old dispute of the liberation of Rama's birthplace as one of national significance (Ludden, 2005, p.39). Instead of the general religious belief that the mosque occupies the place on which Rama was born, the VHP went further by asserting that a temple on the birthplace had been demolished by Muslims and replaced by a mosque. They attempted to make the local tradition that Babar's general had destroyed a temple built on Rama's birthplace into the real history of the Hindu_nation (Van der Veer, 1994, p.160). Such a strategy of clear demarcation of Muslims as foreigners and demonised aggressors is expressed in Ludden's narrative that "Rama and the original temple represented a dehistoricized Hindu utopia, while Babar and his mosque represented the Muslim invasions that brought the Rama-rajya to an end and began a series of oppressive foreign occupations" (Davis, 2005, p.48-9). In this way, in the temple liberation project, the VHP constantly employed anti-Muslim rhetoric, at the same time as trying to develop Hindu unity.

In 1983, under the leadership of the VHP, with its slogan of "sacrifice for unanimity", the Ekatmata Yatra launched three processions with the aim of ethno-religious mobilisation. These covered vast swathes of the country – from Kathmandu in Nepal to Rameshwaram in Tamil Nadu, from Gangasagar in Bengal to Somnath in Gujarat, and from Hardiwar in Uttar Pradesh to Kanyakumari in Tamil Nadu – distributing water from the Ganges and refilling their tanks with holy water. These actions were intended to symbolise Hindu unity (Jaffrelot, 1999, p.360).

Until then, the only symbol that had been used for political mobilisation was the cow (Ibid, p.361). However, with the Ekatmata Yatra, the VHP intended to invent new symbols associated with traditional religious rituals, texts and gods for the purpose of mobilising larger Hindu unity. One epoch-making icon the VHP created was a depiction of the baby Rama in which the cherubic child was held prisoner in a Muslim religious institution on the site of his birth. It was intended to arouse “maternal devotion from those who would nurture the young reincarnation of Hindu nationhood”, while “the aggressive warrior young Rama served as a militant role model for Hindus taking control of their homeland” (Davis, 2005, p.41). The creation of the new symbol of the baby Rama seems to be important from the point of view of arousing devotional sentiment by dragging in family imagery as a metaphor (Ibid.).

In the Ekatmata Yatra, the VHP utilised two other tangible symbols – the Ganges and Mother India – in the form of divinities. According to the statement of the senior VHP official in charge of this programme, these two figures were very carefully selected (Jaffrelot, 1999, p.360). The VHP tried to make the selected symbols be seen as deities – in the case of the Ganges, her water contains the power to purify from sin and to give salvation. Before this *yatra*, the Ganges had hardly been used as a venerated symbol by Hindus. However, it became a symbol of national unity as a “sacred geographical entity” (Davis, 2005, p.40) as well as a “pan-Indian reservoir of holy water” (Ibid.), identified with the figure of Mother India (Jaffrelot, 1999, p.361).

The VHP also resurrected *bhakti* rituals and the fundamental text of Hinduism – the *Bhagavad Gita* – to integrate all Hindus regardless of caste and sects by arousing devotionism (Ibid). During the processions of the temple chariots, the VHP made brand new trucks symbolising the militant war chariot of Arjuna in the *Bhagavad Gita*, while each of the three main processions was named after its chariots referred to as gods and saints (Van der Veer, 1994, p.125).

In this way, the RSS/VHP have striven for the consolidation of Hindu identity and the extension of its power through interference in education at the grassroots level and

utilising symbols with the intention of integrating all castes and sects. Their selected symbols are mainly taken from nature, traditional religious myth or Mother India to represent geographical and genealogic unity.

In the next section, we will look into the metaphor of Mother India, which is often used as a symbol in the strategy of Hindu nationalists.

3.2 Metaphor of the body

Embodying India as Mother is an old tradition in the subcontinent. This is the way India was presented in newspapers and novels at the time of the emergence of Indian nationalism, and it has become common practice thereafter (Chakrabarty, 1999, p.205).

The link with Mother has deep psychological and cultural roots (Bose, 1997, p.54). According to the British army psychiatrist Owen Berkeley-Hill's paper in 1924, as explained briefly in Chapter Two, one of the causes of the residual bitter feelings between Hindus and Muslims is Hindus' motherland complex, according to which their motherland – Bharat Mata – was violated by the Muslim conquest of India (Kakar, 1995, p.140). In effect, the relationship between nation and gender has been involved in nationalism for a long time. Therefore, we need to take into account the metaphor of Bharat Mata as well as religious nationalism discourse and the female body.

The image of Bharat Mata was first used with the start of nationalism in the colonial period. However, its primary aim has been changed to the form of exploitation of communal forces with the intention of mobilising resources from nationalism (Jha, 2004). The metaphoric feminisation of the nation became well known with the cow protection movement between 1880 and 1920, in which the mother cow became an object of veneration and a new symbol of the Hindu nation. Also, Bankim Chattopadhyay contributed to popularising the image of Bharat Mata by expressing the Hindu nation as mother, an object of worship, benevolence and protection (Hansen, 1999, p.112). In his text, he expressed the changing figure of mother over time, from 'mother as she was in

the past' to 'mother in the present' and 'mother as she will become in the future'. He alluded to the figure of mother as a religious goddess – her present form is Kali, a benevolent mother goddess, and the final image is Durga, the ten-armed mother and the representative of feminine power.

This embodiment of the nation as mother emerged against colonisation from the late 19th century, but has become much more complex in the 20th century. After the *swadeshi* period, the image of Bharat Mata changed from a goddess figure to a housewife and mother, as has been presented in various novels and plays. The popular Hindi novel *Maila Anchal* shows the most well presented image of the mother suffering because of her infringed-upon national identity during the pre-and post colonial period.

The mother's feet were torn and bloodied. After seeing the mother's agony, listening to Ramkishan babu's words and hearing Tiwari ji's songs, he could not stop himself. Who could resist that pull? Tears flowing from her eyes like the waters of the Ganges and the Yamuna. Mother India sorrowing over the fate of her children? Straightaway he went to Ramkishan babu and said, "Put my name on the Suraji list" (Phaniswarnath Renu, *Maila Anchal*, 1953, quoted in Jha, 2004)

Also, Sumitranandan Pant's famous poem *Bharat Mata* offers a different vision of romantic nationalism. He considered Mother India as a woman of the soil and the Ganges and Yamuna as rivers of tears, metaphors for the sorrow of the nation (Jha, 2004).¹⁸

The symbolisation of Bharat Mata in the relationship between gender and nation was mentioned by several nationalists including Jawaharlal Nehru during the pre and post colonial period. In the era of globalisation since the 1980s, the metaphor of Bharat Mata has changed from its original aim of arousing nationalism to the exclusive usage of Hindu forces for mobilising religious nationalism.

18 This relation between the Ganges and the Mother India is used for the strategy of the VHP in the *Ekatmata yatra*, as we have seen in the previous section.

During the Ekatamat Yatra in 1983, the VHP brought the image of Bharat Mata in their chariots. In addition, it also built a Bharat Mata temple in Haridwar. This temple contains an anthropomorphic statue of its deity. Here, Bharat Mata holds a milk urn in one hand and sheaves of grain in the other, which the temple guidebook explains as "signifying the white and green revolution that India needs for progress and prosperity". The guidebook also says, "The temple serves to promote the devotional attitude toward Bharat Mata, something that historians and mythological story teller may have missed" (Jha, 2004).

These exertions of the VHP to employ the image of Bharat Mata look as though they are meant to satisfy their desire to mobilise Hindu forces and justify their violence by calling on the old nationalist tradition.

The RSS has also exploited the image of Bharat Mata, as is clearly indicated in their stressing the idiom of "rape of the Motherland" by a potent and dangerous enemy – Muslim invaders. In this ideology, only RSS cadre, the "sons of Bharat", can protect the weak and powerless mother nation by organising on military lines, which makes them true males (Hansen, 1999, p.112-113). Hindu nationalists seem to bring back the symbolisation of Bharat Mata from the old nationalist tradition because they want to rationalise their actions against Muslims by giving Hindus an extreme shock like "rape of the Motherland by Muslims". This is an essential process for them to fight against and drive out Muslims, their permanent enemy, who violated the mother who gave endless and unconditional love to her children-citizens.

Such a metaphor of the nation as mother that emerged with the development of nationalism during the colonial period in India is seen as being taken from the general expression of the colonised nation, which combined nation and gender.

With the militant communalism of the Sangh Parivar, adopting this image of Bharat Mata is seen as an effective method of uniting Hindu identity by demarcating Muslims as others and enemies. Because of the continuous underpinning and displaying of these reinterpreted traditional metaphors, the embodiment of the Indian geography as Mother,

Muslims as having raped the Mother, and the RSS cadre as protecting the Mother – the Mother not as a limitless provider for her children, but as a weak woman who needs the protection of strong men – are crucial strategies employed by Hindu nationalists in ensuring their survival in periods of crisis.

3.3 Media Effect

In critical situations for the nation, nationalist leaders often use the mass media as a tool in inspiring nationalism. Hindu nationalists tried to mobilise and unite Hindu identity by broadcasting the *Ramayana* in 1987. The *Ramayana* is the story of Rama, and it is the earliest and most influential text of Hinduism, supposedly written in the first few centuries BC (Van der Veer, 1994, p.172).

Its long-standing influence on Indian literature can be seen in the fact that many authors have produced new versions or interpretations of the *Ramayana*. The earliest major vernacular retelling of the story was written in Tamil by the 12th century author Kampan. The famous poet Tulsi Das also recreated a North Indian vernacular version of the *Ramayana*. It became the Bible of North India as it was revered as the main authoritative and honourable text among Hindus (Sarkar, 2005, p.173).

During the colonial period, Gandhi also repeatedly mentioned the *Ramcharitmanas*¹⁹ in support of his political views. He urged Indians to live according to the lessons from this text to overcome poverty, untouchability and foreign rule. Gandhi's continuous emphasis on Rama and his rule greatly affected Hindus at that time (Van der Veer, 1994, p.174).

In the South also its leverage has been proved, as the leader of the Dravidian movement used the text of the *Ramayana* to attack Brahmanical hegemony (Ibid). In addition,

¹⁹ *Ramcharitmanasa*, is an epic poem in Awadhi (Indo-Aryan language) which is composed by the 16th-century Indian poet, Goswami Tulsidas (1532–1623). *Ramcharitmanas* literally means the "lake of the deeds of Rama." (Jindal 1955). The work focuses on a poetic retelling of the events of the Sanskrit epic *Ramayana*, centered on the narrative of Rama.

Aurobindo also mentioned the relationship between the influence of the *Ramayana* and Hindu nationalism: "the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* constitute the essence of Indian literature. This orientalist notion was foundational for the Hindu nationalisation of Indian civilisation." (quoted in Van der Veer, 2001, p.132).

With such authority among Hindus, a seventy-eight episode serialisation of the *Ramayana* was broadcast on national television between January 1987 and July 1988. It not only recorded the highest viewing rate ever seen on Indian television, but also had a great ripple effect in Indian society. Twenty-six video cassettes were sold worldwide, with exaggerated advertisements such as "The Greatest Indian Epic. Treasured for over 10,000 years. Enshrining Ideals That Are Ageless. Teaching Lessons That Are Timeless." (Van der Veer, 1994, p.175).

The influence of this broadcast was tremendous. It was watched by 80 to 100 million people, including people who do not understand Hindi. According to newspaper reports, Indian life looked as though it was 'on hold' during the hours the series was aired. Even untouchable sweepers in North India asserted that they inherited their spirit from Valmiki who is the alleged composer of the Sanskrit *Ramayana* and the guru of Rama (Ibid). In this way, the broadcast of the *Ramayana* on Durdarshan inspired religious belief among Hindus all over the country. The broadcast also resulted in homogenisation of understanding of the *Ramayana*, since it swept aside the different regional and political interpretations that had existed until then.

Many Indian scholars have argued that the televised version of the *Ramayana* was planned to elevate the old religious text as a national text. Undoubtedly, Hindu nationalists intended the broadcast to be used for their political objectives, in particular their desire to create a "Hindu nation" (Ibid, p.177).

Above all, it helped in achieving the VHP's long cherished wish of liberating Rama's birthplace. Even people who do not know the exact location of Ayodhya have gradually recognised it as the birthplace of Rama as well as a town in Uttar Pradesh. The broadcast

made this sacred place and Rama's life in popular imagination appear real (Kinvall, 2006, p.149). Indeed, its success produced a great emotional stir among Hindus. As they watched the *Ramayana*, they could not help becoming angry at the manipulated history of their sacred place – the birthplace of Rama – which had been demolished by Muslims. In this way, the broadcast of the *Ramayana* and the Ayodhya affair are closely connected, showing how history has been manipulated and reinterpreted through the mass media and how this has had an impact on the viewer's emotions and ideas. According to Van der Veer (1994), the surprising sensation of the broadcast made it possible to unite many millions at the same time and thereby form a religious gathering. Hence, we can assume that it is closely connected to the recent rise of Hindu religious nationalism.

As we can see from the above, the mass media including television can be used as a tool for instilling nationalist ideology in citizens, thanks to its characteristic of diffusion. Throughout the 1980s, television certainly functioned as a medium for achieving the communal ends of the saffron waves. L.K. Advani, Hindu nationalist leader of the BJP, stressed the cultural significance of the *Ramayana* (Farmer, 2005, p.108) and finally exploited the imagery of Rama as he postured like Rama in the *rath yatra* in October 1990 after the broadcast of the series. It seems as though he was conscious of the need for Hindu votes and thereby intended to unite Hindu identity by taking advantage of the tremendous success of the televised *Ramayana* for communal purposes to criticise the legitimacy of the government's secular stance.

Such an exploitation of the mass media by Hindu groups seems to indicate that political intentions are associated with the relationship between media and communalism. This also shows that the mass media is a useful means of manipulating dispersed groups.

Many scholars have argued that the serialisation of the *Ramayana* on Durdarshan played a major role in mobilising Hindu communal forces, by creating a “shared symbolic lexicon” (Van der Veer, 1994, p.177-78). With its enormous influence, people have accepted the story of the *Ramayana* as a truth rather than as a myth. In this way, the broadcast became an opportunity to pursue the building of Ram's temple. It mobilised

communal forces and legitimised the subsequent event of the destruction of the Babri Masjid by promoting a religious myth to the level of national culture and myth.

This chapter has examined the psychological strategies of Hindu nationalists in strengthening their identity in the face of globalisation and modernisation, under the assumption that the sudden rise of militant Hindu nationalism since the 1980s is related to the rapidly changing environment. In this context, people can easily get the feeling of loss or loss of attachment because various physical changes are occurring. Accordingly, nationalist leaders have tried to secure their identity by fortifying group cohesiveness and to enhance nationalism by increasing group sharing.

To this end, Hindu nationalists have employed diverse tactics. Most importantly, they have drawn clear boundaries between Hindus and non-Hindus, especially Muslims. This othering process includes attitudes such as accepting only the majority-self and not the minority-other, achieved by creating prejudices and projecting bad images onto them.

The attempt to intensify group loyalty and superiority is also one of the main strategies in enhancing Hindu group cohesiveness. Their promotion of Sanskrit is one of good example of the way in which group sharing has been increased to build up group attachment. Also, they construct prejudices of the other by applying the bad traits of the in-group to the out-group so as to increase the self-esteem of their own group. In the case of militant groups, the tendency towards demonisation of the other is more excessively present in group relations. The current Hindu nationalism has also shown this tendency towards communal conflict between Hindus and Muslims.

In addition, reinterpreted history, myth and symbol, diffused by means of education and the mass media, is always manipulated in their desire to spread chauvinistic religious nationalism. This manipulation is mainly intended to be used at the grassroots level, such as to alter textbooks in elementary schools, or to influence low castes and untouchables through the mass media.

In this sense, these strategies used by Hindu nationalists seem to be based on their intolerance and artfulness, since they only pursue majoritarianism as denying the minority and they exploit symbols which are taken from the old tradition of Indian nationalism to mobilise religious nationalism and legitimise their violence.

Chapter V

Conclusion

The dissertation has analysed psychological factors affecting the emergence of an extreme form of Hindu nationalism since the 1980s.

This aggressive and militant phenomenon, which has been known in Indian politics in the last thirty years as ‘Hindutva’ or ‘communalism’, did not appear overnight. Ever since Hindus and Muslims met with the Muslim conquest of a thousand years ago, Hindus seem to have felt hostility towards Muslims.

According to Sen (2005), Hinduism is a liberal, tolerant and receptive tradition. These characteristics are amongst the original tenets of Hinduism, so the question is why Hindu nationalists in the present day incessantly aggravate communal conflicts with Muslims rather than making an effort to narrow the distance between the two communities.

Of course, Hindu nationalism is a combination of religion and nationalism, so it cannot help but represent the traits of nationalism as well as those of religion.

The psychology of nationalism is based on “in-group favouritism”. The construction of nationalism is in large part similar and related to individual and group identity formation. In the process of constructing identity, individuals firstly cognise themselves as the ‘self’, then perceive the ‘other’ through socialisation, by means of the transmission of ways of acting and reacting learned from education and relationships with others. In this process of socialisation of individuals, people necessarily form groups and group membership becomes one of the salient traits in the definition of the self. It is referred to as individual’s ‘social identity’. People equate their status with the status of their in-group, and thus strive to increase the status of this group to enhance their own self-esteem. In-group members impute bad features to other groups, which are considered as different, and thereby create prejudices against them. These prejudices lead to and reinforce the stigmatisation of the other and an awareness that ‘us’ and ‘them’ are fundamentally different.

Such a psychology of nationalism can also be seen in the current Hindu nationalism. The background to the boom in contemporary Hindutva lies in the 19th century. Hindu nationalism originally emerged in opposition to British colonial power. It was closely linked to 'Hindu revivalism', which aimed at national integration through the rediscovery of the archaic Hindu civilisation.

Even though this period is of only indirect relevance to the current militarised Hindu nationalism, the features of the latter had already appeared then. These features include Aryanism based on primordialist thinking and an emphasis on the Vedas. The Vedic Aryanist paradigm advocated by the Arya Samaj stressed that only the descendants of Aryans were true Indians and obeyed the authority of the Vedas. Moreover, the symbol of Mother India articulated by Bankimchandra Chattopadhyaya in the Bengal renaissance was also created in this period. Thus, the manipulation of history in which today's saffron wave engages has its roots in the earliest period of Hindu nationalism from the 19th to the early 20th century.

It is from the 1920s that Hindu nationalism began to show signs of communalism, in the political chaos of colonial India. Hinduised versions of Indian nationalism and the ideology of Hindutva coexisted during this period. With such a radical form of Hindu nationalism altered from the previous period, it began to enter politics. Above all, the birth of the concept of Hindutva by Savarkar in this period could be considered crucial groundwork in the development of the ideology of later Hindu nationalism. His homogeneous nation theory was influenced by Mazzini and Fascism, and was in effect based on racism. According to this theory, if the same blood is not shared within the nation, they are foreigners or others – Muslims thus cannot become Indian. Since the emergence of Savarkar's idea, the division between the Hindu-self and Muslim-other has become clear.

Hindu nationalism from the 1980s has boosted this element of communalism with a neo-fascist and anti-pluralist vision, albeit based on the previous ideologies. This is concretely shown in the Sangh Parivar – the huge family of Hindu nationalist organisations – and

their religious nationalist project in Indian politics, culture and society. This project has been more systematically presented with globalisation. In the context of globalisation and modernisation, which replaces the old with the new, Hindus have felt keenly aware of the security of their identity and thus have displayed violent and paramilitary forms of religious nationalism.

Such a contemporary neo-fascist version of Hindu nationalism revealed its ultimate character in the destruction of the Babri Masjid in 1992. In this sense, it is worth considering the features of this event from various perspectives. Hindu communalists used diverse strategies to expose their bare resentment towards Muslims and to solidify their identity.

First, the demolition of the Babri Masjid was a ventilation of a Hindu trauma from the past. The Mughal empire of a thousand years ago remains a sore point for Hindus. Their indelible hurt has been expressed in the literature of numerous Hindu nationalists. They have highlighted the intolerant behaviour of medieval rulers to depict Muslims as a savage race, stressing only the fact that medieval rulers, including Mahmud of Ghazna or Aurangzeb, suppressed Hindus and demolished Hindu temples.

Another important historical trauma for Hindus with regard to Muslims is the Partition of Indian and Pakistan in 1947. This Hindu shock came when their idea of India as Bharat Mata, which they thought could become a Hindu rashtra after independence from the British, was destroyed.

With these Chosen Trauma, the Sangh Parivar has employed different strategies to reach its goals. Its tactics are mostly based on the exploitation of history and myth, focusing on history distortions and the expression of recreated religious symbols. Its reinterpretation of history has placed emphasis on the Aryan-Vedic paradigm started in the 19th century. Furthermore, it has attempted to disseminate rewritten history that includes disparagement of the Mughal era and only focuses on Hindus' glorified past.

Emphasis on religious symbols has also been seen, both before and after the Ayodhya incident. Due to the broadcast of the *Ramayana* in 1987, the myth of Rama has become the truth, and thereby the destruction of the Babri Masjid, which stood for the oppression and intolerance of the medieval period, and the construction of the Ram temple has been legitimised. In the *yatra*, various religious symbols including the baby Rama, the Ganges and the *Bhagavad Gita* were used. Above all, the symbolisation of Bharat Mata, which came up with Indian nationalism, was exploited with the propagation of the “rape of the Motherland by Muslims”. In this way, Hindu nationalists have used various symbols to spread the idea that “India is the country of Hindus”.

This fascistic idea seems to have resulted from intolerant thinking. In the first place, the obvious demarcation between the Hindu-self and Muslim-other demonstrates narrow-mindedness. Our consciousness instinctively includes the feeling of “otherness” because it is by constantly defining the self in relation to others that we feel stable (Weinstein and Platt, 1973). With the awareness of the other, the feeling of ambivalence also emerges from the unconscious (Babur, 1952, p.68). We perceive the other and our feeling of ambivalence depends on who we unconsciously judge to be similar to or different from us. This feeling of ambivalence and otherness in life is more clearly manifested in periods of crisis (Ibid). In this sense, the current sudden rise of Hindu nationalism, accompanied by serious communal conflict, can be seen as a means for Hindus to secure their identity against the threat of globalisation. In this process, Hindu communalists form a definite dividing line between the self and the other and instigate hatred and prejudice towards the other to improve their own self-esteem as well as to strengthen Hindu group cohesion.

Secondly, majoritarianism, which involves the complete exclusion of minority, also demonstrates intolerance. In fact, majoritarianism is the result of the wrong classification of the nation. Although a majority could be defined according to different criteria, such as class, language or political beliefs, the Hindutva family only categorises majority and minority according to a single classification – based on religion. In this way, what constitutes the ‘Indian majority’ changes with the standards adopted to classify the nation (Sen, 2005, p.55). This can be linked to what Sen refers to the ‘illusion of singularity’,

which implies perceiving a person as a member of one particular collectivity that gives one distinctive identity, rather than as a member of many different groups with diverse identities (Sen, 2006, p.45). In other words, to instigate and cultivate a singular specific identity in a group can be a weapon to instigate violence and terrorism towards another group (Sen, 2006).

In conclusion, the Hindu nationalist insistence on 'Identifying India as a mainly Hindu country' seems to have developed into an extreme form in order to solidify Hindu identity in the face of the threat of globalization that has emerged from the 1980s. On the pretext of historical agony, denunciations of the Muslim as other, without any effort to develop an in-depth understanding of them, exposes their cliquey, xenophobic and intolerant attitude. These attitudes will inevitably result in unceasing communal conflict, which will not only impede the development of the nation but also court isolation in the world.

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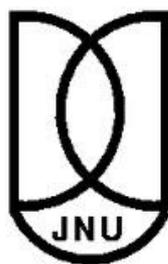
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**Past and Present of an Identity: A Study on the
Rise of Hindu Nationalism in India**

*Dissertation submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the award of the degree of*

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

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Declaration

This dissertation entitled **“Past and Present of an Identity: A Study on the Rise of Hindu Nationalism in India”** submitted by YeonJin Sang in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of **MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**, of Jawaharlal Nehru University. This Dissertation has not been previously submitted for any other degree of this University or any other University and is his original work.

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We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

Prof. Surinder S. Jodhka
(Chairperson)

Dr. A. Bimol Akoijam
(Supervisor)

Dedicated to my Parents

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July 2012, New Delhi

YeonJin Sang

Abbreviations

BJP	- Bharatiya Janata Party
BJS	-Bharatiya Jana Sangh
NCERT	- National Council of Education, Research and Training
RSS	- Rashtriyaswayamsevak Sangh
UGC	- University Grants Commision
VHP	- Vishwa Hindu Parishad

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Introduction

Nationalism can be seen as a specific type of ethnocentrism at the level of the national group, since both share the characteristic referred to as “in-group favouritism” (Brock and Atkinson, 2008). This means having a positive attitude towards an in-group and a negative attitude towards out-groups.

According to Tajfel’s social identity theory (Tajfel, 1981), an individual’s self-esteem can be enhanced by comparing their in-group and out-groups. If individuals recognise that a group identity boosts self-esteem, they identify with the group. Furthermore, individuals use intergroup bias to enhance their self-esteem. This theory can be applied to the psychology of nationalism. With religion, each religious group creates religious intergroup bias to fulfil their in-group superiority, and this develops into religious nationalism.

Hindu nationalism is a form of religious nationalism, which refers to the ideological combination of religion and nationalism. Its supporters equate it with Indian nationalism, while its opponents equate it with communalism (Zavos, 1999, p.2000). Some scholars argue that Hindu nationalism and communalism should be distinguished in terms of ideology, although the terms are often used interchangeably in modern Indian politics. It has been subject to considerable debate from the time of its emergence in India.

Hindu nationalism dates back to the late 19th century under British rule, when intellectuals were interested in the formation of modern Hindu identities. It became a distinctive ideology in the early 20th century, but according to Jaffrelot (1999), it was not clearly ‘codified’ until the 1920s. After the 1920s, Hindu nationalism developed into a form of communalism. More specifically, the communal riot emerged as a feature of Indian politics. The dialectic between Indian nationalism and communalism arose during the 1920s, and the difference between them was more clearly defined from the 1930s when Savarkar began his activities (Bhatt, 2001). This process of the transformation of Hindu nationalism into communalism involved a change from moderate to radical nationalism (Zavos, 1999, p.2000).

Hindu nationalism experienced a boom in the 1980s and 1990s, with its militant form developing and emerging successfully in the political arena, culminating in the BJP forming a minority government in 1998. In 1992, the BJP helped the Sangh Parivar succeed in Ayodhya and thus came to occupy a key position in the political arena, while Lord Rama and his epic became political icons. Subsequently, Hindu nationalism has affected Indian politics, media and popular culture (Ludden, 2005).

In other words, Hindu nationalism became a specific ideology and the base for animating contemporary Hindu nationalism from the 1920s, and it developed into its powerful militant form starting in the 1980s.

More specifically, the beginning of the Hindu nationalist ideology in the 19th and early 20th century was an elite-led Indian nationalist ideology in colonial India. At that time, the idea of Hindu nationalism was based on primordialist conceptions of Indian nationalism. Entering the 1920s, the ambiguous boundary between ‘Indian’ and ‘Hindu’ nationalism started to become distinct as the ideology of ‘Hindutva’ emerged. The birth of ‘Hindutva’ in this period is significant in the history of Hindu nationalism, since it introduced the idea that Indian nationality is based on sharing a “common” Hindu civilisation, culture, religion and race (Bhatt, 2001, p. 4).

In these early stages, the birth of Hindu nationalism was seen as an extension of the development of Indian nationalist ideology, since it was related to the national movement for liberation from British rule from the 19th to early 20th century. Therefore, the differences between these two ideologies were not so clear during this period. Jaffrelot (1999) refers to ‘ethnicity’, while other scholars argue that ‘territorial’ or ‘cultural’ nationalism can be a standard by which to distinguish between ‘Indian’ and ‘Hindu’ nationalism.

It is since the 1980s that Hindu nationalism has developed its militant form, going beyond this early and rather simply-presented ideology. More recently, Hindu nationalism has presented its project as being based on an imagined nation set against other religious communities, particularly the Indian Muslims (Zavos, 1999, p. 2270).

As has been noted by virtually every commentator, Hindu nationalism was constructed as a result of fear of external threats – before Independence, the major threats were Christian missionaries, the impact of British rule and the Mughal Empire, while they are now Muslims and globalisation. Such a construction of Hindu nationalism is not only related to a psychological process of stigmatising others, but also represents a defensive strategy. This Hindu psychology includes the process of redefining Hindu identity against these ‘threatening others’, while assimilating those cultural features of the others into “our” culture in order to regain self-esteem and resist the others (Jaffrelot, 1999, p.6).

Although many enemies have existed in history, the strongest and most threatening enemy for Hindu nationalists is Islam. Making India Hindu by treating Islam as an enemy and as foreign is the most important task for them.

In this way, the main objective of Hindu nationalists is to make India a nation with a homogeneous Hindu identity. They assert that an Indian is a Hindu who belongs to the nation of Hindustan, in the terminology of Hindutva (Kinvall, 2006). Their desire is to be recognised in the flow of Western influence through emphasis on the difference between “us” and “them”.

This serious antagonism between Hindus and Muslims increased after the Ayodhya incident, which was carried out by saffron power including the Sangh Parivar, VHP, RSS and BJP. Since then, the impact of Hindu nationalism on Indian politics, culture and society has grown even further, reaching unprecedented levels.

In this sense, the cause of the sudden rise of Hindu nationalism since the Ayodhya incident can be analysed from two perspectives. Domestically, the effort to resurrect a movement focused on Hinduism has been made by right-wing forces such as the coalition of the Sangh Parivar, BJP, RSS and VHP, while the persistent conflict resulting from historical wounds between Hindus and Muslims has brought about an increase in paramilitary forms of Hindu nationalism.

Externally, ethno-religious conflict in many countries in the 1980s and 1990s, combined with a feeling of loss and the threat of globalisation, enabled Hindu nationalists to boost Hindu consciousness among the Indian public. In this period, minorities were suppressed in the name of majoritarianism in many countries and religion played an important role in world politics (Ludden, 2005, p.2-3). This neo-fascist vision of Hindu nationalism was inspired by this international situation and the forces of globalisation.

With this background in mind, this study focuses on examining the construction of Hindu nationalism and Hindu identity from a psychoanalytical perspective. More particularly, it attempts to provide a psychoanalytic account of factors that have aroused Hindu nationalism and the strategy Hindu nationalists have employed to bring about group cohesion since the 1980s.

Psychoanalysis is employed since psychological factors have played a role in the construction of Hindu nationalism. Furthermore, it is difficult to understand religious identity formation and nationhood without serious consideration of socio-psychological aspects. For this reason, the main purpose of this study is to look into the psychological factors behind Hindutva-invoking fanatic religious chauvinism and the process by which its adherents attempt to form a Hindu identity in the nation.

This theme has been chosen due to the immense leverage Hindu nationalism has acquired in current Indian politics, society and culture. Indeed, it has become the most sensitive and important controversy in India. Hindu nationalism is behind a major Indian political party for the last thirty years and it has constantly triggered communal conflict between Hindus and Muslims due to its ideology of extreme religious nationalism. Accordingly, it is assumed that understanding the construction of Hindu nationalism is essential not only to grasp the current trajectory of Indian society but also to understand the contemporary history of India. Psychology is employed in analysing this theme is because this enables the identification of the key factor in the arousal of the conflict between Hindus and Muslims.

Accordingly, two hypotheses have been established. Firstly, the motivation and reason for increasing violence between Hindus and Muslims, as compared to other religious

communities, is because Hindus have strong animosity towards Muslims. Furthermore, behind this explanation, psychological factors have as much of an effect as social and political factors.

Secondly, the sudden rise of Hindu nationalism from the 1980s is the strategy of Hindu nationalists to cope with the threat of globalisation. This hypothesis has come from the argument that the aggressive contemporary Hindutva is a form of cultural nationalism responding to emerging global capitalism, which is characterised by the collapse of communism, the propagation of consumption economies, information technology, deregulated, globalised economies, and a global cultural hegemony mainstreamed from the West (Bhatt, 2001, p.150).

The main body of the study constitutes an analysis of these hypotheses and is divided into three parts.

In Chapter One, the focus is put on the historical background to the sudden rise of Hindu nationalism, by examining the origin, organisation and development of Hindu nationalism over time. Firstly, it looks at the beginnings of Hindu nationalism in the 19th century to the 1920s, including the Arya Samaj, the Bengal Renaissance, Bal Gangadhar Tilak. This period was influenced by the impact of Orientalism and primordial nationalism from European thinking. Hindu revivalist movements such as the Arya Samaj, which was the most influential movement of its time, have provided the base on which current saffron power has been built up by consolidating people along religious lines.

Secondly, by examining the Hindu Mahasabha and Savarkar's Hindutva, the study looks at the limited influence of Hindu nationalism from the 1920s to the 1980s. The ideology of Hindutva and the perception of Muslims as the main threat, which Savarkar first introduced to the Hindu nationalist movement, have established a foothold in contemporary militarised Hindu nationalism.

Lastly, the study considers the sudden rise of Hindu nationalism in a militant form from the 1980s to the present day, by analysing saffron waves like the RSS, Sangh Parivar, VHP and BJP and their effect on the political arena. Religion and politics have been combined seriously since this time and saffron parties have presented a renewed Hindu identity to the Indian public.

Chapter Two deals with psychological factors behind the conflict and communal riots between Hindus and Muslims. To analyse this, the study presents psychological factors related to the historical background that have provoked the conflict between the two groups. The key question asked in this chapter is why dissension between Hindus and Muslims is more serious than among other religious groups and what are the psychological causes of their conflict. In this sense, the most prominent factor is 'Chosen Trauma'. This chosen trauma, which refers to the mental recollection of a fearful past, is verified historically, especially in the Indian situation, with the Muslim conquest and India-Pakistan Partition being the chosen trauma of Hindus. As discussed above, Partition resulted in increasing Hindu animosity towards Muslims, which was a crucial cause of the Ayodhya incident.

The second factor is proximity. This can explain why the strongest hostility has existed between Hindus and Muslims, as compared to among other religious groups, since nationalistic hostility is more strongly directed against larger, nearer and more powerful out-groups than against smaller, more distant and weaker ones (Rosenblatt, 1964, p.133).

Besides these factors, several other factors have contributed to the build-up of tension between Hindus and Muslims. Muslim assaults on Hindu idols, such as Muslims eating beef or the government's amicable attitude towards Muslims, can be examples of explanations for the increasingly aggravated feelings between the two groups. This chapter looks at Hindu psychology in relation to this animosity against Muslim onslaughts on Hindu idols and the Shah Bano case resulting from the government's cordial position with respect to Muslims.

Chapter Three discusses the strategy of Hindu nationalist groups, focusing on the psychology behind their attempts to enhance Hindu group cohesion in the context of modernisation and globalisation.

The Sangh Parivar uses psychological strategies in achieving their strong group cohesion, based on human instinct against the forces of globalisation. These include promoting intergroup bias by making clear a boundary between “us” and “them” and enhancing strong group loyalty and group superiority in constructing nationalism. Demonising the “other” and strengthening in-group loyalty are natural processes in boosting their self-esteem and this is still furthered when they suffer economic or social insecurity, such as in a period of crisis that diminishes their self-esteem.

This theory can also be applied to Hindu nationalist psychology. It can explain the rise of the paramilitary form of Hindu nationalism to overcome the increasing feeling of loss and insecurity under the threat of globalisation from the 1980s. Hindu nationalists have used strategies of manipulating history and myths to fortify their group cohesion in the face of globalisation, based on the theory that sharing a common culture and symbols can help in ensuring social stability. Right-wing political groups such as the Sangh Parivar, the VHP (Vishwa Hindu Parishad), the RSS (Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh) and the BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party) have put forward to the Indian public a new Hindu identity with these strategies, and they have raised Hindu consciousness based on a neo-fascist vision of constructing a homogeneous Hindu *rashtra*.

In developing this framework, the main purpose of this dissertation is to analyse the psychological factors acting on the construction of Hindu nationalism and the new Hindu identity from the 1980s. A diagnosis of the risks and problems of Hindutva is attempted through the study of the Hindu-Muslim religious conflict from the psychological perspective. The study aims to develop a clear insight into the emotional construction of Hindu nationalism and the new Hindu identity by focusing on psychological aspects, adding to existing studies that rely on social and political aspects.

In its concluding analysis, the study tries to work out how to relieve the tension and violence between Hindus and Muslims, by making a diagnosis of the attitudes of Hindu nationalists that cause the problem.

Chapter I

The Rise of Hindu Nationalism and Hindu Identity

In the last two decades of the 20th century, Hindu nationalism emerged as a force to be reckoned with in Indian politics due to the sudden rise of the BJP as the national opposition party. The main aim of the Sangh Parivar, which includes the BJP-RSS-VHP coalition, is to inject its cultural nationalistic ideology into both Indian politics and public opinion. Due to the leverage of this ideology in different fields, Hindu nationalism has been referred to variously as Hindutva, the saffron wave, Hindu majoritarianism, Hindu communalism and Hindu fundamentalism.

Although it has become a prominent concern only in the last 30 years, the ideology of the movement dates from the 19th century. However, the direct foundation of the ideology of contemporary Hindu nationalism has been constructed from the 1920s. One of its features is the perception that it is the same as communalism. This dialectic can be traced back to the 1920s since communalism and more specifically the communal riot emerged as a systematic characteristic of politics in northern India from this period (Zavos, 2000, p.4).

Accordingly, this chapter will seek to explain the ideologies, origin and history of the Hindu nationalist movement from the 19th century to the present day. This process of examining the background and ideologies of Hindu nationalism is essential to understanding the main argument of the dissertation.

The chapter is divided into three parts. The first examines the formation and main ideologies of Dayananda Saraswati's Arya Samaj movement, the 'Bengal Renaissance' and Bal Gangadhar Tilak's movement from the late 19th to the early 20th century. In the second part, the main ideologies of the troubled period of the 1920s are discussed, with special focus on the Hindu Mahasabha movement and Savarkar's Hindutva. Finally, the third part of the chapter reviews the ideologies and strategies of the contemporary saffron wave, including the RSS, VHP and BJP under the name of the Sangh Parivar.

1. Beginning of the Movement in the 19th Century up to the 1920s

The period encompassing the 19th and early 20th century saw the emergence of the basic ideologies of Hindu nationalism. The concept of Hindu nationalism dates only from the 19th century. According to Zakaria (1970), there was no communal violence between Hindus and Muslims prior to the colonial era. Hindu nationalism in this period should be regarded as part of the wider nationalism resisting British colonial power rather than as a form of communalism. The paramilitary communalist form of Hindu nationalism grounded in fascist ideology established itself after the 1920s. In fact, the form of Hindu nationalism in this period can be seen as Hindu revivalism, because its main characteristic was to homogenise Hindus according to the Hindu religion (Ko et al., 2006, p.42), while one of the period's themes was Hindu reform by improving Hindu weaknesses generated from the threat of 'foreign rule' - first by Muslims and then by the British (Van der Veer, 1994, p.64). Therefore, the emergence of Hindu nationalism in the 19th century was inextricably bound up with the development of Indian nationalism.

European nationalist ideas significantly affected and shaped both secular and religious nationalism in this period of India's history. Nineteenth century nationalism in India can be defined as an "Orientalist mode of production of the people" (Hansen, 1999, p. 60). Hindu revivalism, based on primordialist thinking, was also influenced by European nationalist ideas, especially British and German Orientalism in 19th century colonial India (Bhatt, 2001). Owing to the influence of this Orientalist epistemology, nationalists during this time believed that the Indian community, which was then divided by religion, caste and custom, could be consolidated by means of a Hindu reform movement.

In the same vein, primordialist thinking was stimulated during the British colonial period since Hindu nationalists believed that the nation could be united by rediscovering the archaic Hindu civilisation. A fundamental element of primordial nationalism in this period was Aryanism, which was generated in processes of 'upper' caste, religious, regional and vernacular elite consolidation in colonial India (Ibid.). Hindu nationalists in the mid-19th century tried to achieve national unity by glorifying the Hindu past and

tracing India's archaic memory. They focused on the discovery of Vedic-Aryanism based on archaic religious texts like the Vedas, Upanishads, Puranas and the Epics, which suggest the greatness of the Hindu civilisation not only culturally and morally but also in its political and ethical system (Ibid, 12). Aryanism was used in manipulating ancient history to assert the idea of India as a 'Hindu Rashtra' for Hindu nationalists and developed with elite-led Indian nationalist ideology. Besides verifying ancient Hindu history on their terms, the Vedic Aryanist paradigm presented its superiority by showing southern Dravidians and tribal populations to be inferior to Hindu Aryans (Ibid, 15).

This strategy proved the superiority of the culture and religion and boosted the self-esteem of Hindus. These primordialist ideologies also were used in vernacular and regional elite formation during the second half of the 19th century. Some scholars argue that Hindu nationalism from the 19th to the early 20th century was an elite-led, middle class ideology because it developed with Aryanism and primordialism, which were both led by elite and middle class Indians.¹

The following section discusses three major early Hindu nationalist movements and their ideological development in the 19th century and early 20th century.

1.1 The Arya Samaj

The Arya Samaj, which means 'Society of Aryans', was founded in 1875 in Punjab by Dayananda Saraswati. It is referred to as the most influential, first modern movement to aim at reform and revival or 'Hindu renaissance' in the 19th century.

The core of the Arya Samaj ideology emphasised the Aryan-Vedic tradition. According to Dayananda, the Aryans were the original human inhabitants of the world and they worshipped only one God and accepted the Vedic religion. He clearly delimited his definition of the Aryans with regard to territorial and xenological considerations and

¹ Zavos (1999) regards the initial stage of Hindu nationalism as a middle class ideology and Chandra (1987) defines communalism as a modern political concept developed by each religious colonial elite group who pursued communal and secular interests.

claimed that not every Indian could become Aryan. He also emphasised the importance of the four Vedas and regarded the God in the Vedas as the ancient Aryans. Based on this primacy of the Aryan race, he thought a national revival could be achieved by uniting the nation with the popular and claimed that it was necessary to inculcate Hindu ideals represented in the Vedas to Hindus in order to unite the nation (Hansen, 1999, p.72). Such reverence for Vedic authority on the part of the Arya Samaj seems to have been affected by the Orientalism of the 19th century (Van der Veer, 1994, p.65).

With regard to the caste system, while rejecting the jati system, Dayananda accepted varnashramadharma and the varna system, arguing that this ideal method of social organisation existed in the Vedic Period. This emphasis of the Arya Samaj on the Aryan-Vedic tradition has had an impact on the contemporary Hindutva movement (Bhatt, 2001, p.18).

The most important innovation of the Arya Samaj was the shuddhi or conversion ritual. When it was first created, the aim was “purification” of the faith (Ibid, p.50), as well as putting a stop to conversions of lower caste Hindus to Islam and Christianity and working to reconvert Christians and Muslims to Hinduism. This shuddhi movement has influenced later Hindutva organisations such as the VHP’s homecoming campaigns among Muslims, Christians and tribal groups. The censuses of 1901 and 1911 accelerated the shuddhi movement because they showed an increasing number of Christians and Muslims, making Hindu nationalists feel they were under threat of extinction. From this period, the demographic threat has become one of the main stimuli for Hindu nationalists' strong antipathy towards Muslims over the last century.

The most important motto in the Arya Samaj was “Back to the Veda”. It took a closed stance with respect to other religions, holding the ideal that only the Aryans were Indian and stressing only the authority of the Vedas. This exclusivism against the ‘other’ chimed with primordialism in European thinking in this period.

As regards the religious aspect, the Arya Samaj tried to recover the purity of the Hindu faith, while aiming to make India an autonomous nation free from the British in the political aspect (Cho, 1994, p.440). Their most important contribution was in building up the communication of Hindu nationalism. The Arya Samaj initiated the Cow Protection Movement, which focused on religious nationalism rather than aiming to reform (Van der Veer, 1994, p. 66). The closed and nationalist attitude characteristic of the Hindu revival movement became part of the foundation of the Hindu Mahasabha and RSS ideology. Many leaders and activists of the RSS and the Hindu Mahasabha emerged from these milieus (Hansen, 1999, p.74).

1.2 The Bengal Renaissance

In the latter half of the 19th century, there was a revolutionary nationalism led by the regional and vernacular intelligentsia in Bengal. Bengali nationalist ideologies spread rapidly after the Partition of Bengal in 1905 and they are well represented in the writings of Bankimchandra Chattopadhyaya. There was an effort to amalgamate the ideas of Hindu cultural nationalism with those of Indian nationalism in the 'Bengal Renaissance'. This happened in the aftermath of two consecutive splits in the original Brahmo Samaj established in Calcutta in 1828 by Rammohan Roy. The first split in 1850, led by Debendranath Tagore (1815-1905), was based on the need for internal reform within Hinduism, while the second split in 1866, led by Keshab Chandra Sen (1838-84), attempted to 'Christianise' Hinduism (Bhatt, 2001, p.23).

The fundamental elements of the nationalist ideas in the Bengal Renaissance were also based on Hindu superiority and exclusivity in much the same way as in other Hindu nationalist movements. Rajnarain Basu (1826-99) and Nabagopal Mitra (1840-94), who were Debendranath's colleagues, were core representatives of this trend in Bengal. Hinduism appeared in regional nationalism based on the British Orientalist study of ancient India. It was led by elite Bengalis and occurred in an environment in which Christians emerged as opponents of Hindus (Ibid).

The most prominent theme for Bengali elite nationalists was the concept of India as the 'motherland' and the need to show dedication to and love for motherland. This theme, which was popular among Indian nationalists and Hindu nationalists in the late 19th century, has influenced many revolutionary nationalists since this period. Bankim, often referred to as the father of the modern Bengali novelist, is the most well known figure to have used this metaphor in his writings. In his novels, he articulated Hindu nationalism through the symbolisation of the Hindu nation as the motherland in gendered and religious terms. This represented 'the imagined historical injury to the nation' through symbolisation that the motherland was suffering from foreign invasion (Ibid, p.28).

1.3 Bal Gangadhar Tilak

Bal Gandadhar Tilak (1856-1920) was one of the key figures in the nationalist movement to recapture the glorious past of the Hindus. His argument in support of Hindu supremacy and traditionalism was the genesis of later Hindu fundamentalism. Also, the Hindu Mahasabha and RSS adopted Tilak's ideology and then became amongst the most powerful organisations in triggering the ideology of 'Hindutva'.

Tilak was one of the first and strongest supporters of 'Swaraj' (self-rule) and the boycott, which are famous campaigns of economic resistance to colonialism. He joined the Indian National Congress in 1890, but criticised its moderate attitude. Standing against the moderates, he organised a separate extremist faction in Congress. Tilak was one of the most crucial leaders of the nationalist movement and famous for his radicalism.

He also asserted that Hindu society had a capacity for self-renewal, which could be achieved by underlining the glorified Vedic civilisation. According to him, the Vedic civilisation was the oldest in the world, the most cultured and the mother of all civilisations (Hansen, 1999, p.76). Such emphasis on the archaic Indian civilisation also derived from Orientalist primordialism. His chauvinistic view of the Hindu civilisation can be seen in his distortion of ancient history. Tilak argued that the Aryans were the first creators of civilisation in the world, claiming that the Aryan civilisation dated to earlier than 8,000 BC and was more refined than the later Bronze and Iron Age civilisations (Bhatt, 2001, p.35).

Another of his achievements was the drawing of Hindu traditions and symbols into Indian nationalism. In his efforts to develop two 'ideological configurations' – the gods Ganesh and Shivaji – to resist British rule, we can see the process of “transfiguration of symbols of Hindu religious devotionism – the religious pantheon – into a nationalist pantheon”. Also, his employment of Shivaji as the symbol of Hindu militancy related to the struggle against not only colonial rule but also medieval Muslim 'invaders' (Ibid., p.34). Therefore, Tilak's depiction of Shivaji in justifying the use of violence can be seen as the forerunner of the strategy used by contemporary Hindu nationalism against Muslims.

As seen from the above, Hindu nationalism from the 19th to the early 20th century can be referred to as a Hindu revivalism movement, which emerged as a part of Indian nationalism in the British colonial period because Hindu nationalists believed that the nation could be united by restoring the Hindu civilisation of thousands of years ago.

This Hindu revivalism movement was grounded in claims of the superiority of the Aryan civilisation, based on Hindu-Aryan primordialism from the Vedic text on the Hindus. It expressed religious exclusivism against other religions and showed signs of manipulating ancient history, which has continued since this period. This suggests that the Hindu revivalist movement served as the foundation of later Hindu nationalism, since it is clear that this strategy has been reused in militant Hindu nationalism.

2. Influence from the 1920s to the 1980s

The period from the 1920s to the 1930s was one of great confusion in the political field of colonial India. In particular, the province of Bengal was partitioned into the largely Muslim eastern areas and the largely Hindu western areas in 1905, and then reunited again in 1911. The process of protest for the partition of Bengal marked its importance in the history of the Indian nationalist movement because it not only promoted the *swadeshi* movement and boycott campaign but also fostered the emergence of two oppositional groups – moderate and extremist – in the Congress. Therefore, during this time, the existing ideology of Indian nationalism in the Congress was confronted with the growth

of the 'extremist' group (Zavos, 1999). Accordingly, there were tendencies towards both criticism of the boycott movement against the British and loyalty to the British government in this period. Gandhi started his non-cooperation movement in the 1920s.

Alongside these wider developments, the main characteristic of this period is the emergence of communalism in Indian politics and the dialectic between Indian nationalism and communalism (Zavos, 1999, 2000). The dialectic between Hindu nationalism and Indian nationalism was always present in this troubled period. More specifically, the coexistence of Hinduised versions of Indian nationalism and the specific ideology of Hindutva emerged (Bhatt, 2001, p.4). With regard to the dialectic, Jaffrelot says ethnicity distinguishes Hindu nationalism from the Indian nationalist ideology, while Zavos (1999) argues that the distinguishing factors are history and culture. From this period, the idea of Hindu nationalism started to change from its moderate to more radical nationalism.

Another feature of the 1920s was the appearance of political mobilisation in Hindu nationalism. The ideology of Hindu nationalism slowly became involved in Indian politics.

Comparing post-1920s Hindu nationalism and pre-1920s Hindu revivalism, the marked distinguishing difference is the Hindu attitude toward Muslims. Hindutva, a concept first developed in the 1920s by Savarkar, clearly defined Muslims as foreign and exterior, while the Hindu revivalism of the 19th century did not. This attitude towards Muslims has intensified since the 1980s due to influences from this period. Therefore, it would not be wrong to say "the key political ideas of the contemporary Hindutva movement were being articulated by Savarkar and the Hindu Mahasabha" (Bhatt, 2001, p.77) because post-1980s militant Hindutva ideology and its activity is directly based on 'Savarkarism' and his Hindu Mahasabha. Consolidating Hindus by strengthening their ties under the threat of extermination, aroused by conversions of Hindus to Islam or Christianity, was their most prominent objective during the period between the 1920s and the 1980s.

In other words, criticism of so-called ‘pseudo-secularists’ (Zavos, 1999, 2000), the militarisation of Hindus and the view of Muslims as ‘others’ were key features of Hindu nationalism in this period.

2.1 The Hindu Mahasabha

The Hindu Mahasabha is a Hindu nationalist political party founded in 1915. It represented Hindus who did not agree with the secular Indian National Congress ideology and who were opponents of the Muslim League.

Before discussing the Hindu Mahasabha, it is important to consider Lala Lajpat Rai. Lajpat Rai (1865-1928) was one of the most important figures of Hindu nationalism in this period as an ‘extremist’ within Congress and as a revolutionary nationalist who took an active part in both the pre-Savarkarite Hindu Mahasabha and the Hindu Sangathan movement.

Influenced by a conception of the Arya Samaj that emphasised the ‘purification’ of Hinduism, he stated that ‘Hindus are a nation in themselves, because they represent a civilisation all their own’ in his article for the Indian National Congress in *the Hindustan Review* (Mathur, 1996, 1). In this way, he raised the argument of ‘Hindu weakness’ and the need to strengthen Hinduism by conquering foreigners and treating them as others. He enunciated Indian nationality as Hindu nationalism. These central thoughts of Lajpat Rai came to form the basis of the later ideology of Hindu identity in Savarkarism and the RSS.

In 1906, following the foundation of the All-India Muslim League in Dacca, a Hindu Sabha (society) was established in Punjab with the aim of “protecting the interests of the Hindus by stimulating in them the feelings of self-respect, self-help and mutual co-operation so that by a combined effort there would be some chance of promoting the moral, intellectual, social and material welfare of the individuals of which the nation is composed.”(Zavos, 1999, p.2273). Also, it developed to stand for the interests of a Hindu constituency and it became a powerful symbol of the united community (Ibid.). The

Hindu nationalist movement intervened in the Indian political field for the first time with the emergence of the Hindu Sabha.

In April 1921, the Hindu Sabha was renamed the 'All-India Hindu Mahasabha'. After this renaming, its earlier objective of loyalty to the British government was changed to the aim of 'a united and self-governing Indian nation', while the initial agenda of the Hindu Mahasabha was sangathan, organisation and movement. These notions developed into major principles of Hindu nationalism (Ibid, p.2275).

From the early 1920s, the All-India Hindu Mahasabha gave importance to the *shuddhi* movement to boost the number of Hindus, under the threat of an increasing number of Christians and Muslims. Its targets were largely two groups. It tried to reconvert Christians and Muslims to Hinduism and to encourage untouchable or adivasi (tribal) groups to return to the Hindu fold (Bhatt, 2001). This Hindu Mahasabha conversion movement, influenced by the Arya Samaj, is a key issue for Hindu communalists today.

Another important activity of the Hindu Mahasabha was the Hindu Sangathan² movement. Swami Shradhanand (1856-1926) was well known for playing a key role in the Sangathan movement of the early 1920s and warning of the threat of Hindu extinction.

The Hindu Sangathan is also evidence of the effect of the Arya Samaj since it was based on neo-Vedic ideology from the late 19th century. Its main aim was strengthening the demographic status of Hindus by bringing outcasts into a hierarchical system of caste. In fact, when the 1901 and 1911 censuses showed an increasing population of Muslims and Christians, Hindus felt that they would become extinct. To remove the fear of Hindus losing their status, Shradhanand proposed to strongly oppose conversions to Islam and Christianity. This Sangathan movement can be seen as a product of the consolidation of Hindu nationalist ideology in the 1920s. It has become a key characteristic of today's Hindutva movement (Ibid, p.63, 67).

² Sangathan is derived from the Sanskrit prefix *sam*, 'together', and the verbal root *ghat*, 'to form or mould'. This is evident in the more strict Sanskrit use of *sangathan*, 'organisation, formation, constitution, composition' (Zavos, 2000, p.16).

The Hindu Sangathan movement and the Hindu Mahasabha became influential in the national political field from the mid-1920s under the leadership of Madan Mohan Malaviya, Lajpat Rai and B.S. Moonje, coinciding with the end of Gandhi's mass satyagraha campaigns (Ibid, p.69).

When Savarkar reached the leadership of the Hindu Mahasabha in 1937, the Hindu nationalist ideology in the subcontinent became more aggressive and militaristic. It suggested that the Indian government give Hindus military training in all high schools and colleges (Savarkar, 1941 as cited in Bhatt, 2001). This Mahasabha policy of Hindu militarisation implies that Hindu nationalism started to set up a strategy to protect Hindus from external threats from this period.

In conclusion, Lajpat Rai and Swami Shraddhanand recommended the same remedies to reform Hindus, including the abolition of sub-castes and the conversion of 'untouchables' and tribals to Hinduism. In this respect, we can say that the ideology of this period was the legacy and extension of that of the Arya Samaj of the previous century. Furthermore, it became the foundation for non-Gandhite ideologies for both Hindu internal reform and Hindu political assertion within and around the Congress, the non-cooperation movement and the national movement (Bhatt, 2001, p.75).

2.2 Savarkar's Movement

Vinayak Damodar Savarkar (1883-1966), who is famous for coining the term 'Hindutva', is revered as a revolutionary hero by Hindu nationalists. It is no exaggeration to say that the Hindutva ideology was not definitively articulated until this period. His ideology of Hindutva, as explained in his article "*Hindutva: Who is a Hindu?*" in 1923, lit up contemporary militant Hindu nationalism. Certainly, contemporary usage of the word 'Hindutva' derives from Savarkar (Bhatt, 2001, p.77). According to Zavos (1999) and Jaffrelot (1999), Hindu nationalism was not 'codified' until the birth of his Hindutva ideology.

Savarkar introduced the ideology of Hindutva after the Partition of Bengal and in the political whirlpool of the 1920s. His main objective was to provide an answer to questions such as ‘What is Hinduness’ and ‘What constitutes Hindu identity’ and to consolidate the idea of the unitary nation with Hindu identity. He highlighted the problem presented by this ‘lack’ on the part of Hindus, constructing as solutions Hindutva and the sharing of ‘Hinduness’ by all Hindus. Such eagerness for a strong and culturally homogenous nation by means of the Hindutva idea was due to the impression made on Savarkar by the writings of Giuseppe Mazzini. In Mazzini, Savarkar found an ideological framework and a political philosophy that combined cultural pride, national self-assertion and a view of the culturally homogenous nation (Hansen, 1999, p.77).

Based on Mazzini’s thoughts about the nation, Savarkar explained the five elements that constituted unitary nationality: territory; emotional attachment; coherence and unity of languages; shared blood; and race.³ According to this definition, he asserted that Hindus were those who inherited the blood of the Vedic-Aryan race and the Sanskrit culture and those who considered ‘Sindhusthan’ as their ‘Holyland’ (Bhatt, 2001, p.99).

Among these elements, Savarkar particularly emphasised the racial inheritance of Hindu blood from their Vedic forefathers in characterising Hindutva (Savarkar, 1989). Accordingly, he denied the theory of the Aryan invasion of the subcontinent and stated that the ancient land of “Sindhu”⁴ comprised the entire subcontinent. In this way, his sense of Indian nationality was based on the “Vedic nation” that was already present four thousand years ago with the development of a common language, Sanskrit, and a common body of philosophy and ritual practices (Hansen, 1999, p.78).

3 Savarkar reiterated a number of these tenets. According to him, “the first tenet in forming a nationality was territory and pride of the unique and supreme qualities of each nation. The second tenet was a common emotional attachment to the nation. The third tenet was the coherence and unity of languages as the medium of cultural essence and feeling. The fourth tenet denoted the holistic concept of culture as a uniting whole by shared blood and race. Savarkar praised caste endogamy as a mechanism keeping the blood of the nation pure” (Savarkar, 1969 quoted in Hansen, 1999, p. 78).

4 According to Savarkar, “the term ‘Hindu’ is basically a territorial denomination of the civilization developed through millennia on the eastern side of the river Indus, ‘Sindhu’, which gradually became known as ‘Hindu’” (Ibid 1999)

With this strong assertion of the need for common blood to make a unitary nation, others who were not Hindu such as Christians and Muslims could not be included in the Indian nationality in Savarkar's thought. Accordingly, he sharply distinguished foreigners from Hindus. He continuously stressed that Christians and Muslims should abandon their faith and adopt the Hindutva ideology. It seems that this strategy of demarcating a clear boundary between us and them appeared in the psychology of nationalism from this time:

For though Hindusthan is to them 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. Consequently their names and their outlook smack of a foreign origin. Their love is divided. (Savarkar, 1989, p.113).

This Hindu majoritarian ideology started by Savarkar brought up issues of war, militarism and minorities from the 1930s. He introduced his militarised Hindu nationalism to the Hindu Mahasabha from the mid-1930s as its president. From that time, the difference between Hindu nationalism and the anti-colonial national movement became very clear (Bhatt, 2001).

In this way, Savarkar's activities influenced not only several ideological currents within and outside the Indian freedom movement in his own time, but also the principles of the contemporary saffron wave.

The form of Hindu nationalism after the 1920s is easily distinguishable from that of the previous period. Hindu nationalist organisations like the Hindu Mahasabha extended from the Hindu Sabha started to intervene in the political field, while the political maelstrom involving events such as the Partition of Bengal and the conflict between 'moderate' and 'radical' groups within Congress swept through the 1920s. Hindu nationalists in this period tried to reform Hindus based on the tenets of the Arya Samaj and went on to develop ideas beyond the Arya Samaj ideology. However, the contemporary militarised ideology of Hindu nationalism has been developed since the definition of Hindutva by Savarkar. Therefore, it would be true to say that the emergence of the Hindutva ideology from this period is the immediate background of the propagation of majoritarian group rights by later saffron communities from the 1980s.

3. Sudden rise of Hindu Nationalism from the 1980s to the Present

Hindu nationalism in the period from the 1980s to the present day has presented a further developed form of its previous ideology and has taken a more aggressive form in the political field. Over the past three decades, the Hindutva ideology has become a prominent issue in Indian politics not only because saffron waves have created a new environment in politics in which religion and politics are combined but also because nationalists have felt under threat from globalisation. Since the 1990s, Hindutva has spread at the state and local levels, as well as at the national and international levels, as the leverage of globalisation has increased rapidly. Hindu nationalists in this period have attempted to raise consciousness of Hindu cultural nationalism, bringing an anti-pluralist and neo-fascist vision to the Indian public and politics.

With the hope of establishing a homogenous cultural nation, the Sangh Parivar has introduced a renewed sense of Hindu identity to Indian politics (Chirmuley, 2004, p.2) and created a violent public environment based on a strongly exclusivist principle.

3.1 The Sangh Parivar

The Sangh Parivar – the family of Hindu nationalist organisations – is regarded as a group of several right wing organisations.

In the period 1949-1965, the Rashtriya Swamayamsevak Sangh (RSS) launched several national organisations, including the Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS) and the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP). This process accelerated from the late 1970s, and the Sangh Parivar has developed into the concept of a Hindu family and spread at the national and local levels with its organisations forming an ‘alternative civil society’⁵.

⁵ The Sangh Parivar in Pune almost constitutes an ‘alternative civil society’, with separate schools, its own banks, a large number of colleges, its own organisations for youth, students, women, children, informal networks, frequent marriages between RSS-affiliated families and its own informal communication channels and structures of authority, both reproduced on a daily basis in the shakhas (Hansen, 1999, p.117).

This development of the Sangh Parivar since the 1970s is related to the lack of a central leadership after the decline of the 'Congress system' and the fading of left power. Concomitant with this situation, the Parivar has intervened in politics with a renewed sense of Hindu identity (Chirmuley, 2004).

Between the 1980s and 2002, the Parivar expanded to a very great extent thanks to its cultural nationalist project and manipulation of the 'communal card' to extreme levels (Ibid, p.4).

3.2 The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS)

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS, the 'National Volunteer Corps') was established in 1925 by K.B. Hedgewar (1889-1940), a physician from Maharashtra. It arose in Nagpur (in Maharashtra state) within the town's Brahmin community. For that reason, the organisation has long been dominated by Maharashtrian Brahmins. In the 1930s, the RSS gradually spread out from Nagpur to western Maharashtra – where Pune became a major centre – and to northern and western India and indeed the entire Hindi-speaking region.

Throughout the 1930s, the RSS maintained close relations with the Hindu Mahasabha, which provided profound inspiration for the ideology and organisation of the RSS. However, after Savarkar became the president of the Hindu Mahasabha in 1937, there were indications of a separation between the RSS and the Hindu Mahasabha. In 1939, the gap widened even further and the Hindu Mahasabha established its own uniformed youth corps, the Ram Sena (Ram's Army). When Golwalkar became the supreme leader after Hedgewar, they completely broke up in the early 1940s (Hansen, 1999, p.94). By the 1940s, the RSS had expanded their influence beyond the provinces of northern India to south India as well (Goyal, 1979 as cited in Bhatt, 1999, p.121).

The fact that the ideology of the RSS was inspired by Savarkar's book *Hindutva* is clear because both Hedgewar and Golwalkar's main aim was 'man-moulding' and 'character-

building'. This 'man-moulding' and 'character-building' means imprinting the RSS worldview in the *shakha*⁶ based on Hindu identity (Bhatt, 2001, p.142).

For their 'character building', the RSS attempted several strategies that show some such characteristics. First, the RSS has emphasised the importance of education to raise consciousness of the Muslim as an enemy and other. In other words, provoking Muslims is a key characteristic of the RSS. They have ceaselessly attempted to implant a dehumanising characterisation of the Indian Muslim. The reason for stressing moulding and educating 'Hindu consciousness' is because Hedgewar believed that 'lack of cohesion' and 'Hindu disunity' were the most serious problems facing Hindu society, in addition to 'foreign domination of Hindus', as a result of 'Hindu failings' (Ibid, p.118)

The second characteristic of the RSS is the full-scale emergence of militarised Hindu nationalism, inspired by Mussolini's fascism and descended from Savarkar's Hindutva ideology since the 1920s. As we have noted before, fascist Italy was already a source of inspiration for Hindu nationalist movements in the 1920s and 1930s, especially in their desire to express the organised Hindu strength and militarise the Hindu nation (Bhatt, 2001)

In fact, the RSS started military and ideological training in its youth corps according to its ideas of physical strength and spiritual purity as soon as it was established. The training includes a daily routine of physical exercise, military drills and marches, weapons training and ideological inculcation (Ibid, p.119). To organise its 'martial tradition', the RSS organises its military camps according to its hierarchical leadership principle based on the traditional idea of a 'model Hindu family'.⁷

6 "Shakha" is Hindi for "branch". Most of the organizational work of the RSS is done through the activities of *shakhas*. In 2004, more than 60,000 *shakhas* were performed throughout India (<http://www.rediff.com/news/2004/jul/23rss.htm>, accessed on 5th May, 2012). The *shakhas* carry out various activities for its volunteers which include not only physical fitness activities through yoga, exercises and games but also emphasise on qualities like civic sense, social service, community living and patriotism (Malkani, K.R., 1980).

7 The RSS claimed that the inspiration for its hierarchical leadership principle was not derived from any 'perverted foreign model' such as Mussolini's fascism, but was based on the traditional idea of a 'model Hindu family' (Curran, 1951; Dexhpande and Ramaswamy, 1981 quoted in Bhatt, 2001, p.120). It includes typical traditional hierarchy like led by order men and recruiting young boys, founded on the

Lastly, the key terms of the RSS based on Aryanism and the history of the Vedic times are racism, making a homogenous nation and majoritarianism.

Golwalkar, who became the second supreme leader of the RSS after Hedgewar's death in 1940, emphasised the 'Vedic period', like other previous Hindu nationalists. He stated that the 'Vedic period' was the oldest civilisation and Hindu-Aryans were indigenous and the forebears of Indians.⁸ According to this view, Golwalkar tried to spread the view that the 'nation should consist of pure race'. This xenophobic view, inspired by Fascism and Nazism, created a strong exclusivity towards minorities. For him, minorities could not be other than 'foreign', but nor should they exist in the Hindu nation unless they became Hindus. With regard to this strong repulsion of minorities, he used somatic metaphors – the healthy body of the 'Hindu nation' threatened by a minority 'cancer' (Ibid, p.130). His ignorance of any rights of minorities under the pretext of uniting his 'one nation' is representative of Hindu nationalists, full of intolerance and closed attitudes. For Golwalkar, minorities could:

Live only as outsiders, bound by all the codes and conventions of the Nation, at the sufferance of the Nation and deserving of no special protection, far less any privilege or rights. That is the only logical and correct solution.The non-Hindu peoples of Hindusthan must either adopt the Hindu culture and language, must learn to respect and hold in reverence Hindu religion, must entertain no ideas but those of the glorification of the Hindu race and culture.....They must cease to be foreigners, or may stay in the country wholly subordinated to the Hindu nation, claiming nothing, deserving no privileges (Golwalkar, 1944, quoted from Bhatt, 2001, p.130).

Although such a view of minorities as foreigners and foes was influenced by Fascism and Nazism, Golwalkar also considered communism to be 'foreign' and 'anti-national'. His vigorous anti-communism was a key constituent of RSS ideology in the post-independence period (Bhatt, 2001). With this contradictory ideology, the RSS has changed from a non-political organisation to a political organisation after the experience of being banned⁹ in the period 1948-1949.

institutional absence of women and in which one leader holds absolute leadership and requires compliable and devotional respect from members (Bhatt, 2001, p.120).

⁸ Golwalkar said "we were one nation"- 'Over all the land from sea to sea one Nation!' is the trumpet cry of the ancient Vedas!' (Bhatt, 2001, p.127)

⁹ Following Mahatma Gandhi's assassination in 1948 by a former member of the RSS, Nathuram Godse, many of the main leaders of the RSS were imprisoned and the RSS was banned on February 4, 1948 (Larson, 1995, p.132).

3.3 The Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP)

The VHP (Vishwa Hindu Parishad) was founded in Bombay on 29 August 1964 at the instigation of Golwalkar. One hundred and fifty religious leaders were present at the meeting, including not just Hindus but also Sikhs, Buddhists and Jains, with the aim of representing all Hindus, led by Swami Chinmayananda. Golwalkar explained that "all faiths of Indian origin need to unite", saying that the word "Hindu" applied to followers of all the above religions (Smith, 2003, p.189).

In the meeting, it was decided that the organisation would have the following objectives: (1) to take steps to raise the consciousness and to consolidate and strengthen Hindu society; (2) to protect, develop and spread Hindu life values, both ethical and spiritual; (3) to establish and reinforce contacts with and help for all Hindus living abroad; (4) to welcome back all who had left the Hindu fold and to rehabilitate them as part and parcel of the Universal Hindu Society; (5) to render social service to humanity at large, initiating welfare projects for the 170 million downtrodden brethren who had been suffering for centuries, including schools, hospitals, libraries, etc.; (6) to establish the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, the World Organisation of the six hundred million Hindus at present residing in 80 countries aspiring to revitalise the eternal Hindu Society by rearranging the code of conduct of our age-old Dharma to meet the needs of the changed times; (7) to eradicate the concept of untouchability from Hindu Society (VHP pamphlet, 1982, cited from Vander Veer, 1994, p.130).

With these aims of consolidating Hindus with other religions that emerged from Hinduism, several characteristics differentiated the VHP from other right wing organisations.

First, the VHP has tried to strengthen the solidarity of Hindus overseas. The VHP has organised its branches not only at the level of the nation state, but also at the international level. Internationally, the VHP has reported affiliated bodies in eighteen countries (Bhatt, 2001, p.183).

Second, the VHP has focused on setting up a programme to bring tribals and untouchables into the Hindu fold. This strategy could come from concerns about Hindu extinction. Hindu nationalists are under the delusion that Muslims will be majority in India in the future because of their higher fertility rate and the practice of polygamy. This imagined fear also results in Hindus worrying about a shortage of resources in the future based on 'Malthusian' theory.¹⁰ From the early 1980s, the VHP began in earnest mass conversion campaigns among syncretic Hindu-Muslim groups and among Christian tribals. These so-called 'homecoming' campaigns emphasised that those who had other religions were to 'come back' to their 'original', 'natural' faith, Hinduism, and hence their homeland (Ibid, p.198). The most famous shuddhi activity in the VHP was the Meenakshipuram conversion in 1981. In this conversion movement, the VHP encouraged lower caste Hindus and untouchables to offer devotion to and bathe the idols and continuously resist conversion to Islam among them (Ibid, p.188).

Third, the VHP started to use the iconic representations of 'Ram' and the media effect with their involvement in the Ram Janmabhomi campaign. The destruction of Babri Masjid at Ayodhya to construct a Ram temple was the most remarkable working in the VHP's role. During its Ram Janmabhomi campaign, the VHP elevated the *Ramayana* as the privileged text of Hinduism by broadcasting 'Ramayana' series. The strategy of the VHP during the Ram Janmabhomi campaign included making a clear demarcation of the other to appeal to the majority of Hindus through the utilisation of devotional symbol.

The VHP was a non-political organisation at the time of its foundation, but it has started to influence the politics since the BJP adopted the Hindutva themes of the VHP document issued in 1997 referred to as *Hindu Agenda* as its 1998 general election manifesto. Therefore, the development of a national Hinduism which aims to spread the VHP's version of Hinduism as the standard and mainstream Hinduism to the nation is the most significant of the activities of the VHP (Hansen, 1999, p.102).

¹⁰ According to Bhatt (2001, p.197-8), Malthusian theory has characterised Hindu nationalism since the 20th century.

3.4 The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)

In 1951, senior RSS activists created a national party, the Jana Sangh, and Mookherjee was elected president. Its political strategy was based on RSS ideology and organisation. The Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS), the political arm of Hindu nationalism, initially regarded post-Independence India as 'Bharatiya Rashtra'. This changed to 'Hindu Rashtra' in 1956, with the Jana Sangh claiming that both were equivalent and coextensive with 'Indian' nationalism (Baxter, 1971, p.133).

With its objective of spreading Hindu nationalism, including campaigns against Urdu, for the banning of cow-slaughter and for a militarily strong India, the Jana Sangh emerged from the late 1960s, a period that included the death of Nehru, war with Pakistan and the development of the 'multi-party system' at the national as well as state level (Bhatt, 2001, p.154).

The crucial motivation for examining the Jana Sangh is the fact that the contemporary Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) manifesto is derived from the main principle of the Jana Sangh.

Under the principle of 'one nation, one culture, one people', the Jana Sangh was against the partition of India, which it believed should be 're-united'. It also strongly opposed Nehruvian secularism because the latter was seen as a policy of 'appeasement' of Indian Muslims (Ibid). However, the most influential ideology was Deendayal Upadhyaya's 'Integral Humanism'. This ideology has since had considerable influence on the BJP.

During the Emergency period of 1975-1977, RSS and Jana Sangh leaders and activists were arrested. Later, Indira Gandhi's Congress Party lost the general election and the Janata coalition headed by Moraji Desai won. The Janata coalition formed a slight majority in the Lok Sabha. The founders of Jana Sangh, RSS members Advani and Vajpayee, were also key members of the Janata coalition. This was the first time since just after Independence that Hindu nationalists held political power at the centre, as key members of a ruling coalition (Ibid, p.168).

In 1980, the leaders and workers of the former Jana Sangh formed the BJP, with Vajpayee as its first president. In 1982 during state elections, the BJP formed alliances with other smaller parties and stood in an anti-Congress front. Two years after the 1984 general election, Vajpayee resigned from his position as president due to the disastrous result of the Lok Sabha polls, following which Lal Krishnan Advani became BJP president in 1986. The BJP under Advani started to adopt Upadhyaya's Integral Humanism philosophy as its ideology to fortify its idea of 'cultural nationalism' from 1985. In its 1989 general election campaign, the BJP formed electoral alliances mainly with V.P. Singh's new Janata Dal party, as part of the National Front alliance created by Narasimha Rao in 1988.

In August 1990, L.K. Advani launched his *rath yatra*, a mass march through some ten northern Indian states, sparking serious communal tension and violence. His motivation was seen as relating to the mobilisation of the Hindu vote bank, since it was threatened by the problem of caste loyalties after the implementation of the Mandal report¹¹. In the *rath yatra*, Hindutva forces were trying to bring the issue of caste discrimination to the fore by integrating those outside the caste system into Hinduism. In this sense, the *yatra* could be interpreted as an anti-Mandal strategy (Bhatt, 2001, p.169, 170&171). After the initiation of the *rath yatra*, Advani was imprisoned in Bihar, leading to the fall of the V.P. Singh National Front coalition government in late 1990.

In the 1991 election campaign, the BJP began to express its 'Hindutva' manifesto, based on Savarkar's definition of Hindutva. Its slogan was 'Towards Ram Rajya' (the mythological 'Rule of Ram') (Ibid., p.172).

From the Himalayas to Kanya Kumari, this country has always been one. We have had many States, but we were always one people. We always looked upon our country as Matribhoomi, Punyabhoomi [Motherland and Holyland]. (Bharatiya Janata Party, 1991 quoted in Bhatt, 2001, p.172).

11 In September 1990, the V.P. Singh government announced about implementation of the Mandal Commission's recommendation of 27% reservation of educational seats and government jobs for OBC (backward) communities. This resulted in an 'upper' caste strong resistance and the public self-immolation of Brahmin and 'upper' caste students in the summer of 1990 (Hansen, 1999, p.164).

This 1991 BJP manifesto seems to be some kind of preparation to achieve Hindu cohesion before embarking on the destruction of the Babri Masjid in 1992. The BJP claimed that their planning of the reconstruction of the Ram temple at Ayodhya was a means of rectifying historical wrongs between Hindus and Muslims. In other words, its manifesto was intended to trigger Hindus' old wounds received during the Mughal period.

During the 1996-1998 election, the BJP reiterated its ideology of 'one nation, one people, one culture' with the addition of the ancient cultural heritage of India as 'Hindutva', as well as emphasising the civilisational superiority of the Vedic times. In addition, they tried to legitimise the Ramjanbhoomi movement as the greatest mass movement since Independence.

Hindutva is unifying principle which alone can preserve the unity and integrity of our nation. It is a collective endeavour to protect and re-energise the soul of India, to take us into the next millennium as a strong and prosperous nation...On coming to power, the BJP government will facilitate the construction of a magnificent Shri Rama Mandir at Janmasthan in Ayodhya which will be a tribute to Bharat Mata. This dream moves millions of people in our land; the concept of Rama lies at the core of their consciousness (Bharayiya Janata Party, 1996 quoted in Bhatt, 2001, 174).

Although the BJP stressed its Hindutva manifesto, it has also attempted to appeal to a non-Hindu constituency under its aim of projecting moderation and inclusivity. This dual strategy of the BJP has come about in response to the changing economic and political global environment.

However, this attempt by the BJP to address globalisation has shown up differences in the ideology of the RSS. More particularly, the RSS advocated 'economic nationalism' based on swadeshi and redistributivism, while the BJP supported 'economic globalisation' based on deregulation.

In the late 1990s, these differences became apparent following renewed attacks by the Sangh Parivar on the BJP for apparently abandoning its Hindutva agenda in the coalition government, as well as disagreements about the nature, pace and direction of 'calibrated

globalisation' (Bhatt, 2001, p.177). However, this does not mean that the BJP gave up its Hindutva cultural nationalism slogan as its philosophy. It ceaselessly stressed the view that enhancing India's ancient cultural heritage is important.

Examining the core philosophies of the BJP, first, it has succeeded from Jana Sangh's ideology of 'Integral Humanism'. 'Integral Humanism' was based on a rejection of large-scale technologies and advocated swadeshi (Indian manufacture and consumption) and small-scale industrialisation. It was similar to Gandhian thought with respect to using swadeshi and sarvodaya (welfare for all) concepts.

Secondly, the BJP has declared 'Gandhian Socialism' to be its constitutional political ideology. This theory is inspired by Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule written by Gnadhi. Its features include decentralisation of political and economic power, opposition to technology and large scale industrialisation, and emphasis on self-employment and self-reliance.

Thirdly, it has adopted 'positive secularism'. With regard to 'positive secularism', Vajpayee has stated that:

Mahatma Gandhi describes the correct attitude towards religion as 'Sarva Dharma Sambhava', equal respect to all religions. The concept of 'Sarva Dharma Sambhava' is somewhat different from European secularism which is independent of religion ... We may say that the Indian concept of secularism is that of Sarva Dharma Sambhava ... Sarva Dharma Sambhava is not against any religion. It treats all religions with equal respect. And therefore it can be said that the Indian concept of secularism is more positive (Vajpayee, quoted from Jaffrelot, 2007, p.327).

'Positive secularism' includes the view that the state should consider all India's religions as equal, implying that Hindus should not be treated any differently to minority religions (Malik and Singh, 1994, p. 62).

In conclusion, the beginning of Hindu nationalism from the 19th to the early 20th century can be seen as "Hindu Revivalism" based on Aryanism, which emerged as a form of

nationalism against British colonial rule. Through the introduction of Western Orientalism and primordialism in the late 19th century, nationalists attempted to build up a number of socio-religious movements, mainly among Hindus, in the name of uniting the nation. Accordingly, Hindu nationalists tried to rediscover the history and origins of Hindus under the influence of these two epistemologies – primordialism and Orientalism from Europe. Therefore, Hindu nationalism in this period can be seen as preparation for the construction of contemporary Hindutva.

From the 1920s, Hindu nationalism has started to intervene in politics, with Savarkar introducing the concept of 'Hindutva' amidst the political turmoil of this time in India. Savarkar's 'Hindutva' was an ideology based on Nazism and Fascism. This narrow-minded view, which involves the acceptance only of 'us', has become the fundamental idea of contemporary right wing nationalism.

The sudden rise of the military form of Hindu nationalism since the 1980s has been more apparent in the political field with the strategy of making a clear demarcation of Muslims as others or enemies. Accordingly, right wing forces have used military tactics, including training and education, to unite India under a homogenous Hindu identity. This Hindu-Muslim communal violence was most obviously sparked in the destruction of the Babri Masjid in 1992.

Based on this background of Hindu nationalism, the following chapter will analyse the psychological reasons making Hindu nationalists invoke conflict and violence towards Muslims.

Chapter II

Psychology of the Conflict between Hindus and Muslims

In colonial India, as the idea of nationalism gained ground amongst Indians in the late 19th century, the British government embarked upon a policy of divide and rule. It tried to aggravate the conflict between Hindus and Muslims by offering political rights to Muslims. Muslims formed the Muslim League to overcome their feeling of inferiority, and this in turn contributed to the rise of Hindu communalism. Eventually, the policy resulted in the Partition of India and Pakistan in 1947.

Partition most starkly exposed the hostility between Hindus and Muslims. It was the moment when the wound that Hindus had received in the Mughal era – when Muslims conquered Hindus – stood revealed.

Partition provided the opportunity to emphasise the definition of Muslims as ‘others’. Although Indian Muslims have lived in India for centuries, they are regarded by many Hindu nationalists as foreigners. This perception is derived from a fear that their real loyalties lie with Pakistan and the Middle East rather than with India (Kakar, 1995).

The purpose of this chapter is to analyse the psychological factors behind the serious communal conflicts and strong antagonism between Hindus and Muslims in India. The most prominent of these psychological factors is Chosen Trauma, a wound received by Hindus in Indian history. The depth of this wound is related to the historical background in which Hindus and Muslims were intertwined with each other. In explaining Hindu animosity towards Muslims, it is important to examine this history from the moment Hindus and Muslims met to their current collision.

The most significant wound received by Hindus in Indian history is first the period of Muslim conquest over Hindus and second the Partition of India and Pakistan in 1947.

The first part of the chapter will look into the event of the destruction of the Babri Masjid, which it will be argued took place as a result of these two historical events, through their impact as Chosen Trauma on the Hindu psyche.

The second part will discuss psychological factors that can explain what makes Hindus feel so much anger towards Muslims when the British also dominated India. It will be suggested that the answer is the 'proximity factor', which refers to the tendency to feel more threatened by and therefore also more hostile towards a nearer and larger group than towards a distant and smaller group. These feelings have been handed down the generations through education by families and relatives.

In last part of the chapter, Hindu resentment of Muslims due to the breaking of taboos such as eating beef and slaughtering cows, and from the favourable attitude of the Indian government, will be explained.

1. Chosen Trauma

History is sometimes portrayed as a memory of a wound or glory of the past, and it is sometimes used as a means for someone who belongs to that history to justify an action today. This part of the chapter will examine one of the ways in which such psychological methods have been used by Hindus to justify their actions by reigniting a historical wound or glory.

For Hindu nationalists, the Mughal era and the Partition of India and Pakistan are fundamental injuries or trauma that are a cause of ceaseless communal conflict between Hindus and Muslims. In the Hindu consciousness, these wounds were inflicted when their dream of India as a homogeneous 'Hindu rashtra' was destroyed by the invasion and partition of the country by Muslims, regarded as foreigners or others. For Hindus, Muslims are the main party to be blamed. In addition, Hindus are nervous about decreasing Hindu numbers and the possible extinction of the Hindu race.

This definition of Muslims as others or foreigners can be understood with psychoanalysis. The 'other' is constructed in the process of “the securitisation of subjectivity”, which according to Kinvall (2006, p.47) means “the search for one stable identity”, while the other turns into an abject as the unwanted parts of the self are projected onto the other. This is also a concern with Chosen Trauma, which are mental recollections of a wounded past, where historical memory becomes an important factor in a successful projection process.

Chosen Trauma can easily occur when people feel some new threat, such as globalisation or the threat of the extinction of the race. In other words, Chosen Trauma is increased in a situation of insecurity and anxiety. When people feel their identity is disturbed in a context in which the system or order is changing, abjection occurs. The abject is a key part of group formation when the familiar ‘stranger’ is suddenly recognised as a threat (Babur, 1952; Kinvall, 2006). This includes the process of securitising one’s identity by demonising the other, in which the self is sanctified. In dehumanising the other, the other is usually regarded as dirty. This construction of the self and the other will be discussed in more detail in the third chapter.

Chosen Trauma refers to the mental recollection of a tragedy in a group’s history and includes “information, fantasised expectations, intense feelings and defences against unacceptable thought” (Kinvall, 2006, p.56). The feeling of hate generated from the past wound becomes the link between the present, past and future, and this is passed down through successive generations. It is possible because a specific calamity influences the psychology of individuals as well as that of the group. According to Volkan (1997, p.36-49), large groups also mourn. This process includes building mental defences against painful and unacceptable feelings and thoughts. Humiliation becomes trauma and this Chosen Trauma is rediscovered, reinterpreted and reused, sometimes in a mythologised and intertwined form, by later generations.

To reignite Chosen Trauma means attempting to trace the lineage of a group back to a specific place, time and ancestor in order to establish an ideological heritage and to

suggest a direction for future actions. This is accomplished through the use of symbols, memories, myths and heritage, with the objective of discovering the 'original' event. Political leaders often invoke Chosen Trauma as a way of justifying their actions by reigniting ancient injuries or glories, using remodelled symbols and myths (Kinvall, 2006, p.56-59).

Both Chosen Traumas and Chosen Glories are closely related to images of the nation and religion. Traumas emerge at times when nationalism is strong, when there is a need to search for the nation since the nation is lost, such as following colonisation. In this situation, nationalists want to look for and draw images of their glorified past before colonisation, and this process is often rooted in religious discourse. Here, religion plays a powerful role in turning the abstract symbols on which religion draws into physical objects and tangible events. All religious revelations are connected to the nation – for example, religious miracles become national feasts and holy scriptures are reinterpreted as national epics. In this sense, religious and cultural rituals and ritualistic anniversaries can sustain the trauma and show the demonization of the other while sanctifying the self. In other words, by turning history into a Chosen Trauma or Chosen Glory, it becomes a 'naturalised' part of an identity group's definition of the self and the other (Ibid, p.58, 59).

The use of Chosen Trauma in relation to discourse about religion and the nation can be seen in the actions of contemporary saffron waves and the Ayodhya event. This chapter will analyse the trauma that have been chosen in Hindu consciousness from their history – the Mughal Era and the Partition of India and Pakistan – and discuss how these Chosen Trauma have become a psychological factor in provoking conflict between Hindus and Muslims.

It is argued that the demolition of the Babri Masjid resulted from the emotional wound received by Hindus based on the historical events of the Mughal era and the Partition of 1947, their Chosen Trauma.

1.1 Mughal Era

The first Chosen Trauma for Hindus is the Muslim invasion of the subcontinent from the beginning of the 8th century to the 19th century and the Indian Rebellion of 1857¹².

Broadly speaking, Muslim rule in India had six phases: (i) Arab rule in Sindh and Multan up to the 10th century; (ii) the Delhi Sultanate from Mohammed Ghori to Ibrahim Lodhi from the 11th to the 15th centuries; (iii) the Mughal empire from Babar to Jalaluddin Akbar; (iv) Jehangir to Aurangzeb from the 16th to the 17th centuries; (v) the Bahmani and other Shia Kingdoms in the South; and (vi) the post-Mughal period after Aurangzeb and the rise of Maratha, Sikh and European powers in India (Gopal, 1994, p.10).

According to Kakar (1995, p.25, 27) Hindu nationalists have tended to exaggerate the impact of ten centuries of Muslim domination. He also claims that Hindu nationalists tend to overemphasise the difference between Hindu and Muslim religious identities as well as doctrinal beliefs in India's pre-colonial past.

Indeed, Hindutva describes the Muslim invasion as a history full of wounds, because Hindus were severely exploited by Muslims and many Hindu temples were destroyed – their religion was strongly oppressed during that period. For that reason, Muslims are usually depicted as aggressive fundamentalists and regarded as having inherited the blood of their ancient dictatorial medieval rulers who demolished temples and forcibly converted Hindus to Islam (Hasan, 2005). Hindu nationalists narrate only their suffered suppression and damage in the Mughal period, without mentioning any Muslim dynasty that tried to harmonise relations between Hindus and Muslims or the golden age during the Mughal era.

20 The Indian Rebellion of 1857 emerged as a mutiny of sepoys of the British East India Company's army on 10 May 1857 in the town of Meerut, and soon developed into other mutinies and civilian rebellions, largely in the upper Gangetic plain and central India (Bandyopadhyay, 2004, pp.169-172). The rebellion is also referred as India's First War of Independence, the Great Rebellion, the Indian Mutiny, the Revolt of 1857, the Uprising of 1857, the Sepoy Rebellion, and the Sepoy Mutiny.

Similarly, there are many Hindu literary writers who describe the fate of Hindus oppressed during the Mughal era and who express concern at the harmful influence of Islam on their society by contrasting the glory of pre-medieval India with the cruel character of Muslim dynasties (Ibid., p.200). For example, Gopal Ganesh Agarkar, Gopal Hari Deshmukh, and Vishnushastri Chitambar state with one voice: “Muslims were bullies and fanatics, because violence and aggression was the essence of their civilization” (Hasan, 2005, p.200). Tilak, an extreme Hindu nationalist during the early 20th century, tried to strengthen the Maratha identity with reference to memories of Muslim repression and exploitation. His continuous effort to denounce Muslim rulers including Mahmud of Ghazna, Alauddin Khalji, Timur, Aurangzeb, and Ahmad Shah Abdali as tyrannical dynasties created a religious divide in Maharashtra society and influenced the core ideology of the Hindu Mahasabha and the RSS, which includes regarding Muslims as enemies (Bhatt, 2001; Hasan, 2005).

Hindi writers like Bharatendu Harishchandra, Pratap Narain Misra and Radha Charan Goswami expressed the same idea, portraying medieval rule as an atrocious period, referring to evidence of the rape and conquest of Hindu women, the slaughter of sacred cows, and the demolition of Hindu temples. Bharatendu even expresses their ‘wounds in the heart’, lamenting the fact that Aurangzeb’s mosque stood beside the sacred Vishwanath temple in Varanasi (Hasan, 2005, p.200). He also makes a strong comparison between the characters of Hindus and Muslims, depicting Hindus as subjugated, long-suffering, modest, and acting with courage and honour, while Muslims are shown as dominant, acting with brutality and cowardice, and intolerant (Ibid). Misra and Radha Charan also depreciate Muslim rulers with expressions such as “those mad elephants” or “those who trampled to destruction the flourishing lotus-garden of India”. They bitterly criticise Muslim brutality in slaughtering cows and show wariness about Hindu religious processions being kept under guard (Chandra, 1987, cited in Hasan, 2005,p.201).

The most well known Bengali writer, Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, is another critic of the Mughal era. His strong resentment of Muslims is clear from the following: “He was born to hate the Hindus, he found Hindu offences unpardonable” (Ibid., p.182). He

asserts that medieval India was a period of bondage and that Muslim rule failed to bring any development to India. He sees Islam as loaded with the deceptive, ridiculous, avaricious and immoral, and most of all, he thinks of it as a threat to the Hindu religion (Chatterjee, 1986, p.77). Nirad C. Chaudhuri, a member of the Bengali intelligentsia, agrees that Muslims tried to oppress the Hindu religion to spread their religion with the Quran. In addition, he reveals strong antagonism towards Muslims in his criticism of Aurangzeb's ruthlessness: "As we grew older we read about the Rajputs, the Marathas, and the Sikhs against Muslims, and of the intolerance and oppression of Aurangzeb" (N.C. Chaudhuri, 1987, p.226).

It is clear then that many Hindu writers during the late 19th century tried to create the impression amongst Indians that the Mughal era was a dark age of Muslims raping Hindu women and destroying Hindu temples and sacred places. As a result of their efforts, the Mughal era has become a "historical wound", and this trauma has had an effect in bringing about the destruction of Babri Masjid – the climax of the conflict between Hindus and Muslims.

In the contemporary age, the damage Hindus suffered during the Mughal era has become one of the saffron wave's key foundations, with the intention of justifying the demolition of the Babri Masjid.

After the destruction of the Babri Masjid, the BJP tried to legitimise their actions by highlighting the atrocities committed by Muslim rulers and indoctrinating Hindus with images of the violent invasion of the Muslims:

This historical background of the Mohamedan invasion and the provocative ocular reminders of that violent and barbaric invasion were completely ignored even after the partition of India. This neglect resulted in the failure to evolve a sound basis for Indian nationalism and durable relationships between Hindus and Muslims (BJP, 1993, quoted in Berglund, 2004, p.1069)

In the 'BJP's White Paper on Ayodhya and The Rama Temple Movement', the party also condemned Muslims with its description "Muslims are violent and barbaric" and its

characterisation of the Muslim period on the subcontinent as “...probably the bloodiest story in History”(quoted in Berglund, 2004, p.1069). In addition, it asserted that due to the advent of Islam in the subcontinent, the ancient harmony had been destroyed. It stated: “It is the invasion by fanatic religious statecraft that intervened and introduced inter-religious disharmony and hatred towards all indigenous faiths” (BJP, 1993, quoted in Davis, 2005, p.36).

In this way, the Sangh Parivar has sought to find a rationalisation for the demolition of the Babri Masjid by bringing up Babar, the founder of the Mughal dynasty. When the Sangh Parivar describes Babar, he is connected to his act of conquering iconoclasm and this action is regarded as an expression of indigenous principles in Islam, not as his personal act (Davis, 2005, p.36). As a result, Babar has become a symbol of the historical legacy of Muslim conquest and Hindus have used him to construct their antagonism towards Islam.

The ultimate purpose of the Sangh Parivar is to make a clear division of two communities in India – Hindus and Muslims – and to aggravate the relations between them. Towards this end, they contrast the golden age of the pre-Muslim period with medieval India in which there was a historical collapse as a result of the activities of Babar and the Muslim invasion. For this reason, they claim that Babar’s mosque had to be destroyed because it was the vestiges of this ancient historical wrong (Ibid, p.37).

As already discussed, Hindu nationalists from the late 19th century – the period in which Hindu nationalism began – to the contemporary saffron waves, have derogated the Mughal era as an indelible historical disgrace and memory of defeat. This effort by Hindu nationalists to make the Mughal era a historical wound for Hindus has become a Chosen Trauma and this Chosen Trauma has appeared in Hindus' dread of a “revival of medieval Muslim rule” (Kakar, 1995, p.53) and in the action of the demolition of the Babri Masjid, which is considered the physical residue of Muslim rule.

1.2 Partition

The partition of India and Pakistan in 1947 offended the Hindu mind and became one of their biggest historical trauma, since their dream of constructing one nation – a Hindu rashtra – after Independence from the British was destroyed.

India and Pakistan were created on the basis of the so-called two nation theory¹³, which came about as a result of Muslim desire to form a separate nationality and homeland with a distinct culture.

After the creation of these two new states, communal tensions and riots immediately engulfed the subcontinent. The communal violence after Partition not only killed thousands of people but also displaced many people from their homeland. This meant that many victims had to look for a new home some distance away (Raychaudhury, 2000, p.5653). Partition made their homeland hostile and this was a source of distress for them. It became an unforgettable trauma, not only for the victims who experienced severe cruelty such as physical violence, insult and sexual assault, but also for Hindus in general, who felt miserable due to the division of the Bharat Mata.¹⁴

The violence of Partition is the most shocking memory for Hindus and Muslims alike because of its scale and intensity. It has fixed the relation with a clear division between them. Undoubtedly, the partition of the nation into India and Pakistan strongly affected the Hindu consciousness.

Therefore, it cannot be denied that Partition has worked as a Chosen Trauma, which has had an impact on later riots – the destruction of the Babri Masjid and the Gujarat massacre (Kinvall, 2006, p.105).

13 The two-nation theory is the ideology that the primary identity of Indian Muslims is based on their religion, rather than their language or ethnicity, and therefore Indian Hindus and Muslims identity are separated-two distinct nationalities- regardless of ethnic or other commonalities (Winks W. Robin, Low M. Elaine M ,2001).

14 “Bharat Mata” (explained in Chapter III).

In fact, deeply rooted emotional trauma created by the division of India and Pakistan has given momentum to the development of stereotypes of the Indian Muslim as foreign and alien to India for Hindus. Van der Veer (1994) states that the 1947 Partition brought about the cognition among Hindu nationalists of the construction of the Muslim as other – not truly Indian – and gave this construction a strongly realistic aspect (Van der Veer, 1994, p.10).

This strong perception of Indian Muslims as others has even created hostility towards the Middle East, because Hindu nationalists believe that Pakistan has been Islamicized and the heartland of Muslims is the Middle East – not South Asia. The following Hindu narrative shows this Hindu fear:

The Muslims have weakened the Hindus because they have damaged a lot of temples. This happened already during the Moghuls...The construction of Pakistan destroyed India and now we are threatened by both the Middle East and the West. Only a stronger India can save us (interview of a Hindu male, quoted in Kinvall, 2006, p.161).

For this reason, when contemporary Hindu nationalists emphasise the role of the Muslim minority, they often bring up the trauma of Partition. Hindus force Indian Muslims to devote their loyalty towards India:

When the country was partitioned what did the Muslims say?...It was for them to decide at that time whether they wanted to live here, peacefully with Hindus or they wanted to go to Pakistan. If they have decided to live here they must respect the sentiments of the Hindus (quoted in Berglund, 2004, p.1069).

If we analyse the Chosen Trauma of Partition with reference to the Hindu psyche, it is related to Indian mythology because Indian mythology cannot be easily distinguished from the Hindu religion. Hindu feelings about Partition should be understood in this context. In their mind, it was not regarded simply as a division between the Muslim majority areas and Hindu majority areas, but as a ripping apart of Mother India. This perception was a spiritual and emotional shock to the Hindu consciousness and hence Partition remained an unforgivable and unforgettable humiliation for Hindus (Puri, 1993, p.2145).

The traumatic experience of Partition encouraged the rise of a potent feeling of distrust of each other as well as severe communal conflict between Hindus and Muslims thereafter. Needless to say, it has become a significant event in India, leading to a series of riots and hostilities involving Muslims (Puri, 1993; Van der Veer, 1994).

1.3 Result (Destruction of the Babri Masjid : Ayodhya Event)

The destruction of the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya is significant in the contemporary history of India for its social, political and religious aspects. This event can be said to have been the starting point of the rise of the communal Hindutva movement. It generated considerable social agitation, political trouble and public dispute in the subcontinent.

It was intended as retaliation for historical 'humiliations'. The Ram janmabhoomi movement aimed to reinforce the stature of Ram as a god, prophet, and national hero and of Ayodhya as a Hindu religious centre (Puri, 1993, p.2146). In addition, their message to the public was that the site of the Babri Masjid belonged to Hindus, so Hindus had the right to take it over from Muslims (Berglund, 2004, p.1067). Hindu nationalists tried to provoke an emotional reaction and aimed to mobilise feelings of solidarity among Hindus.

The Ramjanbhoomi movement had been in existence for several years. In April 1984, the VHP summoned Hindu religious figures to plan the liberation of three temple sites in north India – at Mathura, Varanasi and Ayodhya.

In 1990, BJP president L. K. Advani suggested a *rath yatra* to garner support for building a Ram temple in Ayodhya. The procession with Rama's chariot began in Somnath, on the Gujarat coast in western India on September 25, and covered some ten thousand kilometres across eight states over the next 35 days, reaching Ayodhya on October 30. On the way, the procession encountered considerable agitation and Advani and other leaders were arrested by the chief minister of Bihar on October 23. On October 30, a Hindu militia under the leadership of the VHP broke into the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya and caused some damage. On November 7, the BJP withdrew its support for the coalition

government led by the National Front and headed by Prime Minister V.P. Singh, which resulted in the fall of the government. With the success of Advani's *rath yatra*, the BJP became the main opposition party to the declining Congress and eventually came to power in Uttar Pradesh.

The final demolition of the Babri Masjid occurred two years later. It is from this time that communal riots began in earnest.

When the saffron wave planned to destroy this site and called for its return from Muslims, their actions were based on three primary beliefs. First, the god Rama was actually and physically born at that exact place. Secondly, an ancient Hindu temple marking Rama's birthplace formerly stood on the site. Thirdly, the Mughal conqueror Babar destroyed the temple in the early 16th century and constructed a mosque on the ruins (Davis, 2005, p.34).

These reinterpreted and uncertain myths and memories have become Chosen Trauma and have reinforced the perception of Muslims.

More particularly, for Hindu nationalists, the presence of the Babri Masjid was a reminder of the violence and intolerance of Muslims, their celebration of the Muslim conquest of Hindus, and the oppression and disunity of Hindus, all of which was ancient history that Hindu nationalists wanted to erase. This thinking of the Sangh Parivar was also expressed by the BJP, which described the Babri Masjid as follows: "purely and simply a symbol not of devotion and of religion but of conquest" (Berglund, 2004, p.1068).

This Hindu anger at Muslims is also visible in two publications that aimed to justify the destruction of Babri Masjid: the book *Ayodhya Guide* and the pamphlet *Angry Hindu! Yes, Why Not?*

Yes, certainly I am angry. And I have every reason to be angry. And it is also right for me to be so. Otherwise I would be no man. Yes for too long I have

suffered insults in silence. Until now I have been at the receiving end....My people have been kidnapped by the enemies. My numbers have dwindled...my goddess-like motherland has been torn asunder... My traditional rights have been snatched away from me (quoted in Nandy et al., 1995, 54).

Each step taken by the Ram janmabhoomi movement had symbolic value, taken not only with the intention of taking revenge for the humiliation of Hindus at the hands of foreign invaders but also to awaken a historical trauma.

Looking more closely at the *rath yatra*, the choice of Somnath as the starting point for the procession had meaning since it was also related to the Chosen Trauma of the Mughal period. It was the site of the most famous event of Muslim temple destruction in India by Muhmud of Ghazna in 1026. Somnath was understandably a target for the VHP (Davis, 2005, p.43).

The erection of the Rama temple also had symbolic meaning for Hindu nationalists. According to Kakar (1995), “The Rama temple is a response to the mourning of Hindu society: a mourning for lost honor, lost self-esteem, lost civilization, lost Hinduness”. More particularly, the Rama temple was an object for the projection of individual and group experiences of mourning. Historical places are often turned into sacred and national sites and serve as Chosen Trauma (Kinvall, 2006, p.59). Relating monuments and history is to some extent a natural instinct, according to Peter Homans (Kakar, 1995, p.202).

Engage the immediate conscious experience of an aggregate of egos by representing and mediating to them the lost cultural experiences of the past; the experiences of individuals, groups, their ideas and ideals, which coalesce into what can be called a collective memory. In this the monument is a symbol of union because it brings together the particular psychological circumstances of many individual’s life courses and the universals of their otherwise lost historical past within the context of their current or contemporary social processes and structures (quoted in Kakar, 1995, 202).

As already mentioned, Chosen Trauma denotes “an event which causes a community to feel helpless and victimised by another and whose mental representation becomes

embedded in the group's collective identity" (Kakar, 1995, p. 63). In India, Chosen Trauma is the result of the anger and hate Hindus feel towards their Muslim enemy or other.

In the formation of this Chosen Trauma, the construction of Muslims as others and alien is necessary. Prejudice is used as a means of differentiating one group from the other in order to maintain group identity.¹⁵ Dehumanisation also takes place, so that the enemy is gradually dehumanised over time (Kinvall, 2006, p.55). The tendency of Hindu nationalists to brand Muslims as dirty vermin, with reference to features such as facial hair and clothing type, or as aggressive sexualised beings, is related to this process of dehumanisation. Traits are sometimes exaggerated to connect unrelated habits like cow slaughter, crime, drugs and terrorism.

This construction of dehumanisation is accomplished through 'mythic discourse', as shown with the destruction of the Babri Masjid. The grounds on which Hindu nationalists justify their action of destroying the mosque are that they believe the Islamic ruler Babur destroyed a Ram temple and built a mosque on its ruins, based on the Indian mythology of Ram. This 'mythic discourse' can be seen as a strategy to unify a pan-Indian homogeneous identity in India by connecting the Hindutva version of Hinduism to Indian history and Indian national identity (Ibid., p.147). In addition, Hindu nationalists have used this mythic discourse to account for Partition as well as Muslim atrocities in the Mughal era.

Hindutva in the Ram janmabhoomi movement used a manipulated trauma of the past – their victimisation at the hands of Muslim conquerors and the partition of the country – with the objective of strengthening Hindu cohesiveness. After instigating the Ayodhya event, Hindu nationalists justified their communal violence, connecting their glorified and romanticised version of India's past with the elimination of Muslim history in India to the present.

¹⁵ This theory will be explained in Chapter IV in detail.

As has been shown, Chosen Trauma is the main psychological explanation for Hindu enmity towards Muslims. The collected memories of the Muslim conquest and the division of the country that was expected to unite after Independence are historical injuries in the Hindu mind and have become indelible trauma for them. Ultimately, these trauma caused the Ayodhya event, which was the culmination of the Hindu-Muslim conflict.

2. Proximity Factor

In fact, it was a policy of the British government that resulted in Partition and the creation of India and Pakistan, as has already been mentioned. British colonial rule also resulted in an increase in Christianity in the subcontinent. Why is Hindu animosity towards Muslims or Islam stronger than towards the British and Christianity? This part of the chapter analyses the psychological factors behind this curious eventuality.

Examining the difference in Hindu perception of the British colonial period and the medieval period of Mughal rule, it is clear that the former is regarded as relatively gentle, civilised and moral in character, while the latter is depicted as brutal, barbarous and ruthlessly oppressive of Hindus (Bhatt, 2001, p. 53).

Kakar agrees with this conclusion. In his opinion, the reason is that religion is a more important issue than political subjugation or economic exploitation in determining the reaction of Hindus (Kakar, 1995). In this way, the wound received by Hindus in the period of the Mughal Empire is deeper than that of the British period because Hindus think that the Hindu religious identity was more severely subjugated by Muslims as compared to the British.

Where has this difference come from? Kakar (1995, p. 28) suggests that proximity is the cause of “occasional simmering resentment and nagging friction” between Hindus and Muslims. The British remained strangers, while Muslims became others owing to their geographical position.

There is a related theory in the psychology of nationalism – inter-group hostility tends to be stronger with larger, nearer, and more powerful outgroups than with smaller, more distant and weaker ones (Rosenblatt, 1964, p.135). In the same way, nationalist or ethnocentric hostility more easily occurs in groups that are frequently encountered – near neighbours living within the group's territory – than in rarely encountered groups. Neighbouring groups are more likely to block goal responses than non-neighbouring groups (Ibid, p.138).

This theory is analysed in more detail by Freud. He says that the proximity factor determines the nature of emotional relations between men in general. He supports this idea with reference to Schopenhauer's famous simile of the freezing porcupine, which indicates that no one can tolerate too intimate an approach to his neighbour (Freud, 1960, p.33).

Neighbours always feel rivalry towards each other. Two families connected by a marriage or two neighbouring towns or countries often think themselves superior and the other inferior and their main rival. South and North Germans, the English and the Scots, Spaniards and Portuguese are good examples of this tendency for neighbours to feel hostility and contempt for each other (Ibid)

Dollard explains that when an in-group searches for the object of hostility of an out-group, that group will become the "favourite" out-group and the source of the most frustration. This will most likely be an adjacent group. In Campbell and Levine's study of intergroup relations (1961) correlated with ethnocentrism, they also mention intergroup hostility and stereotypes related to proximity. When the dominant group selects scapegoats, there is a high probability of targeting the group towards which the most guilt is felt and needs repressing. They say that this would probably be the most oppressed subordinate group, or the most infringed-against territorial neighbour – in other words, most likely an adjacent group.

This proximity theory can explain the relationship between Hindus and Muslims.

Moreover, due to strong family and kinship ties amongst Hindus, enmity felt by parents becomes a heritage that is handed down from the period of infancy and childhood (Kakar, 1995, p.39).

Such handed down Hindu antagonism toward Muslims is shown in Kakar's book, *The Color of Violence*. In this book, he shows his age-old feeling of strangeness towards Muslims in narratives such as the following: "I became aware that within myself 'the Muslim' was still somewhat of a stranger."

In this way, the hostility between Hindus and Muslims is constructed over a long period, being transmitted in teaching from parents, relatives and schools. As Campbell and LeVine explain, when in-groups want to present a bad-example of groups to children, the most effectively usable example in teaching can be a tangible, nearby group of customs (Campbell and Levine, 1961, p.94). This is because we can find and experience easily and immediately the bad or infringed aspects of adjacent groups.

The negative things in ourselves that we find in the other's character and that adjacent groups have are projected onto the other and then handed down to the next generation and transformed into an exaggerated rumour thanks to its rapid spread.

Proximity is one of the factors aggravating Hindu hostility towards Muslims, since this is in the nature of emotions between individuals as well as groups.

3. Other factors

The factors invoking conflict between Hindu and Muslims include various other factors like

3.1 Muslim Assault on Hindu Idols

The cow has often been the factors of stirring up communal violence in the modern era in India (Korom, 2000, p.189). Hindus are sensitive to the theme of the cow because it is

deeply embedded in the Hindu psyche. The cow has long been a symbol that deifies faith and belief in Hindu practice, and it has thereby become one of the most well-represented idols of the Hindu religion.

The symbolic importance of the cow in India can be traced back to the Vedic period. In a Vedic creation myth, cows are related to water, which is considered to be sacred and purifying. In other words, water has a holy image and the cow takes on this holiness. The depiction of the cow during this period is that she was identified with whole of the universe. This relationship between the cow and the universe is referred to many times in the *Rigveda* as well (Jacobi, 1914, quoted in Korom, 2000, p.187). In addition, the cow was seen as complete and self-contained in the *Atharvaveda* (Korom, 2000, p.187). Therefore, the cow also represented perfection for Hindus (Ibid., p.192). Due to her pure and sacred image, cows were offered as oblations for Vedic sacrifice. In particular, the five products of the cow (i.e., milk, curd, clarified butter, urine and dung) were used as the purest substances available for ritual. With these images, it is clear that the tendency for cows to be revered as deities or inhabited by deities started to emerge a long time ago (Korom, 2000, p. 187, 192; Van der Veer, 1994, p.88).

However, the cow was still being eaten. The idea that harming or slaughtering a cow should be considered a crime arose only in the fifth century BCE – the period of the emergence of Buddhism and Jainism – because of the notion of *ahimsa* (Korom, 2000, p.188).¹⁶

From 1880 to 1920 during the colonial period, the Hindu Cow Protection Movement grew up because there was a need to use the sacred image of the cow to unite the community. Right wing Hindu nationalists highlighted the importance of the cow, depicting Muslims as barbaric and dirty due to their consumption of beef.

16 Ahimsa is a term meaning to do no harm, non harming or nonviolence http://www.sanskrit.org/www/Hindu%20Primer/nonharming_ahimsa.html (accessed on 24th July, 2012). Ahimsa means kindness and non-violence towards all living things including animals. It became an basis of important tenet of Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism. Mohandas Gandhi strongly emphasized on this principle http://news.blaze.com/story/20071014111738_kuma.nb/topstory.html, (accessed on 24th July, 2012)

A publication of the VHP emphasises the importance of the cow, not only from the religious point of view as an object of worship and a symbol of Mother India but also from a practical point of view as a useful tool in agriculture and nutrition, thus promoting the cow as a means of developing the country (Hansen, 1999, p.104). Such efforts on the part of the VHP to promote the cow can also be seen in their tribal missionary activities. By teaching the usefulness of cow products such as milk and dung, they want to convince tribals to start to have faith. This missionary activity can be seen as a kind of cultural narcissism (Ibid).

Cows are a taboo in the Hindu psyche, registering on an emotional level. Because of its universality, taboo belongs to a deep level of the psyche and it can take many forms (O'Doherty, 1960, p.131). For example, there is a taboo on certain foods. According to Fortes (1966), the taboo on eating the totem animal is fundamental and is commonly presented in all the literature of the area. Therefore, a taboo on certain foods and related myths has come down through the generations. The ban on eating often functions as a daily reminder of identity with respect to other individuals and to society in general (Ibid).

In this respect, the Muslim habit of eating beef and slaughtering cows could be one of the most crucial factors in Hindu resentment of Muslims. According to Kakar (1995), Muslim beef eating and Hindu repulsion of the practice creates a prominent barrier between the two communities. Hindus cannot share a meal with Muslims and consider their eating habits disgusting, making it difficult for them to be close to each other. Due to their strong aversion towards eating forbidden and tabooed foods, Hindus make an image of Muslims as animals, with characteristics including ferocity, uncontrolled sexuality and a dirtiness by inner pollution.

In 1924, the British army psychiatrist Owen Berkeley-Hill explained two main factors behind the Hindu-Muslim conflict. The first was the 'motherland complex' of Hindus, referring to the rape of the motherland – Bharat Mata – during the Muslim conquest of India. The second obstacle he mentioned was the Muslim slaughter of cows. According to Berkeley, the acts of Muslims violate Hindu taboo; cow slaughter is understood as

showing off Muslim victories, and it could be a major factor behind Hindu hatred of Muslims (Ibid, p.140). In other words, Hindu anger is derived basically from this Muslim assault on their lifestyle and on their idols (Ibid, p.27).

This Hindu disgust at Muslim eating of beef is shown in many Hindus narratives. For Pardis, beef eating is the most grave sin – over and above marriage to a Muslim or conversion to Islam (Kakar, 1995, p.139). In Pardis' interview:

Bada gosht (beef) is their favorite dish. If any of us even touches it he must have a bath. All Muslims eat bada ghost. That is why we keep ourselves away from them. We do not even drink water in their homes (quoted in Kakar, 1995, p.139).

In fact, from the 19th century, there has been a ceaseless effort against cow slaughter in the Hindu nationalist movement. Similarly, during the Ramjanmabhoomi movement, the following slogan was written on the wall: 'It is the religious duty of every Hindu to kill those who kill cows' (Nandy et al., 1995, p.53). Whenever Hindus face a crisis, they recall the importance of the close relationship between Hindus and the cow and thereby increase the feeling of fury in Hindu emotions regarding Muslim eating of beef and slaughtering of cows.

However, Hindus do not feel as much hostility towards Christians – who also kill cows – as towards Muslims. This is because they do not think Christians kill cows with the intention of insulting Hindus (Kakar, 1995, p.141). This shows Hindus' hatred of and bias against Muslims has been deep-seated for a long time in their intertwined history.

3.2 The Government's Attitude Towards Muslim

The Government's pro-Muslim attitude also increases Hindu anxiety and indignation because it makes Hindus feel left out in their homeland.

In April 1985, an important judgement by the Supreme Court of India – the so-called Shah Bano case – gave Hindus a shock. It resulted in social reverberations and sectarian debate on the position of the Muslim minority in Indian society.

The story began with a Muslim woman Begum Shah Bano who had been divorced by her husband in 1975 after 43 years of marriage. She filed a suit claiming her right to maintenance under Section 125 of the Criminal Procedure Code, which applies to all communities regardless of their separate personal laws. The case was finally decided by the Supreme Court in April 1985 in favour of Begum Shah Bano. This Supreme Court judgement triggered a country-wide reaction and also questioned the legal practice which allows separate civil laws for the various religious communities and argued for a uniform civil code (Berglund, 2004, p.1067). In fact, there have been few issues on which Indian Muslims have reacted so strongly since Independence (Hasan, 1989, p.44). There were strong protests by the Muslim community in support of Muslim civil laws, especially by the religious leadership. Many sections of Muslim society, including Jamait-ul-Ulema-i-Hind, the Jamait-e-Islami and the Muslim League, condemned the judgement and formed a movement in the name of interference in Muslim Personal Law. Their basic argument was that no legislative or executive authority could alter Muslim Personal Law because it was based on the Shariah, which is divine and immutable. By referring to the Shariah as a central symbol, they intended to preserve Muslim identity and make an idiom for integration (Ibid, p.44, 45). Through this movement, Muslim aimed to protect their identity and minority position. In fact, the Muslim demand for restoring Muslim Personal Law was a moment that showed their ability to maintain solidarity in the community. For this reason, Hindus could not help feeling threatened, observing Muslims' immediate group cohesion.

At the same time, Hindu nationalists acclaimed the Supreme Court's decision and fiercely criticised the Rajiv Gandhi government when it nullified the verdict by introducing The Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act 1986, which upheld Muslim Personal Law.

This intervention by the Indian government was based on the assumption that the majority of Muslims were unhappy with the judgement made by the Supreme Court, considering it to be a threat to their religious identity. This effort to appease Muslim indignation was made under the ideology of secularism, which intends to protect all religions (Ibid, p.47, 48).

It provoked strong resistance among Hindus. Hindus condemned the Government's decision, describing it as "abject surrender to Muslim fundamentalism"(Puri, 1993, p.2146). Most of the backlash was led by the BJP. The BJP attempted to mobilise Hindu sentiment by arguing that the Shah Bano episode would reopen Muslims reservations about joining the mainstream in India and by saying that the Government's policy demonstrated partiality for the appeasement of Muslims (Ibid.).

The party argued that its demands were not related to its anti-Muslim propensity, but that they were based on the need for the principle of equal treatment. However, its argument just presented the intolerant attitude of Hindus – who cannot accept minorities – and the Hindu nationalist ideal of cultural nationalism (Berglund, 2004, p.1067).

This Hindu sentiment in the Shah Bano case was also seen in interviews of Hindus. They expressed this “unfair treatment” as “behaving like a stepmother toward the other” (Kakar, 1995, p.136). According to Kakar, the bitter complaints of Hindus about the Government are connected to the psychology of “collective sibling rivalry, of the group-child’s envy and anger at the favoring of an ambivalently regarded sibling by the parent” (Ibid., p.137).

The threat felt by Hindus also included the fear of fast growing Muslim power in the subcontinent. Hindus felt it was unfair because Muslims were favoured and supported by the state in India as well as in Pakistan. In other words, the growing assertion of Muslims within the country and the Islamic resurrection in the Muslim world increased Hindu resentment in their consciousness (Puri, 1993, p.2146).

Therefore, the Shah Bano case strengthened Hindu determination to continue Hindu-Muslim riots so long as the Government continues to mollify Muslims and makes rules against the Hindu majority.

In conclusion, this chapter has looked into the causes of the conflict between Hindus and Muslims by analysing the reasons behind the strong Hindu hostility towards Muslims.

The most prominent psychological factor is Chosen Trauma. Hindu nationalists have constantly talked about how they were hurt in the Mughal era referring to how many people were killed by Muslims and how they indiscriminately destroyed Hindu temples. In addition, it has also been argued that their wound derived from their idea that Bharat Mata was ripped up by Partition in 1947. They have argued that Partition was unfair to Hindus, saying “we gave Pakistan to Muslims, but the remainder is for us” (Ko et al., 2006).

These historical wounds have become Chosen Trauma and this has been one of the crucial factors in bringing about constant communal violence, which reached its peak with the demolition of the Babri Masjid. The correlation between the destruction of the Babri Masjid and the trauma of the past was well presented in Hindu use of historical myth and symbols.

They legitimised their action and strengthened Hindu group cohesion in the Ramjanabhoomi movement and the construction of the Rama temple, depicting Muslims as barbaric foreigners and others, as well as despising the past of Muslims. In this process, historical places have been turned into holy and mythologised venues, and these myths have been romanticised and a fabricated past has become truth.

The use of historical trauma has not just ended in lamentation or grief for the old days, but has instead become a means of enhancing their political position. The Ayodhya event, which was the climax of the conflict between Hindus and Muslims, broke out as a result of this situation.

However, it is not only Muslims who are alien to Hindus. India was ruled by the British and actually Partition of India and Pakistan occurred under the influence of British colonial policy. So why do Hindus have the most serious antagonism toward Muslims and Islam, not towards Christians and the British?

It is suggested that the proximity factor provides an answer to this question from the psychological perspective. In the psychology of nationalism, nearer and larger groups are more threatening than more distant and smaller groups in intergroup relations. Applying this argument to the relationship between Hindus and others, it would be expected that Hindus would feel more threatened by Muslims and Islam than by Christianity and the British because geographically Muslims live closer than the British and they have interacted closely with Hindus for a much longer time. In this way, the existence of Muslims in the homeland is the biggest intimidatory factor for Hindus because it is easier to counter the influence or bad aspects of Muslim.

Hindu consideration of Muslims as iconoclast because of their habit of eating beef and killing cows and the Indian government's pro-Muslim attitude were offered as additional factors provoking Hindu enmity. This psychology created by particular historical events as described above means that Hindus cannot help being more hostile towards Muslims than towards others. Undoubtedly this hostility has been main culprit in evoking serious communal violence between the two communities.

The question then is what psychology Hindus use for mobilising their group appeal and achieving their goal – to defeat Muslims – in the militarised communal conflict between them that has been going on since the 1980s? The next chapter will examine how Hindus defend and secure their identity in the globalised context.

Chapter III

Using Psychology to Enhance Hindu Group Identity in the Context of Modernisation and Globalisation

Personality changes with the onset of modernisation and globalisation, especially with regard to the security of identity and identity formation, since globalisation and modernisation can be menacing forces for individuals – they may feel previously inexperienced threats in this new environment.

According to Barker (1999, p.35), modernity is ‘an uncontrollable engine of enormous power that sweeps away all that stands before it’. With regard to characteristics in the changed situation between the pre-modern and modern, Vanaik (1997) questions the relationship between communalism and modernity. We may find an answer in the construction of contemporary Hindu nationalism. Kakar (1995) claims that the current religious revivalism or fundamentalism in India is a phenomenon that results from a reaction against modernity. During the modernisation process, many people feel new emotions while adjusting to the new environment. Among these new emotions, the feeling of loss is the most common. Individuals can easily experience the feeling of loss because modernisation eliminates old attachments as a result of population movements including continuous migration and wipes out traditional identities.

Globalisation also contributes to making people feel the emotion of alienation. As society changes rapidly and the boundaries of territories become vague, people want to secure their identity to get rid of existential anxiety about global forces. Modernisation and globalisation give rise to feelings of insecurity and people try to overcome such feelings of insecurity by searching for new secure identities (Kinvall, 2006).

The sudden rise of Hindu nationalism since the 1980s is also related to the influence of globalisation and modernisation. With the maelstrom of domestic politics resulting from

the misuse of ethnic and religious identities in party politics, Hindu nationalism has tried to firmly establish Hindu identity in the context of globalisation and modernisation. In other words, the socio-psychological change processes of individuals and groups as a consequence of modernisation and globalisation are closely related to the reason for mobilising and creating a new Hindu identity. Therefore, we can say that the emergence of forceful and militant Hindu nationalism is one way of strengthening the security of their identity in a rapidly changing world.

From the perspective of nationalism, the more a group's members share – such as language, religion and common historical origin – the greater is the nationalism of the group. Also, the greater the group nationalism: 1) the greater is the group homogeneity of attitudes, beliefs and ways of behaving; 2) the greater is the group cohesiveness; and 3) the greater are the pressures for homogeneity and cohesiveness (Rosenblatt, 1964, p.137, 140).

In accordance with this general theory about nationalism and group cohesiveness, Hindu nationalists in the context of globalisation since the 1980s have attempted to firm up their identity to increase group cohesiveness – dreams of creating a homogeneous India as a Hindu nation – using various psychological strategies. The most important of these strategies is the clear demarcation between the self and the other by abjection of the other, which will be discussed in the first part of this chapter. Deepened Hindu hostility towards Muslims as a result of Chosen Trauma is sharpened as a result of the boundary between the Hindu-self and the Muslim-other. The definite distinction between the self and the other is a natural process in the formation of individual and group identity. Hindu nationalists use this psychology to assert their group identity.

The second part will consider Hindu nationalists' strategy of emphasising group superiority and group loyalty to increase self-esteem, by inculcating prejudice and implanting bad images of the other in the process of drawing a distinction between the self and the other.

Finally, we will examine the Sangh Parivar's method of mobilising Hindu group solidarity through the reinterpretation of history and myth, and through the mythical and historical invention of symbols, as expressed in events related to the destruction of the Babri Masjid – in which they drastically showed their homogeneous ideology of cultural nationalism.

In this way, this chapter aims to look into how Hindu nationalists protect their identity from the new threat of globalisation, with reference to the historical events we have already dealt with in the previous chapter, especially in terms of their psychological strategies such as the abjection of the other and the manipulation of history.

1. Clear Boundary between “Us” and “Other”

Category formation in the construction of identity is a natural instinct for all human beings. Examining the process of the construction of the self and the other in detail, firstly, the individual accepts and creates the self by defining himself or herself in relation to others, perceiving similarities and differences between the self and the other. This process of division between the self and the other in the individual is also adopted and proceeds to the production of group formation (Kinvall, 2002, 2006).

This psychology of category formation to resist the other is also used by Hindu nationalists in strengthening group identity in the context of globalisation. Many narratives and propaganda works prove their intention to clearly divide the Hindu-self and the Muslim-other.

According to Tajfel's (1981) social identity theory, individuals tend to favour their own group (in-group) in relation to other groups (out-group) because groups offer their members self-esteem by giving group members a sense of belonging. For that reason, group members try to elevate the status of the in-group in relation to the out-group. In this way, the group in relation to the other and the role the other plays in its discourse is important for group existence (Hogg and Abrams, 1988; Kinvall, 2006, Tajfel and Turner, 1979).

As has already been mentioned, the formation of the other is an innate process for human beings and group members inherently tend to classify groups as in-groups and out-groups through learning from their birth and early experience. Individuals move from self to other-orientation over time, meaning that individuals are socialised. In this regard, Ross (1991, p.177) states that "sociality promotes ethnocentric conflict, furnishing the critical building block for in-group amity and out-group hostility."

In this process, what the self experiences as negative and unfavourable is projected onto the other and this makes the image of the other dehumanised, strange, alien and externalised from us. It means that the stranger or the foreigner is commonly perceived as negative. George Simmel (1971), refers to the stranger as the sociologically marginal (cited in Kinvall, 2006, p. 44)

Like Simmel, Oommen (1994), (as cited by Kinvall, 2006, p.46) also refers to the foreigner and the stranger, classifying others in four categories. The first is 'the equal other', who is different but not subservient to the self. The second category is 'the internal other', which refers to marginalised groups such as women or certain established immigrants. The third group consists of 'unacceptable' societal groups like homosexuals or particular religious groups. Finally, 'the outsider, the non-equal other' constitutes the fourth category, which may include non-established immigrants or religious groups of foreign origin. The last category is considered to be essentially different from the other three categories because the members of the other three categories are likely to exist within the system, while members of the last are not.

It seems as though this fundamental prejudice against the foreigner and the stranger stems from differences in religion and culture. This prejudice, derived from differences in cognition, mostly brings about xenophobia, ethnocentrism, anti-semitism and racism, even more so when one group holds more power and resources and uses 'differences' to control and marginalise others (Ibid, p.47).

From the 1920s, which is the period of the emergence of the Hindutva ideology and the creation of the Sangh Parivar, this stigmatisation of the other has been a key means of mobilising Hindu identity and group power. Hindu militants including the VHP and the RSS have taken the lead in generating strong feelings of hostility towards the ‘threatening other’ as well as in stigmatising it (Jafflerot, 1999, p.201).

Speeches of BJP members during the *rath yatra* also demonstrate the clear boundary between Hindus and Muslims, referencing hostility derived from the historical past:

“Are you children of Babar or Ram, Akbar or Rana Pratap, Auranzeb or Shivaji? Those who do not answer this question properly have no right to be in this country”. (Padmanabhan and Sidhva, 1990, Quoted in Davis, 2005, p.37).

Although over 90 percent of Indian Muslims are in fact descendants of indigenous converts, we can see from the above that Hindu nationalists try to totally exclude Muslims from national citizenship (Ludden, 2005, p.37). On further examination, it is clear that this Hindu clear-cut demarcation of the Muslim as the other is influenced by families and by their own group from childhood while accumulating the in-group’s ‘emotional investment’ in bad images of Muslims (Kakar, 1995, p.54).

The construction of the other is becoming more necessary in the context of globalisation because people feel their identity is under greater threat. In these new circumstances, abjection becomes the main process in collective identity formation because when the familiar stranger is suddenly recognised as a threat, it occurs more easily (Kinvall, 2006, p.78). The process of ‘othering’ is essential to feel security and protection in times of rapid change such as globalisation. Nationalism and religion help in the process by debasing the other (Ibid). Furthermore, “nationalism and religion both provide the idea of a ‘home’, it is easy to give protection and security from the stranger and the abject-other” (Kinvall, 2006, p.79). Therefore, nationalism and religion become more powerful in times of crisis by providing unity, security and a sense of belonging and thereby arouse deep attachments towards religious and national identity (Ibid, p.79).

In this sense, the emergence of militant Hindu nationalism since the 1980s can be seen as the result of strengthening Hindu solidarity to cope with threat of globalisation. In this process, Hindu extremists have accused those who are not included in the Hindu family – especially Muslims – of being foreigners and not of Indian origin, as well as projecting their unwanted features onto them. Ultimately, they have tried to construct a majoritarian religious nationalism, which is always defined in negative terms, by stressing only ‘Hindu’ identity as a trump card identity and ignoring other identity construction (Ibid., p.105). Such a pursuit of Hindu majoritarianism is accomplished through the clear demarcation of the self and the demonised other.

Summing up, as was discussed in the first chapter, Hindu nationalists started drawing clear boundaries with Muslims from the 1920s when the ideology of Hindutva was created by Savarkar. The perception of the Muslim as the other and a stranger has been developed since they feel intimidated by Muslims as a result of the trauma of the Mughal conquest and the Partition of India and Pakistan. This is based on the theory that the othering process in the formation of individual and group identity is more present in moments of crisis. Accordingly, Hindu nationalists have fixed stronger boundaries between the Hindu-self and the Muslim-other since the 1980s as threats to both society and politics have emerged due to domestic and international changes, including globalisation and modernisation.

This clear boundary between Hindus and Muslims was a useful psychological strategy during the destruction of the Babri Masjid, which represents the climax of the conflict between Hindus and Muslims. They intensified fear and hatred towards Muslims by dredging up trauma from the Mughal Empire in addresses during the procession to Ayodhya and presented savagery and brutality as traits of Muslims as well as of Islam itself, in particular criticising Muslim consumption of beef. This Hindu nationalist demonisation of Muslims is associated with the theory that when group leaders want to increase group nationalism, they often exploit fear or hatred of out-groups.

In this way, the demarcation of the self and the other by ceaselessly comparing tolerant Hindus and intolerant, barbarous Muslims has been the most effective psychological strategy in strengthening Hindu group cohesion in Hindu nationalism in the rapid changes of the globalisation context.

2. Intense Group Loyalty and Group Superiority

Group narcissisms, a feeling of civilisational superiority and the different religious faiths have also contributed to amplifying the quarrel between Hindus and Muslims. Hindus are anxious that Muslim loyalty is to Islam rather than the Indian state, as we can assume from its slogans “Babar ki santan, jao Pakistan (children of Babar, go to Pakistan)”. The rise of Muslim power in the subcontinent makes Hindu nationalists fear for their status, so they have attempted to intensify Hindu group loyalty and build themselves up.

The Sangh Parivar is an example of the attempt to create a vision of the “grandiose self” of Hindu culture and spirit, while degrading that of Muslims. The saffron flag and saffron colour are regarded as the symbols of the Hindu nationalist movement and also means of expressing their superiority by marking Hindu areas and also putting them on Muslim tombs and mosques. They have shown their veneration of the flag in religious rituals and processions, considering it a symbol of ideological integration (Hansen, 1999, p.108).

Such group superiority and group loyalty arises from feelings of attachment towards the group. These feelings are important psychological constituents in the construction of nationalism because they strengthen the sense of belonging and thereby increase group superiority and loyalty (Druckman, 1994,; Brock & Atkinson, 2008).

For this reason, group leaders desire to increase the nationalism of the group and share more in-group members to enhance attachment to the group. One Hindu nationalist strategy is also associated with this theory – their promotion of Sanskrit as a national symbol. Since language is one of the most important factors in delimiting a national or ethnic group (Rosenblatt, p.137; Freud, 1960, p.65), they have used Sanskrit as a tool to demarcate Hindus and Muslims as well as a symbol of unity and devotion. The prayers of the RSS *shakhas* are performed in Sanskrit and they consistently stress the significance of “harmony, culture, *dharma*, self-perfection through selfless service to society”. In the colloquial style of the RSS, they express affection for the nation and the Hindu group

using words like “devotion”, “love”, “attachment”, “commitment”, and “service” (Hansen, 1999, p.109).

It seems as though this Hindu nationalist strategy comes from the theory that the more alike people are, the easier it is to engender loyalty and cohesion. Also, conversely, the stronger the loyalty, the more people have similar views and support similar strategies (Druckman, 1994, p.50), so they have also tried to increase loyalty to unite the group as well as to make Hindus more homogeneous.

Group loyalty and cohesion increase “group-think”. Members of the group start to excessively protect their group and not accept any facts counter to their own image of the group (Ibid, p.56). This can make in-group members have narrow views and thereby create out-group bias as well as overestimations of and overconfidence in their own vis-à-vis the other group. Furthermore, it arouses emulation and animosity towards the other group. This in-group bias encourages in-group members to create their own world and place themselves in that world.

According to Tajfel’s social identity theory (1981), an individual’s self-esteem is more enhanced by making a positive comparison between his or her own and another group. In this process, they think they are better than another group. In other words, to distinguish one’s own group from others is the most essential process in increasing self-esteem and loyalty. This process makes people feel positive about themselves and provides a reason why one belongs to a particular group (Brock & Atkinson, 2008).

An individual’s social identity is intimately connected to the status of the groups to which he or she belongs. Nationalism links an individual’s self-esteem to the esteem in which the nation is held because people can obtain a sense of identity and self-esteem through their national identification (Brock & Atkinson, 2008; Druckman, 1994). Accordingly, people are motivated to support the goal of the country and want to increase the value of the nation in order to increase their self-esteem. Therefore, since an individual’s self-identity is determined depending on to which group he or she belongs, in-group members

strive to increase self-esteem by projecting bad images onto other groups and creating prejudice.

Such an individual's loyalty to a group is important because it leads to collective action and antagonism towards other groups. According to Druckman (1994, p.49, 57), group loyalty can cause intergroup conflict, justification of one's own behaviour and a lack of good thoughts about others. In addition, in-group bias, competition and hostility can also follow. When members of a group arrive at a consensus on the strategy or goal, these groups become more hostile and competitive towards other groups.

In particular, in the case of militant groups, they are often formed in two situations: when an existing group experiences a sense of loss of identity in times of rapid change like war, urbanisation, migration or modernisation; and when leaders can transform this experience into a positive if desperate projection of affection onto themselves and an ideological cause that can produce a collective 'grandiose self' – a community organised around the enjoyment of a shared secret, an inexpressible core or spirit (Hansen, 1999, p.107, 108). Militant groups need stronger cohesion, so they tend to more strongly demonise others.

The militant Hindu nationalism that has emerged since the 1980s, as is clear in the strategy and narratives of the Sangh Parivar, has stressed the 'grandiose of self' and 'superior to other' by means of the projection of prejudices onto the other and a clear demarcation of Muslims. Although the feeling of group superiority and the grandiosity of the self is part of the natural process of individual and group identity formation, this strategy in militant Hindu nationalism is not just used to increase self-esteem but also exploited as a weapon to justify their violence against Muslims.

In this way, the emphasis on group superiority and group loyalty is a crucial psychological tactic for Hindu nationalists with the desire to create a homogeneous Hindu identity as well as to establish a stable status for Hindus in the face of the threat embodied by the scramble – accelerated since the onset of globalisation – for resources.

3. Re-interpretation of History and Myth

The Sangh Parivar has steadily drawn the past of history and myth into its efforts to unite Hindu identity using a clear demarcation of the other and emphasising group superiority and loyalty by discriminating against the other. This strategy of the Sangh Parivar can clearly be seen both before and after the destruction of the Babri Masjid in 1992.

As seen in many debates on Indian history between secular and Hindu-front historians, since the emergence of Hindu nationalism in the 19th century, Hindu nationalists have constantly made an effort to reinterpret the past by fostering historians and archaeologists who can support their assertions officially. Debates on Indian history are especially problematic in elementary and high school texts. The BJP has tried to write textbooks with the aim of glorifying the Hindu past and denouncing the Mughal era in Indian history, renaming Indian cities and regions, and forging a relationship between the Hindu religion, national identity and citizenship (Kinvall, 2006, p.139).

The purpose of manipulating history is to make their history splendid through searching for chosen glory and glorifying their cultural, historical memory.

Myths are frequently used not only for constructing and mobilising an identity group, but also for constructing the other (Ibid, 59). According to Hansen (1999, p.90), the purpose of the founding myth is first to demonstrate to followers and potential supporters that the movement is still worth endorsing, and secondly to realise and perform the vision the movement is seeking permanently and thus create “a sort of counterculture, a counterlanguage, a counterinterpretation of history” (Ibid, p. 90).

As argued by Coningham and Lewer (2000, as cited in Kinvall, 2006, p.59), verifying archaeology and historical evidence is a key process when the solidarity of an identity is needed. For this reason, more manipulation and reinterpretation of historical and archaeological evidence to advocate claims and rights for some identity group occurs in situations of violent conflict. Such manipulation is more viable if mass education and

mass media of communication exist. Therefore, many nationalist leaders often interfere in the field of education or mass communication to consolidate their group identity (Hayes, 1926), and Hindu nationalists are no exception.

This section will show how Hindu nationalists manipulate and reinterpret history, myth and symbols through mass education and mass media to consolidate their group identity. It will look first at the strategy of the VHP/RSS using symbols in the *yatra* processions that preceded the demolition of the Babri Masjid, and second at Hindu nationalists' new application of old symbols of "Bharat Mata". Finally, this section will consider the broadcast of the "*Ramayana*" in 1987.

3.1 The Strategy of the VHP and the RSS

Militant Hindu nationalist forces such as the VHP and the RSS have attempted to create a homogeneous Hindu identity by means of the distortion of history and the transformation of the ordinary into national symbols in *yatra* processions. In this strategy of history distortion, the ultimate aim has been to enhance self-esteem and thereby justify their present and future actions, by removing a blot and recreating their glorious past.

With relation to their aim for redescribing the past, Sen (2005, p.62-3) finds two specific characteristics of contemporary Hindu politics. The first is that Hindutva forces have become keenly aware of the importance of gathering dispersed power in their various components and mobilising fresh loyalty from potent recruits. In his opinion, their effort at creating India's history as a 'Hindu civilisation' is intended to increase the cohesiveness of the diverse members of the Sangh Parivar. The second reason is because they want to receive support from the Indian diaspora who have a general Indian nationalist attachment, particularly in North America and Europe. Hindu nationalists believe that reinventing history from a Hinduised point of view helps in mobilising support from the Indian diaspora and that their power would be the foundation from which they could change a narrow Hindu identity into a more general Indian identity.

With this purpose of rewriting history, Hindu communal forces have tried to extend their influence not only in public organisations such as the bureaucracy, police, media, the education system and the judiciary, but also at the grassroots level among children (Mukherjee et al., 2008, p.18). For many years, the RSS has taken the lead in perverting the truth of history in primary and secondary school textbooks, with its Saraswati Shishu Mandirs¹⁷ and Vidya Bharati primary and secondary schools, and its *shakhas*. The major content of their history distortions include disparagement of Muslims and Christians and descriptions of the medieval period as one of the great dark ages in Indian history, while elevating the Hindu civilisation. For example, one of the textbooks in use at the primary level portrays the rise of Islam in the following manner:

Wherever they went, they had a sword in their hand. Their army went like a storm in all the four directions. Any country that came that was destroyed. Houses of prayers and universities were destroyed. Libraries were burnt. Religious books were destroyed. Mothers and sisters were humiliated. Mercy and justice were unknown to them (Extracts from Gaurav Gatha Gatha for Class IV, 1992, quoted in Mukherjee et al., 2008, p.23)

Delhi's Qutb Minar is even today famous in his (Qutbuddin Aibak's) name. This had not been built by him. He could not have been able to build it. It was actually built by emperor Samudragupta. Its real name was Vishnu Stambha...This Sultan actually got some parts of it demolished and its name was changed (Ibid.)

In this way, Hindu communal groups have spread groundless untruths, such as that the Qutab Minar was built by Samudragupta, in the name of spreading patriotism. Looking into this matter, the National Steering Committee on Textbook Evaluation came to the conclusion that "the main purpose which these books would serve is to gradually transform the young children into...bigoted morons in the garb of instilling in them patriotism" (Mukherjee & Mukherjee, 2001, p.33).

Another example of the Vidya Bharati Sansthan publications also shows the efforts of Hindu forces to spread communal and chauvinistic cultural nationalism, and the

¹⁷ The influence of Saraswati Shishu Mandirs, the first of which was started in 1952 in the presence of the RSS chief, M.S. Golwalkar, has now multiplied manifold. It will be in order, to first examine what these 'Mandirs' or 'temples' of learning dish out in the name of education (Mukherjee et al., 2008, 20).

legitimation of the policies of the RSS among the young generation. In these books, India is portrayed with narcissistic expressions such as the 'original home of world civilisation' (Mukherjee et al., 2008, p.25).

India is the most ancient country in the world. When civilization had not developed in many countries of the world, when people in those countries lived in jungles naked or covering their bodies with the bark of trees or hides of animals, Bharat's Rishis-Munis brought the light of culture and civilization to all those countries. (extracts from the report on the publications of Vidya Bharati No.9, quoted in Mukherjee et al., 2008, p.25)

The following are some of the examples of their illogical claims of 'Hindu civilisation as the cradle of world civilisation':

- i) India is the mother country of ancient China. Their ancestors were Indian Kshatriyas...
- ii) The first people who began to inhabit China were Indians.
- iii) The first people to settle in Iran were Indians (Aryans).
- iv) The popularity of the great work of the Aryans-Valmiki's *Ramayana*- influenced Yunan (Greece) and there also the great poet Homer composed a version of the *Ramayana*.
- v) The languages of the indigenous people (Red Indians) of the northern part of America were derived from ancient Indian languages.
(extracts from the report on the publications of Vidya Bharati No.9, quoted in Mukherjee et al., 2008, p.25)

This chauvinistic view is also presented with regards to the origin of Aryans. In order to separate Muslims and Christians from "us" and treat them as strangers, the RSS argues in these textbooks that 'Aryans', whom the RSS regards as true Indians, did not migrate from outside India but originated in India (Mukherjee et al., 2008, p.31).

This attack by Hindu nationalists on the view of secular history began after 1977, when the Jana Sangh took power for the first time in the Indian government. They tried to prohibit the contributions of some respected historians to school textbooks for the National Council of Education, Research and Training (NCERT), but these moves were defeated thanks to a national protest movement (Mukherjee & Mukherjee, 2001, p.33). However, on the coming to power of the BJP as leaders of the coalition government at the

Centre in 1998, the RSS achieved their goal not only in 14,000 Vidya Bharati schools with 80,000 teachers and 1,800,000 students but also in other institutions such as universities, schools, colleges and even the University Grants Commission (UGC) (Mukherjee et al., 2008, p. 28-9).

Besides these distortions of history in school textbooks, the VHP/RSS have attempted another strategy to mobilise Hindu identity in the destruction of the Babri Masjid by using symbols and historical distortions related to the event.

Regarding the forgotten issue of the Ayodhya site, the VHP wanted to reignite the old dispute of the liberation of Rama's birthplace as one of national significance (Ludden, 2005, p.39). Instead of the general religious belief that the mosque occupies the place on which Rama was born, the VHP went further by asserting that a temple on the birthplace had been demolished by Muslims and replaced by a mosque. They attempted to make the local tradition that Babar's general had destroyed a temple built on Rama's birthplace into the real history of the Hindu_nation (Van der Veer, 1994, p.160). Such a strategy of clear demarcation of Muslims as foreigners and demonised aggressors is expressed in Ludden's narrative that "Rama and the original temple represented a dehistoricized Hindu utopia, while Babar and his mosque represented the Muslim invasions that brought the Rama-rajya to an end and began a series of oppressive foreign occupations" (Davis, 2005, p.48-9). In this way, in the temple liberation project, the VHP constantly employed anti-Muslim rhetoric, at the same time as trying to develop Hindu unity.

In 1983, under the leadership of the VHP, with its slogan of "sacrifice for unanimity", the Ekatmata Yatra launched three processions with the aim of ethno-religious mobilisation. These covered vast swathes of the country – from Kathmandu in Nepal to Rameshwaram in Tamil Nadu, from Gangasagar in Bengal to Somnath in Gujarat, and from Hardiwar in Uttar Pradesh to Kanyakumari in Tamil Nadu – distributing water from the Ganges and refilling their tanks with holy water. These actions were intended to symbolise Hindu unity (Jaffrelot, 1999, p.360).

Until then, the only symbol that had been used for political mobilisation was the cow (Ibid, p.361). However, with the Ekatmata Yatra, the VHP intended to invent new symbols associated with traditional religious rituals, texts and gods for the purpose of mobilising larger Hindu unity. One epoch-making icon the VHP created was a depiction of the baby Rama in which the cherubic child was held prisoner in a Muslim religious institution on the site of his birth. It was intended to arouse “maternal devotion from those who would nurture the young reincarnation of Hindu nationhood”, while “the aggressive warrior young Rama served as a militant role model for Hindus taking control of their homeland” (Davis, 2005, p.41). The creation of the new symbol of the baby Rama seems to be important from the point of view of arousing devotional sentiment by dragging in family imagery as a metaphor (Ibid.).

In the Ekatmata Yatra, the VHP utilised two other tangible symbols – the Ganges and Mother India – in the form of divinities. According to the statement of the senior VHP official in charge of this programme, these two figures were very carefully selected (Jaffrelot, 1999, p.360). The VHP tried to make the selected symbols be seen as deities – in the case of the Ganges, her water contains the power to purify from sin and to give salvation. Before this *yatra*, the Ganges had hardly been used as a venerated symbol by Hindus. However, it became a symbol of national unity as a “sacred geographical entity” (Davis, 2005, p.40) as well as a “pan-Indian reservoir of holy water” (Ibid.), identified with the figure of Mother India (Jaffrelot, 1999, p.361).

The VHP also resurrected *bhakti* rituals and the fundamental text of Hinduism – the *Bhagavad Gita* – to integrate all Hindus regardless of caste and sects by arousing devotionalism (Ibid). During the processions of the temple chariots, the VHP made brand new trucks symbolising the militant war chariot of Arjuna in the *Bhagavad Gita*, while each of the three main processions was named after its chariots referred to as gods and saints (Van der Veer, 1994, p.125).

In this way, the RSS/VHP have striven for the consolidation of Hindu identity and the extension of its power through interference in education at the grassroots level and

utilising symbols with the intention of integrating all castes and sects. Their selected symbols are mainly taken from nature, traditional religious myth or Mother India to represent geographical and genealogic unity.

In the next section, we will look into the metaphor of Mother India, which is often used as a symbol in the strategy of Hindu nationalists.

3.2 Metaphor of the body

Embodying India as Mother is an old tradition in the subcontinent. This is the way India was presented in newspapers and novels at the time of the emergence of Indian nationalism, and it has become common practice thereafter (Chakrabarty, 1999, p.205).

The link with Mother has deep psychological and cultural roots (Bose, 1997, p.54). According to the British army psychiatrist Owen Berkeley-Hill's paper in 1924, as explained briefly in Chapter Two, one of the causes of the residual bitter feelings between Hindus and Muslims is Hindus' motherland complex, according to which their motherland – Bharat Mata – was violated by the Muslim conquest of India (Kakar, 1995, p.140). In effect, the relationship between nation and gender has been involved in nationalism for a long time. Therefore, we need to take into account the metaphor of Bharat Mata as well as religious nationalism discourse and the female body.

The image of Bharat Mata was first used with the start of nationalism in the colonial period. However, its primary aim has been changed to the form of exploitation of communal forces with the intention of mobilising resources from nationalism (Jha, 2004). The metaphoric feminisation of the nation became well known with the cow protection movement between 1880 and 1920, in which the mother cow became an object of veneration and a new symbol of the Hindu nation. Also, Bankim Chattopadhyay contributed to popularising the image of Bharat Mata by expressing the Hindu nation as mother, an object of worship, benevolence and protection (Hansen, 1999, p.112). In his text, he expressed the changing figure of mother over time, from 'mother as she was in

the past' to 'mother in the present' and 'mother as she will become in the future'. He alluded to the figure of mother as a religious goddess – her present form is Kali, a benevolent mother goddess, and the final image is Durga, the ten-armed mother and the representative of feminine power.

This embodiment of the nation as mother emerged against colonisation from the late 19th century, but has become much more complex in the 20th century. After the *swadeshi* period, the image of Bharat Mata changed from a goddess figure to a housewife and mother, as has been presented in various novels and plays. The popular Hindi novel *Maila Anchal* shows the most well presented image of the mother suffering because of her infringed-upon national identity during the pre-and post colonial period.

The mother's feet were torn and bloodied. After seeing the mother's agony, listening to Ramkishan babu's words and hearing Tiwari ji's songs, he could not stop himself. Who could resist that pull? Tears flowing from her eyes like the waters of the Ganges and the Yamuna. Mother India sorrowing over the fate of her children? Straightaway he went to Ramkishan babu and said, "Put my name on the Suraji list" (Phaniswarnath Renu, *Maila Anchal*, 1953, quoted in Jha, 2004)

Also, Sumitranandan Pant's famous poem *Bharat Mata* offers a different vision of romantic nationalism. He considered Mother India as a woman of the soil and the Ganges and Yamuna as rivers of tears, metaphors for the sorrow of the nation (Jha, 2004).¹⁸

The symbolisation of Bharat Mata in the relationship between gender and nation was mentioned by several nationalists including Jawaharlal Nehru during the pre and post colonial period. In the era of globalisation since the 1980s, the metaphor of Bharat Mata has changed from its original aim of arousing nationalism to the exclusive usage of Hindu forces for mobilising religious nationalism.

18 This relation between the Ganges and the Mother India is used for the strategy of the VHP in the *Ekatmata yatra*, as we have seen in the previous section.

During the Ekatamat Yatra in 1983, the VHP brought the image of Bharat Mata in their chariots. In addition, it also built a Bharat Mata temple in Haridwar. This temple contains an anthropomorphic statue of its deity. Here, Bharat Mata holds a milk urn in one hand and sheaves of grain in the other, which the temple guidebook explains as "signifying the white and green revolution that India needs for progress and prosperity". The guidebook also says, "The temple serves to promote the devotional attitude toward Bharat Mata, something that historians and mythological story teller may have missed" (Jha, 2004).

These exertions of the VHP to employ the image of Bharat Mata look as though they are meant to satisfy their desire to mobilise Hindu forces and justify their violence by calling on the old nationalist tradition.

The RSS has also exploited the image of Bharat Mata, as is clearly indicated in their stressing the idiom of "rape of the Motherland" by a potent and dangerous enemy – Muslim invaders. In this ideology, only RSS cadre, the "sons of Bharat", can protect the weak and powerless mother nation by organising on military lines, which makes them true males (Hansen, 1999, p.112-113). Hindu nationalists seem to bring back the symbolisation of Bharat Mata from the old nationalist tradition because they want to rationalise their actions against Muslims by giving Hindus an extreme shock like "rape of the Motherland by Muslims". This is an essential process for them to fight against and drive out Muslims, their permanent enemy, who violated the mother who gave endless and unconditional love to her children-citizens.

Such a metaphor of the nation as mother that emerged with the development of nationalism during the colonial period in India is seen as being taken from the general expression of the colonised nation, which combined nation and gender.

With the militant communalism of the Sangh Parivar, adopting this image of Bharat Mata is seen as an effective method of uniting Hindu identity by demarcating Muslims as others and enemies. Because of the continuous underpinning and displaying of these reinterpreted traditional metaphors, the embodiment of the Indian geography as Mother,

Muslims as having raped the Mother, and the RSS cadre as protecting the Mother – the Mother not as a limitless provider for her children, but as a weak woman who needs the protection of strong men – are crucial strategies employed by Hindu nationalists in ensuring their survival in periods of crisis.

3.3 Media Effect

In critical situations for the nation, nationalist leaders often use the mass media as a tool in inspiring nationalism. Hindu nationalists tried to mobilise and unite Hindu identity by broadcasting the *Ramayana* in 1987. The *Ramayana* is the story of Rama, and it is the earliest and most influential text of Hinduism, supposedly written in the first few centuries BC (Van der Veer, 1994, p.172).

Its long-standing influence on Indian literature can be seen in the fact that many authors have produced new versions or interpretations of the *Ramayana*. The earliest major vernacular retelling of the story was written in Tamil by the 12th century author Kampan. The famous poet Tulsi Das also recreated a North Indian vernacular version of the *Ramayana*. It became the Bible of North India as it was revered as the main authoritative and honourable text among Hindus (Sarkar, 2005, p.173).

During the colonial period, Gandhi also repeatedly mentioned the *Ramcharitmanas*¹⁹ in support of his political views. He urged Indians to live according to the lessons from this text to overcome poverty, untouchability and foreign rule. Gandhi's continuous emphasis on Rama and his rule greatly affected Hindus at that time (Van der Veer, 1994, p.174).

In the South also its leverage has been proved, as the leader of the Dravidian movement used the text of the *Ramayana* to attack Brahmanical hegemony (Ibid). In addition,

¹⁹ *Ramcharitmanasa*, is an epic poem in Awadhi (Indo-Aryan language) which is composed by the 16th-century Indian poet, Goswami Tulsidas (1532–1623). *Ramcharitmanas* literally means the "lake of the deeds of Rama." (Jindal 1955). The work focuses on a poetic retelling of the events of the Sanskrit epic *Ramayana*, centered on the narrative of Rama.

Aurobindo also mentioned the relationship between the influence of the *Ramayana* and Hindu nationalism: "the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* constitute the essence of Indian literature. This orientalist notion was foundational for the Hindu nationalisation of Indian civilisation." (quoted in Van der Veer, 2001, p.132).

With such authority among Hindus, a seventy-eight episode serialisation of the *Ramayana* was broadcast on national television between January 1987 and July 1988. It not only recorded the highest viewing rate ever seen on Indian television, but also had a great ripple effect in Indian society. Twenty-six video cassettes were sold worldwide, with exaggerated advertisements such as "The Greatest Indian Epic. Treasured for over 10,000 years. Enshrining Ideals That Are Ageless. Teaching Lessons That Are Timeless." (Van der Veer, 1994, p.175).

The influence of this broadcast was tremendous. It was watched by 80 to 100 million people, including people who do not understand Hindi. According to newspaper reports, Indian life looked as though it was 'on hold' during the hours the series was aired. Even untouchable sweepers in North India asserted that they inherited their spirit from Valmiki who is the alleged composer of the Sanskrit *Ramayana* and the guru of Rama (Ibid). In this way, the broadcast of the *Ramayana* on Durdarshan inspired religious belief among Hindus all over the country. The broadcast also resulted in homogenisation of understanding of the *Ramayana*, since it swept aside the different regional and political interpretations that had existed until then.

Many Indian scholars have argued that the televised version of the *Ramayana* was planned to elevate the old religious text as a national text. Undoubtedly, Hindu nationalists intended the broadcast to be used for their political objectives, in particular their desire to create a "Hindu nation" (Ibid, p.177).

Above all, it helped in achieving the VHP's long cherished wish of liberating Rama's birthplace. Even people who do not know the exact location of Ayodhya have gradually recognised it as the birthplace of Rama as well as a town in Uttar Pradesh. The broadcast

made this sacred place and Rama's life in popular imagination appear real (Kinvall, 2006, p.149). Indeed, its success produced a great emotional stir among Hindus. As they watched the *Ramayana*, they could not help becoming angry at the manipulated history of their sacred place – the birthplace of Rama – which had been demolished by Muslims. In this way, the broadcast of the *Ramayana* and the Ayodhya affair are closely connected, showing how history has been manipulated and reinterpreted through the mass media and how this has had an impact on the viewer's emotions and ideas. According to Van der Veer (1994), the surprising sensation of the broadcast made it possible to unite many millions at the same time and thereby form a religious gathering. Hence, we can assume that it is closely connected to the recent rise of Hindu religious nationalism.

As we can see from the above, the mass media including television can be used as a tool for instilling nationalist ideology in citizens, thanks to its characteristic of diffusion. Throughout the 1980s, television certainly functioned as a medium for achieving the communal ends of the saffron waves. L.K. Advani, Hindu nationalist leader of the BJP, stressed the cultural significance of the *Ramayana* (Farmer, 2005, p.108) and finally exploited the imagery of Rama as he postured like Rama in the *rath yatra* in October 1990 after the broadcast of the series. It seems as though he was conscious of the need for Hindu votes and thereby intended to unite Hindu identity by taking advantage of the tremendous success of the televised *Ramayana* for communal purposes to criticise the legitimacy of the government's secular stance.

Such an exploitation of the mass media by Hindu groups seems to indicate that political intentions are associated with the relationship between media and communalism. This also shows that the mass media is a useful means of manipulating dispersed groups.

Many scholars have argued that the serialisation of the *Ramayana* on Durdarshan played a major role in mobilising Hindu communal forces, by creating a “shared symbolic lexicon” (Van der Veer, 1994, p.177-78). With its enormous influence, people have accepted the story of the *Ramayana* as a truth rather than as a myth. In this way, the broadcast became an opportunity to pursue the building of Ram's temple. It mobilised

communal forces and legitimised the subsequent event of the destruction of the Babri Masjid by promoting a religious myth to the level of national culture and myth.

This chapter has examined the psychological strategies of Hindu nationalists in strengthening their identity in the face of globalisation and modernisation, under the assumption that the sudden rise of militant Hindu nationalism since the 1980s is related to the rapidly changing environment. In this context, people can easily get the feeling of loss or loss of attachment because various physical changes are occurring. Accordingly, nationalist leaders have tried to secure their identity by fortifying group cohesiveness and to enhance nationalism by increasing group sharing.

To this end, Hindu nationalists have employed diverse tactics. Most importantly, they have drawn clear boundaries between Hindus and non-Hindus, especially Muslims. This othering process includes attitudes such as accepting only the majority-self and not the minority-other, achieved by creating prejudices and projecting bad images onto them.

The attempt to intensify group loyalty and superiority is also one of the main strategies in enhancing Hindu group cohesiveness. Their promotion of Sanskrit is one of good example of the way in which group sharing has been increased to build up group attachment. Also, they construct prejudices of the other by applying the bad traits of the in-group to the out-group so as to increase the self-esteem of their own group. In the case of militant groups, the tendency towards demonisation of the other is more excessively present in group relations. The current Hindu nationalism has also shown this tendency towards communal conflict between Hindus and Muslims.

In addition, reinterpreted history, myth and symbol, diffused by means of education and the mass media, is always manipulated in their desire to spread chauvinistic religious nationalism. This manipulation is mainly intended to be used at the grassroots level, such as to alter textbooks in elementary schools, or to influence low castes and untouchables through the mass media.

In this sense, these strategies used by Hindu nationalists seem to be based on their intolerance and artfulness, since they only pursue majoritarianism as denying the minority and they exploit symbols which are taken from the old tradition of Indian nationalism to mobilise religious nationalism and legitimise their violence.

Chapter V

Conclusion

The dissertation has analysed psychological factors affecting the emergence of an extreme form of Hindu nationalism since the 1980s.

This aggressive and militant phenomenon, which has been known in Indian politics in the last thirty years as ‘Hindutva’ or ‘communalism’, did not appear overnight. Ever since Hindus and Muslims met with the Muslim conquest of a thousand years ago, Hindus seem to have felt hostility towards Muslims.

According to Sen (2005), Hinduism is a liberal, tolerant and receptive tradition. These characteristics are amongst the original tenets of Hinduism, so the question is why Hindu nationalists in the present day incessantly aggravate communal conflicts with Muslims rather than making an effort to narrow the distance between the two communities.

Of course, Hindu nationalism is a combination of religion and nationalism, so it cannot help but represent the traits of nationalism as well as those of religion.

The psychology of nationalism is based on “in-group favouritism”. The construction of nationalism is in large part similar and related to individual and group identity formation. In the process of constructing identity, individuals firstly cognise themselves as the ‘self’, then perceive the ‘other’ through socialisation, by means of the transmission of ways of acting and reacting learned from education and relationships with others. In this process of socialisation of individuals, people necessarily form groups and group membership becomes one of the salient traits in the definition of the self. It is referred to as individual’s ‘social identity’. People equate their status with the status of their in-group, and thus strive to increase the status of this group to enhance their own self-esteem. In-group members impute bad features to other groups, which are considered as different, and thereby create prejudices against them. These prejudices lead to and reinforce the stigmatisation of the other and an awareness that ‘us’ and ‘them’ are fundamentally different.

Such a psychology of nationalism can also be seen in the current Hindu nationalism. The background to the boom in contemporary Hindutva lies in the 19th century. Hindu nationalism originally emerged in opposition to British colonial power. It was closely linked to 'Hindu revivalism', which aimed at national integration through the rediscovery of the archaic Hindu civilisation.

Even though this period is of only indirect relevance to the current militarised Hindu nationalism, the features of the latter had already appeared then. These features include Aryanism based on primordialist thinking and an emphasis on the Vedas. The Vedic Aryanist paradigm advocated by the Arya Samaj stressed that only the descendants of Aryans were true Indians and obeyed the authority of the Vedas. Moreover, the symbol of Mother India articulated by Bankimchandra Chattopadhyaya in the Bengal renaissance was also created in this period. Thus, the manipulation of history in which today's saffron wave engages has its roots in the earliest period of Hindu nationalism from the 19th to the early 20th century.

It is from the 1920s that Hindu nationalism began to show signs of communalism, in the political chaos of colonial India. Hinduised versions of Indian nationalism and the ideology of Hindutva coexisted during this period. With such a radical form of Hindu nationalism altered from the previous period, it began to enter politics. Above all, the birth of the concept of Hindutva by Savarkar in this period could be considered crucial groundwork in the development of the ideology of later Hindu nationalism. His homogeneous nation theory was influenced by Mazzini and Fascism, and was in effect based on racism. According to this theory, if the same blood is not shared within the nation, they are foreigners or others – Muslims thus cannot become Indian. Since the emergence of Savarkar's idea, the division between the Hindu-self and Muslim-other has become clear.

Hindu nationalism from the 1980s has boosted this element of communalism with a neo-fascist and anti-pluralist vision, albeit based on the previous ideologies. This is concretely shown in the Sangh Parivar – the huge family of Hindu nationalist organisations – and

their religious nationalist project in Indian politics, culture and society. This project has been more systematically presented with globalisation. In the context of globalisation and modernisation, which replaces the old with the new, Hindus have felt keenly aware of the security of their identity and thus have displayed violent and paramilitary forms of religious nationalism.

Such a contemporary neo-fascist version of Hindu nationalism revealed its ultimate character in the destruction of the Babri Masjid in 1992. In this sense, it is worth considering the features of this event from various perspectives. Hindu communalists used diverse strategies to expose their bare resentment towards Muslims and to solidify their identity.

First, the demolition of the Babri Masjid was a ventilation of a Hindu trauma from the past. The Mughal empire of a thousand years ago remains a sore point for Hindus. Their indelible hurt has been expressed in the literature of numerous Hindu nationalists. They have highlighted the intolerant behaviour of medieval rulers to depict Muslims as a savage race, stressing only the fact that medieval rulers, including Mahmud of Ghazna or Aurangzeb, suppressed Hindus and demolished Hindu temples.

Another important historical trauma for Hindus with regard to Muslims is the Partition of Indian and Pakistan in 1947. This Hindu shock came when their idea of India as Bharat Mata, which they thought could become a Hindu rashtra after independence from the British, was destroyed.

With these Chosen Trauma, the Sangh Parivar has employed different strategies to reach its goals. Its tactics are mostly based on the exploitation of history and myth, focusing on history distortions and the expression of recreated religious symbols. Its reinterpretation of history has placed emphasis on the Aryan-Vedic paradigm started in the 19th century. Furthermore, it has attempted to disseminate rewritten history that includes disparagement of the Mughal era and only focuses on Hindus' glorified past.

Emphasis on religious symbols has also been seen, both before and after the Ayodhya incident. Due to the broadcast of the *Ramayana* in 1987, the myth of Rama has become the truth, and thereby the destruction of the Babri Masjid, which stood for the oppression and intolerance of the medieval period, and the construction of the Ram temple has been legitimised. In the *yatra*, various religious symbols including the baby Rama, the Ganges and the *Bhagavad Gita* were used. Above all, the symbolisation of Bharat Mata, which came up with Indian nationalism, was exploited with the propagation of the “rape of the Motherland by Muslims”. In this way, Hindu nationalists have used various symbols to spread the idea that “India is the country of Hindus”.

This fascistic idea seems to have resulted from intolerant thinking. In the first place, the obvious demarcation between the Hindu-self and Muslim-other demonstrates narrow-mindedness. Our consciousness instinctively includes the feeling of “otherness” because it is by constantly defining the self in relation to others that we feel stable (Weinstein and Platt, 1973). With the awareness of the other, the feeling of ambivalence also emerges from the unconscious (Babur, 1952, p.68). We perceive the other and our feeling of ambivalence depends on who we unconsciously judge to be similar to or different from us. This feeling of ambivalence and otherness in life is more clearly manifested in periods of crisis (Ibid). In this sense, the current sudden rise of Hindu nationalism, accompanied by serious communal conflict, can be seen as a means for Hindus to secure their identity against the threat of globalisation. In this process, Hindu communalists form a definite dividing line between the self and the other and instigate hatred and prejudice towards the other to improve their own self-esteem as well as to strengthen Hindu group cohesion.

Secondly, majoritarianism, which involves the complete exclusion of minority, also demonstrates intolerance. In fact, majoritarianism is the result of the wrong classification of the nation. Although a majority could be defined according to different criteria, such as class, language or political beliefs, the Hindutva family only categorises majority and minority according to a single classification – based on religion. In this way, what constitutes the ‘Indian majority’ changes with the standards adopted to classify the nation (Sen, 2005, p.55). This can be linked to what Sen refers to the ‘illusion of singularity’,

which implies perceiving a person as a member of one particular collectivity that gives one distinctive identity, rather than as a member of many different groups with diverse identities (Sen, 2006, p.45). In other words, to instigate and cultivate a singular specific identity in a group can be a weapon to instigate violence and terrorism towards another group (Sen, 2006).

In conclusion, the Hindu nationalist insistence on 'Identifying India as a mainly Hindu country' seems to have developed into an extreme form in order to solidify Hindu identity in the face of the threat of globalization that has emerged from the 1980s. On the pretext of historical agony, denunciations of the Muslim as other, without any effort to develop an in-depth understanding of them, exposes their cliquey, xenophobic and intolerant attitude. These attitudes will inevitably result in unceasing communal conflict, which will not only impede the development of the nation but also court isolation in the world.

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**Past and Present of an Identity: A Study on the
Rise of Hindu Nationalism in India**

*Dissertation submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the award of the degree of*

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

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Declaration

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We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

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Dedicated to my Parents

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July 2012, New Delhi

YeonJin Sang

Abbreviations

BJP	- Bharatiya Janata Party
BJS	-Bharatiya Jana Sangh
NCERT	- National Council of Education, Research and Training
RSS	- Rashtriyaswayamsevak Sangh
UGC	- University Grants Commision
VHP	- Vishwa Hindu Parishad

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Introduction

Nationalism can be seen as a specific type of ethnocentrism at the level of the national group, since both share the characteristic referred to as “in-group favouritism” (Brock and Atkinson, 2008). This means having a positive attitude towards an in-group and a negative attitude towards out-groups.

According to Tajfel’s social identity theory (Tajfel, 1981), an individual’s self-esteem can be enhanced by comparing their in-group and out-groups. If individuals recognise that a group identity boosts self-esteem, they identify with the group. Furthermore, individuals use intergroup bias to enhance their self-esteem. This theory can be applied to the psychology of nationalism. With religion, each religious group creates religious intergroup bias to fulfil their in-group superiority, and this develops into religious nationalism.

Hindu nationalism is a form of religious nationalism, which refers to the ideological combination of religion and nationalism. Its supporters equate it with Indian nationalism, while its opponents equate it with communalism (Zavos, 1999, p.2000). Some scholars argue that Hindu nationalism and communalism should be distinguished in terms of ideology, although the terms are often used interchangeably in modern Indian politics. It has been subject to considerable debate from the time of its emergence in India.

Hindu nationalism dates back to the late 19th century under British rule, when intellectuals were interested in the formation of modern Hindu identities. It became a distinctive ideology in the early 20th century, but according to Jaffrelot (1999), it was not clearly ‘codified’ until the 1920s. After the 1920s, Hindu nationalism developed into a form of communalism. More specifically, the communal riot emerged as a feature of Indian politics. The dialectic between Indian nationalism and communalism arose during the 1920s, and the difference between them was more clearly defined from the 1930s when Savarkar began his activities (Bhatt, 2001). This process of the transformation of Hindu nationalism into communalism involved a change from moderate to radical nationalism (Zavos, 1999, p.2000).

Hindu nationalism experienced a boom in the 1980s and 1990s, with its militant form developing and emerging successfully in the political arena, culminating in the BJP forming a minority government in 1998. In 1992, the BJP helped the Sangh Parivar succeed in Ayodhya and thus came to occupy a key position in the political arena, while Lord Rama and his epic became political icons. Subsequently, Hindu nationalism has affected Indian politics, media and popular culture (Ludden, 2005).

In other words, Hindu nationalism became a specific ideology and the base for animating contemporary Hindu nationalism from the 1920s, and it developed into its powerful militant form starting in the 1980s.

More specifically, the beginning of the Hindu nationalist ideology in the 19th and early 20th century was an elite-led Indian nationalist ideology in colonial India. At that time, the idea of Hindu nationalism was based on primordialist conceptions of Indian nationalism. Entering the 1920s, the ambiguous boundary between ‘Indian’ and ‘Hindu’ nationalism started to become distinct as the ideology of ‘Hindutva’ emerged. The birth of ‘Hindutva’ in this period is significant in the history of Hindu nationalism, since it introduced the idea that Indian nationality is based on sharing a “common” Hindu civilisation, culture, religion and race (Bhatt, 2001, p. 4).

In these early stages, the birth of Hindu nationalism was seen as an extension of the development of Indian nationalist ideology, since it was related to the national movement for liberation from British rule from the 19th to early 20th century. Therefore, the differences between these two ideologies were not so clear during this period. Jaffrelot (1999) refers to ‘ethnicity’, while other scholars argue that ‘territorial’ or ‘cultural’ nationalism can be a standard by which to distinguish between ‘Indian’ and ‘Hindu’ nationalism.

It is since the 1980s that Hindu nationalism has developed its militant form, going beyond this early and rather simply-presented ideology. More recently, Hindu nationalism has presented its project as being based on an imagined nation set against other religious communities, particularly the Indian Muslims (Zavos, 1999, p. 2270).

As has been noted by virtually every commentator, Hindu nationalism was constructed as a result of fear of external threats – before Independence, the major threats were Christian missionaries, the impact of British rule and the Mughal Empire, while they are now Muslims and globalisation. Such a construction of Hindu nationalism is not only related to a psychological process of stigmatising others, but also represents a defensive strategy. This Hindu psychology includes the process of redefining Hindu identity against these ‘threatening others’, while assimilating those cultural features of the others into “our” culture in order to regain self-esteem and resist the others (Jaffrelot, 1999, p.6).

Although many enemies have existed in history, the strongest and most threatening enemy for Hindu nationalists is Islam. Making India Hindu by treating Islam as an enemy and as foreign is the most important task for them.

In this way, the main objective of Hindu nationalists is to make India a nation with a homogeneous Hindu identity. They assert that an Indian is a Hindu who belongs to the nation of Hindustan, in the terminology of Hindutva (Kinvall, 2006). Their desire is to be recognised in the flow of Western influence through emphasis on the difference between “us” and “them”.

This serious antagonism between Hindus and Muslims increased after the Ayodhya incident, which was carried out by saffron power including the Sangh Parivar, VHP, RSS and BJP. Since then, the impact of Hindu nationalism on Indian politics, culture and society has grown even further, reaching unprecedented levels.

In this sense, the cause of the sudden rise of Hindu nationalism since the Ayodhya incident can be analysed from two perspectives. Domestically, the effort to resurrect a movement focused on Hinduism has been made by right-wing forces such as the coalition of the Sangh Parivar, BJP, RSS and VHP, while the persistent conflict resulting from historical wounds between Hindus and Muslims has brought about an increase in paramilitary forms of Hindu nationalism.

Externally, ethno-religious conflict in many countries in the 1980s and 1990s, combined with a feeling of loss and the threat of globalisation, enabled Hindu nationalists to boost Hindu consciousness among the Indian public. In this period, minorities were suppressed in the name of majoritarianism in many countries and religion played an important role in world politics (Ludden, 2005, p.2-3). This neo-fascist vision of Hindu nationalism was inspired by this international situation and the forces of globalisation.

With this background in mind, this study focuses on examining the construction of Hindu nationalism and Hindu identity from a psychoanalytical perspective. More particularly, it attempts to provide a psychoanalytic account of factors that have aroused Hindu nationalism and the strategy Hindu nationalists have employed to bring about group cohesion since the 1980s.

Psychoanalysis is employed since psychological factors have played a role in the construction of Hindu nationalism. Furthermore, it is difficult to understand religious identity formation and nationhood without serious consideration of socio-psychological aspects. For this reason, the main purpose of this study is to look into the psychological factors behind Hindutva-invoking fanatic religious chauvinism and the process by which its adherents attempt to form a Hindu identity in the nation.

This theme has been chosen due to the immense leverage Hindu nationalism has acquired in current Indian politics, society and culture. Indeed, it has become the most sensitive and important controversy in India. Hindu nationalism is behind a major Indian political party for the last thirty years and it has constantly triggered communal conflict between Hindus and Muslims due to its ideology of extreme religious nationalism. Accordingly, it is assumed that understanding the construction of Hindu nationalism is essential not only to grasp the current trajectory of Indian society but also to understand the contemporary history of India. Psychology is employed in analysing this theme is because this enables the identification of the key factor in the arousal of the conflict between Hindus and Muslims.

Accordingly, two hypotheses have been established. Firstly, the motivation and reason for increasing violence between Hindus and Muslims, as compared to other religious

communities, is because Hindus have strong animosity towards Muslims. Furthermore, behind this explanation, psychological factors have as much of an effect as social and political factors.

Secondly, the sudden rise of Hindu nationalism from the 1980s is the strategy of Hindu nationalists to cope with the threat of globalisation. This hypothesis has come from the argument that the aggressive contemporary Hindutva is a form of cultural nationalism responding to emerging global capitalism, which is characterised by the collapse of communism, the propagation of consumption economies, information technology, deregulated, globalised economies, and a global cultural hegemony mainstreamed from the West (Bhatt, 2001, p.150).

The main body of the study constitutes an analysis of these hypotheses and is divided into three parts.

In Chapter One, the focus is put on the historical background to the sudden rise of Hindu nationalism, by examining the origin, organisation and development of Hindu nationalism over time. Firstly, it looks at the beginnings of Hindu nationalism in the 19th century to the 1920s, including the Arya Samaj, the Bengal Renaissance, Bal Gangadhar Tilak. This period was influenced by the impact of Orientalism and primordial nationalism from European thinking. Hindu revivalist movements such as the Arya Samaj, which was the most influential movement of its time, have provided the base on which current saffron power has been built up by consolidating people along religious lines.

Secondly, by examining the Hindu Mahasabha and Savarkar's Hindutva, the study looks at the limited influence of Hindu nationalism from the 1920s to the 1980s. The ideology of Hindutva and the perception of Muslims as the main threat, which Savarkar first introduced to the Hindu nationalist movement, have established a foothold in contemporary militarised Hindu nationalism.

Lastly, the study considers the sudden rise of Hindu nationalism in a militant form from the 1980s to the present day, by analysing saffron waves like the RSS, Sangh Parivar, VHP and BJP and their effect on the political arena. Religion and politics have been combined seriously since this time and saffron parties have presented a renewed Hindu identity to the Indian public.

Chapter Two deals with psychological factors behind the conflict and communal riots between Hindus and Muslims. To analyse this, the study presents psychological factors related to the historical background that have provoked the conflict between the two groups. The key question asked in this chapter is why dissension between Hindus and Muslims is more serious than among other religious groups and what are the psychological causes of their conflict. In this sense, the most prominent factor is 'Chosen Trauma'. This chosen trauma, which refers to the mental recollection of a fearful past, is verified historically, especially in the Indian situation, with the Muslim conquest and India-Pakistan Partition being the chosen trauma of Hindus. As discussed above, Partition resulted in increasing Hindu animosity towards Muslims, which was a crucial cause of the Ayodhya incident.

The second factor is proximity. This can explain why the strongest hostility has existed between Hindus and Muslims, as compared to among other religious groups, since nationalistic hostility is more strongly directed against larger, nearer and more powerful out-groups than against smaller, more distant and weaker ones (Rosenblatt, 1964, p.133).

Besides these factors, several other factors have contributed to the build-up of tension between Hindus and Muslims. Muslim assaults on Hindu idols, such as Muslims eating beef or the government's amicable attitude towards Muslims, can be examples of explanations for the increasingly aggravated feelings between the two groups. This chapter looks at Hindu psychology in relation to this animosity against Muslim onslaughts on Hindu idols and the Shah Bano case resulting from the government's cordial position with respect to Muslims.

Chapter Three discusses the strategy of Hindu nationalist groups, focusing on the psychology behind their attempts to enhance Hindu group cohesion in the context of modernisation and globalisation.

The Sangh Parivar uses psychological strategies in achieving their strong group cohesion, based on human instinct against the forces of globalisation. These include promoting intergroup bias by making clear a boundary between “us” and “them” and enhancing strong group loyalty and group superiority in constructing nationalism. Demonising the “other” and strengthening in-group loyalty are natural processes in boosting their self-esteem and this is still furthered when they suffer economic or social insecurity, such as in a period of crisis that diminishes their self-esteem.

This theory can also be applied to Hindu nationalist psychology. It can explain the rise of the paramilitary form of Hindu nationalism to overcome the increasing feeling of loss and insecurity under the threat of globalisation from the 1980s. Hindu nationalists have used strategies of manipulating history and myths to fortify their group cohesion in the face of globalisation, based on the theory that sharing a common culture and symbols can help in ensuring social stability. Right-wing political groups such as the Sangh Parivar, the VHP (Vishwa Hindu Parishad), the RSS (Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh) and the BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party) have put forward to the Indian public a new Hindu identity with these strategies, and they have raised Hindu consciousness based on a neo-fascist vision of constructing a homogeneous Hindu *rashtra*.

In developing this framework, the main purpose of this dissertation is to analyse the psychological factors acting on the construction of Hindu nationalism and the new Hindu identity from the 1980s. A diagnosis of the risks and problems of Hindutva is attempted through the study of the Hindu-Muslim religious conflict from the psychological perspective. The study aims to develop a clear insight into the emotional construction of Hindu nationalism and the new Hindu identity by focusing on psychological aspects, adding to existing studies that rely on social and political aspects.

In its concluding analysis, the study tries to work out how to relieve the tension and violence between Hindus and Muslims, by making a diagnosis of the attitudes of Hindu nationalists that cause the problem.

Chapter I

The Rise of Hindu Nationalism and Hindu Identity

In the last two decades of the 20th century, Hindu nationalism emerged as a force to be reckoned with in Indian politics due to the sudden rise of the BJP as the national opposition party. The main aim of the Sangh Parivar, which includes the BJP-RSS-VHP coalition, is to inject its cultural nationalistic ideology into both Indian politics and public opinion. Due to the leverage of this ideology in different fields, Hindu nationalism has been referred to variously as Hindutva, the saffron wave, Hindu majoritarianism, Hindu communalism and Hindu fundamentalism.

Although it has become a prominent concern only in the last 30 years, the ideology of the movement dates from the 19th century. However, the direct foundation of the ideology of contemporary Hindu nationalism has been constructed from the 1920s. One of its features is the perception that it is the same as communalism. This dialectic can be traced back to the 1920s since communalism and more specifically the communal riot emerged as a systematic characteristic of politics in northern India from this period (Zavos, 2000, p.4).

Accordingly, this chapter will seek to explain the ideologies, origin and history of the Hindu nationalist movement from the 19th century to the present day. This process of examining the background and ideologies of Hindu nationalism is essential to understanding the main argument of the dissertation.

The chapter is divided into three parts. The first examines the formation and main ideologies of Dayananda Saraswati's Arya Samaj movement, the 'Bengal Renaissance' and Bal Gangadhar Tilak's movement from the late 19th to the early 20th century. In the second part, the main ideologies of the troubled period of the 1920s are discussed, with special focus on the Hindu Mahasabha movement and Savarkar's Hindutva. Finally, the third part of the chapter reviews the ideologies and strategies of the contemporary saffron wave, including the RSS, VHP and BJP under the name of the Sangh Parivar.

1. Beginning of the Movement in the 19th Century up to the 1920s

The period encompassing the 19th and early 20th century saw the emergence of the basic ideologies of Hindu nationalism. The concept of Hindu nationalism dates only from the 19th century. According to Zakaria (1970), there was no communal violence between Hindus and Muslims prior to the colonial era. Hindu nationalism in this period should be regarded as part of the wider nationalism resisting British colonial power rather than as a form of communalism. The paramilitary communalist form of Hindu nationalism grounded in fascist ideology established itself after the 1920s. In fact, the form of Hindu nationalism in this period can be seen as Hindu revivalism, because its main characteristic was to homogenise Hindus according to the Hindu religion (Ko et al., 2006, p.42), while one of the period's themes was Hindu reform by improving Hindu weaknesses generated from the threat of 'foreign rule' - first by Muslims and then by the British (Van der Veer, 1994, p.64). Therefore, the emergence of Hindu nationalism in the 19th century was inextricably bound up with the development of Indian nationalism.

European nationalist ideas significantly affected and shaped both secular and religious nationalism in this period of India's history. Nineteenth century nationalism in India can be defined as an "Orientalist mode of production of the people" (Hansen, 1999, p. 60). Hindu revivalism, based on primordialist thinking, was also influenced by European nationalist ideas, especially British and German Orientalism in 19th century colonial India (Bhatt, 2001). Owing to the influence of this Orientalist epistemology, nationalists during this time believed that the Indian community, which was then divided by religion, caste and custom, could be consolidated by means of a Hindu reform movement.

In the same vein, primordialist thinking was stimulated during the British colonial period since Hindu nationalists believed that the nation could be united by rediscovering the archaic Hindu civilisation. A fundamental element of primordial nationalism in this period was Aryanism, which was generated in processes of 'upper' caste, religious, regional and vernacular elite consolidation in colonial India (Ibid.). Hindu nationalists in the mid-19th century tried to achieve national unity by glorifying the Hindu past and

tracing India's archaic memory. They focused on the discovery of Vedic-Aryanism based on archaic religious texts like the Vedas, Upanishads, Puranas and the Epics, which suggest the greatness of the Hindu civilisation not only culturally and morally but also in its political and ethical system (Ibid, 12). Aryanism was used in manipulating ancient history to assert the idea of India as a 'Hindu Rashtra' for Hindu nationalists and developed with elite-led Indian nationalist ideology. Besides verifying ancient Hindu history on their terms, the Vedic Aryanist paradigm presented its superiority by showing southern Dravidians and tribal populations to be inferior to Hindu Aryans (Ibid, 15).

This strategy proved the superiority of the culture and religion and boosted the self-esteem of Hindus. These primordialist ideologies also were used in vernacular and regional elite formation during the second half of the 19th century. Some scholars argue that Hindu nationalism from the 19th to the early 20th century was an elite-led, middle class ideology because it developed with Aryanism and primordialism, which were both led by elite and middle class Indians.¹

The following section discusses three major early Hindu nationalist movements and their ideological development in the 19th century and early 20th century.

1.1 The Arya Samaj

The Arya Samaj, which means 'Society of Aryans', was founded in 1875 in Punjab by Dayananda Saraswati. It is referred to as the most influential, first modern movement to aim at reform and revival or 'Hindu renaissance' in the 19th century.

The core of the Arya Samaj ideology emphasised the Aryan-Vedic tradition. According to Dayananda, the Aryans were the original human inhabitants of the world and they worshipped only one God and accepted the Vedic religion. He clearly delimited his definition of the Aryans with regard to territorial and xenological considerations and

¹ Zavos (1999) regards the initial stage of Hindu nationalism as a middle class ideology and Chandra (1987) defines communalism as a modern political concept developed by each religious colonial elite group who pursued communal and secular interests.

claimed that not every Indian could become Aryan. He also emphasised the importance of the four Vedas and regarded the God in the Vedas as the ancient Aryans. Based on this primacy of the Aryan race, he thought a national revival could be achieved by uniting the nation with the popular and claimed that it was necessary to inculcate Hindu ideals represented in the Vedas to Hindus in order to unite the nation (Hansen, 1999, p.72). Such reverence for Vedic authority on the part of the Arya Samaj seems to have been affected by the Orientalism of the 19th century (Van der Veer, 1994, p.65).

With regard to the caste system, while rejecting the jati system, Dayananda accepted varnashramadharma and the varna system, arguing that this ideal method of social organisation existed in the Vedic Period. This emphasis of the Arya Samaj on the Aryan-Vedic tradition has had an impact on the contemporary Hindutva movement (Bhatt, 2001, p.18).

The most important innovation of the Arya Samaj was the shuddhi or conversion ritual. When it was first created, the aim was “purification” of the faith (Ibid, p.50), as well as putting a stop to conversions of lower caste Hindus to Islam and Christianity and working to reconvert Christians and Muslims to Hinduism. This shuddhi movement has influenced later Hindutva organisations such as the VHP’s homecoming campaigns among Muslims, Christians and tribal groups. The censuses of 1901 and 1911 accelerated the shuddhi movement because they showed an increasing number of Christians and Muslims, making Hindu nationalists feel they were under threat of extinction. From this period, the demographic threat has become one of the main stimuli for Hindu nationalists' strong antipathy towards Muslims over the last century.

The most important motto in the Arya Samaj was “Back to the Veda”. It took a closed stance with respect to other religions, holding the ideal that only the Aryans were Indian and stressing only the authority of the Vedas. This exclusivism against the ‘other’ chimed with primordialism in European thinking in this period.

As regards the religious aspect, the Arya Samaj tried to recover the purity of the Hindu faith, while aiming to make India an autonomous nation free from the British in the political aspect (Cho, 1994, p.440). Their most important contribution was in building up the communication of Hindu nationalism. The Arya Samaj initiated the Cow Protection Movement, which focused on religious nationalism rather than aiming to reform (Van der Veer, 1994, p. 66). The closed and nationalist attitude characteristic of the Hindu revival movement became part of the foundation of the Hindu Mahasabha and RSS ideology. Many leaders and activists of the RSS and the Hindu Mahasabha emerged from these milieus (Hansen, 1999, p.74).

1.2 The Bengal Renaissance

In the latter half of the 19th century, there was a revolutionary nationalism led by the regional and vernacular intelligentsia in Bengal. Bengali nationalist ideologies spread rapidly after the Partition of Bengal in 1905 and they are well represented in the writings of Bankimchandra Chattopadhyaya. There was an effort to amalgamate the ideas of Hindu cultural nationalism with those of Indian nationalism in the 'Bengal Renaissance'. This happened in the aftermath of two consecutive splits in the original Brahmo Samaj established in Calcutta in 1828 by Rammohan Roy. The first split in 1850, led by Debendranath Tagore (1815-1905), was based on the need for internal reform within Hinduism, while the second split in 1866, led by Keshab Chandra Sen (1838-84), attempted to 'Christianise' Hinduism (Bhatt, 2001, p.23).

The fundamental elements of the nationalist ideas in the Bengal Renaissance were also based on Hindu superiority and exclusivity in much the same way as in other Hindu nationalist movements. Rajnarain Basu (1826-99) and Nabagopal Mitra (1840-94), who were Debendranath's colleagues, were core representatives of this trend in Bengal. Hinduism appeared in regional nationalism based on the British Orientalist study of ancient India. It was led by elite Bengalis and occurred in an environment in which Christians emerged as opponents of Hindus (Ibid).

The most prominent theme for Bengali elite nationalists was the concept of India as the 'motherland' and the need to show dedication to and love for motherland. This theme, which was popular among Indian nationalists and Hindu nationalists in the late 19th century, has influenced many revolutionary nationalists since this period. Bankim, often referred to as the father of the modern Bengali novelist, is the most well known figure to have used this metaphor in his writings. In his novels, he articulated Hindu nationalism through the symbolisation of the Hindu nation as the motherland in gendered and religious terms. This represented 'the imagined historical injury to the nation' through symbolisation that the motherland was suffering from foreign invasion (Ibid, p.28).

1.3 Bal Gangadhar Tilak

Bal Gandadhar Tilak (1856-1920) was one of the key figures in the nationalist movement to recapture the glorious past of the Hindus. His argument in support of Hindu supremacy and traditionalism was the genesis of later Hindu fundamentalism. Also, the Hindu Mahasabha and RSS adopted Tilak's ideology and then became amongst the most powerful organisations in triggering the ideology of 'Hindutva'.

Tilak was one of the first and strongest supporters of 'Swaraj' (self-rule) and the boycott, which are famous campaigns of economic resistance to colonialism. He joined the Indian National Congress in 1890, but criticised its moderate attitude. Standing against the moderates, he organised a separate extremist faction in Congress. Tilak was one of the most crucial leaders of the nationalist movement and famous for his radicalism.

He also asserted that Hindu society had a capacity for self-renewal, which could be achieved by underlining the glorified Vedic civilisation. According to him, the Vedic civilisation was the oldest in the world, the most cultured and the mother of all civilisations (Hansen, 1999, p.76). Such emphasis on the archaic Indian civilisation also derived from Orientalist primordialism. His chauvinistic view of the Hindu civilisation can be seen in his distortion of ancient history. Tilak argued that the Aryans were the first creators of civilisation in the world, claiming that the Aryan civilisation dated to earlier than 8,000 BC and was more refined than the later Bronze and Iron Age civilisations (Bhatt, 2001, p.35).

Another of his achievements was the drawing of Hindu traditions and symbols into Indian nationalism. In his efforts to develop two 'ideological configurations' – the gods Ganesh and Shivaji – to resist British rule, we can see the process of “transfiguration of symbols of Hindu religious devotionism – the religious pantheon – into a nationalist pantheon”. Also, his employment of Shivaji as the symbol of Hindu militancy related to the struggle against not only colonial rule but also medieval Muslim 'invaders' (Ibid., p.34). Therefore, Tilak's depiction of Shivaji in justifying the use of violence can be seen as the forerunner of the strategy used by contemporary Hindu nationalism against Muslims.

As seen from the above, Hindu nationalism from the 19th to the early 20th century can be referred to as a Hindu revivalism movement, which emerged as a part of Indian nationalism in the British colonial period because Hindu nationalists believed that the nation could be united by restoring the Hindu civilisation of thousands of years ago.

This Hindu revivalism movement was grounded in claims of the superiority of the Aryan civilisation, based on Hindu-Aryan primordialism from the Vedic text on the Hindus. It expressed religious exclusivism against other religions and showed signs of manipulating ancient history, which has continued since this period. This suggests that the Hindu revivalist movement served as the foundation of later Hindu nationalism, since it is clear that this strategy has been reused in militant Hindu nationalism.

2. Influence from the 1920s to the 1980s

The period from the 1920s to the 1930s was one of great confusion in the political field of colonial India. In particular, the province of Bengal was partitioned into the largely Muslim eastern areas and the largely Hindu western areas in 1905, and then reunited again in 1911. The process of protest for the partition of Bengal marked its importance in the history of the Indian nationalist movement because it not only promoted the *swadeshi* movement and boycott campaign but also fostered the emergence of two oppositional groups – moderate and extremist – in the Congress. Therefore, during this time, the existing ideology of Indian nationalism in the Congress was confronted with the growth

of the 'extremist' group (Zavos, 1999). Accordingly, there were tendencies towards both criticism of the boycott movement against the British and loyalty to the British government in this period. Gandhi started his non-cooperation movement in the 1920s.

Alongside these wider developments, the main characteristic of this period is the emergence of communalism in Indian politics and the dialectic between Indian nationalism and communalism (Zavos, 1999, 2000). The dialectic between Hindu nationalism and Indian nationalism was always present in this troubled period. More specifically, the coexistence of Hinduised versions of Indian nationalism and the specific ideology of Hindutva emerged (Bhatt, 2001, p.4). With regard to the dialectic, Jaffrelot says ethnicity distinguishes Hindu nationalism from the Indian nationalist ideology, while Zavos (1999) argues that the distinguishing factors are history and culture. From this period, the idea of Hindu nationalism started to change from its moderate to more radical nationalism.

Another feature of the 1920s was the appearance of political mobilisation in Hindu nationalism. The ideology of Hindu nationalism slowly became involved in Indian politics.

Comparing post-1920s Hindu nationalism and pre-1920s Hindu revivalism, the marked distinguishing difference is the Hindu attitude toward Muslims. Hindutva, a concept first developed in the 1920s by Savarkar, clearly defined Muslims as foreign and exterior, while the Hindu revivalism of the 19th century did not. This attitude towards Muslims has intensified since the 1980s due to influences from this period. Therefore, it would not be wrong to say "the key political ideas of the contemporary Hindutva movement were being articulated by Savarkar and the Hindu Mahasabha" (Bhatt, 2001, p.77) because post-1980s militant Hindutva ideology and its activity is directly based on 'Savarkarism' and his Hindu Mahasabha. Consolidating Hindus by strengthening their ties under the threat of extermination, aroused by conversions of Hindus to Islam or Christianity, was their most prominent objective during the period between the 1920s and the 1980s.

In other words, criticism of so-called ‘pseudo-secularists’ (Zavos, 1999, 2000), the militarisation of Hindus and the view of Muslims as ‘others’ were key features of Hindu nationalism in this period.

2.1 The Hindu Mahasabha

The Hindu Mahasabha is a Hindu nationalist political party founded in 1915. It represented Hindus who did not agree with the secular Indian National Congress ideology and who were opponents of the Muslim League.

Before discussing the Hindu Mahasabha, it is important to consider Lala Lajpat Rai. Lajpat Rai (1865-1928) was one of the most important figures of Hindu nationalism in this period as an ‘extremist’ within Congress and as a revolutionary nationalist who took an active part in both the pre-Savarkarite Hindu Mahasabha and the Hindu Sangathan movement.

Influenced by a conception of the Arya Samaj that emphasised the ‘purification’ of Hinduism, he stated that ‘Hindus are a nation in themselves, because they represent a civilisation all their own’ in his article for the Indian National Congress in *the Hindustan Review* (Mathur, 1996, 1). In this way, he raised the argument of ‘Hindu weakness’ and the need to strengthen Hinduism by conquering foreigners and treating them as others. He enunciated Indian nationality as Hindu nationalism. These central thoughts of Lajpat Rai came to form the basis of the later ideology of Hindu identity in Savarkarism and the RSS.

In 1906, following the foundation of the All-India Muslim League in Dacca, a Hindu Sabha (society) was established in Punjab with the aim of “protecting the interests of the Hindus by stimulating in them the feelings of self-respect, self-help and mutual co-operation so that by a combined effort there would be some chance of promoting the moral, intellectual, social and material welfare of the individuals of which the nation is composed.”(Zavos, 1999, p.2273). Also, it developed to stand for the interests of a Hindu constituency and it became a powerful symbol of the united community (Ibid.). The

Hindu nationalist movement intervened in the Indian political field for the first time with the emergence of the Hindu Sabha.

In April 1921, the Hindu Sabha was renamed the 'All-India Hindu Mahasabha'. After this renaming, its earlier objective of loyalty to the British government was changed to the aim of 'a united and self-governing Indian nation', while the initial agenda of the Hindu Mahasabha was sangathan, organisation and movement. These notions developed into major principles of Hindu nationalism (Ibid, p.2275).

From the early 1920s, the All-India Hindu Mahasabha gave importance to the *shuddhi* movement to boost the number of Hindus, under the threat of an increasing number of Christians and Muslims. Its targets were largely two groups. It tried to reconvert Christians and Muslims to Hinduism and to encourage untouchable or adivasi (tribal) groups to return to the Hindu fold (Bhatt, 2001). This Hindu Mahasabha conversion movement, influenced by the Arya Samaj, is a key issue for Hindu communalists today.

Another important activity of the Hindu Mahasabha was the Hindu Sangathan² movement. Swami Shradhanand (1856-1926) was well known for playing a key role in the Sangathan movement of the early 1920s and warning of the threat of Hindu extinction.

The Hindu Sangathan is also evidence of the effect of the Arya Samaj since it was based on neo-Vedic ideology from the late 19th century. Its main aim was strengthening the demographic status of Hindus by bringing outcasts into a hierarchical system of caste. In fact, when the 1901 and 1911 censuses showed an increasing population of Muslims and Christians, Hindus felt that they would become extinct. To remove the fear of Hindus losing their status, Shradhanand proposed to strongly oppose conversions to Islam and Christianity. This Sangathan movement can be seen as a product of the consolidation of Hindu nationalist ideology in the 1920s. It has become a key characteristic of today's Hindutva movement (Ibid, p.63, 67).

² Sangathan is derived from the Sanskrit prefix *sam*, 'together', and the verbal root *ghat*, 'to form or mould'. This is evident in the more strict Sanskrit use of *sangathan*, 'organisation, formation, constitution, composition' (Zavos, 2000, p.16).

The Hindu Sangathan movement and the Hindu Mahasabha became influential in the national political field from the mid-1920s under the leadership of Madan Mohan Malaviya, Lajpat Rai and B.S. Moonje, coinciding with the end of Gandhi's mass satyagraha campaigns (Ibid, p.69).

When Savarkar reached the leadership of the Hindu Mahasabha in 1937, the Hindu nationalist ideology in the subcontinent became more aggressive and militaristic. It suggested that the Indian government give Hindus military training in all high schools and colleges (Savarkar, 1941 as cited in Bhatt, 2001). This Mahasabha policy of Hindu militarisation implies that Hindu nationalism started to set up a strategy to protect Hindus from external threats from this period.

In conclusion, Lajpat Rai and Swami Shraddhanand recommended the same remedies to reform Hindus, including the abolition of sub-castes and the conversion of 'untouchables' and tribals to Hinduism. In this respect, we can say that the ideology of this period was the legacy and extension of that of the Arya Samaj of the previous century. Furthermore, it became the foundation for non-Gandhite ideologies for both Hindu internal reform and Hindu political assertion within and around the Congress, the non-cooperation movement and the national movement (Bhatt, 2001, p.75).

2.2 Savarkar's Movement

Vinayak Damodar Savarkar (1883-1966), who is famous for coining the term 'Hindutva', is revered as a revolutionary hero by Hindu nationalists. It is no exaggeration to say that the Hindutva ideology was not definitively articulated until this period. His ideology of Hindutva, as explained in his article "*Hindutva: Who is a Hindu?*" in 1923, lit up contemporary militant Hindu nationalism. Certainly, contemporary usage of the word 'Hindutva' derives from Savarkar (Bhatt, 2001, p.77). According to Zavos (1999) and Jaffrelot (1999), Hindu nationalism was not 'codified' until the birth of his Hindutva ideology.

Savarkar introduced the ideology of Hindutva after the Partition of Bengal and in the political whirlpool of the 1920s. His main objective was to provide an answer to questions such as ‘What is Hinduness’ and ‘What constitutes Hindu identity’ and to consolidate the idea of the unitary nation with Hindu identity. He highlighted the problem presented by this ‘lack’ on the part of Hindus, constructing as solutions Hindutva and the sharing of ‘Hinduness’ by all Hindus. Such eagerness for a strong and culturally homogenous nation by means of the Hindutva idea was due to the impression made on Savarkar by the writings of Giuseppe Mazzini. In Mazzini, Savarkar found an ideological framework and a political philosophy that combined cultural pride, national self-assertion and a view of the culturally homogenous nation (Hansen, 1999, p.77).

Based on Mazzini’s thoughts about the nation, Savarkar explained the five elements that constituted unitary nationality: territory; emotional attachment; coherence and unity of languages; shared blood; and race.³ According to this definition, he asserted that Hindus were those who inherited the blood of the Vedic-Aryan race and the Sanskrit culture and those who considered ‘Sindhusthan’ as their ‘Holyland’ (Bhatt, 2001, p.99).

Among these elements, Savarkar particularly emphasised the racial inheritance of Hindu blood from their Vedic forefathers in characterising Hindutva (Savarkar, 1989). Accordingly, he denied the theory of the Aryan invasion of the subcontinent and stated that the ancient land of “Sindhu”⁴ comprised the entire subcontinent. In this way, his sense of Indian nationality was based on the “Vedic nation” that was already present four thousand years ago with the development of a common language, Sanskrit, and a common body of philosophy and ritual practices (Hansen, 1999, p.78).

3 Savarkar reiterated a number of these tenets. According to him, “the first tenet in forming a nationality was territory and pride of the unique and supreme qualities of each nation. The second tenet was a common emotional attachment to the nation. The third tenet was the coherence and unity of languages as the medium of cultural essence and feeling. The fourth tenet denoted the holistic concept of culture as a uniting whole by shared blood and race. Savarkar praised caste endogamy as a mechanism keeping the blood of the nation pure” (Savarkar, 1969 quoted in Hansen, 1999, p. 78).

4 According to Savarkar, “the term ‘Hindu’ is basically a territorial denomination of the civilization developed through millennia on the eastern side of the river Indus, ‘Sindhu’, which gradually became known as ‘Hindu’” (Ibid 1999)

With this strong assertion of the need for common blood to make a unitary nation, others who were not Hindu such as Christians and Muslims could not be included in the Indian nationality in Savarkar's thought. Accordingly, he sharply distinguished foreigners from Hindus. He continuously stressed that Christians and Muslims should abandon their faith and adopt the Hindutva ideology. It seems that this strategy of demarcating a clear boundary between us and them appeared in the psychology of nationalism from this time:

For though Hindusthan is to them 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. Consequently their names and their outlook smack of a foreign origin. Their love is divided. (Savarkar, 1989, p.113).

This Hindu majoritarian ideology started by Savarkar brought up issues of war, militarism and minorities from the 1930s. He introduced his militarised Hindu nationalism to the Hindu Mahasabha from the mid-1930s as its president. From that time, the difference between Hindu nationalism and the anti-colonial national movement became very clear (Bhatt, 2001).

In this way, Savarkar's activities influenced not only several ideological currents within and outside the Indian freedom movement in his own time, but also the principles of the contemporary saffron wave.

The form of Hindu nationalism after the 1920s is easily distinguishable from that of the previous period. Hindu nationalist organisations like the Hindu Mahasabha extended from the Hindu Sabha started to intervene in the political field, while the political maelstrom involving events such as the Partition of Bengal and the conflict between 'moderate' and 'radical' groups within Congress swept through the 1920s. Hindu nationalists in this period tried to reform Hindus based on the tenets of the Arya Samaj and went on to develop ideas beyond the Arya Samaj ideology. However, the contemporary militarised ideology of Hindu nationalism has been developed since the definition of Hindutva by Savarkar. Therefore, it would be true to say that the emergence of the Hindutva ideology from this period is the immediate background of the propagation of majoritarian group rights by later saffron communities from the 1980s.

3. Sudden rise of Hindu Nationalism from the 1980s to the Present

Hindu nationalism in the period from the 1980s to the present day has presented a further developed form of its previous ideology and has taken a more aggressive form in the political field. Over the past three decades, the Hindutva ideology has become a prominent issue in Indian politics not only because saffron waves have created a new environment in politics in which religion and politics are combined but also because nationalists have felt under threat from globalisation. Since the 1990s, Hindutva has spread at the state and local levels, as well as at the national and international levels, as the leverage of globalisation has increased rapidly. Hindu nationalists in this period have attempted to raise consciousness of Hindu cultural nationalism, bringing an anti-pluralist and neo-fascist vision to the Indian public and politics.

With the hope of establishing a homogenous cultural nation, the Sangh Parivar has introduced a renewed sense of Hindu identity to Indian politics (Chirmuley, 2004, p.2) and created a violent public environment based on a strongly exclusivist principle.

3.1 The Sangh Parivar

The Sangh Parivar – the family of Hindu nationalist organisations – is regarded as a group of several right wing organisations.

In the period 1949-1965, the Rashtriya Swamayamsevak Sangh (RSS) launched several national organisations, including the Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS) and the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP). This process accelerated from the late 1970s, and the Sangh Parivar has developed into the concept of a Hindu family and spread at the national and local levels with its organisations forming an ‘alternative civil society’⁵.

⁵ The Sangh Parivar in Pune almost constitutes an ‘alternative civil society’, with separate schools, its own banks, a large number of colleges, its own organisations for youth, students, women, children, informal networks, frequent marriages between RSS-affiliated families and its own informal communication channels and structures of authority, both reproduced on a daily basis in the shakhas (Hansen, 1999, p.117).

This development of the Sangh Parivar since the 1970s is related to the lack of a central leadership after the decline of the 'Congress system' and the fading of left power. Concomitant with this situation, the Parivar has intervened in politics with a renewed sense of Hindu identity (Chirmuley, 2004).

Between the 1980s and 2002, the Parivar expanded to a very great extent thanks to its cultural nationalist project and manipulation of the 'communal card' to extreme levels (Ibid, p.4).

3.2 The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS)

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS, the 'National Volunteer Corps') was established in 1925 by K.B. Hedgewar (1889-1940), a physician from Maharashtra. It arose in Nagpur (in Maharashtra state) within the town's Brahmin community. For that reason, the organisation has long been dominated by Maharashtrian Brahmins. In the 1930s, the RSS gradually spread out from Nagpur to western Maharashtra – where Pune became a major centre – and to northern and western India and indeed the entire Hindi-speaking region.

Throughout the 1930s, the RSS maintained close relations with the Hindu Mahasabha, which provided profound inspiration for the ideology and organisation of the RSS. However, after Savarkar became the president of the Hindu Mahasabha in 1937, there were indications of a separation between the RSS and the Hindu Mahasabha. In 1939, the gap widened even further and the Hindu Mahasabha established its own uniformed youth corps, the Ram Sena (Ram's Army). When Golwalkar became the supreme leader after Hedgewar, they completely broke up in the early 1940s (Hansen, 1999, p.94). By the 1940s, the RSS had expanded their influence beyond the provinces of northern India to south India as well (Goyal, 1979 as cited in Bhatt, 1999, p.121).

The fact that the ideology of the RSS was inspired by Savarkar's book *Hindutva* is clear because both Hedgewar and Golwalkar's main aim was 'man-moulding' and 'character-

building'. This 'man-moulding' and 'character-building' means imprinting the RSS worldview in the *shakha*⁶ based on Hindu identity (Bhatt, 2001, p.142).

For their 'character building', the RSS attempted several strategies that show some such characteristics. First, the RSS has emphasised the importance of education to raise consciousness of the Muslim as an enemy and other. In other words, provoking Muslims is a key characteristic of the RSS. They have ceaselessly attempted to implant a dehumanising characterisation of the Indian Muslim. The reason for stressing moulding and educating 'Hindu consciousness' is because Hedgewar believed that 'lack of cohesion' and 'Hindu disunity' were the most serious problems facing Hindu society, in addition to 'foreign domination of Hindus', as a result of 'Hindu failings' (Ibid, p.118)

The second characteristic of the RSS is the full-scale emergence of militarised Hindu nationalism, inspired by Mussolini's fascism and descended from Savarkar's Hindutva ideology since the 1920s. As we have noted before, fascist Italy was already a source of inspiration for Hindu nationalist movements in the 1920s and 1930s, especially in their desire to express the organised Hindu strength and militarise the Hindu nation (Bhatt, 2001)

In fact, the RSS started military and ideological training in its youth corps according to its ideas of physical strength and spiritual purity as soon as it was established. The training includes a daily routine of physical exercise, military drills and marches, weapons training and ideological inculcation (Ibid, p.119). To organise its 'martial tradition', the RSS organises its military camps according to its hierarchical leadership principle based on the traditional idea of a 'model Hindu family'.⁷

6 "Shakha" is Hindi for "branch". Most of the organizational work of the RSS is done through the activities of *shakhas*. In 2004, more than 60,000 *shakhas* were performed throughout India (<http://www.rediff.com/news/2004/jul/23rss.htm>, accessed on 5th May, 2012). The *shakhas* carry out various activities for its volunteers which include not only physical fitness activities through yoga, exercises and games but also emphasise on qualities like civic sense, social service, community living and patriotism (Malkani, K.R., 1980).

7 The RSS claimed that the inspiration for its hierarchical leadership principle was not derived from any 'perverted foreign model' such as Mussolini's fascism, but was based on the traditional idea of a 'model Hindu family' (Curran, 1951; Dexhpande and Ramaswamy, 1981 quoted in Bhatt, 2001, p.120). It includes typical traditional hierarchy like led by order men and recruiting young boys, founded on the

Lastly, the key terms of the RSS based on Aryanism and the history of the Vedic times are racism, making a homogenous nation and majoritarianism.

Golwalkar, who became the second supreme leader of the RSS after Hedgewar's death in 1940, emphasised the 'Vedic period', like other previous Hindu nationalists. He stated that the 'Vedic period' was the oldest civilisation and Hindu-Aryans were indigenous and the forebears of Indians.⁸ According to this view, Golwalkar tried to spread the view that the 'nation should consist of pure race'. This xenophobic view, inspired by Fascism and Nazism, created a strong exclusivity towards minorities. For him, minorities could not be other than 'foreign', but nor should they exist in the Hindu nation unless they became Hindus. With regard to this strong repulsion of minorities, he used somatic metaphors – the healthy body of the 'Hindu nation' threatened by a minority 'cancer' (Ibid, p.130). His ignorance of any rights of minorities under the pretext of uniting his 'one nation' is representative of Hindu nationalists, full of intolerance and closed attitudes. For Golwalkar, minorities could:

Live only as outsiders, bound by all the codes and conventions of the Nation, at the sufferance of the Nation and deserving of no special protection, far less any privilege or rights. That is the only logical and correct solution.The non-Hindu peoples of Hindusthan must either adopt the Hindu culture and language, must learn to respect and hold in reverence Hindu religion, must entertain no ideas but those of the glorification of the Hindu race and culture.....They must cease to be foreigners, or may stay in the country wholly subordinated to the Hindu nation, claiming nothing, deserving no privileges (Golwalkar, 1944, quoted from Bhatt, 2001, p.130).

Although such a view of minorities as foreigners and foes was influenced by Fascism and Nazism, Golwalkar also considered communism to be 'foreign' and 'anti-national'. His vigorous anti-communism was a key constituent of RSS ideology in the post-independence period (Bhatt, 2001). With this contradictory ideology, the RSS has changed from a non-political organisation to a political organisation after the experience of being banned⁹ in the period 1948-1949.

institutional absence of women and in which one leader holds absolute leadership and requires compliable and devotional respect from members (Bhatt, 2001, p.120).

⁸ Golwalkar said "we were one nation"- 'Over all the land from sea to sea one Nation!' is the trumpet cry of the ancient Vedas!' (Bhatt, 2001, p.127)

⁹ Following Mahatma Gandhi's assassination in 1948 by a former member of the RSS, Nathuram Godse, many of the main leaders of the RSS were imprisoned and the RSS was banned on February 4, 1948 (Larson, 1995, p.132).

3.3 The Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP)

The VHP (Vishwa Hindu Parishad) was founded in Bombay on 29 August 1964 at the instigation of Golwalkar. One hundred and fifty religious leaders were present at the meeting, including not just Hindus but also Sikhs, Buddhists and Jains, with the aim of representing all Hindus, led by Swami Chinmayananda. Golwalkar explained that "all faiths of Indian origin need to unite", saying that the word "Hindu" applied to followers of all the above religions (Smith, 2003, p.189).

In the meeting, it was decided that the organisation would have the following objectives: (1) to take steps to raise the consciousness and to consolidate and strengthen Hindu society; (2) to protect, develop and spread Hindu life values, both ethical and spiritual; (3) to establish and reinforce contacts with and help for all Hindus living abroad; (4) to welcome back all who had left the Hindu fold and to rehabilitate them as part and parcel of the Universal Hindu Society; (5) to render social service to humanity at large, initiating welfare projects for the 170 million downtrodden brethren who had been suffering for centuries, including schools, hospitals, libraries, etc.; (6) to establish the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, the World Organisation of the six hundred million Hindus at present residing in 80 countries aspiring to revitalise the eternal Hindu Society by rearranging the code of conduct of our age-old Dharma to meet the needs of the changed times; (7) to eradicate the concept of untouchability from Hindu Society (VHP pamphlet, 1982, cited from Vander Veer, 1994, p.130).

With these aims of consolidating Hindus with other religions that emerged from Hinduism, several characteristics differentiated the VHP from other right wing organisations.

First, the VHP has tried to strengthen the solidarity of Hindus overseas. The VHP has organised its branches not only at the level of the nation state, but also at the international level. Internationally, the VHP has reported affiliated bodies in eighteen countries (Bhatt, 2001, p.183).

Second, the VHP has focused on setting up a programme to bring tribals and untouchables into the Hindu fold. This strategy could come from concerns about Hindu extinction. Hindu nationalists are under the delusion that Muslims will be majority in India in the future because of their higher fertility rate and the practice of polygamy. This imagined fear also results in Hindus worrying about a shortage of resources in the future based on 'Malthusian' theory.¹⁰ From the early 1980s, the VHP began in earnest mass conversion campaigns among syncretic Hindu-Muslim groups and among Christian tribals. These so-called 'homecoming' campaigns emphasised that those who had other religions were to 'come back' to their 'original', 'natural' faith, Hinduism, and hence their homeland (Ibid, p.198). The most famous shuddhi activity in the VHP was the Meenakshipuram conversion in 1981. In this conversion movement, the VHP encouraged lower caste Hindus and untouchables to offer devotion to and bathe the idols and continuously resist conversion to Islam among them (Ibid, p.188).

Third, the VHP started to use the iconic representations of 'Ram' and the media effect with their involvement in the Ram Janmabhomi campaign. The destruction of Babri Masjid at Ayodhya to construct a Ram temple was the most remarkable working in the VHP's role. During its Ram Janmabhomi campaign, the VHP elevated the *Ramayana* as the privileged text of Hinduism by broadcasting 'Ramayana' series. The strategy of the VHP during the Ram Janmabhomi campaign included making a clear demarcation of the other to appeal to the majority of Hindus through the utilisation of devotional symbol.

The VHP was a non-political organisation at the time of its foundation, but it has started to influence the politics since the BJP adopted the Hindutva themes of the VHP document issued in 1997 referred to as *Hindu Agenda* as its 1998 general election manifesto. Therefore, the development of a national Hinduism which aims to spread the VHP's version of Hinduism as the standard and mainstream Hinduism to the nation is the most significant of the activities of the VHP (Hansen, 1999, p.102).

¹⁰ According to Bhatt (2001, p.197-8), Malthusian theory has characterised Hindu nationalism since the 20th century.

3.4 The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)

In 1951, senior RSS activists created a national party, the Jana Sangh, and Mookherjee was elected president. Its political strategy was based on RSS ideology and organisation. The Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS), the political arm of Hindu nationalism, initially regarded post-Independence India as 'Bharatiya Rashtra'. This changed to 'Hindu Rashtra' in 1956, with the Jana Sangh claiming that both were equivalent and coextensive with 'Indian' nationalism (Baxter, 1971, p.133).

With its objective of spreading Hindu nationalism, including campaigns against Urdu, for the banning of cow-slaughter and for a militarily strong India, the Jana Sangh emerged from the late 1960s, a period that included the death of Nehru, war with Pakistan and the development of the 'multi-party system' at the national as well as state level (Bhatt, 2001, p.154).

The crucial motivation for examining the Jana Sangh is the fact that the contemporary Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) manifesto is derived from the main principle of the Jana Sangh.

Under the principle of 'one nation, one culture, one people', the Jana Sangh was against the partition of India, which it believed should be 're-united'. It also strongly opposed Nehruvian secularism because the latter was seen as a policy of 'appeasement' of Indian Muslims (Ibid). However, the most influential ideology was Deendayal Upadhyaya's 'Integral Humanism'. This ideology has since had considerable influence on the BJP.

During the Emergency period of 1975-1977, RSS and Jana Sangh leaders and activists were arrested. Later, Indira Gandhi's Congress Party lost the general election and the Janata coalition headed by Moraji Desai won. The Janata coalition formed a slight majority in the Lok Sabha. The founders of Jana Sangh, RSS members Advani and Vajpayee, were also key members of the Janata coalition. This was the first time since just after Independence that Hindu nationalists held political power at the centre, as key members of a ruling coalition (Ibid, p.168).

In 1980, the leaders and workers of the former Jana Sangh formed the BJP, with Vajpayee as its first president. In 1982 during state elections, the BJP formed alliances with other smaller parties and stood in an anti-Congress front. Two years after the 1984 general election, Vajpayee resigned from his position as president due to the disastrous result of the Lok Sabha polls, following which Lal Krishnan Advani became BJP president in 1986. The BJP under Advani started to adopt Upadhyaya's Integral Humanism philosophy as its ideology to fortify its idea of 'cultural nationalism' from 1985. In its 1989 general election campaign, the BJP formed electoral alliances mainly with V.P. Singh's new Janata Dal party, as part of the National Front alliance created by Narasimha Rao in 1988.

In August 1990, L.K. Advani launched his *rath yatra*, a mass march through some ten northern Indian states, sparking serious communal tension and violence. His motivation was seen as relating to the mobilisation of the Hindu vote bank, since it was threatened by the problem of caste loyalties after the implementation of the Mandal report¹¹. In the *rath yatra*, Hindutva forces were trying to bring the issue of caste discrimination to the fore by integrating those outside the caste system into Hinduism. In this sense, the *yatra* could be interpreted as an anti-Mandal strategy (Bhatt, 2001, p.169, 170&171). After the initiation of the *rath yatra*, Advani was imprisoned in Bihar, leading to the fall of the V.P. Singh National Front coalition government in late 1990.

In the 1991 election campaign, the BJP began to express its 'Hindutva' manifesto, based on Savarkar's definition of Hindutva. Its slogan was 'Towards Ram Rajya' (the mythological 'Rule of Ram') (Ibid., p.172).

From the Himalayas to Kanya Kumari, this country has always been one. We have had many States, but we were always one people. We always looked upon our country as Matribhoomi, Punyabhoomi [Motherland and Holyland]. (Bharatiya Janata Party, 1991 quoted in Bhatt, 2001, p.172).

11 In September 1990, the V.P. Singh government announced about implementation of the Mandal Commission's recommendation of 27% reservation of educational seats and government jobs for OBC (backward) communities. This resulted in an 'upper' caste strong resistance and the public self-immolation of Brahmin and 'upper' caste students in the summer of 1990 (Hansen, 1999, p.164).

This 1991 BJP manifesto seems to be some kind of preparation to achieve Hindu cohesion before embarking on the destruction of the Babri Masjid in 1992. The BJP claimed that their planning of the reconstruction of the Ram temple at Ayodhya was a means of rectifying historical wrongs between Hindus and Muslims. In other words, its manifesto was intended to trigger Hindus' old wounds received during the Mughal period.

During the 1996-1998 election, the BJP reiterated its ideology of 'one nation, one people, one culture' with the addition of the ancient cultural heritage of India as 'Hindutva', as well as emphasising the civilisational superiority of the Vedic times. In addition, they tried to legitimise the Ramjanbhoomi movement as the greatest mass movement since Independence.

Hindutva is unifying principle which alone can preserve the unity and integrity of our nation. It is a collective endeavour to protect and re-energise the soul of India, to take us into the next millennium as a strong and prosperous nation...On coming to power, the BJP government will facilitate the construction of a magnificent Shri Rama Mandir at Janmasthan in Ayodhya which will be a tribute to Bharat Mata. This dream moves millions of people in our land; the concept of Rama lies at the core of their consciousness (Bharayiya Janata Party, 1996 quoted in Bhatt, 2001, 174).

Although the BJP stressed its Hindutva manifesto, it has also attempted to appeal to a non-Hindu constituency under its aim of projecting moderation and inclusivity. This dual strategy of the BJP has come about in response to the changing economic and political global environment.

However, this attempt by the BJP to address globalisation has shown up differences in the ideology of the RSS. More particularly, the RSS advocated 'economic nationalism' based on swadeshi and redistributivism, while the BJP supported 'economic globalisation' based on deregulation.

In the late 1990s, these differences became apparent following renewed attacks by the Sangh Parivar on the BJP for apparently abandoning its Hindutva agenda in the coalition government, as well as disagreements about the nature, pace and direction of 'calibrated

globalisation' (Bhatt, 2001, p.177). However, this does not mean that the BJP gave up its Hindutva cultural nationalism slogan as its philosophy. It ceaselessly stressed the view that enhancing India's ancient cultural heritage is important.

Examining the core philosophies of the BJP, first, it has succeeded from Jana Sangh's ideology of 'Integral Humanism'. 'Integral Humanism' was based on a rejection of large-scale technologies and advocated swadeshi (Indian manufacture and consumption) and small-scale industrialisation. It was similar to Gandhian thought with respect to using swadeshi and sarvodaya (welfare for all) concepts.

Secondly, the BJP has declared 'Gandhian Socialism' to be its constitutional political ideology. This theory is inspired by Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule written by Gnadhi. Its features include decentralisation of political and economic power, opposition to technology and large scale industrialisation, and emphasis on self-employment and self-reliance.

Thirdly, it has adopted 'positive secularism'. With regard to 'positive secularism', Vajpayee has stated that:

Mahatma Gandhi describes the correct attitude towards religion as 'Sarva Dharma Sambhava', equal respect to all religions. The concept of 'Sarva Dharma Sambhava' is somewhat different from European secularism which is independent of religion ... We may say that the Indian concept of secularism is that of Sarva Dharma Sambhava ... Sarva Dharma Sambhava is not against any religion. It treats all religions with equal respect. And therefore it can be said that the Indian concept of secularism is more positive (Vajpayee, quoted from Jaffrelot, 2007, p.327).

'Positive secularism' includes the view that the state should consider all India's religions as equal, implying that Hindus should not be treated any differently to minority religions (Malik and Singh, 1994, p. 62).

In conclusion, the beginning of Hindu nationalism from the 19th to the early 20th century can be seen as "Hindu Revivalism" based on Aryanism, which emerged as a form of

nationalism against British colonial rule. Through the introduction of Western Orientalism and primordialism in the late 19th century, nationalists attempted to build up a number of socio-religious movements, mainly among Hindus, in the name of uniting the nation. Accordingly, Hindu nationalists tried to rediscover the history and origins of Hindus under the influence of these two epistemologies – primordialism and Orientalism from Europe. Therefore, Hindu nationalism in this period can be seen as preparation for the construction of contemporary Hindutva.

From the 1920s, Hindu nationalism has started to intervene in politics, with Savarkar introducing the concept of 'Hindutva' amidst the political turmoil of this time in India. Savarkar's 'Hindutva' was an ideology based on Nazism and Fascism. This narrow-minded view, which involves the acceptance only of 'us', has become the fundamental idea of contemporary right wing nationalism.

The sudden rise of the military form of Hindu nationalism since the 1980s has been more apparent in the political field with the strategy of making a clear demarcation of Muslims as others or enemies. Accordingly, right wing forces have used military tactics, including training and education, to unite India under a homogenous Hindu identity. This Hindu-Muslim communal violence was most obviously sparked in the destruction of the Babri Masjid in 1992.

Based on this background of Hindu nationalism, the following chapter will analyse the psychological reasons making Hindu nationalists invoke conflict and violence towards Muslims.

Chapter II

Psychology of the Conflict between Hindus and Muslims

In colonial India, as the idea of nationalism gained ground amongst Indians in the late 19th century, the British government embarked upon a policy of divide and rule. It tried to aggravate the conflict between Hindus and Muslims by offering political rights to Muslims. Muslims formed the Muslim League to overcome their feeling of inferiority, and this in turn contributed to the rise of Hindu communalism. Eventually, the policy resulted in the Partition of India and Pakistan in 1947.

Partition most starkly exposed the hostility between Hindus and Muslims. It was the moment when the wound that Hindus had received in the Mughal era – when Muslims conquered Hindus – stood revealed.

Partition provided the opportunity to emphasise the definition of Muslims as ‘others’. Although Indian Muslims have lived in India for centuries, they are regarded by many Hindu nationalists as foreigners. This perception is derived from a fear that their real loyalties lie with Pakistan and the Middle East rather than with India (Kakar, 1995).

The purpose of this chapter is to analyse the psychological factors behind the serious communal conflicts and strong antagonism between Hindus and Muslims in India. The most prominent of these psychological factors is Chosen Trauma, a wound received by Hindus in Indian history. The depth of this wound is related to the historical background in which Hindus and Muslims were intertwined with each other. In explaining Hindu animosity towards Muslims, it is important to examine this history from the moment Hindus and Muslims met to their current collision.

The most significant wound received by Hindus in Indian history is first the period of Muslim conquest over Hindus and second the Partition of India and Pakistan in 1947.

The first part of the chapter will look into the event of the destruction of the Babri Masjid, which it will be argued took place as a result of these two historical events, through their impact as Chosen Trauma on the Hindu psyche.

The second part will discuss psychological factors that can explain what makes Hindus feel so much anger towards Muslims when the British also dominated India. It will be suggested that the answer is the 'proximity factor', which refers to the tendency to feel more threatened by and therefore also more hostile towards a nearer and larger group than towards a distant and smaller group. These feelings have been handed down the generations through education by families and relatives.

In last part of the chapter, Hindu resentment of Muslims due to the breaking of taboos such as eating beef and slaughtering cows, and from the favourable attitude of the Indian government, will be explained.

1. Chosen Trauma

History is sometimes portrayed as a memory of a wound or glory of the past, and it is sometimes used as a means for someone who belongs to that history to justify an action today. This part of the chapter will examine one of the ways in which such psychological methods have been used by Hindus to justify their actions by reigniting a historical wound or glory.

For Hindu nationalists, the Mughal era and the Partition of India and Pakistan are fundamental injuries or trauma that are a cause of ceaseless communal conflict between Hindus and Muslims. In the Hindu consciousness, these wounds were inflicted when their dream of India as a homogeneous 'Hindu rashtra' was destroyed by the invasion and partition of the country by Muslims, regarded as foreigners or others. For Hindus, Muslims are the main party to be blamed. In addition, Hindus are nervous about decreasing Hindu numbers and the possible extinction of the Hindu race.

This definition of Muslims as others or foreigners can be understood with psychoanalysis. The 'other' is constructed in the process of “the securitisation of subjectivity”, which according to Kinvall (2006, p.47) means “the search for one stable identity”, while the other turns into an abject as the unwanted parts of the self are projected onto the other. This is also a concern with Chosen Trauma, which are mental recollections of a wounded past, where historical memory becomes an important factor in a successful projection process.

Chosen Trauma can easily occur when people feel some new threat, such as globalisation or the threat of the extinction of the race. In other words, Chosen Trauma is increased in a situation of insecurity and anxiety. When people feel their identity is disturbed in a context in which the system or order is changing, abjection occurs. The abject is a key part of group formation when the familiar ‘stranger’ is suddenly recognised as a threat (Babur, 1952; Kinvall, 2006). This includes the process of securitising one’s identity by demonising the other, in which the self is sanctified. In dehumanising the other, the other is usually regarded as dirty. This construction of the self and the other will be discussed in more detail in the third chapter.

Chosen Trauma refers to the mental recollection of a tragedy in a group’s history and includes “information, fantasised expectations, intense feelings and defences against unacceptable thought” (Kinvall, 2006, p.56). The feeling of hate generated from the past wound becomes the link between the present, past and future, and this is passed down through successive generations. It is possible because a specific calamity influences the psychology of individuals as well as that of the group. According to Volkan (1997, p.36-49), large groups also mourn. This process includes building mental defences against painful and unacceptable feelings and thoughts. Humiliation becomes trauma and this Chosen Trauma is rediscovered, reinterpreted and reused, sometimes in a mythologised and intertwined form, by later generations.

To reignite Chosen Trauma means attempting to trace the lineage of a group back to a specific place, time and ancestor in order to establish an ideological heritage and to

suggest a direction for future actions. This is accomplished through the use of symbols, memories, myths and heritage, with the objective of discovering the 'original' event. Political leaders often invoke Chosen Trauma as a way of justifying their actions by reigniting ancient injuries or glories, using remodelled symbols and myths (Kinvall, 2006, p.56-59).

Both Chosen Traumas and Chosen Glories are closely related to images of the nation and religion. Traumas emerge at times when nationalism is strong, when there is a need to search for the nation since the nation is lost, such as following colonisation. In this situation, nationalists want to look for and draw images of their glorified past before colonisation, and this process is often rooted in religious discourse. Here, religion plays a powerful role in turning the abstract symbols on which religion draws into physical objects and tangible events. All religious revelations are connected to the nation – for example, religious miracles become national feasts and holy scriptures are reinterpreted as national epics. In this sense, religious and cultural rituals and ritualistic anniversaries can sustain the trauma and show the demonization of the other while sanctifying the self. In other words, by turning history into a Chosen Trauma or Chosen Glory, it becomes a 'naturalised' part of an identity group's definition of the self and the other (Ibid, p.58, 59).

The use of Chosen Trauma in relation to discourse about religion and the nation can be seen in the actions of contemporary saffron waves and the Ayodhya event. This chapter will analyse the trauma that have been chosen in Hindu consciousness from their history – the Mughal Era and the Partition of India and Pakistan – and discuss how these Chosen Trauma have become a psychological factor in provoking conflict between Hindus and Muslims.

It is argued that the demolition of the Babri Masjid resulted from the emotional wound received by Hindus based on the historical events of the Mughal era and the Partition of 1947, their Chosen Trauma.

1.1 Mughal Era

The first Chosen Trauma for Hindus is the Muslim invasion of the subcontinent from the beginning of the 8th century to the 19th century and the Indian Rebellion of 1857¹².

Broadly speaking, Muslim rule in India had six phases: (i) Arab rule in Sindh and Multan up to the 10th century; (ii) the Delhi Sultanate from Mohammed Ghori to Ibrahim Lodhi from the 11th to the 15th centuries; (iii) the Mughal empire from Babar to Jalaluddin Akbar; (iv) Jehangir to Aurangzeb from the 16th to the 17th centuries; (v) the Bahmani and other Shia Kingdoms in the South; and (vi) the post-Mughal period after Aurangzeb and the rise of Maratha, Sikh and European powers in India (Gopal, 1994, p.10).

According to Kakar (1995, p.25, 27) Hindu nationalists have tended to exaggerate the impact of ten centuries of Muslim domination. He also claims that Hindu nationalists tend to overemphasise the difference between Hindu and Muslim religious identities as well as doctrinal beliefs in India's pre-colonial past.

Indeed, Hindutva describes the Muslim invasion as a history full of wounds, because Hindus were severely exploited by Muslims and many Hindu temples were destroyed – their religion was strongly oppressed during that period. For that reason, Muslims are usually depicted as aggressive fundamentalists and regarded as having inherited the blood of their ancient dictatorial medieval rulers who demolished temples and forcibly converted Hindus to Islam (Hasan, 2005). Hindu nationalists narrate only their suffered suppression and damage in the Mughal period, without mentioning any Muslim dynasty that tried to harmonise relations between Hindus and Muslims or the golden age during the Mughal era.

20 The Indian Rebellion of 1857 emerged as a mutiny of sepoys of the British East India Company's army on 10 May 1857 in the town of Meerut, and soon developed into other mutinies and civilian rebellions, largely in the upper Gangetic plain and central India (Bandyopadhyay, 2004, pp.169-172). The rebellion is also referred as India's First War of Independence, the Great Rebellion, the Indian Mutiny, the Revolt of 1857, the Uprising of 1857, the Sepoy Rebellion, and the Sepoy Mutiny.

Similarly, there are many Hindu literary writers who describe the fate of Hindus oppressed during the Mughal era and who express concern at the harmful influence of Islam on their society by contrasting the glory of pre-medieval India with the cruel character of Muslim dynasties (Ibid., p.200). For example, Gopal Ganesh Agarkar, Gopal Hari Deshmukh, and Vishnushastri Chitambar state with one voice: “Muslims were bullies and fanatics, because violence and aggression was the essence of their civilization” (Hasan, 2005, p.200). Tilak, an extreme Hindu nationalist during the early 20th century, tried to strengthen the Maratha identity with reference to memories of Muslim repression and exploitation. His continuous effort to denounce Muslim rulers including Mahmud of Ghazna, Alauddin Khalji, Timur, Aurangzeb, and Ahmad Shah Abdali as tyrannical dynasties created a religious divide in Maharashtra society and influenced the core ideology of the Hindu Mahasabha and the RSS, which includes regarding Muslims as enemies (Bhatt, 2001; Hasan, 2005).

Hindi writers like Bharatendu Harishchandra, Pratap Narain Misra and Radha Charan Goswami expressed the same idea, portraying medieval rule as an atrocious period, referring to evidence of the rape and conquest of Hindu women, the slaughter of sacred cows, and the demolition of Hindu temples. Bharatendu even expresses their ‘wounds in the heart’, lamenting the fact that Aurangzeb’s mosque stood beside the sacred Vishwanath temple in Varanasi (Hasan, 2005, p.200). He also makes a strong comparison between the characters of Hindus and Muslims, depicting Hindus as subjugated, long-suffering, modest, and acting with courage and honour, while Muslims are shown as dominant, acting with brutality and cowardice, and intolerant (Ibid). Misra and Radha Charan also depreciate Muslim rulers with expressions such as “those mad elephants” or “those who trampled to destruction the flourishing lotus-garden of India”. They bitterly criticise Muslim brutality in slaughtering cows and show wariness about Hindu religious processions being kept under guard (Chandra, 1987, cited in Hasan, 2005,p.201).

The most well known Bengali writer, Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, is another critic of the Mughal era. His strong resentment of Muslims is clear from the following: “He was born to hate the Hindus, he found Hindu offences unpardonable” (Ibid., p.182). He

asserts that medieval India was a period of bondage and that Muslim rule failed to bring any development to India. He sees Islam as loaded with the deceptive, ridiculous, avaricious and immoral, and most of all, he thinks of it as a threat to the Hindu religion (Chatterjee, 1986, p.77). Nirad C. Chaudhuri, a member of the Bengali intelligentsia, agrees that Muslims tried to oppress the Hindu religion to spread their religion with the Quran. In addition, he reveals strong antagonism towards Muslims in his criticism of Aurangzeb's ruthlessness: "As we grew older we read about the Rajputs, the Marathas, and the Sikhs against Muslims, and of the intolerance and oppression of Aurangzeb" (N.C. Chaudhuri, 1987, p.226).

It is clear then that many Hindu writers during the late 19th century tried to create the impression amongst Indians that the Mughal era was a dark age of Muslims raping Hindu women and destroying Hindu temples and sacred places. As a result of their efforts, the Mughal era has become a "historical wound", and this trauma has had an effect in bringing about the destruction of Babri Masjid – the climax of the conflict between Hindus and Muslims.

In the contemporary age, the damage Hindus suffered during the Mughal era has become one of the saffron wave's key foundations, with the intention of justifying the demolition of the Babri Masjid.

After the destruction of the Babri Masjid, the BJP tried to legitimise their actions by highlighting the atrocities committed by Muslim rulers and indoctrinating Hindus with images of the violent invasion of the Muslims:

This historical background of the Mohamedan invasion and the provocative ocular reminders of that violent and barbaric invasion were completely ignored even after the partition of India. This neglect resulted in the failure to evolve a sound basis for Indian nationalism and durable relationships between Hindus and Muslims (BJP, 1993, quoted in Berglund, 2004, p.1069)

In the 'BJP's White Paper on Ayodhya and The Rama Temple Movement', the party also condemned Muslims with its description "Muslims are violent and barbaric" and its

characterisation of the Muslim period on the subcontinent as “...probably the bloodiest story in History”(quoted in Berglund, 2004, p.1069). In addition, it asserted that due to the advent of Islam in the subcontinent, the ancient harmony had been destroyed. It stated: “It is the invasion by fanatic religious statecraft that intervened and introduced inter-religious disharmony and hatred towards all indigenous faiths” (BJP, 1993, quoted in Davis, 2005, p.36).

In this way, the Sangh Parivar has sought to find a rationalisation for the demolition of the Babri Masjid by bringing up Babar, the founder of the Mughal dynasty. When the Sangh Parivar describes Babar, he is connected to his act of conquering iconoclasm and this action is regarded as an expression of indigenous principles in Islam, not as his personal act (Davis, 2005, p.36). As a result, Babar has become a symbol of the historical legacy of Muslim conquest and Hindus have used him to construct their antagonism towards Islam.

The ultimate purpose of the Sangh Parivar is to make a clear division of two communities in India – Hindus and Muslims – and to aggravate the relations between them. Towards this end, they contrast the golden age of the pre-Muslim period with medieval India in which there was a historical collapse as a result of the activities of Babar and the Muslim invasion. For this reason, they claim that Babar’s mosque had to be destroyed because it was the vestiges of this ancient historical wrong (Ibid, p.37).

As already discussed, Hindu nationalists from the late 19th century – the period in which Hindu nationalism began – to the contemporary saffron waves, have derogated the Mughal era as an indelible historical disgrace and memory of defeat. This effort by Hindu nationalists to make the Mughal era a historical wound for Hindus has become a Chosen Trauma and this Chosen Trauma has appeared in Hindus' dread of a “revival of medieval Muslim rule” (Kakar, 1995, p.53) and in the action of the demolition of the Babri Masjid, which is considered the physical residue of Muslim rule.

1.2 Partition

The partition of India and Pakistan in 1947 offended the Hindu mind and became one of their biggest historical trauma, since their dream of constructing one nation – a Hindu rashtra – after Independence from the British was destroyed.

India and Pakistan were created on the basis of the so-called two nation theory¹³, which came about as a result of Muslim desire to form a separate nationality and homeland with a distinct culture.

After the creation of these two new states, communal tensions and riots immediately engulfed the subcontinent. The communal violence after Partition not only killed thousands of people but also displaced many people from their homeland. This meant that many victims had to look for a new home some distance away (Raychaudhury, 2000, p.5653). Partition made their homeland hostile and this was a source of distress for them. It became an unforgettable trauma, not only for the victims who experienced severe cruelty such as physical violence, insult and sexual assault, but also for Hindus in general, who felt miserable due to the division of the Bharat Mata.¹⁴

The violence of Partition is the most shocking memory for Hindus and Muslims alike because of its scale and intensity. It has fixed the relation with a clear division between them. Undoubtedly, the partition of the nation into India and Pakistan strongly affected the Hindu consciousness.

Therefore, it cannot be denied that Partition has worked as a Chosen Trauma, which has had an impact on later riots – the destruction of the Babri Masjid and the Gujarat massacre (Kinvall, 2006, p.105).

13 The two-nation theory is the ideology that the primary identity of Indian Muslims is based on their religion, rather than their language or ethnicity, and therefore Indian Hindus and Muslims identity are separated-two distinct nationalities- regardless of ethnic or other commonalities (Winks W. Robin, Low M. Elaine M ,2001).

14 “Bharat Mata” (explained in Chapter III).

In fact, deeply rooted emotional trauma created by the division of India and Pakistan has given momentum to the development of stereotypes of the Indian Muslim as foreign and alien to India for Hindus. Van der Veer (1994) states that the 1947 Partition brought about the cognition among Hindu nationalists of the construction of the Muslim as other – not truly Indian – and gave this construction a strongly realistic aspect (Van der Veer, 1994, p.10).

This strong perception of Indian Muslims as others has even created hostility towards the Middle East, because Hindu nationalists believe that Pakistan has been Islamicized and the heartland of Muslims is the Middle East – not South Asia. The following Hindu narrative shows this Hindu fear:

The Muslims have weakened the Hindus because they have damaged a lot of temples. This happened already during the Moghuls...The construction of Pakistan destroyed India and now we are threatened by both the Middle East and the West. Only a stronger India can save us (interview of a Hindu male, quoted in Kinvall, 2006, p.161).

For this reason, when contemporary Hindu nationalists emphasise the role of the Muslim minority, they often bring up the trauma of Partition. Hindus force Indian Muslims to devote their loyalty towards India:

When the country was partitioned what did the Muslims say?...It was for them to decide at that time whether they wanted to live here, peacefully with Hindus or they wanted to go to Pakistan. If they have decided to live here they must respect the sentiments of the Hindus (quoted in Berglund, 2004, p.1069).

If we analyse the Chosen Trauma of Partition with reference to the Hindu psyche, it is related to Indian mythology because Indian mythology cannot be easily distinguished from the Hindu religion. Hindu feelings about Partition should be understood in this context. In their mind, it was not regarded simply as a division between the Muslim majority areas and Hindu majority areas, but as a ripping apart of Mother India. This perception was a spiritual and emotional shock to the Hindu consciousness and hence Partition remained an unforgivable and unforgettable humiliation for Hindus (Puri, 1993, p.2145).

The traumatic experience of Partition encouraged the rise of a potent feeling of distrust of each other as well as severe communal conflict between Hindus and Muslims thereafter. Needless to say, it has become a significant event in India, leading to a series of riots and hostilities involving Muslims (Puri, 1993; Van der Veer, 1994).

1.3 Result (Destruction of the Babri Masjid : Ayodhya Event)

The destruction of the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya is significant in the contemporary history of India for its social, political and religious aspects. This event can be said to have been the starting point of the rise of the communal Hindutva movement. It generated considerable social agitation, political trouble and public dispute in the subcontinent.

It was intended as retaliation for historical 'humiliations'. The Ram janmabhoomi movement aimed to reinforce the stature of Ram as a god, prophet, and national hero and of Ayodhya as a Hindu religious centre (Puri, 1993, p.2146). In addition, their message to the public was that the site of the Babri Masjid belonged to Hindus, so Hindus had the right to take it over from Muslims (Berglund, 2004, p.1067). Hindu nationalists tried to provoke an emotional reaction and aimed to mobilise feelings of solidarity among Hindus.

The Ramjanbhoomi movement had been in existence for several years. In April 1984, the VHP summoned Hindu religious figures to plan the liberation of three temple sites in north India – at Mathura, Varanasi and Ayodhya.

In 1990, BJP president L. K. Advani suggested a *rath yatra* to garner support for building a Ram temple in Ayodhya. The procession with Rama's chariot began in Somnath, on the Gujarat coast in western India on September 25, and covered some ten thousand kilometres across eight states over the next 35 days, reaching Ayodhya on October 30. On the way, the procession encountered considerable agitation and Advani and other leaders were arrested by the chief minister of Bihar on October 23. On October 30, a Hindu militia under the leadership of the VHP broke into the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya and caused some damage. On November 7, the BJP withdrew its support for the coalition

government led by the National Front and headed by Prime Minister V.P. Singh, which resulted in the fall of the government. With the success of Advani's *rath yatra*, the BJP became the main opposition party to the declining Congress and eventually came to power in Uttar Pradesh.

The final demolition of the Babri Masjid occurred two years later. It is from this time that communal riots began in earnest.

When the saffron wave planned to destroy this site and called for its return from Muslims, their actions were based on three primary beliefs. First, the god Rama was actually and physically born at that exact place. Secondly, an ancient Hindu temple marking Rama's birthplace formerly stood on the site. Thirdly, the Mughal conqueror Babar destroyed the temple in the early 16th century and constructed a mosque on the ruins (Davis, 2005, p.34).

These reinterpreted and uncertain myths and memories have become Chosen Trauma and have reinforced the perception of Muslims.

More particularly, for Hindu nationalists, the presence of the Babri Masjid was a reminder of the violence and intolerance of Muslims, their celebration of the Muslim conquest of Hindus, and the oppression and disunity of Hindus, all of which was ancient history that Hindu nationalists wanted to erase. This thinking of the Sangh Parivar was also expressed by the BJP, which described the Babri Masjid as follows: "purely and simply a symbol not of devotion and of religion but of conquest" (Berglund, 2004, p.1068).

This Hindu anger at Muslims is also visible in two publications that aimed to justify the destruction of Babri Masjid: the book *Ayodhya Guide* and the pamphlet *Angry Hindu! Yes, Why Not?*

Yes, certainly I am angry. And I have every reason to be angry. And it is also right for me to be so. Otherwise I would be no man. Yes for too long I have

suffered insults in silence. Until now I have been at the receiving end....My people have been kidnapped by the enemies. My numbers have dwindled...my goddess-like motherland has been torn asunder... My traditional rights have been snatched away from me (quoted in Nandy et al., 1995, 54).

Each step taken by the Ram janmabhoomi movement had symbolic value, taken not only with the intention of taking revenge for the humiliation of Hindus at the hands of foreign invaders but also to awaken a historical trauma.

Looking more closely at the *rath yatra*, the choice of Somnath as the starting point for the procession had meaning since it was also related to the Chosen Trauma of the Mughal period. It was the site of the most famous event of Muslim temple destruction in India by Muhmud of Ghazna in 1026. Somnath was understandably a target for the VHP (Davis, 2005, p.43).

The erection of the Rama temple also had symbolic meaning for Hindu nationalists. According to Kakar (1995), “The Rama temple is a response to the mourning of Hindu society: a mourning for lost honor, lost self-esteem, lost civilization, lost Hinduness”. More particularly, the Rama temple was an object for the projection of individual and group experiences of mourning. Historical places are often turned into sacred and national sites and serve as Chosen Trauma (Kinvall, 2006, p.59). Relating monuments and history is to some extent a natural instinct, according to Peter Homans (Kakar, 1995, p.202).

Engage the immediate conscious experience of an aggregate of egos by representing and mediating to them the lost cultural experiences of the past; the experiences of individuals, groups, their ideas and ideals, which coalesce into what can be called a collective memory. In this the monument is a symbol of union because it brings together the particular psychological circumstances of many individual’s life courses and the universals of their otherwise lost historical past within the context of their current or contemporary social processes and structures (quoted in Kakar, 1995, 202).

As already mentioned, Chosen Trauma denotes “an event which causes a community to feel helpless and victimised by another and whose mental representation becomes

embedded in the group's collective identity" (Kakar, 1995, p. 63). In India, Chosen Trauma is the result of the anger and hate Hindus feel towards their Muslim enemy or other.

In the formation of this Chosen Trauma, the construction of Muslims as others and alien is necessary. Prejudice is used as a means of differentiating one group from the other in order to maintain group identity.¹⁵ Dehumanisation also takes place, so that the enemy is gradually dehumanised over time (Kinvall, 2006, p.55). The tendency of Hindu nationalists to brand Muslims as dirty vermin, with reference to features such as facial hair and clothing type, or as aggressive sexualised beings, is related to this process of dehumanisation. Traits are sometimes exaggerated to connect unrelated habits like cow slaughter, crime, drugs and terrorism.

This construction of dehumanisation is accomplished through 'mythic discourse', as shown with the destruction of the Babri Masjid. The grounds on which Hindu nationalists justify their action of destroying the mosque are that they believe the Islamic ruler Babur destroyed a Ram temple and built a mosque on its ruins, based on the Indian mythology of Ram. This 'mythic discourse' can be seen as a strategy to unify a pan-Indian homogeneous identity in India by connecting the Hindutva version of Hinduism to Indian history and Indian national identity (Ibid., p.147). In addition, Hindu nationalists have used this mythic discourse to account for Partition as well as Muslim atrocities in the Mughal era.

Hindutva in the Ram janmabhoomi movement used a manipulated trauma of the past – their victimisation at the hands of Muslim conquerors and the partition of the country – with the objective of strengthening Hindu cohesiveness. After instigating the Ayodhya event, Hindu nationalists justified their communal violence, connecting their glorified and romanticised version of India's past with the elimination of Muslim history in India to the present.

¹⁵ This theory will be explained in Chapter IV in detail.

As has been shown, Chosen Trauma is the main psychological explanation for Hindu enmity towards Muslims. The collected memories of the Muslim conquest and the division of the country that was expected to unite after Independence are historical injuries in the Hindu mind and have become indelible trauma for them. Ultimately, these trauma caused the Ayodhya event, which was the culmination of the Hindu-Muslim conflict.

2. Proximity Factor

In fact, it was a policy of the British government that resulted in Partition and the creation of India and Pakistan, as has already been mentioned. British colonial rule also resulted in an increase in Christianity in the subcontinent. Why is Hindu animosity towards Muslims or Islam stronger than towards the British and Christianity? This part of the chapter analyses the psychological factors behind this curious eventuality.

Examining the difference in Hindu perception of the British colonial period and the medieval period of Mughal rule, it is clear that the former is regarded as relatively gentle, civilised and moral in character, while the latter is depicted as brutal, barbarous and ruthlessly oppressive of Hindus (Bhatt, 2001, p. 53).

Kakar agrees with this conclusion. In his opinion, the reason is that religion is a more important issue than political subjugation or economic exploitation in determining the reaction of Hindus (Kakar, 1995). In this way, the wound received by Hindus in the period of the Mughal Empire is deeper than that of the British period because Hindus think that the Hindu religious identity was more severely subjugated by Muslims as compared to the British.

Where has this difference come from? Kakar (1995, p. 28) suggests that proximity is the cause of “occasional simmering resentment and nagging friction” between Hindus and Muslims. The British remained strangers, while Muslims became others owing to their geographical position.

There is a related theory in the psychology of nationalism – inter-group hostility tends to be stronger with larger, nearer, and more powerful outgroups than with smaller, more distant and weaker ones (Rosenblatt, 1964, p.135). In the same way, nationalist or ethnocentric hostility more easily occurs in groups that are frequently encountered – near neighbours living within the group's territory – than in rarely encountered groups. Neighbouring groups are more likely to block goal responses than non-neighbouring groups (Ibid, p.138).

This theory is analysed in more detail by Freud. He says that the proximity factor determines the nature of emotional relations between men in general. He supports this idea with reference to Schopenhauer's famous simile of the freezing porcupine, which indicates that no one can tolerate too intimate an approach to his neighbour (Freud, 1960, p.33).

Neighbours always feel rivalry towards each other. Two families connected by a marriage or two neighbouring towns or countries often think themselves superior and the other inferior and their main rival. South and North Germans, the English and the Scots, Spaniards and Portuguese are good examples of this tendency for neighbours to feel hostility and contempt for each other (Ibid)

Dollard explains that when an in-group searches for the object of hostility of an out-group, that group will become the "favourite" out-group and the source of the most frustration. This will most likely be an adjacent group. In Campbell and Levine's study of intergroup relations (1961) correlated with ethnocentrism, they also mention intergroup hostility and stereotypes related to proximity. When the dominant group selects scapegoats, there is a high probability of targeting the group towards which the most guilt is felt and needs repressing. They say that this would probably be the most oppressed subordinate group, or the most infringed-against territorial neighbour – in other words, most likely an adjacent group.

This proximity theory can explain the relationship between Hindus and Muslims.

Moreover, due to strong family and kinship ties amongst Hindus, enmity felt by parents becomes a heritage that is handed down from the period of infancy and childhood (Kakar, 1995, p.39).

Such handed down Hindu antagonism toward Muslims is shown in Kakar's book, *The Color of Violence*. In this book, he shows his age-old feeling of strangeness towards Muslims in narratives such as the following: "I became aware that within myself 'the Muslim' was still somewhat of a stranger."

In this way, the hostility between Hindus and Muslims is constructed over a long period, being transmitted in teaching from parents, relatives and schools. As Campbell and LeVine explain, when in-groups want to present a bad-example of groups to children, the most effectively usable example in teaching can be a tangible, nearby group of customs (Campbell and Levine, 1961, p.94). This is because we can find and experience easily and immediately the bad or infringed aspects of adjacent groups.

The negative things in ourselves that we find in the other's character and that adjacent groups have are projected onto the other and then handed down to the next generation and transformed into an exaggerated rumour thanks to its rapid spread.

Proximity is one of the factors aggravating Hindu hostility towards Muslims, since this is in the nature of emotions between individuals as well as groups.

3. Other factors

The factors invoking conflict between Hindu and Muslims include various other factors like

3.1 Muslim Assault on Hindu Idols

The cow has often been the factors of stirring up communal violence in the modern era in India (Korom, 2000, p.189). Hindus are sensitive to the theme of the cow because it is

deeply embedded in the Hindu psyche. The cow has long been a symbol that deifies faith and belief in Hindu practice, and it has thereby become one of the most well-represented idols of the Hindu religion.

The symbolic importance of the cow in India can be traced back to the Vedic period. In a Vedic creation myth, cows are related to water, which is considered to be sacred and purifying. In other words, water has a holy image and the cow takes on this holiness. The depiction of the cow during this period is that she was identified with whole of the universe. This relationship between the cow and the universe is referred to many times in the *Rigveda* as well (Jacobi, 1914, quoted in Korom, 2000, p.187). In addition, the cow was seen as complete and self-contained in the *Atharvaveda* (Korom, 2000, p.187). Therefore, the cow also represented perfection for Hindus (Ibid., p.192). Due to her pure and sacred image, cows were offered as oblations for Vedic sacrifice. In particular, the five products of the cow (i.e., milk, curd, clarified butter, urine and dung) were used as the purest substances available for ritual. With these images, it is clear that the tendency for cows to be revered as deities or inhabited by deities started to emerge a long time ago (Korom, 2000, p. 187, 192; Van der Veer, 1994, p.88).

However, the cow was still being eaten. The idea that harming or slaughtering a cow should be considered a crime arose only in the fifth century BCE – the period of the emergence of Buddhism and Jainism – because of the notion of *ahimsa* (Korom, 2000, p.188).¹⁶

From 1880 to 1920 during the colonial period, the Hindu Cow Protection Movement grew up because there was a need to use the sacred image of the cow to unite the community. Right wing Hindu nationalists highlighted the importance of the cow, depicting Muslims as barbaric and dirty due to their consumption of beef.

16 Ahimsa is a term meaning to do no harm, non harming or nonviolence http://www.sanskrit.org/www/Hindu%20Primer/nonharming_ahimsa.html (accessed on 24th July, 2012). Ahimsa means kindness and non-violence towards all living things including animals. It became an basis of important tenet of Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism. Mohandas Gandhi strongly emphasized on this principle http://news.blaze.com/story/20071014111738_kuma.nb/topstory.html, (accessed on 24th July, 2012)

A publication of the VHP emphasises the importance of the cow, not only from the religious point of view as an object of worship and a symbol of Mother India but also from a practical point of view as a useful tool in agriculture and nutrition, thus promoting the cow as a means of developing the country (Hansen, 1999, p.104). Such efforts on the part of the VHP to promote the cow can also be seen in their tribal missionary activities. By teaching the usefulness of cow products such as milk and dung, they want to convince tribals to start to have faith. This missionary activity can be seen as a kind of cultural narcissism (Ibid).

Cows are a taboo in the Hindu psyche, registering on an emotional level. Because of its universality, taboo belongs to a deep level of the psyche and it can take many forms (O'Doherty, 1960, p.131). For example, there is a taboo on certain foods. According to Fortes (1966), the taboo on eating the totem animal is fundamental and is commonly presented in all the literature of the area. Therefore, a taboo on certain foods and related myths has come down through the generations. The ban on eating often functions as a daily reminder of identity with respect to other individuals and to society in general (Ibid).

In this respect, the Muslim habit of eating beef and slaughtering cows could be one of the most crucial factors in Hindu resentment of Muslims. According to Kakar (1995), Muslim beef eating and Hindu repulsion of the practice creates a prominent barrier between the two communities. Hindus cannot share a meal with Muslims and consider their eating habits disgusting, making it difficult for them to be close to each other. Due to their strong aversion towards eating forbidden and tabooed foods, Hindus make an image of Muslims as animals, with characteristics including ferocity, uncontrolled sexuality and a dirtiness by inner pollution.

In 1924, the British army psychiatrist Owen Berkeley-Hill explained two main factors behind the Hindu-Muslim conflict. The first was the 'motherland complex' of Hindus, referring to the rape of the motherland – Bharat Mata – during the Muslim conquest of India. The second obstacle he mentioned was the Muslim slaughter of cows. According to Berkeley, the acts of Muslims violate Hindu taboo; cow slaughter is understood as

showing off Muslim victories, and it could be a major factor behind Hindu hatred of Muslims (Ibid, p.140). In other words, Hindu anger is derived basically from this Muslim assault on their lifestyle and on their idols (Ibid, p.27).

This Hindu disgust at Muslim eating of beef is shown in many Hindus narratives. For Pardis, beef eating is the most grave sin – over and above marriage to a Muslim or conversion to Islam (Kakar, 1995, p.139). In Pardis' interview:

Bada gosht (beef) is their favorite dish. If any of us even touches it he must have a bath. All Muslims eat bada ghost. That is why we keep ourselves away from them. We do not even drink water in their homes (quoted in Kakar, 1995, p.139).

In fact, from the 19th century, there has been a ceaseless effort against cow slaughter in the Hindu nationalist movement. Similarly, during the Ramjanmabhoomi movement, the following slogan was written on the wall: 'It is the religious duty of every Hindu to kill those who kill cows' (Nandy et al., 1995, p.53). Whenever Hindus face a crisis, they recall the importance of the close relationship between Hindus and the cow and thereby increase the feeling of fury in Hindu emotions regarding Muslim eating of beef and slaughtering of cows.

However, Hindus do not feel as much hostility towards Christians – who also kill cows – as towards Muslims. This is because they do not think Christians kill cows with the intention of insulting Hindus (Kakar, 1995, p.141). This shows Hindus' hatred of and bias against Muslims has been deep-seated for a long time in their intertwined history.

3.2 The Government's Attitude Towards Muslim

The Government's pro-Muslim attitude also increases Hindu anxiety and indignation because it makes Hindus feel left out in their homeland.

In April 1985, an important judgement by the Supreme Court of India – the so-called Shah Bano case – gave Hindus a shock. It resulted in social reverberations and sectarian debate on the position of the Muslim minority in Indian society.

The story began with a Muslim woman Begum Shah Bano who had been divorced by her husband in 1975 after 43 years of marriage. She filed a suit claiming her right to maintenance under Section 125 of the Criminal Procedure Code, which applies to all communities regardless of their separate personal laws. The case was finally decided by the Supreme Court in April 1985 in favour of Begum Shah Bano. This Supreme Court judgement triggered a country-wide reaction and also questioned the legal practice which allows separate civil laws for the various religious communities and argued for a uniform civil code (Berglund, 2004, p.1067). In fact, there have been few issues on which Indian Muslims have reacted so strongly since Independence (Hasan, 1989, p.44). There were strong protests by the Muslim community in support of Muslim civil laws, especially by the religious leadership. Many sections of Muslim society, including Jamait-ul-Ulema-i-Hind, the Jamait-e-Islami and the Muslim League, condemned the judgement and formed a movement in the name of interference in Muslim Personal Law. Their basic argument was that no legislative or executive authority could alter Muslim Personal Law because it was based on the Shariah, which is divine and immutable. By referring to the Shariah as a central symbol, they intended to preserve Muslim identity and make an idiom for integration (Ibid, p.44, 45). Through this movement, Muslim aimed to protect their identity and minority position. In fact, the Muslim demand for restoring Muslim Personal Law was a moment that showed their ability to maintain solidarity in the community. For this reason, Hindus could not help feeling threatened, observing Muslims' immediate group cohesion.

At the same time, Hindu nationalists acclaimed the Supreme Court's decision and fiercely criticised the Rajiv Gandhi government when it nullified the verdict by introducing The Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act 1986, which upheld Muslim Personal Law.

This intervention by the Indian government was based on the assumption that the majority of Muslims were unhappy with the judgement made by the Supreme Court, considering it to be a threat to their religious identity. This effort to appease Muslim indignation was made under the ideology of secularism, which intends to protect all religions (Ibid, p.47, 48).

It provoked strong resistance among Hindus. Hindus condemned the Government's decision, describing it as "abject surrender to Muslim fundamentalism"(Puri, 1993, p.2146). Most of the backlash was led by the BJP. The BJP attempted to mobilise Hindu sentiment by arguing that the Shah Bano episode would reopen Muslims reservations about joining the mainstream in India and by saying that the Government's policy demonstrated partiality for the appeasement of Muslims (Ibid.).

The party argued that its demands were not related to its anti-Muslim propensity, but that they were based on the need for the principle of equal treatment. However, its argument just presented the intolerant attitude of Hindus – who cannot accept minorities – and the Hindu nationalist ideal of cultural nationalism (Berglund, 2004, p.1067).

This Hindu sentiment in the Shah Bano case was also seen in interviews of Hindus. They expressed this “unfair treatment” as “behaving like a stepmother toward the other” (Kakar, 1995, p.136). According to Kakar, the bitter complaints of Hindus about the Government are connected to the psychology of “collective sibling rivalry, of the group-child's envy and anger at the favoring of an ambivalently regarded sibling by the parent” (Ibid., p.137).

The threat felt by Hindus also included the fear of fast growing Muslim power in the subcontinent. Hindus felt it was unfair because Muslims were favoured and supported by the state in India as well as in Pakistan. In other words, the growing assertion of Muslims within the country and the Islamic resurrection in the Muslim world increased Hindu resentment in their consciousness (Puri, 1993, p.2146).

Therefore, the Shah Bano case strengthened Hindu determination to continue Hindu-Muslim riots so long as the Government continues to mollify Muslims and makes rules against the Hindu majority.

In conclusion, this chapter has looked into the causes of the conflict between Hindus and Muslims by analysing the reasons behind the strong Hindu hostility towards Muslims.

The most prominent psychological factor is Chosen Trauma. Hindu nationalists have constantly talked about how they were hurt in the Mughal era referring to how many people were killed by Muslims and how they indiscriminately destroyed Hindu temples. In addition, it has also been argued that their wound derived from their idea that Bharat Mata was ripped up by Partition in 1947. They have argued that Partition was unfair to Hindus, saying “we gave Pakistan to Muslims, but the remainder is for us” (Ko et al., 2006).

These historical wounds have become Chosen Trauma and this has been one of the crucial factors in bringing about constant communal violence, which reached its peak with the demolition of the Babri Masjid. The correlation between the destruction of the Babri Masjid and the trauma of the past was well presented in Hindu use of historical myth and symbols.

They legitimised their action and strengthened Hindu group cohesion in the Ramjanabhoomi movement and the construction of the Rama temple, depicting Muslims as barbaric foreigners and others, as well as despising the past of Muslims. In this process, historical places have been turned into holy and mythologised venues, and these myths have been romanticised and a fabricated past has become truth.

The use of historical trauma has not just ended in lamentation or grief for the old days, but has instead become a means of enhancing their political position. The Ayodhya event, which was the climax of the conflict between Hindus and Muslims, broke out as a result of this situation.

However, it is not only Muslims who are alien to Hindus. India was ruled by the British and actually Partition of India and Pakistan occurred under the influence of British colonial policy. So why do Hindus have the most serious antagonism toward Muslims and Islam, not towards Christians and the British?

It is suggested that the proximity factor provides an answer to this question from the psychological perspective. In the psychology of nationalism, nearer and larger groups are more threatening than more distant and smaller groups in intergroup relations. Applying this argument to the relationship between Hindus and others, it would be expected that Hindus would feel more threatened by Muslims and Islam than by Christianity and the British because geographically Muslims live closer than the British and they have interacted closely with Hindus for a much longer time. In this way, the existence of Muslims in the homeland is the biggest intimidatory factor for Hindus because it is easier to counter the influence or bad aspects of Muslim.

Hindu consideration of Muslims as iconoclast because of their habit of eating beef and killing cows and the Indian government's pro-Muslim attitude were offered as additional factors provoking Hindu enmity. This psychology created by particular historical events as described above means that Hindus cannot help being more hostile towards Muslims than towards others. Undoubtedly this hostility has been main culprit in evoking serious communal violence between the two communities.

The question then is what psychology Hindus use for mobilising their group appeal and achieving their goal – to defeat Muslims – in the militarised communal conflict between them that has been going on since the 1980s? The next chapter will examine how Hindus defend and secure their identity in the globalised context.

Chapter III

Using Psychology to Enhance Hindu Group Identity in the Context of Modernisation and Globalisation

Personality changes with the onset of modernisation and globalisation, especially with regard to the security of identity and identity formation, since globalisation and modernisation can be menacing forces for individuals – they may feel previously inexperienced threats in this new environment.

According to Barker (1999, p.35), modernity is ‘an uncontrollable engine of enormous power that sweeps away all that stands before it’. With regard to characteristics in the changed situation between the pre-modern and modern, Vanaik (1997) questions the relationship between communalism and modernity. We may find an answer in the construction of contemporary Hindu nationalism. Kakar (1995) claims that the current religious revivalism or fundamentalism in India is a phenomenon that results from a reaction against modernity. During the modernisation process, many people feel new emotions while adjusting to the new environment. Among these new emotions, the feeling of loss is the most common. Individuals can easily experience the feeling of loss because modernisation eliminates old attachments as a result of population movements including continuous migration and wipes out traditional identities.

Globalisation also contributes to making people feel the emotion of alienation. As society changes rapidly and the boundaries of territories become vague, people want to secure their identity to get rid of existential anxiety about global forces. Modernisation and globalisation give rise to feelings of insecurity and people try to overcome such feelings of insecurity by searching for new secure identities (Kinvall, 2006).

The sudden rise of Hindu nationalism since the 1980s is also related to the influence of globalisation and modernisation. With the maelstrom of domestic politics resulting from

the misuse of ethnic and religious identities in party politics, Hindu nationalism has tried to firmly establish Hindu identity in the context of globalisation and modernisation. In other words, the socio-psychological change processes of individuals and groups as a consequence of modernisation and globalisation are closely related to the reason for mobilising and creating a new Hindu identity. Therefore, we can say that the emergence of forceful and militant Hindu nationalism is one way of strengthening the security of their identity in a rapidly changing world.

From the perspective of nationalism, the more a group's members share – such as language, religion and common historical origin – the greater is the nationalism of the group. Also, the greater the group nationalism: 1) the greater is the group homogeneity of attitudes, beliefs and ways of behaving; 2) the greater is the group cohesiveness; and 3) the greater are the pressures for homogeneity and cohesiveness (Rosenblatt, 1964, p.137, 140).

In accordance with this general theory about nationalism and group cohesiveness, Hindu nationalists in the context of globalisation since the 1980s have attempted to firm up their identity to increase group cohesiveness – dreams of creating a homogeneous India as a Hindu nation – using various psychological strategies. The most important of these strategies is the clear demarcation between the self and the other by abjection of the other, which will be discussed in the first part of this chapter. Deepened Hindu hostility towards Muslims as a result of Chosen Trauma is sharpened as a result of the boundary between the Hindu-self and the Muslim-other. The definite distinction between the self and the other is a natural process in the formation of individual and group identity. Hindu nationalists use this psychology to assert their group identity.

The second part will consider Hindu nationalists' strategy of emphasising group superiority and group loyalty to increase self-esteem, by inculcating prejudice and implanting bad images of the other in the process of drawing a distinction between the self and the other.

Finally, we will examine the Sangh Parivar's method of mobilising Hindu group solidarity through the reinterpretation of history and myth, and through the mythical and historical invention of symbols, as expressed in events related to the destruction of the Babri Masjid – in which they drastically showed their homogeneous ideology of cultural nationalism.

In this way, this chapter aims to look into how Hindu nationalists protect their identity from the new threat of globalisation, with reference to the historical events we have already dealt with in the previous chapter, especially in terms of their psychological strategies such as the abjection of the other and the manipulation of history.

1. Clear Boundary between “Us” and “Other”

Category formation in the construction of identity is a natural instinct for all human beings. Examining the process of the construction of the self and the other in detail, firstly, the individual accepts and creates the self by defining himself or herself in relation to others, perceiving similarities and differences between the self and the other. This process of division between the self and the other in the individual is also adopted and proceeds to the production of group formation (Kinvall, 2002, 2006).

This psychology of category formation to resist the other is also used by Hindu nationalists in strengthening group identity in the context of globalisation. Many narratives and propaganda works prove their intention to clearly divide the Hindu-self and the Muslim-other.

According to Tajfel's (1981) social identity theory, individuals tend to favour their own group (in-group) in relation to other groups (out-group) because groups offer their members self-esteem by giving group members a sense of belonging. For that reason, group members try to elevate the status of the in-group in relation to the out-group. In this way, the group in relation to the other and the role the other plays in its discourse is important for group existence (Hogg and Abrams, 1988; Kinvall, 2006, Tajfel and Turner, 1979).

As has already been mentioned, the formation of the other is an innate process for human beings and group members inherently tend to classify groups as in-groups and out-groups through learning from their birth and early experience. Individuals move from self to other-orientation over time, meaning that individuals are socialised. In this regard, Ross (1991, p.177) states that "sociality promotes ethnocentric conflict, furnishing the critical building block for in-group amity and out-group hostility."

In this process, what the self experiences as negative and unfavourable is projected onto the other and this makes the image of the other dehumanised, strange, alien and externalised from us. It means that the stranger or the foreigner is commonly perceived as negative. George Simmel (1971), refers to the stranger as the sociologically marginal (cited in Kinvall, 2006, p. 44)

Like Simmel, Oommen (1994), (as cited by Kinvall, 2006, p.46) also refers to the foreigner and the stranger, classifying others in four categories. The first is 'the equal other', who is different but not subservient to the self. The second category is 'the internal other', which refers to marginalised groups such as women or certain established immigrants. The third group consists of 'unacceptable' societal groups like homosexuals or particular religious groups. Finally, 'the outsider, the non-equal other' constitutes the fourth category, which may include non-established immigrants or religious groups of foreign origin. The last category is considered to be essentially different from the other three categories because the members of the other three categories are likely to exist within the system, while members of the last are not.

It seems as though this fundamental prejudice against the foreigner and the stranger stems from differences in religion and culture. This prejudice, derived from differences in cognition, mostly brings about xenophobia, ethnocentrism, anti-semitism and racism, even more so when one group holds more power and resources and uses 'differences' to control and marginalise others (Ibid, p.47).

From the 1920s, which is the period of the emergence of the Hindutva ideology and the creation of the Sangh Parivar, this stigmatisation of the other has been a key means of mobilising Hindu identity and group power. Hindu militants including the VHP and the RSS have taken the lead in generating strong feelings of hostility towards the ‘threatening other’ as well as in stigmatising it (Jafflerot, 1999, p.201).

Speeches of BJP members during the *rath yatra* also demonstrate the clear boundary between Hindus and Muslims, referencing hostility derived from the historical past:

“Are you children of Babar or Ram, Akbar or Rana Pratap, Auranzeb or Shivaji? Those who do not answer this question properly have no right to be in this country”. (Padmanabhan and Sidhva, 1990, Quoted in Davis, 2005, p.37).

Although over 90 percent of Indian Muslims are in fact descendants of indigenous converts, we can see from the above that Hindu nationalists try to totally exclude Muslims from national citizenship (Ludden, 2005, p.37). On further examination, it is clear that this Hindu clear-cut demarcation of the Muslim as the other is influenced by families and by their own group from childhood while accumulating the in-group’s ‘emotional investment’ in bad images of Muslims (Kakar, 1995, p.54).

The construction of the other is becoming more necessary in the context of globalisation because people feel their identity is under greater threat. In these new circumstances, abjection becomes the main process in collective identity formation because when the familiar stranger is suddenly recognised as a threat, it occurs more easily (Kinvall, 2006, p.78). The process of ‘othering’ is essential to feel security and protection in times of rapid change such as globalisation. Nationalism and religion help in the process by debasing the other (Ibid). Furthermore, “nationalism and religion both provide the idea of a ‘home’, it is easy to give protection and security from the stranger and the abject-other” (Kinvall, 2006, p.79). Therefore, nationalism and religion become more powerful in times of crisis by providing unity, security and a sense of belonging and thereby arouse deep attachments towards religious and national identity (Ibid, p.79).

In this sense, the emergence of militant Hindu nationalism since the 1980s can be seen as the result of strengthening Hindu solidarity to cope with threat of globalisation. In this process, Hindu extremists have accused those who are not included in the Hindu family – especially Muslims – of being foreigners and not of Indian origin, as well as projecting their unwanted features onto them. Ultimately, they have tried to construct a majoritarian religious nationalism, which is always defined in negative terms, by stressing only ‘Hindu’ identity as a trump card identity and ignoring other identity construction (Ibid., p.105). Such a pursuit of Hindu majoritarianism is accomplished through the clear demarcation of the self and the demonised other.

Summing up, as was discussed in the first chapter, Hindu nationalists started drawing clear boundaries with Muslims from the 1920s when the ideology of Hindutva was created by Savarkar. The perception of the Muslim as the other and a stranger has been developed since they feel intimidated by Muslims as a result of the trauma of the Mughal conquest and the Partition of India and Pakistan. This is based on the theory that the othering process in the formation of individual and group identity is more present in moments of crisis. Accordingly, Hindu nationalists have fixed stronger boundaries between the Hindu-self and the Muslim-other since the 1980s as threats to both society and politics have emerged due to domestic and international changes, including globalisation and modernisation.

This clear boundary between Hindus and Muslims was a useful psychological strategy during the destruction of the Babri Masjid, which represents the climax of the conflict between Hindus and Muslims. They intensified fear and hatred towards Muslims by dredging up trauma from the Mughal Empire in addresses during the procession to Ayodhya and presented savagery and brutality as traits of Muslims as well as of Islam itself, in particular criticising Muslim consumption of beef. This Hindu nationalist demonisation of Muslims is associated with the theory that when group leaders want to increase group nationalism, they often exploit fear or hatred of out-groups.

In this way, the demarcation of the self and the other by ceaselessly comparing tolerant Hindus and intolerant, barbarous Muslims has been the most effective psychological strategy in strengthening Hindu group cohesion in Hindu nationalism in the rapid changes of the globalisation context.

2. Intense Group Loyalty and Group Superiority

Group narcissisms, a feeling of civilisational superiority and the different religious faiths have also contributed to amplifying the quarrel between Hindus and Muslims. Hindus are anxious that Muslim loyalty is to Islam rather than the Indian state, as we can assume from its slogans “Babar ki santan, jao Pakistan (children of Babar, go to Pakistan)”. The rise of Muslim power in the subcontinent makes Hindu nationalists fear for their status, so they have attempted to intensify Hindu group loyalty and build themselves up.

The Sangh Parivar is an example of the attempt to create a vision of the “grandiose self” of Hindu culture and spirit, while degrading that of Muslims. The saffron flag and saffron colour are regarded as the symbols of the Hindu nationalist movement and also means of expressing their superiority by marking Hindu areas and also putting them on Muslim tombs and mosques. They have shown their veneration of the flag in religious rituals and processions, considering it a symbol of ideological integration (Hansen, 1999, p.108).

Such group superiority and group loyalty arises from feelings of attachment towards the group. These feelings are important psychological constituents in the construction of nationalism because they strengthen the sense of belonging and thereby increase group superiority and loyalty (Druckman, 1994,; Brock & Atkinson, 2008).

For this reason, group leaders desire to increase the nationalism of the group and share more in-group members to enhance attachment to the group. One Hindu nationalist strategy is also associated with this theory – their promotion of Sanskrit as a national symbol. Since language is one of the most important factors in delimiting a national or ethnic group (Rosenblatt, p.137; Freud, 1960, p.65), they have used Sanskrit as a tool to demarcate Hindus and Muslims as well as a symbol of unity and devotion. The prayers of the RSS *shakhas* are performed in Sanskrit and they consistently stress the significance of “harmony, culture, *dharma*, self-perfection through selfless service to society”. In the colloquial style of the RSS, they express affection for the nation and the Hindu group

using words like “devotion”, “love”, “attachment”, “commitment”, and “service” (Hansen, 1999, p.109).

It seems as though this Hindu nationalist strategy comes from the theory that the more alike people are, the easier it is to engender loyalty and cohesion. Also, conversely, the stronger the loyalty, the more people have similar views and support similar strategies (Druckman, 1994, p.50), so they have also tried to increase loyalty to unite the group as well as to make Hindus more homogeneous.

Group loyalty and cohesion increase “group-think”. Members of the group start to excessively protect their group and not accept any facts counter to their own image of the group (Ibid, p.56). This can make in-group members have narrow views and thereby create out-group bias as well as overestimations of and overconfidence in their own vis-à-vis the other group. Furthermore, it arouses emulation and animosity towards the other group. This in-group bias encourages in-group members to create their own world and place themselves in that world.

According to Tajfel’s social identity theory (1981), an individual’s self-esteem is more enhanced by making a positive comparison between his or her own and another group. In this process, they think they are better than another group. In other words, to distinguish one’s own group from others is the most essential process in increasing self-esteem and loyalty. This process makes people feel positive about themselves and provides a reason why one belongs to a particular group (Brock & Atkinson, 2008).

An individual’s social identity is intimately connected to the status of the groups to which he or she belongs. Nationalism links an individual’s self-esteem to the esteem in which the nation is held because people can obtain a sense of identity and self-esteem through their national identification (Brock & Atkinson, 2008; Druckman, 1994). Accordingly, people are motivated to support the goal of the country and want to increase the value of the nation in order to increase their self-esteem. Therefore, since an individual’s self-identity is determined depending on to which group he or she belongs, in-group members

strive to increase self-esteem by projecting bad images onto other groups and creating prejudice.

Such an individual's loyalty to a group is important because it leads to collective action and antagonism towards other groups. According to Druckman (1994, p.49, 57), group loyalty can cause intergroup conflict, justification of one's own behaviour and a lack of good thoughts about others. In addition, in-group bias, competition and hostility can also follow. When members of a group arrive at a consensus on the strategy or goal, these groups become more hostile and competitive towards other groups.

In particular, in the case of militant groups, they are often formed in two situations: when an existing group experiences a sense of loss of identity in times of rapid change like war, urbanisation, migration or modernisation; and when leaders can transform this experience into a positive if desperate projection of affection onto themselves and an ideological cause that can produce a collective 'grandiose self' – a community organised around the enjoyment of a shared secret, an inexpressible core or spirit (Hansen, 1999, p.107, 108). Militant groups need stronger cohesion, so they tend to more strongly demonise others.

The militant Hindu nationalism that has emerged since the 1980s, as is clear in the strategy and narratives of the Sangh Parivar, has stressed the 'grandiose of self' and 'superior to other' by means of the projection of prejudices onto the other and a clear demarcation of Muslims. Although the feeling of group superiority and the grandiosity of the self is part of the natural process of individual and group identity formation, this strategy in militant Hindu nationalism is not just used to increase self-esteem but also exploited as a weapon to justify their violence against Muslims.

In this way, the emphasis on group superiority and group loyalty is a crucial psychological tactic for Hindu nationalists with the desire to create a homogeneous Hindu identity as well as to establish a stable status for Hindus in the face of the threat embodied by the scramble – accelerated since the onset of globalisation – for resources.

3. Re-interpretation of History and Myth

The Sangh Parivar has steadily drawn the past of history and myth into its efforts to unite Hindu identity using a clear demarcation of the other and emphasising group superiority and loyalty by discriminating against the other. This strategy of the Sangh Parivar can clearly be seen both before and after the destruction of the Babri Masjid in 1992.

As seen in many debates on Indian history between secular and Hindu-front historians, since the emergence of Hindu nationalism in the 19th century, Hindu nationalists have constantly made an effort to reinterpret the past by fostering historians and archaeologists who can support their assertions officially. Debates on Indian history are especially problematic in elementary and high school texts. The BJP has tried to write textbooks with the aim of glorifying the Hindu past and denouncing the Mughal era in Indian history, renaming Indian cities and regions, and forging a relationship between the Hindu religion, national identity and citizenship (Kinvall, 2006, p.139).

The purpose of manipulating history is to make their history splendid through searching for chosen glory and glorifying their cultural, historical memory.

Myths are frequently used not only for constructing and mobilising an identity group, but also for constructing the other (Ibid, 59). According to Hansen (1999, p.90), the purpose of the founding myth is first to demonstrate to followers and potential supporters that the movement is still worth endorsing, and secondly to realise and perform the vision the movement is seeking permanently and thus create “a sort of counterculture, a counterlanguage, a counterinterpretation of history” (Ibid, p. 90).

As argued by Coningham and Lewer (2000, as cited in Kinvall, 2006, p.59), verifying archaeology and historical evidence is a key process when the solidarity of an identity is needed. For this reason, more manipulation and reinterpretation of historical and archaeological evidence to advocate claims and rights for some identity group occurs in situations of violent conflict. Such manipulation is more viable if mass education and

mass media of communication exist. Therefore, many nationalist leaders often interfere in the field of education or mass communication to consolidate their group identity (Hayes, 1926), and Hindu nationalists are no exception.

This section will show how Hindu nationalists manipulate and reinterpret history, myth and symbols through mass education and mass media to consolidate their group identity. It will look first at the strategy of the VHP/RSS using symbols in the *yatra* processions that preceded the demolition of the Babri Masjid, and second at Hindu nationalists' new application of old symbols of "Bharat Mata". Finally, this section will consider the broadcast of the "*Ramayana*" in 1987.

3.1 The Strategy of the VHP and the RSS

Militant Hindu nationalist forces such as the VHP and the RSS have attempted to create a homogeneous Hindu identity by means of the distortion of history and the transformation of the ordinary into national symbols in *yatra* processions. In this strategy of history distortion, the ultimate aim has been to enhance self-esteem and thereby justify their present and future actions, by removing a blot and recreating their glorious past.

With relation to their aim for redescribing the past, Sen (2005, p.62-3) finds two specific characteristics of contemporary Hindu politics. The first is that Hindutva forces have become keenly aware of the importance of gathering dispersed power in their various components and mobilising fresh loyalty from potent recruits. In his opinion, their effort at creating India's history as a 'Hindu civilisation' is intended to increase the cohesiveness of the diverse members of the Sangh Parivar. The second reason is because they want to receive support from the Indian diaspora who have a general Indian nationalist attachment, particularly in North America and Europe. Hindu nationalists believe that reinventing history from a Hinduised point of view helps in mobilising support from the Indian diaspora and that their power would be the foundation from which they could change a narrow Hindu identity into a more general Indian identity.

With this purpose of rewriting history, Hindu communal forces have tried to extend their influence not only in public organisations such as the bureaucracy, police, media, the education system and the judiciary, but also at the grassroots level among children (Mukherjee et al., 2008, p.18). For many years, the RSS has taken the lead in perverting the truth of history in primary and secondary school textbooks, with its Saraswati Shishu Mandirs¹⁷ and Vidya Bharati primary and secondary schools, and its *shakhas*. The major content of their history distortions include disparagement of Muslims and Christians and descriptions of the medieval period as one of the great dark ages in Indian history, while elevating the Hindu civilisation. For example, one of the textbooks in use at the primary level portrays the rise of Islam in the following manner:

Wherever they went, they had a sword in their hand. Their army went like a storm in all the four directions. Any country that came that was destroyed. Houses of prayers and universities were destroyed. Libraries were burnt. Religious books were destroyed. Mothers and sisters were humiliated. Mercy and justice were unknown to them (Extracts from Gaurav Gatha Gatha for Class IV, 1992, quoted in Mukherjee et al., 2008, p.23)

Delhi's Qutb Minar is even today famous in his (Qutbuddin Aibak's) name. This had not been built by him. He could not have been able to build it. It was actually built by emperor Samudragupta. Its real name was Vishnu Stambha...This Sultan actually got some parts of it demolished and its name was changed (Ibid.)

In this way, Hindu communal groups have spread groundless untruths, such as that the Qutab Minar was built by Samudragupta, in the name of spreading patriotism. Looking into this matter, the National Steering Committee on Textbook Evaluation came to the conclusion that "the main purpose which these books would serve is to gradually transform the young children into...bigoted morons in the garb of instilling in them patriotism" (Mukherjee & Mukherjee, 2001, p.33).

Another example of the Vidya Bharati Sansthan publications also shows the efforts of Hindu forces to spread communal and chauvinistic cultural nationalism, and the

¹⁷ The influence of Saraswati Shishu Mandirs, the first of which was started in 1952 in the presence of the RSS chief, M.S. Golwalkar, has now multiplied manifold. It will be in order, to first examine what these 'Mandirs' or 'temples' of learning dish out in the name of education (Mukherjee et al., 2008, 20).

legitimation of the policies of the RSS among the young generation. In these books, India is portrayed with narcissistic expressions such as the 'original home of world civilisation' (Mukherjee et al., 2008, p.25).

India is the most ancient country in the world. When civilization had not developed in many countries of the world, when people in those countries lived in jungles naked or covering their bodies with the bark of trees or hides of animals, Bharat's Rishis-Munis brought the light of culture and civilization to all those countries. (extracts from the report on the publications of Vidya Bharati No.9, quoted in Mukherjee et al., 2008, p.25)

The following are some of the examples of their illogical claims of 'Hindu civilisation as the cradle of world civilisation':

- i) India is the mother country of ancient China. Their ancestors were Indian Kshatriyas...
- ii) The first people who began to inhabit China were Indians.
- iii) The first people to settle in Iran were Indians (Aryans).
- iv) The popularity of the great work of the Aryans-Valmiki's *Ramayana*- influenced Yunan (Greece) and there also the great poet Homer composed a version of the *Ramayana*.
- v) The languages of the indigenous people (Red Indians) of the northern part of America were derived from ancient Indian languages.
(extracts from the report on the publications of Vidya Bharati No.9, quoted in Mukherjee et al., 2008, p.25)

This chauvinistic view is also presented with regards to the origin of Aryans. In order to separate Muslims and Christians from "us" and treat them as strangers, the RSS argues in these textbooks that 'Aryans', whom the RSS regards as true Indians, did not migrate from outside India but originated in India (Mukherjee et al., 2008, p.31).

This attack by Hindu nationalists on the view of secular history began after 1977, when the Jana Sangh took power for the first time in the Indian government. They tried to prohibit the contributions of some respected historians to school textbooks for the National Council of Education, Research and Training (NCERT), but these moves were defeated thanks to a national protest movement (Mukherjee & Mukherjee, 2001, p.33). However, on the coming to power of the BJP as leaders of the coalition government at the

Centre in 1998, the RSS achieved their goal not only in 14,000 Vidya Bharati schools with 80,000 teachers and 1,800,000 students but also in other institutions such as universities, schools, colleges and even the University Grants Commission (UGC) (Mukherjee et al., 2008, p. 28-9).

Besides these distortions of history in school textbooks, the VHP/RSS have attempted another strategy to mobilise Hindu identity in the destruction of the Babri Masjid by using symbols and historical distortions related to the event.

Regarding the forgotten issue of the Ayodhya site, the VHP wanted to reignite the old dispute of the liberation of Rama's birthplace as one of national significance (Ludden, 2005, p.39). Instead of the general religious belief that the mosque occupies the place on which Rama was born, the VHP went further by asserting that a temple on the birthplace had been demolished by Muslims and replaced by a mosque. They attempted to make the local tradition that Babar's general had destroyed a temple built on Rama's birthplace into the real history of the Hindu_nation (Van der Veer, 1994, p.160). Such a strategy of clear demarcation of Muslims as foreigners and demonised aggressors is expressed in Ludden's narrative that "Rama and the original temple represented a dehistoricized Hindu utopia, while Babar and his mosque represented the Muslim invasions that brought the Rama-rajya to an end and began a series of oppressive foreign occupations" (Davis, 2005, p.48-9). In this way, in the temple liberation project, the VHP constantly employed anti-Muslim rhetoric, at the same time as trying to develop Hindu unity.

In 1983, under the leadership of the VHP, with its slogan of "sacrifice for unanimity", the Ekatmata Yatra launched three processions with the aim of ethno-religious mobilisation. These covered vast swathes of the country – from Kathmandu in Nepal to Rameshwaram in Tamil Nadu, from Gangasagar in Bengal to Somnath in Gujarat, and from Hardiwar in Uttar Pradesh to Kanyakumari in Tamil Nadu – distributing water from the Ganges and refilling their tanks with holy water. These actions were intended to symbolise Hindu unity (Jaffrelot, 1999, p.360).

Until then, the only symbol that had been used for political mobilisation was the cow (Ibid, p.361). However, with the Ekatmata Yatra, the VHP intended to invent new symbols associated with traditional religious rituals, texts and gods for the purpose of mobilising larger Hindu unity. One epoch-making icon the VHP created was a depiction of the baby Rama in which the cherubic child was held prisoner in a Muslim religious institution on the site of his birth. It was intended to arouse “maternal devotion from those who would nurture the young reincarnation of Hindu nationhood”, while “the aggressive warrior young Rama served as a militant role model for Hindus taking control of their homeland” (Davis, 2005, p.41). The creation of the new symbol of the baby Rama seems to be important from the point of view of arousing devotional sentiment by dragging in family imagery as a metaphor (Ibid.).

In the Ekatmata Yatra, the VHP utilised two other tangible symbols – the Ganges and Mother India – in the form of divinities. According to the statement of the senior VHP official in charge of this programme, these two figures were very carefully selected (Jaffrelot, 1999, p.360). The VHP tried to make the selected symbols be seen as deities – in the case of the Ganges, her water contains the power to purify from sin and to give salvation. Before this *yatra*, the Ganges had hardly been used as a venerated symbol by Hindus. However, it became a symbol of national unity as a “sacred geographical entity” (Davis, 2005, p.40) as well as a “pan-Indian reservoir of holy water” (Ibid.), identified with the figure of Mother India (Jaffrelot, 1999, p.361).

The VHP also resurrected *bhakti* rituals and the fundamental text of Hinduism – the *Bhagavad Gita* – to integrate all Hindus regardless of caste and sects by arousing devotionism (Ibid). During the processions of the temple chariots, the VHP made brand new trucks symbolising the militant war chariot of Arjuna in the *Bhagavad Gita*, while each of the three main processions was named after its chariots referred to as gods and saints (Van der Veer, 1994, p.125).

In this way, the RSS/VHP have striven for the consolidation of Hindu identity and the extension of its power through interference in education at the grassroots level and

utilising symbols with the intention of integrating all castes and sects. Their selected symbols are mainly taken from nature, traditional religious myth or Mother India to represent geographical and genealogic unity.

In the next section, we will look into the metaphor of Mother India, which is often used as a symbol in the strategy of Hindu nationalists.

3.2 Metaphor of the body

Embodying India as Mother is an old tradition in the subcontinent. This is the way India was presented in newspapers and novels at the time of the emergence of Indian nationalism, and it has become common practice thereafter (Chakrabarty, 1999, p.205).

The link with Mother has deep psychological and cultural roots (Bose, 1997, p.54). According to the British army psychiatrist Owen Berkeley-Hill's paper in 1924, as explained briefly in Chapter Two, one of the causes of the residual bitter feelings between Hindus and Muslims is Hindus' motherland complex, according to which their motherland – Bharat Mata – was violated by the Muslim conquest of India (Kakar, 1995, p.140). In effect, the relationship between nation and gender has been involved in nationalism for a long time. Therefore, we need to take into account the metaphor of Bharat Mata as well as religious nationalism discourse and the female body.

The image of Bharat Mata was first used with the start of nationalism in the colonial period. However, its primary aim has been changed to the form of exploitation of communal forces with the intention of mobilising resources from nationalism (Jha, 2004). The metaphoric feminisation of the nation became well known with the cow protection movement between 1880 and 1920, in which the mother cow became an object of veneration and a new symbol of the Hindu nation. Also, Bankim Chattopadhyay contributed to popularising the image of Bharat Mata by expressing the Hindu nation as mother, an object of worship, benevolence and protection (Hansen, 1999, p.112). In his text, he expressed the changing figure of mother over time, from 'mother as she was in

the past' to 'mother in the present' and 'mother as she will become in the future'. He alluded to the figure of mother as a religious goddess – her present form is Kali, a benevolent mother goddess, and the final image is Durga, the ten-armed mother and the representative of feminine power.

This embodiment of the nation as mother emerged against colonisation from the late 19th century, but has become much more complex in the 20th century. After the *swadeshi* period, the image of Bharat Mata changed from a goddess figure to a housewife and mother, as has been presented in various novels and plays. The popular Hindi novel *Maila Anchal* shows the most well presented image of the mother suffering because of her infringed-upon national identity during the pre-and post colonial period.

The mother's feet were torn and bloodied. After seeing the mother's agony, listening to Ramkishan babu's words and hearing Tiwari ji's songs, he could not stop himself. Who could resist that pull? Tears flowing from her eyes like the waters of the Ganges and the Yamuna. Mother India sorrowing over the fate of her children? Straightaway he went to Ramkishan babu and said, "Put my name on the Suraji list" (Phaniswarnath Renu, *Maila Anchal*, 1953, quoted in Jha, 2004)

Also, Sumitranandan Pant's famous poem *Bharat Mata* offers a different vision of romantic nationalism. He considered Mother India as a woman of the soil and the Ganges and Yamuna as rivers of tears, metaphors for the sorrow of the nation (Jha, 2004).¹⁸

The symbolisation of Bharat Mata in the relationship between gender and nation was mentioned by several nationalists including Jawaharlal Nehru during the pre and post colonial period. In the era of globalisation since the 1980s, the metaphor of Bharat Mata has changed from its original aim of arousing nationalism to the exclusive usage of Hindu forces for mobilising religious nationalism.

18 This relation between the Ganges and the Mother India is used for the strategy of the VHP in the *Ekatmata yatra*, as we have seen in the previous section.

During the Ekatamat Yatra in 1983, the VHP brought the image of Bharat Mata in their chariots. In addition, it also built a Bharat Mata temple in Haridwar. This temple contains an anthropomorphic statue of its deity. Here, Bharat Mata holds a milk urn in one hand and sheaves of grain in the other, which the temple guidebook explains as "signifying the white and green revolution that India needs for progress and prosperity". The guidebook also says, "The temple serves to promote the devotional attitude toward Bharat Mata, something that historians and mythological story teller may have missed" (Jha, 2004).

These exertions of the VHP to employ the image of Bharat Mata look as though they are meant to satisfy their desire to mobilise Hindu forces and justify their violence by calling on the old nationalist tradition.

The RSS has also exploited the image of Bharat Mata, as is clearly indicated in their stressing the idiom of "rape of the Motherland" by a potent and dangerous enemy – Muslim invaders. In this ideology, only RSS cadre, the "sons of Bharat", can protect the weak and powerless mother nation by organising on military lines, which makes them true males (Hansen, 1999, p.112-113). Hindu nationalists seem to bring back the symbolisation of Bharat Mata from the old nationalist tradition because they want to rationalise their actions against Muslims by giving Hindus an extreme shock like "rape of the Motherland by Muslims". This is an essential process for them to fight against and drive out Muslims, their permanent enemy, who violated the mother who gave endless and unconditional love to her children-citizens.

Such a metaphor of the nation as mother that emerged with the development of nationalism during the colonial period in India is seen as being taken from the general expression of the colonised nation, which combined nation and gender.

With the militant communalism of the Sangh Parivar, adopting this image of Bharat Mata is seen as an effective method of uniting Hindu identity by demarcating Muslims as others and enemies. Because of the continuous underpinning and displaying of these reinterpreted traditional metaphors, the embodiment of the Indian geography as Mother,

Muslims as having raped the Mother, and the RSS cadre as protecting the Mother – the Mother not as a limitless provider for her children, but as a weak woman who needs the protection of strong men – are crucial strategies employed by Hindu nationalists in ensuring their survival in periods of crisis.

3.3 Media Effect

In critical situations for the nation, nationalist leaders often use the mass media as a tool in inspiring nationalism. Hindu nationalists tried to mobilise and unite Hindu identity by broadcasting the *Ramayana* in 1987. The *Ramayana* is the story of Rama, and it is the earliest and most influential text of Hinduism, supposedly written in the first few centuries BC (Van der Veer, 1994, p.172).

Its long-standing influence on Indian literature can be seen in the fact that many authors have produced new versions or interpretations of the *Ramayana*. The earliest major vernacular retelling of the story was written in Tamil by the 12th century author Kampan. The famous poet Tulsi Das also recreated a North Indian vernacular version of the *Ramayana*. It became the Bible of North India as it was revered as the main authoritative and honourable text among Hindus (Sarkar, 2005, p.173).

During the colonial period, Gandhi also repeatedly mentioned the *Ramcharitmanas*¹⁹ in support of his political views. He urged Indians to live according to the lessons from this text to overcome poverty, untouchability and foreign rule. Gandhi's continuous emphasis on Rama and his rule greatly affected Hindus at that time (Van der Veer, 1994, p.174).

In the South also its leverage has been proved, as the leader of the Dravidian movement used the text of the *Ramayana* to attack Brahmanical hegemony (Ibid). In addition,

¹⁹ *Ramcharitmanasa*, is an epic poem in Awadhi (Indo-Aryan language) which is composed by the 16th-century Indian poet, Goswami Tulsidas (1532–1623). *Ramcharitmanas* literally means the "lake of the deeds of Rama." (Jindal 1955). The work focuses on a poetic retelling of the events of the Sanskrit epic *Ramayana*, centered on the narrative of Rama.

Aurobindo also mentioned the relationship between the influence of the *Ramayana* and Hindu nationalism: "the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* constitute the essence of Indian literature. This orientalist notion was foundational for the Hindu nationalisation of Indian civilisation." (quoted in Van der Veer, 2001, p.132).

With such authority among Hindus, a seventy-eight episode serialisation of the *Ramayana* was broadcast on national television between January 1987 and July 1988. It not only recorded the highest viewing rate ever seen on Indian television, but also had a great ripple effect in Indian society. Twenty-six video cassettes were sold worldwide, with exaggerated advertisements such as "The Greatest Indian Epic. Treasured for over 10,000 years. Enshrining Ideals That Are Ageless. Teaching Lessons That Are Timeless." (Van der Veer, 1994, p.175).

The influence of this broadcast was tremendous. It was watched by 80 to 100 million people, including people who do not understand Hindi. According to newspaper reports, Indian life looked as though it was 'on hold' during the hours the series was aired. Even untouchable sweepers in North India asserted that they inherited their spirit from Valmiki who is the alleged composer of the Sanskrit *Ramayana* and the guru of Rama (Ibid). In this way, the broadcast of the *Ramayana* on Durdarshan inspired religious belief among Hindus all over the country. The broadcast also resulted in homogenisation of understanding of the *Ramayana*, since it swept aside the different regional and political interpretations that had existed until then.

Many Indian scholars have argued that the televised version of the *Ramayana* was planned to elevate the old religious text as a national text. Undoubtedly, Hindu nationalists intended the broadcast to be used for their political objectives, in particular their desire to create a "Hindu nation" (Ibid, p.177).

Above all, it helped in achieving the VHP's long cherished wish of liberating Rama's birthplace. Even people who do not know the exact location of Ayodhya have gradually recognised it as the birthplace of Rama as well as a town in Uttar Pradesh. The broadcast

made this sacred place and Rama's life in popular imagination appear real (Kinvall, 2006, p.149). Indeed, its success produced a great emotional stir among Hindus. As they watched the *Ramayana*, they could not help becoming angry at the manipulated history of their sacred place – the birthplace of Rama – which had been demolished by Muslims. In this way, the broadcast of the *Ramayana* and the Ayodhya affair are closely connected, showing how history has been manipulated and reinterpreted through the mass media and how this has had an impact on the viewer's emotions and ideas. According to Van der Veer (1994), the surprising sensation of the broadcast made it possible to unite many millions at the same time and thereby form a religious gathering. Hence, we can assume that it is closely connected to the recent rise of Hindu religious nationalism.

As we can see from the above, the mass media including television can be used as a tool for instilling nationalist ideology in citizens, thanks to its characteristic of diffusion. Throughout the 1980s, television certainly functioned as a medium for achieving the communal ends of the saffron waves. L.K. Advani, Hindu nationalist leader of the BJP, stressed the cultural significance of the *Ramayana* (Farmer, 2005, p.108) and finally exploited the imagery of Rama as he postured like Rama in the *rath yatra* in October 1990 after the broadcast of the series. It seems as though he was conscious of the need for Hindu votes and thereby intended to unite Hindu identity by taking advantage of the tremendous success of the televised *Ramayana* for communal purposes to criticise the legitimacy of the government's secular stance.

Such an exploitation of the mass media by Hindu groups seems to indicate that political intentions are associated with the relationship between media and communalism. This also shows that the mass media is a useful means of manipulating dispersed groups.

Many scholars have argued that the serialisation of the *Ramayana* on Durdarshan played a major role in mobilising Hindu communal forces, by creating a “shared symbolic lexicon” (Van der Veer, 1994, p.177-78). With its enormous influence, people have accepted the story of the *Ramayana* as a truth rather than as a myth. In this way, the broadcast became an opportunity to pursue the building of Ram's temple. It mobilised

communal forces and legitimised the subsequent event of the destruction of the Babri Masjid by promoting a religious myth to the level of national culture and myth.

This chapter has examined the psychological strategies of Hindu nationalists in strengthening their identity in the face of globalisation and modernisation, under the assumption that the sudden rise of militant Hindu nationalism since the 1980s is related to the rapidly changing environment. In this context, people can easily get the feeling of loss or loss of attachment because various physical changes are occurring. Accordingly, nationalist leaders have tried to secure their identity by fortifying group cohesiveness and to enhance nationalism by increasing group sharing.

To this end, Hindu nationalists have employed diverse tactics. Most importantly, they have drawn clear boundaries between Hindus and non-Hindus, especially Muslims. This othering process includes attitudes such as accepting only the majority-self and not the minority-other, achieved by creating prejudices and projecting bad images onto them.

The attempt to intensify group loyalty and superiority is also one of the main strategies in enhancing Hindu group cohesiveness. Their promotion of Sanskrit is one of good example of the way in which group sharing has been increased to build up group attachment. Also, they construct prejudices of the other by applying the bad traits of the in-group to the out-group so as to increase the self-esteem of their own group. In the case of militant groups, the tendency towards demonisation of the other is more excessively present in group relations. The current Hindu nationalism has also shown this tendency towards communal conflict between Hindus and Muslims.

In addition, reinterpreted history, myth and symbol, diffused by means of education and the mass media, is always manipulated in their desire to spread chauvinistic religious nationalism. This manipulation is mainly intended to be used at the grassroots level, such as to alter textbooks in elementary schools, or to influence low castes and untouchables through the mass media.

In this sense, these strategies used by Hindu nationalists seem to be based on their intolerance and artfulness, since they only pursue majoritarianism as denying the minority and they exploit symbols which are taken from the old tradition of Indian nationalism to mobilise religious nationalism and legitimise their violence.

Chapter V

Conclusion

The dissertation has analysed psychological factors affecting the emergence of an extreme form of Hindu nationalism since the 1980s.

This aggressive and militant phenomenon, which has been known in Indian politics in the last thirty years as ‘Hindutva’ or ‘communalism’, did not appear overnight. Ever since Hindus and Muslims met with the Muslim conquest of a thousand years ago, Hindus seem to have felt hostility towards Muslims.

According to Sen (2005), Hinduism is a liberal, tolerant and receptive tradition. These characteristics are amongst the original tenets of Hinduism, so the question is why Hindu nationalists in the present day incessantly aggravate communal conflicts with Muslims rather than making an effort to narrow the distance between the two communities.

Of course, Hindu nationalism is a combination of religion and nationalism, so it cannot help but represent the traits of nationalism as well as those of religion.

The psychology of nationalism is based on “in-group favouritism”. The construction of nationalism is in large part similar and related to individual and group identity formation. In the process of constructing identity, individuals firstly cognise themselves as the ‘self’, then perceive the ‘other’ through socialisation, by means of the transmission of ways of acting and reacting learned from education and relationships with others. In this process of socialisation of individuals, people necessarily form groups and group membership becomes one of the salient traits in the definition of the self. It is referred to as individual’s ‘social identity’. People equate their status with the status of their in-group, and thus strive to increase the status of this group to enhance their own self-esteem. In-group members impute bad features to other groups, which are considered as different, and thereby create prejudices against them. These prejudices lead to and reinforce the stigmatisation of the other and an awareness that ‘us’ and ‘them’ are fundamentally different.

Such a psychology of nationalism can also be seen in the current Hindu nationalism. The background to the boom in contemporary Hindutva lies in the 19th century. Hindu nationalism originally emerged in opposition to British colonial power. It was closely linked to 'Hindu revivalism', which aimed at national integration through the rediscovery of the archaic Hindu civilisation.

Even though this period is of only indirect relevance to the current militarised Hindu nationalism, the features of the latter had already appeared then. These features include Aryanism based on primordialist thinking and an emphasis on the Vedas. The Vedic Aryanist paradigm advocated by the Arya Samaj stressed that only the descendants of Aryans were true Indians and obeyed the authority of the Vedas. Moreover, the symbol of Mother India articulated by Bankimchandra Chattopadhyaya in the Bengal renaissance was also created in this period. Thus, the manipulation of history in which today's saffron wave engages has its roots in the earliest period of Hindu nationalism from the 19th to the early 20th century.

It is from the 1920s that Hindu nationalism began to show signs of communalism, in the political chaos of colonial India. Hinduised versions of Indian nationalism and the ideology of Hindutva coexisted during this period. With such a radical form of Hindu nationalism altered from the previous period, it began to enter politics. Above all, the birth of the concept of Hindutva by Savarkar in this period could be considered crucial groundwork in the development of the ideology of later Hindu nationalism. His homogeneous nation theory was influenced by Mazzini and Fascism, and was in effect based on racism. According to this theory, if the same blood is not shared within the nation, they are foreigners or others – Muslims thus cannot become Indian. Since the emergence of Savarkar's idea, the division between the Hindu-self and Muslim-other has become clear.

Hindu nationalism from the 1980s has boosted this element of communalism with a neo-fascist and anti-pluralist vision, albeit based on the previous ideologies. This is concretely shown in the Sangh Parivar – the huge family of Hindu nationalist organisations – and

their religious nationalist project in Indian politics, culture and society. This project has been more systematically presented with globalisation. In the context of globalisation and modernisation, which replaces the old with the new, Hindus have felt keenly aware of the security of their identity and thus have displayed violent and paramilitary forms of religious nationalism.

Such a contemporary neo-fascist version of Hindu nationalism revealed its ultimate character in the destruction of the Babri Masjid in 1992. In this sense, it is worth considering the features of this event from various perspectives. Hindu communalists used diverse strategies to expose their bare resentment towards Muslims and to solidify their identity.

First, the demolition of the Babri Masjid was a ventilation of a Hindu trauma from the past. The Mughal empire of a thousand years ago remains a sore point for Hindus. Their indelible hurt has been expressed in the literature of numerous Hindu nationalists. They have highlighted the intolerant behaviour of medieval rulers to depict Muslims as a savage race, stressing only the fact that medieval rulers, including Mahmud of Ghazna or Aurangzeb, suppressed Hindus and demolished Hindu temples.

Another important historical trauma for Hindus with regard to Muslims is the Partition of Indian and Pakistan in 1947. This Hindu shock came when their idea of India as Bharat Mata, which they thought could become a Hindu rashtra after independence from the British, was destroyed.

With these Chosen Trauma, the Sangh Parivar has employed different strategies to reach its goals. Its tactics are mostly based on the exploitation of history and myth, focusing on history distortions and the expression of recreated religious symbols. Its reinterpretation of history has placed emphasis on the Aryan-Vedic paradigm started in the 19th century. Furthermore, it has attempted to disseminate rewritten history that includes disparagement of the Mughal era and only focuses on Hindus' glorified past.

Emphasis on religious symbols has also been seen, both before and after the Ayodhya incident. Due to the broadcast of the *Ramayana* in 1987, the myth of Rama has become the truth, and thereby the destruction of the Babri Masjid, which stood for the oppression and intolerance of the medieval period, and the construction of the Ram temple has been legitimised. In the *yatra*, various religious symbols including the baby Rama, the Ganges and the *Bhagavad Gita* were used. Above all, the symbolisation of Bharat Mata, which came up with Indian nationalism, was exploited with the propagation of the “rape of the Motherland by Muslims”. In this way, Hindu nationalists have used various symbols to spread the idea that “India is the country of Hindus”.

This fascistic idea seems to have resulted from intolerant thinking. In the first place, the obvious demarcation between the Hindu-self and Muslim-other demonstrates narrow-mindedness. Our consciousness instinctively includes the feeling of “otherness” because it is by constantly defining the self in relation to others that we feel stable (Weinstein and Platt, 1973). With the awareness of the other, the feeling of ambivalence also emerges from the unconscious (Babur, 1952, p.68). We perceive the other and our feeling of ambivalence depends on who we unconsciously judge to be similar to or different from us. This feeling of ambivalence and otherness in life is more clearly manifested in periods of crisis (Ibid). In this sense, the current sudden rise of Hindu nationalism, accompanied by serious communal conflict, can be seen as a means for Hindus to secure their identity against the threat of globalisation. In this process, Hindu communalists form a definite dividing line between the self and the other and instigate hatred and prejudice towards the other to improve their own self-esteem as well as to strengthen Hindu group cohesion.

Secondly, majoritarianism, which involves the complete exclusion of minority, also demonstrates intolerance. In fact, majoritarianism is the result of the wrong classification of the nation. Although a majority could be defined according to different criteria, such as class, language or political beliefs, the Hindutva family only categorises majority and minority according to a single classification – based on religion. In this way, what constitutes the ‘Indian majority’ changes with the standards adopted to classify the nation (Sen, 2005, p.55). This can be linked to what Sen refers to the ‘illusion of singularity’,

which implies perceiving a person as a member of one particular collectivity that gives one distinctive identity, rather than as a member of many different groups with diverse identities (Sen, 2006, p.45). In other words, to instigate and cultivate a singular specific identity in a group can be a weapon to instigate violence and terrorism towards another group (Sen, 2006).

In conclusion, the Hindu nationalist insistence on 'Identifying India as a mainly Hindu country' seems to have developed into an extreme form in order to solidify Hindu identity in the face of the threat of globalization that has emerged from the 1980s. On the pretext of historical agony, denunciations of the Muslim as other, without any effort to develop an in-depth understanding of them, exposes their cliquey, xenophobic and intolerant attitude. These attitudes will inevitably result in unceasing communal conflict, which will not only impede the development of the nation but also court isolation in the world.

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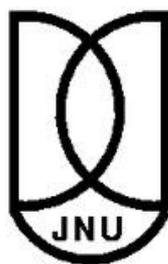
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**Past and Present of an Identity: A Study on the
Rise of Hindu Nationalism in India**

*Dissertation submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the award of the degree of*

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

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Declaration

This dissertation entitled **“Past and Present of an Identity: A Study on the Rise of Hindu Nationalism in India”** submitted by YeonJin Sang in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of **MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**, of Jawaharlal Nehru University. This Dissertation has not been previously submitted for any other degree of this University or any other University and is his original work.

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We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

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(Chairperson)

Dr. A. Bimol Akoijam
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Dedicated to my Parents

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July 2012, New Delhi

YeonJin Sang

Abbreviations

BJP	- Bharatiya Janata Party
BJS	-Bharatiya Jana Sangh
NCERT	- National Council of Education, Research and Training
RSS	- Rashtriyaswayamsevak Sangh
UGC	- University Grants Commision
VHP	- Vishwa Hindu Parishad

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Introduction

Nationalism can be seen as a specific type of ethnocentrism at the level of the national group, since both share the characteristic referred to as “in-group favouritism” (Brock and Atkinson, 2008). This means having a positive attitude towards an in-group and a negative attitude towards out-groups.

According to Tajfel’s social identity theory (Tajfel, 1981), an individual’s self-esteem can be enhanced by comparing their in-group and out-groups. If individuals recognise that a group identity boosts self-esteem, they identify with the group. Furthermore, individuals use intergroup bias to enhance their self-esteem. This theory can be applied to the psychology of nationalism. With religion, each religious group creates religious intergroup bias to fulfil their in-group superiority, and this develops into religious nationalism.

Hindu nationalism is a form of religious nationalism, which refers to the ideological combination of religion and nationalism. Its supporters equate it with Indian nationalism, while its opponents equate it with communalism (Zavos, 1999, p.2000). Some scholars argue that Hindu nationalism and communalism should be distinguished in terms of ideology, although the terms are often used interchangeably in modern Indian politics. It has been subject to considerable debate from the time of its emergence in India.

Hindu nationalism dates back to the late 19th century under British rule, when intellectuals were interested in the formation of modern Hindu identities. It became a distinctive ideology in the early 20th century, but according to Jaffrelot (1999), it was not clearly ‘codified’ until the 1920s. After the 1920s, Hindu nationalism developed into a form of communalism. More specifically, the communal riot emerged as a feature of Indian politics. The dialectic between Indian nationalism and communalism arose during the 1920s, and the difference between them was more clearly defined from the 1930s when Savarkar began his activities (Bhatt, 2001). This process of the transformation of Hindu nationalism into communalism involved a change from moderate to radical nationalism (Zavos, 1999, p.2000).

Hindu nationalism experienced a boom in the 1980s and 1990s, with its militant form developing and emerging successfully in the political arena, culminating in the BJP forming a minority government in 1998. In 1992, the BJP helped the Sangh Parivar succeed in Ayodhya and thus came to occupy a key position in the political arena, while Lord Rama and his epic became political icons. Subsequently, Hindu nationalism has affected Indian politics, media and popular culture (Ludden, 2005).

In other words, Hindu nationalism became a specific ideology and the base for animating contemporary Hindu nationalism from the 1920s, and it developed into its powerful militant form starting in the 1980s.

More specifically, the beginning of the Hindu nationalist ideology in the 19th and early 20th century was an elite-led Indian nationalist ideology in colonial India. At that time, the idea of Hindu nationalism was based on primordialist conceptions of Indian nationalism. Entering the 1920s, the ambiguous boundary between ‘Indian’ and ‘Hindu’ nationalism started to become distinct as the ideology of ‘Hindutva’ emerged. The birth of ‘Hindutva’ in this period is significant in the history of Hindu nationalism, since it introduced the idea that Indian nationality is based on sharing a “common” Hindu civilisation, culture, religion and race (Bhatt, 2001, p. 4).

In these early stages, the birth of Hindu nationalism was seen as an extension of the development of Indian nationalist ideology, since it was related to the national movement for liberation from British rule from the 19th to early 20th century. Therefore, the differences between these two ideologies were not so clear during this period. Jaffrelot (1999) refers to ‘ethnicity’, while other scholars argue that ‘territorial’ or ‘cultural’ nationalism can be a standard by which to distinguish between ‘Indian’ and ‘Hindu’ nationalism.

It is since the 1980s that Hindu nationalism has developed its militant form, going beyond this early and rather simply-presented ideology. More recently, Hindu nationalism has presented its project as being based on an imagined nation set against other religious communities, particularly the Indian Muslims (Zavos, 1999, p. 2270).

As has been noted by virtually every commentator, Hindu nationalism was constructed as a result of fear of external threats – before Independence, the major threats were Christian missionaries, the impact of British rule and the Mughal Empire, while they are now Muslims and globalisation. Such a construction of Hindu nationalism is not only related to a psychological process of stigmatising others, but also represents a defensive strategy. This Hindu psychology includes the process of redefining Hindu identity against these ‘threatening others’, while assimilating those cultural features of the others into “our” culture in order to regain self-esteem and resist the others (Jaffrelot, 1999, p.6).

Although many enemies have existed in history, the strongest and most threatening enemy for Hindu nationalists is Islam. Making India Hindu by treating Islam as an enemy and as foreign is the most important task for them.

In this way, the main objective of Hindu nationalists is to make India a nation with a homogeneous Hindu identity. They assert that an Indian is a Hindu who belongs to the nation of Hindustan, in the terminology of Hindutva (Kinvall, 2006). Their desire is to be recognised in the flow of Western influence through emphasis on the difference between “us” and “them”.

This serious antagonism between Hindus and Muslims increased after the Ayodhya incident, which was carried out by saffron power including the Sangh Parivar, VHP, RSS and BJP. Since then, the impact of Hindu nationalism on Indian politics, culture and society has grown even further, reaching unprecedented levels.

In this sense, the cause of the sudden rise of Hindu nationalism since the Ayodhya incident can be analysed from two perspectives. Domestically, the effort to resurrect a movement focused on Hinduism has been made by right-wing forces such as the coalition of the Sangh Parivar, BJP, RSS and VHP, while the persistent conflict resulting from historical wounds between Hindus and Muslims has brought about an increase in paramilitary forms of Hindu nationalism.

Externally, ethno-religious conflict in many countries in the 1980s and 1990s, combined with a feeling of loss and the threat of globalisation, enabled Hindu nationalists to boost Hindu consciousness among the Indian public. In this period, minorities were suppressed in the name of majoritarianism in many countries and religion played an important role in world politics (Ludden, 2005, p.2-3). This neo-fascist vision of Hindu nationalism was inspired by this international situation and the forces of globalisation.

With this background in mind, this study focuses on examining the construction of Hindu nationalism and Hindu identity from a psychoanalytical perspective. More particularly, it attempts to provide a psychoanalytic account of factors that have aroused Hindu nationalism and the strategy Hindu nationalists have employed to bring about group cohesion since the 1980s.

Psychoanalysis is employed since psychological factors have played a role in the construction of Hindu nationalism. Furthermore, it is difficult to understand religious identity formation and nationhood without serious consideration of socio-psychological aspects. For this reason, the main purpose of this study is to look into the psychological factors behind Hindutva-invoking fanatic religious chauvinism and the process by which its adherents attempt to form a Hindu identity in the nation.

This theme has been chosen due to the immense leverage Hindu nationalism has acquired in current Indian politics, society and culture. Indeed, it has become the most sensitive and important controversy in India. Hindu nationalism is behind a major Indian political party for the last thirty years and it has constantly triggered communal conflict between Hindus and Muslims due to its ideology of extreme religious nationalism. Accordingly, it is assumed that understanding the construction of Hindu nationalism is essential not only to grasp the current trajectory of Indian society but also to understand the contemporary history of India. Psychology is employed in analysing this theme is because this enables the identification of the key factor in the arousal of the conflict between Hindus and Muslims.

Accordingly, two hypotheses have been established. Firstly, the motivation and reason for increasing violence between Hindus and Muslims, as compared to other religious

communities, is because Hindus have strong animosity towards Muslims. Furthermore, behind this explanation, psychological factors have as much of an effect as social and political factors.

Secondly, the sudden rise of Hindu nationalism from the 1980s is the strategy of Hindu nationalists to cope with the threat of globalisation. This hypothesis has come from the argument that the aggressive contemporary Hindutva is a form of cultural nationalism responding to emerging global capitalism, which is characterised by the collapse of communism, the propagation of consumption economies, information technology, deregulated, globalised economies, and a global cultural hegemony mainstreamed from the West (Bhatt, 2001, p.150).

The main body of the study constitutes an analysis of these hypotheses and is divided into three parts.

In Chapter One, the focus is put on the historical background to the sudden rise of Hindu nationalism, by examining the origin, organisation and development of Hindu nationalism over time. Firstly, it looks at the beginnings of Hindu nationalism in the 19th century to the 1920s, including the Arya Samaj, the Bengal Renaissance, Bal Gangadhar Tilak. This period was influenced by the impact of Orientalism and primordial nationalism from European thinking. Hindu revivalist movements such as the Arya Samaj, which was the most influential movement of its time, have provided the base on which current saffron power has been built up by consolidating people along religious lines.

Secondly, by examining the Hindu Mahasabha and Savarkar's Hindutva, the study looks at the limited influence of Hindu nationalism from the 1920s to the 1980s. The ideology of Hindutva and the perception of Muslims as the main threat, which Savarkar first introduced to the Hindu nationalist movement, have established a foothold in contemporary militarised Hindu nationalism.

Lastly, the study considers the sudden rise of Hindu nationalism in a militant form from the 1980s to the present day, by analysing saffron waves like the RSS, Sangh Parivar, VHP and BJP and their effect on the political arena. Religion and politics have been combined seriously since this time and saffron parties have presented a renewed Hindu identity to the Indian public.

Chapter Two deals with psychological factors behind the conflict and communal riots between Hindus and Muslims. To analyse this, the study presents psychological factors related to the historical background that have provoked the conflict between the two groups. The key question asked in this chapter is why dissension between Hindus and Muslims is more serious than among other religious groups and what are the psychological causes of their conflict. In this sense, the most prominent factor is 'Chosen Trauma'. This chosen trauma, which refers to the mental recollection of a fearful past, is verified historically, especially in the Indian situation, with the Muslim conquest and India-Pakistan Partition being the chosen trauma of Hindus. As discussed above, Partition resulted in increasing Hindu animosity towards Muslims, which was a crucial cause of the Ayodhya incident.

The second factor is proximity. This can explain why the strongest hostility has existed between Hindus and Muslims, as compared to among other religious groups, since nationalistic hostility is more strongly directed against larger, nearer and more powerful out-groups than against smaller, more distant and weaker ones (Rosenblatt, 1964, p.133).

Besides these factors, several other factors have contributed to the build-up of tension between Hindus and Muslims. Muslim assaults on Hindu idols, such as Muslims eating beef or the government's amicable attitude towards Muslims, can be examples of explanations for the increasingly aggravated feelings between the two groups. This chapter looks at Hindu psychology in relation to this animosity against Muslim onslaughts on Hindu idols and the Shah Bano case resulting from the government's cordial position with respect to Muslims.

Chapter Three discusses the strategy of Hindu nationalist groups, focusing on the psychology behind their attempts to enhance Hindu group cohesion in the context of modernisation and globalisation.

The Sangh Parivar uses psychological strategies in achieving their strong group cohesion, based on human instinct against the forces of globalisation. These include promoting intergroup bias by making clear a boundary between “us” and “them” and enhancing strong group loyalty and group superiority in constructing nationalism. Demonising the “other” and strengthening in-group loyalty are natural processes in boosting their self-esteem and this is still furthered when they suffer economic or social insecurity, such as in a period of crisis that diminishes their self-esteem.

This theory can also be applied to Hindu nationalist psychology. It can explain the rise of the paramilitary form of Hindu nationalism to overcome the increasing feeling of loss and insecurity under the threat of globalisation from the 1980s. Hindu nationalists have used strategies of manipulating history and myths to fortify their group cohesion in the face of globalisation, based on the theory that sharing a common culture and symbols can help in ensuring social stability. Right-wing political groups such as the Sangh Parivar, the VHP (Vishwa Hindu Parishad), the RSS (Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh) and the BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party) have put forward to the Indian public a new Hindu identity with these strategies, and they have raised Hindu consciousness based on a neo-fascist vision of constructing a homogeneous Hindu *rashtra*.

In developing this framework, the main purpose of this dissertation is to analyse the psychological factors acting on the construction of Hindu nationalism and the new Hindu identity from the 1980s. A diagnosis of the risks and problems of Hindutva is attempted through the study of the Hindu-Muslim religious conflict from the psychological perspective. The study aims to develop a clear insight into the emotional construction of Hindu nationalism and the new Hindu identity by focusing on psychological aspects, adding to existing studies that rely on social and political aspects.

In its concluding analysis, the study tries to work out how to relieve the tension and violence between Hindus and Muslims, by making a diagnosis of the attitudes of Hindu nationalists that cause the problem.

Chapter I

The Rise of Hindu Nationalism and Hindu Identity

In the last two decades of the 20th century, Hindu nationalism emerged as a force to be reckoned with in Indian politics due to the sudden rise of the BJP as the national opposition party. The main aim of the Sangh Parivar, which includes the BJP-RSS-VHP coalition, is to inject its cultural nationalistic ideology into both Indian politics and public opinion. Due to the leverage of this ideology in different fields, Hindu nationalism has been referred to variously as Hindutva, the saffron wave, Hindu majoritarianism, Hindu communalism and Hindu fundamentalism.

Although it has become a prominent concern only in the last 30 years, the ideology of the movement dates from the 19th century. However, the direct foundation of the ideology of contemporary Hindu nationalism has been constructed from the 1920s. One of its features is the perception that it is the same as communalism. This dialectic can be traced back to the 1920s since communalism and more specifically the communal riot emerged as a systematic characteristic of politics in northern India from this period (Zavos, 2000, p.4).

Accordingly, this chapter will seek to explain the ideologies, origin and history of the Hindu nationalist movement from the 19th century to the present day. This process of examining the background and ideologies of Hindu nationalism is essential to understanding the main argument of the dissertation.

The chapter is divided into three parts. The first examines the formation and main ideologies of Dayananda Saraswati's Arya Samaj movement, the 'Bengal Renaissance' and Bal Gangadhar Tilak's movement from the late 19th to the early 20th century. In the second part, the main ideologies of the troubled period of the 1920s are discussed, with special focus on the Hindu Mahasabha movement and Savarkar's Hindutva. Finally, the third part of the chapter reviews the ideologies and strategies of the contemporary saffron wave, including the RSS, VHP and BJP under the name of the Sangh Parivar.

1. Beginning of the Movement in the 19th Century up to the 1920s

The period encompassing the 19th and early 20th century saw the emergence of the basic ideologies of Hindu nationalism. The concept of Hindu nationalism dates only from the 19th century. According to Zakaria (1970), there was no communal violence between Hindus and Muslims prior to the colonial era. Hindu nationalism in this period should be regarded as part of the wider nationalism resisting British colonial power rather than as a form of communalism. The paramilitary communalist form of Hindu nationalism grounded in fascist ideology established itself after the 1920s. In fact, the form of Hindu nationalism in this period can be seen as Hindu revivalism, because its main characteristic was to homogenise Hindus according to the Hindu religion (Ko et al., 2006, p.42), while one of the period's themes was Hindu reform by improving Hindu weaknesses generated from the threat of 'foreign rule' - first by Muslims and then by the British (Van der Veer, 1994, p.64). Therefore, the emergence of Hindu nationalism in the 19th century was inextricably bound up with the development of Indian nationalism.

European nationalist ideas significantly affected and shaped both secular and religious nationalism in this period of India's history. Nineteenth century nationalism in India can be defined as an "Orientalist mode of production of the people" (Hansen, 1999, p. 60). Hindu revivalism, based on primordialist thinking, was also influenced by European nationalist ideas, especially British and German Orientalism in 19th century colonial India (Bhatt, 2001). Owing to the influence of this Orientalist epistemology, nationalists during this time believed that the Indian community, which was then divided by religion, caste and custom, could be consolidated by means of a Hindu reform movement.

In the same vein, primordialist thinking was stimulated during the British colonial period since Hindu nationalists believed that the nation could be united by rediscovering the archaic Hindu civilisation. A fundamental element of primordial nationalism in this period was Aryanism, which was generated in processes of 'upper' caste, religious, regional and vernacular elite consolidation in colonial India (Ibid.). Hindu nationalists in the mid-19th century tried to achieve national unity by glorifying the Hindu past and

tracing India's archaic memory. They focused on the discovery of Vedic-Aryanism based on archaic religious texts like the Vedas, Upanishads, Puranas and the Epics, which suggest the greatness of the Hindu civilisation not only culturally and morally but also in its political and ethical system (Ibid, 12). Aryanism was used in manipulating ancient history to assert the idea of India as a 'Hindu Rashtra' for Hindu nationalists and developed with elite-led Indian nationalist ideology. Besides verifying ancient Hindu history on their terms, the Vedic Aryanist paradigm presented its superiority by showing southern Dravidians and tribal populations to be inferior to Hindu Aryans (Ibid, 15).

This strategy proved the superiority of the culture and religion and boosted the self-esteem of Hindus. These primordialist ideologies also were used in vernacular and regional elite formation during the second half of the 19th century. Some scholars argue that Hindu nationalism from the 19th to the early 20th century was an elite-led, middle class ideology because it developed with Aryanism and primordialism, which were both led by elite and middle class Indians.¹

The following section discusses three major early Hindu nationalist movements and their ideological development in the 19th century and early 20th century.

1.1 The Arya Samaj

The Arya Samaj, which means 'Society of Aryans', was founded in 1875 in Punjab by Dayananda Saraswati. It is referred to as the most influential, first modern movement to aim at reform and revival or 'Hindu renaissance' in the 19th century.

The core of the Arya Samaj ideology emphasised the Aryan-Vedic tradition. According to Dayananda, the Aryans were the original human inhabitants of the world and they worshipped only one God and accepted the Vedic religion. He clearly delimited his definition of the Aryans with regard to territorial and xenological considerations and

¹ Zavos (1999) regards the initial stage of Hindu nationalism as a middle class ideology and Chandra (1987) defines communalism as a modern political concept developed by each religious colonial elite group who pursued communal and secular interests.

claimed that not every Indian could become Aryan. He also emphasised the importance of the four Vedas and regarded the God in the Vedas as the ancient Aryans. Based on this primacy of the Aryan race, he thought a national revival could be achieved by uniting the nation with the popular and claimed that it was necessary to inculcate Hindu ideals represented in the Vedas to Hindus in order to unite the nation (Hansen, 1999, p.72). Such reverence for Vedic authority on the part of the Arya Samaj seems to have been affected by the Orientalism of the 19th century (Van der Veer, 1994, p.65).

With regard to the caste system, while rejecting the jati system, Dayananda accepted varnashramadharma and the varna system, arguing that this ideal method of social organisation existed in the Vedic Period. This emphasis of the Arya Samaj on the Aryan-Vedic tradition has had an impact on the contemporary Hindutva movement (Bhatt, 2001, p.18).

The most important innovation of the Arya Samaj was the shuddhi or conversion ritual. When it was first created, the aim was “purification” of the faith (Ibid, p.50), as well as putting a stop to conversions of lower caste Hindus to Islam and Christianity and working to reconvert Christians and Muslims to Hinduism. This shuddhi movement has influenced later Hindutva organisations such as the VHP’s homecoming campaigns among Muslims, Christians and tribal groups. The censuses of 1901 and 1911 accelerated the shuddhi movement because they showed an increasing number of Christians and Muslims, making Hindu nationalists feel they were under threat of extinction. From this period, the demographic threat has become one of the main stimuli for Hindu nationalists' strong antipathy towards Muslims over the last century.

The most important motto in the Arya Samaj was “Back to the Veda”. It took a closed stance with respect to other religions, holding the ideal that only the Aryans were Indian and stressing only the authority of the Vedas. This exclusivism against the ‘other’ chimed with primordialism in European thinking in this period.

As regards the religious aspect, the Arya Samaj tried to recover the purity of the Hindu faith, while aiming to make India an autonomous nation free from the British in the political aspect (Cho, 1994, p.440). Their most important contribution was in building up the communication of Hindu nationalism. The Arya Samaj initiated the Cow Protection Movement, which focused on religious nationalism rather than aiming to reform (Van der Veer, 1994, p. 66). The closed and nationalist attitude characteristic of the Hindu revival movement became part of the foundation of the Hindu Mahasabha and RSS ideology. Many leaders and activists of the RSS and the Hindu Mahasabha emerged from these milieus (Hansen, 1999, p.74).

1.2 The Bengal Renaissance

In the latter half of the 19th century, there was a revolutionary nationalism led by the regional and vernacular intelligentsia in Bengal. Bengali nationalist ideologies spread rapidly after the Partition of Bengal in 1905 and they are well represented in the writings of Bankimchandra Chattopadhyaya. There was an effort to amalgamate the ideas of Hindu cultural nationalism with those of Indian nationalism in the 'Bengal Renaissance'. This happened in the aftermath of two consecutive splits in the original Brahmo Samaj established in Calcutta in 1828 by Rammohan Roy. The first split in 1850, led by Debendranath Tagore (1815-1905), was based on the need for internal reform within Hinduism, while the second split in 1866, led by Keshab Chandra Sen (1838-84), attempted to 'Christianise' Hinduism (Bhatt, 2001, p.23).

The fundamental elements of the nationalist ideas in the Bengal Renaissance were also based on Hindu superiority and exclusivity in much the same way as in other Hindu nationalist movements. Rajnarain Basu (1826-99) and Nabagopal Mitra (1840-94), who were Debendranath's colleagues, were core representatives of this trend in Bengal. Hinduism appeared in regional nationalism based on the British Orientalist study of ancient India. It was led by elite Bengalis and occurred in an environment in which Christians emerged as opponents of Hindus (Ibid).

The most prominent theme for Bengali elite nationalists was the concept of India as the 'motherland' and the need to show dedication to and love for motherland. This theme, which was popular among Indian nationalists and Hindu nationalists in the late 19th century, has influenced many revolutionary nationalists since this period. Bankim, often referred to as the father of the modern Bengali novelist, is the most well known figure to have used this metaphor in his writings. In his novels, he articulated Hindu nationalism through the symbolisation of the Hindu nation as the motherland in gendered and religious terms. This represented 'the imagined historical injury to the nation' through symbolisation that the motherland was suffering from foreign invasion (Ibid, p.28).

1.3 Bal Gangadhar Tilak

Bal Gandadhar Tilak (1856-1920) was one of the key figures in the nationalist movement to recapture the glorious past of the Hindus. His argument in support of Hindu supremacy and traditionalism was the genesis of later Hindu fundamentalism. Also, the Hindu Mahasabha and RSS adopted Tilak's ideology and then became amongst the most powerful organisations in triggering the ideology of 'Hindutva'.

Tilak was one of the first and strongest supporters of 'Swaraj' (self-rule) and the boycott, which are famous campaigns of economic resistance to colonialism. He joined the Indian National Congress in 1890, but criticised its moderate attitude. Standing against the moderates, he organised a separate extremist faction in Congress. Tilak was one of the most crucial leaders of the nationalist movement and famous for his radicalism.

He also asserted that Hindu society had a capacity for self-renewal, which could be achieved by underlining the glorified Vedic civilisation. According to him, the Vedic civilisation was the oldest in the world, the most cultured and the mother of all civilisations (Hansen, 1999, p.76). Such emphasis on the archaic Indian civilisation also derived from Orientalist primordialism. His chauvinistic view of the Hindu civilisation can be seen in his distortion of ancient history. Tilak argued that the Aryans were the first creators of civilisation in the world, claiming that the Aryan civilisation dated to earlier than 8,000 BC and was more refined than the later Bronze and Iron Age civilisations (Bhatt, 2001, p.35).

Another of his achievements was the drawing of Hindu traditions and symbols into Indian nationalism. In his efforts to develop two 'ideological configurations' – the gods Ganesh and Shivaji – to resist British rule, we can see the process of “transfiguration of symbols of Hindu religious devotionism – the religious pantheon – into a nationalist pantheon”. Also, his employment of Shivaji as the symbol of Hindu militancy related to the struggle against not only colonial rule but also medieval Muslim 'invaders' (Ibid., p.34). Therefore, Tilak's depiction of Shivaji in justifying the use of violence can be seen as the forerunner of the strategy used by contemporary Hindu nationalism against Muslims.

As seen from the above, Hindu nationalism from the 19th to the early 20th century can be referred to as a Hindu revivalism movement, which emerged as a part of Indian nationalism in the British colonial period because Hindu nationalists believed that the nation could be united by restoring the Hindu civilisation of thousands of years ago.

This Hindu revivalism movement was grounded in claims of the superiority of the Aryan civilisation, based on Hindu-Aryan primordialism from the Vedic text on the Hindus. It expressed religious exclusivism against other religions and showed signs of manipulating ancient history, which has continued since this period. This suggests that the Hindu revivalist movement served as the foundation of later Hindu nationalism, since it is clear that this strategy has been reused in militant Hindu nationalism.

2. Influence from the 1920s to the 1980s

The period from the 1920s to the 1930s was one of great confusion in the political field of colonial India. In particular, the province of Bengal was partitioned into the largely Muslim eastern areas and the largely Hindu western areas in 1905, and then reunited again in 1911. The process of protest for the partition of Bengal marked its importance in the history of the Indian nationalist movement because it not only promoted the *swadeshi* movement and boycott campaign but also fostered the emergence of two oppositional groups – moderate and extremist – in the Congress. Therefore, during this time, the existing ideology of Indian nationalism in the Congress was confronted with the growth

of the 'extremist' group (Zavos, 1999). Accordingly, there were tendencies towards both criticism of the boycott movement against the British and loyalty to the British government in this period. Gandhi started his non-cooperation movement in the 1920s.

Alongside these wider developments, the main characteristic of this period is the emergence of communalism in Indian politics and the dialectic between Indian nationalism and communalism (Zavos, 1999, 2000). The dialectic between Hindu nationalism and Indian nationalism was always present in this troubled period. More specifically, the coexistence of Hinduised versions of Indian nationalism and the specific ideology of Hindutva emerged (Bhatt, 2001, p.4). With regard to the dialectic, Jaffrelot says ethnicity distinguishes Hindu nationalism from the Indian nationalist ideology, while Zavos (1999) argues that the distinguishing factors are history and culture. From this period, the idea of Hindu nationalism started to change from its moderate to more radical nationalism.

Another feature of the 1920s was the appearance of political mobilisation in Hindu nationalism. The ideology of Hindu nationalism slowly became involved in Indian politics.

Comparing post-1920s Hindu nationalism and pre-1920s Hindu revivalism, the marked distinguishing difference is the Hindu attitude toward Muslims. Hindutva, a concept first developed in the 1920s by Savarkar, clearly defined Muslims as foreign and exterior, while the Hindu revivalism of the 19th century did not. This attitude towards Muslims has intensified since the 1980s due to influences from this period. Therefore, it would not be wrong to say "the key political ideas of the contemporary Hindutva movement were being articulated by Savarkar and the Hindu Mahasabha" (Bhatt, 2001, p.77) because post-1980s militant Hindutva ideology and its activity is directly based on 'Savarkarism' and his Hindu Mahasabha. Consolidating Hindus by strengthening their ties under the threat of extermination, aroused by conversions of Hindus to Islam or Christianity, was their most prominent objective during the period between the 1920s and the 1980s.

In other words, criticism of so-called ‘pseudo-secularists’ (Zavos, 1999, 2000), the militarisation of Hindus and the view of Muslims as ‘others’ were key features of Hindu nationalism in this period.

2.1 The Hindu Mahasabha

The Hindu Mahasabha is a Hindu nationalist political party founded in 1915. It represented Hindus who did not agree with the secular Indian National Congress ideology and who were opponents of the Muslim League.

Before discussing the Hindu Mahasabha, it is important to consider Lala Lajpat Rai. Lajpat Rai (1865-1928) was one of the most important figures of Hindu nationalism in this period as an ‘extremist’ within Congress and as a revolutionary nationalist who took an active part in both the pre-Savarkarite Hindu Mahasabha and the Hindu Sangathan movement.

Influenced by a conception of the Arya Samaj that emphasised the ‘purification’ of Hinduism, he stated that ‘Hindus are a nation in themselves, because they represent a civilisation all their own’ in his article for the Indian National Congress in *the Hindustan Review* (Mathur, 1996, 1). In this way, he raised the argument of ‘Hindu weakness’ and the need to strengthen Hinduism by conquering foreigners and treating them as others. He enunciated Indian nationality as Hindu nationalism. These central thoughts of Lajpat Rai came to form the basis of the later ideology of Hindu identity in Savarkarism and the RSS.

In 1906, following the foundation of the All-India Muslim League in Dacca, a Hindu Sabha (society) was established in Punjab with the aim of “protecting the interests of the Hindus by stimulating in them the feelings of self-respect, self-help and mutual co-operation so that by a combined effort there would be some chance of promoting the moral, intellectual, social and material welfare of the individuals of which the nation is composed.”(Zavos, 1999, p.2273). Also, it developed to stand for the interests of a Hindu constituency and it became a powerful symbol of the united community (Ibid.). The

Hindu nationalist movement intervened in the Indian political field for the first time with the emergence of the Hindu Sabha.

In April 1921, the Hindu Sabha was renamed the 'All-India Hindu Mahasabha'. After this renaming, its earlier objective of loyalty to the British government was changed to the aim of 'a united and self-governing Indian nation', while the initial agenda of the Hindu Mahasabha was sangathan, organisation and movement. These notions developed into major principles of Hindu nationalism (Ibid, p.2275).

From the early 1920s, the All-India Hindu Mahasabha gave importance to the *shuddhi* movement to boost the number of Hindus, under the threat of an increasing number of Christians and Muslims. Its targets were largely two groups. It tried to reconvert Christians and Muslims to Hinduism and to encourage untouchable or adivasi (tribal) groups to return to the Hindu fold (Bhatt, 2001). This Hindu Mahasabha conversion movement, influenced by the Arya Samaj, is a key issue for Hindu communalists today.

Another important activity of the Hindu Mahasabha was the Hindu Sangathan² movement. Swami Shradhanand (1856-1926) was well known for playing a key role in the Sangathan movement of the early 1920s and warning of the threat of Hindu extinction.

The Hindu Sangathan is also evidence of the effect of the Arya Samaj since it was based on neo-Vedic ideology from the late 19th century. Its main aim was strengthening the demographic status of Hindus by bringing outcasts into a hierarchical system of caste. In fact, when the 1901 and 1911 censuses showed an increasing population of Muslims and Christians, Hindus felt that they would become extinct. To remove the fear of Hindus losing their status, Shradhanand proposed to strongly oppose conversions to Islam and Christianity. This Sangathan movement can be seen as a product of the consolidation of Hindu nationalist ideology in the 1920s. It has become a key characteristic of today's Hindutva movement (Ibid, p.63, 67).

² Sangathan is derived from the Sanskrit prefix *sam*, 'together', and the verbal root *ghat*, 'to form or mould'. This is evident in the more strict Sanskrit use of *sangathan*, 'organisation, formation, constitution, composition' (Zavos, 2000, p.16).

The Hindu Sangathan movement and the Hindu Mahasabha became influential in the national political field from the mid-1920s under the leadership of Madan Mohan Malaviya, Lajpat Rai and B.S. Moonje, coinciding with the end of Gandhi's mass satyagraha campaigns (Ibid, p.69).

When Savarkar reached the leadership of the Hindu Mahasabha in 1937, the Hindu nationalist ideology in the subcontinent became more aggressive and militaristic. It suggested that the Indian government give Hindus military training in all high schools and colleges (Savarkar, 1941 as cited in Bhatt, 2001). This Mahasabha policy of Hindu militarisation implies that Hindu nationalism started to set up a strategy to protect Hindus from external threats from this period.

In conclusion, Lajpat Rai and Swami Shraddhanand recommended the same remedies to reform Hindus, including the abolition of sub-castes and the conversion of 'untouchables' and tribals to Hinduism. In this respect, we can say that the ideology of this period was the legacy and extension of that of the Arya Samaj of the previous century. Furthermore, it became the foundation for non-Gandhite ideologies for both Hindu internal reform and Hindu political assertion within and around the Congress, the non-cooperation movement and the national movement (Bhatt, 2001, p.75).

2.2 Savarkar's Movement

Vinayak Damodar Savarkar (1883-1966), who is famous for coining the term 'Hindutva', is revered as a revolutionary hero by Hindu nationalists. It is no exaggeration to say that the Hindutva ideology was not definitively articulated until this period. His ideology of Hindutva, as explained in his article "*Hindutva: Who is a Hindu?*" in 1923, lit up contemporary militant Hindu nationalism. Certainly, contemporary usage of the word 'Hindutva' derives from Savarkar (Bhatt, 2001, p.77). According to Zavos (1999) and Jaffrelot (1999), Hindu nationalism was not 'codified' until the birth of his Hindutva ideology.

Savarkar introduced the ideology of Hindutva after the Partition of Bengal and in the political whirlpool of the 1920s. His main objective was to provide an answer to questions such as ‘What is Hinduness’ and ‘What constitutes Hindu identity’ and to consolidate the idea of the unitary nation with Hindu identity. He highlighted the problem presented by this ‘lack’ on the part of Hindus, constructing as solutions Hindutva and the sharing of ‘Hinduness’ by all Hindus. Such eagerness for a strong and culturally homogenous nation by means of the Hindutva idea was due to the impression made on Savarkar by the writings of Giuseppe Mazzini. In Mazzini, Savarkar found an ideological framework and a political philosophy that combined cultural pride, national self-assertion and a view of the culturally homogenous nation (Hansen, 1999, p.77).

Based on Mazzini’s thoughts about the nation, Savarkar explained the five elements that constituted unitary nationality: territory; emotional attachment; coherence and unity of languages; shared blood; and race.³ According to this definition, he asserted that Hindus were those who inherited the blood of the Vedic-Aryan race and the Sanskrit culture and those who considered ‘Sindhusthan’ as their ‘Holyland’ (Bhatt, 2001, p.99).

Among these elements, Savarkar particularly emphasised the racial inheritance of Hindu blood from their Vedic forefathers in characterising Hindutva (Savarkar, 1989). Accordingly, he denied the theory of the Aryan invasion of the subcontinent and stated that the ancient land of “Sindhu”⁴ comprised the entire subcontinent. In this way, his sense of Indian nationality was based on the “Vedic nation” that was already present four thousand years ago with the development of a common language, Sanskrit, and a common body of philosophy and ritual practices (Hansen, 1999, p.78).

3 Savarkar reiterated a number of these tenets. According to him, “the first tenet in forming a nationality was territory and praise of the unique and supreme qualities of each nation. The second tenet was a common emotional attachment to the nation. The third tenet was the coherence and unity of languages as the medium of cultural essence and feeling. The fourth tenet denoted the holistic concept of culture as a uniting whole by shared blood and race. Savarkar praised caste endogamy as a mechanism keeping the blood of the nation pure” (Savarkar, 1969 quoted in Hansen, 1999, p. 78).

4 According to Savarkar, “the term ‘Hindu’ is basically a territorial denomination of the civilization developed through millennia on the eastern side of the river Indus, ‘Sindhu’, which gradually became known as ‘Hindu’”(Ibid 1999)

With this strong assertion of the need for common blood to make a unitary nation, others who were not Hindu such as Christians and Muslims could not be included in the Indian nationality in Savarkar's thought. Accordingly, he sharply distinguished foreigners from Hindus. He continuously stressed that Christians and Muslims should abandon their faith and adopt the Hindutva ideology. It seems that this strategy of demarcating a clear boundary between us and them appeared in the psychology of nationalism from this time:

For though Hindusthan is to them 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. Consequently their names and their outlook smack of a foreign origin. Their love is divided. (Savarkar, 1989, p.113).

This Hindu majoritarian ideology started by Savarkar brought up issues of war, militarism and minorities from the 1930s. He introduced his militarised Hindu nationalism to the Hindu Mahasabha from the mid-1930s as its president. From that time, the difference between Hindu nationalism and the anti-colonial national movement became very clear (Bhatt, 2001).

In this way, Savarkar's activities influenced not only several ideological currents within and outside the Indian freedom movement in his own time, but also the principles of the contemporary saffron wave.

The form of Hindu nationalism after the 1920s is easily distinguishable from that of the previous period. Hindu nationalist organisations like the Hindu Mahasabha extended from the Hindu Sabha started to intervene in the political field, while the political maelstrom involving events such as the Partition of Bengal and the conflict between 'moderate' and 'radical' groups within Congress swept through the 1920s. Hindu nationalists in this period tried to reform Hindus based on the tenets of the Arya Samaj and went on to develop ideas beyond the Arya Samaj ideology. However, the contemporary militarised ideology of Hindu nationalism has been developed since the definition of Hindutva by Savarkar. Therefore, it would be true to say that the emergence of the Hindutva ideology from this period is the immediate background of the propagation of majoritarian group rights by later saffron communities from the 1980s.

3. Sudden rise of Hindu Nationalism from the 1980s to the Present

Hindu nationalism in the period from the 1980s to the present day has presented a further developed form of its previous ideology and has taken a more aggressive form in the political field. Over the past three decades, the Hindutva ideology has become a prominent issue in Indian politics not only because saffron waves have created a new environment in politics in which religion and politics are combined but also because nationalists have felt under threat from globalisation. Since the 1990s, Hindutva has spread at the state and local levels, as well as at the national and international levels, as the leverage of globalisation has increased rapidly. Hindu nationalists in this period have attempted to raise consciousness of Hindu cultural nationalism, bringing an anti-pluralist and neo-fascist vision to the Indian public and politics.

With the hope of establishing a homogenous cultural nation, the Sangh Parivar has introduced a renewed sense of Hindu identity to Indian politics (Chirmuley, 2004, p.2) and created a violent public environment based on a strongly exclusivist principle.

3.1 The Sangh Parivar

The Sangh Parivar – the family of Hindu nationalist organisations – is regarded as a group of several right wing organisations.

In the period 1949-1965, the Rashtriya Swamayamsevak Sangh (RSS) launched several national organisations, including the Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS) and the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP). This process accelerated from the late 1970s, and the Sangh Parivar has developed into the concept of a Hindu family and spread at the national and local levels with its organisations forming an ‘alternative civil society’⁵.

⁵ The Sangh Parivar in Pune almost constitutes an ‘alternative civil society’, with separate schools, its own banks, a large number of colleges, its own organisations for youth, students, women, children, informal networks, frequent marriages between RSS-affiliated families and its own informal communication channels and structures of authority, both reproduced on a daily basis in the shakhas (Hansen, 1999, p.117).

This development of the Sangh Parivar since the 1970s is related to the lack of a central leadership after the decline of the 'Congress system' and the fading of left power. Concomitant with this situation, the Parivar has intervened in politics with a renewed sense of Hindu identity (Chirmuley, 2004).

Between the 1980s and 2002, the Parivar expanded to a very great extent thanks to its cultural nationalist project and manipulation of the 'communal card' to extreme levels (Ibid, p.4).

3.2 The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS)

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS, the 'National Volunteer Corps') was established in 1925 by K.B. Hedgewar (1889-1940), a physician from Maharashtra. It arose in Nagpur (in Maharashtra state) within the town's Brahmin community. For that reason, the organisation has long been dominated by Maharashtrian Brahmins. In the 1930s, the RSS gradually spread out from Nagpur to western Maharashtra – where Pune became a major centre – and to northern and western India and indeed the entire Hindi-speaking region.

Throughout the 1930s, the RSS maintained close relations with the Hindu Mahasabha, which provided profound inspiration for the ideology and organisation of the RSS. However, after Savarkar became the president of the Hindu Mahasabha in 1937, there were indications of a separation between the RSS and the Hindu Mahasabha. In 1939, the gap widened even further and the Hindu Mahasabha established its own uniformed youth corps, the Ram Sena (Ram's Army). When Golwalkar became the supreme leader after Hedgewar, they completely broke up in the early 1940s (Hansen, 1999, p.94). By the 1940s, the RSS had expanded their influence beyond the provinces of northern India to south India as well (Goyal, 1979 as cited in Bhatt, 1999, p.121).

The fact that the ideology of the RSS was inspired by Savarkar's book *Hindutva* is clear because both Hedgewar and Golwalkar's main aim was 'man-moulding' and 'character-

building'. This 'man-moulding' and 'character-building' means imprinting the RSS worldview in the *shakha*⁶ based on Hindu identity (Bhatt, 2001, p.142).

For their 'character building', the RSS attempted several strategies that show some such characteristics. First, the RSS has emphasised the importance of education to raise consciousness of the Muslim as an enemy and other. In other words, provoking Muslims is a key characteristic of the RSS. They have ceaselessly attempted to implant a dehumanising characterisation of the Indian Muslim. The reason for stressing moulding and educating 'Hindu consciousness' is because Hedgewar believed that 'lack of cohesion' and 'Hindu disunity' were the most serious problems facing Hindu society, in addition to 'foreign domination of Hindus', as a result of 'Hindu failings' (Ibid, p.118)

The second characteristic of the RSS is the full-scale emergence of militarised Hindu nationalism, inspired by Mussolini's fascism and descended from Savarkar's Hindutva ideology since the 1920s. As we have noted before, fascist Italy was already a source of inspiration for Hindu nationalist movements in the 1920s and 1930s, especially in their desire to express the organised Hindu strength and militarise the Hindu nation (Bhatt, 2001)

In fact, the RSS started military and ideological training in its youth corps according to its ideas of physical strength and spiritual purity as soon as it was established. The training includes a daily routine of physical exercise, military drills and marches, weapons training and ideological inculcation (Ibid, p.119). To organise its 'martial tradition', the RSS organises its military camps according to its hierarchical leadership principle based on the traditional idea of a 'model Hindu family'.⁷

6 "Shakha" is Hindi for "branch". Most of the organizational work of the RSS is done through the activities of *shakhas*. In 2004, more than 60,000 *shakhas* were performed throughout India (<http://www.rediff.com/news/2004/jul/23rss.htm>, accessed on 5th May, 2012). The *shakhas* carry out various activities for its volunteers which include not only physical fitness activities through yoga, exercises and games but also emphasise on qualities like civic sense, social service, community living and patriotism (Malkani, K.R., 1980).

7 The RSS claimed that the inspiration for its hierarchical leadership principle was not derived from any 'perverted foreign model' such as Mussolini's fascism, but was based on the traditional idea of a 'model Hindu family' (Curran, 1951; Dexhpande and Ramaswamy, 1981 quoted in Bhatt, 2001, p.120). It includes typical traditional hierarchy like led by order men and recruiting young boys, founded on the

Lastly, the key terms of the RSS based on Aryanism and the history of the Vedic times are racism, making a homogenous nation and majoritarianism.

Golwalkar, who became the second supreme leader of the RSS after Hedgewar's death in 1940, emphasised the 'Vedic period', like other previous Hindu nationalists. He stated that the 'Vedic period' was the oldest civilisation and Hindu-Aryans were indigenous and the forebears of Indians.⁸ According to this view, Golwalkar tried to spread the view that the 'nation should consist of pure race'. This xenophobic view, inspired by Fascism and Nazism, created a strong exclusivity towards minorities. For him, minorities could not be other than 'foreign', but nor should they exist in the Hindu nation unless they became Hindus. With regard to this strong repulsion of minorities, he used somatic metaphors – the healthy body of the 'Hindu nation' threatened by a minority 'cancer' (Ibid, p.130). His ignorance of any rights of minorities under the pretext of uniting his 'one nation' is representative of Hindu nationalists, full of intolerance and closed attitudes. For Golwalkar, minorities could:

Live only as outsiders, bound by all the codes and conventions of the Nation, at the sufferance of the Nation and deserving of no special protection, far less any privilege or rights. That is the only logical and correct solution.The non-Hindu peoples of Hindusthan must either adopt the Hindu culture and language, must learn to respect and hold in reverence Hindu religion, must entertain no ideas but those of the glorification of the Hindu race and culture.....They must cease to be foreigners, or may stay in the country wholly subordinated to the Hindu nation, claiming nothing, deserving no privileges (Golwalkar, 1944, quoted from Bhatt, 2001, p.130).

Although such a view of minorities as foreigners and foes was influenced by Fascism and Nazism, Golwalkar also considered communism to be 'foreign' and 'anti-national'. His vigorous anti-communism was a key constituent of RSS ideology in the post-independence period (Bhatt, 2001). With this contradictory ideology, the RSS has changed from a non-political organisation to a political organisation after the experience of being banned⁹ in the period 1948-1949.

institutional absence of women and in which one leader holds absolute leadership and requires compliable and devotional respect from members (Bhatt, 2001, p.120).

⁸ Golwalkar said "we were one nation"- 'Over all the land from sea to sea one Nation!' is the trumpet cry of the ancient Vedas!' (Bhatt, 2001, p.127)

⁹ Following Mahatma Gandhi's assassination in 1948 by a former member of the RSS, Nathuram Godse, many of the main leaders of the RSS were imprisoned and the RSS was banned on February 4, 1948 (Larson, 1995, p.132).

3.3 The Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP)

The VHP (Vishwa Hindu Parishad) was founded in Bombay on 29 August 1964 at the instigation of Golwalkar. One hundred and fifty religious leaders were present at the meeting, including not just Hindus but also Sikhs, Buddhists and Jains, with the aim of representing all Hindus, led by Swami Chinmayananda. Golwalkar explained that "all faiths of Indian origin need to unite", saying that the word "Hindu" applied to followers of all the above religions (Smith, 2003, p.189).

In the meeting, it was decided that the organisation would have the following objectives: (1) to take steps to raise the consciousness and to consolidate and strengthen Hindu society; (2) to protect, develop and spread Hindu life values, both ethical and spiritual; (3) to establish and reinforce contacts with and help for all Hindus living abroad; (4) to welcome back all who had left the Hindu fold and to rehabilitate them as part and parcel of the Universal Hindu Society; (5) to render social service to humanity at large, initiating welfare projects for the 170 million downtrodden brethren who had been suffering for centuries, including schools, hospitals, libraries, etc.; (6) to establish the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, the World Organisation of the six hundred million Hindus at present residing in 80 countries aspiring to revitalise the eternal Hindu Society by rearranging the code of conduct of our age-old Dharma to meet the needs of the changed times; (7) to eradicate the concept of untouchability from Hindu Society (VHP pamphlet, 1982, cited from Vander Veer, 1994, p.130).

With these aims of consolidating Hindus with other religions that emerged from Hinduism, several characteristics differentiated the VHP from other right wing organisations.

First, the VHP has tried to strengthen the solidarity of Hindus overseas. The VHP has organised its branches not only at the level of the nation state, but also at the international level. Internationally, the VHP has reported affiliated bodies in eighteen countries (Bhatt, 2001, p.183).

Second, the VHP has focused on setting up a programme to bring tribals and untouchables into the Hindu fold. This strategy could come from concerns about Hindu extinction. Hindu nationalists are under the delusion that Muslims will be majority in India in the future because of their higher fertility rate and the practice of polygamy. This imagined fear also results in Hindus worrying about a shortage of resources in the future based on 'Malthusian' theory.¹⁰ From the early 1980s, the VHP began in earnest mass conversion campaigns among syncretic Hindu-Muslim groups and among Christian tribals. These so-called 'homecoming' campaigns emphasised that those who had other religions were to 'come back' to their 'original', 'natural' faith, Hinduism, and hence their homeland (Ibid, p.198). The most famous shuddhi activity in the VHP was the Meenakshipuram conversion in 1981. In this conversion movement, the VHP encouraged lower caste Hindus and untouchables to offer devotion to and bathe the idols and continuously resist conversion to Islam among them (Ibid, p.188).

Third, the VHP started to use the iconic representations of 'Ram' and the media effect with their involvement in the Ram Janmabhomi campaign. The destruction of Babri Masjid at Ayodhya to construct a Ram temple was the most remarkable working in the VHP's role. During its Ram Janmabhomi campaign, the VHP elevated the *Ramayana* as the privileged text of Hinduism by broadcasting 'Ramayana' series. The strategy of the VHP during the Ram Janmabhomi campaign included making a clear demarcation of the other to appeal to the majority of Hindus through the utilisation of devotional symbol.

The VHP was a non-political organisation at the time of its foundation, but it has started to influence the politics since the BJP adopted the Hindutva themes of the VHP document issued in 1997 referred to as *Hindu Agenda* as its 1998 general election manifesto. Therefore, the development of a national Hinduism which aims to spread the VHP's version of Hinduism as the standard and mainstream Hinduism to the nation is the most significant of the activities of the VHP (Hansen, 1999, p.102).

¹⁰ According to Bhatt (2001, p.197-8), Malthusian theory has characterised Hindu nationalism since the 20th century.

3.4 The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)

In 1951, senior RSS activists created a national party, the Jana Sangh, and Mookherjee was elected president. Its political strategy was based on RSS ideology and organisation. The Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS), the political arm of Hindu nationalism, initially regarded post-Independence India as 'Bharatiya Rashtra'. This changed to 'Hindu Rashtra' in 1956, with the Jana Sangh claiming that both were equivalent and coextensive with 'Indian' nationalism (Baxter, 1971, p.133).

With its objective of spreading Hindu nationalism, including campaigns against Urdu, for the banning of cow-slaughter and for a militarily strong India, the Jana Sangh emerged from the late 1960s, a period that included the death of Nehru, war with Pakistan and the development of the 'multi-party system' at the national as well as state level (Bhatt, 2001, p.154).

The crucial motivation for examining the Jana Sangh is the fact that the contemporary Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) manifesto is derived from the main principle of the Jana Sangh.

Under the principle of 'one nation, one culture, one people', the Jana Sangh was against the partition of India, which it believed should be 're-united'. It also strongly opposed Nehruvian secularism because the latter was seen as a policy of 'appeasement' of Indian Muslims (Ibid). However, the most influential ideology was Deendayal Upadhyaya's 'Integral Humanism'. This ideology has since had considerable influence on the BJP.

During the Emergency period of 1975-1977, RSS and Jana Sangh leaders and activists were arrested. Later, Indira Gandhi's Congress Party lost the general election and the Janata coalition headed by Moraji Desai won. The Janata coalition formed a slight majority in the Lok Sabha. The founders of Jana Sangh, RSS members Advani and Vajpayee, were also key members of the Janata coalition. This was the first time since just after Independence that Hindu nationalists held political power at the centre, as key members of a ruling coalition (Ibid, p.168).

In 1980, the leaders and workers of the former Jana Sangh formed the BJP, with Vajpayee as its first president. In 1982 during state elections, the BJP formed alliances with other smaller parties and stood in an anti-Congress front. Two years after the 1984 general election, Vajpayee resigned from his position as president due to the disastrous result of the Lok Sabha polls, following which Lal Krishnan Advani became BJP president in 1986. The BJP under Advani started to adopt Upadhyaya's Integral Humanism philosophy as its ideology to fortify its idea of 'cultural nationalism' from 1985. In its 1989 general election campaign, the BJP formed electoral alliances mainly with V.P. Singh's new Janata Dal party, as part of the National Front alliance created by Narasimha Rao in 1988.

In August 1990, L.K. Advani launched his *rath yatra*, a mass march through some ten northern Indian states, sparking serious communal tension and violence. His motivation was seen as relating to the mobilisation of the Hindu vote bank, since it was threatened by the problem of caste loyalties after the implementation of the Mandal report¹¹. In the *rath yatra*, Hindutva forces were trying to bring the issue of caste discrimination to the fore by integrating those outside the caste system into Hinduism. In this sense, the *yatra* could be interpreted as an anti-Mandal strategy (Bhatt, 2001, p.169, 170&171). After the initiation of the *rath yatra*, Advani was imprisoned in Bihar, leading to the fall of the V.P. Singh National Front coalition government in late 1990.

In the 1991 election campaign, the BJP began to express its 'Hindutva' manifesto, based on Savarkar's definition of Hindutva. Its slogan was 'Towards Ram Rajya' (the mythological 'Rule of Ram') (Ibid., p.172).

From the Himalayas to Kanya Kumari, this country has always been one. We have had many States, but we were always one people. We always looked upon our country as Matribhoomi, Punyabhoomi [Motherland and Holyland]. (Bharatiya Janata Party, 1991 quoted in Bhatt, 2001, p.172).

11 In September 1990, the V.P. Singh government announced about implementation of the Mandal Commission's recommendation of 27% reservation of educational seats and government jobs for OBC (backward) communities. This resulted in an 'upper' caste strong resistance and the public self-immolation of Brahmin and 'upper' caste students in the summer of 1990 (Hansen, 1999, p.164).

This 1991 BJP manifesto seems to be some kind of preparation to achieve Hindu cohesion before embarking on the destruction of the Babri Masjid in 1992. The BJP claimed that their planning of the reconstruction of the Ram temple at Ayodhya was a means of rectifying historical wrongs between Hindus and Muslims. In other words, its manifesto was intended to trigger Hindus' old wounds received during the Mughal period.

During the 1996-1998 election, the BJP reiterated its ideology of 'one nation, one people, one culture' with the addition of the ancient cultural heritage of India as 'Hindutva', as well as emphasising the civilisational superiority of the Vedic times. In addition, they tried to legitimise the Ramjanbhoomi movement as the greatest mass movement since Independence.

Hindutva is unifying principle which alone can preserve the unity and integrity of our nation. It is a collective endeavour to protect and re-energise the soul of India, to take us into the next millennium as a strong and prosperous nation...On coming to power, the BJP government will facilitate the construction of a magnificent Shri Rama Mandir at Janmasthan in Ayodhya which will be a tribute to Bharat Mata. This dream moves millions of people in our land; the concept of Rama lies at the core of their consciousness (Bharayiya Janata Party, 1996 quoted in Bhatt, 2001, 174).

Although the BJP stressed its Hindutva manifesto, it has also attempted to appeal to a non-Hindu constituency under its aim of projecting moderation and inclusivity. This dual strategy of the BJP has come about in response to the changing economic and political global environment.

However, this attempt by the BJP to address globalisation has shown up differences in the ideology of the RSS. More particularly, the RSS advocated 'economic nationalism' based on swadeshi and redistributivism, while the BJP supported 'economic globalisation' based on deregulation.

In the late 1990s, these differences became apparent following renewed attacks by the Sangh Parivar on the BJP for apparently abandoning its Hindutva agenda in the coalition government, as well as disagreements about the nature, pace and direction of 'calibrated

globalisation' (Bhatt, 2001, p.177). However, this does not mean that the BJP gave up its Hindutva cultural nationalism slogan as its philosophy. It ceaselessly stressed the view that enhancing India's ancient cultural heritage is important.

Examining the core philosophies of the BJP, first, it has succeeded from Jana Sangh's ideology of 'Integral Humanism'. 'Integral Humanism' was based on a rejection of large-scale technologies and advocated swadeshi (Indian manufacture and consumption) and small-scale industrialisation. It was similar to Gandhian thought with respect to using swadeshi and sarvodaya (welfare for all) concepts.

Secondly, the BJP has declared 'Gandhian Socialism' to be its constitutional political ideology. This theory is inspired by Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule written by Gnadhi. Its features include decentralisation of political and economic power, opposition to technology and large scale industrialisation, and emphasis on self-employment and self-reliance.

Thirdly, it has adopted 'positive secularism'. With regard to 'positive secularism', Vajpayee has stated that:

Mahatma Gandhi describes the correct attitude towards religion as 'Sarva Dharma Sambhava', equal respect to all religions. The concept of 'Sarva Dharma Sambhava' is somewhat different from European secularism which is independent of religion ... We may say that the Indian concept of secularism is that of Sarva Dharma Sambhava ... Sarva Dharma Sambhava is not against any religion. It treats all religions with equal respect. And therefore it can be said that the Indian concept of secularism is more positive (Vajpayee, quoted from Jaffrelot, 2007, p.327).

'Positive secularism' includes the view that the state should consider all India's religions as equal, implying that Hindus should not be treated any differently to minority religions (Malik and Singh, 1994, p. 62).

In conclusion, the beginning of Hindu nationalism from the 19th to the early 20th century can be seen as "Hindu Revivalism" based on Aryanism, which emerged as a form of

nationalism against British colonial rule. Through the introduction of Western Orientalism and primordialism in the late 19th century, nationalists attempted to build up a number of socio-religious movements, mainly among Hindus, in the name of uniting the nation. Accordingly, Hindu nationalists tried to rediscover the history and origins of Hindus under the influence of these two epistemologies – primordialism and Orientalism from Europe. Therefore, Hindu nationalism in this period can be seen as preparation for the construction of contemporary Hindutva.

From the 1920s, Hindu nationalism has started to intervene in politics, with Savarkar introducing the concept of 'Hindutva' amidst the political turmoil of this time in India. Savarkar's 'Hindutva' was an ideology based on Nazism and Fascism. This narrow-minded view, which involves the acceptance only of 'us', has become the fundamental idea of contemporary right wing nationalism.

The sudden rise of the military form of Hindu nationalism since the 1980s has been more apparent in the political field with the strategy of making a clear demarcation of Muslims as others or enemies. Accordingly, right wing forces have used military tactics, including training and education, to unite India under a homogenous Hindu identity. This Hindu-Muslim communal violence was most obviously sparked in the destruction of the Babri Masjid in 1992.

Based on this background of Hindu nationalism, the following chapter will analyse the psychological reasons making Hindu nationalists invoke conflict and violence towards Muslims.

Chapter II

Psychology of the Conflict between Hindus and Muslims

In colonial India, as the idea of nationalism gained ground amongst Indians in the late 19th century, the British government embarked upon a policy of divide and rule. It tried to aggravate the conflict between Hindus and Muslims by offering political rights to Muslims. Muslims formed the Muslim League to overcome their feeling of inferiority, and this in turn contributed to the rise of Hindu communalism. Eventually, the policy resulted in the Partition of India and Pakistan in 1947.

Partition most starkly exposed the hostility between Hindus and Muslims. It was the moment when the wound that Hindus had received in the Mughal era – when Muslims conquered Hindus – stood revealed.

Partition provided the opportunity to emphasise the definition of Muslims as ‘others’. Although Indian Muslims have lived in India for centuries, they are regarded by many Hindu nationalists as foreigners. This perception is derived from a fear that their real loyalties lie with Pakistan and the Middle East rather than with India (Kakar, 1995).

The purpose of this chapter is to analyse the psychological factors behind the serious communal conflicts and strong antagonism between Hindus and Muslims in India. The most prominent of these psychological factors is Chosen Trauma, a wound received by Hindus in Indian history. The depth of this wound is related to the historical background in which Hindus and Muslims were intertwined with each other. In explaining Hindu animosity towards Muslims, it is important to examine this history from the moment Hindus and Muslims met to their current collision.

The most significant wound received by Hindus in Indian history is first the period of Muslim conquest over Hindus and second the Partition of India and Pakistan in 1947.

The first part of the chapter will look into the event of the destruction of the Babri Masjid, which it will be argued took place as a result of these two historical events, through their impact as Chosen Trauma on the Hindu psyche.

The second part will discuss psychological factors that can explain what makes Hindus feel so much anger towards Muslims when the British also dominated India. It will be suggested that the answer is the 'proximity factor', which refers to the tendency to feel more threatened by and therefore also more hostile towards a nearer and larger group than towards a distant and smaller group. These feelings have been handed down the generations through education by families and relatives.

In last part of the chapter, Hindu resentment of Muslims due to the breaking of taboos such as eating beef and slaughtering cows, and from the favourable attitude of the Indian government, will be explained.

1. Chosen Trauma

History is sometimes portrayed as a memory of a wound or glory of the past, and it is sometimes used as a means for someone who belongs to that history to justify an action today. This part of the chapter will examine one of the ways in which such psychological methods have been used by Hindus to justify their actions by reigniting a historical wound or glory.

For Hindu nationalists, the Mughal era and the Partition of India and Pakistan are fundamental injuries or trauma that are a cause of ceaseless communal conflict between Hindus and Muslims. In the Hindu consciousness, these wounds were inflicted when their dream of India as a homogeneous 'Hindu rashtra' was destroyed by the invasion and partition of the country by Muslims, regarded as foreigners or others. For Hindus, Muslims are the main party to be blamed. In addition, Hindus are nervous about decreasing Hindu numbers and the possible extinction of the Hindu race.

This definition of Muslims as others or foreigners can be understood with psychoanalysis. The 'other' is constructed in the process of “the securitisation of subjectivity”, which according to Kinvall (2006, p.47) means “the search for one stable identity”, while the other turns into an abject as the unwanted parts of the self are projected onto the other. This is also a concern with Chosen Trauma, which are mental recollections of a wounded past, where historical memory becomes an important factor in a successful projection process.

Chosen Trauma can easily occur when people feel some new threat, such as globalisation or the threat of the extinction of the race. In other words, Chosen Trauma is increased in a situation of insecurity and anxiety. When people feel their identity is disturbed in a context in which the system or order is changing, abjection occurs. The abject is a key part of group formation when the familiar ‘stranger’ is suddenly recognised as a threat (Babur, 1952; Kinvall, 2006). This includes the process of securitising one’s identity by demonising the other, in which the self is sanctified. In dehumanising the other, the other is usually regarded as dirty. This construction of the self and the other will be discussed in more detail in the third chapter.

Chosen Trauma refers to the mental recollection of a tragedy in a group’s history and includes “information, fantasised expectations, intense feelings and defences against unacceptable thought” (Kinvall, 2006, p.56). The feeling of hate generated from the past wound becomes the link between the present, past and future, and this is passed down through successive generations. It is possible because a specific calamity influences the psychology of individuals as well as that of the group. According to Volkan (1997, p.36-49), large groups also mourn. This process includes building mental defences against painful and unacceptable feelings and thoughts. Humiliation becomes trauma and this Chosen Trauma is rediscovered, reinterpreted and reused, sometimes in a mythologised and intertwined form, by later generations.

To reignite Chosen Trauma means attempting to trace the lineage of a group back to a specific place, time and ancestor in order to establish an ideological heritage and to

suggest a direction for future actions. This is accomplished through the use of symbols, memories, myths and heritage, with the objective of discovering the 'original' event. Political leaders often invoke Chosen Trauma as a way of justifying their actions by reigniting ancient injuries or glories, using remodelled symbols and myths (Kinvall, 2006, p.56-59).

Both Chosen Traumas and Chosen Glories are closely related to images of the nation and religion. Traumas emerge at times when nationalism is strong, when there is a need to search for the nation since the nation is lost, such as following colonisation. In this situation, nationalists want to look for and draw images of their glorified past before colonisation, and this process is often rooted in religious discourse. Here, religion plays a powerful role in turning the abstract symbols on which religion draws into physical objects and tangible events. All religious revelations are connected to the nation – for example, religious miracles become national feasts and holy scriptures are reinterpreted as national epics. In this sense, religious and cultural rituals and ritualistic anniversaries can sustain the trauma and show the demonization of the other while sanctifying the self. In other words, by turning history into a Chosen Trauma or Chosen Glory, it becomes a 'naturalised' part of an identity group's definition of the self and the other (Ibid, p.58, 59).

The use of Chosen Trauma in relation to discourse about religion and the nation can be seen in the actions of contemporary saffron waves and the Ayodhya event. This chapter will analyse the trauma that have been chosen in Hindu consciousness from their history – the Mughal Era and the Partition of India and Pakistan – and discuss how these Chosen Trauma have become a psychological factor in provoking conflict between Hindus and Muslims.

It is argued that the demolition of the Babri Masjid resulted from the emotional wound received by Hindus based on the historical events of the Mughal era and the Partition of 1947, their Chosen Trauma.

1.1 Mughal Era

The first Chosen Trauma for Hindus is the Muslim invasion of the subcontinent from the beginning of the 8th century to the 19th century and the Indian Rebellion of 1857¹².

Broadly speaking, Muslim rule in India had six phases: (i) Arab rule in Sindh and Multan up to the 10th century; (ii) the Delhi Sultanate from Mohammed Ghori to Ibrahim Lodhi from the 11th to the 15th centuries; (iii) the Mughal empire from Babar to Jalaluddin Akbar; (iv) Jehangir to Aurangzeb from the 16th to the 17th centuries; (v) the Bahmani and other Shia Kingdoms in the South; and (vi) the post-Mughal period after Aurangzeb and the rise of Maratha, Sikh and European powers in India (Gopal, 1994, p.10).

According to Kakar (1995, p.25, 27) Hindu nationalists have tended to exaggerate the impact of ten centuries of Muslim domination. He also claims that Hindu nationalists tend to overemphasise the difference between Hindu and Muslim religious identities as well as doctrinal beliefs in India's pre-colonial past.

Indeed, Hindutva describes the Muslim invasion as a history full of wounds, because Hindus were severely exploited by Muslims and many Hindu temples were destroyed – their religion was strongly oppressed during that period. For that reason, Muslims are usually depicted as aggressive fundamentalists and regarded as having inherited the blood of their ancient dictatorial medieval rulers who demolished temples and forcibly converted Hindus to Islam (Hasan, 2005). Hindu nationalists narrate only their suffered suppression and damage in the Mughal period, without mentioning any Muslim dynasty that tried to harmonise relations between Hindus and Muslims or the golden age during the Mughal era.

20 The Indian Rebellion of 1857 emerged as a mutiny of sepoys of the British East India Company's army on 10 May 1857 in the town of Meerut, and soon developed into other mutinies and civilian rebellions, largely in the upper Gangetic plain and central India (Bandyopadhyay, 2004, pp.169-172). The rebellion is also referred as India's First War of Independence, the Great Rebellion, the Indian Mutiny, the Revolt of 1857, the Uprising of 1857, the Sepoy Rebellion, and the Sepoy Mutiny.

Similarly, there are many Hindu literary writers who describe the fate of Hindus oppressed during the Mughal era and who express concern at the harmful influence of Islam on their society by contrasting the glory of pre-medieval India with the cruel character of Muslim dynasties (Ibid., p.200). For example, Gopal Ganesh Agarkar, Gopal Hari Deshmukh, and Vishnushastri Chitambar state with one voice: “Muslims were bullies and fanatics, because violence and aggression was the essence of their civilization” (Hasan, 2005, p.200). Tilak, an extreme Hindu nationalist during the early 20th century, tried to strengthen the Maratha identity with reference to memories of Muslim repression and exploitation. His continuous effort to denounce Muslim rulers including Mahmud of Ghazna, Alauddin Khalji, Timur, Aurangzeb, and Ahmad Shah Abdali as tyrannical dynasties created a religious divide in Maharashtra society and influenced the core ideology of the Hindu Mahasabha and the RSS, which includes regarding Muslims as enemies (Bhatt, 2001; Hasan, 2005).

Hindi writers like Bharatendu Harishchandra, Pratap Narain Misra and Radha Charan Goswami expressed the same idea, portraying medieval rule as an atrocious period, referring to evidence of the rape and conquest of Hindu women, the slaughter of sacred cows, and the demolition of Hindu temples. Bharatendu even expresses their ‘wounds in the heart’, lamenting the fact that Aurangzeb’s mosque stood beside the sacred Vishwanath temple in Varanasi (Hasan, 2005, p.200). He also makes a strong comparison between the characters of Hindus and Muslims, depicting Hindus as subjugated, long-suffering, modest, and acting with courage and honour, while Muslims are shown as dominant, acting with brutality and cowardice, and intolerant (Ibid). Misra and Radha Charan also depreciate Muslim rulers with expressions such as “those mad elephants” or “those who trampled to destruction the flourishing lotus-garden of India”. They bitterly criticise Muslim brutality in slaughtering cows and show wariness about Hindu religious processions being kept under guard (Chandra, 1987, cited in Hasan, 2005,p.201).

The most well known Bengali writer, Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, is another critic of the Mughal era. His strong resentment of Muslims is clear from the following: “He was born to hate the Hindus, he found Hindu offences unpardonable” (Ibid., p.182). He

asserts that medieval India was a period of bondage and that Muslim rule failed to bring any development to India. He sees Islam as loaded with the deceptive, ridiculous, avaricious and immoral, and most of all, he thinks of it as a threat to the Hindu religion (Chatterjee, 1986, p.77). Nirad C. Chaudhuri, a member of the Bengali intelligentsia, agrees that Muslims tried to oppress the Hindu religion to spread their religion with the Quran. In addition, he reveals strong antagonism towards Muslims in his criticism of Aurangzeb's ruthlessness: "As we grew older we read about the Rajputs, the Marathas, and the Sikhs against Muslims, and of the intolerance and oppression of Aurangzeb" (N.C. Chaudhuri, 1987, p.226).

It is clear then that many Hindu writers during the late 19th century tried to create the impression amongst Indians that the Mughal era was a dark age of Muslims raping Hindu women and destroying Hindu temples and sacred places. As a result of their efforts, the Mughal era has become a "historical wound", and this trauma has had an effect in bringing about the destruction of Babri Masjid – the climax of the conflict between Hindus and Muslims.

In the contemporary age, the damage Hindus suffered during the Mughal era has become one of the saffron wave's key foundations, with the intention of justifying the demolition of the Babri Masjid.

After the destruction of the Babri Masjid, the BJP tried to legitimise their actions by highlighting the atrocities committed by Muslim rulers and indoctrinating Hindus with images of the violent invasion of the Muslims:

This historical background of the Mohamedan invasion and the provocative ocular reminders of that violent and barbaric invasion were completely ignored even after the partition of India. This neglect resulted in the failure to evolve a sound basis for Indian nationalism and durable relationships between Hindus and Muslims (BJP, 1993, quoted in Berglund, 2004, p.1069)

In the 'BJP's White Paper on Ayodhya and The Rama Temple Movement', the party also condemned Muslims with its description "Muslims are violent and barbaric" and its

characterisation of the Muslim period on the subcontinent as “...probably the bloodiest story in History”(quoted in Berglund, 2004, p.1069). In addition, it asserted that due to the advent of Islam in the subcontinent, the ancient harmony had been destroyed. It stated: “It is the invasion by fanatic religious statecraft that intervened and introduced inter-religious disharmony and hatred towards all indigenous faiths” (BJP, 1993, quoted in Davis, 2005, p.36).

In this way, the Sangh Parivar has sought to find a rationalisation for the demolition of the Babri Masjid by bringing up Babar, the founder of the Mughal dynasty. When the Sangh Parivar describes Babar, he is connected to his act of conquering iconoclasm and this action is regarded as an expression of indigenous principles in Islam, not as his personal act (Davis, 2005, p.36). As a result, Babar has become a symbol of the historical legacy of Muslim conquest and Hindus have used him to construct their antagonism towards Islam.

The ultimate purpose of the Sangh Parivar is to make a clear division of two communities in India – Hindus and Muslims – and to aggravate the relations between them. Towards this end, they contrast the golden age of the pre-Muslim period with medieval India in which there was a historical collapse as a result of the activities of Babar and the Muslim invasion. For this reason, they claim that Babar’s mosque had to be destroyed because it was the vestiges of this ancient historical wrong (Ibid, p.37).

As already discussed, Hindu nationalists from the late 19th century – the period in which Hindu nationalism began – to the contemporary saffron waves, have derogated the Mughal era as an indelible historical disgrace and memory of defeat. This effort by Hindu nationalists to make the Mughal era a historical wound for Hindus has become a Chosen Trauma and this Chosen Trauma has appeared in Hindus' dread of a “revival of medieval Muslim rule” (Kakar, 1995, p.53) and in the action of the demolition of the Babri Masjid, which is considered the physical residue of Muslim rule.

1.2 Partition

The partition of India and Pakistan in 1947 offended the Hindu mind and became one of their biggest historical trauma, since their dream of constructing one nation – a Hindu rashtra – after Independence from the British was destroyed.

India and Pakistan were created on the basis of the so-called two nation theory¹³, which came about as a result of Muslim desire to form a separate nationality and homeland with a distinct culture.

After the creation of these two new states, communal tensions and riots immediately engulfed the subcontinent. The communal violence after Partition not only killed thousands of people but also displaced many people from their homeland. This meant that many victims had to look for a new home some distance away (Raychaudhury, 2000, p.5653). Partition made their homeland hostile and this was a source of distress for them. It became an unforgettable trauma, not only for the victims who experienced severe cruelty such as physical violence, insult and sexual assault, but also for Hindus in general, who felt miserable due to the division of the Bharat Mata.¹⁴

The violence of Partition is the most shocking memory for Hindus and Muslims alike because of its scale and intensity. It has fixed the relation with a clear division between them. Undoubtedly, the partition of the nation into India and Pakistan strongly affected the Hindu consciousness.

Therefore, it cannot be denied that Partition has worked as a Chosen Trauma, which has had an impact on later riots – the destruction of the Babri Masjid and the Gujarat massacre (Kinvall, 2006, p.105).

13 The two-nation theory is the ideology that the primary identity of Indian Muslims is based on their religion, rather than their language or ethnicity, and therefore Indian Hindus and Muslims identity are separated-two distinct nationalities- regardless of ethnic or other commonalities (Winks W. Robin, Low M. Elaine M ,2001).

14 “Bharat Mata” (explained in Chapter III).

In fact, deeply rooted emotional trauma created by the division of India and Pakistan has given momentum to the development of stereotypes of the Indian Muslim as foreign and alien to India for Hindus. Van der Veer (1994) states that the 1947 Partition brought about the cognition among Hindu nationalists of the construction of the Muslim as other – not truly Indian – and gave this construction a strongly realistic aspect (Van der Veer, 1994, p.10).

This strong perception of Indian Muslims as others has even created hostility towards the Middle East, because Hindu nationalists believe that Pakistan has been Islamicized and the heartland of Muslims is the Middle East – not South Asia. The following Hindu narrative shows this Hindu fear:

The Muslims have weakened the Hindus because they have damaged a lot of temples. This happened already during the Moghuls...The construction of Pakistan destroyed India and now we are threatened by both the Middle East and the West. Only a stronger India can save us (interview of a Hindu male, quoted in Kinvall, 2006, p.161).

For this reason, when contemporary Hindu nationalists emphasise the role of the Muslim minority, they often bring up the trauma of Partition. Hindus force Indian Muslims to devote their loyalty towards India:

When the country was partitioned what did the Muslims say?...It was for them to decide at that time whether they wanted to live here, peacefully with Hindus or they wanted to go to Pakistan. If they have decided to live here they must respect the sentiments of the Hindus (quoted in Berglund, 2004, p.1069).

If we analyse the Chosen Trauma of Partition with reference to the Hindu psyche, it is related to Indian mythology because Indian mythology cannot be easily distinguished from the Hindu religion. Hindu feelings about Partition should be understood in this context. In their mind, it was not regarded simply as a division between the Muslim majority areas and Hindu majority areas, but as a ripping apart of Mother India. This perception was a spiritual and emotional shock to the Hindu consciousness and hence Partition remained an unforgivable and unforgettable humiliation for Hindus (Puri, 1993, p.2145).

The traumatic experience of Partition encouraged the rise of a potent feeling of distrust of each other as well as severe communal conflict between Hindus and Muslims thereafter. Needless to say, it has become a significant event in India, leading to a series of riots and hostilities involving Muslims (Puri, 1993; Van der Veer, 1994).

1.3 Result (Destruction of the Babri Masjid : Ayodhya Event)

The destruction of the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya is significant in the contemporary history of India for its social, political and religious aspects. This event can be said to have been the starting point of the rise of the communal Hindutva movement. It generated considerable social agitation, political trouble and public dispute in the subcontinent.

It was intended as retaliation for historical 'humiliations'. The Ram janmabhoomi movement aimed to reinforce the stature of Ram as a god, prophet, and national hero and of Ayodhya as a Hindu religious centre (Puri, 1993, p.2146). In addition, their message to the public was that the site of the Babri Masjid belonged to Hindus, so Hindus had the right to take it over from Muslims (Berglund, 2004, p.1067). Hindu nationalists tried to provoke an emotional reaction and aimed to mobilise feelings of solidarity among Hindus.

The Ramjanbhoomi movement had been in existence for several years. In April 1984, the VHP summoned Hindu religious figures to plan the liberation of three temple sites in north India – at Mathura, Varanasi and Ayodhya.

In 1990, BJP president L. K. Advani suggested a *rath yatra* to garner support for building a Ram temple in Ayodhya. The procession with Rama's chariot began in Somnath, on the Gujarat coast in western India on September 25, and covered some ten thousand kilometres across eight states over the next 35 days, reaching Ayodhya on October 30. On the way, the procession encountered considerable agitation and Advani and other leaders were arrested by the chief minister of Bihar on October 23. On October 30, a Hindu militia under the leadership of the VHP broke into the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya and caused some damage. On November 7, the BJP withdrew its support for the coalition

government led by the National Front and headed by Prime Minister V.P. Singh, which resulted in the fall of the government. With the success of Advani's *rath yatra*, the BJP became the main opposition party to the declining Congress and eventually came to power in Uttar Pradesh.

The final demolition of the Babri Masjid occurred two years later. It is from this time that communal riots began in earnest.

When the saffron wave planned to destroy this site and called for its return from Muslims, their actions were based on three primary beliefs. First, the god Rama was actually and physically born at that exact place. Secondly, an ancient Hindu temple marking Rama's birthplace formerly stood on the site. Thirdly, the Mughal conqueror Babar destroyed the temple in the early 16th century and constructed a mosque on the ruins (Davis, 2005, p.34).

These reinterpreted and uncertain myths and memories have become Chosen Trauma and have reinforced the perception of Muslims.

More particularly, for Hindu nationalists, the presence of the Babri Masjid was a reminder of the violence and intolerance of Muslims, their celebration of the Muslim conquest of Hindus, and the oppression and disunity of Hindus, all of which was ancient history that Hindu nationalists wanted to erase. This thinking of the Sangh Parivar was also expressed by the BJP, which described the Babri Masjid as follows: "purely and simply a symbol not of devotion and of religion but of conquest" (Berglund, 2004, p.1068).

This Hindu anger at Muslims is also visible in two publications that aimed to justify the destruction of Babri Masjid: the book *Ayodhya Guide* and the pamphlet *Angry Hindu! Yes, Why Not?*

Yes, certainly I am angry. And I have every reason to be angry. And it is also right for me to be so. Otherwise I would be no man. Yes for too long I have

suffered insults in silence. Until now I have been at the receiving end....My people have been kidnapped by the enemies. My numbers have dwindled...my goddess-like motherland has been torn asunder... My traditional rights have been snatched away from me (quoted in Nandy et al., 1995, 54).

Each step taken by the Ram janmabhoomi movement had symbolic value, taken not only with the intention of taking revenge for the humiliation of Hindus at the hands of foreign invaders but also to awaken a historical trauma.

Looking more closely at the *rath yatra*, the choice of Somnath as the starting point for the procession had meaning since it was also related to the Chosen Trauma of the Mughal period. It was the site of the most famous event of Muslim temple destruction in India by Muhmud of Ghazna in 1026. Somnath was understandably a target for the VHP (Davis, 2005, p.43).

The erection of the Rama temple also had symbolic meaning for Hindu nationalists. According to Kakar (1995), “The Rama temple is a response to the mourning of Hindu society: a mourning for lost honor, lost self-esteem, lost civilization, lost Hinduness”. More particularly, the Rama temple was an object for the projection of individual and group experiences of mourning. Historical places are often turned into sacred and national sites and serve as Chosen Trauma (Kinvall, 2006, p.59). Relating monuments and history is to some extent a natural instinct, according to Peter Homans (Kakar, 1995, p.202).

Engage the immediate conscious experience of an aggregate of egos by representing and mediating to them the lost cultural experiences of the past; the experiences of individuals, groups, their ideas and ideals, which coalesce into what can be called a collective memory. In this the monument is a symbol of union because it brings together the particular psychological circumstances of many individual’s life courses and the universals of their otherwise lost historical past within the context of their current or contemporary social processes and structures (quoted in Kakar, 1995, 202).

As already mentioned, Chosen Trauma denotes “an event which causes a community to feel helpless and victimised by another and whose mental representation becomes

embedded in the group's collective identity" (Kakar, 1995, p. 63). In India, Chosen Trauma is the result of the anger and hate Hindus feel towards their Muslim enemy or other.

In the formation of this Chosen Trauma, the construction of Muslims as others and alien is necessary. Prejudice is used as a means of differentiating one group from the other in order to maintain group identity.¹⁵ Dehumanisation also takes place, so that the enemy is gradually dehumanised over time (Kinvall, 2006, p.55). The tendency of Hindu nationalists to brand Muslims as dirty vermin, with reference to features such as facial hair and clothing type, or as aggressive sexualised beings, is related to this process of dehumanisation. Traits are sometimes exaggerated to connect unrelated habits like cow slaughter, crime, drugs and terrorism.

This construction of dehumanisation is accomplished through 'mythic discourse', as shown with the destruction of the Babri Masjid. The grounds on which Hindu nationalists justify their action of destroying the mosque are that they believe the Islamic ruler Babur destroyed a Ram temple and built a mosque on its ruins, based on the Indian mythology of Ram. This 'mythic discourse' can be seen as a strategy to unify a pan-Indian homogeneous identity in India by connecting the Hindutva version of Hinduism to Indian history and Indian national identity (Ibid., p.147). In addition, Hindu nationalists have used this mythic discourse to account for Partition as well as Muslim atrocities in the Mughal era.

Hindutva in the Ram janmabhoomi movement used a manipulated trauma of the past – their victimisation at the hands of Muslim conquerors and the partition of the country – with the objective of strengthening Hindu cohesiveness. After instigating the Ayodhya event, Hindu nationalists justified their communal violence, connecting their glorified and romanticised version of India's past with the elimination of Muslim history in India to the present.

¹⁵ This theory will be explained in Chapter IV in detail.

As has been shown, Chosen Trauma is the main psychological explanation for Hindu enmity towards Muslims. The collected memories of the Muslim conquest and the division of the country that was expected to unite after Independence are historical injuries in the Hindu mind and have become indelible trauma for them. Ultimately, these trauma caused the Ayodhya event, which was the culmination of the Hindu-Muslim conflict.

2. Proximity Factor

In fact, it was a policy of the British government that resulted in Partition and the creation of India and Pakistan, as has already been mentioned. British colonial rule also resulted in an increase in Christianity in the subcontinent. Why is Hindu animosity towards Muslims or Islam stronger than towards the British and Christianity? This part of the chapter analyses the psychological factors behind this curious eventuality.

Examining the difference in Hindu perception of the British colonial period and the medieval period of Mughal rule, it is clear that the former is regarded as relatively gentle, civilised and moral in character, while the latter is depicted as brutal, barbarous and ruthlessly oppressive of Hindus (Bhatt, 2001, p. 53).

Kakar agrees with this conclusion. In his opinion, the reason is that religion is a more important issue than political subjugation or economic exploitation in determining the reaction of Hindus (Kakar, 1995). In this way, the wound received by Hindus in the period of the Mughal Empire is deeper than that of the British period because Hindus think that the Hindu religious identity was more severely subjugated by Muslims as compared to the British.

Where has this difference come from? Kakar (1995, p. 28) suggests that proximity is the cause of “occasional simmering resentment and nagging friction” between Hindus and Muslims. The British remained strangers, while Muslims became others owing to their geographical position.

There is a related theory in the psychology of nationalism – inter-group hostility tends to be stronger with larger, nearer, and more powerful outgroups than with smaller, more distant and weaker ones (Rosenblatt, 1964, p.135). In the same way, nationalist or ethnocentric hostility more easily occurs in groups that are frequently encountered – near neighbours living within the group's territory – than in rarely encountered groups. Neighbouring groups are more likely to block goal responses than non-neighbouring groups (Ibid, p.138).

This theory is analysed in more detail by Freud. He says that the proximity factor determines the nature of emotional relations between men in general. He supports this idea with reference to Schopenhauer's famous simile of the freezing porcupine, which indicates that no one can tolerate too intimate an approach to his neighbour (Freud, 1960, p.33).

Neighbours always feel rivalry towards each other. Two families connected by a marriage or two neighbouring towns or countries often think themselves superior and the other inferior and their main rival. South and North Germans, the English and the Scots, Spaniards and Portuguese are good examples of this tendency for neighbours to feel hostility and contempt for each other (Ibid)

Dollard explains that when an in-group searches for the object of hostility of an out-group, that group will become the "favourite" out-group and the source of the most frustration. This will most likely be an adjacent group. In Campbell and Levine's study of intergroup relations (1961) correlated with ethnocentrism, they also mention intergroup hostility and stereotypes related to proximity. When the dominant group selects scapegoats, there is a high probability of targeting the group towards which the most guilt is felt and needs repressing. They say that this would probably be the most oppressed subordinate group, or the most infringed-against territorial neighbour – in other words, most likely an adjacent group.

This proximity theory can explain the relationship between Hindus and Muslims.

Moreover, due to strong family and kinship ties amongst Hindus, enmity felt by parents becomes a heritage that is handed down from the period of infancy and childhood (Kakar, 1995, p.39).

Such handed down Hindu antagonism toward Muslims is shown in Kakar's book, *The Color of Violence*. In this book, he shows his age-old feeling of strangeness towards Muslims in narratives such as the following: "I became aware that within myself 'the Muslim' was still somewhat of a stranger."

In this way, the hostility between Hindus and Muslims is constructed over a long period, being transmitted in teaching from parents, relatives and schools. As Campbell and LeVine explain, when in-groups want to present a bad-example of groups to children, the most effectively usable example in teaching can be a tangible, nearby group of customs (Campbell and Levine, 1961, p.94). This is because we can find and experience easily and immediately the bad or infringed aspects of adjacent groups.

The negative things in ourselves that we find in the other's character and that adjacent groups have are projected onto the other and then handed down to the next generation and transformed into an exaggerated rumour thanks to its rapid spread.

Proximity is one of the factors aggravating Hindu hostility towards Muslims, since this is in the nature of emotions between individuals as well as groups.

3. Other factors

The factors invoking conflict between Hindu and Muslims include various other factors like

3.1 Muslim Assault on Hindu Idols

The cow has often been the factors of stirring up communal violence in the modern era in India (Korom, 2000, p.189). Hindus are sensitive to the theme of the cow because it is

deeply embedded in the Hindu psyche. The cow has long been a symbol that deifies faith and belief in Hindu practice, and it has thereby become one of the most well-represented idols of the Hindu religion.

The symbolic importance of the cow in India can be traced back to the Vedic period. In a Vedic creation myth, cows are related to water, which is considered to be sacred and purifying. In other words, water has a holy image and the cow takes on this holiness. The depiction of the cow during this period is that she was identified with whole of the universe. This relationship between the cow and the universe is referred to many times in the *Rigveda* as well (Jacobi, 1914, quoted in Korom, 2000, p.187). In addition, the cow was seen as complete and self-contained in the *Atharvaveda* (Korom, 2000, p.187). Therefore, the cow also represented perfection for Hindus (Ibid., p.192). Due to her pure and sacred image, cows were offered as oblations for Vedic sacrifice. In particular, the five products of the cow (i.e., milk, curd, clarified butter, urine and dung) were used as the purest substances available for ritual. With these images, it is clear that the tendency for cows to be revered as deities or inhabited by deities started to emerge a long time ago (Korom, 2000, p. 187, 192; Van der Veer, 1994, p.88).

However, the cow was still being eaten. The idea that harming or slaughtering a cow should be considered a crime arose only in the fifth century BCE – the period of the emergence of Buddhism and Jainism – because of the notion of *ahimsa* (Korom, 2000, p.188).¹⁶

From 1880 to 1920 during the colonial period, the Hindu Cow Protection Movement grew up because there was a need to use the sacred image of the cow to unite the community. Right wing Hindu nationalists highlighted the importance of the cow, depicting Muslims as barbaric and dirty due to their consumption of beef.

16 Ahimsa is a term meaning to do no harm, non harming or nonviolence http://www.sanskrit.org/www/Hindu%20Primer/nonharming_ahimsa.html (accessed on 24th July, 2012). Ahimsa means kindness and non-violence towards all living things including animals. It became an basis of important tenet of Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism. Mohandas Gandhi strongly emphasized on this principle http://news.blaze.com/story/20071014111738_kuma.nb/topstory.html, (accessed on 24th July, 2012)

A publication of the VHP emphasises the importance of the cow, not only from the religious point of view as an object of worship and a symbol of Mother India but also from a practical point of view as a useful tool in agriculture and nutrition, thus promoting the cow as a means of developing the country (Hansen, 1999, p.104). Such efforts on the part of the VHP to promote the cow can also be seen in their tribal missionary activities. By teaching the usefulness of cow products such as milk and dung, they want to convince tribals to start to have faith. This missionary activity can be seen as a kind of cultural narcissism (Ibid).

Cows are a taboo in the Hindu psyche, registering on an emotional level. Because of its universality, taboo belongs to a deep level of the psyche and it can take many forms (O'Doherty, 1960, p.131). For example, there is a taboo on certain foods. According to Fortes (1966), the taboo on eating the totem animal is fundamental and is commonly presented in all the literature of the area. Therefore, a taboo on certain foods and related myths has come down through the generations. The ban on eating often functions as a daily reminder of identity with respect to other individuals and to society in general (Ibid).

In this respect, the Muslim habit of eating beef and slaughtering cows could be one of the most crucial factors in Hindu resentment of Muslims. According to Kakar (1995), Muslim beef eating and Hindu repulsion of the practice creates a prominent barrier between the two communities. Hindus cannot share a meal with Muslims and consider their eating habits disgusting, making it difficult for them to be close to each other. Due to their strong aversion towards eating forbidden and tabooed foods, Hindus make an image of Muslims as animals, with characteristics including ferocity, uncontrolled sexuality and a dirtiness by inner pollution.

In 1924, the British army psychiatrist Owen Berkeley-Hill explained two main factors behind the Hindu-Muslim conflict. The first was the 'motherland complex' of Hindus, referring to the rape of the motherland – Bharat Mata – during the Muslim conquest of India. The second obstacle he mentioned was the Muslim slaughter of cows. According to Berkeley, the acts of Muslims violate Hindu taboo; cow slaughter is understood as

showing off Muslim victories, and it could be a major factor behind Hindu hatred of Muslims (Ibid, p.140). In other words, Hindu anger is derived basically from this Muslim assault on their lifestyle and on their idols (Ibid, p.27).

This Hindu disgust at Muslim eating of beef is shown in many Hindus narratives. For Pardis, beef eating is the most grave sin – over and above marriage to a Muslim or conversion to Islam (Kakar, 1995, p.139). In Pardis' interview:

Bada gosht (beef) is their favorite dish. If any of us even touches it he must have a bath. All Muslims eat bada ghost. That is why we keep ourselves away from them. We do not even drink water in their homes (quoted in Kakar, 1995, p.139).

In fact, from the 19th century, there has been a ceaseless effort against cow slaughter in the Hindu nationalist movement. Similarly, during the Ramjanmabhoomi movement, the following slogan was written on the wall: 'It is the religious duty of every Hindu to kill those who kill cows' (Nandy et al., 1995, p.53). Whenever Hindus face a crisis, they recall the importance of the close relationship between Hindus and the cow and thereby increase the feeling of fury in Hindu emotions regarding Muslim eating of beef and slaughtering of cows.

However, Hindus do not feel as much hostility towards Christians – who also kill cows – as towards Muslims. This is because they do not think Christians kill cows with the intention of insulting Hindus (Kakar, 1995, p.141). This shows Hindus' hatred of and bias against Muslims has been deep-seated for a long time in their intertwined history.

3.2 The Government's Attitude Towards Muslim

The Government's pro-Muslim attitude also increases Hindu anxiety and indignation because it makes Hindus feel left out in their homeland.

In April 1985, an important judgement by the Supreme Court of India – the so-called Shah Bano case – gave Hindus a shock. It resulted in social reverberations and sectarian debate on the position of the Muslim minority in Indian society.

The story began with a Muslim woman Begum Shah Bano who had been divorced by her husband in 1975 after 43 years of marriage. She filed a suit claiming her right to maintenance under Section 125 of the Criminal Procedure Code, which applies to all communities regardless of their separate personal laws. The case was finally decided by the Supreme Court in April 1985 in favour of Begum Shah Bano. This Supreme Court judgement triggered a country-wide reaction and also questioned the legal practice which allows separate civil laws for the various religious communities and argued for a uniform civil code (Berglund, 2004, p.1067). In fact, there have been few issues on which Indian Muslims have reacted so strongly since Independence (Hasan, 1989, p.44). There were strong protests by the Muslim community in support of Muslim civil laws, especially by the religious leadership. Many sections of Muslim society, including Jamait-ul-Ulema-i-Hind, the Jamait-e-Islami and the Muslim League, condemned the judgement and formed a movement in the name of interference in Muslim Personal Law. Their basic argument was that no legislative or executive authority could alter Muslim Personal Law because it was based on the Shariah, which is divine and immutable. By referring to the Shariah as a central symbol, they intended to preserve Muslim identity and make an idiom for integration (Ibid, p.44, 45). Through this movement, Muslim aimed to protect their identity and minority position. In fact, the Muslim demand for restoring Muslim Personal Law was a moment that showed their ability to maintain solidarity in the community. For this reason, Hindus could not help feeling threatened, observing Muslims' immediate group cohesion.

At the same time, Hindu nationalists acclaimed the Supreme Court's decision and fiercely criticised the Rajiv Gandhi government when it nullified the verdict by introducing The Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act 1986, which upheld Muslim Personal Law.

This intervention by the Indian government was based on the assumption that the majority of Muslims were unhappy with the judgement made by the Supreme Court, considering it to be a threat to their religious identity. This effort to appease Muslim indignation was made under the ideology of secularism, which intends to protect all religions (Ibid, p.47, 48).

It provoked strong resistance among Hindus. Hindus condemned the Government's decision, describing it as "abject surrender to Muslim fundamentalism"(Puri, 1993, p.2146). Most of the backlash was led by the BJP. The BJP attempted to mobilise Hindu sentiment by arguing that the Shah Bano episode would reopen Muslims reservations about joining the mainstream in India and by saying that the Government's policy demonstrated partiality for the appeasement of Muslims (Ibid.).

The party argued that its demands were not related to its anti-Muslim propensity, but that they were based on the need for the principle of equal treatment. However, its argument just presented the intolerant attitude of Hindus – who cannot accept minorities – and the Hindu nationalist ideal of cultural nationalism (Berglund, 2004, p.1067).

This Hindu sentiment in the Shah Bano case was also seen in interviews of Hindus. They expressed this “unfair treatment” as “behaving like a stepmother toward the other” (Kakar, 1995, p.136). According to Kakar, the bitter complaints of Hindus about the Government are connected to the psychology of “collective sibling rivalry, of the group-child's envy and anger at the favoring of an ambivalently regarded sibling by the parent” (Ibid., p.137).

The threat felt by Hindus also included the fear of fast growing Muslim power in the subcontinent. Hindus felt it was unfair because Muslims were favoured and supported by the state in India as well as in Pakistan. In other words, the growing assertion of Muslims within the country and the Islamic resurrection in the Muslim world increased Hindu resentment in their consciousness (Puri, 1993, p.2146).

Therefore, the Shah Bano case strengthened Hindu determination to continue Hindu-Muslim riots so long as the Government continues to mollify Muslims and makes rules against the Hindu majority.

In conclusion, this chapter has looked into the causes of the conflict between Hindus and Muslims by analysing the reasons behind the strong Hindu hostility towards Muslims.

The most prominent psychological factor is Chosen Trauma. Hindu nationalists have constantly talked about how they were hurt in the Mughal era referring to how many people were killed by Muslims and how they indiscriminately destroyed Hindu temples. In addition, it has also been argued that their wound derived from their idea that Bharat Mata was ripped up by Partition in 1947. They have argued that Partition was unfair to Hindus, saying “we gave Pakistan to Muslims, but the remainder is for us” (Ko et al., 2006).

These historical wounds have become Chosen Trauma and this has been one of the crucial factors in bringing about constant communal violence, which reached its peak with the demolition of the Babri Masjid. The correlation between the destruction of the Babri Masjid and the trauma of the past was well presented in Hindu use of historical myth and symbols.

They legitimised their action and strengthened Hindu group cohesion in the Ramjanabhoomi movement and the construction of the Rama temple, depicting Muslims as barbaric foreigners and others, as well as despising the past of Muslims. In this process, historical places have been turned into holy and mythologised venues, and these myths have been romanticised and a fabricated past has become truth.

The use of historical trauma has not just ended in lamentation or grief for the old days, but has instead become a means of enhancing their political position. The Ayodhya event, which was the climax of the conflict between Hindus and Muslims, broke out as a result of this situation.

However, it is not only Muslims who are alien to Hindus. India was ruled by the British and actually Partition of India and Pakistan occurred under the influence of British colonial policy. So why do Hindus have the most serious antagonism toward Muslims and Islam, not towards Christians and the British?

It is suggested that the proximity factor provides an answer to this question from the psychological perspective. In the psychology of nationalism, nearer and larger groups are more threatening than more distant and smaller groups in intergroup relations. Applying this argument to the relationship between Hindus and others, it would be expected that Hindus would feel more threatened by Muslims and Islam than by Christianity and the British because geographically Muslims live closer than the British and they have interacted closely with Hindus for a much longer time. In this way, the existence of Muslims in the homeland is the biggest intimidatory factor for Hindus because it is easier to counter the influence or bad aspects of Muslim.

Hindu consideration of Muslims as iconoclast because of their habit of eating beef and killing cows and the Indian government's pro-Muslim attitude were offered as additional factors provoking Hindu enmity. This psychology created by particular historical events as described above means that Hindus cannot help being more hostile towards Muslims than towards others. Undoubtedly this hostility has been main culprit in evoking serious communal violence between the two communities.

The question then is what psychology Hindus use for mobilising their group appeal and achieving their goal – to defeat Muslims – in the militarised communal conflict between them that has been going on since the 1980s? The next chapter will examine how Hindus defend and secure their identity in the globalised context.

Chapter III

Using Psychology to Enhance Hindu Group Identity in the Context of Modernisation and Globalisation

Personality changes with the onset of modernisation and globalisation, especially with regard to the security of identity and identity formation, since globalisation and modernisation can be menacing forces for individuals – they may feel previously inexperienced threats in this new environment.

According to Barker (1999, p.35), modernity is ‘an uncontrollable engine of enormous power that sweeps away all that stands before it’. With regard to characteristics in the changed situation between the pre-modern and modern, Vanaik (1997) questions the relationship between communalism and modernity. We may find an answer in the construction of contemporary Hindu nationalism. Kakar (1995) claims that the current religious revivalism or fundamentalism in India is a phenomenon that results from a reaction against modernity. During the modernisation process, many people feel new emotions while adjusting to the new environment. Among these new emotions, the feeling of loss is the most common. Individuals can easily experience the feeling of loss because modernisation eliminates old attachments as a result of population movements including continuous migration and wipes out traditional identities.

Globalisation also contributes to making people feel the emotion of alienation. As society changes rapidly and the boundaries of territories become vague, people want to secure their identity to get rid of existential anxiety about global forces. Modernisation and globalisation give rise to feelings of insecurity and people try to overcome such feelings of insecurity by searching for new secure identities (Kinvall, 2006).

The sudden rise of Hindu nationalism since the 1980s is also related to the influence of globalisation and modernisation. With the maelstrom of domestic politics resulting from

the misuse of ethnic and religious identities in party politics, Hindu nationalism has tried to firmly establish Hindu identity in the context of globalisation and modernisation. In other words, the socio-psychological change processes of individuals and groups as a consequence of modernisation and globalisation are closely related to the reason for mobilising and creating a new Hindu identity. Therefore, we can say that the emergence of forceful and militant Hindu nationalism is one way of strengthening the security of their identity in a rapidly changing world.

From the perspective of nationalism, the more a group's members share – such as language, religion and common historical origin – the greater is the nationalism of the group. Also, the greater the group nationalism: 1) the greater is the group homogeneity of attitudes, beliefs and ways of behaving; 2) the greater is the group cohesiveness; and 3) the greater are the pressures for homogeneity and cohesiveness (Rosenblatt, 1964, p.137, 140).

In accordance with this general theory about nationalism and group cohesiveness, Hindu nationalists in the context of globalisation since the 1980s have attempted to firm up their identity to increase group cohesiveness – dreams of creating a homogeneous India as a Hindu nation – using various psychological strategies. The most important of these strategies is the clear demarcation between the self and the other by abjection of the other, which will be discussed in the first part of this chapter. Deepened Hindu hostility towards Muslims as a result of Chosen Trauma is sharpened as a result of the boundary between the Hindu-self and the Muslim-other. The definite distinction between the self and the other is a natural process in the formation of individual and group identity. Hindu nationalists use this psychology to assert their group identity.

The second part will consider Hindu nationalists' strategy of emphasising group superiority and group loyalty to increase self-esteem, by inculcating prejudice and implanting bad images of the other in the process of drawing a distinction between the self and the other.

Finally, we will examine the Sangh Parivar's method of mobilising Hindu group solidarity through the reinterpretation of history and myth, and through the mythical and historical invention of symbols, as expressed in events related to the destruction of the Babri Masjid – in which they drastically showed their homogeneous ideology of cultural nationalism.

In this way, this chapter aims to look into how Hindu nationalists protect their identity from the new threat of globalisation, with reference to the historical events we have already dealt with in the previous chapter, especially in terms of their psychological strategies such as the abjection of the other and the manipulation of history.

1. Clear Boundary between “Us” and “Other”

Category formation in the construction of identity is a natural instinct for all human beings. Examining the process of the construction of the self and the other in detail, firstly, the individual accepts and creates the self by defining himself or herself in relation to others, perceiving similarities and differences between the self and the other. This process of division between the self and the other in the individual is also adopted and proceeds to the production of group formation (Kinvall, 2002, 2006).

This psychology of category formation to resist the other is also used by Hindu nationalists in strengthening group identity in the context of globalisation. Many narratives and propaganda works prove their intention to clearly divide the Hindu-self and the Muslim-other.

According to Tajfel's (1981) social identity theory, individuals tend to favour their own group (in-group) in relation to other groups (out-group) because groups offer their members self-esteem by giving group members a sense of belonging. For that reason, group members try to elevate the status of the in-group in relation to the out-group. In this way, the group in relation to the other and the role the other plays in its discourse is important for group existence (Hogg and Abrams, 1988; Kinvall, 2006, Tajfel and Turner, 1979).

As has already been mentioned, the formation of the other is an innate process for human beings and group members inherently tend to classify groups as in-groups and out-groups through learning from their birth and early experience. Individuals move from self to other-orientation over time, meaning that individuals are socialised. In this regard, Ross (1991, p.177) states that "sociality promotes ethnocentric conflict, furnishing the critical building block for in-group amity and out-group hostility."

In this process, what the self experiences as negative and unfavourable is projected onto the other and this makes the image of the other dehumanised, strange, alien and externalised from us. It means that the stranger or the foreigner is commonly perceived as negative. George Simmel (1971), refers to the stranger as the sociologically marginal (cited in Kinvall, 2006, p. 44)

Like Simmel, Oommen (1994), (as cited by Kinvall, 2006, p.46) also refers to the foreigner and the stranger, classifying others in four categories. The first is 'the equal other', who is different but not subservient to the self. The second category is 'the internal other', which refers to marginalised groups such as women or certain established immigrants. The third group consists of 'unacceptable' societal groups like homosexuals or particular religious groups. Finally, 'the outsider, the non-equal other' constitutes the fourth category, which may include non-established immigrants or religious groups of foreign origin. The last category is considered to be essentially different from the other three categories because the members of the other three categories are likely to exist within the system, while members of the last are not.

It seems as though this fundamental prejudice against the foreigner and the stranger stems from differences in religion and culture. This prejudice, derived from differences in cognition, mostly brings about xenophobia, ethnocentrism, anti-semitism and racism, even more so when one group holds more power and resources and uses 'differences' to control and marginalise others (Ibid, p.47).

From the 1920s, which is the period of the emergence of the Hindutva ideology and the creation of the Sangh Parivar, this stigmatisation of the other has been a key means of mobilising Hindu identity and group power. Hindu militants including the VHP and the RSS have taken the lead in generating strong feelings of hostility towards the ‘threatening other’ as well as in stigmatising it (Jafflerot, 1999, p.201).

Speeches of BJP members during the *rath yatra* also demonstrate the clear boundary between Hindus and Muslims, referencing hostility derived from the historical past:

“Are you children of Babar or Ram, Akbar or Rana Pratap, Auranzeb or Shivaji? Those who do not answer this question properly have no right to be in this country”. (Padmanabhan and Sidhva, 1990, Quoted in Davis, 2005, p.37).

Although over 90 percent of Indian Muslims are in fact descendants of indigenous converts, we can see from the above that Hindu nationalists try to totally exclude Muslims from national citizenship (Ludden, 2005, p.37). On further examination, it is clear that this Hindu clear-cut demarcation of the Muslim as the other is influenced by families and by their own group from childhood while accumulating the in-group’s ‘emotional investment’ in bad images of Muslims (Kakar, 1995, p.54).

The construction of the other is becoming more necessary in the context of globalisation because people feel their identity is under greater threat. In these new circumstances, abjection becomes the main process in collective identity formation because when the familiar stranger is suddenly recognised as a threat, it occurs more easily (Kinvall, 2006, p.78). The process of ‘othering’ is essential to feel security and protection in times of rapid change such as globalisation. Nationalism and religion help in the process by debasing the other (Ibid). Furthermore, “nationalism and religion both provide the idea of a ‘home’, it is easy to give protection and security from the stranger and the abject-other” (Kinvall, 2006, p.79). Therefore, nationalism and religion become more powerful in times of crisis by providing unity, security and a sense of belonging and thereby arouse deep attachments towards religious and national identity (Ibid, p.79).

In this sense, the emergence of militant Hindu nationalism since the 1980s can be seen as the result of strengthening Hindu solidarity to cope with threat of globalisation. In this process, Hindu extremists have accused those who are not included in the Hindu family – especially Muslims – of being foreigners and not of Indian origin, as well as projecting their unwanted features onto them. Ultimately, they have tried to construct a majoritarian religious nationalism, which is always defined in negative terms, by stressing only ‘Hindu’ identity as a trump card identity and ignoring other identity construction (Ibid., p.105). Such a pursuit of Hindu majoritarianism is accomplished through the clear demarcation of the self and the demonised other.

Summing up, as was discussed in the first chapter, Hindu nationalists started drawing clear boundaries with Muslims from the 1920s when the ideology of Hindutva was created by Savarkar. The perception of the Muslim as the other and a stranger has been developed since they feel intimidated by Muslims as a result of the trauma of the Mughal conquest and the Partition of India and Pakistan. This is based on the theory that the othering process in the formation of individual and group identity is more present in moments of crisis. Accordingly, Hindu nationalists have fixed stronger boundaries between the Hindu-self and the Muslim-other since the 1980s as threats to both society and politics have emerged due to domestic and international changes, including globalisation and modernisation.

This clear boundary between Hindus and Muslims was a useful psychological strategy during the destruction of the Babri Masjid, which represents the climax of the conflict between Hindus and Muslims. They intensified fear and hatred towards Muslims by dredging up trauma from the Mughal Empire in addresses during the procession to Ayodhya and presented savagery and brutality as traits of Muslims as well as of Islam itself, in particular criticising Muslim consumption of beef. This Hindu nationalist demonisation of Muslims is associated with the theory that when group leaders want to increase group nationalism, they often exploit fear or hatred of out-groups.

In this way, the demarcation of the self and the other by ceaselessly comparing tolerant Hindus and intolerant, barbarous Muslims has been the most effective psychological strategy in strengthening Hindu group cohesion in Hindu nationalism in the rapid changes of the globalisation context.

2. Intense Group Loyalty and Group Superiority

Group narcissisms, a feeling of civilisational superiority and the different religious faiths have also contributed to amplifying the quarrel between Hindus and Muslims. Hindus are anxious that Muslim loyalty is to Islam rather than the Indian state, as we can assume from its slogans “Babar ki santan, jao Pakistan (children of Babar, go to Pakistan)”. The rise of Muslim power in the subcontinent makes Hindu nationalists fear for their status, so they have attempted to intensify Hindu group loyalty and build themselves up.

The Sangh Parivar is an example of the attempt to create a vision of the “grandiose self” of Hindu culture and spirit, while degrading that of Muslims. The saffron flag and saffron colour are regarded as the symbols of the Hindu nationalist movement and also means of expressing their superiority by marking Hindu areas and also putting them on Muslim tombs and mosques. They have shown their veneration of the flag in religious rituals and processions, considering it a symbol of ideological integration (Hansen, 1999, p.108).

Such group superiority and group loyalty arises from feelings of attachment towards the group. These feelings are important psychological constituents in the construction of nationalism because they strengthen the sense of belonging and thereby increase group superiority and loyalty (Druckman, 1994.; Brock & Atkinson, 2008).

For this reason, group leaders desire to increase the nationalism of the group and share more in-group members to enhance attachment to the group. One Hindu nationalist strategy is also associated with this theory – their promotion of Sanskrit as a national symbol. Since language is one of the most important factors in delimiting a national or ethnic group (Rosenblatt, p.137; Freud, 1960, p.65), they have used Sanskrit as a tool to demarcate Hindus and Muslims as well as a symbol of unity and devotion. The prayers of the RSS *shakhas* are performed in Sanskrit and they consistently stress the significance of “harmony, culture, *dharma*, self-perfection through selfless service to society”. In the colloquial style of the RSS, they express affection for the nation and the Hindu group

using words like “devotion”, “love”, “attachment”, “commitment”, and “service” (Hansen, 1999, p.109).

It seems as though this Hindu nationalist strategy comes from the theory that the more alike people are, the easier it is to engender loyalty and cohesion. Also, conversely, the stronger the loyalty, the more people have similar views and support similar strategies (Druckman, 1994, p.50), so they have also tried to increase loyalty to unite the group as well as to make Hindus more homogeneous.

Group loyalty and cohesion increase “group-think”. Members of the group start to excessively protect their group and not accept any facts counter to their own image of the group (Ibid, p.56). This can make in-group members have narrow views and thereby create out-group bias as well as overestimations of and overconfidence in their own vis-à-vis the other group. Furthermore, it arouses emulation and animosity towards the other group. This in-group bias encourages in-group members to create their own world and place themselves in that world.

According to Tajfel’s social identity theory (1981), an individual’s self-esteem is more enhanced by making a positive comparison between his or her own and another group. In this process, they think they are better than another group. In other words, to distinguish one’s own group from others is the most essential process in increasing self-esteem and loyalty. This process makes people feel positive about themselves and provides a reason why one belongs to a particular group (Brock & Atkinson, 2008).

An individual’s social identity is intimately connected to the status of the groups to which he or she belongs. Nationalism links an individual’s self-esteem to the esteem in which the nation is held because people can obtain a sense of identity and self-esteem through their national identification (Brock & Atkinson, 2008; Druckman, 1994). Accordingly, people are motivated to support the goal of the country and want to increase the value of the nation in order to increase their self-esteem. Therefore, since an individual’s self-identity is determined depending on to which group he or she belongs, in-group members

strive to increase self-esteem by projecting bad images onto other groups and creating prejudice.

Such an individual's loyalty to a group is important because it leads to collective action and antagonism towards other groups. According to Druckman (1994, p.49, 57), group loyalty can cause intergroup conflict, justification of one's own behaviour and a lack of good thoughts about others. In addition, in-group bias, competition and hostility can also follow. When members of a group arrive at a consensus on the strategy or goal, these groups become more hostile and competitive towards other groups.

In particular, in the case of militant groups, they are often formed in two situations: when an existing group experiences a sense of loss of identity in times of rapid change like war, urbanisation, migration or modernisation; and when leaders can transform this experience into a positive if desperate projection of affection onto themselves and an ideological cause that can produce a collective 'grandiose self' – a community organised around the enjoyment of a shared secret, an inexpressible core or spirit (Hansen, 1999, p.107, 108). Militant groups need stronger cohesion, so they tend to more strongly demonise others.

The militant Hindu nationalism that has emerged since the 1980s, as is clear in the strategy and narratives of the Sangh Parivar, has stressed the 'grandiose of self' and 'superior to other' by means of the projection of prejudices onto the other and a clear demarcation of Muslims. Although the feeling of group superiority and the grandiosity of the self is part of the natural process of individual and group identity formation, this strategy in militant Hindu nationalism is not just used to increase self-esteem but also exploited as a weapon to justify their violence against Muslims.

In this way, the emphasis on group superiority and group loyalty is a crucial psychological tactic for Hindu nationalists with the desire to create a homogeneous Hindu identity as well as to establish a stable status for Hindus in the face of the threat embodied by the scramble – accelerated since the onset of globalisation – for resources.

3. Re-interpretation of History and Myth

The Sangh Parivar has steadily drawn the past of history and myth into its efforts to unite Hindu identity using a clear demarcation of the other and emphasising group superiority and loyalty by discriminating against the other. This strategy of the Sangh Parivar can clearly be seen both before and after the destruction of the Babri Masjid in 1992.

As seen in many debates on Indian history between secular and Hindu-front historians, since the emergence of Hindu nationalism in the 19th century, Hindu nationalists have constantly made an effort to reinterpret the past by fostering historians and archaeologists who can support their assertions officially. Debates on Indian history are especially problematic in elementary and high school texts. The BJP has tried to write textbooks with the aim of glorifying the Hindu past and denouncing the Mughal era in Indian history, renaming Indian cities and regions, and forging a relationship between the Hindu religion, national identity and citizenship (Kinvall, 2006, p.139).

The purpose of manipulating history is to make their history splendid through searching for chosen glory and glorifying their cultural, historical memory.

Myths are frequently used not only for constructing and mobilising an identity group, but also for constructing the other (Ibid, 59). According to Hansen (1999, p.90), the purpose of the founding myth is first to demonstrate to followers and potential supporters that the movement is still worth endorsing, and secondly to realise and perform the vision the movement is seeking permanently and thus create “a sort of counterculture, a counterlanguage, a counterinterpretation of history” (Ibid, p. 90).

As argued by Coningham and Lewer (2000, as cited in Kinvall, 2006, p.59), verifying archaeology and historical evidence is a key process when the solidarity of an identity is needed. For this reason, more manipulation and reinterpretation of historical and archaeological evidence to advocate claims and rights for some identity group occurs in situations of violent conflict. Such manipulation is more viable if mass education and

mass media of communication exist. Therefore, many nationalist leaders often interfere in the field of education or mass communication to consolidate their group identity (Hayes, 1926), and Hindu nationalists are no exception.

This section will show how Hindu nationalists manipulate and reinterpret history, myth and symbols through mass education and mass media to consolidate their group identity. It will look first at the strategy of the VHP/RSS using symbols in the *yatra* processions that preceded the demolition of the Babri Masjid, and second at Hindu nationalists' new application of old symbols of "Bharat Mata". Finally, this section will consider the broadcast of the "*Ramayana*" in 1987.

3.1 The Strategy of the VHP and the RSS

Militant Hindu nationalist forces such as the VHP and the RSS have attempted to create a homogeneous Hindu identity by means of the distortion of history and the transformation of the ordinary into national symbols in *yatra* processions. In this strategy of history distortion, the ultimate aim has been to enhance self-esteem and thereby justify their present and future actions, by removing a blot and recreating their glorious past.

With relation to their aim for redescribing the past, Sen (2005, p.62-3) finds two specific characteristics of contemporary Hindu politics. The first is that Hindutva forces have become keenly aware of the importance of gathering dispersed power in their various components and mobilising fresh loyalty from potent recruits. In his opinion, their effort at creating India's history as a 'Hindu civilisation' is intended to increase the cohesiveness of the diverse members of the Sangh Parivar. The second reason is because they want to receive support from the Indian diaspora who have a general Indian nationalist attachment, particularly in North America and Europe. Hindu nationalists believe that reinventing history from a Hinduised point of view helps in mobilising support from the Indian diaspora and that their power would be the foundation from which they could change a narrow Hindu identity into a more general Indian identity.

With this purpose of rewriting history, Hindu communal forces have tried to extend their influence not only in public organisations such as the bureaucracy, police, media, the education system and the judiciary, but also at the grassroots level among children (Mukherjee et al., 2008, p.18). For many years, the RSS has taken the lead in perverting the truth of history in primary and secondary school textbooks, with its Saraswati Shishu Mandirs¹⁷ and Vidya Bharati primary and secondary schools, and its *shakhas*. The major content of their history distortions include disparagement of Muslims and Christians and descriptions of the medieval period as one of the great dark ages in Indian history, while elevating the Hindu civilisation. For example, one of the textbooks in use at the primary level portrays the rise of Islam in the following manner:

Wherever they went, they had a sword in their hand. Their army went like a storm in all the four directions. Any country that came that was destroyed. Houses of prayers and universities were destroyed. Libraries were burnt. Religious books were destroyed. Mothers and sisters were humiliated. Mercy and justice were unknown to them (Extracts from Gaurav Gatha Gatha for Class IV, 1992, quoted in Mukherjee et al., 2008, p.23)

Delhi's Qutb Minar is even today famous in his (Qutbuddin Aibak's) name. This had not been built by him. He could not have been able to build it. It was actually built by emperor Samudragupta. Its real name was Vishnu Stambha...This Sultan actually got some parts of it demolished and its name was changed (Ibid.)

In this way, Hindu communal groups have spread groundless untruths, such as that the Qutab Minar was built by Samudragupta, in the name of spreading patriotism. Looking into this matter, the National Steering Committee on Textbook Evaluation came to the conclusion that "the main purpose which these books would serve is to gradually transform the young children into...bigoted morons in the garb of instilling in them patriotism" (Mukherjee & Mukherjee, 2001, p.33).

Another example of the Vidya Bharati Sansthan publications also shows the efforts of Hindu forces to spread communal and chauvinistic cultural nationalism, and the

¹⁷ The influence of Saraswati Shishu Mandirs, the first of which was started in 1952 in the presence of the RSS chief, M.S. Golwalkar, has now multiplied manifold. It will be in order, to first examine what these 'Mandirs' or 'temples' of learning dish out in the name of education (Mukherjee et al., 2008, 20).

legitimation of the policies of the RSS among the young generation. In these books, India is portrayed with narcissistic expressions such as the 'original home of world civilisation' (Mukherjee et al., 2008, p.25).

India is the most ancient country in the world. When civilization had not developed in many countries of the world, when people in those countries lived in jungles naked or covering their bodies with the bark of trees or hides of animals, Bharat's Rishis-Munis brought the light of culture and civilization to all those countries. (extracts from the report on the publications of Vidya Bharati No.9, quoted in Mukherjee et al., 2008, p.25)

The following are some of the examples of their illogical claims of 'Hindu civilisation as the cradle of world civilisation':

- i) India is the mother country of ancient China. Their ancestors were Indian Kshatriyas...
- ii) The first people who began to inhabit China were Indians.
- iii) The first people to settle in Iran were Indians (Aryans).
- iv) The popularity of the great work of the Aryans-Valmiki's *Ramayana*- influenced Yunan (Greece) and there also the great poet Homer composed a version of the *Ramayana*.
- v) The languages of the indigenous people (Red Indians) of the northern part of America were derived from ancient Indian languages.
(extracts from the report on the publications of Vidya Bharati No.9, quoted in Mukherjee et al., 2008, p.25)

This chauvinistic view is also presented with regards to the origin of Aryans. In order to separate Muslims and Christians from "us" and treat them as strangers, the RSS argues in these textbooks that 'Aryans', whom the RSS regards as true Indians, did not migrate from outside India but originated in India (Mukherjee et al., 2008, p.31).

This attack by Hindu nationalists on the view of secular history began after 1977, when the Jana Sangh took power for the first time in the Indian government. They tried to prohibit the contributions of some respected historians to school textbooks for the National Council of Education, Research and Training (NCERT), but these moves were defeated thanks to a national protest movement (Mukherjee & Mukherjee, 2001, p.33). However, on the coming to power of the BJP as leaders of the coalition government at the

Centre in 1998, the RSS achieved their goal not only in 14,000 Vidya Bharati schools with 80,000 teachers and 1,800,000 students but also in other institutions such as universities, schools, colleges and even the University Grants Commission (UGC) (Mukherjee et al., 2008, p. 28-9).

Besides these distortions of history in school textbooks, the VHP/RSS have attempted another strategy to mobilise Hindu identity in the destruction of the Babri Masjid by using symbols and historical distortions related to the event.

Regarding the forgotten issue of the Ayodhya site, the VHP wanted to reignite the old dispute of the liberation of Rama's birthplace as one of national significance (Ludden, 2005, p.39). Instead of the general religious belief that the mosque occupies the place on which Rama was born, the VHP went further by asserting that a temple on the birthplace had been demolished by Muslims and replaced by a mosque. They attempted to make the local tradition that Babar's general had destroyed a temple built on Rama's birthplace into the real history of the Hindu_nation (Van der Veer, 1994, p.160). Such a strategy of clear demarcation of Muslims as foreigners and demonised aggressors is expressed in Ludden's narrative that "Rama and the original temple represented a dehistoricized Hindu utopia, while Babar and his mosque represented the Muslim invasions that brought the Rama-rajya to an end and began a series of oppressive foreign occupations" (Davis, 2005, p.48-9). In this way, in the temple liberation project, the VHP constantly employed anti-Muslim rhetoric, at the same time as trying to develop Hindu unity.

In 1983, under the leadership of the VHP, with its slogan of "sacrifice for unanimity", the Ekatmata Yatra launched three processions with the aim of ethno-religious mobilisation. These covered vast swathes of the country – from Kathmandu in Nepal to Rameshwaram in Tamil Nadu, from Gangasagar in Bengal to Somnath in Gujarat, and from Hardiwar in Uttar Pradesh to Kanyakumari in Tamil Nadu – distributing water from the Ganges and refilling their tanks with holy water. These actions were intended to symbolise Hindu unity (Jaffrelot, 1999, p.360).

Until then, the only symbol that had been used for political mobilisation was the cow (Ibid, p.361). However, with the Ekatmata Yatra, the VHP intended to invent new symbols associated with traditional religious rituals, texts and gods for the purpose of mobilising larger Hindu unity. One epoch-making icon the VHP created was a depiction of the baby Rama in which the cherubic child was held prisoner in a Muslim religious institution on the site of his birth. It was intended to arouse “maternal devotion from those who would nurture the young reincarnation of Hindu nationhood”, while “the aggressive warrior young Rama served as a militant role model for Hindus taking control of their homeland” (Davis, 2005, p.41). The creation of the new symbol of the baby Rama seems to be important from the point of view of arousing devotional sentiment by dragging in family imagery as a metaphor (Ibid.).

In the Ekatmata Yatra, the VHP utilised two other tangible symbols – the Ganges and Mother India – in the form of divinities. According to the statement of the senior VHP official in charge of this programme, these two figures were very carefully selected (Jaffrelot, 1999, p.360). The VHP tried to make the selected symbols be seen as deities – in the case of the Ganges, her water contains the power to purify from sin and to give salvation. Before this *yatra*, the Ganges had hardly been used as a venerated symbol by Hindus. However, it became a symbol of national unity as a “sacred geographical entity” (Davis, 2005, p.40) as well as a “pan-Indian reservoir of holy water” (Ibid.), identified with the figure of Mother India (Jaffrelot, 1999, p.361).

The VHP also resurrected *bhakti* rituals and the fundamental text of Hinduism – the *Bhagavad Gita* – to integrate all Hindus regardless of caste and sects by arousing devotionism (Ibid). During the processions of the temple chariots, the VHP made brand new trucks symbolising the militant war chariot of Arjuna in the *Bhagavad Gita*, while each of the three main processions was named after its chariots referred to as gods and saints (Van der Veer, 1994, p.125).

In this way, the RSS/VHP have striven for the consolidation of Hindu identity and the extension of its power through interference in education at the grassroots level and

utilising symbols with the intention of integrating all castes and sects. Their selected symbols are mainly taken from nature, traditional religious myth or Mother India to represent geographical and genealogic unity.

In the next section, we will look into the metaphor of Mother India, which is often used as a symbol in the strategy of Hindu nationalists.

3.2 Metaphor of the body

Embodying India as Mother is an old tradition in the subcontinent. This is the way India was presented in newspapers and novels at the time of the emergence of Indian nationalism, and it has become common practice thereafter (Chakrabarty, 1999, p.205).

The link with Mother has deep psychological and cultural roots (Bose, 1997, p.54). According to the British army psychiatrist Owen Berkeley-Hill's paper in 1924, as explained briefly in Chapter Two, one of the causes of the residual bitter feelings between Hindus and Muslims is Hindus' motherland complex, according to which their motherland – Bharat Mata – was violated by the Muslim conquest of India (Kakar, 1995, p.140). In effect, the relationship between nation and gender has been involved in nationalism for a long time. Therefore, we need to take into account the metaphor of Bharat Mata as well as religious nationalism discourse and the female body.

The image of Bharat Mata was first used with the start of nationalism in the colonial period. However, its primary aim has been changed to the form of exploitation of communal forces with the intention of mobilising resources from nationalism (Jha, 2004). The metaphoric feminisation of the nation became well known with the cow protection movement between 1880 and 1920, in which the mother cow became an object of veneration and a new symbol of the Hindu nation. Also, Bankim Chattopadhyay contributed to popularising the image of Bharat Mata by expressing the Hindu nation as mother, an object of worship, benevolence and protection (Hansen, 1999, p.112). In his text, he expressed the changing figure of mother over time, from 'mother as she was in

the past' to 'mother in the present' and 'mother as she will become in the future'. He alluded to the figure of mother as a religious goddess – her present form is Kali, a benevolent mother goddess, and the final image is Durga, the ten-armed mother and the representative of feminine power.

This embodiment of the nation as mother emerged against colonisation from the late 19th century, but has become much more complex in the 20th century. After the *swadeshi* period, the image of Bharat Mata changed from a goddess figure to a housewife and mother, as has been presented in various novels and plays. The popular Hindi novel *Maila Anchal* shows the most well presented image of the mother suffering because of her infringed-upon national identity during the pre-and post colonial period.

The mother's feet were torn and bloodied. After seeing the mother's agony, listening to Ramkishan babu's words and hearing Tiwari ji's songs, he could not stop himself. Who could resist that pull? Tears flowing from her eyes like the waters of the Ganges and the Yamuna. Mother India sorrowing over the fate of her children? Straightaway he went to Ramkishan babu and said, "Put my name on the Suraji list" (Phaniswarnath Renu, *Maila Anchal*, 1953, quoted in Jha, 2004)

Also, Sumitranandan Pant's famous poem *Bharat Mata* offers a different vision of romantic nationalism. He considered Mother India as a woman of the soil and the Ganges and Yamuna as rivers of tears, metaphors for the sorrow of the nation (Jha, 2004).¹⁸

The symbolisation of Bharat Mata in the relationship between gender and nation was mentioned by several nationalists including Jawaharlal Nehru during the pre and post colonial period. In the era of globalisation since the 1980s, the metaphor of Bharat Mata has changed from its original aim of arousing nationalism to the exclusive usage of Hindu forces for mobilising religious nationalism.

18 This relation between the Ganges and the Mother India is used for the strategy of the VHP in the *Ekatmata yatra*, as we have seen in the previous section.

During the Ekatamat Yatra in 1983, the VHP brought the image of Bharat Mata in their chariots. In addition, it also built a Bharat Mata temple in Haridwar. This temple contains an anthropomorphic statue of its deity. Here, Bharat Mata holds a milk urn in one hand and sheaves of grain in the other, which the temple guidebook explains as "signifying the white and green revolution that India needs for progress and prosperity". The guidebook also says, "The temple serves to promote the devotional attitude toward Bharat Mata, something that historians and mythological story teller may have missed" (Jha, 2004).

These exertions of the VHP to employ the image of Bharat Mata look as though they are meant to satisfy their desire to mobilise Hindu forces and justify their violence by calling on the old nationalist tradition.

The RSS has also exploited the image of Bharat Mata, as is clearly indicated in their stressing the idiom of "rape of the Motherland" by a potent and dangerous enemy – Muslim invaders. In this ideology, only RSS cadre, the "sons of Bharat", can protect the weak and powerless mother nation by organising on military lines, which makes them true males (Hansen, 1999, p.112-113). Hindu nationalists seem to bring back the symbolisation of Bharat Mata from the old nationalist tradition because they want to rationalise their actions against Muslims by giving Hindus an extreme shock like "rape of the Motherland by Muslims". This is an essential process for them to fight against and drive out Muslims, their permanent enemy, who violated the mother who gave endless and unconditional love to her children-citizens.

Such a metaphor of the nation as mother that emerged with the development of nationalism during the colonial period in India is seen as being taken from the general expression of the colonised nation, which combined nation and gender.

With the militant communalism of the Sangh Parivar, adopting this image of Bharat Mata is seen as an effective method of uniting Hindu identity by demarcating Muslims as others and enemies. Because of the continuous underpinning and displaying of these reinterpreted traditional metaphors, the embodiment of the Indian geography as Mother,

Muslims as having raped the Mother, and the RSS cadre as protecting the Mother – the Mother not as a limitless provider for her children, but as a weak woman who needs the protection of strong men – are crucial strategies employed by Hindu nationalists in ensuring their survival in periods of crisis.

3.3 Media Effect

In critical situations for the nation, nationalist leaders often use the mass media as a tool in inspiring nationalism. Hindu nationalists tried to mobilise and unite Hindu identity by broadcasting the *Ramayana* in 1987. The *Ramayana* is the story of Rama, and it is the earliest and most influential text of Hinduism, supposedly written in the first few centuries BC (Van der Veer, 1994, p.172).

Its long-standing influence on Indian literature can be seen in the fact that many authors have produced new versions or interpretations of the *Ramayana*. The earliest major vernacular retelling of the story was written in Tamil by the 12th century author Kampan. The famous poet Tulsi Das also recreated a North Indian vernacular version of the *Ramayana*. It became the Bible of North India as it was revered as the main authoritative and honourable text among Hindus (Sarkar, 2005, p.173).

During the colonial period, Gandhi also repeatedly mentioned the *Ramcharitmanas*¹⁹ in support of his political views. He urged Indians to live according to the lessons from this text to overcome poverty, untouchability and foreign rule. Gandhi's continuous emphasis on Rama and his rule greatly affected Hindus at that time (Van der Veer, 1994, p.174).

In the South also its leverage has been proved, as the leader of the Dravidian movement used the text of the *Ramayana* to attack Brahmanical hegemony (Ibid). In addition,

¹⁹ *Ramcharitmanasa*, is an epic poem in Awadhi (Indo-Aryan language) which is composed by the 16th-century Indian poet, Goswami Tulsidas (1532–1623). *Ramcharitmanas* literally means the "lake of the deeds of Rama." (Jindal 1955). The work focuses on a poetic retelling of the events of the Sanskrit epic *Ramayana*, centered on the narrative of Rama.

Aurobindo also mentioned the relationship between the influence of the *Ramayana* and Hindu nationalism: "the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* constitute the essence of Indian literature. This orientalist notion was foundational for the Hindu nationalisation of Indian civilisation." (quoted in Van der Veer, 2001, p.132).

With such authority among Hindus, a seventy-eight episode serialisation of the *Ramayana* was broadcast on national television between January 1987 and July 1988. It not only recorded the highest viewing rate ever seen on Indian television, but also had a great ripple effect in Indian society. Twenty-six video cassettes were sold worldwide, with exaggerated advertisements such as "The Greatest Indian Epic. Treasured for over 10,000 years. Enshrining Ideals That Are Ageless. Teaching Lessons That Are Timeless." (Van der Veer, 1994, p.175).

The influence of this broadcast was tremendous. It was watched by 80 to 100 million people, including people who do not understand Hindi. According to newspaper reports, Indian life looked as though it was 'on hold' during the hours the series was aired. Even untouchable sweepers in North India asserted that they inherited their spirit from Valmiki who is the alleged composer of the Sanskrit *Ramayana* and the guru of Rama (Ibid). In this way, the broadcast of the *Ramayana* on Durdarshan inspired religious belief among Hindus all over the country. The broadcast also resulted in homogenisation of understanding of the *Ramayana*, since it swept aside the different regional and political interpretations that had existed until then.

Many Indian scholars have argued that the televised version of the *Ramayana* was planned to elevate the old religious text as a national text. Undoubtedly, Hindu nationalists intended the broadcast to be used for their political objectives, in particular their desire to create a "Hindu nation" (Ibid, p.177).

Above all, it helped in achieving the VHP's long cherished wish of liberating Rama's birthplace. Even people who do not know the exact location of Ayodhya have gradually recognised it as the birthplace of Rama as well as a town in Uttar Pradesh. The broadcast

made this sacred place and Rama's life in popular imagination appear real (Kinvall, 2006, p.149). Indeed, its success produced a great emotional stir among Hindus. As they watched the *Ramayana*, they could not help becoming angry at the manipulated history of their sacred place – the birthplace of Rama – which had been demolished by Muslims. In this way, the broadcast of the *Ramayana* and the Ayodhya affair are closely connected, showing how history has been manipulated and reinterpreted through the mass media and how this has had an impact on the viewer's emotions and ideas. According to Van der Veer (1994), the surprising sensation of the broadcast made it possible to unite many millions at the same time and thereby form a religious gathering. Hence, we can assume that it is closely connected to the recent rise of Hindu religious nationalism.

As we can see from the above, the mass media including television can be used as a tool for instilling nationalist ideology in citizens, thanks to its characteristic of diffusion. Throughout the 1980s, television certainly functioned as a medium for achieving the communal ends of the saffron waves. L.K. Advani, Hindu nationalist leader of the BJP, stressed the cultural significance of the *Ramayana* (Farmer, 2005, p.108) and finally exploited the imagery of Rama as he postured like Rama in the *rath yatra* in October 1990 after the broadcast of the series. It seems as though he was conscious of the need for Hindu votes and thereby intended to unite Hindu identity by taking advantage of the tremendous success of the televised *Ramayana* for communal purposes to criticise the legitimacy of the government's secular stance.

Such an exploitation of the mass media by Hindu groups seems to indicate that political intentions are associated with the relationship between media and communalism. This also shows that the mass media is a useful means of manipulating dispersed groups.

Many scholars have argued that the serialisation of the *Ramayana* on Durdarshan played a major role in mobilising Hindu communal forces, by creating a “shared symbolic lexicon” (Van der Veer, 1994, p.177-78). With its enormous influence, people have accepted the story of the *Ramayana* as a truth rather than as a myth. In this way, the broadcast became an opportunity to pursue the building of Ram's temple. It mobilised

communal forces and legitimised the subsequent event of the destruction of the Babri Masjid by promoting a religious myth to the level of national culture and myth.

This chapter has examined the psychological strategies of Hindu nationalists in strengthening their identity in the face of globalisation and modernisation, under the assumption that the sudden rise of militant Hindu nationalism since the 1980s is related to the rapidly changing environment. In this context, people can easily get the feeling of loss or loss of attachment because various physical changes are occurring. Accordingly, nationalist leaders have tried to secure their identity by fortifying group cohesiveness and to enhance nationalism by increasing group sharing.

To this end, Hindu nationalists have employed diverse tactics. Most importantly, they have drawn clear boundaries between Hindus and non-Hindus, especially Muslims. This othering process includes attitudes such as accepting only the majority-self and not the minority-other, achieved by creating prejudices and projecting bad images onto them.

The attempt to intensify group loyalty and superiority is also one of the main strategies in enhancing Hindu group cohesiveness. Their promotion of Sanskrit is one of good example of the way in which group sharing has been increased to build up group attachment. Also, they construct prejudices of the other by applying the bad traits of the in-group to the out-group so as to increase the self-esteem of their own group. In the case of militant groups, the tendency towards demonisation of the other is more excessively present in group relations. The current Hindu nationalism has also shown this tendency towards communal conflict between Hindus and Muslims.

In addition, reinterpreted history, myth and symbol, diffused by means of education and the mass media, is always manipulated in their desire to spread chauvinistic religious nationalism. This manipulation is mainly intended to be used at the grassroots level, such as to alter textbooks in elementary schools, or to influence low castes and untouchables through the mass media.

In this sense, these strategies used by Hindu nationalists seem to be based on their intolerance and artfulness, since they only pursue majoritarianism as denying the minority and they exploit symbols which are taken from the old tradition of Indian nationalism to mobilise religious nationalism and legitimise their violence.

Chapter V

Conclusion

The dissertation has analysed psychological factors affecting the emergence of an extreme form of Hindu nationalism since the 1980s.

This aggressive and militant phenomenon, which has been known in Indian politics in the last thirty years as 'Hindutva' or 'communalism', did not appear overnight. Ever since Hindus and Muslims met with the Muslim conquest of a thousand years ago, Hindus seem to have felt hostility towards Muslims.

According to Sen (2005), Hinduism is a liberal, tolerant and receptive tradition. These characteristics are amongst the original tenets of Hinduism, so the question is why Hindu nationalists in the present day incessantly aggravate communal conflicts with Muslims rather than making an effort to narrow the distance between the two communities.

Of course, Hindu nationalism is a combination of religion and nationalism, so it cannot help but represent the traits of nationalism as well as those of religion.

The psychology of nationalism is based on "in-group favouritism". The construction of nationalism is in large part similar and related to individual and group identity formation. In the process of constructing identity, individuals firstly cognise themselves as the 'self', then perceive the 'other' through socialisation, by means of the transmission of ways of acting and reacting learned from education and relationships with others. In this process of socialisation of individuals, people necessarily form groups and group membership becomes one of the salient traits in the definition of the self. It is referred to as individual's 'social identity'. People equate their status with the status of their in-group, and thus strive to increase the status of this group to enhance their own self-esteem. In-group members impute bad features to other groups, which are considered as different, and thereby create prejudices against them. These prejudices lead to and reinforce the stigmatisation of the other and an awareness that 'us' and 'them' are fundamentally different.

Such a psychology of nationalism can also be seen in the current Hindu nationalism. The background to the boom in contemporary Hindutva lies in the 19th century. Hindu nationalism originally emerged in opposition to British colonial power. It was closely linked to 'Hindu revivalism', which aimed at national integration through the rediscovery of the archaic Hindu civilisation.

Even though this period is of only indirect relevance to the current militarised Hindu nationalism, the features of the latter had already appeared then. These features include Aryanism based on primordialist thinking and an emphasis on the Vedas. The Vedic Aryanist paradigm advocated by the Arya Samaj stressed that only the descendants of Aryans were true Indians and obeyed the authority of the Vedas. Moreover, the symbol of Mother India articulated by Bankimchandra Chattopadhyaya in the Bengal renaissance was also created in this period. Thus, the manipulation of history in which today's saffron wave engages has its roots in the earliest period of Hindu nationalism from the 19th to the early 20th century.

It is from the 1920s that Hindu nationalism began to show signs of communalism, in the political chaos of colonial India. Hinduised versions of Indian nationalism and the ideology of Hindutva coexisted during this period. With such a radical form of Hindu nationalism altered from the previous period, it began to enter politics. Above all, the birth of the concept of Hindutva by Savarkar in this period could be considered crucial groundwork in the development of the ideology of later Hindu nationalism. His homogeneous nation theory was influenced by Mazzini and Fascism, and was in effect based on racism. According to this theory, if the same blood is not shared within the nation, they are foreigners or others – Muslims thus cannot become Indian. Since the emergence of Savarkar's idea, the division between the Hindu-self and Muslim-other has become clear.

Hindu nationalism from the 1980s has boosted this element of communalism with a neo-fascist and anti-pluralist vision, albeit based on the previous ideologies. This is concretely shown in the Sangh Parivar – the huge family of Hindu nationalist organisations – and

their religious nationalist project in Indian politics, culture and society. This project has been more systematically presented with globalisation. In the context of globalisation and modernisation, which replaces the old with the new, Hindus have felt keenly aware of the security of their identity and thus have displayed violent and paramilitary forms of religious nationalism.

Such a contemporary neo-fascist version of Hindu nationalism revealed its ultimate character in the destruction of the Babri Masjid in 1992. In this sense, it is worth considering the features of this event from various perspectives. Hindu communalists used diverse strategies to expose their bare resentment towards Muslims and to solidify their identity.

First, the demolition of the Babri Masjid was a ventilation of a Hindu trauma from the past. The Mughal empire of a thousand years ago remains a sore point for Hindus. Their indelible hurt has been expressed in the literature of numerous Hindu nationalists. They have highlighted the intolerant behaviour of medieval rulers to depict Muslims as a savage race, stressing only the fact that medieval rulers, including Mahmud of Ghazna or Aurangzeb, suppressed Hindus and demolished Hindu temples.

Another important historical trauma for Hindus with regard to Muslims is the Partition of Indian and Pakistan in 1947. This Hindu shock came when their idea of India as Bharat Mata, which they thought could become a Hindu rashtra after independence from the British, was destroyed.

With these Chosen Trauma, the Sangh Parivar has employed different strategies to reach its goals. Its tactics are mostly based on the exploitation of history and myth, focusing on history distortions and the expression of recreated religious symbols. Its reinterpretation of history has placed emphasis on the Aryan-Vedic paradigm started in the 19th century. Furthermore, it has attempted to disseminate rewritten history that includes disparagement of the Mughal era and only focuses on Hindus' glorified past.

Emphasis on religious symbols has also been seen, both before and after the Ayodhya incident. Due to the broadcast of the *Ramayana* in 1987, the myth of Rama has become the truth, and thereby the destruction of the Babri Masjid, which stood for the oppression and intolerance of the medieval period, and the construction of the Ram temple has been legitimised. In the *yatra*, various religious symbols including the baby Rama, the Ganges and the *Bhagavad Gita* were used. Above all, the symbolisation of Bharat Mata, which came up with Indian nationalism, was exploited with the propagation of the “rape of the Motherland by Muslims”. In this way, Hindu nationalists have used various symbols to spread the idea that “India is the country of Hindus”.

This fascistic idea seems to have resulted from intolerant thinking. In the first place, the obvious demarcation between the Hindu-self and Muslim-other demonstrates narrow-mindedness. Our consciousness instinctively includes the feeling of “otherness” because it is by constantly defining the self in relation to others that we feel stable (Weinstein and Platt, 1973). With the awareness of the other, the feeling of ambivalence also emerges from the unconscious (Babur, 1952, p.68). We perceive the other and our feeling of ambivalence depends on who we unconsciously judge to be similar to or different from us. This feeling of ambivalence and otherness in life is more clearly manifested in periods of crisis (Ibid). In this sense, the current sudden rise of Hindu nationalism, accompanied by serious communal conflict, can be seen as a means for Hindus to secure their identity against the threat of globalisation. In this process, Hindu communalists form a definite dividing line between the self and the other and instigate hatred and prejudice towards the other to improve their own self-esteem as well as to strengthen Hindu group cohesion.

Secondly, majoritarianism, which involves the complete exclusion of minority, also demonstrates intolerance. In fact, majoritarianism is the result of the wrong classification of the nation. Although a majority could be defined according to different criteria, such as class, language or political beliefs, the Hindutva family only categorises majority and minority according to a single classification – based on religion. In this way, what constitutes the ‘Indian majority’ changes with the standards adopted to classify the nation (Sen, 2005, p.55). This can be linked to what Sen refers to the ‘illusion of singularity’,

which implies perceiving a person as a member of one particular collectivity that gives one distinctive identity, rather than as a member of many different groups with diverse identities (Sen, 2006, p.45). In other words, to instigate and cultivate a singular specific identity in a group can be a weapon to instigate violence and terrorism towards another group (Sen, 2006).

In conclusion, the Hindu nationalist insistence on 'Identifying India as a mainly Hindu country' seems to have developed into an extreme form in order to solidify Hindu identity in the face of the threat of globalization that has emerged from the 1980s. On the pretext of historical agony, denunciations of the Muslim as other, without any effort to develop an in-depth understanding of them, exposes their cliquey, xenophobic and intolerant attitude. These attitudes will inevitably result in unceasing communal conflict, which will not only impede the development of the nation but also court isolation in the world.

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