

**CO-OPTION AND APPROPRIATION: SOCIO-POLITICAL
EXPERIENCES OF CONTENDING IDEOLOGIES**

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

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

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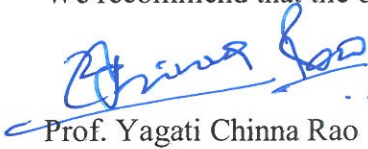
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I declare that the dissertation titled “Co-option and Appropriation: Socio-Political Experiences of Contending Ideologies” submitted by me in partial fulfilment of requirements for the award of the degree of **Master of Philosophy** to Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. It has not been previously submitted for any other Degree of this or any other University.


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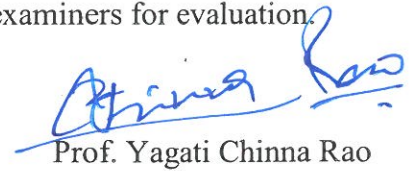
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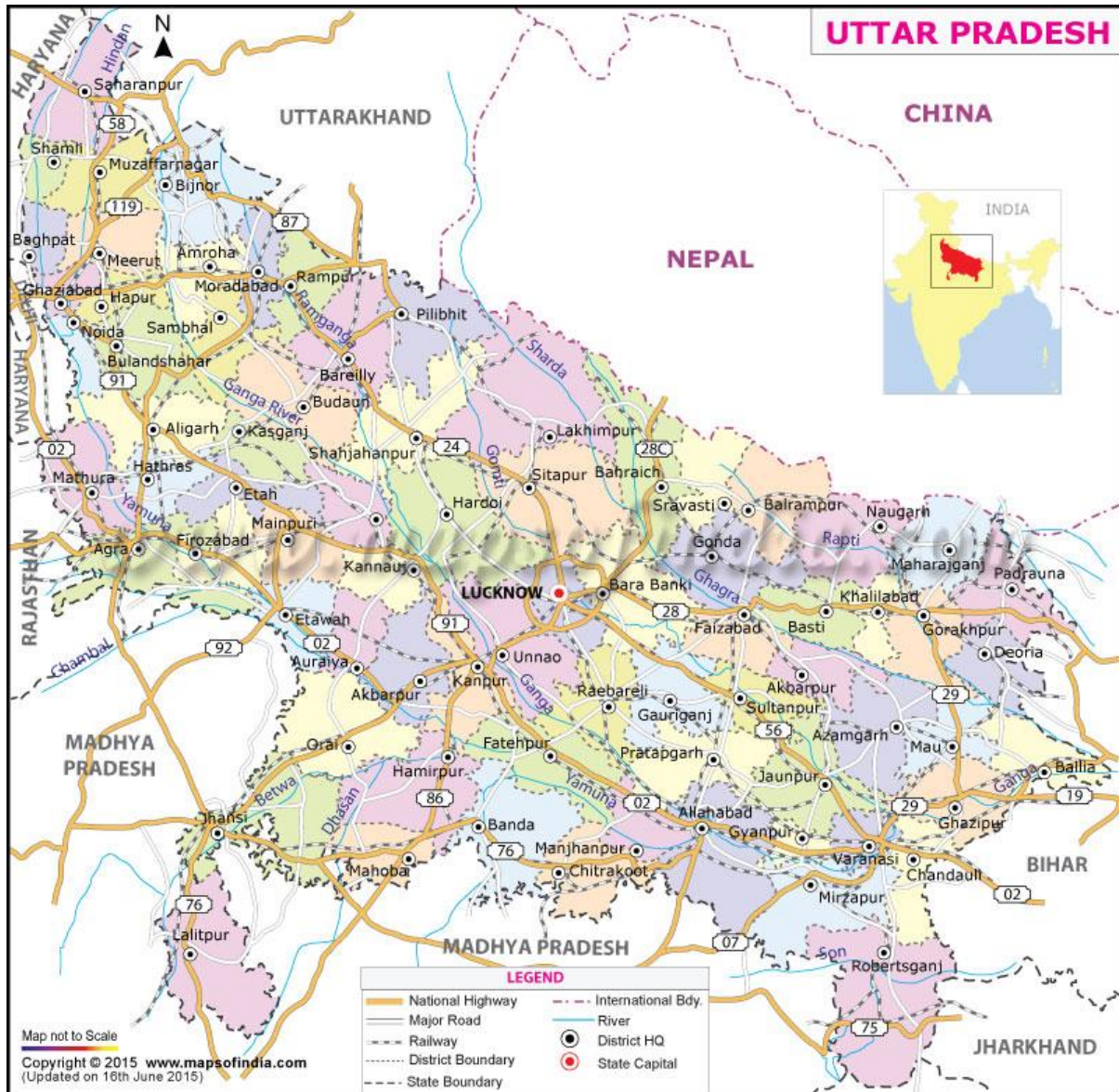
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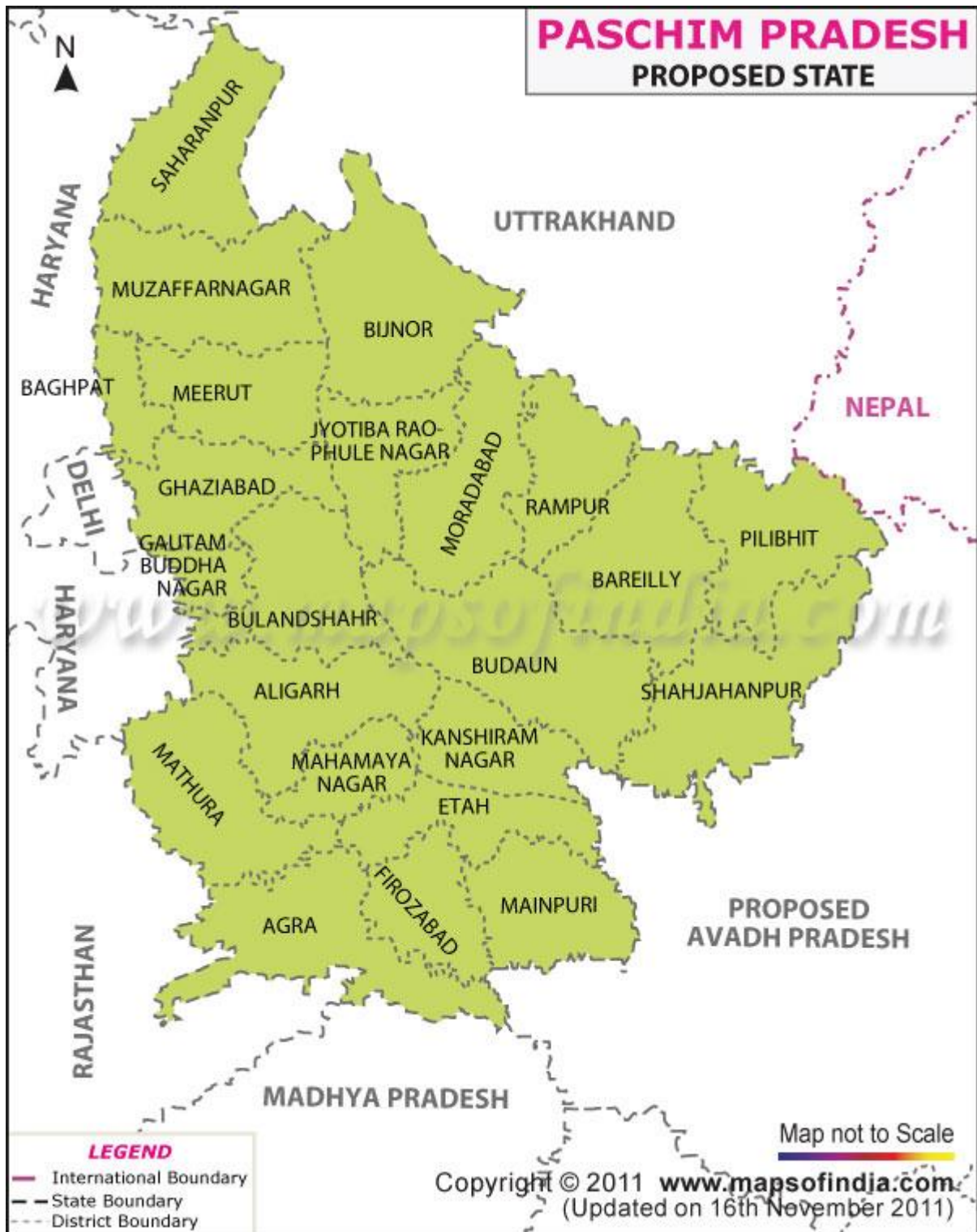
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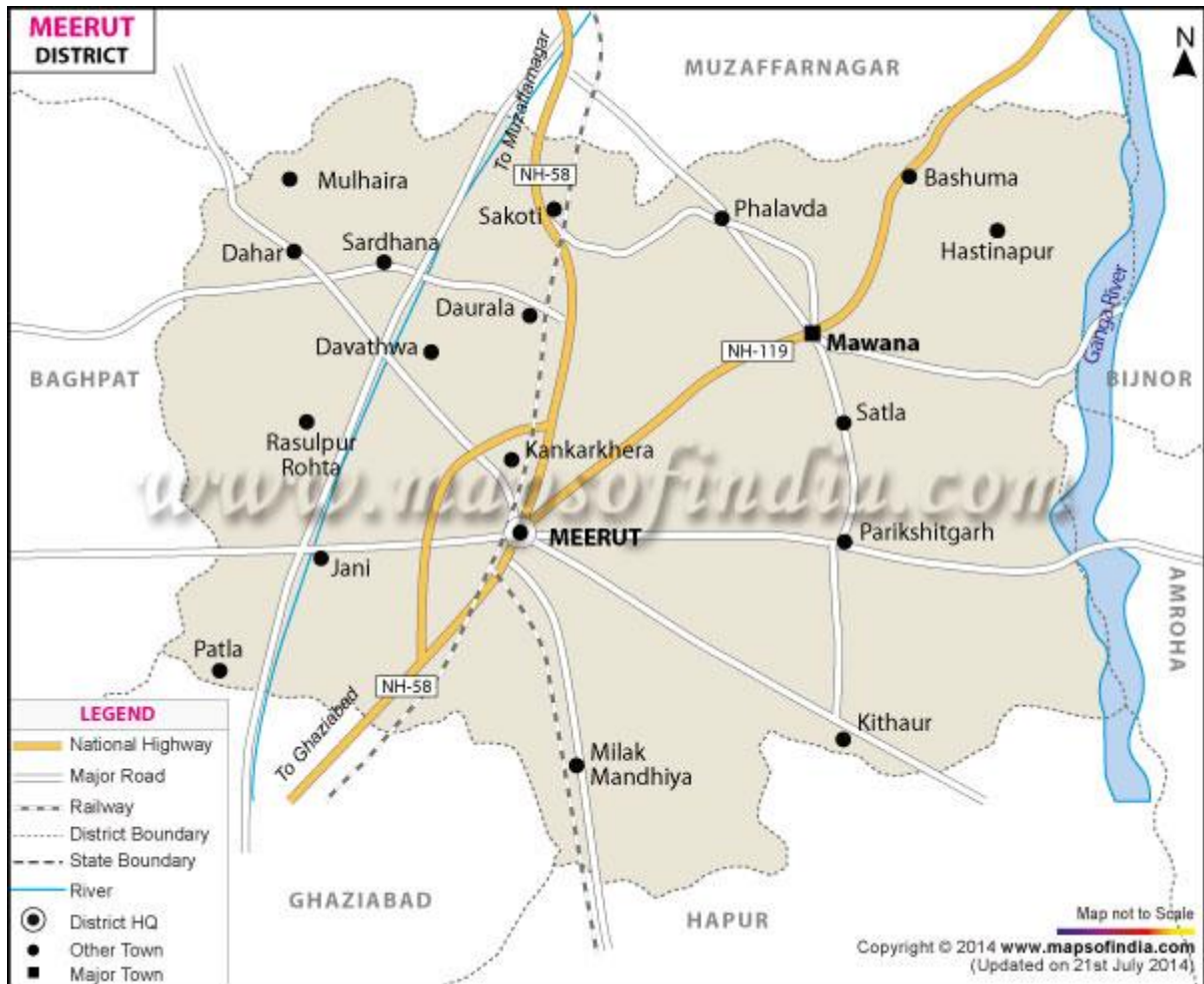
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ABBREVIATIONS

BAMCEF	-	All India Backward and Minorities' communities Employees Federation
BD	-	Bajrang Dal
BJP	-	Bhartiya Janata Party
BJS	-	Bhartiya Jana Sangh
BSP	-	Bahujan Samaj Party
HYV	-	Hindu Yuva Vahini
NDA	-	National Democratic Alliance
PD	-	Param Dham
RSS	-	Rashtriya Swamyam Sewak Sangh
SP	-	Samajwadi Party
U.P.	-	Uttar Pradesh
VHP	-	Vishwa Hindu Parishad

Glossary of Selected Terms

Akhara	Institutions for training Freestyle wrestler
Andolan	Movement
Anthapooja	Inner Worship
Arya Samaj	Noble Society
Atirikta	Extra
Avirodh	Consistency
Bapouti	Ownership
Bhagwaan Samaan	Like God
Bhagya	Luck
Bharat Mata	Mother Land
Brahmo Samaj	Brahmo Society
Choochoot	Untouchability
Chulha	Hearth
Deshbhakta	Patriots
Deshbhakti	Patriotism
Dharm Rakshak	Religion Saviour
Dharmshala	Innards
Ekjut	Unite
Failna	Spread
Gau Rakshak	Cow Saviour
Ghar Vapsi	Homecoming

Gau Mata	Mother Cow
Himsa	Violence
Hindu Jati	Hindu Caste
Hindu Mahasabha	All India Hindu Grand Assembly
Hindu Raaj	Hindu Rule
Hindu Sanskriti	Hindu Culture
Hindutva	Hindu-ness
Jaat- Biradri	Caste
Janaeu	Sacred Thread
Jansankhaya	Population
Jati	Caste
Kattar	Fanatical
Kendra	Centre
Khichri	Pedigree
Kranti	Revolution
Majboot	Strong
Manuvaad	Manu's ideology
Mandal karyavah	Mandal Organizer
Mann banana	Making mind
Mauka	Opportunity
Rashtravaad	Nationalism
Nazar	Detection
Niche phaucha	Downlift

Panwatha	Well
Paramdham	Supreme Abodes
Pracharak	Propagator
Pramukh	Chief of organisation
Prant karyavah	Regional Secretary
Pure Hindu	Hinduness
Purvaj	Ancestors
Raaj	Rule
Raksha	Protection
Ram bhakti	Worship of Ram
Ramayan	Ramayana
Ramrajya	Ideal state
Rashtra	Nation
Saint Rakshak	Saint Saviour
Samaj	Community
Samajik Nyaya	Social Justice
Samajik Samrasta	Social Harmony
Samrasta Bhoj	Inter – Dinning
Samrasta Manch	Harmony stage
Samta	Equity
Sath dunga	Along with
Satsang	Spiritual Preaching
Sewa	Ritual Service

Shaheed	Martyr
Shakha	Branch
Sharminda	Ashamed
Shastra	Scripture
Shikhsa	Education
Shuddhi	Re-conversion
Smarak Samiti	Memorial committee
Smriti	Memory
Soshan Mukta	free from exploitatin
Swadeshi	Own country
Swayamsevak	Volunteer
Tezi	Fast
Todna	Break
Vedas	Religious Text of the Hindus
Viraat	Primeval
Virodh	Antagonistic
Wafa	Loyal
Wo samay	That Time

Introduction

This research is an attempt to understand the idea of Hindu Nationalism and the experience of the dalits in the process of assimilation and appropriation. It begins with the conceptual category of Nationalism which will be discussed in detail. This present research further investigates the early phases of Hindu Nationalism at the ideological level along with organisational structure of RSS. It talks about the different ideological, political and social strategies which have been used by the groups belonging to the category of Hindu Nationalism. In the category of Hindu Nationalism, the practise of co-option and appropriation is a manifest function and there is a strategy and practise, which deliberately focuses on result oriented phenomenon. In Bourdieu sense, co-option is a practise and strategy which gives the agency of the dominant culture to maintain their oppression. For example, Gandhi had 'agency' to speak on untouchability and proclaimed as an untouchable, but it was an exercise of 'appropriating victimhood'. Therefore the co-option and appropriation is manifest as well as a latent function in Hinduism.

The challenges behind the acceptance are controlled by the dominant ideology. It's a different practice that they maintain that ideology by their pre-defined agenda. Ideology itself proclaimed the notion of liberation and appropriation of differences along with continuance hegemony. Hindutva as an ideology recruit the space of survival with different organisation in appropriated manner. However, the hindutva approach to dalit was with the motive appropriation of differences. The scholarly writings on hindutva and dalit limit the accuracy of understanding the co-option and appropriation. Why are Dalits favourable for RSS and BJP? What are the circumstances which support the co-option and appropriation and encourage the nourishment of those favourable practices? Apart from the history of caste discrimination and exclusion, why is appropriation of differences easy for Hindutva ideology? Today, almost 58% area of India has been conquered by BJP and RSS nexus. Out of 29 states 13 have been captured by BJP.¹

Hindu nationalism with their chronological history is absorbing the space and location of Indian society. With the question that why invention of Hinduism is necessary for

¹ PM Modi to meet CMs of 13 BJP-ruled states, with eye on Lok Sabha 2019
(<http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/narendra-modi-to-meet-cms-of-13-bjp-ruled-states-2019-lok-sabha-polls/1/935903.html>)

nationalism? This question is restructuring the appearance and the reality of nationalism with epistemic violence, symbolic violence and the structural violence. It is not a 1925 emerged term, had the ontological legacy of the practices of hindutva with the link of shastra, vedas, and Sanskrit literature. Today, the appearance of hindu rashtra is a 'tip of ice berg' for laymen public and in intellectual domain, it has the pluralistic approach with different narratives.

A couple of decades prior, there was much dialog on what goes into the making of nationalism. The discourse was differed since nationalism is not a substantial protest but rather a dynamic idea. Benedict Anderson (2006) contended that an envisioned group is built by individuals who consider themselves a group with regular observations that join them. The solidarity was more achievable in current circumstances than in the past in light of the fact that the spread of education with the help of the printing press and are helping of daily newspapers, and so on. To this one could include, if so inclined, the impact of TV and the silver screen as maintaining or notwithstanding helping with making a national feeling.²

Ernest Gellner, the British social anthropologist connected nationalism to another sort of society that came out of a past society and contrasted from it in different ways. It allowed the development of an unoriginal society where people were fortified through characterizing a mutual culture and taking in a common history. Once more, to this one could include that the recognition of a similar code of laws was likewise a coupling component. Be that as it may, the truth of the matter is that code of laws and the mutual culture has an overwhelming structure in the general public.³

Eric Hobsbawm characterized the nationalism with the history. He clarified how history is reproduced in a way that suits the belief system of nationalism and is fundamental to the development of nationalism. It is fundamental to the making of a state and this joins the world class as well as the less advantaged. Nationalism may start with thoughts among the world class yet its spread includes having mass help. History assumes a vital part in both making the premise of the solidarity and for supporting it. Yet, it relies upon the social reality

² Benedict Anderson, *Imagine communities: reflections on the origin and spread of Nationalism*, New York: Verso, (2006), New York.

³ Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, Cornell University Press, (1983), New York.

of the society around then.⁴ However, what are the social and political aspects in nationalism? It's an important question. How should one recognise the social and political aspect in nationalism? Is nationalism necessary to integrate the country? Is nationalism necessary to maintain the cultural hegemony within the country? Is it the necessity of Nationalism produce the duality of emancipation or co-option of the counter culture?

With these questions the debate over nation, nation-state and nationalism is far removed from the sociological perspective. G. Aloysius argued that “the ‘national’ became isolated, insulated, elevated and far removed from the ‘social’ which was often delegitimized as communal/castiest”.⁵ After the changing of socio-political situation the concept also lost its usefulness to understand the social reality and on the other hand it proved to be a block to understand the reality.⁶ We can study Nationalism in the contextual manner to understand the structure and changes in the society as a whole.

Nationalism in India is viewed from the perspective of traditional history. As Aloysius observes that the idea of nationalism ones interpreted by upper caste Brahminical Nationalism. One of first part of framework is around the concept of Hindu Nationalism. This will allow us to understand the different forms of nationalist ideology which existed in India and even the different aspects of Hindu nationalism. Then the focus of attention would be on the categories of appropriation and co-option and how these categories can be contextualized with respect to Hindu Nationalism. The prime idea of this research is to investigate and analyse the social aspects of this appropriation and co-option. Then, how can the idea of India and Indians gets constructed along the lines of Hindu nationalism and finally how the discourse of appropriation and co-option of dalit has shaped the post Independent India. Without co-opting the history you can't co-opt the community.

Statement of the problem:

Regarding the Hindu nationalism, the practices of co-option and appropriation of dalit is not new phenomenon. It has a particular history which defines the notion of cultural appropriation of lower strata. The origin and development of Hindu nationalism as a project

⁴ Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, myth, reality*, CU, (1990), London.

⁵ G. Aloysius, *Nationalism without a Nation in India*, OUP, (1997) Delhi.

⁶ *ibid*

was first enunciated in the 1920s with a major contribution from V. D. Savarkar.⁷ His work 'Hindutva: who is a Hindu?' published in Nagpur in 1923 is a basic text for nationalist 'Hinduness'. Jafferlot in this context states about genesis and development of Hindu nationalism as an ideology. He writes that ideology is defined by Geertz as a 'symbolic strategy' undermined by modernization process.⁸ This term used in the establishment of defence of value and belief of a culture in implicit and explicit way. This perspective allows viewing the instrumentalist understanding of strategic and manipulative reinterpretation of culture and value systems.

This reinterpretation and its manifestation allow a process which facilitates in strategic creation of a space for strategic appropriation and co-option of different social groups. This strategic co-option of different social groups has happened as part of a long historical process in India. This co-option which attempts to give space, maintains its hegemonic and dominant structure and internal hierarchy at its bottom surface. In this context Jafferlot writes that Hedgewar insisted upon the practice of having meals together with low castes which unnerved some Brahmins. This practice was also appreciated by Mahatma Gandhi when he visited in RSS camp at Wardha, Maharashtra in 1934.⁹

For Hindutva as an ideology, the only relevant objective is to re-establish this golden age of Hinduism, and especially its Varna system. The sociological basis of this ideological strategy is easy to trace, among the Hindus, the persons most willing to protect the cultural equilibrium belong to the high caste elite, not only because they aspire to preserve a privileged position but also because they alone seem to have an overall view of their society. The Varna model expounded in the Vedas, with its organicist emphasis on the harmony of a complementary social system is most likely a Brahmanic creation. Indeed, the leaders of the socio-religious reform movements come mainly from the high caste intelligentsia (Ram Mohan Roy was a Brahmin whose knowledge of English enabled him to work in the East

⁷ Christophe Jafferlot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement and Indian Politics 1925 to 1990s: Strategies of Identity-Building, Implantation and Mobilisation (With special reference to Central India)*, Penguin Books India, (1993) New Delhi, P. 25

⁸ Christophe Jafferlot, "Hindu Nationalism: Strategic Syncretism in Ideology Building", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 28, No. 12/13 (Mar. 20-27, 1993), pp. 517-524.

⁹ Christophe Jafferlot, *Analysing and fighting caste: Dr. Ambedkar and Untouchability*, Permanent Black, (2005), Delhi.

India Company administration and Dayananda, a Gujarati Brahmin, came from an orthodox milieu).

Yet, in such a social hierarchy the position of the minimized and the barred, known as the ex-untouchables or the Dalits, has stayed faulty. While for the development of a Hindu Rashtra, Hindutva is still to locate a persuading answer relating the position of these underestimated individuals inside the Hindu structure. Savarkar says "The concept of the term Hindutva-Hinduness is more comprehensive than the word 'Hinduism'. It was to draw a pointed attention to this distinction that I had coined the words 'Hindutva ', 'Pan Hindu' and 'Hindudom' when I framed the definition of the word Hindu. Hinduism concerns with the religious system of the Hindus, their theology and dogma."¹⁰

Conceptual Understanding:

Contending ideologies:

It is not a compulsion on ideology to conform to a chronological order with reference to history. It's a history which represents the ideology of the oppression and liberation with time and context. In this kind of conceptualisation the history of doing and undoing with hindutva ideology trace the question of complexity of understanding. It's an important question as to how many people really know about the Hindutva as an ideology. History of any concept can't conceptualise in a unilinear way; it has the propensity to enrol with dominant ideology (see A. A Mondal, 2003). How ideologies change in a contending way for oppressor and the oppressed? To understand this question, Freedden maintained the distinction between ideological analysis (the study of real world ideologies) and the ideologizing (the construction of ideologies, which occurs partly through political theory).¹¹ Therefore the role of ideology in a contending way depends upon the analysis and construction by the public sphere of that society.

As Karl Mannheim observed ideological portrayal can be viewed either as 'false cognizance', 'a misleading', and a 'cognizant lie' or as the 'standpoint definitely connected with a given verifiable and social circumstance and the Weltanschauung and style of thought bound up with it; and that in solid circumstances, these two evidently polar angles regularly

¹⁰ Savarkar quoted in Jyotirmaya Sharma, *Hindutva; Exploring the Idea of Hindu Nationalism*, Viking, Penguin, (2003), New Delhi p.156.

¹¹ Michael Freedden, *Ideologies and political theory: A conceptual approach*, Oxford University Press, (1996), Oxford, pp. 27-28.

have a tendency to "mix".¹² In the context of contending ideologies, the identity and the conscience of intention, modify in the co-opted way to deal with counter culture. And it is clear that 'contending' can't exist in a holistic way, it has tendency to assimilate with the unconscious mind. Ideological analysis is hence worried about the exhuming and scientific examination of unmistakable frameworks of thoughts and the effective part they play in political life. However ideological investigation has every now and again been undermined by the notorious assorted qualities of implications that have been appended to the ideal.¹³ Who will identify whether ideology is contending or not, the class of intellectuals of the hierarchical society or the oppressed section of that society?

Hindu Nationalism and ideology:

This part deals with the theme of 'Hindu Nationalism' and its sociological analysis. This analysis would require a socio-historical understanding of Hinduism and deployment of the term in context of 'religion'. Max Weber¹⁴ in his view on nation, was very clear that 'prestigious community' is a path of examine the nation, which is endowed with a feeling of cultural mission. Further he argued that nation has various dimension and can't be defined in single criterion and also explain the nation as an ethnic communities by which population convert in an organicist model with the common descent of myth. Define the nation in a distinguish way is a project of political commitment.

As early as his first major work, *The Division of Labour in Society*, Durkheim was writing: "What brings men together are mechanical causes and impulsive forces, such as affinity of blood, attachment to the same soil, ancestral worship, community of habits, etc. It is only when the group has been formed on these bases that co-operation is organised there¹⁵." The result of these mechanical causes and impulsive forces is a sense of solidarity or community based upon shared beliefs and sentiments, and a close resemblance between its members. Lacking an adequate sociology of specific cultures and of politics, however, Durkheim stopped short of applying his ideas directly to modern nations and their secular faiths. Nor was he able to give an account of the genesis of nations and nationalism; his

¹² Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, (1979), London, pp. 49-50.

¹³ Michael Freedon, *Ideologies and Political theory: A conceptual Approach*, Oxford, (1996), New York, p. 13. (see also Eagleton (1991: 1-2), Van Dijk (1998: 1), McLellan (1995:1), Humphrey (2005: 225-27).

¹⁴ Zenonas Norkus, "Max Weber on Nations and Nationalism: Political Economy before Political Sociology", *The Canadian Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 29, No. 3 (Summer, 2004), pp. 389-418.

¹⁵ W.D. Halls (Trans.), Intro. Lewis A. Coser, Emile Durkheim: *The Division of Labor in Society*, Free Press, (1997), New York, pp. 39, 60, 108.

wholly 'internal' analysis addresses itself to the functions of collective symbolism, ritual and ideals.

Clifford Geertz, from an anthropological point of view, shows that there are two contending yet corresponding segments ethnic and civic in the patriotism of post-colonial states. The ethnic measurement is depicted as a pledge to "primordial" loyalties which supply people with a particular identity; the civic as a yearning for citizenship in a modern state. Since state and ethnic limits regularly conflict, the outcome is endemic clash.¹⁶

For contrast, Anthony Giddens displays an unambiguous statist definition of the nation depicted here likewise 'bordered power- container'. This furthermore much else is the subject of a investigated by Walker Connor, who rejects propensities to compare nation with state, what's more patriotism with state patriotism. Similar to Weber, he characterizes the nation likewise a group keeping for descent, that as recognizes it from ethnic groups eventually Tom's perusing its level from claiming self- consciousness; as much as ethnic community might be other- defined, a nation must a chance to be self -defined.¹⁷

On the other side, ideology contended as a cultural part to used in the defence of value and belief pattern. He also further argued, ideology as a part of culture is apologetic in nature. With this understanding, it is useful to develop the national self-esteem. In the concluding remarks, it is clear that this approach does not assimilate with 'primordialist' because culture can't considered here as static 'given' but reinterpretation is a main subject to conglomerate with ideologization point out by Lloyd Fallers.¹⁸

With their critical point of view, Jaffrelot contended that the definition of Geertz and Fallers does not consider the social background of the reinterpreters who mould the ideologies. This factor deserves greater attention because the major aim of these leaders is to adjust the outward expression of their discourse in order to preserve what they consider to be the basic values and identity of society. Their choices are determined by both cultural framework and social status. Therefore, the reformers of the high caste who mould the ideology, largely reflects the Brahminical view in Hindu nationalism.¹⁹ Jaffrelot argues that

¹⁶ John Hutchinson, Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism*, OUP, (1994), Delhi, p.15.

¹⁷ *ibid*

¹⁸ Christophe Jaffrelot, *The Hindu nationalist Movement and Indian Politics 1925 to 1990s: Strategies of Identity-Building, Implantation and Mobilisation (With special reference to Central India)*, Penguin Books India, 1993, New Delhi, pp. 12-13.

¹⁹ *Ibid*.

this ‘Syncretism’ is ‘strategic’ because it underlies an ideology that aims to dominate the others, in terms of prestige and also based on socio-political lines. In this context the explanatory model of Anthony Smith for the emergence of ethnic nationalism proves very useful.²⁰

Borrowing from Geertz definition of ‘Ideology’ Jaffrelot tries to explain as how ‘Hindu Nationalism’ originated and developed as an Ideology. According to Geertz ideology is ‘Symbolic Strategy’ evolved in a society by modernization process. And even the concept of Nationalism is an ideology following the definition.²¹ Jaffrelot writes here further in this context: “This theoretical perspective emphasizes the ‘instrumentalist idea of manipulative reinterpretations of cultural material, nevertheless the model remains predominantly ‘cultural’ since the major aim of reinterpreters is to adjust the outward expression of ideology while preserving the basic values and identity of society’.”²²

This perspective reflects on the idea that how tradition was reinvented in context of emergence of Hindu nationalist Ideology. Jaffrelot believes that if it is possible to analyze this as a subcategory of that can be used as sub category of this invention process. This sub category can be called ‘Strategic Syncretism’. It is because the content of this ideology has been supplied to a large extent by material taken from the cultural values of groups who were seen to be antagonistic towards the Hindu community. Further Jaffrelot argues that this ‘Syncretism’ is ‘strategic’ because it underlies an ideology that aims to dominate the others, in terms of prestige and is also based on socio-political lines. He believes that his hypothesis can be tested based on three significant and cumulative episodes. First one is the shaping of socio-religious movements, birth of Hindu Mahasabha in the wake of Khilafat movement and the ideological development of ‘RSS Complex’.²³

Review of literature:

Before the late 1980s early commentary on Hindu Nationalism Literature documented on communalism, construction of the ‘others’ rather than re - presented the co-option and appropriation of different social groups. The literature didn’t focus on the strategic co-option

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Christophe Jaffrelot, “Hindu Nationalism: Strategic Syncretism in Ideology Building”, *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 28, No. 12/13 (Mar. 20-27, 1993), pp. 517-524.

²³ ibid

and appropriation to maintain the hegemony of the upper caste through manifest and latent functions in the society. The interpretive function of reading and writing about the Hindu Nationalism, the discursive construction of subjectivity, agency, nationalism and history that are involved in its narrativization was not considered. The representations of the everyday and local experiences had been pushed to the margin and literary criticism did not give a fuller, more rounded discussion of the event. However, this historical scholarship does not deal with the personal and social histories of the people.

With this shift in attention it becomes clear that history and literature are linked. Any discussion or criticism without them becomes meaningless. In order to get a clearer picture, it is necessary to review the historical sources, recent literary sources of criticism as well as journals which deal with the historical, literary and inter-disciplinary aspects of Hindu Nationalism.

An examination that spots Hindu nationalism as its focal concentration may appear to be repetitive given the excess of writing accessible regarding the matter. With a few exemptions,²⁴ Hindu nationalism took the scholastic spotlight from the mid to late 1980s, when the Sangh Parivar started to develop as a conspicuous constrain in Indian culture and political issues. With the ascent of the Ramjanambhoomi movement as a skillet north Indian concern, it was clear that the surge in help for religious nationalism was the aftereffect of profound established improvements that had adjusted the political scene of the Hindi belt altogether. It may be contended now that such an advancement was fast approaching given

²⁴ Jean Alonzo Currean, *Militant Hinduism in Indian politics: A study of the R.S.S.* International Secretariat, Institute of Pacific Relations, (1951), New York.

the solid nearness of conventional Hindu components in the social mind of this district, even as a major aspect of the Congress' practical motivation, since the pre-autonomy period.²⁵

However, until the late 1980s, there was little by way of formal support for religious majoritarianism as a political ideology – as was seen from the failure of the BJS, and even the BJP in its early stages, to attain a reasonable level of popular acceptance and success. The change was thus one that spanned many dimensions and hence, created a need to interpret the nature of Hindutva as a socio-political ideology, and gain a better understanding of its influence in contemporary Indian society and politics.²⁶ Studies on Hindu nationalism have been so numerous and comprehensive that it is near impossible to account for all of them. Hence, this brief review takes up some of the broad strands of study that encompass much of the relevant literature on this subject.

The first amongst these is the focus on the ideological and socio-political origins of Hindu nationalism. Most studies place the genesis of Hindu nationalism at the late 19th century, wherein the conjunction of two strands of nationalist thought – Indian nationalism and Hindu revivalism – produced a synthesized ideology that was secular as well as religious. The unique, or ironic, blend of elements was derived to a large extent from the influence of European scholarship on the Indian elite, as a result of which the Indian elite attempted to emulate the West subconsciously,²⁷ yet outwardly sought to reinstate a national

²⁵ Zoya Hasan, *Quest for power: Oppositional movements and post-Congress politics in UttarPradesh*, Oxford University Press, (1998), New Delhi.

²⁶ Jasmine Zerini-Brotel, in Thomas Blorn Hansen and Christophe Jeffrelot (eds.) *BJP and the Compulsions of Politics in India*, Oxford University Press, (1998), Delhi, p. 74

²⁷ Partha Chaterjee, “Bengal politics and the Muslim masses, 1920-47” in Hasan, Mushirul, (ed.) *India's partition : process, strategy, and mobilization*, Oxford University Press; 1993, Delhi. Gyan Prakash, “Body politic in colonial India” in Timothy Mitchell (ed.), *Questions of modernity*, University of Minnesota Press, 2000, London.

identity that was shaped by elements of Indian tradition and culture. Significantly, Hinduism was seen as the only religion capable of engendering and sustaining such a transformation.

The centrality of Hinduism to the nationalist movement was further strengthened by the formation of religious and socio-political organizations (Arya Samaj, Hindu Mahasabha) and mass-based movements (the Cow Protection Movement), which helped to disseminate and strengthen a growing sense of religious consciousness.²⁸ It is noteworthy that the influence was not limited to Hindu revivalists alone – the Congress's 'secular' framework was itself constituted of traditionalist Hindu elements, especially at the state level.²⁹

There is common consensus that Hindu nationalist ideology was 'formalized' in the early 1920s when V.D. Savarkar sought to provide a comprehensive definition of the 'Hindu' based on multiple markers of geography, race, religion and ethnicity in his thesis *Hindutva: Who is a Hindu?* (first published in 1923).³⁰

The importance of Savarkar's and Golwalkar's works to contemporary Hindu nationalist ideology derives from their ability to provide a firm theoretical basis that legitimizes the exclusion of followers of other religions, especially Muslims, from the right to 'belong' in the country of their birth.³¹ Studies of the Ramjanambhoomi movement³² point to the centrality of this element to the campaign, especially with regard to the stress on the 'Muslim' origins of the mosque and the call for the demonstration of 'Hindu' pride through participation in the effort to replace it with a temple.

Apart from this central focus, the literature on the Ramjanambhoomi movement has dealt with several aspects that relate to the larger socio-economic forces shaping the country's psyche such as the importance of media in shaping the public imagination, with particular reference to the televised serials, *Ramayana*;³³ the means by which socio-economic grievances had been contextualized within religion;³⁴ and the contributory factors to, and

²⁸ Gyanendra Pandey, *The construction of communalism in colonial north India*, Oxford University Press, (1991), New Delhi, John Zavos, *The emergence of Hindu nationalism in India*. New Delhi; New York: Oxford University Press, 2000, New Delhi.

²⁹ William Gould, *Hindu nationalism and the language of politics in late colonial India*, Cambridge University Press, (2004), New York.

³⁰ Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, *Hindutva: Who is a Hindu?* 6th ed. Veer Savarkar Prakashan, (1989), Bombay.

³¹ Gyanendra Pandey (ed.), *Hindus and others: The question of identity in India today*, Viking, (1993), New York.

³² *ibid*

³³ Arvind Rajagopal, *Politics after television: Religious nationalism and the reshaping of the Indian public*, Cambridge University Press, (2001), New York.

³⁴ Ashish Nandy et al. *Creating a nationality: The Ramjanmabhumi movement and fear of the self*, Oxford University Press, (1995), Delhi.

impact of, communal rioting and its impact on political and social structures.³⁵ These studies didn't cover the circumstances of co-option of dalit in a ground level through socio-psychological phenomenon.

Another dimension of the study of Hindu nationalism concentrates on the core organizations that constitute the Sangh Parivar. Of these, the RSS has received considerable attention, given its primacy as the foundation upon which the Sangh Parivar was built. On a general note, the RSS is often perceived as the progenitor and inheritor of the fascist tradition of Hindu nationalism, largely because of the extremist leanings of the organization in the 1930s and 40s. Although the RSS moderated much of its rhetoric and maintained its distance from politics in the post-independence period, certain elements that continued to be retained, such as the para-military style of its training and organization in the *shakas*³⁶, sustained the stereotype of the organization.

This perception has been tempered to some extent by studies in recent times,³⁷ which have highlighted the different aspects of the ideology, structure and functioning of the RSS. In particular, these studies have dealt with important issues including the spread and development of Hindu nationalism in the post-independence period, the manner in which Hindu nationalism has come to be ingrained within the social and political culture of north India, and the limits to the RSS's 'non-involvement' with politics.

The steady growth in membership over the years from mere hundreds to over a million in recent times is a result of the RSS's modus operandi that institutes cadre based networks throughout the country, which in turn implant memberships at the local level. Underlying this strategy is the RSS's disregard for short-term social or numerical gain, with the sole aim of transforming society over time from the grassroots. The RSS's strategy is complemented by its social welfare wings such as the 'Sewa Bharti' and schools like 'Sanskrit Kendra' and 'Saraswathi Shishu Mandir', which work with lower-caste or tribal groups.

In recent times, these initiatives have come under criticism on account of the organizations' efforts to propagate a synthesized set of Hindu practices that could promulgate

³⁵ Thomas Blom Hansen, *The saffron wave: Democracy and Hindu nationalism in modern India*. Princeton University Press, (1999), New Jersey.

³⁶ Shakas is the term used to refer to local branches or centers of the RSS.

³⁷ Tapan Basu et al. *Khaki shorts and saffron flags: A critique of the Hindu right*, Orient Longman, (1993), New Delhi Viking.

attachment to the religion and the society simultaneously – a practice that is seen as representative of the RSS's underlying pro-Brahminical ethos, and contradictory to its claims of a casteless agenda.³⁸ Nevertheless, despite the questions raised over the nature of its ideological commitment, there is common consensus that the RSS is the primary representative of Hindutva in Indian society over the years.

Whilst other organizations within the Sangh Parivar such as the VHP³⁹ have also received considerable attention, the BJP commands a special place in academic discourse on account of its role as the sole envoy of the Sangh Parivar's interests in the political forte. Although focus on the BJP intensified only in the late 1980s, the studies that have emerged since have been extensive and numerous, especially when compared to the works on the Bharatiya Jan Sangh (BJS).⁴⁰ The general themes of analysis include the BJP's ideology, strategy and functioning.⁴¹ Amongst these, an oft-examined topic of analysis centers on the timing of the rise of the BJP in Indian politics.

Given the close-knit framework of the Sangh Parivar, the BJP had a strong member network built up by the RSS since the 1920s to tap into for support. However, the BJP failed to make its mark as a prominent political force until the late 1980s. The reason for this delay lay in the lack of an opportune political moment, which was created by the convergence of specific socio-political conditions that provided the Sangh Parivar with an opportunity to implement its strategy of ethno-religious mobilization and validate the notion of the threatening 'Other'.⁴² In particular, the ineptitude of the Congress in the 1970s and 80s and the inability of the state to adapt its secular ideology to suit a changing social polity resulted in the weakening of the secular principle and 'legitimized' the growth in support for religious nationalism in the early 1990s.⁴³

Much has been said on the BJP's ability to capitalize on the shifting trends through the Ramjanambhoomi movement. It is important to note that apart from its larger implications for Indian society and politics as a whole, the significance of the movement lay in its ability to

³⁸ Christophe Jaffrelot, *"The Hindu nationalist movement and Indian politics, 1925 to the 1990s: Strategies of identity-building, implantation and mobilization"* Hurst & Company, (1996), London.

³⁹ Tapan Basu et al. (1993), op.cit. p.42.

⁴⁰ Craig Baxter, *The Jana Sangh: A biography of an Indian political party*, University of Pennsylvania Press, (1969), Philadelphia.

⁴¹ Tapan Basu, et al. (1993). Op.cit. p.16.

⁴² Christophe Jaffrelot, (1996). Op.cit. pp.45-47.

⁴³ Zoya Hasan, *Quest for power: Oppositional movements and post-Congress politics in Uttar Pradesh*, Oxford University Press, (1998), New Delhi.

provide the BJP with an opportunity to reconcile its roles as both a movement and a political party.⁴⁴ However, the post-Ramjanambhoomi movement period brought to fore challenges that restricted the BJP's rise and expansion, and more importantly, put to test the resilience of the BJP's commitment to the social agenda of the Sangh Parivar. As a result, the academic spotlight moved away from the dominant discourse on the communal leanings of the party to an assessment of the manner in which the BJP had accommodated itself within Indian politics and the factors that tested its expansion.

In a significant new interpretative study of Indian nationalism, Aloysius reverses the usual tendency to see the high caste-led independence movement as the 'nationalist' movement, and instead analyses it as mainly a high-caste movement with a dual purpose, achieving independence and maintaining the basic structures of a society which they ruled.⁴⁵

In contrast, the social movement of the low castes was, according to Aloysius, truly nationalist not simply because it sought to create the "social feeling... a corporate sentiment of oneness which make those who are charged with it feel they are kith and kin" (in Ambedkar's definition, cited 153) that nearly all agree is at the core of nationalism. Ambedkar, and Phule and others before him, went beyond this accepted definition of 'nation-building' to argue that the foundation of this sentiment of oneness could only be provided by a destruction of caste hierarchies and elite exclusiveness. Thus, what others are now describing as a 'dalit-bahujan movement' was, in Aloysius' terms, the true political nationalism.

Angana P. Chatterji is an intelligent and elegiac investigation of Hindu nationalism in India today. It offers a noteworthy record of Hindu aggressor preparation as a tyrant show all through culture, commonwealth, and economy, religion and law, class and standing, on sexual orientation, body land and memory. Following the coherencies amongst Hindutva and Hindu social predominance, this book maps the structures of urban and dictatorial represent attitudes forming Hindu Patriotism out in the open, household and regular day to day existence. At the crossing points of humanities, post-pilgrim, subaltern and South Asia Studies creator poses a basic inquiries of Country making, social Patriotism and subaltern disappointment. As a Foucauldian history of the present this book attests the part of moral

⁴⁴ Amrita Basu, "The dialectics of Hindu nationalism" in Atul Kohli (ed.), *The success of India's democracy*, Cambridge University Press, (2001), New York.

⁴⁵ G. Aloysius, *Nationalism without a nation in India*, Oxford, (1997), New Delhi.

learning creation as counter-memory. In the present situation the act of vital co-alternative and appointment give the opportunity to co-select the dalit in Hindu overlap.⁴⁶

Badrinarayan Tiwari in *Fascinating Hindutva* examines how, Hindutva forces like RSS, VHP, and other fundamentalist organisation are trying to mobilize the dalit to reinterpret their Hindu past and unifying into the Hindutva fold. And he also explain that how hindutva forces are using the fascinating tactics to mobilize the dalit castes like Nishads, Musahars, and Dusadhs.⁴⁷

In the discussion above, a commonly referred to but relatively unexplored factor has been the impact of the rise of dalit co-option and appropriation, which provide the strategy to RSS for maintaining the Hindu social order. Despite the vast literature on Hindu nationalism and caste, there is a lacuna in the analysis on the manner in which the trajectories of caste and Hindu nationalism have interacted. In the other words, the debate on Hindu Nationalism covered only the communal character, construction of the others. They didn't focus on the practise of co-option of dalit in Hindutva fold. Is it only a social co-option or political co-option? It is important to understand the research on Hindutva thus needs to focus attention not only on the Sangh Parivar but also on everyday environs that imbue Hindutva with diffuse meaning and substance. It is important to understand the research on Hindutva with their hideousness of past. How did they success to differentiate between political and social in everyday life?

Review of literature: Uttar Pradesh

Unlike anti caste movements in south, northern parts of India did not witness different movements against the caste system. Multiple factors were responsible for the lack of anti-caste movements in these states. Different scholars have highlighted different causes for it. Some felt that unlike oppressive caste system in South, northern parts did not have oppressive caste practices and leaving few Dalit communities such as Bhangi, Doms, Chamar others did not face much humiliating experiences.⁴⁸ However, the struggle for freedom addressed all the subjects equally therefore Dalits and other agrarian castes assimilated themselves in the

⁴⁶ A. Chatterji, *Violent gods: Hindu Nationalism in India's present*, NEC, (2009), Gurgaon.

⁴⁷ Badrinarayan Tiwari, *Fascinating Hindutva: Saffron politics and dalit mobilisation*, SAGE, (2009), Delhi.

⁴⁸ L. Rudolph and S. Rudolph, *The Modernity of Tradition: Political Development in India*, University of Chicago Press, (1967), Chicago.

national movement.⁴⁹ The delayed Dalit consciousness due to absence of any major anti-caste movements in Uttar Pradesh has resulted in lack of economic development, educational deprivation and political submission in Uttar Pradesh.⁵⁰

Dalit politics reached Uttar Pradesh much after it did in Maharashtra, but seen in the context of power, politics and electoral mobilization, the success graph of Dalit politics has been much higher in Uttar Pradesh. As Kanshi Ram would like to put it, 'Dalit Politics was a small plant in Maharashtra which I have transplanted and nurtured in the grounds of UP'. Badri Narayan says, here the ground of Uttar Pradesh means the social, cultural and political environment of the people. It also stands for the cultural psyche of the Dalits which has been giving shape to their political language. The experiences of daily oppression and humiliation faced by the Dalits have been converted to language of dissent.⁵¹

The Bahujan Samaj Party was not formed as a political party from beginning rather it was named as BAMCEF-Backward and Minority Classes Employees Federation in 1976. It was a statist party and believed in state to provide justice to the marginalised communities.⁵² According to Omvedt⁵³ it allied with some major parties in the state and its objective was to capture power. It was not a reform movement rather a 'social action group'. BSP was formed after lot of mobilisation executed by the strong workers of the organisation. On 14th April, 1984 on the occasion of Dr. Ambedkar's birth anniversary Kanshi Ram formally launched the party. BSP through both Kanshi Ram and Mayawati gave a steady leadership and organisation to Dalits for the first time in Uttar Pradesh. Slowly in elections after elections BSP grew in stature, especially in the 1990's it acquired new political heights. It not only generated self-belief and vigour among Dalits, but Mayawati went on to become the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh twice in 1997 and in 1999 with the alliance of Bharatiya Janata Party's and in 2007 BSP came to power with majority of its own.

Affirmative Action Policies, Dalit Consciousness and Assertion

⁴⁹ Sudha Pai, *Dalit Assertion and Unfinished Democratic Revolution: The Bahujan Samaj Party in Uttar Pradesh*, SAGE, (2002), New Delhi.

⁵⁰ ibid

⁵¹ Badrinarayan Tiwari, *Fascinating Hindutva: Saffron politics and dalit mobilisation*, SAGE, (2009), Delhi.

⁵² Sudha Pai, *Dalit Assertion and Unfinished Democratic Revolution: The Bahujan Samaj Party in Uttar Pradesh*, SAGE, (2002), New Delhi.

⁵³ G. Omvedt, *Dalits and Dalit Democratic Revolution: Dr. Ambedkar and Dalit Movements in Colonial India*, Sage, (1994), New Delhi.

Dalit assertion is one of the significant features in the contemporary Indian politics and society. Different scholars have attempted to analyse the various causes for the increasing Dalit assertion. Ram⁵⁴ while highlighting the possible causes for the rise of Dalit assertion emphasised on the state policies and programmes and also on the movements led by Dalit leaders such as Ambedkar. According to him, Dalits have gained from the state policies, developmental schemes and programmes such as protective discrimination i.e. Reservation. These policies have provided a source/avenue to channelize their potential. Gorringe⁵⁵ expresses that most violence does not arise from the straight imposition of higher castes authority but as higher castes reaction to initiatives of former-Untouchables to shed of their historic conditions and rise in the world. The more Dalits have resisted their subordination the more savage has been reaction they have encountered from the upper castes.

Social Movements and Dalit Leadership

Apart from the state's actions, Ram⁵⁶ also emphasised upon various movements led by Dalits. He says, Dalits have organized several agitations and movements to attract the attention of the state for their development. More importantly these agitations and confrontations were directed against the *status quoism* and also to maintain the social equilibrium. Similar views were expressed by Anupama Rao⁵⁷ who has stated Dalits were benefited through the state policies to achieve development and equal status. She has also pointed the various strategies adopted by Dalit movement leaders to seek policies and states affirmative action's which began through Ambedkar from the demand for separate electorate. On the other hand scholars have laid emphasis on various caste movements in general and Dalit movements in particular that have occurred since the post-independence period across the country have provided space for asserting their demands and rights.⁵⁸

The above mentioned studies have concentrated predominantly on the pre-1990's period. The studies in the post- 1990's have largely located in the Dalits assertion in the political context. However, in the present scenario the politics of co-option and appropriation is going on. This study will focus on the co-option and appropriation of dalits in Western Uttar Pradesh. It is important to understand the changing nature of politics and the cultural hegemony of Hindutva forces.

⁵⁴ Nandu Ram, *Beyond Ambedkar: Essays on Dalits in India*, Har Anand, (2009) New Delhi.

⁵⁵ Hugo Gorringe, *Untouchable Citizens: Dalit Movements and Democratisation in TN*, (New Delhi: SAGE, 2005).

⁵⁶ Nandu Ram, *Beyond Ambedkar: Essays on Dalits in India*, Har Anand, (2009) New Delhi.

⁵⁷ Anupama Rao, *Gender and Caste: Kali for Women*, Zuban Publication, (2006), New Delhi.

⁵⁸ Eleanor Zelliot, *From Untouchables to Dalits: Essays on Ambedkar's Movement*, Manohar, (2001) Delhi.

Objectives of the Research:

- 1.To understand the mechanism of Co-option of Schedule Castes;
- 2.To understand the co-opting history and experience of Dalits into Hindu Nationalism; and
- 3.To understand the political co-option and the social co-option of dalits in Hindutva politics.

Research Questions:

- 1.What is the historicity of co-option of dalit in the context of Hindu nationalism?
- 2.What are the processes of mechanism of appropriation and co-option which provide base to the Hindu Nationalism? (Constructed past and memory)
- 3.How have appropriation and co-option shaped the different discourses in Post- Independent Indian political arena with contending ideologies.

Hypothesis

1. There are various processes of appropriation and co-option along with intersectionality of time and space dimensions in context of Hindu Nationalism.
2. The practice and strategies of co-option and appropriation can revive the social order in the context of Hindu nationalism.
3. The memory of oppression can blur with constructed past.

Research Methodology:

In this research of Historical Sociology method has been followed. After the dominant functional paradigm in sociology, it is important to understand the concept of nationalism along with social history. The present social phenomenon is a trajectory of history and responds to the future. As C.W. Mills⁵⁹ argued sociology is an attempt to write 'the present as history'. He opined that to understand the social trajectory there are three elements: structure, history and biography. Epistemologically, 'historical sociology contended with the macro and micro approach, where macro indulged with one extreme and micro approach conglomerate with the deconstructionist and traditional history on the other end.⁶⁰ Historical explanation is

⁵⁹ C. W. Mills, *The Sociological Imagination*, Oxford University Press, (1959/1976), New York.

⁶⁰ P. Abrams, *Historical Sociology*, Cornell University Press, (1982), Ithaca.

basically the revaluation to its former significance within sociology. Nationalism in a sociological perspective proposed the criticism of one dimensionality and composite culture. Therefore, it would attempt to study and investigate the historical origins and development of Hindu Nationalism in India. This methodology will investigate the patterns as major factors in the origin and development of Hindu nationalism along with appropriation and co-option of dalit. It is important for us to understand the socio-historical trajectory of the appropriation and co-option of Schedule Castes.

This study use both qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis. The study has conducted in Meerut district of Western Uttar Pradesh. Two blocks of Meerut district have selected for collecting primary data are Sardhana and Rajpura. This research has largely been dependent on the available primary and secondary sources of data. Primary sources of data collected from the study area. This includes case studies, interviews and Focus Group Discussions. For collection of data, Simple Random Sampling has done. There are 20 in-depth interview has taken from the local leaders of different socio-religious organization which are associated and working for hindu rastra. And also there are around 25 Focused Group Discussion (FGD) has been conducted in the study area. In the secondary sources, different documents of BJP and 'The Organiser', a weekly published by the RSS provided certain valuable perspectives. Articles from journals and magazines have also been consulted. The local magazine of the study area has used for this research namely Paramdham booklet, Rashtradev magazine, etc.

Tables have been provided wherever necessary, to substantiate the findings and arguments. The tables have made with the use of SPSS technique.

Chapterisation:

This research is divided into 'Three' chapters excluding introduction and Conclusion. The chapters are;

Introduction: This chapter deals with the conceptualisation and traces the history of Hindu nationalism. The debate on nationalism is fragmented due to the ideological baggage carried forward by the trained and stereotyped idea of national by the Brahmin nationalist.

Chapter 1: Historicity of co-option: This chapter looks into the history of co-option in different forms of social and cultural practices. In the context of practise, co-option entangles

the form of domination and hegemony within the debate of nation, nationalism and the national movement. In this chapter the practice and strategies of co-option and appropriation will be traced on the basis of study of: (a) Bhakti movement and strategies of co-option; (b) History of appropriation in late 19th and 20th century (Arya samaj, Brahma Samaj, Hindu Mahasabha, RSS); and (c) RSS and BJP: continuity of co-option and appropriation.

Chapter 2: This chapter attempts to analyse the way of co-opting history: constructed past and memory. In this chapter, the phenomenon of co-option entangled with the co-opting history with constructed past and memory. How stock of knowledge generate and gets legitimacy in the everyday practice? In this chapter the role of collective memory, public memory and constructed past is the helping verb for the oppressor.

- (a) Co-option: continuation of past (stock of knowledge, 'who and how gets generate and regulate the stocks of knowledge; how that existing stock of knowledge regulates in the everyday life of practice, habitus, field', 'different versions of Hindutva- similarity and difference in different hindutva organisations like RSS, VHP, Bajrang Dal, Hindu Yuva Vahini- their strategy and practice of co-option of dalit)
- (b) Co-option, Past, and political discourse at present [(appropriation of constitution and appropriation in constitution like Ayodhya verdict, caste violence in everyday life, cultural and ritual violence with ritual purification, symbolic violence and physical violence like (*ghar wapsi*) how state categorises the practice of appropriation with violence, silence and how conservatism attempts to modernize itself.]

Chapter-3: Narrative of co-option and appropriation: A field view

This chapter is exploring the different narratives of co-option and appropriation of dalit by different Hindutva organizations. It will explore the loop-holes in theorizing nationalism with field and a-priori knowledge. This chapter also deals with the rise and culmination of different Hindutva groups which appropriate and co-opt the SC's. What are the strategic of co-option practices going on in the Western Uttar Pradesh?

Conclusion: This chapter will analyse and after concluding remarks on the past that got revealed in the course of research the fact finding and their relation between the before

mentioned ideas. Conclusion is an open ended passage and seeks to raise further debates on the subject of research. It aims to understand the process and raise further debates.

Chapter-1

Historicity of Co-option of Dalits

A consciousness of the history of concepts becomes a duty of critical thinking.

-Hans-Georg Gadamer

Words, too, can destroy.

-Reinhart Koselleck

Historical Semantics and Etymology:

As Reinhart Koselleck contended that a concept can't exist without the history.¹ Therefore, the conceptual history exists with their meaning and word in a different space and time. The contextuality of any concept helps to understand the socio-political settings of the location in which it emerged and developed. Jan Werner Muller² said that "in particular there have been questions whether concepts actually change or whether all that can be investigated is the 'changing usage of the words'."

How these concepts are part of larger intellectual movement which further are associated with different social- political groupings. As Walter Benzamin³ said that "to articulate what is past does not mean to recognize "how it really was." It means to take control of a memory, as it flashes in a moment of danger." Other side Yehuda Elkana⁴ contended that 'Without disregarding the noteworthy significance of 'collective memory', atmosphere in which a whole people decides its state of mind to the present and shapes its future by underlining the past lessons, is laden with danger for the eventual fate of that society, in the event that it needs to live in relative quietness and relative security, similar to every other individuals.'

Therefore, the everyday practice which are the result of our stock of knowledge and further develop our stock of knowledge which entangle with the memory, past and history.

¹ Reinhart Koselleck, *The Practice of conceptual history: Timing History, Spacing concepts*, Stanford University Press, (2002), Stanford, p.2.

² Jan Werner Muller, "Comprehending Conservatism: A new framework for analysis", *Journal of political ideologies*, (2006), pp.359-365.

³ Walter Benzamin, On the concept of history (<http://folk.uib.no/hlils/TBLR-B/Benjamin-History.pdf>)

⁴ Yehuda Elkana, "The need to forget", *"Ha'aretz"* (March 2, 1988), p.3. (<https://www.google.co.in/search?q=the+need+to+forget+yehuda+elkana>)

The terms which are used in past itself were socio-cultural laden that attaches and reflect, and reshape upon the meaning with the structure of that society. For example, in the age of Peshwa, the shadow of the untouchable was impure for Brahmin. On the other side, in 19th or 20th century the hindutva ideologues were successfully trying to co-opt the dalit in a hindutva fold, with practice of 'sehbhoj'. Therefore the meaning of impurity with shadow examined the historicity of hierarchy, structural violence, and the symbolic violence also. So, the practices can exist before turn into the concept or word with their hegemonic mantle. Hence, we observe how the concept and ideas are also located in practices of the society. This shows that how the trajectory of concepts and ideas are located or situated in certain form of practices. It is not only the concept and ideas which stimulates the practices but also how the practices stimulate and provide the meaning to concepts and ideas

Co-option as an end of process entangled with past, memory and historical construction of history. Co-opt is a mid-17th century term derive with Latin word 'co-optare', where 'co' means together and 'optare' means choose.⁵ Therefore, the meaning is 'choose together' with or without coercion. How do we choose or not choose itself an important question on togetherness? In Cambridge dictionary, the definition of co-opt 'to include someone in something, often against their will'.⁶ Other side in Merriam-Webster dictionary co-opt define like 'to take into a group (such as a faction, movement, or culture), like absorb, and assimilate'.⁷

With these definition and meaning the conclude point is that co-option is a process to assimilate and absorb in group, movement and culture. While the acceptance of 'together' itself a question on the reasoning of intuition in the society. The structure and agency develop modes of thought of that society as a form of 'ideal type' which gives the framework of negotiation in the process to choose or no to choose.⁸ As weber argued that the ideal type is a mental construct to approach the occurring phenomenon in the society. One can classify the characteristics to your own to understand the incident or action in the society. For Weber, it's a method to attempt the empirical reality in the society. In modern era, the practice of conservatism in Indian society adopts the strategies like construction of the 'other' as an ideal type for hindutva ideologue. It's a 'rationale' for them to attain their goal. In Weberian sense,

⁵ <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/us/co-opt>

⁶ <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/co-opt>

⁷ <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/co-opt>

⁸The concept of ideal type is using in the context of contending ideologies, by which dominant ideology construct and use as means and end process. Here the ideal type is not using in the researcher context.

action is intentional and goal directed. With the explanation of action and agency, Giddens examines that how intentionality uses in the production of the structures and how production of action affects from structures.⁹ One can explain that ideal type is an end and the co-option is a means for hindutva ideologue. For example, ‘Samajik Samrasta’ (social harmony) is means for ideal type like Hindu Rashtra. The practice of ritual harmony with ritual violence can be seen with historical perspective when Gandhi went to Wardha in Dec-1934, where the *Shakha* of RSS was going on. Gandhi was trying to know the caste composition of Swayamsevaks in the camp. The responses of Swayamsevaks were “There are no differences like Brahman, Maratha, Asprishyas etc. in the Sangh. We are, in fact, not even aware of each other’s caste among us. For us, it is enough that we are Hindus and Swyamsevaks.” Gandhi told Appa, “It appears almost impossible to ward off the evil of untouchability and high and low belief from our society. How could the Sangh achieve this miracle.”¹⁰ At the point when Gandhi visit to the R.S.S. camp left such an enduring impact at the forefront of his thoughts that on 16th September 1947. Only a couple of months before his grievous passing, Gandhi while tending to a rally of the R.S.S. swayamsevaks held in the Bhangi colony, Delhi, where he was remaining those days, recollected that camp strikingly. This speech was widely reported in the media. The Hindu, the English daily published from Madras, reported Gandhi’s speech in these words,¹¹

“Bapu recalled how many years ago when the founder of the Sangh Hedgewar was alive Seth Jammalal Bajaj had taken me to see a camp held by the organisation in Wardha. I was impressed by the discipline, complete absence of untouchability and rigorous simplicity which I saw there.” He added. “The Sangh has since grown. I am convinced that any organisation which is inspired by the ideal of service and self-sacrifice is bound to grow in strength. But, in order to be truly useful, self-sacrifice has to be combined with purity of motive and true knowledge. Sacrifice without these two aspects has been known to prove ruinous to society”.

Here, the main attributes is that the past of ‘civilizational violence’ appropriate through the use of agency in a strategic way and perform ritual violence with locating space. Appropriation and selective appropriation through assimilation is a core strategy of hindutva

⁹ Anthony Giddens, *New Rules of Sociological Method: A positive critique of interpretative sociologies*, Basic Book, (1976), New York, p. 76.

¹⁰ The Hindu, September 17, 1947; in *Mahatma Gandhi: The last 200 days*. Ed V Ramaswamy, Kasturi & Sons Ltd, Chennai; 2003; p. 158) Also in (D.G. Tendulkar, *Mahatma*. Vol. VIII pp. 120-121).

¹¹ *ibid*

ideology for co-option. It can be seen through “the practice of the structure and structure of the practice.”¹²

According to Berger¹³ “to be located in society means to be at the intersection point of specific social forces, locations become important because it influences a whole gamut of conditions ranging from life-chances and health to world-view. Without an appreciation of location, one fails to see the contrasting perceptions of or vested interests in violence based on one’s place in society.” In Indian society the location of dalit as a part of life chances used by the opposing ideologies likes hindutva for their political to social purpose and vice versa. And the other side the appreciation of location in hierarchical society is also a deliberately appropriation to assimilate in hegemonic culture.

In the conceptualisation of sanskritisation by M.N. Srinivas, is also an appreciation of location and also an indirectly appropriation in the context of epistemic violence. He define sanskritisation as a process by which "a "low" Hindu caste, or tribal or other group, changes its customs, ritual, ideology, and way of life in the direction of a high, and frequently, "twice-born" caste".¹⁴ Here, the appropriation and appreciation perform the location of caste in hierarchical society. And the appreciation is also a part of appropriation with un-earned privilege. Edmund Leach, in review of Srinivas’s *Caste in modern India*, contended that his model of sanskritisation is Brahminocentric.

In this context, cultural and racial theorist George Lipsitz used the term “strategic anti-essentialism” with the cultural form, exist by outside your own form, and define yourself or your group. He contended that “when the majority culture attempts to strategically anti-essentialize itself by appropriating a minority culture, it must take great care to recognize the specific socio-historical circumstances and significance of these cultural forms so as not to perpetuate the already existing majority vs. minority unequal power relations.”¹⁵Therefore, the practice of co-option conglomerates with the location, agency and space.

Gopal Guru taking a clue from Lefebvre, further noted that ‘space which has a depth form of experience and it is understood by the cultural manifestation. Space is not simply a living phenomenon, it persists with culturally constructed. Regarding the civilizational

¹² Marshall Sahlins, *Historical Metaphors and Mythical Realities: Structure in the Early History of Sandwich Island Kingdoms*, University of Michigan Press, (1981), Ann Arbor, p.79.

¹³ Peter Berger, *Invitation to Sociology: A Humanist Perspective*, Doubleday, (1963), New York, p.67.

¹⁴ M N. Srinivas, *Social Change in Modern India*, Orient Longman, (1972) New Delhi, p.6.

¹⁵ George Lipsitz, *Footsteps in the Dark: The Hidden Histories of Popular Music*, University of Minnesota Press, (2007), Minneapolis.

violence where the historically dominant group achieves their hegemonic purpose through the structuring and restructuring of the given space.¹⁶ The practice of co-option is a process where the Brahmin restructured the spaces of hegemony.

As Reinhart Koselleck define that ‘concepts are not indicators, they are also factors in the society’. Therefore, the ideologization with the practices of assimilation, collaboration, and integration entangled with the broader practices of co-option. The re-interpretation of culture and location develop the space of appropriation. It perpetuates the hegemony in explicit way.

Epistemology of Co-option and Appropriation

When the legitimacy of Hindutva enters into the legitimacy of Nationalism, it protects the area of domination within different societies. In Hindutva ideology the problems start with the ideology of composite culture. In composite culture the space of maintaining of hegemony is reviewed through the dominant practicing ideology. For example, Nehru, who was known as a modern and progressive but the other side he was the traditionalist with Hindu rituals.¹⁷ According to Engineer, there are two categories i.e. religious revivalism and religious fundamentalism existing in Indian socio-religious practices. In the context of religious revivalism he includes the babas, yogis, and other religious gurus, who cash in on the growing sense of insecurity, urban tensions, and other stresses generated by the modern industrial pattern of life. Such religious frauds are rapidly multiplying in our society in urban as well as rural areas, strengthening and promoting irrationalism. This irrationalism generates illusions and false consciousness among the masses. They propagate the ideology of dominant religious sanction in the indirect form.¹⁸

In the second category i.e. religious fundamentalism he includes the movements like that of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) and rise of Islamic fundamentalism. These movements have political aims and reflect the ideology through media. Here the religious revivalism has clearly directed political goals. The Vishwa Hindu Parishad, Bajrang Dal, and Hindu Mahasabha are seizing upon the opportunity provided by the conversions of few

¹⁶ Gopal Guru & Sarukkai Sundar, *The cracked mirror: an Indian debate on experience and theory*, Oxford university press, (2012), New Delhi.

¹⁷ Christophe Jaffrelot, *The Hindu nationalist Movement and Indian Politics 1925 to 1990s: Strategies of Identity-Building, Implantation and Mobilisation (With special reference to Central India)*, Penguin Books India, (1993) New Delhi, p.55.

¹⁸ Asghar Ali Engineer, *Communalism and Communal violence in India*, Ajanta Publications, (1989) Delhi, p.5.

‘Harijans’¹⁹ to Islam, launched in a calculated way, a propaganda offensive, intensifying communal conflict in the country. Many communal riots occurred in many places like Ahmedabad, Pune, Solapur, Surat and Muzzafarnagar.²⁰ The construction of the ‘other’²¹ represents the construction of violence with protected co-option. During field visits, the main terminology is observed that ‘Muslim’ as a word performs the blatant practices in rural area. People hate this word Muslim. Why didn’t Hindutva ideologues question violence as a ritual in Hinduism? Why had Gandhi proclaimed itself as an untouchable, is it protected appropriation or appropriating victimhood with ritualistic hierarchy?

The history of co-option occurs through many processes like assimilation, integration, and imitation. The process of co-option entangled with the construction of the ‘others’ and reduced the core image of cultural identity. Every culture has a particular and unique history, which is not governed by any universal laws.²² But culture is modified through the historical counter and encounter phenomenon. The question is why is culture modified and for what purpose? Is it a strategic functionality to maintain the transformation for their own profit or maintain their hegemony? Why was the process of change and transformation captured by the upper castes sections in Indian societies?

There is a normative and descriptive debate going on Hindu nationalism in India for a long time. The history of any concept recovers the history of their on-going phenomenon. In India, the debates on nationalism have some questions regarding their historiography. Is/was nationalism a form of tokenism for the oppressor in the name of anti-colonial and anti-communal? Is a role of nation change from the word to the form of intention with club to state?²³

The objective of any religion with positive and negative character covers the notion of construction of the ‘other’. In the parallel phenomenon the construction of the other revives the role of hegemonic construction with cultural and social history. In India, the

¹⁹ Harijan is a derogatory and unconstitutional word, which is a subtle form of humiliation in contextual way. We can’t use it. Firstly that word used by M.K.Gandhi (as son of god) to appropriate the dalit in the hindutva fold.

²⁰ *ibid*

²¹ Gyanendra Pandey, *The Construction of Communalism in The Colonial North India*, Oxford University Press, 1990, New Delhi, p. 6.

²² Franz Boas, *Race, Language and Culture*, The Macmillan Company, (1940), New York, p.3.

²³ Benzamin Zacharia, *Playing the nation game: The ambiguities of nationalism in India*, Yodapress, (2011), New Delhi, p. 5.

history of nationalism draws the analogy between emancipatory history and dominant history. How a word Hindu established with society (samaj), identity, and partial ritual practices? The history of any phenomenon creates the counter phenomenon due to the hollow functionality in the society. Why every culture dominant to the other with construction of the other? Why is the history of nationalism in India interlinked with the occasional communalism?

Hindu Nationalism is not a new phenomenon in western Uttar Pradesh. It has a long history with different trajectories. When one writes a history of any process it raises the question on past and present trajectory with ambiguities. Some historians write history based on their background but other write on their consciousness from suffering, pain, and humiliation. Due to the construction of the 'other' and lack of knowledge about hegemonized history, the role of violence is growing in the social structure. In the name of nationalism, the 'idea of dangerous zone for Hindu' has been created by the paramilitary brigades like RSS, VHP, Bajrang Dal, Paramdham etc. Therefore, it presents a question whether there is any relation between fear and nationalism? Is there any difference between experience of fear and experience of nationalism? Is there any possibility to link religion with nationalism? Is there any relation between Hindu and nationalism?

The consciousness of majority and minority with developing fear in the name of 'raaz' draw the analogy between nationalism and patriotism. '*Jansankhya bahut tezi se badh rahi hai musalmano ki, yedi hum hindu log ek nahi hue to ye log havi ho jaenge or phir se inka raaz aa jaega*' (Block Parmukh, Paramdham 'Janaeu Kranti Andolan').²⁴ But the question is that how does memory of violence affect on the present form of constructed violence with deconstructed past?

Th,lo ke character of violence with internalize phenomenon assembled the tool of aggression with oral history. For example '*Jati musalmano ne banai hai hindu dharm ko todne ke liye*'.²⁵ It's a structural consequence with symbolic power, where the receiver and

²⁴ Block Parmukh of Paramdham "Janaeu Kranti Andolan", who is a dalit. It's a Hindu organization and doing work for Hindu nation. This organization basically practices of bhakti of rastra (in the name of martyrs) and blurs the picture of Brahminism. After talking with the block Parmukh regarding the political connection and political ideology, he argued that 'Guru Ji' told us that most of the agendas of our organization will fulfilled by the BJP. So, most of the people in this organization support BJP and cast their vote for it. And most of the cadres belong to the dalit community in this organization. In this organization there is no space for moorti pooja or idol worship. Guru ji of this organization gives a diksha and gives sacred thread to the cadre to wear and it is compulsory. The identity of paramdham cadre is that, they have a small tail on the head like gurukul Brahmin padhti.

²⁵ ibid

donor don't know about that domination which is working with internalized phenomenon. Mark Tapan (2006) argued that "a reinterpretation of "internalized oppression" and "internalized domination," not as internal, psychological qualities or characteristics, but rather as sociocultural phenomena—that is, as forms of "mediated action."²⁶

In the concept the idea of internalization conglomerate with the sociocultural phenomenon. The sociocultural phenomenon mediated with the cultural tools which are interpreted by the oppressor and the oppressed also. In their writing Thompson and Tapan state that: "No matter the source or the form, these tools are marked by a set of White-supremacist, male-supremacist, classist, heterosexist ideologies that are promulgated in and by the dominant culture and then appropriated by both the oppressed and the privileged" (see Tappan, 2005; Thompson, 1990). Therefore the interpretation and reinterpretation of any culture is going on with the history, past and present. The history of any culture doesn't vanish but is appropriated in a dominant manner. Same as the debate on nationalism in India it has a history of reductionism due to the appropriation of culture and history of marginalized section.

A social scientist Ernest Gellner says that monopoly of legitimate violence is created through monopoly of legitimate education which is attached with the integration and reproduction of social order (Gellner 1983: 34).²⁷ If a legitimate violence is symbolic then its acceptance would increase without knowing the unconscious practise of domination. In Bourdieu sense there is one relation between symbolic violence, symbolic power and symbolic domination, the oppressor and the oppressed don't know about that act is going through structure.²⁸

If one traces the epistemology of co-option of dalits with different practices, we will find that it have assimilating, imitating and appropriating past and present. Every category has some special character which is attained through the knowledge and power. People, who don't know about the meaning of 'Rastra', but know very well about the Hindu Rastra. Hindu Rastra, meaning comes from the Hindu, not from Rastra. We can say that the contextuality of meaning and word start with their hegemonic sound. This sound creates the

²⁶ Mark Tapan, "Reframing Internalized Oppression and Internalized Domination: From the Psychological to the Sociocultural" *Teachers College Record* Volume 108, Number 10, October 2006, pp. 2115–2144.

²⁷ Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, Cornell University, (1983), New York, p. 34.

²⁸ P. Bourdieu, *The logic of practice*, Stanford University Press, (1990), Stanford.

intention of everyday practising ideology. The main phenomenon that comes to mind is that if you have knowledge and power; use it with their script of domination.

The history of co-option in India is continuing with the 'selective remembrance and strategic forgetting'.²⁹ This approach indicates the consciousness with historical/nationalist with protected ignorance. It is means control over such people who don't even know the difference between white and black. If this type of consciousness exists in the society it will become hegemonic and affects the way by which a person can think about history, entangled with the collective reification of the 'national'. This practice affects professional as well as lay person in the society as Zacharia pointed out.³⁰ If memory and past protect dominant history, it will create confusion when one tries to understand the phenomenon of emancipation. The history which is led by the 'present and past' discourse develops the process of co-option and appropriation due to their status quo. In the name of Indian liberation movement, the liberation as a word was saved by the historian to blur the identity of transformation of power. Liberation for what and for whom, is also a question for the stalwarts of the history writing. Internalized stereotyping for Gandhi is also a part of this ideological agenda.

Politics of co-option and appropriation in context of Bhakti:

Bhakti has frequently been commended as a type of religion in light of cherishing dedication that rises above social class, caste, and gender. Since early twentieth century, the verifiable setting of bhakti has all around been told similar to "the bhakti movement" a singular ingenious "wave" of respectful suspicion and populist social change that spread over the entire Indian subcontinent.³¹ As indicated by the usually acknowledged story, this "movement" started in the Tamil South amongst the 6th and 19th century through Saiva Nāyanārs as well as Vaisnava Ājvārs. These poets, as per one insightful version of the figure of speech, "delivered a transformatory avalanche and social reform that is presently known as the Bhakti Movement".³²

²⁹ Benzamin Zacharia, *Playing the nation game: The ambiguities of nationalism in India*, Yodapress (2011), New Delhi, p.76.

³⁰ Ibid, p.77.

³¹ Prema Nandakumar, "The Bhakti Movement in South India" In R. Balasubramian, (ed.). *Theistic Vedānta*, Centre for Studies in Civilizations, (2003), New Delhi. pp.760-865.

³² ibid

J. S. Hawley in his article raises an important question that is “the bhakti movement—says who?”³³ The question is important because it questions the epistemology of bhakti or bhakti movement. How do these ideas get the legitimacy as all India to the regional level as well? The other thing is that bhakti in mode of salvation has unique intention but bhakti with multiple narratives (*desh bhakti, ram bhakti, shaeed bhakti, matra bhakti*) changes its intention with time and space.

In the early 20th century the idea of Bhakti movement was developed by the Indian nationalists with social cultural milieu. With the condition of feeling national character, identity, they proliferating the thought of a Pan-Indian bhakti religious legacy. Ramchandra Shukla and Hazariprasad Dwedi, who were the nationalist scholars in early and mid 20th century, they drew the idea of nationalism through bhakti by the construction of nationalist history. In their writing they laid claim on pan-Indian ‘bhakti movement’ or andolan (in Hindi). With love, progress and social egalitarianism, they tried to unite the subcontinents past with the present.³⁴ But question here is that, Ramchandra Sukla and Hazari Prasad Dwedi were writing in a national or nationalist manner or in traditional-bound nationalism manner.

Can we say that Shukla and Dwedi were fulfilling the responsibility as Hindu nationalists at that time? Milind Wakankar (2002:990) argued that “the method of self-subjection or routine of living in Shukla's program for verse, encourages into the bigger Hindu nationalist extend that is intrigued presently in the interiority, rather than the body, of the nationalism in-asceticism.”³⁵ In this context the idea of Hindu nation can reach their path through the projection of responsibility by the Brahminical nationalist poet. Appropriation of Hindi as a national phenomenon directly hit the construction of the other.

During the 1966 series, V. Raghavan addressed the Indian public and gave a classic example of the enduring magniloquence. He argued that bhakti is a “democratic doctrine

³³ J. Hawley, “Introduction” *International Journal of Hindu Studies*, Vol. 11, No. 3 (December 2007), pp. 209-225.

³⁴ J. S. Hawley, “Introduction.” In John S. Hawley and Mark Juergensmeyer, trans., *Songs of the Saints of India*, Oxford University Press, (1988), New York, pp.3-7

³⁵ Milind Wakankar, “The Moment of Criticism in Indian Nationalist Thought: Ramchandra Shukla and the Poetics of a Hindi Responsibility”, *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, Volume 101, Number 4, Fall (2002), pp. 987-1014.

which consolidates all people without distinction of caste, community, nationality, or sex".³⁶ This type of thinking is working till now. Gail Omvedt contended that "radical bhakti (devotional) movement that had swept over northern and western India, bringing together women and men of low caste to proclaim equality and reject Brahmanic ritualism and caste hierarchy".³⁷

In this line of thinking, Rohini Mokashi-Punekar depicted bhakti for instance: a 'profoundly otherworldly and socialize development that is typically progressive trendy soul and fixated set a scrutinizing of the conventional and exploitive Brahminical conception of Hinduism. Which create it feasible designed for lower caste in addition ladies to stretch a frame toward their religious yearnings, underscoring dedication and love, not learning as a method for salvation'.³⁸ We can point out that bhakti in theory and practice described the milieu of emancipation and co-option. It is same as a library, which is full of books for cultivation of mind but bhakti of Ram, Hanuman, is also going there and people of that university also worship of these pictures.

In contextualising history, the debates on bhakti movement carry on with the idea of bhakti in a different manner. Bhakti is a term which is entangled with the devotion, love, salvation and sanction. On the other side it also creates the category of influence with constructing and hiding hate. Somewhere you have an agenda behind this bhakti. In 1992, demolition of Babri mosque, the bhakti of ram was/is another type of appropriation of bhakti due to their long term agenda. In search of love and devotion bhakti is a path to someone but on the other side it's a path of creating hate and jealousy by the Hindutva ideologue. But here this research will try to explain the idea of appropriation of bhakti by the upper castes.

Important question is that, what were the spaces in bhakti movement, through which it has been appropriated in a hegemonic sense. Co-option defines itself as availability and space for option. Bhakti draws the analogy between organicist model and hierarchical model. In organicist model the role of bhakti absorbs the idea of liberal equality. On the other side, bhakti in hierarchical society reclaimed the idea of sacred social order. In other words, bhakti

³⁶ V. Raghavan, *The Great Integrators: The Saint-Singers of India*, Publications Division, (1966), Delhi, Government of India.

³⁷ Gail Omvedt and Bharat Patankar, "Says Tuka...: Songs of a Radical Bhakta." *Critical Asian Studies*, Vol. 35, Number 2, (2003), pp. 277–86.

³⁸ Mokashi-Punekar, Rohini. "On the Threshold: The Songs of Chokhamela." In Eleanor Zelliot and Rohini Mokashi-Punekar, (edt.), *Untouchable Saints: An Indian Phenomenon*, 123–42. Manohar, (2005) New Delhi.

in egalitarian theory is working with the differentiation of actual practice of egalitarian social relation and maintains the caste hierarchical society with purity and pollution.³⁹

Therefore the intention behind the bhakti itself is raising a question with emancipatory ideology and the ideology of interpreters. In their work “Kabir Panth and social protest”, Lorenzen has pointed out that the attendance in bhakti communities entangled with the social protest against the hierarchical Hindu social order and the other side generally represents the receipt of hegemony with that order.⁴⁰

But the acceptance itself is a part of an ideology which is interpreted by the interpreter of dominant section. Here, the situation exists with idea of co-option. In Bourdieu sense, co-option is a practice and strategy which gives the agency to the dominant culture to maintain their oppression. For example, Gandhi had ‘agency’ (which was/is authorised by the category of co-option) to speak on untouchability and proclaimed himself as an untouchable, but it was exercise of ‘appropriating victimhood’. Jafferlot in this context states about genesis and development of Hindu Nationalism as an ideology. He writes that ideology is defined by Geertz as a ‘symbolic strategy’ undermined by modernization process.⁴¹ This perspective allows viewing the instrumentalist understanding of strategic and manipulative reinterpretation of culture and value systems.

With taking a leave form Victor Turner, A. K. Ramanujan has commented that "bhakti-groups, while declaring hostile to structure, fundamentally build up their own particular structures for conduct and conviction, regularly insignificant, much of the time made out of components chosen from the very structures they deny or dismiss".⁴²

Joseph O'Connell critically evaluates the process of bhakti. He proposed that bhakti is exist with the biased action of the structures and also preserve the organicist model where hierarchy can't be question. Bhakti really attempts to make biased standing practices and structures all the more persevering. With the nature of preserving hierarchy, bhakti as a part

³⁹ Patton Burchett, “Bhakti Rhetoric in the Hagiography of ‘Untouchable’ Saints: Discerning Bhakti’s Ambivalence on Caste and Brahminhood”, *International Journal of Hindu Studies*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (August 2009), pp. 115-141.

⁴⁰ David N. Lorenzen, "The Kabir-Panth and Social Protest", In Katherine Schomer and W. H. McLeod, (ed.), *The Saints: Studies in a Devotional Tradition of India*, Motilal Banarsidass, (1987), Delhi, pp.281-304.

⁴¹ Christophe Jaffrelot, “Hindu Nationalism: Strategic Syncretism in Ideology Building”, *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 28, No. 12/13 (Mar. 20-27, 1993), pp. 517-524.

⁴² A.K. Ramanujan, *Speaking of Siva*, Penguin Books, (1973), London, p.35.

of ideologizing practices not hit on the root of the 'graded inequality'. It was a part of 'appreciation of location' with contending ideologies to maintain the status quo in the society. He contends that bhakti's effect on society "tends not to include major basic changes, but instead humble alterations".⁴³

In the context of practice and theory, for a long time bhakti was the stuff of egalitarianism in theory but today most of the thinkers can't attest that bhakti in practice performs the actual function of social reform and progress in intention. So the debate on practice and theory itself carry on with the ideological trend in the society, as pointed out by Burchett.⁴⁴

Karen Pechilis argues that, "as contemporary scholarship points out that if any change not occur in the place by bhakti, it was not the failure of low caste only but as well as untouchable to".⁴⁵ David N. Lorenzen also adds that "Is there any significant rejection of caste found, it is exist in Virasaivism in nirguni sects such as Kabir, Rvidas and to a lesser extent Arya samaj.

Despite all the opposition it is only limited and deals with the existence of ideology rather than any practice in the ground".⁴⁶ In my field work I have found the proof that, now-a-days Ravidasis are following the agenda of Hindu Rastra. They neither criticise and nor go against the Hindutva ideology. They worship Ravidas and Dr. Ambedkar also, and have pictures of Hindu dieties in their houses. I am explaining here all these things because bhakti in Hindu rastra is taking the idea of devotion beyond the apriori notion defined by the most of the philosophers.

In Madhya Pradesh the RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat on the occasion of Saint Ravidas Jayanti argued that "A nation will progress only when everyone prospers in it." He also said

⁴³ Joseph O'Connell, "Religious Movements and Social Structure: The Case of Chaitanya's Vaisnavas in Bengal. Rashtrapati Nivas (1993), Shimla, pp.12-13.

⁴⁴ Patton Burchett, Bhakti Rhetoric in the Hagiography of 'Untouchable' Saints: Discerning Bhakti's Ambivalence on Caste and Brahminhood, *International Journal of Hindu Studies*, Vol. 13, No. 2, (2009), pp. 115-41.

⁴⁵ Karen Pechilis, *The Embodiment of Bhakti*, Oxford University Press, (1999) New York, p.29.

⁴⁶ David N Lorenzen, *Religious Movements in South Asia 600-1800*, Oxford University Press, (2004), New York, p.10.

that, "The entire Hindu society is our own family. Everyone will prosper and those who have not received success so far, efforts should be made to make them prosperous."⁴⁷

The question is that, how can we differentiate the idea of bhakti and social harmony in the society. Because RSS has big agenda on *Samajik Samrasta* (social harmony) like one temple, one connotarium, and one well. The important thing is that the respondents on this question gave answers very quickly and argued that “*ye to bahut acha hai, isse to acha kuch ho hi nahi ho sakta*” (That’s very good, nothing is better than this).

Actually this is a part of structure and agency, through the process of co-option seeks to internalise through the social order by the dominant ideology. It observed that it’s a discretionary co-option by the RSS. As, they know how to appropriate all things through their long term agenda. Same example is found in the other organisations like “Param Dham”.⁴⁸ In this organisation the identity of cadre is a long tail on their head. They also define the rastra bhakti as *ram bhakti*. In this organisation most of the members are dalits. They also voice their support for Hindu Rashtra. The most important thing is that the name of movement is ‘*Janaeu Kranti Andolan*’ and the slogan is ‘*Shaeedo hum sharminnda hai, jaat biradri jinda hai*’.⁴⁹ Here, the important thing is that bhakti in hierarchical society maintains the co-option in form of assimilation, imitation and integration. Therefore, the structure of the society and agency define the dominant role in the society. In the form of internalisation, the practices of dominant ideology itself create the space for their field.

One can explore the idea of agency and structure at that time. In the debate of structure and agency, Pierre Bourdieu examines this debate through the notion of habitus and field. He argued that habitus is a co-opted mental or perceptive structure by which people organised themselves with that social world. Habitus conglomerate with the ‘practice of the structure and structure of the practices.’ Therefore habitus associate with the ‘stock of knowledge’ in everyday form of practices. And these practices convert into the field where the relations of network produce among impartial positions. The structure, where field draws constrains on agents in individual or collective way reflects the adjective form of assimilation. In conclusive way, Bourdieu is trying to develop the relationship between the habitus and field.

⁴⁷ Suchanandna Gupta, ‘RSS chief speaks to unite Hindus, supports reservations’, in *Times of India*, Feb 10, 2017, New Delhi, p.6.

⁴⁸ Param dham is a Hindu organization. Poran guru Chandra Mohan is the founder.

⁴⁹ In Param Dham organisation, the practices of hinduisation from the perspective of annihilate caste and martyrs going on with agenda of Hindu Rashtra.

It is clear that how habitus creates the field and field creates the habitus, and also creates the dialectical relationship.⁵⁰

The domination of Brahmins on structure and agency draws the field of habitus in bhakti, which internalises through the social order in the society. Therefore, the practice of bhakti in hierarchical social order is a part of habitus for upper castes. It is a very enlightened remark that shows how a movement with ideology could not attain of social change in the society.

Jayant Lele argued that bhakti movement as a tradition contradictorily entangled with the elements of hegemony, oppression, and liberation at once. Therefore the tradition of hegemony in embodiment social order and the existence of liberation, reformation and co-option are nucleus in nature.⁵¹ Kumkum Sangari, her article ‘Mirabai and the Bhakti movement’, also examine that the liberation and dissident are joining part “as a powerful source which selectively uses the metaphysics of high Hinduism in an attempt to create an appropriable excess or transcendent value ground in the dailiness of material life within the reach of all.”⁵² In this sense, we can collect the data by which the upper caste hijacked this movement through Hindu, Hindi, and bigotry of nationalism because; tradition and modernity are the process which is in tandem with the appropriating hegemony and liberation.

Jayant Lele argued that: “Hospital sees as a paradox between the unlimitedness of human imagination and the particularity of human existence. This paradox at times congeals into-and at other times explodes out of-the same symbolic universe. These are the hegemonic and liberating moments of tradition. Valued symbols, myths, beliefs and rituals of a tradition bear in them, as meanings, the actuality of everyday experience and the imaginative or creative potentiality of its transition.”⁵³

In the contextuality of symbols, it defines and reinterprets in a different manner and the defining process going with the universal tradition. This universality itself creates a paradox with liberation and hegemonic appropriation in legitimating social order and this

⁵⁰ George Ritzer, *Sociological Theory*, Mcgraw Hill, (2010), New York, USA.

⁵¹ Jayant Lele, Introduction. In J. Lele, (edt.); *Tradition and modernity in bhakti movements*, E.J. Brill, (1981), Leiden, pp. 1-10.

⁵² Kumkum Sangari, ‘Mirabai and spiritual economy of bhakti’ *Economic and Political Weekly* Vol. 25, No. 27 (Jul. 7, 1990), pp. 1464-1475

⁵³ Jayant Lele, ‘The Bhakti movement in India: A critical introduction, *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 1980; 15; 1.

legitimation entangles with necessary and un-necessary oppression. In bhakti tradition the space of oppression and hegemonic appropriation was going with the tradition and modernity.⁵⁴

Why does the liberation not exceed and appropriation exceed in the trajectory of modernity and tradition? The answer is that functional perspective in the society dominant due to their space of harmony in imagination. Those also not define the role of power in hierarchical society. Solidarity with appropriated hegemony does not oppose the status-quo. Example like Hindu nationalism and good governance, Hindu nationalism and hiding pedagogy of nexus between liberal equality and fragmented sovereignty, exclusion in inclusion, and the important points are harmony and equity (samrasta and samta).

Bhakti as a hegemonic project:

After the analysis of bhakti movement, now the question emerges is how can the pedagogy of co-option established in bhakti? What were the methodologies by which upper castes maintain their status-quo in the veil of bhakti?

Another question is that influence as a theory defines the dominant role in the society for hegemony of oppressor and liberation for oppressed. In the name of purification the role of bhakti converts into the bhakti of saving Hindu ritual. Actually the question is that in whole phenomenon, the idea of purity and ritual hierarchy with devotion, equality, and emancipation are fuzziness in nature. In a hierarchical society, the ritual purification and salvation also play their part of appropriated domination. The owner and mastery in society implicitly and explicitly do work for appropriation.⁵⁵



⁵⁴ Ibid, pg.6

⁵⁵ J. Wertsch, “*Mind as action*”, New York, Oxford University Press, (1998).



Photo by Narendra Kumar, [Saint Shiromani Guru Ravidas Dharmshala, vill. Rardhana, Block Sardhana, Dist. Meerut] Fig.1.1 Interior part of Dharmsala. Fig.1.2 Outsider part of dharmsala.

These pictures perform the role of “symbolic capital” in a reversible category. Reversible as a category determines the problem of intention in a peculiar way. Reversible in internalized oppression and internalized domination draws the analogy as a knife falling on watermelon and watermelon falling on the knife is the same thing. Including contemporary critical pedagogy, internalized oppression is a concept which is used widely in a variety of disciplines (See, for example, Freire, 1970; McLaren, 1998; Tatum, 1997; Young, 1990). This concept basically explains the experience of subordinated, marginalized, or minority groups in a stratified society. As Griffin argued that: “this concept is also used for who are powerless and often victimized both intentionally and unintentionally, by members of dominant groups; and those who have “adopted the [dominant] group’s ideology and accept their subordinate status as deserved, natural, and inevitable”.⁵⁶

Therefore internalizing oppression has reciprocal tendency which is usually linked with internalized domination. Domination is a privilege, prejudice and prestige phenomenon. This phenomenon does not exist in an abstract sense. It conglomerate of cultural, social, political and also symbolic. Domination can exist in every category like animals, birds, and humans also. In Darwinian sense the survival of the fittest is also a part of the domination. If you have capability you can dominate. But in human tendency the domination exists in a cultural sense. And the important thing is that when subordinated groups adopt the ideology of a dominant group, it is not only determined by the ideology of

⁵⁶ P. Griffin, “Introductory module for the single issue courses. In M. Adams, L. A. Bell, & P. Griffin (Eds.), *Teaching for diversity and social justice: A sourcebook* (pp. 61–81). New York: Routledge, (1997), New York, pp.61-81

that time, but also the role of the reinterpreter, who shapes the ideologies, is important⁵⁷ for e.g. ‘samrasta’.

Therefore, internalized domination in a hierarchical society does not exist as a one sided phenomenon; it has the capacity to involve the oppressor and the oppressed in parallel way. Thus in theoretical understanding, the empirical reality is important i.e. who defines the base of any theory. In this sense, during field work I have observed the same phenomenon.

When questioning the purpose of the celebration of Ravidas Jayanti, they gave a priori knowledge based answer. Ravidas ji hamare bhagwan saman hai or inhone bahut kuch kia h hum logo ke lie (ravidas is a god, he did a lot of work for us). The next question was: that what type of work has he done? They told me that jati partha or chooa-choot ka virodh kia (he raise the voice against casteism and untouchability). Who told you? Ye hame hamare poorvajo ne bataya hai (It was told to us by our ancestors). Did Ravidas raise the voice against Hinduism? They gave answer in hesitated way, and answered ‘No’. He was not against Hinduism. They argued that ‘man changa to katauti mein ganga’ (if your heart is pure and pristine, then there it is not necessary to go and take a bath in the Ganga river). Did Ambedkar oppose Hinduism? The answer was ‘No’.

The question that comes to mind is that assertion can be as hollow as an inner part of vessel? Can recognition of past in an oral tradition narrate the reality with consciousness? If it is, then what is next? Symbolic capital in hierarchical society is a reversible phenomenon, but it holds assertion, appropriation, and domination in a different way. But the question is whether symbolic capital performs the assertion for oppressed sections in the society, where the root of oppression exists in following their practice?

It is necessary to explain here how Bhakti movement has cast a big shadow and has internalized oppression on lower castes. Internalized oppression here defines the aggression on worshipping hindu god. Kya bamman log hi pooja path kar sakte hai? Worshipping Hindu deities are not their (Brahmin) trademark (they used word ‘*bapouti*’). How do the oppressed accept the dominant ideology of the oppressor? Freire observed it and provided an

⁵⁷ Christophe Jaffrelot, *The Hindu nationalist Movement and Indian Politics 1925 to 1990s: Strategies of Identity-Building, Implantation and Mobilisation (With special reference to Central India)*, Penguin Books India, (1993) New Delhi, pp:12-13

outstandingly and gainful digest of these profits. He began by hostility saunter the intention of the overwhelmed is to give birth to individual and their oppressors.⁵⁸

The obstruction of realizing this intention, word-of-mouth Freire, comes approximately in regard to in the smashing years of their exploit contrast dictatorship, the subjugated, a substitute alternatively of struggle for transport, refer to be proper oppressors (or “sub-oppressors”).⁵⁹

Internalized domination helps the dominant section in the society. We can say that mediation has a big role in oppression and domination. This mediation creates the way for appropriated domination and appropriated oppression. Culture capital and cultural impact have different meanings in their interpretation.⁶⁰ This capital exchanges the idea of liberation to oppression and oppression to liberation as vice versa. Here, it will recall Bourdieu again with the idea of symbolic domination, violence and power in a threesome category. In their meaning of symbolic capital, it delivers the idea of wretched consciousness in the oppressed people for Hindu gods and goddesses. Domination that occurs through the internalization of oppression is also a part of imagination in dalit, of ‘we should do something for our icon’ [without knowing their philosophy].

In the above picture the idea of bhakti conglomerate with the liberation, domination and appropriation also. We can understand as to, how participatory appropriation converts into appropriated oppression. In many writings on bhakti, there was a lack of discourse on the roots of Hinduism. They were questioning on the impartial orthodoxical practices, not the roots of exclusion. Therefore, the past has been distorted through the religious aspiration and assimilate with the practice of devotion and love, not perform the salvation through knowledge as a means.⁶¹ Does the Hindu social order recognise the fraternity? ⁶² This question on Hinduism poses a question on its sacred social order. But in the writings of saints they are questioning on the evils in Hinduism not on the philosophy of Hinduism.

⁵⁸ P. Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Continuum, (1970) New York.

⁵⁹ Ibid, p. 30

⁶⁰ Clifford Geertz, *The interpretation of cultures*, Basics Book, (1973), New York.

⁶¹ Mokashi-Punekar, Rohini. “On the Threshold: The Songs of Chokhamela.” In Eleanor Zelliott and Rohini Mokashi-Punekar, (edt.), *Untouchable Saints: An Indian Phenomenon*, Manohar, (2005) New Delhi, p.14.

⁶² B. R. Ambedkar,(2014) (1st ed. 1987) *Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar : Writings and Speeches* Vol. 3, Ch.2.The Hindu Social Order—Its Essential Principles, pp. 99-100, Reprinted Edition, Dr. Ambedkar Foundation.

In the writings of bhakti movement the upper caste people save their identity of co-option of dalit through the constructed hagiography of untouchable saints. Somewhere idea of bhakti has been conglomeration with Hinduness. Brahminization of untouchable saints and their writings and recognising them as social reformers of Hindu religion itself created the question on fixity of appropriation in long period. Why did Brahmins call them as Hindu social reformers?

If we analyse the writings of Brahmin and non-Brahmin bhakti poets, we find that, they were against the practice not means of domination. Firstly we will discuss the writings of Chokhamela. He was the well-known poet of Maharashtra in Bhakti movement nearby the thirteenth century. The identity of Mahar community contributed him a significant consciousness about the existence of an untouchable. Due to the abuse as an untouchable, Chokhamela was exasperated. The exasperated clearly shows the anger against the untouchability and the social world in his Abhanga. For example, if you needed to give me this birth, why give me birth by any stretch of the imagination?⁶³

You cast me away to be born; you were cruel,
Where were you at the time of my birth?
Who did you help then?
Chokha says: O Lord, O Keshava, don't let me go.
(Abhanga 6)⁶⁴

In this Abhanga, I observed that the role of untouchability was exposed. In the practice of untouchability, the dilemma between the religious sanctity and the authority of this sanctity posed the question on legitimacy.

In another Abhanga, Chokha expresses his inability to serve the divine for he does not have access to thee:

O God, my caste is low;
How can I serve you?
Everyone tells me to go away;
How can I see you?
When I touch anyone, they take offence.
Chokhamela wants your mercy. (Abhanga, 76).⁶⁵

⁶³ E. Zelliott, "From Untouchable to Dalit: Essays on Ambedkar Movement" Manohar, (1992), New Delhi

⁶⁴ Ibid, p. 5.

Here basically, the poet is trying to live with the devotion but due to caste phenomenon, it is unattainable. There is a scuttle point here between liberation through devotion. Liberation with mercy of God, gave permission to appropriation through the bhakti. Devotion is an internalized form of oppression for the oppressed not liberation in a hierarchical society.

There is an unmistakable component of submission to the inevitable in Chokha also. He appears to acknowledge his outward offensiveness accordingly yielding in the process a feeling of prevalence over the style of the upper-order:

Cane is crooked, but its juice isn't crooked
 Why be fooled by outward appearance?
 The bow is crooked, but the arrow isn't crooked,
 Why be fooled by outward appearance?
 The river is twisting, but the water isn't crooked.
 Why be fooled by outward appearance?
 Chokha is ugly, but his feelings aren't ugly.
 Why be fooled by outward appearance? (Abhanga 52)⁶⁶

The spirit of most of the Abhangas, as Zelliott puts it, “is delight in the Lord, delivery from life’s sufferings through devotion. Even though agony is there, the central message is that Chokha, even though a Mahar, could experience the grace of God.” (8)

Abhanga which is quoted below narrate the less precarious of orthodoxy about the hindu social order and present the apologetic nature due to his own Birth and Karma:

Pure Chokhamela, always chanting the name.
 I am a Mahar without a caste. Nila in a previous birth.
 He showed disrespect to Krishna; so my birth as a mahar.
 Chokh says: this impurity is the fruit of our past.
 (Abhanga 4)⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Ibid, p. 5.

⁶⁶ Ibid, p. 8

⁶⁷ Ibid, p. 7.

Eknath is a Brahmin bhakti writer yet he talks in the interest of the Mahars; rather he goes up against the Mahar voice in his sensational ballads called *Bharuds*. He kept in touch with almost three hundred bharuds, in which very nearly "fifty were composed as though an Untouchable were the creator. Forty-seven bharuds appear to originate from the mouths of Mahar, men or ladies; one is composed for the sake of a Mang" (Zelliot, 2005, 15). Eknath brings into focus the hard-earned livelihood of Mahars:

I do more than my routine work.
I answer to anyone who comes or goes.
I guard the houses of all the villagers.
Is this hard life such a small thing,
O my masters?⁶⁸

In this Abhang, the difference is found between the intentions of emancipation with different connotations. Appeasement and petitioning are also involved here. There is no involved confrontation against oppression which gains its legitimacy from the social order. Therefore the conversion of aggression into the intention of appeasement, appropriation entangled with it.

Co-option in 19th and 20th century by different organisation

As late as 1903 the Indian social reformer (ISR) raised the question: who are the social reformers- all those who claimed to be, or only those who belonged to a social reform association?⁶⁹ (March 8, 1903, p.273, cited in Heimsath, 1964). These questions hint on the epistemological way to understand the space of reform as a signified and signifier. The intellectual history in 19th century developed with the reform, traditional, and pre-ascribed notion. The other question was whether the mode of reform movement was inclusive or going with the tip of the iceberg.

As Chandavarkar explained that the social reformers who deal with the customs and institutions are common to higher classes of the Hindu society, from whom, they derive their standard perception of lower classes.⁷⁰ Charles Heimsath clearly passes the critical comment on social reform and reformists; 'the idea of social reform was not same as it did in

⁶⁸ Ibid, p.261.

⁶⁹ Charles Heimsath, *Indian Nationalism and Hindu social reform*, Princeton University Press, (1964), New York, P.4

⁷⁰ N.G. Chandavarkar, *Speeches and Writings*, p.54

the West, because in India, it was not reorganization of the structure of the society at social level at large. The situation was infusion in the social structure existing with the new ways of life and thought. And this society would be preserved with the peoples who would be transformed.⁷¹ Therefore the structure of the society would be same but the practices of that society exist with ontological violence.

As Levinas criticized that, “Western philosophy has been so concerned with both the epistemological and ontological privilege of the rational self that, not only had it exaggerated the adequate potential of man’s knowing and defining, but it also ethically violated everything apart from the self by forcing it into a mold suitable within its own ontology.”⁷² In the same line of thinking, the appearance of social reform was limited for group of lower castes. The cause of social reform had no meaning for lower castes; they were adjusting with the upper caste families’ practices and their behaviour in a westernized way, by the desire of creating themselves.⁷³ The death of social evil (as propagated) is not same as structure dead. Most of the reformers argued that caste system is the main cause of India’s social ills but no one has the pragmatic mind to think about annihilate of caste.⁷⁴ They were trying to assimilate the lower castes in the structuring of the structure.

The co-option of outcastes to Hinduism was part of the nineteenth century social reform movements in India. The Hindu reformist sects like the Arya Samaj believed that caste was not an integral part of the Hindu cultural system. They challenged the distinctions based on purity and pollution and felt that the Hindu social order was flexible enough to accommodate those, who had left the religion earlier. The earliest of co-option techniques were revealed in the Arya Samaj's discourse on shuddhi.⁷⁵ In Punjab, this movement was particularly visible, since the Arya Samaj preachers involved in the preaching of a Hindu monotheistic system tried to reconvert the Ods, Meghs and Doms who had converted to other religions. In fact, this form of co-option was achieved through a reading of some scriptures from the Vedas.⁷⁶

⁷¹ Charles Heimsath, (1964), op.cit, p.14.

⁷² <https://cityofgod.wordpress.com/2007/01/26/i-and-the-other-levinas-and-the-violence-of-ontology/>

⁷³ Charles Heimsath, (1964), op.cit, p.14.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ J.F. Seunarine, *Reconversion to Hinduism Through Suddhi*, The Christian literature society, (1977), Madras, p.8.

⁷⁶ Ibid, p.10.

Similar initiatives were taken in South India by the Hindu Tract Society when it confronted the missionary activities aimed at the conversion of the lower castes. Conversion had never been a matter of fixity and the options for the free flow of people from the adopted religion to the original religion to which they were open. The co-option of converts within Hinduism was made on the basis of the logic that since the converts were born as Hindus, it would not be a problem if they decided to reconvert. There are scholars who would argue that since the religious boundaries were seldom closed, there were frequent moments of adopting and assimilating the rituals and traditions of others, which was evident in the subaltern theology.

The situation became more complex with the rise of identity politics in early twentieth century British India. The fixity in religious status was attempted through reforms aimed towards pristine religion. The use of Hindu symbols and traditions became too evident and it certainly broke the distinctions, based on the autonomy of the Great Traditions and Little Traditions. While there were attempts to integrate the castes in terms of a single Hindu race, there were efforts to encourage the reverse flow of the converts from the adopted religious order to the earlier one based on generational affiliation to a religion.

The co-option was not simply based on the prescriptions of the Sanatani order, but one which was championed by lower caste reformers like Swami Sraddhanand and Swami Acuttanand in their efforts to build a cohesive Hindu order.⁷⁷ There were similar movements in the 1930s when the numerical strength of the religious communities became important. The Ezhava movement in Kerala brings out this part of the story.⁷⁸

History is a relationship between the past and present.⁷⁹ In the practice of co-option and appropriation, the role of history exists with their time and space. Today, the practice of co-option is borrowing the idea of reformation with prior form of practices. In 19th and 20th century the idea of co-option was working with hidden nexus of reformation and status quo. The strategy like print nationalism (Gita Press, Kalyan) was the symbol of co-option. The

⁷⁷<http://www.blog.thearyasamaj.org/contribution-of-swamy-shradhanand-to-keralas-socio-religious-reform-movements/>

⁷⁸ *ibid*

⁷⁹ E. H. Carr, *What is History*, Penguin Books, (1961), New Delhi

role of Gita Press was maintained the stereotypical ‘whole’ phenomenon in Hindu community.⁸⁰

The main asset of Gita Press was ‘ability to resolve the conflict between the reformist organizations (Brahmo Samaj, Arya Samaj) and the traditionalist organizations (Hindu Mahasabha, Bharat Dharma Mahamandal) and was based on sanatan dharma, and which had the larger project of the Hindu nationalism’ as pointed out by Monika Freier.⁸¹ In this perspective, the legitimacy of Hindu nationalism with idea of ‘whole’ perspective was growing with the reformist and traditionalist ideologue. But at a point the traditionalist and reformist ideologue did their work with the same ideology and that ideology tried to dominate with ‘whole’ Hindu community. In the antagonistic way, the idea of ‘whole’ Hindu community hides the nexus of structural violence and ritualistic hierarchy.

Hindutava wanted to homogenize all the Hindus by co-opting the Dalits to fight against the “others” such as Deen Dayal Upadhyaya who said that: "There can be only one culture in India. The slogan of many cultures can break this country in to pieces and destroy it ... It is the sentiment of one culture that can preserve the unity and integrity of India and solve all our problems."⁸²

In the nexus of ritual hierarchy and constructive idea of ‘one culture’ block the understanding of role of violence in Hinduism for oppressed. Here, the purpose of mentioning this point because the legitimacy of any concept, category, and ideology depend upon the public sphere. In Arendt and Habermas words, for public sphere a minimal condition is that it should be free from the structural coercion or manipulation.⁸³ On the other side the postmodernist thinker like Foucault (1977,1980a), Lyotard (1984;1985), and Deleuze (1980) questioned and argued that the role of power, language games are important phenomenon which describe public sphere and perpetuate the role of coercion and manipulation. It can't be free from the structural coercion or manipulation.⁸⁴ In this sense, the

⁸⁰ Monika Freier, Cultivating emotions: The Gita press and its agenda of social and spiritual reform, *South Asian history and culture*, Volume 3, (2012), Issue 3, pp. 397- 413.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Sudhakar Raje (ed.), *Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya : A Profile*, New Delhi: Deen Dayal Research Institute, (1979), New Delhi, p.172.

⁸³ American Political Science Association, Public Sphere, Postmodernism and Polemic, *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 88, No. 2 (Jun., 1994), pp. 427-433.

⁸⁴ Ibid

role of structural coercion and manipulation in hierarchical society discard the role of public sphere for oppressed section.

For example in UP 2017 constituent assembly elections, the paradigm of shift of dalit vote for BJP indicates on blurred identity of Brahminism in the shadow of Hinduism. And also they didn't understand the legitimacy of violence by which, who, and how. During field visit, there was a photo of Savarkar in a dalit house. To know about the purpose of that picture, put up the question to activist, what was the main work of Savarkar? He argued that '*unhone hindu sanskriti ko failane ka kaam kia aur sabhi hinduo ko ekjut kia*' (he had spread the Hindu culture and united all Hindus).⁸⁵



(Fig. 1.3, A house of Paramdham

Activist)

One can understand as to how Hinduism got the legitimacy by the oppressed through the idea of one culture. The question is that, in modern era how did Hindutva way of life enter into the political realm from social and cultural realm? How did Hindutva way of life enter into the judiciary with all its myths? Regarding these questions we can arrive at a critical understanding of Hindu nationalism with traditionalists and reformists, and vice versa. In 19th and 20th centuries, many Hindu organisations were doing work for their ideology through the idea of one culture aided with the practice of co-option of dalits. In this section the most important question is; how in the name of reformation and tradition, the interpreters use their ideology for their long term agenda?

Jaffrelot recognises the development of Hindu nationalism similarly to a different political ideology around transform of the century in north and north-west India. The advancement about this ideology constituted the primary phase about the thing that he calls 'birthing processes' from claiming Hindu nationalism. The second stage, found in the 1920s,

⁸⁵ An interviewee belongs to dalit community and doing work in Paramdham organization.

saw in the development of Hindu nationalism likewise a political mobilisation that drew on personality images furnished through this ideology.⁸⁶

In the setting for identity, Jaffrelot states that: “Hindu nationalism might have been not primordialist, drawing ahead a built sense from claiming ethnicity; yet towards that same time, it might have been not instrumentalist, a negative development of the elite. On account of it does re-interpret subjects drawn starting with the secured convention for Hinduism.

Jaffrelot instead infers the ideological boundary development of Hindu nationalism concerning illustration and social technique should guard brahmanical hegemony.”⁸⁷ This perspective mediates on the judgment as to how delivery was reinvented in context of emergence of Hindu nationalist Ideology.

Jaffrelot expects that if it is possible to analyse this as a sub-category of that it can be of interest as subaltern order of this invention process. This subordinate genus can be called ‘Strategic Syncretism’. It is because the satisfied of this ideology has been supplied to a comprehensive size by essential taken from the cultural values of body, which were seen antagonistic towards the Hindu community. Further Jaffrelot argues that this ‘Syncretism’ is ‘strategic’ and in it underlies an ideology that aspiration to dominate the others, in extremity of influence and also supported on socio-political lines. He expects that his hypothesis can be tested based on three significant and cumulative episodes. First one is the shaping of socio-religious movements, and secondly, consanguineous of Hindu Mahasabha in the watch of Khilafat figure and lastly the ideological development of ‘RSS complex’.⁸⁸

As have already mentioned that the role of ideology in different organisation will be same with same agenda. At that time, this ideology as a form of strategy was practised by the different organisations with socio-religious reform like Arya Samaj.⁸⁹ The question comes to one’s mind that: How traditionalists and reformists occupied the space of liberation with their ideological leanings.

⁸⁶ Christophe Jaffrelot, “ *The Hindu Nationalist Movement and Indian Politics 1925 to 1990s: Strategies of Identity-Building, Implantation and Mobilisation* (With special reference to Central India) Penguin Books India, (1983) New Delhi, pp. 3-7.

⁸⁷ *ibid*

⁸⁸ Christophe Jaffrelot, Hindu Nationalism: Strategic Syncretism in Ideology Building, *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 28, No. 12/13 (Mar. 20-27, 1993), pp. 517-524.

⁸⁹ *ibid*

Brahmo Samaj and Arya Samaj: Survival of hegemony

The Socio-religious movements such as, the “Arya Samaj” and the “Brahmo Samaj” were founded in nineteenth century by the new English educated Indians.⁹⁰ It is need to understand what were the conceptions of Samajist’s in terms of the origin, history and nature of the caste?

Brahmo Samaj:

Brahmo Samaj means "Society of Brahmo", additionally interpreted as "Society of God". It was the societal part of Brahmoism. It was the most prominent amongst the most influential religious reformist movements.⁹¹ Brahmo Samaj was set up in 1830 in Calcutta, the capital of British India, by Raja Rammohun Roy. Rammohun Roy was a rich, upper-rank Brahmin, a respectable Sanskrit researcher, knowledgeable in a few dialects like Persian, Arabic and English, and has also known for a couple of philosophical productions in Bengali.⁹² The recently discovered Samaj was called Adi Brahmo Samaj, where Adi stands for "Unique" and Samaj signifies "gathering". It was founded in 1860 by the Bengal Brahmin ‘Thakur’ clan of Rammohun Roy, Dwarkanath Tagore and Prasanna Coomar Tagore who were Hindu philosophers and religious reformers. It was the first ordered casteless movement in British India which was originated by this upper caste ‘Kulin’ Brahmins of Bengal. It was helpful in the Bengal Renaissance of the nineteenth century; organizing the religious, social and edifying progress of the Hindu community.⁹³ There were other famous leaders of Brahmo Samaj in Calcutta such as Keshav Chandra Sen, Pratap Chandra Majumdar and Sivnath Shastri.

In 1828 ‘Brahmo Samaj’ was under the authority of Raja Rammohun Roy for the emancipation of his countrymen from the social evils and orthodoxy. It is important to trace back the history of establishment of Brahmo Samaj; why Brahmo Samaj has been established and what were its purposes? Rammohun has lost his faith in all the religion. Rammohun, ‘his

⁹⁰ Harjot Oberoi, *The Construction of Religious Boundaries: Culture, Identity and Diversity in Sikh tradition* (Oxford, (1994), Delhi, p. 278.

⁹¹ J. N. Farquhar, *Modern Religious Movements of India*, Macmillan, (1915), New York.

⁹² Carpenter Mary, (ed.), *The Last Days in England of Rajah Rammohun Roy*, Trübner & co.; Calcutta: Lepage, (1866), London.

⁹³ Official Brahmo website Brahmosamaj.org. Retrieved 15 October 2012.

essence of religion consisted of faith in One God, without a second and service of humanity'.⁹⁴ In Collet's English biography of Rammohun, "As a reformer of Hinduism he wanted that the contemplated body should have a thoroughly Indian and Hindu Character."⁹⁵ 'Rammohun was extremely amazed by Unitarian Christianity as he was also associated with the Unitarian Christians from 1821 to 1828'.⁹⁶ So, Rammohun's religious thoughts of monotheism came from the Islam and Christianity although the grounds of these religions were fundamentally different which couldn't be adopted by Brahma Samaj. Because the Brahma Samaj should be based on the worship of one 'true god', it should be propagated on the basis of the divine authority of 'Ved' and not on the Holy writ of Christianity.⁹⁷

The Brahma Samaj was entirely based on Hindu sculptures but it was considered as universal because it was open to "men of all religious persuasions and creeds". As a reformer one is required to be a rationalist 'Brahmo'. There was an immense argument on Rammohun Roy's by Brahma and non Brahma writers, likewise 'Akshoy Kumar Datta remarked in a lecture that Rammohun was not a purely Vedantist, he was a rationalist Brahma and impartial to scriptures.'⁹⁸ In the same way, 'Professor Amitabha Mukherjee has argued that Rammohun Roy was a rationalist with strong social consciousness, an intellectual and a reformer.'⁹⁹ Whereas some argues that Rammohun was a Vedantist and principally a religious man. It was all controversial and overlapping arguments. So, to evade this confusion one needs to understand the evolution of Raja's thought. Because, during the life of Rammohun Roy, the Brahma Samaj was founded on the basis of reason, scripture and common sense so in such sense B.N Seal states that:

"In the interest of the solidarity of religions from the social point of view, he founded the Brahma Samaj as a Society of the worshippers of the one God of all religions and all Humanity. By the declarations in the trust of deed, the Brahma Samaj was only to be only a meeting house and congregation for the worship of the one universal God.... In actual practice, no doubt, the congregation in the Raja's Brahma Samaj was a congregation of Hindu

⁹⁴ Kalidas Nag and Debjyoti Burman (eds.), *The English works of Raja Rammohun Roy*, (in 6 Parts, Sadharan Brahma Samaj, Cal. 1945-51), Pt.II, p.189 (see the concluding paragraph of The Brahmical Magazine, No.IV) and p.200 (see the opening paragraph of the Humble Suggestions etc).

⁹⁵ S.D.Collet, op.cit, p.245 see the supplementary notes added by the editors at the end of the Ch.VI.

⁹⁶ K .Nag and D. Burman ed.s, English works Pt.IV, p. 50.

⁹⁷ William Adam's letter to Dr.Tuckeman, dated 22 January,1829, quoted in S.D.Collet, op. cit, p.222

⁹⁸ Akshoy Kumar Datta. "Rammohun Roy" in the Tattv abodhini Patrika Part I, no.103, Phal gun, 1773 Saka era. PP. 146-150; also ibid Pt.IV, no.139, Phal gun,1776, saka era, pp.157-62.

⁹⁹ Amitabha Mukherji, "Dharam-Samskarak Rammohun" in his Unish Sataker Samaj O Samskriti (in Bengal, Cal. 1971, p.93-115).

Theists using the rituals and symbols of that particular type of theism; for public worship must be embodied in some concrete form.”¹⁰⁰

The special arrangements by Rammohun Roy of reading of the Vedas, is a more suitable example to understand the co-opting strategies of Brahmo Samajist's. It would certainly seem as contradictory for the general population. It was not an easy task in those days to find skilled Brahmins in the reading of Vedas and more importantly who would take the duty of reading the Vedas in front of the non-Brahmin, who were not allowed to attend. So, it was said that, "From a separate room, the Vedas may not be desecrated by being in the same apartment with the profanum vulvus of hearers."¹⁰¹ Moreover, to understand the strategies of co-option one needs to understand that as to how the Brahmo Samaj became successful? How did it become popular among general population? So, the answer could be that by providing women education, abolition of 'Sati', and other welfare activities.

The aim of the Brahmo Samaj was religious, cultural and social reform. Hence, some historians such as R.C. Majumdar and Amitabha have argued that, “the Rammohun's reform movement was confined within a small section of the educated Hindu society of Calcutta and that it failed to bring about any radical change in the life of the people.”¹⁰² Furthermore, Rammohun Roy wanted to exterminate the social evils through the religious reform. So, the social reform movement was propounded for the abolition of the caste system and emancipation of women. But, most important thing to notice is that the Samajists such as Debendranath were not against the caste system, and thus somewhere they wanted to maintain this hierarchical order within the society. Certainly, evidence shows that the long before Keshab had initiated the inter-caste marriages, which Debendranath was planning to introduce within the Samaj.¹⁰³ Hence, it has been also written by Majumdar that, “the inter-caste marriages began to accept according to the rituals of the Brahmo Samaj under the sanctions of Debendranath.”¹⁰⁴ In the same way, they were both in the favour of imparting education to the women both at home and in the public schools.

It is very important to mention that there is immense difference between the co-opting strategies of the elder and the later group of the Brahmos. The elder group of Brahmos

¹⁰⁰ B.N. Seal, *op.cit*, p.23.

¹⁰¹ John Bull, August 23, 1828, quoted in S.D.Collet, *op.cit*, p. 226.

¹⁰² A, Mukherji, *op.cit*, p.199.

¹⁰³ Priyanath Sastri (ed.), *Maharshir Patravali (Letters of Debendranath in Bengali)* Hitabali Press, Cal. n.d., Letter No. 38, p. 49.

¹⁰⁴ P.C Majumdra, *op.cit*, p.100.

in early nineteenth century has approved the necessity of social reformation but at the same time they didn't want to alienate themselves from the Hindu society. In other words they wanted to maintain the hierarchical social order through caste system. So, they only gently pushed the social reform activities so that it might confine to a particular section of the society i.e. upper strata. The other group in the later part of nineteenth century has addressed the different social issues for social change. This group had to compromise with the Hindu orthodoxy. However, these two groups have implicit differences in terms of their agreement on the issues of social change. So, the elder members wanted to keep Brahmoism within Hindu fold. They didn't want to shake the grounds of Hindutva fold.¹⁰⁵

Arya Samaj:

The Arya Samaj was founded by Swami Dayanand Saraswati, who was a Gujrati Brahman. The Arya Samaj was established as a new Dharma, which simply mean a set of religion on the basis of social values, which serve as an alternative 'Sanatan Dharma'. There was immense diversity in Arya Samaj because it consists of distinct religious cultures. If one talks about the history of Arya Samaj, 'There was a misunderstanding that the Arya Samaj was cramped to the North and North West provinces of India mainly Punjab and Uttar Pradesh. By that fact, the Arya Samaj got its initial success in these areas and then spreaded all over the India.'¹⁰⁶ The revivalist movement for social and religious reform was deeply rooted in Punjab and so, the important question to rise is that why did Arya Samaj succeed in Punjab? Kenneth William Jones has stated that: "Not only were the missionaries successful in converting Indians in Christianity, but they were considerably more successful into converting Indians to their methods and to their combative attitude than to their religious beliefs."¹⁰⁷ In this sense, to spread the message of 'Vedic Dharma' the Punjab was first place where Arya Samaj had originated. Although, he may have founded a new religious community but he had neither violated nor abandoned the Hindu traditions.

Perhaps, the most important question to ask is: why did Arya Samaj emerge? So, the advent of Arya Samaj was because of the threat from Christianity which became sharper as

¹⁰⁵Arundhati Mukhopadhyay, 'History of the Brahma Samaj (1828-1878): A study of ideological and social conflicts', unpublished Ph.D. work submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, 1990, pp.164-165.

¹⁰⁶J.F. Seunarine, 'Reconversion to Hinduism through Suddhi', The Christian Litertature Society, Madras (1977) p. 11.

¹⁰⁷Kenneth William Jones, The Arya Samaj in the Punjab: A study of social reformation and religious revivalism, 1877-1902, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation (Berkeley: University of California, 1966), p.23

well as the Brahma Samaj was not able to get desired results out of growing challenges. For, Jaffrelot the approach of Roy is "syncretic" because he attempts to change Hinduism depending on the statutes of Christianity and Western rationalism. Moreover, the lower castes were more enthusiastic toward these new movements because they regarded Dayanand as their saviour and his organization was be considered to be as helpful in improving their position and bringing them as equals to the upper castes.¹⁰⁸ Roy was the revivalist of Hinduism and claims that he describes this neo-Hinduism from an absolutely indigenous brilliant age. He has restored the Hindu characters which have been mocked by Europeans. He has used a pre-nationalist belief system to oppose the hostilities among locals; these hostilities are seen as most hazardous for the local social balance. Hence, the development of Arya Samaj is the development of another kind of socio-religious change development.¹⁰⁹

The question is, are reformists free from the traditional values? And if so, then, how has the idea of reform along with the traditional practices developed the notion of liberation for all? Isn't it co-option for others? Didn't it the restrict emancipation of others or the notion of exclusion and discrimination at the same time? So, one needs to look at that How has Samaj modifies the orthodox beliefs in terms of reform emphasis? One of the best examples is the orthodox practices followed by Arya Samajists was 'Shuddhi'. Shuddhi is a Sanskrit word which means purification. Monier Williams defines "Shuddhi as Purity, cleanness, holiness, freedom from defilement; purification, expiation, cleansing; a particular expiatory rite; it also means: rectification, correction, truth, and is sometimes given as a name of Durga."¹¹⁰

"The Arya Samaj added a new and extremely significant dimension to the Hindu religion. Hinduism became a Pracharak Dharma i.e. a conversion religion. No longer did the Hindu community face threats of conversion empty-handed. Shuddhi provided the capacity for the defence and offence. Aryan efforts to proselytize, covert, educate and reform were supported by a variety of modern and traditional techniques...., The Samaj stood boldly in defence of Hinduism, but only its Aryan interpretation."¹¹¹

The Shuddhi practice claims to be an ancient one but it was rediscovered for political purposes to save Hinduism by opening the doors for those who were excluded from

¹⁰⁸ Har Bilas Sharda, op.cit. pp. 81-82.

¹⁰⁹ ibid

¹¹⁰ Monier Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1872), p.1014.

¹¹¹ Jones, op. cit., pp. 52-53.

Hinduism i.e. the untouchables. And for those, who have been converted to Christianity and Islam, needed to be converted back to Hinduism.¹¹² Shuddhi seems as superficial process of purification although people were not concerned of any religious instruction before enduring 'shuddhi'. 'Shuddhi' could have been criticised in terms of how such regulations could be restored and wrecked by man himself? Likewise, "Fifteen Arya Samajists of Moradabad were outcasted by the members of the orthodox community on the offence of drinking Ganges water from Christians who had become Hindus again".¹¹³ Some of the Arya Samajists couldn't accept the converted Hindus because of the fear of orthodox caste brotherhood who may not accept water or food from their hands. The Arya Samajists converted Christians and Muslims as Hindus but they would not accept them socially; otherwise the whole 'Hindu Biradari' would banish them.¹¹⁴ The Arya Samajists were not in the favour of disturbing the existing social order. Hence, the Shuddhi movement bridged the gap between the Arya Samaj and orthodox Hinduism.¹¹⁵ Certainly, the Arya Samaj and orthodoxy worked in close cooperation in terms of performing Shuddhi. The desired endeavour of Shuddhi has been accomplished with the cooperation of both the orthodox and reformers, and as a result of it, all the forcibly converted were returned to their castes along with the privileges.

The Arya Samajists have had close cooperation with the orthodox practices which have been reflected through the various cases. This whole argument could lead into the distinction between the reformer and orthodox. Certainly, if 'Arya Samaj follows the purificatory ceremony which prescribed under the 'law of Manu' then it can be simply termed as orthodox, as it is one of the transcripts of orthodoxy. The orthodox leaders would not accept the people to their caste position even after they had undergone the Shuddhi ceremony.'¹¹⁶ So, "the orthodox Hinduism always barred its doors against them. The Arya Samaj kept it open."¹¹⁷

It is claimed that Arya Samaj didn't abandon the caste system although they marked the gap between the conceptual framework of 'Varna' and 'Jati'. The Arya Samaj equated the 'Jati' with existing caste order. So, the members of the Samaj retained the Varna

¹¹² J.F Seunarine, '*Reconversion in Hinduism through Suddhi*', The Christian Literature Society, Madras, 1977, p.54.

¹¹³ Arya Patrika, October 19, 1895, p. 5.

¹¹⁴ Ibid. April 17, 1897, p.6., June 13, 1896, p. 4.

¹¹⁵ Satyadev Vidyalkar, Swami Shraddhanand, pp.558 - 596.

¹¹⁶ Etee Bahadur, '*Arya Samaj and Caste reform (1875-1925)*', unpublished M.Phil dissertation submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University New Delhi India 1996, p. 28

¹¹⁷ Mahumdar, op. cit., p. 298

system of Hinduism but rejected the notion of caste by birth. It could be easily visible when one talks about reform of rituals, likewise, to keep the basic rites of Hinduism such as the daily five sacrifices and the sixteen sacraments or Sankars. This statement could solve the doubts about ideologies of Arya Samajists, which states that: “The hour of trial has come. We had said the Vedas were for all. People are coming to us. Will we receive them? We are afraid the Biradari will excommunicate us.”¹¹⁸ Hence, the caste reform activities and attitudes have been adopted by the followers of Arya Samaj. They were not ready for complete abolition of caste customs and distinctions rather they wanted to convert this caste distinction from birth to qualities of individuals. They wanted to restore the many divisions of caste in four Varnas which could not be possible.

Arya Samaj was also meant for fulfilment of many good purposes to mention the few: “the upliftment of untouchables, schools for girls and societies for the higher education of women, children being taught in distant lands where religion was forgotten and the ideal of Dayanand: humanity is one even as God himself is one.”¹¹⁹ Arya Samaj has made serious efforts to improve the condition of depressed caste and classes. Such as the Jat Pat Todak Mandala was formed by 1922 which was an organization. All could be fit into the co-opting strategies of Samajists. The other co-opting strategies were commensality and intermarriage as there were Samajists who started to eat meat with those who are willing to eat, but they don’t eat with those who have recently converted from Islam and Christianity because of the fear of their orthodox caste brotherhood.

Swami Atmanand remarks, “Because of their numerical strength they (the Dalits) are truly the spinal cord of Hindu Jati. Lakhs and crores of these people are getting disassociated from Hindu Samaj because they are humiliated and looked down upon.”¹²⁰ Hence, the approach of Arya samajists were always revivalist rather than reformist as their inherent orthodoxy could not go away Hindutava always needed the support of Dalits in order to fight with “others” i.e. Muslims. Like the Arya Samajists such as Dayanand and Shraddhanand they adopted the strategy of taking an Anti-Brahminical stands such as Interdining. The strategy of Dayanand has been visible through his statement that “The nature of the genital fluids made in a Brahmin body due to special kind of fooding is different from that made in

¹¹⁸ Arya Patrika, April 17, 1897, p. 6

¹¹⁹ Charlea Freer Andrews, Letter written to the Vedic Magazine and quoted in *The Modern Review* (Calcutta: March, 1925), p. 336.

¹²⁰ Ghanshyam Shah, ‘Caste Hindutva and Hideousness’, *EPW*, 13 April 2002, p. 1392.

Chandal's (untouchable's) body on account of bad diet. The body of a Chandal is full of rotten particles due to rotten diet".¹²¹ Such statements show the hypocritical stands of reformists and hence, it is an important question whether reformists are secular and egalitarian in a true sense. It is important to notice that how the certain aspects of revivalists are always present in reformists' movement. In short the Arya Samajist calls for "Back to the Vedas."

Arya Samaj represents the religious attitude and in that sense Shuddhi is not merely a purification ritual but a far reaching ideology; it is a 'tip of the iceberg'. On holding such hypocritical stands the question that arises is: 'Is the Arya Samaj a political body? Is it communal?'¹²² Arya Samaj claims to be Universalist but it gives more emphasis to Sanskrit language which reflects as the 'cultural quality' of Hinduism. So, the Arya Samaj seems as communal but some assert and others deny this fact.

If one focuses on the political purposes of the Arya Samaj i.e. 'Shuddhi', Shuddhi movement has been adopted by the other groups also as a political instrument such as by the 'Hindu Mahasabha'.¹²³ So, one cannot deny the fact that the Arya Samaj is a political body. Furthermore, 'the large numbers of Arya Samajists are active in the leadership of other organizations such as in 'Jana Sangh', which one might call as the height of 'hiddenness', the unseen part of the Arya Samaj.'¹²⁴

In the Rig Veda, the position of the four Varnas does exist differently. In earliest of the Vedic texts, in the hymn X90, a famous foundation myth metaphor has been born out of the sacrifice of the primordial man i.e. 'Virat Purusha'; "the Brahmin (priest) was his mouth, his arm was made the Kshatriya (warrior), his thighs became the Vaishya and from his feet the Shudra (servant) was made". This fourfold scheme is an ideal, normative and hierarchical one. The relationship of this hierarchical structure with the social practices is not very well clear; but the existing distinction within hierarchical social structure based upon the ritual practices like in the Jati system, on the one hand the Brahman holds an upper position within

¹²¹ Dayanand, Sarasvati, quoted in, Christophe Jaffrelot, in, "*India's Silent Revolution: The Rise of Low Castes in North Indian Politics*", Permanent Black, (2003), Delhi p. 191.

¹²² J.F Seunarine, 'Reconversion in Hinduism through Suddhi', The Christian Literature Society, Madras, 1977, p. 61

¹²³ Ibid p. 65

¹²⁴ Ibid p. 70

the strata and on the other, the Shudra holds the lower position; both are set apart in the social organisation in terms of social, cultural and economic positions.¹²⁵

Dayananda has argued that these four Vedic 'classes' are merely born out because of basic collectivity needs. He has also claimed that the status distinction among these classes have come at later stage on the basis of socio-economic terms. He also vindicates the caste system as under the array of ancestral Varna because it subsumes certain individualistic values. Dayananda's reformism merely depends upon the ancestral Varna which was justified by him. He hasn't tried to challenge the social system but tried to protect its equilibrium for the continuation of society. His ideologies have been reflected through his recommendation which was related to the strict practice of endogamy of Varna.

The process of Ideological reconstruction is suitable here while relating the theory of Geertz and Fallers to the Arya Samaj that tries to evolve an ideology. Arya Samaj tries to vindicate an identity which was threatened by the criticism of the caste system. Caste system is one of the major pillars of the Indian society which also represents as its 'cultural quality'. Arya Samaj was majorly threatened for the negation of its 'cultural quality'. Here, the traditional cultural qualities are majorly moderate according to the golden age which seems to be natural formulation of a pre-nationalist ideology. It is important to notice that traditions are not merely forgettable but they invent according to contemporary time and space. They can never be completely eradicated by the society; some aspect would always remain in certain ways.¹²⁶

Perhaps, this 'invention of tradition' by the socio-religious reform movements is of great importance because it is modelled on the basis of antagonist's culture by an ideology of strategic syncretism. Ram Mohan Roy and Dayananda have discovered in Vedas that why they need to resist western influence. Perhaps, it could be said that this is an ideology of strategic syncretism: syncretism simply because of the strong purpose behind is to be consistent with the Hindu cultural equilibrium. The major aim of syncretism is to reform and establish one's society through the assimilation of western values for the continuation of society and cultural equilibrium. Further, the question on equilibrium remains the primary concern. The superiority of culture is part of any society so; the main question that arises is

¹²⁵ Christophe Jaffrelot, "Hindu Nationalism: Strategic Syncretism in Ideology Building," *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 28, No. 12/13 (Mar. 20-27, 1993), pp. 517-524.

¹²⁶ Christophe Jaffrelot, (1983), op.cit p. 458.

whether there exists any society which gives equal importance to all existing cultures. This strategy constitutes with the two major dimensions: firstly, it is directed towards the 'psychological' demands for convincing the consciousness of individuals. Secondly, it is concerned about the reforming of ideology and so it uses the 'mimetic' aspects of ideology building for cultural equilibrium. It is the core perception of Arya samajists that through this 'mimetic' aspect of ideology they could create 'culture superiority' of Hinduism.

Recovering self-esteem:

It is claimed that the Vedic society is considered as monotheistic and respectful of the individual as the Christian west. Strategic Syncretism is useful in socio-religious reform movements while co-opting the history and aspects of other's culture. Likewise, adapting the prestigious values of Europeans, in such sense Europeans were so proud of this first strategic moment and tried to legitimize them. But at the same time during the second strategic moment, which was related to cultural institutions such as the caste system; the second moment was under the idealised array of the Varna. In second strategic moment it was expected by the reformists that they would continue the society with same structure and process along with certain invention of traditions; but these cultural institutions would be the same such as language, caste system etc. So, on the basis of these arguments, a major aspect which has come out of the reformers' message is that: it is to be said that there is no need to leave Hinduism because of rationalist scepticism or to be converted. Hinduism is in its perfect pure state and it has the same virtues as in Christianity, both could be defined by modern science and based on the modern science.¹²⁷

It is very important to focus on the relevant objective behind the re-establishment of the Hinduism in this golden age and especially the need to focus on its Varna system. This is an ideological strategy that could be easily understood and traced on the sociological basis. Within the Hindus, the most willing persons who engaged in protecting the cultural equilibrium majorly were high caste elites. They desire to not merely preserve their upper caste position but they alone want to understand the whole structure of society, and they want to have an overall view of the society so as to control it. The classification of Varna model is described in the Vedas, by focusing on the organicist emphasis, by focusing on how to

¹²⁷ ibid

develop harmonic relationship within the social system which is most likely a Brahmanical creation, for the continuation of existing social structure. Whereas it is important to notice that the leaders of the socio-religious reform movement belong to the higher caste intelligentsia such as Ram Mohan Roy who was a Brahmin and his knowledge of English allowed him to work in the East India Company administration. In the same way Dayanand, who was a Gujarati Brahmin and came from an orthodox background.¹²⁸

Indeed, education plays an important role in the lives of people, whereas schools are considered as socializing agents hence forth, some leaders of the Arya Samaj such as Lala Lajpat Rai, Mahatma Hansraj, Gurudutta Vidyarthi and others, with the growing importance of education, have decided to give a religious favouritism to the western system of education. So, they have started a chain of D.A.V (Dayanand Anglo Vedic) schools and colleges to impart particular type of education for convincing the consciousness of individuals. In the same way, Swami Shraddanand and others thought of establishment of Gurukuls so that it would be helpful in the rebirth of ancient Hindu culture and Vedic literature.¹²⁹ So, schools may consider as agents of secondary socialization but they also develop the ideology and certain values among members of the society.

Gandhi's Appropriation of Ambedkar

The untouchable question and representation made Ambedkar and Gandhi have dialogue with each other. Ambedkar clearly believed that the class interested cannot be represented by a borrowed or a hired person¹³⁰, thus, he emphasized for self- representation. From 1920's till his death he had dealt with the question of untouchability and had experimented several ways of solving the untouchable question. The conflict between Ambedkar and Gandhi or their thoughts arose on the question of representation, initially. It got strengthened, when Gandhi replied to Ambedkar that, he was 'against the political separation of the untouchables'¹³¹. When the life of the untouchable is decided by the social and political decisions, naturally the untouchable will seek steps to escape the untouchable body. The question here is why does Gandhi oppose the political separation of the untouchables? All the caste Hindus believes that the untouchables are part of Hinduism, but, with no social or political right according to

¹²⁸ Christophe Jaffrelot (ed.), *The Sangh Parivar: A Reader*, Oxford University Press, (2005), New Delhi p. 65.

¹²⁹ Dr. Dukhan Ram & Gauri Shankar, "The Arya Samaj in Bihar" K.K.Dutta, (ed.), *Comprehensire History of Bihar, Vol. III, part II*, p. 30.

¹³⁰ Ambedkar's speech in 1933, available in M S Gore, *The Social Context of an Ideology* p 213.

¹³¹ See Christopher Jaffrelot, *Dr. Ambedkar and Untouchability* page 57.

their religious texts. The exercise of the political rights by the untouchables would mean that they are no longer under the dominance of the caste Hindus. The Gandhian logic would mean that the untouchable should exist but without any political rights. It is well known that the rights are political and social in nature, ever since the dawn of civilization and consciousness. Gandhi was bothered about the division in Hinduism i.e. some Hindus moving away from Hinduism. The Gandhian logic is opposed to the civilization and consciousness of the untouchables.

Gandhi had argued that ‘those who speak about political rights of the untouchables do not know India and do not know how Indian society is today constructed’¹³². Gandhi presumes that all those speaking for the rights of the untouchables are aware of the Indian situation. Gandhi undermines that thinking capability of the assertive being like that of Ambedkar. Having being hailing from the untouchable community, Ambedkar understands the problem of untouchability which is pertinent in the Indian context. Therefore, Ambedkar and his communities experience are well equipped to understand and explain the Indian reality and its construction. Because of the construction of some of the Indians who vehemently argued and proposed for caste system, untouchability is practiced in India. Gandhi uses the word construction, for the sake of our understanding, let us see, how does construction happens. Two individuals or parties are involved in the construction of a thing when they ought to share it, or else, a single individual decides it. The construction which Gandhi talks about is the Indian Society, which is based on caste system. Therefore, the question is was the individual in the caste system consulted before prescribing him/her? No. So, Gandhi is not letting the untouchable person or any other lower caste person take a stock of the constructed Indian reality and comes to terms with it. What makes Gandhi not let the untouchable think of the constructed caste system? In the caste system as it is well known there is a hierarchical system wherein the Brahmin, Baniya, Kshatriya and Shudra are placed in the hierarchy respectively. The untouchable actually is not in the hierarchical order but outside the fold of hierarchy. Though the untouchable is outside the fold, all those in the fold of Hinduism have their right to exercise their dominance on the untouchable. Gandhi himself being a baniya (trading caste) doesn’t want the untouchable being to think. Any thinking of the untouchable person would lead to a problem in Hinduism, as Gandhi was afraid of the breakaway of some people from Hinduism. Gandhi is interested in safeguarding the interests of the dominance of caste Hindus over the untouchables and Hinduism in general.

¹³² Ibid page 58.

On the question of the separate electorate, the rift between Ambedkar and Gandhi widened. The comments of the Gandhi are the following “ the untouchables do not realize that that a separate electorate will create division among Hindus so much that it will lead to a bloodshed. Untouchable hooligans will make common cause with Muslim hooligans and kill caste Hindus”¹³³. Gandhi is bothered about the unity of Hindus and Hinduism. What Gandhi doesn't realize is that already the Hindus are divided in the form of caste system. So, how can the divided people unite? It is only through submission to the caste Hindu order and its dominance can there be a unity among the Hindus. The individual is not free, but under the subjugation of the caste system and Gandhi is enforcing the untouchable to be a proponent/believer in Hinduism.

The caste system has had and is shedding a lot of bloodshed on the untouchable, even till date. It is the untouchable who is under subjugation of the caste system. Therefore, the untouchable being is at the receiving end of the caste system hierarchy and bloodshed. The everyday atrocities on the untouchables clearly exhibits who is at the suffering end of the caste system.

The unity between the untouchables and Muslims is undesired by caste Hindus including Gandhi. Gandhi is bothered about the common cause between the untouchable and Muslim will end up killing Hindus. Why would there be any killing, if there is a common cause between the untouchable and Muslims? The common cause arises when the problem is the same or when the trouble maker is the same. By making the above comments on the common cause of untouchables and Muslims, Gandhi exhibits his hatred towards both the communities shared aspiration of being equal in all terms. The Gandhian logic is antagonistic towards the untouchable and Muslim.

With regard to Gandhi's fast against separate electorate, Ambedkar wasn't positive. Ambedkar's pragmatic approach didn't win the argument as the fellow untouchables like M C Rajah were in favour of Gandhi's fast and Ambedkar had to compromise with the warning of Rajah¹³⁴. Rajah had feared that, owing to the fast, if Gandhi dies, then the entire civilized community will stand against the untouchable community. Apart from fearing, Rajah had also warned Ambedkar that he will not be in agreement with his idea of separate electorate; this is evident in the Rajah-Moonje Pact. The general sentiment towards Gandhi since he was

¹³³ Ibid page 64.

¹³⁴ Ibid page 66.

an advocate of the freedom of India from British made the Indian community vouch for Gandhi's life. Owing to the larger people's pressure and Rajah's constant pressure and Gandhi's fast, Ambedkar had to compromise on the separate electorate.

Now, let us examine the following things. 1. Gandhi is an advocate of freedom of India. 2. Gandhi is an advocate of peace which is well known. 3. He opposes the untouchables freedom of being independent (either political or social rights). Logically speaking within the logic of peace and freedom, for all the individuals both are essential. The caste system is full of conflicts and there is space for breathing for the freedom by the untouchables. Therefore, the threat posed by Gandhi's fast against the political rights of the untouchables has to be examined carefully. Gandhi by fasting against the untouchable rights is exhibiting that his life is more important than that of the untouchable's rights. Within the philosophy and logic of rights the Gandhi's fast can be negated. The right exercised by Gandhi is a negative right over the untouchable. The untouchable is vouching for her existence and only within the logic of political existence can the untouchable express his or her rights. By placing his life above the untouchable's rights, Gandhi clearly enforces the untouchable to withdraw his/her legitimate demand for rights. With the constant threatening Gandhi had co-opted and appropriated Ambedkar, as a result, the rights of the untouchable for separate electorate were curtailed.

RSS and BJP: The continuity of co-option

The RSS took shape in 1925 like the Hindu Mahasabha. The RSS was founded by Hedgewar, and its major aim was to combine the Hindu nation by two different ways: firstly through psychological reform, and secondly, through assimilating other's cultural values for 'culture equilibrium'. For Hedgewar, the method of assimilation could not be possible by reinterpreting the Varna system rather the method which he had introduced was more relevant. For Hedgewar, Varna system was still a true division and four fold classifications were still present which define Hindu nation. So, he claimed that there is need to create an ethic of selfless individualism. This could be helpful in providing the more inclusive and cohesive form of Hindu nationalism.

The RSS was supposed to become a Hindu nationalist spearhead based on individual solidarity. It has adapted the imported egalitarian values of the European nationalism and the

Muslim communal fraternity. So, this syncretism was strategic because the main aim behind this was to establish a unified Hindu nation. By establishing a 'single identity nation' it could become easy to resist these, 'foreigners' and it was seen as elaboration of familiar and indigenous sectarian pattern.¹³⁵

The RSS belief system and ideology is simply described as conservative and backward-looking. So, it is important to understand that through what type of value patterns the RSS wanted to establish the Hindu nationalism. It is little doubtful that it represents an outline of Hindu nationalism. While, establishing a nation state, it is very important to eliminate the particular type of ideology from a democratic space. However, the ideology of RSS reflects something else because it justifies the classification of Varna system. Whereas, at face reality RSS do not support the aristocratic order which has been reflected through their practices, they do not support the dominant caste in the Varna System, and the landed and industrial entrepreneur. But, sometimes the defence of Hinduism by the RSS is interpreted as the support of orthodoxy. So, it seems that the RSS supports feudal aristocracy, higher classes and capitalism. However, some RSS leaders converse such views. Indeed, it seems like there is an egalitarian structure of RSS in terms of writing and practices. In such sense Golwalker writes on caste system that:

He claims that the feeling of inequality i.e. the high and low has skulked into the Varna system and its recently developed origin. In the original form of the Varna system the distinction in the social order didn't lead to the discrimination of high and low, big and small. Whereas in the Gita it tells that if an individual does assigned duties, by providing selfless service through such performances, they worship god in true sense.

The RSS organization has been founded by Maharashtrian Brahmins like Hedgewar who came from Telugu Brahmin family whereas; Golwalker was from Karhada Brahmin and most interestingly all the Swayamsevaks were Brahmins. In Moonje's autobiography he himself defines a Deshastha Brahmin, and referred to RSS members 'Brahmin youths' and 'Brahmins lads'. That's why the egalitarian nature of the RSS was contradicted because for a long period of time it has been only associated with castes specifically in the context of RSS Brahmanism and its Social Contradiction.¹³⁶ Likewise, Vinayak Damodar Savarkar was the President of Hindu Mahasabha in 1937. Under his leadership, he has projected the Hindu

¹³⁵ Christophe Jaffrelot, (2005), op. cit. p.65.

¹³⁶ Christophe Jaffrelot, (2005), op. cit. p.65.

Mahasabha alternative to the Congress and the Muslim League. But, in the post-independent India, it existed as provincial Hindu Sabha which simply means strongly identified as upper caste party with socially conservative views.¹³⁷

Savarkar had borrowed the idea of ethnic nationalism from the west and then arranged it with the ideology of 'Hindutva'. Hedgewar adopted the idea of ethnic nationalism and employed it with the Social model of the Hindu nation. He endeavours to employ the idea with a solid organization such as RSS immediately.

But, it is important to notice that there has been rapid politicization and expedite of groups such as Dalits. So, expedition of certain groups would develop through electoral strategies or through Dalit consciousness. So, what type of consciousness has developed? These changes might be possible through different strategies and processes. Hence, it is important to find out whether it was political compulsion for BJP to come up with certain tactics and strategies, to attain votes or BJP has been seriously involved for their interests. It is important to understand the ideology of BJP, whereas, BJP is nothing but the political manifestation of Hindutava. So, we can understand one of the major strategies of the BJP with regards to coalition politics in U.P. Hence, this clearly shows the process of mobilization and co-option of Dalits was more of political compulsion rather than a serious step to eliminate their alienation. The BJS leadership was supported by the RSS.

BJS was formed in 1951, under the leadership of Shyama Prasad Mookherji. The ideological plane of RSS and BJS were similar, majorly influenced by the Sangathanism. "The Jana Sangh stated its "fundamentals" as "one country, one nation, one culture and the rule of the law."¹³⁸ But, it is very interesting to notice that over emphasis on Sangathanism has been paid by the collapse of the Janata government. The members of Jana Sangh had ideological coherence, and high degree of discipline and the ability to subordinate their personal interest that led to collapse of the Janata party government. So, the gaining of acceptability of any party within a society is a must. Later, the birth of BJP took place in 1980.¹³⁹

¹³⁷Indra Prakash, *A Review of the History and work of the Hindu Mahasabha and the Hindu Sanghatan Movement* (New Delhi, 1938), pp.1-31; Richard Gordon, "The Hindu Maha Sabha and Indian National Congress, 1915 to 1926", *Modern Asian Studies*, vol.IX, no.2 (1975), pp.145-71; Mushirul Hasan, *Nationalism and Communal Politics in India, 1916-1928* (Columbia, MO, 1979), pp.254-6.

¹³⁸Craig Baxter, *A Biography of an Indian Political Party*, University of Pennsylvania Press, (1969), Philadelphia, p.84.

¹³⁹ Y .K Malik, V .B Singh, (2007) op. cit.p. 34.

At that time because of ideological coherence, the political structure was fully dominated by Congress and so; the survival of the BJP could be only possible by putting behind the ‘Sangathanism’ and by pursuing the new strategy of “Gandian socialism”. Hence, the BJP has created a new image of itself by adopting the new ideologies of ‘Gandhian Socialism’, and ‘positive secularism’¹⁴⁰ along with ‘nationalism and national integration’, ‘democracy’ and ‘value based politics’. These were simply known as the five commitments of BJP.

The BJP thought it would be accepted through such moderate approaches within the system by separating itself from ‘Jana Sangh’. But, all these strategies were proved vain. Furthermore, because of the inner conflict between RSS and BJP, party had to accept ‘integral humanism’ in the place of ‘Gandhian socialism’ which was thought to be more inclusive and suitable in terms of cooption of Dalits.¹⁴¹

So, the RSS had made the pressurised BJP to replace Gandhian Socialism with Integral Humanism, with a reminder that the BJP party could not take the RSS support for granted. Hence, ‘Integral Humanism’ is something opposed to ‘Gandhian socialism’ because it believes in cultural centralization i.e. cultural oneness in the society. It wanted to create monolithic Hindu societal structure and that means all Hindus need to be together irrespective of their caste. So, Dalits or Shudras need to be incorporated in this defined structure, it’s simply call for the cooperation not socialism. On the other hand, ‘Gandhian socialism’ focuses on decentralization of the society. This concept of ‘Integral Humanism’ has provided an option to the BJP to co-opt Dalits according to the existing structure by maintaining the traditional ‘Varna Vayastha’.

Furthermore, ‘Integral humanism’ was accepted in July 1985 as the party’s fundamental philosophy, and by the end of 1986 it was added into party’s constitution.’¹⁴² Apart from this, BJP and the Sangh Parivar have attempted to create a breach in Muslim-Dalit unity, as; both Dalits and Muslims have held the common grudge with the upper caste Hindus. They have shared common class solidarity irrespective of their communal lines and

¹⁴⁰Christophe Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement and Indian Politics, 1925-1990s: Strategies of Identity Building Implantation and Mobilization* (with special reference to Central India) (London: Hurst and Company, 1996), p.316.

¹⁴¹ Christophe Jaffrelot, (1996), op.cit, p. 319.

¹⁴² *BJP Working Committee Report*, (New Delhi: BJP Central Office, 1998)

also relatively deprived to upper caste Hindus in terms of social, political, religious, and economic status. BJP and Sangh Parivar could easily destroy this communal harmony as the BJP was aware about this solidarity was perilous. So, they have made the full utilization of such opportunities to prompt riots, so that with the eruption of such riots would simply lead to the mobilization of the Dalits in their favor. BJP and Sangh parvar were successful in portray the Muslims image as apostate and lustful. They have polarized the society by stigmatizing 'other' on the basis of communal lines. So, the BJP, VHP and other Hindu organizations have raised such slogans 'Babar ki Santan, Jao Pakistan ya Qabristan'. In simple terms they have portrayed the image of all the Muslims as posterity of Babar who was an intruder. This could be the only successful way by which Hindutava politics could survive.¹⁴³

During the 'Ram janambhoomi movement' a number of the riots have been taken place at that time specifically in the vicinity of the Muslims and the Dalits. The important thing is to notice here is that several strategies have been employed by the BJP to mobilize the Dalits against the Muslims. BJP also tried to spread rumors about 'others' i.e. Muslims, and they responsible for creating tension in the society and such rumours are also responsible for creating a climate of fear among people. Thus, as a result of it, people feel safest within their own communities during the times of danger. Hence, this has created an unfathomable line between these two masses of people.¹⁴⁴

Now, there was a shift from ethno religious mobilization to ethno-nationalist mobilization because BJP could not merely rely on Ayodhya but the party has to concern itself with other issues of national interest. So, BJP stated that: "No party can have credibility if it is seen as a one issue party .We would like the BJP to be accepted by the people as a party which has a holistic view of the problems of the country and which is not trying to win power simply on the basis of an emotional issue".¹⁴⁵

With the concluding remarks it is clear that the process of co-option of dalit in Hindutva ideology is not a unilinear phenomenon. It has some sense of multiplicity of doctrines and

¹⁴³ Ashgar Ali Engineer, *Lifting the Veil: The Ramjanmbhoomi- Babri Masjid Controversy*, Sangarn Books, (1995), New Delhi, p.91.

¹⁴⁴ G.Pandey, "The Civilized and the Barbarian: The New Politics of Late Twentieth Century India and the World" in G. Pandey (ed.), *Hindus and Others: The Question of Identity in India Today*, Viking, (1993), New Delhi.

¹⁴⁵ Advani's interview in, Christophe Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement and Indian Politics, 1925-1990s: Strategies of Identity Building Implantation and Mobilization* (with special reference to Central India),op.cit., p. 485

images of appropriation. History is not which is reachable but the unreachable project is important to understand the space and location of that society. And the oppressor with their location develops the strategic forgetting for oppressed to envelope the liberation with their situation. Therefore, history of co-option is incomplete without examination of co-opting history.

Chapter: 2

Co-opting History: Constructing Past and Memory

Theorization of Past, Memory, and History

Contemporary historians of memory have pointed out on media technologies that are of great importance in shaping what it means to remember. So, here important thing is what we remember and how do we remember it. Sources are important to recreate histories. Some societies keep their written records and so they have a different relationship to the past than those who don't. Because with the advancements in record keeping it becomes easier to debunk these 'inventions' as some historical myths have proven to be wrong, and they were not convincing to the evidence.

If one talk about media's theoretical perspective, the rise of modernist narrative is also result of the rise of the press and development of media like photography, film, and the digital revolution. Modern media has also contributed to advance our understanding of memory.

If we move towards the origin of memory it is difficult to determine: how much memory is there and what kind of memory it is? It is quite difficult to evaluate and explain the operation of memory. There is no evidence of the "surfeit" of memory that when, why and where it was seen as such. So, to trace its epistemology is quite difficult. However, it was only supposed that the rise of memory in culture and politics happened in the second half of the twentieth century.

Memories are also of several types. A memory attributed to a single person is a personal memory; whereas, memory that is attributed to more than one person is termed as collective memory. But, again these definitions are not clear. There is no clarity about the relationship between an individual and collective memory and about their functions. A memory is transmitted in nature from one generation to another.¹

¹ Nicolas Russell, "Collective Memory before and after Halbwachss", *The French Review*, Vol. 79, No. 4 (Mar., 2006), p. 793.

Memories are everlasting, ageless or in a sense timeless. Some part of the past is always present in future whether it is by individual memory or by recalled meaning of material. Interestingly past, present and future all are interrelated with one another. Memory exists out of the reach of the individual or any single group lived experience. Memories are multidimensional; they are not absolute according to any specific group. Memories are not precise they are free from the exact history of any specific group; and even if they are dependent, they are related to multiple individual memories for their own existence. The memory has a special status because it exists in an unchanging and unending sphere; at least in the theory and hence memories are everlasting.²

Furthermore, while moving towards the individual and collective memory, Bergson's work on memory corresponds to Halbwachss consideration. He makes distinction between subjective and objective anxiety of the past. Here is an argument on different ways of record keeping in the past and present times. He talked about how the new forms of record keeping measured time and recorded history in uniform ways. The long and short periods recorded in different ways, short periods with the intense detail while long periods are vaguely summarized. However, the 'individual memory' is highly variable in past and present. Following Bergson, majorly 'the variability of memory' was the real point of interest for Halbwachs.³ In such discussions it can be said that "Primitive" societies are societies of collective memory, whereas on the other hand modern societies are societies of individual memory.

Halbwach mainly focuses on the construction of memory. For Halbwachs, memory is a matter of mind, it is important to understand how do mind works in a similar way in a society. How similar type of consciousness does develop? How particular kind of historical knowledge does emerge? He was curious to find an answer of, how the memories are structured by the society; memories are not merely mediated by social arrangements. "It is in society that people normally acquire their memories. It is also in society that they recall, recognize, and localize their memories".⁴ Furthermore, for Halbwachs, memory is important in the present as much as it

² Russell Nicolas, 'Collective Memory before and after Halbwachss'. *The French Review*, Vol. 79, No. 4 (Mar., 2006), p. 794.

³ Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, Trans. N. M. Paul and W. S. Palmer. Zone Books, (1988), New York.

⁴ Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory* (ed. and trans. Lewis A. Coser), The University of Chicago Press, (1992), Chicago, p. 38.

is important in the past but it is framed in the present according to contemporary situations. Memory is also dynamic it is not constant, as it is created and recreated; and there is a need to identify it through dynamic social frames. New identities have great relation with past, they are not free from the past and hence, they emerge through the revaluation of previous values and arrangements.

Halbwachs was more interested in understanding the group memory. Furthermore, Halbwachs was more influenced with Durkheim. So, Halbwachs's analysis remains wholly Durkheimian because, Durkheim has made efforts to elaborate the mechanisms of social solidarity. Hence, for Halbwachs collective memory is divided into three parts i.e. family memory, social class memory and religion memory.⁵ Halbwachs focuses on the concept of interaction to understand remembrance. These dynamics of the groups such as family, religion and social classes are responsible for remembrance. For him, an individual's social interactions with the members of his or her group simply resolve the dilemma as to how members interact with one another and shared the lived experiences. They remember experiences from the past and that's how the past is reconstructed and reproduced. This can also lead to the collective reconstruction of the past.⁶ There is always visible and great tension between the past and the present. It is a tension of how to conceive the past meaning and processes suitable to contemporary period; particularly because past meanings are useful for the present processes. From historical remains and meanings we would like to reconstruct our present.⁷

In contemporary period, the relationship between history and memory needs to understand. According to Halbwachs, groups reconstruct their past experiences collectively. So, as a result of it the particular perspective of an individual cannot remain as independent memory of past. One thing here to notice is that perspective of an individual is prepared through interaction and sharing.⁸ Furthermore, it is important now to make distinction between history

⁵ Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory* (ed. and trans. Lewis A. Coser), The University of Chicago Press, (1992), Chicago.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ S. Jones, "Discourses of identity in the interpretation of the past [in] Graves", in Brown, P. Jones, S. and C. Gamble (ed.), *Cultural identity and Archaeology: The Construction of European Communities*. Routledge, (1996), New Delhi.

⁸ Russell Nicolas, op.cit. p.796.

and memory. The divide has been made firstly for those who see history and memory as completely distinct and secondly, for those who see memory and history as continuous with each other. In such sense, R. G. Collingwood has strongly argued that; “history is a certain kind of organized and inferential knowledge, and memory is not organized, not inferential at all.”⁹

So, somewhere, both the terms are quite overlapping. They seem to be quite similar but different in many ways. Memory is a contemporary phenomenon and history is related to the past. History and memory both are important for the construction of present, for a better future. History is always challenging and an incomplete project; history can never be exact.

Co-option: Continuation of past with collective memory

Halbwachs makes the distinction between collective memories and history. History is based on a set of facts. Memory has subjective dimensions; it shapes, creates and recreates according to space and time whereas, history is consistent. Memory could lead to a special sense of pride, a special complaint, or simply both; it involves particularistic sense of continuity as it is transmitted from generation to generation. It can stand in oppositional to other group or subgroup with a sense of distinctiveness. On the one hand, Halbwachs calls the history or abstract knowledge of the past, as problematic and unfinished reconstruction of past times. On the other hand, he calls as memory the reconstruction of past lived experience.

Halbwachs has focused on past lived experiences that result in the emergence of collective memory, which is part of a group’s identity. So, the group’s identity and collective memory are interrelated, whereas, personal identity is related to the particular kind of memory. Furthermore, according to Halbwachs, through an awareness of the past a group becomes conscious of its identity. Likewise, Richard Hofstadter has said that, “memory is the thread of personal identity, history of public identity.”¹⁰

⁹ Robin George Collingwood, *The Idea of History*, Oxford, (1999), Clarendon.

¹⁰ Richard Hofstadter, “*The Progressive Historians: Turner, Beard, Partington*”, Alfred A. Knopf, (1968), New York, p. 3.

A group exists because of its collective memory and if there is any change in the characteristics of any group's collective memory; the continuation of the group comes to an end. As a result of it, members started to form a new group with the new identity and ideology. According to Halbwachs's 'theory of collective memory', an individual can be a member of more than one group at the same time and they can also access different collective memories. But, it is very difficult to separate a group's collective Halbwachs's 'theory of collective memory' forms a constant system.¹¹

In the reflexive mode, the collective memory of dalit is useful for themselves and the opposing ideologies. How the RSS and BJP used this collective memory to interpret the history undertook and construction of hatred. Collective memory is not which exists in a holistic in nature. It has the space for interpretation of past by using the dominant ideology. If RSS cadre argue that dalits are the backbone of Sangh. It is a symbol of assimilation of identity of oppression. Actually the sense of memory is not parallel to consciousness, because the consciousness with fragmented memory distorts the idea of emancipation. Patrick Geary has argued that the past influences the nature and content of the collective memories and hence, several practices are followed by societies in preserving the past.¹² The representation of past can also be strategic because, to preserve certain kind of memory could lead to reconstruction of the past according to preserved remains. Furthermore, it is important to understand - how groups remember collectively? To understand this 'collective approach' we need to focus on culturally specific concepts of collective memory.

For Durkheim collective memory has its own life, though in this sense it sounds metaphysical; but it should not be. The collective nature of social memory is not something 'otherworldly' thing but we need to focus on the structure which is organized and maintained in such a way. We could say that it is a gradual and strategic process in the sense that what societies remember. It could be very strategic that individuals cannot escape from what they remember. So, it is need to notice that it is a continual process of making memories, myths and social materials. Behind such strategies some powerful institutions are always involved, who support

¹¹ Maurice Halbwachs, (1992), op. cit. p. 797.

¹² Patrick Geary, "*Phantoms of Remembrance: Memory and Oblivion at the End of the First Millennium*", Princeton University Press, (1994), Princeton.

some histories more than others. In simple terms they highlight certain kind of histories and legends; they provide certain modernist narratives to influence the mind of individuals. So, that the individual consciousness develops in a certain way and they also tell individuals that how to remember.¹³ It is important to notice that what individuals remember is determined by their group memberships, which simply means to which group they belong to. Furthermore, there is dialectical relationship between the collective meanings and structure, both influences each other; and responsible for the production and reproduction of structure of collective meaning and structure of society. According to Jung, the development of collective meanings within the structure is not treated as ‘conscience collective’ but it should be treated as “collective unconscious”¹⁴

According to LaCapra: “In certain of its forms, the preoccupation with memory may indicate a failure of constructive will and divert attention from the needs of the present and the necessity of attempting to face the future.”¹⁵ Likewise, Philip Abrams opines: “Doing justice to the reality of history is not a matter of noting the way in which the past provides background to the present; it is a matter of treating what people do in the present as a struggle to create a future out of the past, of seeing that the past is not just the womb of the present but the only raw material out of which the present can be constructed.”¹⁶ So, there is need to understand the relationship between past, present and future; as they all are interrelated with one another. Without the reconstruction of the past, present and future cannot be possible.

Hobsbawm has argued that the historians “compile and constitute the collective memory of the past.”¹⁷ In simple terms, historians try to compile the history by taking the individual’s interviews on their lived experiences. Hence, an important question arose on the reliability of individual memory. As there is no evidence of an individual’s lived experiences and their memories. Semon has coined the term “engram,” which simply refers to the basic units of

¹³ Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, Trans. J. W. Swain. Allen and Unwin, 1968 [1915]. London.

¹⁴ Carl Gustav Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, (Collected Works of C. G. Jung, Vol. 9, Part 1). Trans. R. F. C. Hull, Bollington, (1968), Princeton.

¹⁵ LaCapra, Dominick La Capra, *History and Memory after Auschwitz*, Cornell University Press, (1998), Ithaca, p. 8.

¹⁶ Philip Abrams, *Historical Sociology*, Cornell University Press, (1982), Ithaca, p. 8.

¹⁷ Eric J. Hobsbawm, *On History*, New Press, (1997), New York, pp. 24-25.

memory.¹⁸ He states that firstly, we can't perceive every aspect of the situation, and so, every aspect of situation that we do perceive can't convert into 'engrams'. Furthermore, the situation we discovered as unitary is actually preserved in fragments. Hence, 'the act of "remembering" merely involves the latest amalgamation of stored engrams, noise, extrapolation, and features of the present. Remembering is not a matter of recovery but it is a matter of recombination and creation'.¹⁹ In the same way, Halbwachss also argues that it is impossible for an individual to remember in any consistent manner outside of their group contexts. So here self-reflexivity of an individual has great importance that how individual memory and their experiences are responsible for the creation of myths, history and new type of memory.²⁰ So, it is important to note that, how according to the social framework an individual consciously merges the historical remains and individual experiences and memory.

So, it is very important to know how mind works. It is not possible for an individual to remember the historical events as it is, the recombination with other fragmented 'engrams' could be possible when we present new types of reality, and that could be merely imaginative. Likewise the narratives, symbols, images and myths all are constitutive of imagination. But here it is most important to notice that imagination is also a conscious process. So, these modernist narratives, myths, symbols and images all constitute selected goals. There are certain hidden aims behind such creations.

In Indian context, multiple collective memories exist so, who's lived experiences would be considered as valid; dominant section or oppressed section? For Halbwachs, the collective experience of the group is helpful in shaping its collective memory. For him, experiences are equally important for collective memories; through shared experiences a group shares identity and memory. As a result of it, every group has its own collective memory and thus multiple collective memories exist. In this sense it is difficult to recognize which one is absolute. Further, the collective memory of one group is differs from the collective memory of another group as

¹⁸ Bella Duffy and Vernon Lee, *Mnemonic Psychology*, Allen & Unwin, (1923), London.

¹⁹ Richard Wolfgang Semon, *The Mneme*, (Trans. Louis Simon), Allen & Unwin, (1921), London.

²⁰ Lewis A. Coser, (1992), op.cit. p.38.

their experiences and remembrance are also different.²¹ Through this compilation and constitution of memory, again the important question that arises on the collective memory: whether is it possible that the collective memory which is presented by historians is distorted? In this sense, it is also important to make a distinction between the ‘fact’ and ‘memory’. Moreover, a past event necessitates historical analysis which simply means rigorous investigation for collecting of factual analysis. On the other hand, memory is considered as a practice of relating to the past, to reconstruct the unfinished past, and to use that group’s symbols.

Collective memory and construction of identity

Memory is an essential element; it is helpful in creating and sustaining of individual and communal identity. Communal identity or the group identity is explained through the past; as past is considered as monolithic, united and with linear history, whereas individual identity includes variability. The past plays an elementary role in the construction of identity, and is also responsible for the development of awareness of one’s identity. Through past one can understand the importance of identity and how much identity is useful for political power in the present.

It is always the strong desire of a community that it can preserve its identity on the basis of its past. The major aim of homogenizing of their or group’s identity, is to secure political power, domination and electoral politics. Thus, this whole process of construction of identity is to be seen as a political project; as a strategy of political mobilization. Hence, this shift in the political strategy has been started in 1980s when marginalized Dalit castes had started to emerge in the democratic realm.²²

It is said that, “Memories are not ready-made reflections of the past, but eclectic, selective reconstructions. People remember or forget the past according to the needs of the present and social memory is an active and ongoing process”.²³

²¹ Maurice Halbwachs, (1992), op. cit. p. 40.

²² Ibid p. 5.

²³ Van Dyke, R.M. & S.E. Alcock, *Archaeologies of Memory*, Blackwell Publishing, (2003), New Delhi.

For collective memory Halbwachs has argued that the collective memory cannot be considered as monolithic and stable. For him, collective memory is changing according to the class, religion, gender and ethnicity. Collective memory also influenced by the individual experiences; as collective memory is not something ready - made in nature but comprises of several facts and experiences. Social memory includes both of the acts that are remembering and forgetting as social memory appears, expands and vanishes according to social frames and situations. One of the common and related uses of the social memory is; it creates a sense of individual and collective identity. By these definitions and arguments, it appears clear that the creation and the recreation of social memory is vigorous and enduring process.²⁴

Perhaps, the social memory is thoroughly correlated with oral tradition, images, and location. On the one hand, memory is related to historical remains such as various images, symbols, objects which simply represent certain meanings and that can be easily recognized by the members of particular community, along with the communication to the generation of their creators. On the other hand, memory is a continuous process; but it varies according to the space and time. To take the example of dead individual who is forgotten, leads to the construction of collective memory. And most significantly memory of that person is still present and shared by the other members of the group. With time, this deceased become anonymous for family members and social friends, but his/her roles and identity is present in memorization of group. According to Insoll, it is a very suitable argument that identities are not freely chosen but they are ascribed in nature; and which is always attached to individuals before and after his/her death. For example the caste system in India provides you certain identity, which you have not freely chosen but that is ascribed in nature.²⁵

Identities are 'safe' and 'unproblematic' when we take them for granted and do not begin to question them. Once we start questioning: who we are? To whom do we belong? It becomes problematic. Identity could not be defined through some singular definitions and meaning; it can be understood only in plural form. As identity is not constant it is changeable according to space and time, so there are no defined characteristics of identity. If someone pointed out that the

²⁴ Ibid. p. 3.

²⁵ T. Insoll (ed.), *The archaeology of identities: A reader*, Routledge, (2007), New Delhi.

notion of identity is forever grounded, stable and absolute, then, it simply means that this perspective have a mythical status.²⁶

The existence of any group or community is temporary in nature; so that the identities are temporary in nature, hence groups and communities are continually changing, and the social material is also fluid in nature. So, there is nothing stable, sure and absolute. Likewise, for Tilley: “we are faced with constant change and uncertainty. We are forced to attempt to find our identity in the maelstrom of the permanent revolution of modern life”.²⁷

Materialization of memory and practice

The materialization of memory has been started to extend, multiply and decentralize; the crucial aim behind this was to save all from elapsed and started to generate new places where it can be preserved i.e. archives. It was supposed that the saving much is the only solution, by which we can save, that which is left. And that will further help in reproducing, so that something will be left. In such sense, we can say that people are involved with full enthusiasm in the creation of memory places, so that they can feel connected with that place of memory. But, the question is - what if the consciousness breaks with the past? This could be considered as the turning point where one’s consciousness breaks and now they have to create new memory with places. No other option is left, because no considerable background of memory exists anymore.²⁸

For materiality of practice, Connerton’s (1989) and Rowlands’ (1993) concepts of ‘inscribed memory’ need to be referred: and that includes repetition, public access, and it incorporates the materialized practices through monumentality. To understand the materiality of practice, the best example of ritual behaviour is - mortuary practice. Mortuary practice requires the community participation that’s why it is a form of public action, a performance within this ritual practice is accomplished by the livings.²⁹ Important point to notice here is that the

²⁶ Charles Tilley, “Identity, Place, Landscape, and Heritage”, *Journal of Material Culture*. 11 (1-2, 2006) pp. 7-32.

²⁷ Tilly, op. cit. p. 6.

²⁸ Tilly, op.cit, p. 4.

²⁹ I. Kuijt, “The Regeneration of Life. Neolithic Structures of Symbolic Remembering and Forgetting, *Current Anthropology* 49 (2) (2008): p. 83.

materiality of practice is adopted from the dominant Hindu culture; whereas the ritual behaviour of other communities is simply eliminated, and only particular and dominant type of ritual behaviour and practice is considered as absolute.

However, these practices become important in the day to day lives of individuals. It is important to observe that these practices are extended by the groups, and that's how they become the important social material which is required to perform in the same manner. They feel connected with such materiality of practices. In the same way, 'remembrance places are spaces which are inscribed by specific meaning. Individuals feel themselves related to places such as monuments, landscapes, natural features, buildings, tombs, trees, obelisks, shrines, mountain peaks, and caves; as these places have some relation to the past events.'³⁰

The memory exists at various places; they can be represented by some symbols and signs. So, they can be understood metaphorically. They require our attention so that we can deconstruct the meaning of such inscribed places, symbols and signs but according to their defined historical events, past, by portraying their own story and knowledge. This could lead into the dilemma of consciousness and stock of knowledge.

Through some items and objects, memory is represented such as paintings, rock art, figurines, and masks etc. which perform the memorial functions. Some specific kind of objects have material symbols, they don't have verbalized meaning such as photographs. But, it is important to notice that we have to understand the symbols meanings because there may be lots of interpretation of symbols, again most importantly most of the time though popular historical events or past, people are conscious about those meanings of symbol. The knowledge of specific symbol of an individual could be his/her stock of knowledge; that is transmitted to them from their parents. Now it is clear that knowledge of an object is also cultural specific; which is produced and reproduced from generation to generation.

In this sense, Rowlands has argued that: "Objects are culturally constructed to connote and consolidate the possession of past events associated with their use or ownership. They are there to be talked about and invested with the memories and striking events associated with their

³⁰ Van Dyke, R.M & S.E. Alcock, *Archaeologies of Memory*, Blackwell Publishing, (2003), New York.

use. The link between past, present and future is made through their materiality. Objects of a durable kind assert their own memories, their own forms of commentary and therefore come to possess their own personal trajectories. Remembering is therefore a form of work and is inseparable from the motive to memorialize.”³¹

Historical events and places are associated with particular communities. So we could say that every community has its own historical events with which they have associated and no many communities exist. Furthermore, each community tries to convert their historical events and memories into popular memory. It could also be possible that they try to make some addition and deletion according to their political agendas and goals. In this sense, BJP is the main player who popularizes the versions of their historical events. As a result of it these reconstructed events also influence others in certain ways. The construction of memories is quite a complex process by outside socio-political forces. BJP may try to integrate their local myths with grand history of the community. Through their local myths they also represent their ideology and merge them into the grand history, so that others could be influenced easily. BJP has played strategically; they have started to reinterpret the local histories of different spaces for their political gain. It has created a meta-narrative of all the communities so that it can include these other communities in its political fold.

Co-option of past and political discourse

Past is invisible and intangible in reality. Past is an important source of a person's identity. Past is not free of the imagination and it take place during the process of remembrance of the past. The story of past events is deep rooted in a person's psyche. People get deeply influenced with their past which is responsible for their existence in some sense. Hence, we can relate this sense of pastness to understand the past of the communities. So, this sense of pastness is always present in the psyche of an individual, in simple terms past is responsible for the developed consciousness of individuals towards their community. Past is everywhere, which is flexible, constant, changing and multiple but it depends on the groups and individuals i.e. how they hold or view their past.

³¹ M. Rowlands, “The Role of Memory in the Transmission of Culture”, *World Archaeology* 25 (2) (1993) p. 144.

The sense of pastness is totally dependent upon the context of remembrance and that's why past is changing and is not constant. Some of the individuals have narrated their experiences through their autobiographies by narrating their sufferings, exclusion and ill-treatment. On the other hand, some have forgotten their sufferings when they came into the contact with dominant caste groups within a public sphere. So, it is important to notice that individual experiences are equally important in the remembrance of past. Further, these individual experiences of pastness transform into collective memories by sharing them within one's own group. That's how past is organized and institutionalized and this collective past is sustained through the ideology, language and common sense of the community.³² Certainly they have not created their groups symbols and language, they have taken them for granted and they use their languages and symbols in a creative ways.

Halbwachs argues that they risk of becoming a "dead memory," a past which is of no use in present. Past which is not helpful to maintain 'organic relationships'. That's why they have started to co-opt the remaining past and tried to extend it through the interaction, within their and other groups; hence, this would results into the collective memory. Sometimes, Halbwachs's collective memory seems as a socially framed individual memory and sometimes seems as a common memory of groups.

Political strategies are based on the exploitation of past. Communities try to find similarities with their own mythical or historical heroes so that the other castes members can easily identify themselves with their political ideology. These heroes were taken from the past and represented in a different manner. They are recreated, reinterpreted and reconstructed, so that they are suitable to their political ideologies and are also accepted by people as their symbols of their own caste identity. However, significantly within a multi-caste country like India various communities exist with different forms of past. So, is it difficult to recreate, revise and reproduce various kinds of pastness to create a single unified community? The important point is that the division within the Indian society on the basis of caste lines alone is responsible for the success of such political parties that indulge in caste and identity politics along with politics of past.

³² Badri Narayan, *Fascinating Hindutva: Saffron Politics and Dalit Mobilization*, Sage publication, (2009), New Delhi, pp.1- 4.

The main ideal agenda of BJP is to spread the conception of Hindu cultural nationalism. It was a compulsion for the party to move beyond their own community because of electoral politics. BJP won the elections of 1991 by using an important symbol of the Hindus i.e. lord “Rama” hero of the “Ramayana”. Badri Narayan has argued that it’s not only BJP which employed this strategy attaining political power but even BSP too did the same albeit in a different manner. Hence, both the parties i.e. BSP and BJP have played out important strategies for their political mobilization but in different ways. Likewise, during the chief ministership of Mayawati in 1996, places were renamed; buildings were reconstructed such as Eklavya stadium in Agra, Ambedkar Park in Lucknow, and new districts were named as Gautam Buddha Nagar, Mahamayanagar, and Sant Ravidas Nagar. The BSP however played these strategies as they only wanted to empower the Dalits. On the other hand upper castes wanted a unified Hindu society on the lines of upper caste norms; and this was the major difference among both parties.³³

Along with different and opposing strategies, both the parties have used different slogans such as, “*Tilak, Tarazu aur Talwar inko maro jote char*” (by the BSP) and “*Hathi nahi, Ganesh hai, Brahma, Vishnu, Mahesh hai*” (by the BJP). Hindutva has played a fascinating political tactics by relating the social and cultural identities of Dalit castes to bring them into their Hindutva fold. The major aim was to separate Dalits from the Muslims, and to create a unified Hindu nation with a single identity. So, it is clear that on the one hand, BJP wanted to establish a unified nation with single identity but by not abandoning their caste based social norms. Hence, this was clearly a hypocritical stand, rooted as it was fundamentally in the Manu’s tradition.

Furthermore, Savarkar in his book ‘Hindutva’ has made a distinction between Hindutva and Hinduism. For him “Hindutva is not a word but a history, not only the spiritual or religious history of our people...but a history in full. Hinduism is only a derivation, fraction, part of Hindutva”.³⁴ Rama was used as a symbol for the process of social engineering by the BJP so that they can reach out to all the sections of the society including Dalits. Rama was presented as a hero of Hindus, symbol of unity and he was a significant symbol for all. BJP has propagated the concept of ‘*Ramrajya*’ which simply means upper and lower castes live together; harmonic relationship among both. Rama was linked to the deprived castes.

³³ Badri Narayan, op.cit. pp. 1-4.

³⁴ V.D. Savarkar, *Who is a Hindu? Hindutva*, (Poona: S.P.Gokhle) 1949, p. 3.

D'Argens observes that the definite kinds of people and material can get into the collective memory of humanity. Certain popular material can engrave them ceaselessly in the collective memory.³⁵ But then question that arises is: why only certain kind of people, past and memories get popular? Furthermore, one gains entry into collective memory by great actions and by creative activities. Hence, this notion is majorly related to the heroic and poetic past and glory. On the other hand the Western tradition, where the rationale selection of the material for collective memory was the exemplary idea because it serves as the model of ethical behaviour. The heroes, symbols and artists from the past seemed to be important for the collective memory. Individuals engrave themselves into collective memory through their ethical and aesthetic activities. Certain kind of people and material get into the collective memory because of two reasons: first is stock of knowledge and second through domination and power.

Co-option of Historical events by RSS and BJP

The RSS was founded in 1925 to establish India as a Hindu nation. RSS is known for its communal politics based on Hindu identity. The important function of the RSS that it was boom as a Sangh parivar. The BJP is the political front or wing of RSS; which sets the goals for attaining power in political arena as well as for circulating the ideology of RSS through their political agenda.

The RSS and BJP have started portraying the Dalits as saviors or the protectors of 'Hindu Dharma', and they portray them as the militia, because they have tried to link the Dalits with 'Ramayana' in manifold ways. Perhaps, in 'Ramayana' it is to be said that in the entire life of Rama, Dalits have played an important role. Rama took the help of 'Hanuman', Angad, and Sugriv who were portrayed as those from the oppressed and deprived communities but, they succeeded in finding 'Sita' (Rama's wife) - the soul of India.

The most important question is whether that the past of Dalits has been totally eliminated by the Hindutva or it has been simply transformed? Hindutva has focused on the local myths and heroes; they have related the Dalit heroes with the story of 'Rama' in 'Ramayana'. Hindutva has linked the mythical character of 'Ramayana' to other lower castes community members. Hence,

³⁵ D'Jean-Baptiste Argens, *The Jewish Spy* (1736), P. Paupie, (1738), The Hague.

the result of this was increased mobilization of local Dalits towards the BJP. They tried to create meta-narratives from all the communities for establishing a unified nation and vote bank.³⁶

Under the influence of Arya Samajists, the upper caste communities have tried to write caste histories to achieve their selfish, divisive, motivated and perverted goals.³⁷ It needs to be noticed that here the cultural resources of the Dalits such as their histories, caste heroes etc, are reinterpreted and recreated by giving them a Hindutva shade. Thus, they can saffronize the Dalit's psyche and their memory spaces. Through their strategies they have also created and used the myths and symbols as instruments for mass mobilization. People's imagination and their memories are reformulated by the invention of different types of histories. Memories are constructed through visual forms, by including various elements such as statues, calendars etc.

They have produced new rituals, published new pamphlets, and wrote popular books about heroes, organized new myths and reframed ongoing rituals. As a result of it they try to make a new public sphere in the society.³⁸ The transmission of myths is quite easy in the society comprises in several communities but in different forms. It is necessary to note that these new narratives have been developed in one locality and they are gradually transmitted to other localities. However, sometimes they spread very fast. But, the crucial question here is how some communities are selectively retaining and re-narrating those myths?

To reinterpret and recreate Dalits past as Hindu past is one of the major strategies used by the BJP. Perhaps, it would become simple for Dalit community to accept the memories and myths of Hindu past as their own past. So, in this whole process, selective remembrance and selective forgetting could be applied. It could also be a strategy by the BJP that they might have eliminated some part of the history and remaining part was re-narrated. History was by itself is complex and not absolute with regard to any community. History is of great importance for a group's identity and collective memory. So, it is clear that historical remains could be problematic within the present society but they are nonetheless necessary not merely for group

³⁶ Badri Narayan, *Fascinating Hindutva: Saffron Politics and Dalit Mobilization*, Sage publication,(2009), New Delhi p.21.

³⁷ Nicholas B. Dirks, 'The Invention of Caste: Civil Society in Colonial India', in H.L. Seneviratne (ed.), *Identity, Consciousness and the Past*, Oxford University Press, (1997), New Delhi.

³⁸ Badri Narayan, (2009), op.cit, p. 27.

identity but for individual identity too. But, once again, the point is, which portion of history has been eliminated and why? And which portion has been re-narrated?

In this sense T. K. Oommen (2004) has argued that, “in changing a system we can pursue the path of selective retention and replacement of its traditional elements. Why not destroy the past and create a new social order in tune with the aspirations of the people and the spirit of the contemporary era”.³⁹ So, it is clear that people according to social context and contemporary situation selectively retain their past and re-narrate it. And also it is also possible that BJP has added its own narrative with the narrative of local heroes; and that they tried to merge their imagination with the narratives of local heroes, and thus by doing so; can successfully eliminate other’s history.

Moreover, both the BJP and RSS have succeeded in co-opting the histories of Dalits for their further achievements in terms of electoral politics in contemporary India. The BJP and RSS further assert that Dalits were equally important in history and, for ‘Rama’ in his entire life. The Dalits and backward castes were equally supportive of ‘Maharana Pratap’ when the ‘Mughals’ attacked India. They have fought against ‘Akbar’ when no other ‘Rajput’ had agreed to do so. The Dalits such as Vanvasi, Paharis and Bhavlis also stood by ‘Shivaji’ in the battlefield; as he wanted to establish the Hindu kingdom with the help of the ‘Dalits’ to shake the foundations of the ‘Mughal’ monarchy. So, BJP has portrayed the Dalits as being equally important for the establishment of Hinduism and to throw away the Mughals from the country.⁴⁰ This contemporary approach has widespread our skepticism toward these modernist narratives. Most importantly memory is noticeable by a high degree of self-reflexivity. So, the modernist narratives are creation of the self-reflexive memory or they are historically proven with valid evidences.

A temple built in Jittora in the memory of Suhaldeve who was a Pasi king and who apparently killed Ghazi Mian; who was a Muslim king, and he also dies in the battle. BJP according to their strategy started to co-opt the history of Dalits, because through the co-option of Dalits history the mobilization Dalits into the larger Hindu fold could become quite easy. So,

³⁹ T.K. Oommen (2004), *Nation, civil society, and social movements: Essays in political sociology*, Sage (2004), New Delhi.

⁴⁰ Dattopant Thengdi, ‘Sri Guruji Aur Samta Aur Sanrasta’, *Panchjanya*, 6 April (2003).

they started to celebrate the memory of Suhaldev. The BJP also tries to emphasize that Suhaldev was a Hindu warrior, for both Hindus and Dalits. They claim that he has sacrificed his life to save the Hindu religion. The BJP has started to portray a superhuman image of the Suhaldev and gradually posting it in opposition to the so-called Muslim invaders who were not original residents of the country.⁴¹ But we need to go beyond the actions of BJP that why they started to portray the heroic identity of the Pasi king?

The main reason for creating such a narrative was firstly; through this strategy they could appropriate Pasis population, as Pasi population is the second largest in the state of U.P. and secondly, they wanted to construct a strong Hindu nation against the Islam. Then, only they could mobilize and co-opt the Dalits into their own fold. Hence, the Pasis were targeted by various political parties for their vote bank. According to Black, “Memory and tradition alone do not preserve an object’s identity; it is the ongoing incorporation of that object into routinized practice that generates meaning”.⁴² That’s why Suhaldev was anticipated as a ‘Rashtra Rakshak Shiromani’, as he has protected the Hindu society, culture and country from the Muslim invaders. He was depicted by several identities such as ‘Saint Rakshak’, ‘Gau Rakshak’ and ‘Dharma Rakshak’ etc.⁴³

In the process of focalization, for the RSS and BJP, cow is a ubiquitous example in Hindutva ideology. For example, Ghazi Mian was a Muslim invader, consequently he has portrayed as being insensate toward animals i.e. cow. On the other hand Suhaldev through the narrative emerged as the savior of the cow.⁴⁴ As a result of it Pasis considered Muslims as their greatest enemy and they began to think themselves as the part of the Hindu fold. He was considered as a combatant who has sheltered Hindutva. Through his statue, it is reflected that he is considered a Hindu Pasi king, as he holds the bow and arrow; he wears the dress of Maharaja. Along with his statue, there are pictures of cows on the walls; to clarify that he is considered a ‘gau-rakshak’ i.e. cow protector. He is considered as a Hindu god, because on the one side of

⁴¹ Badri Narayan, ‘Memories, Saffronising Statues and Constructing Communal Politics’. *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 41, No. 45 (Nov. 11-17, 2006), p. 4695.

⁴² I. Kuijt, “The Regeneration of Life: Neolithic Structures of Symbolic Remembering and Forgetting”, *Current Anthropology* 49 (2) (2008): 173.

⁴³ Ibid, p. 4696.

⁴⁴ Ibid, p. 4698.

wall the painting of Krishna is present and Krishna was the cowherd god in Hindu mythology. On the other side, there is painting of Rama. BJP has co-opted all the dimensions of dalits history and reinterpreted that history in Hindutva terms so; that they can co-opt the dalits and several images of Suhaldeve has been portrayed by the BJP such as the Hindu god, Saviour of Hindutva, cow protector and Hindu Pasi king.

The 'Sri Suhaldeve Smarak Samiti' was directed by 'Ram Rajya Parishad' and 'the Arya Samaj', and 'the Hindu Mahasabha'. Murli Manohar Joshi states, while he was addressing Pasi community, by unambiguously revealing that Suhaldeve, had stopped the adaptation of many Hindus to Islam. He was mentioning for the appeasement and appreciation of Pasi community to gain the currency of Hindutva fold and electoral benefit. By this it is clear that the image of Suhaldeve was used more for electoral politics. With the unknowing nature of reality by public, RSS using Maharana Paratap in the name of conservation of Hindu culture from Muslim.⁴⁵

Co-option of public sphere

Perhaps, when the Dalit voice began to emerge in the public sphere and political arena, the RSS was indebted to enlarge its frontier of Hinduism to comprise Dalits. To gain the legitimacy of Hindutva from dalits, they develop strategies to invisibilised the Brahminical structure in the name of *samajik samrasta*. For this, they founded the *Smajik Samrasta Manch*, i.e 'social harmony forum'. In the 1980s this forum became active with the aim of co-opting Dalits under the Hindutva fold. The most vital tactic was to pursuit for connexions in the symbolic images, objects and myths. So, the RSS tried to show the close affinity between both Hedgewar and B.R. Ambedkar.⁴⁶ Today, it's an important question as to how dalit leaders accepted the ideology of Hindutva and maintained the silence on violence.

'Ramrajya' for RSS and BJP is strategic co-option with the blurred past of exclusion of dalits in Hindu social order and propagated Ram as an indicator of assimilation between lower

⁴⁵ Badri Narayan, 'Memories, Saffronising Statues and Constructing Communal Politics'. *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 41, No. 45 (Nov. 11-17, 2006), p. 4700.

⁴⁶ Maharaj Krishna Bharat, 'Chalo Man Samrasata Ke Tir', Samajik Nyay Issue, *Panchjanya*, Janaury (2004).

and upper caste harmony. They have created their own propaganda through print and visual media.

It is observed that people got more influenced by the visual images of Ram when presented by media. Even, the weekly newspaper 'Panchjanya' was published by RSS was called as 'Samajik Nyay' issue. It was printed in imperative to remove all the differences between Dalits and Brahmins. Narratives were made by BJP-RSS to highlight the defenders of the nation otherwise their memories would have been erased from the history. So, narratives were vital to vibrate the glory of great sons of the nation and to recall the non existence and so called glorious past of the country. Otherwise there would be more risk of the glory of cruel invaders even though they were not original residents of the country.⁴⁷

Arya Samaj, Ram Rajya Parishad and the Hindu Mahasabha Sangathan were developed in the public sphere and dispersed the different narratives which are used in the co-option and appropriation of dalits with their hideousness phenomenon. They exasperated to banquet the ideas of Hindu nationalism over their socio-religious movements which were instigated by the upper caste Hindus.⁴⁸ Hindutva has focused on different types of strategies to bring all diverse Dalit castes into their fold by relating Dalits to their own histories and heroes.

Hindutva has portrayed the other communities as enemies such as Muslims. They have created the communal walls among the two communities which have been living together harmoniously since centuries. They have sowed the seeds of hatred among the two communities by linking the Dalits to Hindu identity, who were mutually inter-dependent. The greatest danger is that such forces are achieving success though their cunning strategy. During the field visit, it has been observed that the conflict started with the exaggeration of behaviour of Muslims towards women of dalit community.⁴⁹

BJP has also claims that whatever riots have engaged in the last 45 years, it was mainly the only Dalits and backward castes that had died, to protect their religion. So, in simple terms

⁴⁷ *Panchjanya*, April 6, 2003 and January 23, 2004, Delhi, and various other interpretations of BJP and RSS leaders published in other issues of *Panchjanya* and other related publications.

⁴⁸ C. Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement and Indian Politics: 1920s to the 1990s*, Columbia University Press, (1996), New Delhi, p.11.

⁴⁹ This conclusion comes out in the discussion of Akhara Parmukh of Bajrang Dal, who belongs to dalit community.

they wanted to claim that Dalits are protectors of their religion. It is equally their religion as well as ours and when it comes to Hinduism it are only the Dalits who save it and they had always stood against the Muslims to protect Hinduism. So, they claim that Dalits are the true guardians of the Hindu faith.⁵⁰ Furthermore, the BJP and RSS were conscious about the condition of dalits in early periods.

Hence, they ensure that the social justice for marginalized castes to include them within their fold. It is believed by them that by securing social justice; social harmony can also promoted, as BJP wants a unified nation. The Samjik Samrasta campaign had been launched in Maharashtra in 1983 for bringing about the idea of social harmony.⁵¹ The major motive of this campaign was to remove untouchability, and in simple terms to reduce the existing inequality in the society.

Secondly, to bring these outcaste Dalits into mainstream of the society by providing different facilities such as health, education and skills to them and especially for those who were deprived for different historical and social reasons. Further, many programs have been launched in various parts of Maharashtra to eradicate such inequalities from the society.⁵²

One of the activities was also part of their strategy for co-opting the Dalits past. As people were conscious about untouchability in terms of commensality in the early periods, especially when Dalits were not allowed to sit and have food along with the upper caste people. So, in the strategies of BJP several activities were included, among them one such activity that is ‘Samrasta Bhoj Campaign’ was launched in which Dalits were invited to eat ‘Khichri’ along with the upper castes.⁵³ In 1989, during the birth celebration of Dr. Hedgewar, the RSS and BJP have launched an organization to work in Dalits Bastis, (colonies) to make them aware about their identity but it was intended according to their ideology, only for linking Dalits with Hindu

⁵⁰ Panchjanya , 2003.

⁵¹ R. Patange, ‘Path Samrasta Ka’; and Ramesh Patange and Tarun Vijay (eds.), *Samrasta Ke Sutra*, Samrasta Granth Prakashan, (2006), New Delhi.

⁵² Ibid, p.101.

⁵³ Badri Narayan, ‘Dalits and the remaking of hindutva’, in *The Hindu*, 25 January, 2016, New Delhi. (<http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/Dalits-and-the-remaking-of-Hindutva/article14018125.ece>)

identity. So, many of the organizations were set up for this purpose such as: *Dayanand Shiksha Kendra*, *Swami Vivekanand Shiksha Kendra* and *Jaya Baba Ramdeo Kendra*.⁵⁴

The BJP and RSS have contributed in the development of collective memories of the Dalit community. It was not merely helpful in furthering a unified cultural nation and homogenizes caste identity, but this collective memory of the Dalits is also being used by Hindutva forces to shape aggressive Hindu identity by linking it with 'Rama'. Hence, Hindutva forces have always motivated Dalits to fight against those who followed anti-Hindu ideology.

Halbwachss argued; "in seeking where . . . [memories] are preserved in my brain or in some nook of my mind to which I alone have access: for they are recalled by me externally, and the groups of which I am a part at any given time give me the means to reconstruct them."⁵⁵ So, the individual remembering depends upon the social context and social material. The groups only mediate their members to memory and also provide them social material and the ways by which they can recall. Several instruments have been used such as festivals, memorations, and celebrations, through the publication of magazines, newspapers, and books, booklets, and by establishing statues at some specific and strategic places. They tried to generate anxiety and fear towards others like Muslims by portraying them as enemies and by doing so, the collective memory is reconstructed. In the same way, literatures also made the influence on the psyche of individuals. The importance of literature is evidence in the impact it has on the consciousness of society. Both the political parties have tried to establish their literature to influence the consciousness of the society. To take the example of it, BJP has founded a newspaper 'Panchjanya' for spreading its ideology and for developing the specific type of Hindu consciousness. As a result of it, the counter-cultural booklets are available for discovering and reconstituting the identity. Booklets are used for raising political consciousness of people and for the growth and sustenance of popular and local traditions. The basic agenda of these literature and booklets is propaganda and guide in particular manner in searching for their identities. Literature is a source of self experience; it is more influential in terms of developing individual and collective consciousness.

⁵⁴ Maharaj Krishna Bharat, 'Chalo Man Samrasata Ke Tir', Samajik Nyay Issue, *Panchjanya*, Janaury, (2004).

⁵⁵ Lewis A. Coser, (1992), op.cit. p. 38.

Badri Narayan argues that: “The ongoing Dalit discussions on history I do not mean to say that the movement is revivalist in nature or that the present is missing, but rather that it is an attempt to reconstruct the past on the basis of challenges posed by the present. But what are those challenges? The attempt was to debate on historical myths which, as practiced in daily life, keep on suppressing them and their search for self-identity.”⁵⁶ So it is clear that historical myth plays an important part in daily life, as are followed in daily life. But, we can relate it to the strategies of RSS because they try to suppress the historical myths of other’s by enforcing their own instead. Hence as a result of it communities search for their new identities.

One of the suitable example to this is evident in the introduction of ‘Mool Vansh Katha’ in 1994 which claims, “To distort the history of our ancestors they have distorted our sense of history, that is why we are in the grip of forgetfulness of glory of our own past.”⁵⁷ So, the members of the community need to educate and unite to understand their histories and their glorified past and as well as they try to develop a common consciousness.

As Patrick Hutton argues that, “over the long run, the appreciation of memory as habit is displaced by one of memory as representation.”⁵⁸ So, through the representation of hegemonic history, memory and past the public sphere for dalits were started to decline or simply distorted. As a result of it they started questioning about their own history with whether little developed consciousness. Dalits have also challenged Brahmanical epical beliefs of culture. They started to deconstruct the dominant and hegemonic history and various myths that accompany them. For them myth is nothing but considered as an instrument for attaining power. That’s why myths get converted into instruments. In this sense, the socio cultural myths have become political ones. Dalits understood that the myths also play an important role in the political discourse within the society and therefore, they have confronted Brahmins with the notion of ‘the deconstruction of the dominant’. They started to deconstruct the dominant history of Brahmins with the complaint that Dalits do not get their appropriate place in history. Hence, they questioned whether their history has been written or not. Their identity was merely of criminal and uncultured.⁵⁹ As the

⁵⁶ Badri Narayan, “Heroes, Histories and Booklets”, *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 36, No. 41 (Oct. 13-19, 2001), p. 3928.

⁵⁷ G. P. Prashant, *Mool Vansh Katha*, Cultural Publishers, (1994), Lucknow.

⁵⁸ Patrick H. Hutton, *History as an Art of Memory*, University of Vermont Press, (1993), Burlington, p.16

⁵⁹ Gajadhar Prasad Bandh's book *Buddh Ke Bad*, op. Cit, and Bhavdev Pandey, *Kosh Karon Ki Swaran Mansikta aur Purushvadi Kuntha in Hans*, 1998, Delhi, p. 60.

most important fact is that the history which exists is the history of Brahmanical culture, festivals, traditions and their identity.⁶⁰

Many attempts have been made for the reconstruction of Dalit's identity by RSS and their associated organization, such as, 'The Arya Samaj Movement' and the campaign led by Gandhiji to remove untouchability by giving them name the 'harijans'.⁶¹ Harijan for Gandhi is an appearance of co-option of dalit in Hindutva fold. So, the dominant group of the section, for their own political interests started imposing the constructed identity on Dalits. And it was not matter to them whether Dalits agreed to it or not. But, with the developing consciousness and increasing education, Dalits do not agree with these imposed identities.⁶² The history emerging from past memories, this was another struggle for communities around myths and symbols within democratic society.

Identity means self-identity which has to be discovered by oneself, and not by other. This should be the task of an individual to discover one's identity.⁶³ Identity formation is the whole process which requires historical memories. They constitute the active domain because they are major source in the process of identity formation. But, these need to contextualize because they are guided by present. The present context is of great importance for historical remains. Many of times these historical events stand in opposition to the dominant structure of the past and contemporary present. In most of the cases they also provide the space for protest, contestation and resistance against dominant culture. Hence, past is nothing but challenging ground, selectively remembered, conveniently forgotten, and sometimes it is invented. The identity is a socially constructed and continuous process of defining 'friend and enemy'.⁶⁴

Symbolic violence and appropriation

⁶⁰ Gajdhar Prasad Banddh, *Buddh Ke Bad*, op. cit, p. 3.

⁶¹ Raj Viadya Mata Prasad Sagar, *Achhut Virangana (Nautanki)*, Cultural Publisher, (1987), Lucknow, p. 2.

⁶² Kanshi Ram had in his several speeches expressed this view. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xYDxdnSwfao>)

⁶³ R K Singh, *Kanshi Ram aur BSP*, op. cit, p.106.

⁶⁴ Michael Novak, *The Rise of Unmeltable Ethnic*, New York, 1972. See John Soronson, *History and Identity in the Horn of Africa: Dialectical Anthropology*, no 17, pp. 227-52 and O. P. Sahlins, *Baundaris, The Making of France and Spain in Pyrenes*, Berkeley, 1989, pp.270-72.

People are inspired by their own history according to their contemporary needs. History in popular memory contains symbolic power. This symbolic power is used by political forces for their political gain and communication. These political communications have a deep impact on people's memory. In this sense media acts as a bridge between the government and public. Through political communication one can spread the news effectively, as one is aware about how to spread news to influence public and policy makers. So, having the symbolic power and effective political communication makes one truly dominant.

Hence, during social conflict and power struggle, groups explore, invent, capture, and reinterpret the symbolic mythical domain. This phenomenon has led the society in the bitter struggle of symbolism. In India different classes exist but the most influencing one is the dominant one, which possesses cultural capital. The 'different classes' and 'class fractions' are involved in this struggle, and they all try to enforce the explanation of social world according to their experiences and stock of knowledge which could be best suited to their interests.⁶⁵

In the process of symbolic production, conflicting forces re-explore, reinterpret and reinvent tradition, myths, popular memory and history. It is claimed that the history can no longer be factual, because the facts about the past are inherently un-establishable. But, facts are also helpful in creative interpretation. Hence those facts which provide the past with meanings are imaginations. These imaginations are based on the present interests and it is enclosed in its own process of creating attitude, perspective and values.⁶⁶ So, memory is formed largely in the present rather than in the past, thus the perspective of contemporary interest is important. 'Hobsbawm's "invention of tradition" is appropriate to the past and present perspective'.⁶⁷ It is important to notice that we take very much for granted. The "constructionist" approaches majorly emphasize on different ways by which images of the past distort and are then presented or represented. These can be considered as instrumental processes through which ends need to be achieved such as propagated myths and so on. One should not forget the power of such

⁶⁵ Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, Harvard University Press, (1991), Cambridge, p. 169.

⁶⁶ H. L. Seneviratne in *Identity, Consciousness and the Past*, provides many case studies of India and Sri Lanka which favour my assumption. See his *Identity, Consciousness and Past*, OUP, Delhi, 1997

⁶⁷ Eric J. Hobsbawm., and Terence O. Ranger, (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge University Press, (1983), Cambridge.

perspectives and instrument purposes. Hence, this symbolic power can convert into the symbolic violence as it contains instrumental purposes.

Furthermore, the past is overstated and interpreted, as it is not based on factual accounts only. The interpretation of past occurs with the present-day ethnic and the other group distinctiveness, ambitions, ethics and securities. The past is inferred through the perspective of present-day ethnic and other group identities, aspirations, values, interests. And, new perception of past is created that is glorious, pure and exclusive. So, new customs, traditions, festivities and rituals are invented. So, on the one hand 'present' is reconstructed by distorting 'past'; and on the other hand, 'past' is constructed with the perspectives of 'present'. Hence, it could lead to the great dilemma of past and present and it is difficult to isolate past with present.⁶⁸

Selective remembrance has an important role to create the influence with acquiring power along with the bunch of memories in popular way. These symbols, myths and legends of popular memories have effective communicative power. Past is a dominant characteristic in the political discourse. Popular memories are used for the political communication as well mobilization technique.⁶⁹ From the popular memories, the selective remembrance has unique character to influence and mobilize communities. These are powerful and instrumental within the society.

Now it is important to elaborate upon how the BJP has constructed the 'dominant narratives' on practical field. And how they have appropriated the narratives, symbols, places, legends of dalits for co-opting them? So, how have they related the historical myths, objects, social material, symbols to the contemporary legends? How did they provide them with a 'charismatic authority'? So, overall the representation plays an important part in that sense. We have several examples through which we can clearly understand the strategic mindset of the RSS-BJP. Most important example is one where the BJP constructed the image of Valmiki parallel to 'Tulsidas', they mention that 'Ramayana' was written by a 'Valmiki' and Valmikis are from the lower castes. They have also claimed that Valmiki Ramayana is authentic whereas the Ramayana of Tulsi was fictitious. 'Ramcharitmanas' by 'Tulsidas' was retelling about the

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Badri Narayan, 'Heroes, Histories and Booklets', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 36, No. 41 (Oct. 13-19, 2001), p. 3929.

‘Ramayana’; it is based on the original work of ‘Valmiki’.⁷⁰ Hence, in our society Dalit historical memories have been shaped by the Brahmins and under the Brahmanical cultural influence. On the other hand, Dalit histories have been consciously suppressed or we can say that, some part of it is presented in a very different way and some part has been eliminated.

There have also been constant efforts by the Hindu communal forces to ‘Hinduisse’ Ambedkar for the co-option of Dalits into Hindu fold. Most importantly, there is a relevant question to ask have only certain sections of Dalits has been targeted? Why they are attracted towards the rightist forces in various states? Are Dalits not conscious about their own history, identity, struggles and most importantly, humiliation by the upper caste Hindus? If, Dalits are not conscious about their history and struggles, then important question is to rise why? In reality, Dalits are making them successful in their unifying efforts as well as, when the Hindutvawadi forces are trying to systematically co-opt Dalits into the Hindu fold. They have co-opted Dalits in very sophisticated manner.

The rise of egalitarian movement started with this ethnicization process which was more prevalent in south and west. This ethnicization process has provided an alternative and egalitarian sub-culture to the lower castes. The RSS has contributed in making divisions between the lower castes according to the mechanisms of “graded inequality.”⁷¹

In 20th century, Arya Samaj was successful to influence the Untouchables of North India and that was visible and open. To take the example of movement of Jatav in Uttar Pradesh, Jatavs are ‘Chamars’, the untouchable’s leather workers. Arya Samaj has claimed that they descend from Yadu race, so, they ought to be recognised as ‘Kshatriyas’ like the Yadavs. So, Arya Samaj became successful in influencing the dominant community of Dalits by propagating these false views.⁷² Furthermore, if we talk about why the RSS and BJP have targeted certain sections of society; it is firstly, because of their dominant feature within the society, because of their vast population. Secondly, to trace the history and then, relate that history to those certain groups which is an easy task by which the groups or communities get influenced.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Christophe Jaffrelot, ‘Sanskritization vs. Ethnicization in India: Changing Identities and Caste Politics before Mandal’. Source: *Asian Survey*, Vol. 40, No. 5, Modernizing Tradition in India (Sep. - Oct., 2000), pp. 756-766.

⁷² Ibid.

The efforts of 'Hinduisation' of Dalits led by the BJP, ABVP-RSS combine and operate at two major levels. The BJP is trying to misinterpret Ambedkar's mode of thinking at the theoretical level. They have argued that his act of conversion from Hinduism, in simple terms he wanted the conformity with Hinduism rather than its insurrection.⁷³ BJP has distorted the writings of Ambedkar and represented it in their own way. Furthermore, these Neo-Hindu forces make efforts to compare Ambedkar with Hedgewar and Savarkar where, Ambedkar was a 'Dalit leader', and Hedgewar has founded the 'RSS' and Savarkar was the elected president of 'Hindu Mahasabha'. By linking both of them the co-option of Dalits becomes easy. They try to show that how all these three are tried to create common 'Hindu identity' by defeating the terrible practice of caste and untouchability.⁷⁴

Not only in U.P, have the strategies of BJP been worked out speedily but also in various other states. Such as in Nashik in January 1991, the BJP has launched a 25-point programme for the dalits.⁷⁵ These points are meant for the abolition of caste and inequality, the demand for 'ek gaon ek panwatha' i.e. common village water resources and common crematory ground for all castes, implementation of the reservation policy including the Mandal Commission and the renaming of Marathwada University as Ambedkar University . These were all merely past of their strategy rather than the real upliftment of Dalits and backward classes. Moreover, the Hindu forces were not ready to abandon their upper caste traditional norms and practices.

The result of various strategies adopted by BJP was that Dalit activists have not only joined the ABVP-sponsored 'Sandesh Yatra' but they have also shared the platform of 'Samarasta Manch' i.e. social harmony forum, on various occasions in the state of Maharashtra. They called upon the Dalits to respect Savarkar as he was a Hindu nationalist, just as they respect Ambedkar.⁷⁶

The ABVP has sponsored the 'Ambedkar-Phule Sandesh Yatra' in Aurangabad in November 1989. This was evident that the Dalit teachers like Gangadhar Pantiawane, Manohar

⁷³ H.V. Seshadri's (RSS secretary) expressions quoted in his 'Durdarhi Vihar' appearing in Dr Hedgewar to Dr. Ambedkar Vichar Yatra (Anand Hardikar, Shrimati Ramabai Anti Vikas Pratisthan Pune, 1991, p. 68.) Similar opinion was also expressed by Dattopant Thengdi, an old guard of RSS, (ed.) in Kolhapur Sakal, a Marathi daily, January 7, 1991.

⁷⁴ Ambedkar, special number brought out by Shrimati Ramabai Anti Vikas Pratisthan, Pune 1991.

⁷⁵ Uttam Kamble, 'BJP cha Chehar Badalnyacha Prayanla' (BJP is trying to change its face) Kolhapur Sakal, Marathi daily, January 12, 1991.

⁷⁶ Sharan Kumar Limbale (ed.), *Dalit Panther*, Sugawa Publications, (1989) Pune, p. 225.

Garud, some teachers from the Ambedkar Physical Education College, Aurangabad and Dalit corporators from Aurangabad were excitedly welcomed by them.⁷⁷

The important question to be asked is that: did Ambedkar believe that Hindus were a nation? This question has been asked because the BJP has portrayed Ambedkar as a follower of Hinduism. So, his answer to this question was definitely 'No'. His view was that Hindus could not become a nation or even a society because of the overreaching hierarchy exists among Hindus. The country like India which is divided into several castes cannot become a unified nation. He argues that the Hindus didn't possess the 'consciousness of the kind' but 'consciousness of caste', and this is an obstacle to communication and common activity in Hindu society.⁷⁸

Ambedkar also claims that a Hindu society can never be a monolithic one and if the 'Hindu Raj' would turn into a fact, then it would be the greatest ruin for this country. He also states that Hinduism is an obstacle to the liberty, equality fraternity and basic human rights. Hence, it is incompatible with democracy, as in any democratic society these three principles are basic pre-requisite.⁷⁹ Now, it's clear that these views of Ambedkar have been misinterpreted by the BJP, as they have portrayed him in different manner for co-opting the Dalits.

This is a hint from Savarkar that the protagonists from the 'Samarasta Manch' and the 'Phule Ambedkar Sandesh Yatra', speak of eliminating casteism and untouchability but only to strengthen Hindutva. Perhaps, it has to be noticed that, within Hinduism the caste system and Varna system both are mutually dependent on one other. Hence, to eliminate the caste system simply means to demolish Hinduism. But, the Hindu protagonists would never abandon their religion i.e. Hinduisim. They hold their religion very hard, as they hold Hinduism near to their heart. The essential question is will these Neo-Hinduist forces demolish the caste at the cost of

⁷⁷ Gopal Guru, 'Hinduisation of Ambedkar in Maharashtra', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 26, No. 7 (Feb. 16, 1991), p. 340.

⁷⁸ Moin Shakir, G. N. Sharma, *Politics and Society: Raja Ram Mohan Roy to Nehru*, Parimal Publications, (1976) Aurangabad, p. 208.

⁷⁹ Bhagwan Das, *Thus Spoke Ambedkar*, Vol 11, Buddhist Publishing House, Jalandar, p. 86.

the demise of Hinduism? So, it is quite contradictory they would by eradicating caste by renouncing Hinduism.⁸⁰

After misinterpreting Ambedkar, they have also claimed Buddha as the ninth incarnation of 'Vishnu'. One has to see that Ambedkar's idea on Buddhism and conversion has been presented as a counter ideology in the form of Neo-Buddhism. So, he has rejected the old Buddhism by offering a logical Hinduism at the ideological level. Most importantly, the present day Neo Hinduists are so convinced to develop 1920s protest, merely out of context, which was considered invalid earlier.⁸¹

Moreover, Ambedkar's religious protest of 1930s was not a protest for Hindu reform; he used this protest as a strategy, so that the Dalit struggle would be on clearer way towards the political arena. In the same way the conversion movement of Ambedkar in 1956 was a political strategy, this involved the political mobilization of Dalit masses in creating a counter culture. He wanted to unify the Dalits for the negation of Hindu dominant culture. Ambedkar's ideology and his strategies are misinterpreted by Hindu forces for the appropriation of Ambedkar into Hinduism. BJP has tried to distort the emancipatory ideas of Ambedkar.

The BJP and RSS have used this symbolic strategy to establish a unified Hindu nation state. India needs to be unified internally and externally as it is a diverse country; multi-lingual, multi-cultural, and multi-castes. BJP and RSS have appropriated dalits narratives, symbols, memories, histories and legends for internal unification. But, for the external unification one needs to appropriate the national ideology. So, BJP has tried to appropriate their Hindu ideology with nation. Clifford Geertz has defined the term 'Ideology' as a 'symbolic strategy' that is developed in a society, destabilized by modernization processes.⁸² This term refers as "to that part of culture which is actively and explicitly concerned with the establishment and defence of

⁸⁰ Gopal Guru, 'Hinduisation of Ambedkar in Maharashtra', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 26, No. 7 (Feb. 16, 1991), p. 340.

⁸¹ Ibid, p. 342.

⁸² C. Geertz, *The Interpretation of Culture*, Basic Books, (1973), New York, Chapter 8, 'Ideology as a Cultural System, pp.193-254.

patterns of value and belief”.⁸³ So by this definition it is clear that ‘Nationalism is obviously an ideology’.⁸⁴

Syncretism strategy for co-option

It is interesting that the emergence of the Hindu nationalist ideology in terms of ‘invention of the tradition’.⁸⁵ This ‘syncretism’ is ‘strategic’ because it motivates particular type of ideology that aims to dominate the others at a socio-political level. The same process of ideological reconstruction theorized by Geertz and Fallers, this ideological reconstruction through ‘syncretism’ can be related to the strategy of RSS-BJP, the Arya Samaj try to develop an ideology for unify nation. They are at higher risk in terms of identity threatened, but they likely to justify an identity threatened by criticizing in opposition to one of their the major pillar i.e. the caste system, caste system is part of their culture but they negate their ‘cultural quality’. The appearance is different from reality. Therefore the appearance of assimilation is totally different from the reality of the caste as a prejudice phenomenon. The ‘syncretism’ of association is also strategic because it involves the assimilation of other’s practices, so that they cannot be more effective. In the same way BJP started to adapt the selective practices of other’s so that the mobilization could be easy.

In Romila Thapar words: that the reform movements which were based on socio-religious practices “attempted to defend, re-define and create ‘Hinduism’ on the model of the Christian religion. They sought for the equivalent of a monotheistic god, a book, a prophet or a founder and congregational worship with an institutional organization supporting it.”⁸⁶

⁸³ L.A. Fallers, 'Ideology and Culture in Uganda Nationalism', *American Anthropologist* 3(4), August 1961, pp. 677-678.

⁸⁴ Christophe Jaffrelot, 'Hindu Nationalism: Strategic Syncretism in Ideology Building', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 28, No. 12/13 (Mar. 20-27, 1993), p. 517.

⁸⁵ This term refers to R. Kothari's concept of "building of tradition" ('Tradition and Modernity Revisited: Government and Opposition, Summer 1968, p. 273-293) that I applied to the case of Hindu nationalism in 'La place de l'Etat dans l'ideologie nationaliste hindoue-elements pour l'etude de l'invention de la tradition politique' *Revue Francaise de Science Politique* 39 (6) December 1989, pp. 829-851.

⁸⁶ R. Thapar, 'Syndicated Moksha', Seminar, September 1985, p. 18 and Ashish Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy v-Loss and Recovery of Self Under Colonialism*, Oxford University Press, (1983), Delhi, pp. 24-25.

The syncretism simply means the fusion of two or more cultures. So, the Hindu culture per se is not pure, because the construction of Hindu identity is through the emulation and imitation of the other's, the dominant one, from whom the identity threaten was more. So, one can also say that this is intrinsic to the 'strategic syncretism'. Now, it is essential to look upon how this process underwritten to the realisation of real nationalism. Furthermore, it could be possible through such process because the BJP aims to succeed in creating the meta-narratives of all the communities. Not only this, but by several strategies they hope to construct the common national identity or a Hindu nation. Moreover, the techniques of co-opting remain the same; it only consists in the assimilation of other's culture features that threaten the Hindus. So, by this sense other communities would not feel themselves ignored and excluded from the past and present. Hence, by this co-option and mobilization becomes easy.

Now, most importantly, for other communities it is quite difficult to understand the BJP-RSS's motives, ideals and perspectives. Likewise, the RSS general secretary, Rajendra Singh, has said that a Hindu nation "accepts all diverse religions as sects, but which does not give any special treatment to any sect, is our goal. We want a consolidated Hindu society, based on national heroes, and it should be homogenous."⁸⁷ In 1987, Ashok Singhal, a VHP secretary marked that "Hindu consciousness" would retain the "Hindu interest in the forefront". Hindu cultural values are the means to establish a state with their major end. Their major aim is to establish a state mostly based on Hindu cultural values.⁸⁸

Moreover, the most interesting single aspect of this invention and protection of a Hindu identity is that, they also try to preserve the hierarchy by reinterpreting the Varna system. In strategic syncretism process it seems like the defense of hierarchy is no longer remain a priority but somewhere the reinterpretation of Varna system is done by organizations. This clearly reflects the importance of hierarchy in the lives and memories of people. The second chief of the RSS, Golwalkar used the writing like 'work is assigned' for defended the caste division. In the same way, the RSS ideologue, Govindacharya, sued that "voluntary surrender of rights and acceptance of duties will promote cooperation and take away the sting of disparity."⁸⁹ Moreover,

⁸⁷ Santosh C. Saha. 'The Idea of a Hindu State (Rashtra): Cultural Aspects in the Revivalist Movement in Contemporary India'. *Indian Journal of Asian Affairs*, Vol. 14, No. 1/2 (June & December 2001), p. 47.

⁸⁸ Ibid. p. 47.

⁸⁹ Ibid. p. 50.

there were many leaders of the Hindu Mahasabha who came from the environment of orthodox Brahmans, landlords and even maharajahs who reinterpreted the Varna as it is the legitimate basis of the caste system.

Different versions of Hindutva with same ideology:

Now, we are moving towards the different organization of Hindutva, basically to look upon their different strategies of co-opting Dalits. Revivalist parties have intended that the cultural identity has to be supreme concern in the nation building process. These parties include: Hindu Mahasabha, the Jana Sangh, BJP, RSS, and VHP, and others. The main concern of the revivalist parties was to restore and reassert a Hindu identity that stands in direct contradistinction to any other identity. In contemporary period the real or perceived threat is to the integrity of the Hindu community.

The revivalist parties evoking the Vedic and Aryan background of the nation beside the notion that the nation should be based dominate religion- cultural values. The concept of Hindu has been founded by Vinayak Damodhar Savarkar who saw the Hindu groups along with lower castes. He claimed that there should be a common language, a common history, and the subjugation to common sovereign Hindu laws on a defined but expansive territory just like an imagined community. He wanted to present the idea of a Hindu state by covering many aspects such as territorial, religion and culture. So he has presented an image of imagined Hindu state and the necessary categories of it.

In the same way, Madhav Sadashiv Golwalkar, was the second chief of the RSS, but he has shifted the concept from nation to Hindu community specifically. The revivalists have also used various methods but they majorly depended on the cultural dimension for the nation building. In India, they argued that nation should be based on cultural fact. These cultural values should be helpful in national unity. Likewise, Ramesh Chandra Majumdar, a historian in India argues that the scale of values in India should be on the basis of “the development of social and moral values.” In such sense Hinduism is majorly equated with moral purity.

Ratha Yatras, Dharnas, Andolans and the Padayatras etc are the fanatical celebrations which are organized by the revivalist parties to attract the public with symbolic assertion for Hindutva ideology. These cultural aspects have been projected by groups such as, the ‘Bajrang Dal’ and the ‘Virat Hindu Sammelan’ to attract the sympathy and support from the people who belong from lower and backward classes and castes such as farmers etc.⁹⁰

The VHP used the strategic syncretism for Hindu unity. They wanted to bring various Hindu communities inside one ‘faith’ culturally. They insisted people to perform pure Hindu practices by giving up the wrong ones for the integration within the society and which need to be maintained. They wanted them to support Hindu social unity through charity and homecoming (*ghar wapsi*). With the example of assimilation, practice of co-option can be seen in the argument of Balraj Madhok, where he argued that the Aryan Race had the strength to assimilate with cultural element of Dravidian and instituting the spirit of nationhood which secured the unity of the nation.⁹¹ Mobilization of collective identity is not merely depending upon Hindutava forces, but “David Ludden argues this from the perspective of agrarian history, and nationality appears merely one type of identity.”⁹²

The Jana Sangh party was concerned with the rise of sub-nationalism; it means on the issues of “state reorganization” on the basis of languages. The solution given by the party was “the adoption of Dev Nagri (Sanskrit) script and a common technical terminology derived from Sanskrit by all Indian languages to create an atmosphere of harmony, cultural unity, and national solidarity in the country.”⁹³ Benedict Anderson emphasized the role played by print and language in developing the “imagined community.”

Furthermore, he argued that in the last wave of nationalism, language became an effective tool in the nation making. Sanskrit remains a great language for prayer and rituals; it has outstanding literature, it is still dominated in India in certain ways. But, it goes against the progress of national unity because language is reason for daily communication. The contemporary revivalists advanced in so-called “pure Hindi”, so they are majorly dependent on

⁹⁰Santosh C. Saha. ‘The Idea of a Hindu State (Rashtra): Cultural Aspects in the Revivalist Movement in Contemporary India’. *Indian Journal of Asian Affairs*, Vol. 14, No. 1/2 (June & December 2001), pp. 45-47.

⁹¹ Ibid. pp. 48- 51.

⁹² Ibid. p. 52.

⁹³ Ibid. p.54.

Hindi language for political and religious purposes. Hindi defines one's cultural identity through which their national identity is also reflected. India is a country, where a number of languages are spoken, so it is difficult while one relates the national identity with languages. Hindi is used for political issues, in simple terms for mass mobilization in north India. Jana Sangh has recommended that schools should offer Sanskrit subject as compulsory, so that Sanskrit would be the national language for many purposes.

With the emergence of Muslim cultural nationalism in north India, Hindutva forces called for more use of Hindi as the national language. In the same way Golwalkar also argued that a knowledge of Hindi "by all Indians will help to foster a sense of integration and feeling of brotherliness."⁹⁴ But, most importantly Hindi was never a clear identification of indigenous national culture.

In a communalised context, the Bajrang Dal and Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) gave up secularism. The Ayodhya temple movement was an appearance of religious nationalism. L. K. Advani was the BJP leader who stated that he was not very religious. The movement like Ayodhya temple used religious cultural symbols to retrieve as Banaras and Mathura temples, but it is clear that issue is related to appropriate the feelings of Hindutva with the phenomenon of construction of the 'other'. And try to gain the political power with the name of conservation of Hindu culture. The point is that there is no space in history which claimed, it is a birth place of deities but the appropriation of constitution in the name of Hindutva is an on-going practice which retrieved the hegemony. Hence, by this we can say that at front stage the organizations of Hindutva don't show their true ideology rather they present the distorted picture or half truths. Moreover, finally we have seen that the Bajrang Dal was concerned with the "abduction of Hindu mothers and sisters," and the large-scale conversion to Islam whereas, VHP was majorly concerned with the religious/cultural aspects for national unity.

In 1875, Arya Samaj was started by Swami Dayananda, who met the Brahmo Samajists in Calcutta in the early 1870s. The concept of 'Hindu nationalism' has been evolved by these Arya Samajists as an ideology and that reached its maturity in the 1920s. The Vishva Hindu Parishad was the first organization which was formed by RSS. The major aim of establishing

⁹⁴ Ibid. p. 55.

VHP was, to concern with diverse elements of the society. So, the major aim of VHP was to provide a unifying framework of the diverse elements which are present within the society, so that an organized Hinduism can be established. VHP constitutes another example of 'strategic syncretism' as this organization works according to syncretism process.

But firstly it is important to understand the formulation and origin of VHP. So, the VHP was founded in 1964, and this organization was more concerned with the activities of the Christian missionaries. Indeed, from a sociological point of view the individual is an elementary unit of the nation, and individualism is important in sect, sect is the only Hindu social institution whereas, holistic caste system is being kept at bay. Hence, the RSS represents indissolubly a kind of "brotherhood in saffron". S. S. Apte, a former RSS 'pracharak' who was appointed by general secretary of VHP i.e. Golwalkar, has justified the creation of his new organization by stating that; "The declared object of Christianity is to turn the whole world into Christendom as that of Islam is to make it 'Pak'".⁹⁵

Besides' these two dogmatic and proselytizing religions there has arisen a third religion, communism (...) the world has been divided into Christian, Islamic and Communist, and all these three consider the Hindu society as a very fine rich food on which to feast and fatten themselves. It is therefore necessary in this age of competition and conflict to think of, and organize, the Hindu world to save itself from the evil eyes of all the three."⁹⁶

In one of the reports by Moonje's in 1993, he states his clear aims and that were to "remove the docility and the mildness from the temper of the Hindus and make them imbibe the aggressiveness of their neighbours."⁹⁷ There is one more evidence of strategic syncretism mechanism, Hindu nationalists have identified the certain values which they regarded as the basis of the Muslim's strength and solidarity, such as an in their religion there was no sectarian division on the basis of caste lines, the social cohesion exists. So, Moonje insists that these values should also be adopted by sect and caste ridden Hindu community.

⁹⁵ S. S. Apte, 'Why Vishva Hindu Parishad', *Organiser*, Diwali Special Issue, 1964, p. 15.

⁹⁶ Ibid. p. 15.

⁹⁷ 'Forcible Conversions in Malabar Moonje Papers, Nehru Memorial Library, (hereafter NMML) (cited form The Sangh Parivar: A Reader, ed., by Christophe Jaffrelot).

The members of the community are considered to be weak by the Britishers in terms of unity. Moonje's main concern was the lack of unity among Hindus as compared to the Muslims. Muslims were more united than Hindus in terms of religious and social lines. For, Moonje the most crucial disease of the Hindus is social disunity. Moreover, Moonje gives up the idea of reintroducing their religion, because it was difficult, so he suggested for the transformation in Hindu temples. Shradhananda approved this suggestion in 1926.⁹⁸

Law's violence with appropriation of Constitution

'Law is socially determined set of rules enforced by authoritative.'⁹⁹ Law is "a part of Dharma" in the first sense and law in the second sense (Rocher 1978:1285).¹⁰⁰ It is important to understand that is law free from the social sanctions? On the one hand, in contemporary times law refers to courts, contracts, and crime and punishment, which is particularly administered by the state; in simple terms "the law" means legislation. On the other hand, law has regularly been used in Dharmashastra contexts, while it has been related to the 'Dharma' (Olivelle 2000, 2005; Fitzgerald 2004a).¹⁰¹ So, there is need to understand the relationship between the law and Dharma. Law is not isolated from the Dharma rather law is an essential and integral part of Dharma; Dharma is central concept to the Hindu theologies. However, there is no distinction between these rules and acts henceforth there is no distinction between the law and religion. Furthermore, if focuses on law, there are two types of law exists i.e. legal (in terms of fundamental rights etc) and non legal (in terms of customs and norms) that are prevailing within any society.

Firstly, one needs to understand the distinction between the legal and non-legal practices. Law and customs in Indian society are going to parallel to maintain the social dominance but it is important to notice that how such customs and norms appropriate the

⁹⁸ Swami Shradhananda, " *Hindu Sangathan Saving of the Dying Race*", Arjun Press, (1926), Delhi, pp 140-141.

⁹⁹ Donald R. Davis Jr., 'Hinduism as a Legal Tradition', Oxford University Press, *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, Vol. 75, No. 2 (Jun., 2007), pp. 243.

¹⁰⁰ Rocher, Ludo, "Hindu Conceptions of Law." *Hastings Law Journal* 29/6, 1978: 1285.

¹⁰¹ Patrick Olivelle, (2000), *Dharmasutras: The Law Codes of Apastamba, Gautama, Baudhdyana, and Vasistha* Motilal Banarsidass, (2000), Delhi. Patrick Olivelle, *Manus Code of Law: a Critical Edition and Translation of the Mdnava-Dharmashastra : South Asia Research Series*, Oxford University Press, (2005), New York, and James Fitzgerald, "Dharma and its Translation in the Mahabharata." *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 32: 2004a, 671-685.

constitution? The judicial legacy in Indian society covered the notion of Hindu tradition system with mythological text like Manusmriti, Bhagwadgita etc. So, the customs and the norms of any society affect the legal system. The legality with illegality and the invisibility and visibility of customs and norms are important concepts to focus. Secondly, how these practices become legalized by integrating them under the old headings? Such as the 'law of Manu' co-opted by the entire realm of legal procedure, under the title of 'the dharma of the rulers.'¹⁰² Dharma as a part of law, Hindu theologies are relating to the Dharma so; law goes with it, Dharmashastra which instructs disciplines and tells us about Dharma's. It makes influence on practical law, in direct or indirect terms (Davis 2004).¹⁰³

Dharma is considered as a law which provides a baseline for the construction of religious meaning. In Hindu texts the high value is given to the rules, which are expressed in legal thought. The narratives within the Hindu text connect with the law; they connect and narrate in such a way that it produces a new and different meaning. This could be said as the strategy of appropriating constitution.

For white, Dharmshastra is "not as an objective reality in an imagined social world," but rather "as an activity, and specifically as a rhetorical activity" (White 1985:33).¹⁰⁴ The concept of Dharma is successful in establishing of rules. In such sense traditionalist's try to engage rhetorically with theology, so that the new reality could emerge through new interpretation where the law is taken as foundational. Hence forth, traditionalists create their own theology through a process of rhetorical elaboration. Likewise, the Bhgavata Purana, presents its own reformulation of dharma. So, Dharamshastra is considered as rhetoric that could interpret differently. For White "the rhetorician must always start with the materials of his or her language and culture" (White, 1985:43).¹⁰⁵ So, the interpretation of text is majorly depends upon the socio-cultural background of rhetorician. Furthermore, according to him "Like law, rhetoric invents, and like law it invents

¹⁰² Patrick Olivelle, "Manu and the Arthashastra : A Study in Sastric Intertextuality." *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, 2004, 32/2-3: 281-291.

¹⁰³ Donald Davis R. Jr. 'The Boundaries of Hindu Law: Tradition, Custom, and Politics in Medieval Kerala. vol. 5. Torino, (Italy): CESMEO, (2004), Torino.

¹⁰⁴ White, James Boyd, "Rhetoric and Law: The Arts of Cultural and Communal Life." In *Heracles' Bow: Essays on the Rhetoric and Poetics of the Law*. University of Wisconsin Press, (1985), Madison, p. 33.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid. p. 43.

not out of anything but out of something it always starts in a particular place among particular people" (White 1985: 39).¹⁰⁶

Now, it is important to focus on several aspects by which one tries to appropriate the constitution according to the Hindu law. It is said "in Hindu law, that the property can property can be dedicated to idols which is known as "debutter" property. The ownership of the property, who would manage the property called as shebait (manager) of a temple or devasthanam and the mohunt or mahant of a math i.e. a place for learning. However, the ownership of the property is the deity or idol. A private temple doesn't have the same legal status. The idol itself conceives as a juridical person and juridical person conceive as an idol, so an idol can sue or can be sued. The idol can receive gifts etc, even if there is no such actual receiving; as well as an idol's property can also be alienated."¹⁰⁷

According the decision given by Calcutta High court,¹⁰⁸ "these lands of the idol need to be surveyed, its ownership need to be discovered and then these lands are free from all taxes. The property is to be given to legal guardians. In such sense an idol conceives as a living being with its own distinct interests. An idol is, therefore a juristic person of different kind. The property may own by an idol and minor, they can manage their property according to their interests like another human being. But at the same time court make the distinction between idol and minor is that idol exists for worshippers not for itself; as well as that the minor is considered as a natural person, they don't exist for worshippers. Temples by nature are flexible; they are suitable for changes and growth. The ownership of the land also depends upon the establishment of Sanad or any other instrument which is reliable enough to present as a proof of the land. As a result of it the court decision majorly depends upon the doubtful legal propositions because there is no such evidence is present. The judgment of the court is on the basis of the notion of "faith and belief." Hence, the dispute takes place in the finding of lawful and legal ownership of the land."¹⁰⁹

The case of Babri Masjid was unusual in many ways. It could be proved by one example 'Since 1722, there was a masjid called Shahidgang situated in Lahore. This case was similar to Babri Masjid case in some sense. Therefore, by 1762 this building used as a Gurudwara as it was

¹⁰⁶ Ibid. P. 49.

¹⁰⁷ Gautam Patel, 'Idols in Law' *Economic & Political Weekly*, DECEMBER 11, 2010 Vol. XLV no 50, p. 49.

¹⁰⁸ Tarit Bhushan Rai vs Sree Iswar Sridhar Salgramsila Thakur, AIR 1942 Cal 99.

¹⁰⁹ Gautam Patel, 'Idols in Law' *Economic & Political Weekly*, DECEMBER 11, 2010, Vol. XLV no 50, p. 49.

under the sikh rule of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. In 1935, the action has been taken by the Muslims claimed that the building was a mosque so, it should be return to us. However, the Privy Council said that it could not happen under the 'Limitation Act'. In the same way, during the British rule there were few legal suits in the case of Babri mosque. But all these suits were dismissed under the 'Limitation Act', but in 1949 this case was turnaround by the judicial and other authorities.¹¹⁰ So, here important question rise that why within a democratic society, state is more favorable to a particular religion and why it is unfavorable to other ones? Is this situation occurs because majority of the population belongs to Hindu religion? If so, then what would be the situation of minority ones? Why India considered as secular, multicultural, liberal and democratic state?

India is considered as democratic nation but it has strongly religious organized civil societies. However, such democratic and secularist state should make equidistance from all religions and should not be in the favor of any particular religion but, the state appreciate and conscious about Hinduism.¹¹¹ On 6th December 1992, numbers of people gathered together at Ayodhya to demolish the mosque, they were guided by the top leaders of BJP and other Hindu fundamentalist organizations. This was visible through the judgment of Allahabad court of 30th September 2010. So, the judgment was in the favor of the unlawful act of fixing the statues or idols and demolition of mosque. So, this was clearly visible that judicial itself commits the unlawful acts. This was an act of invisible illegality, but got a title of legality.¹¹²

If one talks about 'the records of Hindutva authoritarianism, that is extremely extensive and confined to the central and north-western India. Hindu organizations with an aim of establishing a Hindu nationalism have drifted India towards an anti-secular and authoritative polity. As a result of it, the liberal democracy and the rule of law are gradually and regularly threatened. The Indian democracy is exploited by the Hindu nationalism. The public sphere has been demolished and its form of political discourse. The political meanings of liberalism, secularism, federalism and democracy, don't emerge independently. The meaning of and the associations between secular nationalism, citizenship and liberal democracy are examined by

¹¹⁰ P. A. Sebastian, 'Secularism and the Indian Judiciary' *Economic & Political Weekly*42, December 11, 2010 Vol. XLV no 50, p.43.

¹¹¹ P.C. Chatterji, *Secular Values for Secular India*, Manohar, (1995), New Delhi, pp. 106-107.

¹¹² Gautam Patel, 'Idols in Law' *Economic & Political Weekly*, DECEMBER 11, 2010, Vol. XLV no 50, p. 51.

religious forces.¹¹³ The Sangh Parivar wanted to transform the entire Indian political culture along with the legitimate form of that culture. Sangh Parivar wanted to change “the quality of the relation between nationalism, the state and democratic citizenship, the boundaries between legal and extralegal spheres, the deepest layers of personal and civil society, and the nature of civic association, solidarity and mass political participation.”¹¹⁴ It is said that the ‘arrested development, political centralism and limited democracy.’¹¹⁵

In the contextual category of collective memory and past, it is clear that hindutva ideologue explain all the social evils in the flexible way like ‘aisa hua hoga, lekin ab isse upar uthkar sochna hoga hindu sanskriti ke lie’(it may have occurred, but we should change now for the cultural unity).¹¹⁶ With this notion, the memory of violence and co-option of history running parallelly. Co-option of history through little and great tradition entangles with the hegemonic strategies. How this is going on it will be clear through the field visit analysis.

¹¹³ Chetan Bhatt, Democracy and Hindu nationalism, *Democratization*, 11:4, 2004, p. 140.

¹¹⁴ Ibid. p.142.

¹¹⁵ Stuart Corbridge and John Harriss, *Reinventing India: Liberalization, Hindu Nationalism and Popular democracy*, Cambridge, (2000), UK, p.18.

¹¹⁶ A discussion with Prant Karyavah (Belongs to dalit community) of RSS in Meerut Western U.P. (He argues that understanding of dalit about Manusmriti is wrong, he suggest me to read Dr. Krishna Vallabh Paliwal book ‘Manusmriti or Dr. Ambedkar’)

Chapter- 3

Narrative of Co-option and Appropriation: A Field view

Islam Dharm mein sex or hinsa ke atirikt kuch nhi hai (There is no special character in Islamic religion except sex and violence) (Akhara Parmukh, Bajrang Dal)¹

These words are an instance of manufacturing hatred and indicate Hindutv's; legitimacy. When the legitimacy of hindutva enters into the legitimacy of Nationalism, it protects the area of domination within different societies. Today the role of nationalism is same as someone on the road, someone in the ICU, theatres and others are crying to prove themselves as 'deshbhakta'. Is it constructed knowledge which dominant on consciousness and fragmented experience that developed with different voices? Same questions come to mind with the aspect of Hindu nationalism, is it exist with meaning of nationalism? Is it a phenomenon which can be defined in a majoritarian way? Is nationalist ideology gain the legitimacy through the local level practices?

As Froerer points out that it is necessary to identify the instrumental involvement of the activist in local level issues and groups like RSS are able to gain the legitimacy at ground level.² In this chapter, the main objective is that how the co-option and appropriation are means for the RSS to gain the legitimacy from the oppressed sections? One can raise the voice against the atrocities but not against the Hindu religion. Can one say that Dalits going on the same track which is 'master narrative' for RSS? During field work it has been observed that they (Dalits) have all faced feel humiliation, discrimination, and exclusion, but even then but they talk about the unity of Hindus against the Muslims. There are many aspects which cover the notion of becoming with their hinduness. The process of co-option and appropriation will not see simply in a practice but through the internalised oppression.

Most of the scholars had written on Hindu nationalism with a broader perspective like urban phenomenon, globalizing hindutva, political strategies, and mobilizing ideologies (Basu et al.1993; Jaffrelot 1996; Kanungo 2002; Sharma 2003). Another section examines Hindu nationalism in the context cultural and historical terms (Bhatt 2001; Ludden 2005; Sarkar 2001; Vanaik 1997). Some scholars examine Hindu nationalism on the basis of

¹Akhara Parmukh was a dalit. He trained the people, and how to use the long stick for attack and defence. Pupils respect the guru with a loud 'Jai Shri Ram'.

²Peggy Froerer, *Religious division and social conflict*, Social Science Press, (2007), New Delhi, p.7.

religious nationalism (Juergensmeyer 1993; Van der Veer 1994). Democratic mobilization and governance as the other disjuncture of this movement is examined by scholars (Hansen 1999; Khilnani 1997). After reviewing these works, the point is that the everyday practice phenomenon and the socio-psychological understanding of the people about Hindu Nationalism are missed due to the empirical reality. Co-option and appropriation is also a part of Hindu nationalism, which has a capacity for 'selective remembrance and strategic forgetting'.³

The practice of co-option and appropriation is not only a cultural phenomenon, but also a socio-psychological phenomenon. The role of memory, past and the present are constructed in an appropriated manner by the Hindutva ideologues. It is very important to understand that process through which dalits are being co-opted and appropriated by invisible Brahminism. In this perspectives the role of signified and signifier with their understanding of 'stock of knowledge' perpetuate the phenomenon of appropriation. In the hierarchical society, the 'stock of knowledge' for oppressor and the oppressed draws the line between assimilation and appropriation.

During the field visit, when the constituent assembly elections were near, a Pracharak who was campaigning in the dalit basti argued that '*Bharatmata paanch saal mein ek baar mauka deti hai sewa karne ka*' (Mother India gives an opportunity to do service once in five years). We can understand the link a pracharak becomes in election with their 'stock of knowledge' to do something for our country. The other notion is that election for a pracharak is not only a question winning and losing but apparently it is something more than that.

The socialization of cadre with notion of *sewa* (Service which is given without consideration of anything in return)⁴ is a unique manifestation for their strategic ideology. But the question that arises here, does the notion of *sewa* in the context of nationalism perpetuate the unnoticed habits of construction of the others. The other question, is (*sewa*) for whom and for what? How does *sewa* as a form of social action at small scale level is useful for appropriation and co-option?

The debate on nationalism with a field view and a theoretical view promote the idea of a-priori and the a-posteriori notion. But the important thing is that, the way by which we

³ Benjamin Zacharia, *Playing the nation game: The ambiguities of nationalism in India*, Yoda Press, (2011), New Delhi, P. 77.

⁴ *Bhagavad Gita* 17.20.

reach the reality, is missed because of hyper-reality. Today, the role of hindutva is beyond the Hindu and Muslim conflict. It has the capacity to evolve with a new dimension in the society.⁵ The idea of nation and nationalism were fluctuating with the answers like love with country and don't know. But the important notion is that people supporting it through the imbibed form of acceptance. The acceptance notified by the RSS pracharak at ground level in dalit basti converts it into the broader perspective.⁶

As Narayan (2009) observes, in the villages, the hindutva forces like RSS and VHP narrate the story between dalit against the 'other' aspect like Muslims and poison their minds with hatred. And this hatred is used in the interpreting and reinterpreting in ways which suit their political ideology.⁷ In Nietzsche's understanding hatred is defined in a creative way and divided into two ways like agonal hatred and reactive hatred. Here one needs to define only reactive hatred which has the notion of spirit of revenge and produces slave morality.⁸

In the same line of thinking, the practice of co-option of dalit with the use of hatred by RSS and VHP produce the reactive hatred. During election campaign the RSS activists tell dalits '*Jati musalmano ne banai hai hindu dharm ko todne ke liye*' (Muslims have made a community only to break the Hindu religion).⁹ On the ground level this aspect is dominant on the other perspectives. And dalit also accept this aspect in particularistic as well as in holistic way. One can understand that how an oppressor divert the issue of real anecdotes and oppressed accept this tendency and be ready for the revenge in the context of Hindu and Muslim.

In their study on Banjara community of rural Rajasthan *The Camphor Flame* Fuller noticed that, in order to capture dalits with their hindutva ideology, RSS activists have spent months residing in the local community.¹⁰ In this preliminary research the important part of the RSS activists is that, they have ideological commitment to maintain the idea of 'cultural unity' along with Hinduness. The idea of 'cultural unity' amongst all Hindus itself brings the question with ontological and epistemological way. Its cultural unity becomes a factor of forgetting oppression or remembering of location in the society? On the other side the

⁵ See Peggy Froerer (2007) for detailed analysis, op. cit. p. 7.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Badri Narayan Tiwari, *Fascinating Hindutva: Saffron Politics and dalit mobilisation*, Sage, (2009), New Delhi, p. 35.

⁸ F. Nietzsche, *On The Genealogy of Morals*, Vintage Books, (1967), New York, P. 39.

⁹ Narendra kumar, Field Diary, Village Gokalpur, 20 February, 2017. (Interview with Bajrangdal Parmukh).

¹⁰ Chris Fuller, *The Camphor Flame: Popular Hinduism and society in India*, Princeton, (2004), Princeton University Press, pp. 262-89.

question is that how does the dalit community accept their ideology, and what are the strategies and practices by which they co-opt the dalit?

There a lot plethora of narratives which help to mechanise the hegemony in the caste hierarchical society. With their long term agenda of co-option, the RSS tried to appropriate the Brahmanical past. Moreover, the question is: how do the Hindutva forces use the collective memory of dalit community to energise their fight against the anti-Hindu sentiments? Except all these things, the hindutva forces is not only entangle with RSS, VHP, Hindu Yuva Vahini, Rastra Sevika Samiti, and Bajrang Dal. On the other hand revivalist organisations are working with the same agenda (Hindu Nation) like Paramdham (Janaeu Kranti Andolan), Divya Jyoti Jagriti Sansthan etc.¹¹

They work under the reformist category with the strategy of the absorption of tradition and maintenance of emotions. It is necessary to examine the role of these organisations in the production of emotion, devotion and irrationalism in the name of patriotism. In these organisations, most of the people come from the marginalized background. The question is, how do these satsangs, organisations draw the analogy between Nationalism (Hindu) and devotion at ground level? How do they develop the civilizing and aggressive notion between people in a constructive way?

As Jaffrelot examines, how Hindu rightwing organizations were conscious of the preservation of culture on the one hand and at the same time were totally against the modernization on other.¹² In the 19th century the intellectuals of Hindu society sought to stigmatize and emulate the western aspects for once useful and threatening to Hindu Society.¹³ In his work 'Banal Nationalism' Billig examines as to how the reproduction of ideology of nations (and nationalism) is a phenomenon the unnoticed, every day practices.¹⁴

Therefore it is essential to covenant with the question of and establishing the idea, to understand people's attitude towards Nationalism in India. The key question here is to examine the various factors which might lead to shape an individual's idea of India, which is considered to be a democratic nation-state today. These factors might work differently for individuals. Some of these factors include active membership of religious organizations, right

¹¹ Asghar Ali Engineer, *Communalism and Communal Violence in India*, Ajanta Publications, (1989), Delhi, p.5.

¹² Christophe Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement and Indian Politics: 1925 to the 1990s*, Hurst and co. (1996), London, p.11

¹³ *ibid*

¹⁴ Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, Sage Publications, (1995), London.

wing orientation or willingness to fight for the country. And how the people participate in the national practices developed by the caste Hindu ideologue? Basically here, the involvement of dalit is important due to their oppression and now their acceptance of Hindutva ideology while forgetting their inhuman past.

With the debate on nation and nationalism the role of history is primary with their sociological aspect. It is important to know the reality which exists on the ground. In the context of micro and macro analysis it will be necessary to analyse the 'RSS as a form of system'¹⁵ in the Indian hierarchical society. The role of agency and the structure in society legitimizes the explanation of any notion with bifurcation of knowledge. The practice of co-option and appropriation by the RSS is also a part of structure and agency. In a book written by one of the Hindutva ideologue 'Dr. Ambedkar and Manusmriti', it is mentioned that, 'Ambedkar ko Sanskrit ka gyan nahi tha isliye wo sahi se uske arth ko nahi samajh sake aur unhone ye svikar bhi kia hai' (Ambedkar had lacked of knowledge of Sanskrit, and he couldn't understand the meaning of Manusmriti and he also accept that).¹⁶

The role of agency with location claims the reality of existence. And appropriation of realities with their ideological benefit reclaims the fixity of location in the society for oppressor and the oppressed. Therefore, 'the invention of Hinduism for national use'¹⁷ is a vice versa phenomenon of structure and agency. And who will be the owner and master of this platform has already decided by the Brahminical nationalists with the invention of 'others' in the context of Vedas, Upanishads, cow, and Hindi. The question is how does conservatism attempt to modernize itself today? How does this conservatism develop the castiest morality in a hierarchical society? And the most important question is that, a community like dalit is trying to understand the whole phenomenon except for the intellectual class of dalit community.

Moreover, the debates on traditional and modern distinguish the alien and indigenous aspect and also depict tradition in the pressure of change. The representation of self in their traditional notion stands against modern change, due to revivalist and reformist dichotomy.¹⁸ But the picture became clearer after doing the field work in western Uttar Pradesh, where, the babas, sadhu, and yogis, club their agency with the revivalist and reformist tradition. As

¹⁵ Pralay Kanungo, *RSS tryst with politics: From Hedgewar to Sudarshan*, Manohar,(2002), Delhi, pp.39-40.

¹⁶ Krishna Vallabh Paliwaal, *Manusmriti and Dr. Ambedkar*, Suruchi Prakashan, (2014), New Delhi, p. 3.

¹⁷ Benzamin Zacharia, (2011), op.cit. p.153.

¹⁸ Christophe Jaffrelot, (1996), op. cit, p.11.

Gentile (1990:229) writes that fascist state use the gods, saints, ascetics, and heroes in a political sense.¹⁹

With traditional theorem of 'Samrasta' of RSS, the diabolical relations between the assertion and co-option are going parallelly, in U.P. The politics of mobilisation with the politics of exclusion in inclusion is drawing a pendulum between good governance and communalism as such.²⁰

There is a hidden agenda of caste and communalism in the guise of good governance and social welfare. Thus the BJP got the legitimacy of a Hindu nation through its social welfare scheme. In the Valmiki Basti (colony), an old woman argued; *Bhaiya 'Modi bahut acha kaam kar raha hoga hinduo ke liye or hamare ghar mein pehle chulha jalta tha ab uski wajah se gas cylinder mila hume'*²¹ (Modi is doing good work for Hindus, and some time before we were using the earthen furnace, now he gave us gas cylinder). The tendency of being a Hindu with imbibed form claims their location in Hindutva ideology.

Despite the phenomenon, it is important to learn whether they really understand about the meaning of their acceptance? In rural areas the process of focalization,²² like where will you spend their ideology through welfare scheme is a big agenda of BJP. The ways of mobilisation of sub-caste within schedule caste strictly holds the fraction and co-opts them under an umbrella of Hindutva.²³ Therefore, there are multiple narratives to understand the strategic ideology to secure the acceptance of brahminical nationalism without knowing its meaning and context.

Understanding Nation and Nationalism:

If any concept emerges it has some criticism to offer on the pre-existing concepts in social sciences. Further, no perfection exists in social science concepts. On the same basis we can evaluate the idea of nation and nationalism debate over past years. The idea of nation and nationalism sanction the banal, self and the other kinds of typification. The typification exists with acceptance of assimilation, imitation, and appropriation at that time.

¹⁹ E. Gentile, "Fascism as political religion", *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol.25, No. 2/3 (May - Jun., 1990), pp. 229-251.

²⁰ Thomas Blame Hansen, *The Saffron Wave*, Princeton University Press, (1999), New Jersey, P.41.

²¹ Narendra Kumar, Field Diary, Village Khardoni, 15 February 2017 (Interview with old women from Valmiki community).

²² S.Tambiah, "Ethnic conflict in the world today", *American Ethnologist*, vol. 16(2), (1989), pp. 335-49.

²³ Thomas Blame Hansen, (1999), op.cit. p. 41.

Same development occurs with the construction of voice of necessity with the majoritarian views. But it is important that this majoritarian view is established on the ideological grounds. As Zacharia argued that the identification of oppressor with the solidarity against the anti-colonial practices itself creates the question, 'who we are against' is not 'who we are'.²⁴ Actually the identification of oppressor with solidarity attempts the question on the solidarities between with or whom.²⁵ The dominant tendency perpetuates the notion of bifurcation of power from one hand to the other, with the interest of hegemonized articulation. This articulation of nation and nationalism gets the legitimacy through 'top down and bottom up'²⁶ approach.

With the explanation of nation and nationalism, there are three categories like the Primordialist, the modernist, and the ethno-symbolic. In the category of the primordialist, nation and nationalism define the basis of natural and biological phenomenon. On the other side, modernists explain the nation and nationalism in the context of new events. They also determine the nation in constructed or invented way. With the contrast of these approaches, ethno-symbolic approach carries the burden of these two approaches in a composite way. Somewhere, it dealt with the primordial as well as modernist approach also.²⁷

Despite all these works, Jaffrelot gives a different view on nation and nationalism. He argued that: 'The 'primordialist' approach, which sees cultural specificity as leading to ethnic consciousness and the 'instrumentalist' view, which sees such movements as being determined by elite manipulations of identity symbols, have in the main dominated investigations of the origins and development of ethnic movements in India. The main drawback of both these approaches lies in this attitude to nationalist ideology.'²⁸ Emphasising the relevance of the 'invention of tradition' in illuminating the emergence of the Hindu nationalist, it is possible to treat this ideology as a sub-category of this invention process, a sub-category called 'strategic syncretism'. Syncretic because it has been culled from cultural values of groups perceived as being antagonistic to the Hindu community and strategic

²⁴ Benzamin Zacharia, (2011), op.cit. p. 4.

²⁵ ibid

²⁶ Amrita Basu, "When local riots are not merely local: collective violence and the state in Bijnor, in India, 1988-1993", *Theory and Society* vol. 24, (1995) pp. 25-78.

²⁷ Ata Anbarani, "Nation, Nationalism in Controversial Debates and Thought: A Review of Origin of Nation and Nationalism", *Canadian Social Science*, vol. 9, No.3, (2013), pp.61-67.

²⁸ Christophe Jaffrelot, (1993) "Hindu Nationalism: Strategic Syncretism in Ideology Building", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 28, No. 12/13 (Mar. 20-27, 1993), pp. 517-524.

because it underlies an ideology that seeks to dominate the 'others' in terms of prestige as well as on a concrete socio-political plane.²⁹

It is clear that the conceptualisation of nation and nationalism appropriate with the different forms of identity, power, tradition/modern, mobilization and strategy. Here Aloysius raises the point “the ‘national’ became isolated, insulated, elevated and far removed from the ‘social’ which was often delegitimized as communal/castiest”.³⁰ After the changing of socio-political situation the concepts also lost their usefulness to understand the social reality and the other hand they created problem in trying to understand the reality (ibid).³¹

However, with the reality of local level, the interpretations develop the new idea of construction and legitimation of concept. How nation and nationalism got the legitimacy with knowing and not knowing phenomena at the local level. In India, nationalism is just like a ‘cosmetic industry’ where you can borrow a product to remove the scars and give a certificate of security with the brand of RSS, VHP, BJP, Bajrang Dal. We don’t know what will be the effect on us of this product but we know that the brand is famous and popular in nature. a) देश का पैसा देश में रहे | पतंजलि दिव्य फार्मेसी सदा अमर रहे || b) पतंजलि दिव्य फार्मेसी का वादा | देश का पैसा देश में लगाने का वादा||³²

Like the idea of swadeshi, Patanjali is a brand which got the legitimacy at the local level. The idea of nation and money draw the analogy as to how to contribute in the development of extremism with their tag line of swadeshi.³³ It is important to examine the nexus between manufacturing consent and nationalism with their different versions of acceptance. In the historical evidences, the concept of swadeshi was the root cause of development of extremist sections. With this parallel phenomenon, the Hindu rhetoric developed with the upper caste symbolism. Today, the idea of swadeshi with a new avatar (re-appropriation) is also a production of symbolic violence and hegemony over the mind consciousness.³⁴

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ G. Aloysius, “*Nationalism without a Nation in India*”, OUP, (1997), Delhi, p.2.

³¹ Ibid.

³² <https://hindislogans.blogspot.in/2015/08/slogans-tagline.html>

³³ Benzamin Zacharia, (2011), op. cit. p.91.

³⁴ Ibid, p.92.

Nation and Nationalism: A field view

In the field work it was that nation and nationalism have the capacity to exist in public sphere without knowing the meaning in a real manner. And the important aspect is how a concept gets the popularity in the intellectual class but not in a same way which exist at local level among laymen.³⁵ In this way, it is easy to appropriate the meaning with their focalization of the time and space.³⁶

Why does a particular group or organisation focus more on nationalism? Today, the nationalism is a tool for mobilization of public to maximizing the vote bank. The question is how do politics attempt to adjust nationalism with contending ideologies? The field work was conducted in rural areas for to understand the etymology of the word nation and nationalism. It is very important to know that the debate which is going on in the country has space for social despite the political. With this analysis, the question is whether the meaning of nation and nationalism absorb the contradiction between ideology and the interpreter of that ideology.

The notion of 'we' in the context of the other represents the etymology of the word. 'We' in a philosophical sense develops the contradiction between rationalism and empiricism. The etymology of 'we' has space for contradiction of oneness and otherness. But the main point is that the experiences of 'we' exist with different categories. The experiences of dalit in context of 'we' are different from the Brahminical nationalist (who has a synthetic idea of nation and nationalism). The consciousness of past with 'we' as an oppressor and oppressed can't regulate the same meaning due to the feeling of fear. The politics of inclusion, entitlement, and ignorance are helping elements which made it difficult.

With different narratives the debate on nation and nationalism are going on with different meanings. At the local level, there are two types of representation found with the ideological, occasional, and symbolical. On the other hand the people who belonged to dalit community have different understanding. However those who engaged with the different organisation, satsang and other welfare schemes of RSS have different views. Without the ideological

³⁵ Benzamin Zacharai, (2011). op. cit. p.4.

³⁶ S. Tambiah, *Leveling crowds: Ethno-Nationalist conflict and collective violence in South Asia*, University of California Press, (1996), Berkeley, p.81.

consideration, the nation has been defined by the people with reference to country, state, limited boundary, and bhakti. Thapar has clarified:³⁷

“Nationalism meant differentiating between the nation and the state, and it was clear that no government could take upon itself the rights of a nation. Sovereignty resides with the nation and not with the government. A nation referred to the people that inhabited a territory who saw themselves as an evolved community created by drawing upon the range of communities that existed prior to the nation. It was based on shared history, interests and aspirations frequently expressed in a common culture that in turn drew from multiple cultures.”

With such argumentative analysis people assume that the nation and state is the same thing. The point is that the legitimacy of any concept depends on the public sphere. And this public sphere will be different when raised with their ideological and without ideological background. Their understanding is different from the perceptions and reasoning of the intellectual class. Nation, country, state, limited boundary, acknowledge the ideas of nation with categorisation of meaning but have the same contextuality.

At the ground level the acceptance of word and appropriate in their ideological way is a key to keep the peoples in an abstract reality. The real meaning of the nation is absent at the ground level. As Zacharia point out that, in India, the meaning of state and nation have ambiguity due to the identity of regional one to a national one. In nation formation the region and nation are not given category are related to one other, for example Bengali nationalism.³⁸ In the legitimacy of nationalism with the geographical and conceptual space inhabited with the British rule. In the reformation era, the collective identities do not exist with their real meaning in the language of nationalism. With the moulded identities, the categories of ‘Indian’ and ‘nation’ were pre-selected by the ideologue of the Indian nationalism.³⁹

Therefore, the legacy of the meaning is going on through the people of the country without knowing the contending ideologies. On the leading image like culture and identities,

³⁷ Romila Thapar, “Reflection on nationalism in History”, in Romila Thapar, et.al (eds.), “*On Nationalism*”, OUP, (2016), New Delhi, p.3.

³⁸ Benzamin Zacharia, (2011), op. cit. p.16.

³⁹ Ibid, p.7.

is not necessary to always lead the nation by the people with discipline, if it is, then who has developed this discipline.⁴⁰ Zacharia questions: does the category 'nation' itself have the capacity to discipline and oppress even those whose liberation it claims to speak for? This question is an ontological enquiry as a concept of nation.

In this way, Dr. Ambedkar's understanding on nationalism is important. He was very clear that India is not a nation; it's a process of making. He had conducted the epistemological enquiry to know that the nation could be strong by the exterior but removed the internal sickness is important for nation. To him,⁴¹

“Philosophically, it may be possible to consider a nation as a unit but sociologically, it cannot be regarded as consisting of many classes and freedom of the nation, if it is to be a reality, must vouchsafe the freedom of the different classes comprised in it, particularly of those who are treated as the servile classes”.

Ambedkar focussed on the emancipation of oppressed people who have been caged by the Varna Hindu through several of years. Nation is considered to be as co-extensive phenomena, then it should be in reach of all people, in simple terms it should be truly representative of all people along with the ruling classes. And this could be only possible while these people would get free from oppression, fear and exploitation. For Ambedkar, on the one hand nation is defined though 'comprises a whole society' that includes all the groups and classes but at the same time, on the other hand, these classes have occupied the space on the basis of physical features of the land i.e. area and soil. So, he mainly focussed on the freedom of the people. There was a misunderstanding in the minds of those who got confused between the political and social freedom. As this a well-known fact that nationalist leaders in general and Hindu nationalists in particular; extremely stresses on the political freedom; although they have ignored the social aspects of the nationalism. Ambedkar claimed that in the absence of the complete freedom national unity would not be attainable; with the absence of national unity, nationalism is of no use and leads to the internal slavery and organized oppression for the poor and depressed people.

⁴⁰ Ibid, p.33.

⁴¹ B. R. Ambedkar, in Dr.Baba Saheb Ambedkar, *Writings and Speeches*, Vo/.3, (Government of Maharashtra: Education Department, 1987). pp 504-505.

The main agenda of emancipation in the context of nationalism blurs due to the hold of agency and structure by the Brahminical nationalists, and how the consciousness of dalit is dominated by the idea of bhakti without questioning on state. The first question that emerges is whether India is a nation or a nation making process? The population of marginalized sections have their meaning and idea but the lack of history and the identity of the oppressed do not perpetuate the right meaning. Romila Thapar in their article argued that,⁴²

“The nation is different from the state and from the government. The state can have different forms of government as it did in the pre-modern past. The use of the term ‘nation state’ qualifies the kind of the state. Nationalism is a function of the nation. Conceptually, it consolidates the aspects of the nation such as democracy, territory and power and endorses the value systems that ensure equal rights and justice. It is.....the people who determine the nation.”

With this understanding the examination of nation, the idea of existence is not original, but a form of ritual at ground level. The understanding of any concept is an abstract formation for the people except fragmented intellectual class. The demand of justice, emancipation and rights is removed from the definition of nation and nationalism at the local level of public sphere. The flag, national anthem and Bharat mata, these are the themes for them to understand the concept of nationalism. In Bourdieu sense, the practice and strategy with the interpretation of meaning absorb the hyper-reality and have demolished the real meaning of that word. In the post truth era, the hyper reality of any concept plays with the anecdotes of that word.

In the debate on nationalism *deshbhakti*, honour, responsibility, conservation of culture, and emotion are the characteristics which are found at the ground level. Nationalism at the ground level only exists with emotional baggage. ‘Nation’ and ‘nationalism’ are not the adequate terms to describe, as both the terms have distinct definitions. Nation is considered as a political entity and nationalism is merely defined as sentiment that individuals attach with their nationality. Likewise, he has made an analogy of the soldier dying for his flag rather than his country because the flag simply narrates his collective emotions.⁴³

⁴² Romila Thapar, (2016), op. cit. p.9.

⁴³ E. Durkheim, *The Division of Labour in Society*, tr. G. Simpson, Free Press, (1964), New York, p. 220.

Furthermore, it is possible that the decline of nationalism would result into the decline of the nation-state. So, in many ways Durkheim's detailed analysis fits in the case of nation and nationalism. Durkheim claims that; "there can be no society which does not feel the need of upholding and reaffirming at regular intervals the collective sentiments and the collective ideas which make its unity and its personality."⁴⁴

Moreover, Durkheim's detailed discussion of symbols of totemic religion can be more applied to the symbolism of the nation; his thesis fits more naturally to the concept of nation than the totemic symbols.⁴⁵ So, for the survival of a political entity i.e. nation, the sentiments are equally important for the survival of nation state. So, the BJP has always tried to make the constant efforts for the resurgence of nationalism by relating it to Hindu religion. For example, the slogans of "Bharat Mata" are the reflection of their strategy of co-option.

Cultural individuality developed through many possible sources that Weber has emphasized such as: physical type, common religion, shared customs, and all above the language of the community. All of these may be considered as the 'culture values' for the members of a particular ethnic or national community. These characteristics can develop the collective conscience among the members of the community. But none of them is sufficient to define a 'nation' and a sense of 'nationality', as there is no necessary condition of nationality. Hence, the political action is required for the transition from an ethnic or culture group to a 'nation', often of a military nature.⁴⁶

In the "The Division of Labor in Society", Durkheim wrote: "What brings men together are mechanical causes and impulsive forces, such as affinity of blood, attachment to the same soil, ancestral worship, community of habits, etc. It is only when the group has been formed on these bases that co-operation is organized there".⁴⁷ Hence, it is a fact that under the impact of urbanization, secularization, globalization and specialized labor, and the collective conscience we can say that the 'mechanical' type of solidarity has started to decline but they it can never be eliminated.

Likewise, Eric Hobsbawm, had said that in 1990, 'nationalism had no longer history in debate, like it was very less important historically and also not exist for a long time in a

⁴⁴ Ibid, p.221.

⁴⁵ Emile Durkheim, (1964), op. cit. p. 427.

⁴⁶ Anthony D. Smith, "Nationalism and Classical Social Theory", *The British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 34, No. 1 (Mar., 1983), p. 32.

⁴⁷ Emile Durkheim, (1964), op. cit. p. 278.

global political programme. It has been adjusted with their existence in 19th and earlier 20th centuries.⁴⁸ But important thing is that the continuous efforts have been made by the BJP for the characterization of the concepts through the sudden imposition of the forces which became helpful for the revival of Hindu traditions such as through Hindu Rashtra. Hence, this becomes the symbol of never elimination of unified society i.e. collective conscience.

Practice of co-option and influencing with the idea of Hindu nation:

The most common thinking which was found in the course of field work is construction and imbibed form of hatred. The co-option and appropriation of dalit is going on at a mass level. The co-option of dalit is not only a practice of Sangh Parivaar. There are number of organisations and satsangs which are working for the same ideology. And the ideology is hindutva, and dalit intensity is much more in these organisations. Pralay Kanungo has said that RSS is not just an organisation, but it's a system. And you know that the system itself produce the way to capture someone and relax someone with their ideological mechanism. In this system the micro and macro analysis is important to understand the functioning of these organisations as a thick layer of description.

Most of the scholars had used the word mobilisation for dalits in the different organisations (Badri 2009, Pandey 1993, Nandy1995). Mobilization as a category has chances for upliftment, emancipation and assertion. But in the busy schedule of democracy, mobocracy, politics of entitlement, and the bhakti of rastra, Ram is also a co-opted tool. Therefore, the mobilisation resonates with the positive way of signalling. Moreover, mobilisation with the pendulum of upward and downward movement correctly matches with the contending ideologies. But in the co-option process the internalised oppression, internalised identity, and the revivalism of tradition maintain the hegemony with their political as well as cultural goals. Mobilization is a temporal phenomenon but co-option has a long term tendency to maintain the order and structure.

Likewise, for Calhoun, it is problematic to equate nationalism to ethno nationalism and by placing the “thick” understanding of culture on the nationalist side. So, through the set of approaches, principles, and feelings which give directive and connotation to a political practice, that's how they become “political culture”. To take the example of ruling government and their “Hindutava” ideology by which they try to represent popular culture

⁴⁸ Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, Cambridge University Press, (1990), New York, p. 14.

but, on the other hand “thin” cultures have disappeared. Hence, the sense of democracy is degraded.⁴⁹ According to Ashish Nandy, perhaps, there are several reasons by which the BJP became successful in its way of co-opting Dalits.

One of the major reasons for the success is the capacity of the Sangh Parivar to provide the easiest passage to Dalits for their upward mobility within the Hindu society. Most importantly for Dalits all strategies of the BJP facilitated their easiest passage i.e. their upward mobility. The plentiful section of Dalits was looking for the alternative model of the ‘Sanskritization’ so that; so that they could temporarily transcend their lower caste status for their acceptance within the society.⁵⁰ But acceptance is also a part of interpretation of ideology. Sanskritisation is an epistemic violence which produces the slave morality in the society. Here, the criticism is that dalits are not aware about the reality of Hindutva ideology.

Continuity and discontinuity of dalit movement: stages of co-option and appropriation

The Dalits know ‘who are we’ but don’t know the contending ideologies. Ideologies dominate and maintain the hegemony with the help of fragmented identity. In the field work among the dalit communities, the result was different from accepting and practicing the Sanskritisation with unknowing phenomenon. But the important point is that Sanskritisation is not a phenomenon of upward mobility, its contextuality indicates the practice of co-option and internalized oppression due to the epistemological and ontological violence.

Table 3.1: Separate temples of Dalit in village⁵¹

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	30	46.2
No	35	53.8
Total	65	100.0

⁴⁹ C. Calhoun, *“Imagining Solidarity: Cosmopolitanism, Constitutional Patriotism, and the Public Sphere”*, Duke University Press, (2002), New Delhi , pp. 147-171.

⁵⁰ Ashish Nandy (et. al.), *Creating a Nationality: The Ram Janma Bhoomi Movement and the Fear of Self*, OUP, (1995), Delhi, pp. 103.

⁵¹ This data shows the practice of untouchability in one side and the other side also indulged with the practice of Hinduism with their unknown path.

Graph 3.1: Percentage of separate temples of Dalits

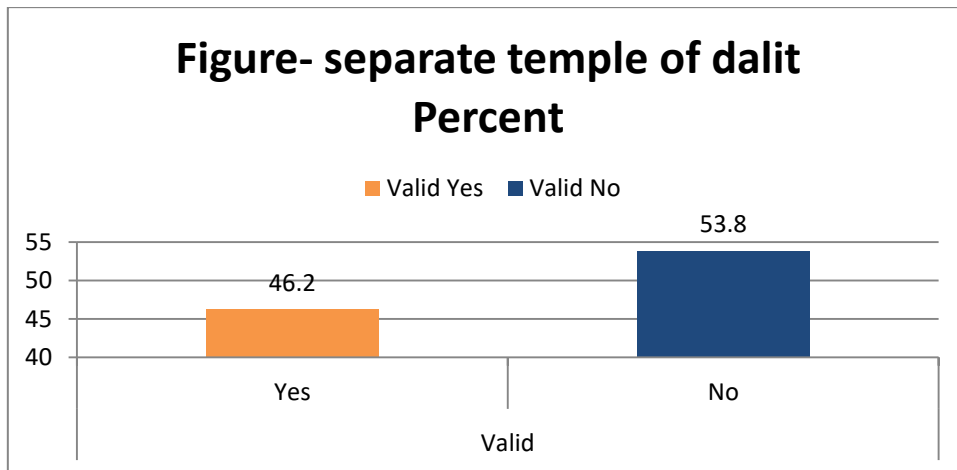
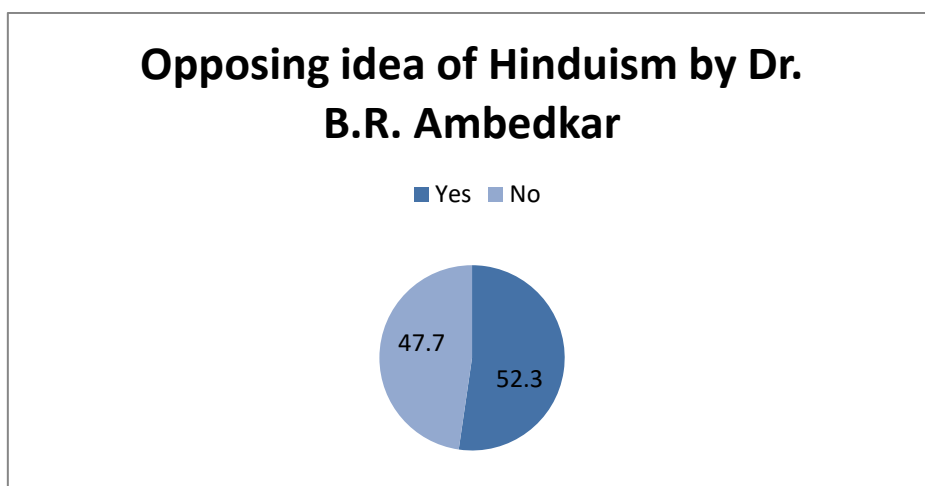


Table 3.2: Dr. Ambedkar opposed Hinduism

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	34	52.3
No	31	47.7
Total	65	100.0

Graph 3.2: Dr. Ambedkar opposed hinduism



In this graph, the worship with the name of 'astha', satisfaction and ritual practice are the characteristics of acceptance of imitation. And the important thing is that the separate temple had to be made due to the denial of entry for dalits in the other temple of upper castes in the village. The interpretation of this table exists in two ways. On one side, the process of imitation, with the conscious and unconscious ways convey the notion of co-option and acceptance for it. In the rural area of Meerut with two Blocks (Rajpura, and Sardhana) 46.2% have their own temple for dalit community. Most of the temples were of the Lord Shiva, Ganesh, and Hanuman. They believe in God, and feel something exists in the earth is common argument given by the people.

In the Table no.2, the idea that Ambedkar opposed Hindusim, got 52.3% 'Yes' and 47.7% answered 'No'. But the important thing is to know that who people know about the opposing of Hinduism by Ambedkar had a soft corner for Hinduism. They argued that the the past was different but current the situation is different. However, they added that he didn't oppose Hinduism but oppose the idea of untouchability in Hinduism. (*wo samay kuch aur tha, aaj ka samay wo nahi hai, unhone Hindu dharma ka virodh nahi kiya chooachoot ka virodh kiya*).⁵² It's a continuity and discontinuity of dalit movement where people of oppressed community themselves take the side of Hinduism which similar to RSS ideology. The percentage of respondents opposing Hinduism in the category of 'No' was 47.7%.

The practice of co-option is not a unilinear process, it's a multiple form of action and the root is religion. It also shows the selective appropriation of idea of Dr. Ambedkar. The question is that how did it happen? Why do people have selective remembrance? Is it propaganda of co-option of dalit and which appropriate them and aims at forgetting the past and facilitate Samrasta. Approximately, 20, respondents from RSS and Bajrang Dal and 10 from the Paramdham absorb the ideology of Hindutva in a Hindu nation formation. The construction of the other is most reluctant concept which exists at the ground level. The imbibed nature of hatred and how to use it comes under the process of focalization.⁵³

It's a very crucial question that, how they absorb the space of hate and convert into the co-option with hindutva ideology? Without knowing the reality of Hinduism and hindutva, dalits are supporting it only on the basis of a Hindu nation (Hindustan mein rehna hoga vande matram kehna hoga), (Muslim bahut kattar hote hai, behen betio per nazar rakhte

⁵² Interviews with different people within dalit community.

⁵³ S. Tambiah, (1996), op.cit. p.81.

hai, and musalmaan kabhi wafa nahi kar sakta).⁵⁴ All are catchy statements given by the dalits who are working and some are not working under the supervision of RSS, Bajrangdal and Paramdham. Hindutava has created the fear in the minds of the Dalits who lives in Mulim dominated areas. This was merely an attempt to make Dalits cannon fodder for Hindutava. BJP has used certain strategies for its political gain without adulteration of their basic ideology. Likewise, Jyotiba Phule says that: “In order to fulfill their plan, that those people shall remain perpetually in slavery and to perpetuate their social privileges and religious authority. They were able to do this by their invention of the caste system, and the rights and duties that it assigned. Brahmin set up the fiction of caste divisions and made up several books on it for their own selfish ends.”⁵⁵

Hinduism and Hindutva: Understanding of Dalits

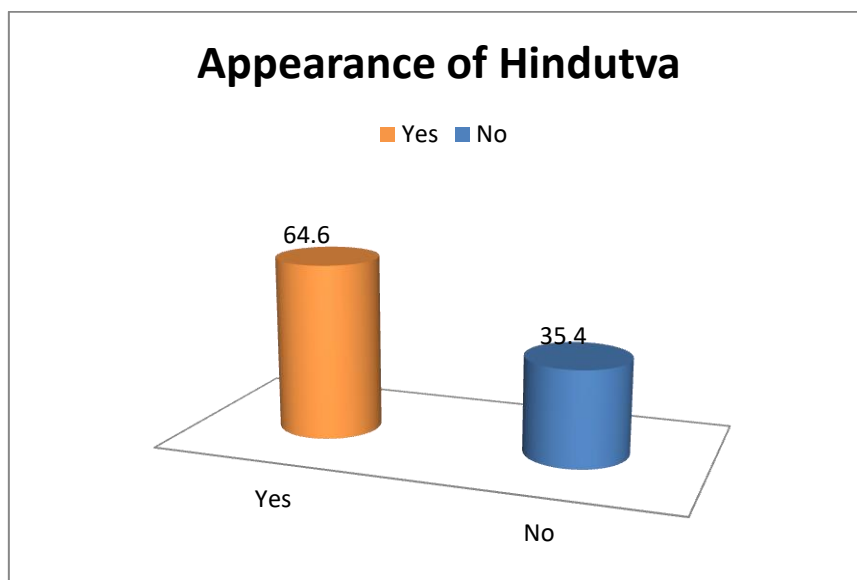
At the ground level, most of the practices are going on without knowing the meaning and they are part of this. In the name of equality, Samajik Samrasta (social harmony) was an old form of co-option and appropriation of dalit under the umbrella term like Hindutva. Here, the point of Hindutva and the samrasta at ground level exists but without knowing fully about its or its implications.

Table 3.3: Appearance of Hindutva

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	42	64.6
No	23	35.4
Total	65	100.0

⁵⁴ Interview with secretary of BJP Yuva Morcha (Belong to dalit community), village Lisadhi, Meerut.

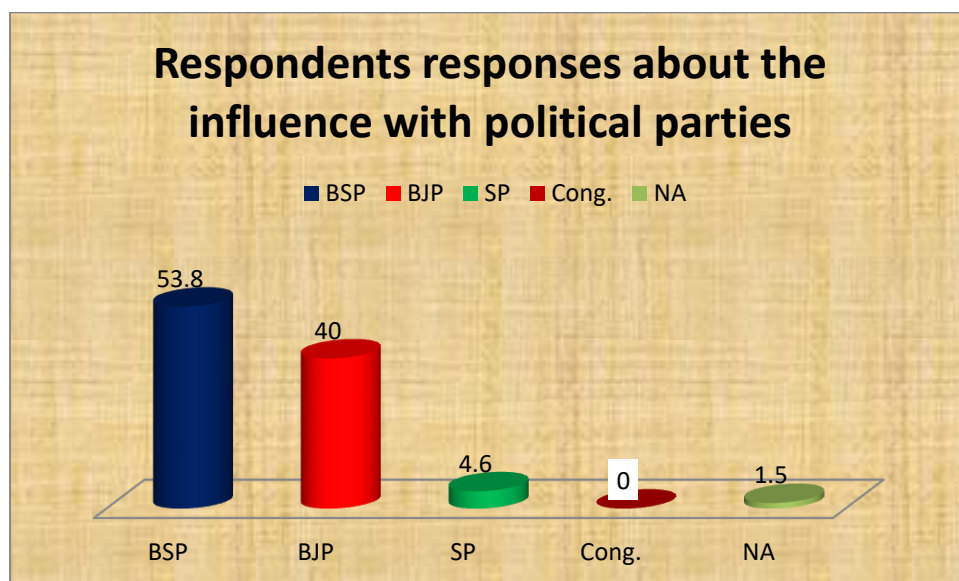
⁵⁵ Rosalind O' Hanlon, *Caste Conflict and Ideology*, Cambridge University Press (1985), New Delhi p142.

Graph 3.3: Percentage of the understanding on Hindutva

In Graph no.3.3, the percentage of people who heard about the Hindutva was 64.6%. During the field work, it was necessary to know about the range of Hindutva at the ground level in rural areas. The result is positive and the appropriation angle is working smoothly for RSS and BJP with through their cultural and political agenda. Most of the answers were in the favour of Hindutva and securing Hindu culture as Hindutva is a way of life for Hindus. Then, question raises that how a concept likes Hindutva dominants the dalits consciousness despite the Ambedkar opposing the idea of Hinduism. The reason is that the absence of uniformity in dalit movement.

Table 3.4: Response about the influence with Political Parties

	Frequency	Percent
BSP	35	53.8
BJP	26	40.0
SP	3	4.6
NA	1	1.5
Total	65	100.0

Graph 3.4: Percentage of influence with Political Parties

Despite, the presence of RSS, and other organisations, satsangs have their own methods to maintain the Brahminical hegemony with the same ideology. They know how to co-opt and appropriate the counter ideology. Within dalit community, the consciousness is not as collective and is rather a fragmented identity. The important thing is that during the field work, the constituent assembly elections were near and in Valmiki basti, the co-option was not only made through the collective memory of Ram and Ramayan, but also from the positive aspect of Hindu nation (Graph 3.4). (Jo Hindu dharam ki raksha ke liye age ayega usko vote denge).⁵⁶ The other phenomenon which is working among dalits on the ground is that they should cast their vote on the basis of development despite the caste consciousness (Hame jati biradri se upar uthkar vote karna chahye, vikas ke naam per vote dena chahye). The manufacturing consent through the media and the constant campaign of development was projected as a diversion of caste identity into monolithic culture of Hindu.

The BJP party and its leaders were soliciting Dalit support in the name of ‘Ram’. Likewise, the BJP leaders have stated that "The whole life of Shri Ram was dedicated to the people of lower classes. The virtues, for which Ram is revered, are the ones, which were established the emancipation of Dalits. Dalits and the backwards have been the platform of the activities of Shri Ram."⁵⁷ Moreover it was also emphasized that ‘Ramayana’ had been written by a Dalit. So, in the 1930s, the Dalit groups in northern India, who were called as Chuhras and Bhangis started to be called as 'Valmikis' by others and themselves.

⁵⁶ Interview with dalit person, Village Bhamori, 12 February, 2017.

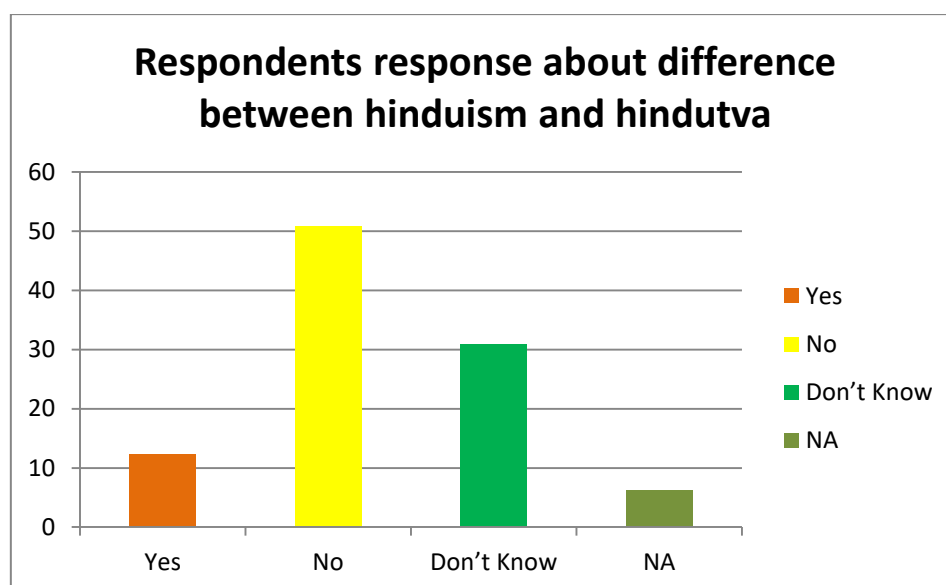
⁵⁷ Narendra Seghal, *Ram Athaat Rashtra*, (in Hindi), Utpal Publications, (1995), New Delhi pp.162-164.

Hence, this group was the most favorable one to the commencement of Hindutva and BJP in Uttar Pradesh. ‘Ram’ was used as a magnet to attract Dalits. All these were the important strategies of BJP to gather Dalits into its fold. Also large number of Valmikis have participated in ‘Kar Sewa’ after falsely being promise that a temple for the Valmikis would be constructed inside the grounds of the destroyed Babri Masjid.⁵⁸

Table 3.5: Difference between Hinduism and Hindutva

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	8	12.3
No	33	50.8
Don't Know	20	30.8
NA	4	6.2
Total	65	100.0

Graph 3.4: Percentage of difference between Hinduism and Hindutva



The other difference is found between Hinduism and Hindutva in Graph no.3.4. It is clear that 50.8% people of dalit community can't understand the difference between Hinduism and hindutva; and 30.8% people didn't know about the difference between Hinduism and Hindutva. The process of influence of any concept exists with unknowing debate control the questioning power and accept the ideological hegemony. With the contending ideologies the dominant sound with holistic perspective draws the acceptance of blurred identity. It is very

⁵⁸ Vijay Prasad, *Untouchable freedom: social history of a dalit community*, OUP, (2000), Delhi, p.10.

important to understand as how a concept gets legitimacy and was popularity among people without knowing its meaning. In the academic era, the debate of Hinduism and Hindutva is going on with a new perspective. It's very clear that RSS as a system has gained the popularity beyond their perception. And that perception is helpful to appropriate the dalit with their time and space. The question that emerges is why dalits support the Hindutva ideology which is contending and not accept the inclusion from dalit.

In contrast to these examinations of discourse co-option between “social movements” and the “establishment” (for lack of a better term), this analysis examines the process of discursive appropriation between like-minded organizations. Groups that engage in this type of strategic action are incorporating the rhetoric as a means of showing similarities between the groups’ situations in order to utilize the power and resonance of the established discourse, not to counter, expose, or subordinate the “other.” While this may likely be viewed as “sharing” as opposed to “co-opting” the differences in intention and use make it appropriate for a detailed analysis.⁵⁹ But in the context of Hindu nationalism the situation is different with Hindutva ideologue. They established the discourse and also constructed the other. Hindutva wanted to homogenize all the Hindus by co-opting the Dalits to fight against the “others”. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya said that: "There can be only one culture in India. The slogan of many cultures can break this country in to pieces and destroy it ... It is the sentiment of one culture that can preserve the unity and integrity of India and solve all our problems."⁶⁰

Hindutva has "no place for the numerous lower caste Hindu traditions, cults and sects that represent ways of life at variance with the upper caste orthodoxy. The concept of cultural nationalism articulated by the Sangh Parivar not only rejects the pluralistic nature of Indian society but also does not agree with the Nehruvian and Ambedkarian paradigm that India is a 'nation in the making' and seeks to give a cultural connotation to Indian Nationalism as Hindu Rashtra."⁶¹ It can be observed that Hindutva ideology with one culture one nation is controlled and lock the space of emancipation of dalit with the constructed past and memory. They know that how can we materialize the memory of oppression and exclusion with the shining of reform as a ‘tip of ice-berg’.

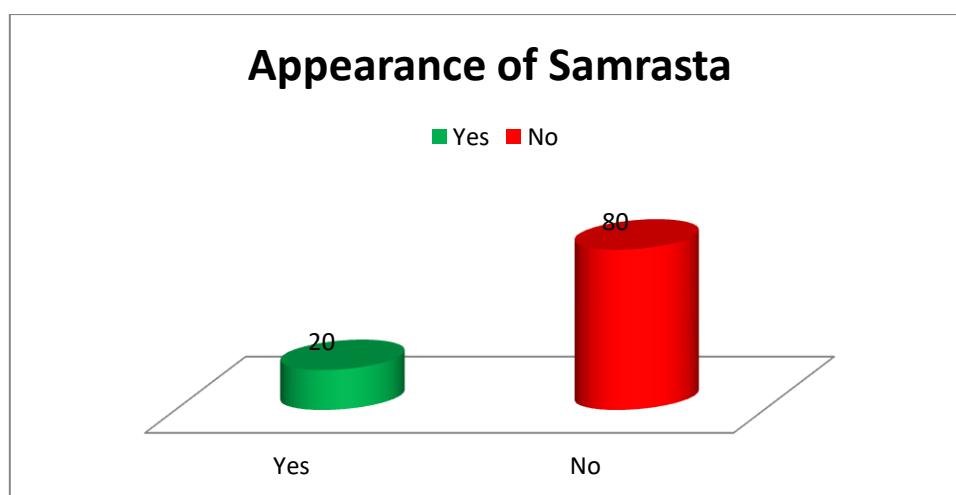
⁵⁹ Jennifer Ann Peeples, “Downwind: articulation and appropriation of social movement discourse”, *Southern Communication Journal* Vol. 76, No. 3, July–August 2011, pp. 248–263.

⁶⁰ Sudhakar Raje (ed.), “Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya : A Profile”, Deen Dayal Research Institute, (1979), New Delhi, p. 172.

⁶¹ S.M. Michel, “Culture and Politics in Modern India: Rise of Hindutva and Dalit Forces”, *Journal of the Asiatic Society*: vol. Xxxviii No. 1, 1996, p.97-98.

Table 3.6: Have you heard about ‘Samajik Samrasta’

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	13	20.0
No	52	80.0
Total	65	100.0

Graph 3.5: Appearance of ‘Samajik Samrasta’

Samajik Samrasta is an important agenda and the old programme of RSS to assimilate and articulate the justice with their appropriating strategy. The practice of samrasta is an old phenomenon but the official agenda has been started only in 1983 in Maharashtra.⁶² The first objective of this campaign was to eradicate the internal conflicts existing in the society, and remove untouchability. And the second objective was to bring the dalits into mainstream society by providing them health, education, and entrepreneurial skills (ibid.,:92).⁶³ The source of inspiration of the campaign was Dr. Hedgewar and in order to link with the dalits it sought similarities between him and Dr. Ambedkar, which were published in Panchjanya (2004a). Many of the activities like samrasta bhoj (campaign in which dalits were invited to eat khichri), samrasta saptah (125th birth anniversary of Dr. Ambedkar) etc. are the part of this campaign.

⁶² R. Patange, "Path Samrasta ka", in Ramesh Patange and Tarun Vijay (ed.), *Samrasta ke Sutra*, Samrasta Granth Prakashan, (2006), New Delhi, p. 92.

⁶³ Ibid, p. 92.

In the field work, discussions with the Prant Karvyah, Phool Singh Jatav, on samrasta, he defined samrasta with a different perspective; '*sabhi logo mein saman ras bharna athart sabhi ke sath avirodh or mann banane ka kaam karna, samta or soshanmukt samaj ko banaye rakhna*'. He argued that we can't grant equality to all people because everyone has a different identity but we can do one thing like developing the fraternity. In the All India Buddhist Sangh programme,⁶⁴ Mohan Bhagwat argued that: 'samrasta ka arth hai ki wo viyakti jisko bhagya ne niche pahuchaya dia mein uska sath dunga' the meaning of harmony is that if anyone in the lowest rank of social order due to fate and I will support him. After the definition and analysis, the point emerged that Samrasta is unknown for the available community.

Approximately 80% people of dalit community were not aware samrasta. They didn't hear this word which is a big agenda for the RSS today for co-option of dalit into their fold. A discussion with Mandal Karvyah⁶⁵ who belongs to Valmiki community was a 10th class pass out and he told me that, there is no caste discrimination in RSS. He arranges the sakhas in his village with a saffron flag. After asking about caste discrimination, he told me that Thakur of the village does caste practice and doesn't even allow daltis to sit before him. His family rears pigs (Suar palan). He also informed that the RSS pracharak came to my house and ate food. The nexus between the hereditary occupation and caste discrimination by the upper caste on the one hand and according to the facts there is no caste discrimination in RSS on the other. So, they try to maintain caste system rather than demolish it. Golwalkar writes that,⁶⁶

“To our bitter experiences, we know how the British used to set up one caste or sect against the other, as for example the non-Brahmin against the Brahmin and play the game of divide and rule, and how our own people, even the so called leaders, fell a willing prey to it. We should take a lesson from that, and beware of similar designs even now of foreign powers and their agents inside our borders..... It goes without saying that if anyone is suffering from any disability, social, or political, on account of what is called caste, that must be removed completely. Dr. Ambedkar had envisaged the special privileges for scheduled caste for only 10 years from the day we became a Republic in 1950. But it is going on, being extended. Continued special privileges, on the basis of caste only, are bound to create vested interests in them in remaining as a separate entity. That would harm their integration with the rest of the society.”

⁶⁴ This programme organised by the All India Buddhist Sangha on 25 March 2017 at Connaught Place and RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat was the chief guest. 'Samajik Samrasta Bauddh Mahasammelan' was the theme of the programme. Before entering the Mohan Bhagwat, Jai Bhim slogan was raised but when he enters Jai Bhim Vande Matram slogans were raised.

⁶⁵ Interview with Mandal Karvyah of RSS, Village Bhamori, Block Sardhana, 15 February 2017. His elder brother also a Sharairik Parshikshan Block Parmukh, in Noida.

⁶⁶ M.S. Golwalkar, *A bunch of thoughts*, Jagaran Prakashan, (1980), Bangalore, pp. 465-466.

In this argument Golwalkar cleverly saves the Hindu social order. This argument proposes that Sangh Parivar intends to integrate the dalits into the national mainstream and also project that dalits can become a part of a unified Hindu fold without criticising that why dalits are not integrated because of the fear of expose of Hindu social order. On the side, he clearly mentions that reservation of schedule caste should come to an end.⁶⁷ This type of argument about the samrasta is a double edged weapon. In Hindu religion the purity and pollution in the context of food is exists with the saliva of one's mouth.

Samrasta is a way of appropriating the caste identity with their ideology. But for dalit it is very important that upper caste people come and have food in their home. Caste question for RSS is not that exists in the abstract form. The articulation with their ideology through the different campaigns is one a tip of the ice berg. And dalit can see the ice which is only a minor part of the whole ice. But again a question that why dalits are joining the RSS and Bajrang Dal?

Gopal Guru has pointed out that, the public sector has provided material security to many Dalits along with the psychological confidence to resist upper caste domination. Hence, they fall back upon Hindutva primarily for material gains. Many of Dalit youths have taken part in Hindu religious festivals not merely for a little pocket money, but also for glamour, public visibility, and some kind of cultural satisfaction and for a sense of superiority in terms of culture. So it was pragmatic choice rather than substantive one.⁶⁸

So, Hindutva could conveniently transform the caste a communal category because Dalits had agreed to become Hindus, for Hindutava it was not difficult task to co-opt Dalits in the name of religion, glamour and some social position. Hence, Dalits forgot their caste antagonism with dominated upper caste strata and were ready to accept their deprived identities for small benefit.⁶⁹

The sense of fear not for emancipation but for belief, fear of doing something wrong, and the ritual purity are the instruments by which a Brahmin makes you senseless and this theme is dominant on their mind. Temple as a projection of purity and pollution is not

⁶⁷ Prakash Louis, "Hindutva: Historicity of dalit connection" in Anand Teltumbde (ed.), *Hindutva and Dalits: perspectives for understanding communal Praxis*, Samya, (2005), Kolkata, pp.145-46.

⁶⁸ Gopal Guru, 'Dalit face a culture threats both from within and without', in Anand Teltumbde (ed.), *Hindutva and Dalits: Perspectives for Understanding Communal Praxis*, Samya, (2005), Kolkata, pp. 145-146.

⁶⁹ Ibid, p. 165.

helping in the assertion for dalits but provides a peculiar space to divert the whole issue of emancipation.

The space in a sacred form is eligible to maintain the location of imbibed inequality in the society. The repetition of any act under the influence of other mind is a part of social mystery.⁷⁰ The question is that how dalit is dominating on their consciousness and the effect of brahminical way of appropriation. In the name of sanskritisation, the brahminical notion appropriate with hegemony due to fear of self. In the rural areas the consciousness exists with the fragmented idea of emancipation. The imitation can't exist in a singular power container. M. Tarde,⁷¹ observes that:

“There is not a word that you say which is not the reproduction, now unconscious, but formerly conscious and voluntary, of verbal articulations reaching back to the most distant past, with some special accent due to your immediate surroundings... even your very originality itself is made up of accumulated commonplaces, and aspires to become commonplace in its turn”.

As Baldwin argued that the sense of our discrimination developed through the habit of imitation which is set up in our body, which can reproduce and assimilate in the imbibed form of practices already exist.⁷² In other words the individuals develop their practices, with the imitation of sense of discrimination, what should be left and what not is the primary concern which is helpful for assimilation and reproduction; the individual also carry up with the social fact of the society. Individual makes society and society makes an individual is a reversible phenomenon. In the same way the ‘stock of knowledge’ is a similar part of imitation. In the everyday practices, the stock of knowledge is an important phenomenon which produces the hierarchy in their habits. Same line of thinking, the belief, ritual practices, and fear of doing something wrong is a part of everyday life. But the difference is that this stock of knowledge is also a dominant category for the oppressor and oppressed.

In Hinduism, imitation and stock of knowledge constitutes *prima facie* of domination. The past of oppressor is different form of imitation in their imbibed norms of ritual superiority. But for the oppressed it's a tool to co-opt by themselves in gloves of oppressor. This is not a holistic approach, for some member of oppressed community makes the stock of knowledge to question the hegemony by ethno-methodological enquiry. The fear is not

⁷⁰ Charles A. Ellwood, “The theory of imitation in social psychology”, *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 6, No. 6 (May, 1901), pp. 721-741

⁷¹ Ibid, p. 723.

⁷² Ibid, p.726.

endowed only in the oppressed but it also exists in the oppressor due to their location of hierarchy.

Strategic co-option: Paramdham Satsang

The organisation Paramdham “supreme adobe” (Janaeu Kranti Andolan) works systematically for Hindu nation. The socialisation of the cadre is engaged in social, moral and ethical ways. In their aspirations from the moral duty of eradication of caste, the cadre go to and fro for the nourishing of their ideology. The slogan of this organisation is ‘*Saheedo hum sharminda hai, jaat Biradri zinda hai*’⁷³ (Martyrs we are ashamed that caste is still alive). In their organisation, they have organised a satsang in Daurala (block of Meerut).

The other slogan is also the main theme of this organisation; ‘Janaeu kranti se hi vishwa shanti’ (The peace in world through ‘Sacred thread’ revolution). The identity of the cadre of this organisation is long hair tail in the middle of head. They discard the worship of stone. In their organisation the process of meditation called ‘Antha Pooja’ i.e. listening to the inner voice. After discussing with the cadre, the important point that emerges is that they want Hindu nation. And also they support BJP as an organisation because of their interest and the same line of thinking like Hindu nation. They didn’t speak clearly but most of the cadre supported the BJP as political party. During the election they were campaigning in different places of rural areas. In this organisation they compared the Nation with Lord Ram. They argued that rastra should be compared with ram bhakti (*Rastra aur man ko majboot karna hai, ram bhakti hai atarth rastra ko majboot karne se pehle man ko majboot karna zaroori hai*).

It’s a very grave situation in a country that is how a new organisation develops and gives a new idea with rastra to save the identity of Hindu social order. It was observed that at rural level, the idea of Hindu rastra is strong through these Satsangs and Krantigurus. It’s a form of revivalist idea with the reformist traditions. Is there any relation between the soldier and caste? It’s a new type of symbolic domination in the name of rastra. They argued very clearly, that there is no space for Muslim in this country and develop the hatred among the cadres against the Muslims. In the starting phase of this organisation, they established the “gau raksha rastra raksha campaign”. Cow protection was equivalent to protecting nation.

⁷³ Interview with Block Parmukh of Paramdham, Village Gokalpur, block Rajpura, 24 February 2017.

Hegemony with Co-option



Fig. No. 3.0 (Block Pramukh of Paramdham)



Fig. No.3.1: Picture of back page of Paramdham org. Book

Another theoretical lens through which in UP working of unchallengeable dominant ‘ideology’ is permeated is through Paramdham. In the name of moral polishing, the ideologization of the hindu rashtra and casteless society is the main agenda of Paramdham. *Jati rahit Samaj ho Nashe ka Naash ho* is the slogan of organisation perpetuate the notion of hegemony with moral polishing and the other slogan *Dharmo Rakshati Rakshitah* means Dharma protects those who uphold and protect Dharma, confirm the Brahmanical notion with the saviour of religion through the integration. In integration (*Aao Sab Brahmin Bane*) the cultural hegemony will maintained and the backdoor agenda of Hindu Rashtra will complete with the consented coercion. Dharma, Jati rahit, Nasha, these are the words which conglomerate with the moral polishing and constructed past with their revivalist and reformist mode. It is clear that the moral polishing organisation is more powerful which effect on the making of Hindu nation through the protection of Dharma. The narratives like Shaheed, Jaati

Rahit, Dharma, Nasha, Janaeu, Ram bhakti, Gau Raksha and Hindu Rashtra, Brahmin are created with the creation of explicit hegemony with the submission of countering ideology. The important point is that most of the dalit young personalities are involved in this. When I have asked to a volunteer of Paramdham that can Muslim join this organisation, the answer was full of hatred and they should go out from India. Antonio Gramsci called it 'Hegemony' whereby domination, injustice and antagonism comes to be perceived as normal. Here the mention of how hegemony works needs to be made. Gramsci introduced the notion of 'hegemony' or 'ideological hegemony' which is not based upon physical force or coercion by the ruling class but subtle, pervasive forms of ideological control and manipulation. While drawing a distinction between domination and ideology, he makes it clear by pointing out that political society dominates but civil society hegemonises.

In order to effectively press its political claims, permeation of an ideology through civil society is sought for by the ruling body. The ruling or the dominant class relies on 'consented coercion'⁷⁴. We are discussing this because media being an integral part of civil society is an effective tool to hegemonise a thought process or an ideology. Louis Althusser⁷⁵ argued that site for struggle is just not in the industrial field but also in the ideological arena as well. Therefore he states that religion, education, family, legal courts, political arena, trade union, culture and communication are important components of Ideological State Apparatus. As the ruling classes tries to popularize their own culture, philosophy, morality, etc. Through mediums like advertisements, news, literature or cinema, the prevailing consciousness is internalized by the masses to the extent that it becomes a part of their common sense.

For Gramsci, common sense is at the core of ideology making process which aims to become a 'part of us'. It is when the ruling class worldview becomes the total worldview that is imposed and accepted as a cultural norm that it subsequently justifies the economic, political and social status quo as natural, inevitable and beneficial to all. Gramsci's idea on 'hegemony' construction has provided us with a powerful tool to analyze the role of co-optation of dalit with their irrational conscience. We can understand a trend or a pattern of co-optation popularization by analyzing the hegemonic layers of meaning of construction. The idea is that these organisations induced ideologies that subsequently hegemonise people's consciousness so much so that it becomes unchallengeable after substantial time.

⁷⁴ Perry Anderson, *The Antinomies of Antonio Gramsci*, New Left Review (1976) New York.

⁷⁵ Louis Althusser, *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus in Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, New Left Books (1971) London.



Fig. no. 3.2(In the house of Block Parmukh of Paramdham)

The photo was welcomed by the activist of Paramdham. With these portraits of Bharat mata, Buddha, Maharana Pratap, Shivaji, and Shubhas Chandra Bose they connect with the ideology of Hindutva. How are the dalits living with their forgetting and remembrance or assimilated with the new form of co-option? In this picture, one thing very important is that the dalit directly and indirectly engage with the rituals. And it is observed that how dalits were engaging with the rituals of bonded hierarchy of Hindu social order. It shows that Hindutva ideology is surely but slowly entering into the public sphere. And it gets the legitimacy with the infiltration of violence in the different hamlets.

In Paramdham, the construction of the other is propagated through the moral, martyr and casteless society nexus. It is very clear that the nexus between Satsang and the BSP exists for moral propagation of the brahminical symbols in the dalit households. This is my hypothesis that dalits had forgotten the practice of Brahminical culture and accepted the Hindutva ideology. Today, the identity of Brahminical order has blurred in the name of Hindutva. It is not only successful with only Brahmins, but also other communities like Bania, Brahmin etc. nexus between them can change their space and location with their adjustable phenomenon in local level to political, cultural, and social also.

The role of social in the public sphere has been brought out by the dominance of political assimilation. And the assimilation has lots of variety by which dalits can adjust in their ritual practices. Due to the politics of entitlement, emotional attachment, and bhakti with Ram, in name of nation-state produces the illusion of liberation of the dalit community. In the name of democracy, justice and nation, the idea of saffron administration has gone beyond the space of Hindu – Muslim conflict. Hindu nation is not a demand of the RSS; it has been converted

with the Brahmin-Bania nexus, co-opted dalits, and also the Rastravadi Muslim Sanghatan also. Is liberation from brahminical order struck in the illusion of replacing identity with Hindutva?

Finally, to conclude in the cautious words of advice for dalits given by Ambedkar in view of the long down struggle;⁷⁶

“How to bring about the reform of the hindu social order? How to abolish caste? Inter dining, inter marriage seems to be asolution. Yet to agitate for and to organize inter caste marriage is liked forced feeding brought about by artificial means. Make every man and woman free from the thraldom of the shastras, cleanse their minds of the pernicious notions founded on the shastras, and he or she will inter-dine and inter-marry, without your telling him or her to do so.... You must take stand that Buddha and Nanak took. You must not only discard the Shastras, you must deny their authority, as did Buddha and Nanak. You must have courage to tell the Hindus, that what is wrong with them is their religion: the religion which has produced in them this notion of the sacredness of the caste.”

It is clear that the function of democracy, identity, and the notion of others are very loaded in nature which play dominant role on the consciousness of an individual. Believing in the reality without knowing the sources and without the knowledge is dangerous for oppressed section. If one person exposes the reality of Hindu social order, it will not serve its intended purpose at the right location. Why someone appropriate and co-opts is not only a process but a function with the contextuality of oppressed and the oppressor. And how they follow the structure which is exist with everyday violence, oppression, and humiliation.

Therefore, the process of integration which is performing by the Hindutva organisation dominated on the ambedkarite movement. Why dalit movement can't exist in a same way of Hindu reform movement besides the everyday violence? Today, the persistence of hindutva ideology with *Poora Hindu* (full Hindu) controls the voting pattern in dalit community. In one family father will vote BJP, other member will vote for BSP. If they are success to attract the one member of family, the ideology will dominate on cultural and social level along with political. Acha kaam (Good Governance) is an adjective of RSS and BJP in the name of Hindu Sanskriti conglomerate with the noun for dalit.

⁷⁶ Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, “*Writing and speeches*”, edited by Vasant Moon, (ed.) vol.1, Government of Maharashtra, Education Department (1979), Mumbai, pp.67-69.

Location politics, Agency and Appropriation

In the context of Hindu nationalism, the idea of democracy revitalise with the sanskriti, violence, inequality, and opportunistic appropriation. Location itself an adjective in Hindu Social order. And the oppressor and the oppressed used it for their opportunism like emancipation for Dalit and agency of co-option for Brahmin. The question is that how a dalit leader, who were the ardent opponent of Hindutva ideology, they are doing work for that ideology. Is it intention action or action which is shaped by the power of structure? In this context, we can't deny the importance and the existence of the human agency. The form of appropriation does not play in abstract notion. It has the accuracy to culminate with the past, present and the formation of domination.

In democracy the notion of power exist with the practical, moral, and evaluative form. In their explanation of power, Steven Lukes take the leave form Peter Morriss, argued that power can't exist only in moral and evaluative sense, political aspect is important which is entangle with backward and forward looking. Further, he argued that one can understand the past of punishing and rewards both, and make the distinction in future. It exists with the life nexus in the outer and inner formation of self. An individual attract with the outer world and indulged with self-consciousness. As Rudolf Makkreel define life nexus with objective and subjective way "a relational nexus a structure that always relates something outer to something inner."⁷⁷ In the Ideas Concerning a Descriptive and Analytic Psychology (1894) Dilthey theorises about life. For him life is interface between a subjective and an immanent purposiveness.⁷⁸

Life has to be understood in part by reciprocity between an inner life of feelings and volitions and an environment of means, ends, and obstacles. Here Purposiveness describes the relation between the driving agency of feelings and instincts and the intellectual and volitional life of the individual within his/her milieu. The enhancement of life is made possible by cooperation between the representational, emotional, instinctual, and volitional components of psychic life and articulation of the relation of individuals to their

⁷⁷ Rudolf Makkreel, "The Feeling of Life: Some Kantian Sources of Life-Philosophy," in Dilthey-Jahrbuch für Philosophie und Geschichte der Geisteswissenschaften, vol. 3, ed. Frithjof Rodi, (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1985), p. 102.

⁷⁸ Wilhelm Dilthey, "Ideas Concerning a Descriptive and Analytic Psychology," in Descriptive Psychology and Historical Understanding, trans. Richard M. Zaner (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1977). Hereafter referred to as Ideas.

environment.⁷⁹ This purposiveness is subjective as it describes the lived experience and immanent because it refers to nothing beyond lived experience. Therefore, the location of politics emerged with the idea of life-nexus, where the oppressor and the oppressed act in their implicit and explicit way. In hindutva ideology, the role of life-nexus and the agency of agents covered the notion of power to dominant other. In this sense, when a dalit shake hands with opposing ideologies like hindutva, it creates some sense that why they adopt or enter that arena. The answer is quoted from C. Hayward and S. Lukes⁸⁰

“In evaluative contexts, we aim to assess societies and their institutions with respect to justice and freedom. Here, as in practical and moral contexts, we need the distinction between structural arrangements and the power (as distinct from the powers) of agents. Social and institutional structures consist in constraints and opportunities, and in roles and norms that limit, guide, and shape individuals’ behavior. These are the frameworks within which politics is conducted and economic and social life functions. Nevertheless, these constraints are never uniquely determining. Agents may or may not seize opportunities. The requirements of roles and norms are always subject to agents’ interpretations. Moreover, the power of agents to achieve their goals and to dominate others is always subject to the impact of unintended consequences. When specifiable individual or collective actors, separately or together, by acting or not acting, can make a difference (and thus be held accountable), it becomes appropriate to use the language of power.”

⁷⁹ *ibid*

⁸⁰ C. Hayward and S. Lukes, “Nobody to shoot? Power, structure, and agency: A dialogue”, *Routledge*, (2008), London, p.8.

Conclusion

Hum Jante hai ki wo Nahi jante hai, (we know that, they don't know) these words problematize the epistemology of co-option. The sense of domination with the 'consciousness of location' is routinized in the practice of co-option. In this notion Gramsci contended that there are two elements in the society which are helpful to understand the construction of hegemony: one is explicit and second is implicit. In implicit element, the people have subaltern consciousness which develops the potential to change the subordination of the oppressed. In explicit element, it is manifested in the actions of the community which are borrowed from the dominant group and represent the ideological submission of the subaltern to the dominant group.

This research shows that how Hinduism invented for national use. The practice of co-option and appropriation with assimilation, collaboration has been used by the propagator of Hinduism. The travel of Hindu Nationalism does not start after independence. The structural roots of co-option and appropriation can be seen in the constructed past with the strategic appreciation. With the source of David Lorenzen book, when he point out that who invented Hinduism, proceed the epistemological enquiry of process of development or creation of Hinduism.

This research tries to develop the conceptualisation of co-option and appropriation. In which it has been clearly mentioned that practice of the words, strategies exist but how they convert into the concept it's a big question. Through this analysis, it has been clear that history and concept exist with their past practices and located in the society. The legitimacy of Hinduism is also a part of co-opting history of the past. How this past converts into the practice, which is located in the society? Therefore, Hinduism for national use has the co-opting history to recruit the hegemony of Brahminical past. It starts with Bhakti movement, relation of Shethji or Bhattji and indulged with Hindu Mahasabha, Brahma Samaj, Arya Samaj, and their relation with Congress and Hindu Nationalist.

Hindu Nationalism is not just a category of Brahminical past, it has the tendency to evolve the system to perpetuate the ideologization of the location, where dalits, tribal and women itself gave the permission to co-opt their space. The practice of opportunism to gain the political status produces the identity of selective appropriation with their hideousness agenda. The reality versus appearance is strong of RSS which is crucial point to maintain the

hegemonic ideology. We can say that the appearance of RSS is strong rather than the reality of that phenomenon for dalits. The appearance can be seen in the trust deficit between dalit and Muslim with the construction of the 'other.' This deficit can be seen in the field. During the field visit different narratives pointed out with the unity and fraction between dalit and Muslim. However, the participation of dalit is going to maximize in hindtva ideology, the reason behind this only the development of hate with the honour of 'bahu', 'beti'.

But the generalisation is not a symbol of sociological imagination. The question is that unity itself problematize with the contextuality. In some place the unity between dalit and Muslim is stronger rather than fraction. And in some places where, the incidents of honour occur, the hate exists between them. With the discussion of a young person of a Valmiki community, the conclusion is that he was full of anger against the Muslims and said that '*ye hamari bahu beti ko takte hai*' (These Muslim people watch on our bride and sister). The other side the harmony between Dalit and Muslim is strong without the political influence. Muslims give token money for Ambedkar jayanti and also celebrate with pride and honor. The process of focalisation is important that how Bajrangdal and VHP focused on the area where Dalit and Muslim conflict exist.

On the basis of political analysis, the category of social is delegitimised by the historian and the political scientist also. And on this counter Aloysius write the book and develop the new debate in the nationalism and the dear nationalist. In the epistemological form of understanding the debate on nationalism in India exist with the defined by the media, and the ideologue of the national category. With the conservatism, the debate on modern, traditional carries on with their burden of homogeneity.

One culture, one nation, is appropriating with the exclusion in inclusion. The invisibility of Brahminism in the Hindutva ideology for dalit is tabulation of past and present. The formation of hatred in dalit with context of other constructs, the hegemony by self as Gramsci discussed earlier. Gopal Guru raises the question as to why are dalits accepting the hindutva ideology? With this question the lack of leadership, social movements, and the responsibility for society the assimilation in the Hindutva fold are also discussed.¹

¹ Gopal Guru, 'Dalit face a culture threats both from within and without', in (ed.) Anand Teltumbde, *Hindutva and Dalits: Perspectives for Understanding Communal Praxis*, Samya, (2005). Kolkata.

The other point is that, the public sphere of dalits has been crushed by the satsang and the other Hindutva organisation. They dominant theme on minds is only religion, culture, and how to save it. In last state assembly elections, the BSP core vote move towards the BJP. And the reason was that BSP give a ticket to Muslims in large numbers. On the other hand, BJP has the campaign like *Musalmano ka raaj aa jaega* with 24 and 7 days.

Respondents response on influence with political party

	Frequency	Percent
BSP	35	53.8
BJP	26	40.0
SP	3	4.6
Cong.	0	0
NA	1	1.5
Total	65	100.0

Table No, 5.1

From the Table 5.1 it is clear that the percentage gap is not much between BJP and the BSP. This study is before the election, when the heat of the election was on a high. And the important point is that the study was done in the dalit community only. It is clear that the Hindutva ideology is not playing with dalits in the abstract form. Despite all things, the atrocities and the discrimination practiced by the upper caste at the ground level but they take it as a regular way of life.

The other phenomenon like *Desh ke liye BJP ko vote karenge or Samaj ke liye BSP ko vote karenge, Hindu ke liye BJP ko vote karenge, or Jati ke liye BSP ko vote karenge*² (For country we will cast the vote for BJP and for society, will support BSP, for Hindu, we will support BJP and for caste, will support for BSP). It's a very important point note how a public sphere creates the hegemony and supports the dominant class with their ontological agenda. As Bourdieu contended that:³

“Without turning a power into a circle whose centre is everywhere and nowhere’, which could be to dissolve it in yet another way, we have to be able to discover where it is least visible, where it is most recognized....For symbolic power is that invisible power which can be exercised only with the complicity

² Interview with Bajrangdal Karyakarta, (Belongs to dalit community) Village Gokalpur, Meerut, 21 February 2017. They informed that for saving of Shastra (Scriptures), Shastr (Weapons) is important.

³ P. Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, Harward University Press, (1991), Cambridge, pp. 163-164.

of those who do not want to know that they are subject to it or even that they themselves exercise it.”

Here, Bourdieu clearly point out, as to how an oppressor and oppressed follow the structure and provide the acceptance. The BJP and RSS have capacity to recognize the power with focalization. The invisible power which is dominating on structure with words of dichotomy like desh-samaj, hindu-jati, BSP-BJP perpetuates the hegemony produced by the self. It is clear that the words used by the dalit people like samaj, jati for BSP has a space of consciousness of location but it can divert with the issue of nationalism, cow, and army raised by the BJP and RSS. On which point they negate each other, it's an emotional tie up in the democracy. Dalits didn't understand the difference between political and social. And it's a tool of BJP to use the assertion of dalit only for names of nationalism and, cow.

Table 5.2: Appearance of Bahujan Hitaye Bahujan Sukhaye

	Frequency	Percent
Know	22	33.8
Dont Know	43	66.2
Total	65	100.0

Table 5.3: Apperance of Sarvajan Hitaye Sarvajan Sukhaye

	Frequency	Percent
Know	23	35.4
Dont Know	42	64.6
Total	65	100.0

When you can learn like ‘ghar ghar modi har har modi’ but not learn their ideological slogan. It's a real situation at the ground level where, the BSP supporters don't know the meaning of the party slogan. You can imagine that how contending ideologies are easily entering into the houses of dalit. The lack of uniformity in dalit movement creates the fuzziness in the liberation and the opposition ideologies caught it very clearly with different ways like granting leadership to Dalits, hatred for Muslim, focalization with the notion that this place is important for us to play with the emotion of Hindus and Muslim.

It is clear that the co-option and appropriation has their way of adjusting in marginalized communities. Strategy and co-option were appropriated in a suitable way to absorb the past. The important thing to notice is that there were numerous organizations within the Sangh Parivar that were fighting against untouchability. There are several reasons for fighting against untouchability such as: 1) Hindutva has no choice; they have to portray Dalits as an integral part of the Hindus to defend themselves; 2) By the inclusion of Dalits they will get benefit in terms of electoral purposes; 3) Through this they can prove that there is no discrimination in Hindu social order and it is an egalitarian structure and 4) It was problematic for Hindutva when Dalits began to assert that they have separate identity.

By this, Hindutva began to claim that Dalits are “our people” so, where is the question of separate identity, because they simply don’t want to extirpate their unity. As well as Sangh Parivar too rejects the pluralistic nature of Indian society and hence, the concept of cultural nationalism is eloquent by spoken by them. An article published in *Organiser* in 1989s B.K. Kelkar claims: "the havoc the politics of reservation is playing with the social fabric is unimaginable. It provides a premium for mediocrity encourages brain drain and sharpens caste divide".⁴ In the same way one of his articles by M.V. Kamath declares that reservations and other mechanisms would not improve the condition of lower caste Hindus and OBCs. A casteless society can only be established by the efforts of the upper castes not by the hate mongrels like Kanshi Ram.⁵ It’s hideousness of invisible brahminism, and dichotomy of hierarchy and assertion against caste. It is something where RSS and the BJP successfully to hidden their visible brahmanical thoughts and practices. Why were they afraid of Kanshi Ram and call him hate monger? If you explore the idea of annihilation of caste, they will make you and proposed you as an accused for breaking the unity of the country.

The co-option strategies by the BJP are not easily understood able; although one needs to deconstruct the daily life practices. BJP and RSS has co-opted the past of dalits through their historical remains and tried to merge the past with present. So, it’s very difficult to make clear distinction between past and present because on the one hand present perception based on the past events and on the other hand past is reconstructed and

⁴ B.K. Kelkar, 'Frankly Speaking,' *Organiser*, vol. XLI, No.13, 8 October,

⁵ M. V. Kamath, 'Is Shudra Revolution in the Offing', *Organiser*, 1 May 1994, p.6.

reinterpreted according to contemporary situation. Interpretation of past is not in holistic manner or based on valid evidence rather on the basis of dominant ideology. Hence, the representation of the past can also be strategic because defined kind of memory is reconstructed. In this sense, we could say that the past is reconstructed by the RSS cadre, as BJP-RSS wanted to establish a unified Hindu nation; so they not merely adopt other's culture (dalits) but adopt in restricted manner for co-opting them.

BJP and RSS try to highlight certain kind of histories, memory, past, legends, symbols and narratives to influence the minds of individuals. So, this reinterpretation and reconstruction of the past make the influence on the consciousness of an individual. The dominant political structure and symbolic power is involved behind the remembrance of an individual i.e. what they remember. The reinterpreted past and memories are not free from the imaginations; and imagination is a conscious process. So, the BJP-RSS consciously eliminates the past of others (dalits) for their own domination and power.

In Indian context multiple collective memories exists; there are two main reasons of it firstly India is a multi-lingual and secondly collective memories contains of individual memories and experiences, as result of it multiple collective memory exists. Hence we could say that collective memories are subjective in nature. So, it was quite difficult for RSS cadre to establish a unified Hindu nation. But, BJP played strategically by creating meta-narratives of local heroes of several regions.

BJP has co-opted dalits by co-opting their public sphere through modern media, newspaper, audio and visual media and literatures. In contemporary period this new media is so loud for influencing the consciousness of individuals. This new media not merely influence the consciousness but also help in the elimination of 'others' past and history. In contemporary times media mainly focuses on the depiction of Hindu mythology through different versions and opposing ideologies and interpretations are always missed. This could lead to the main conclusion that is: how ruling government controls this modern media; so the power and domination are always primary for the elimination and distortion of other's culture, history, memory, past and ritual behavior.

There is no valid evidence of such narratives and history which are presented according to dominant ideology. So, the important question is that how could one's memory and history considered to be absolute and factual? And how could one believe? Halbwach says that the memory is not consistent it is fragmented, and history is not absolute.

As Walton has suggested, imagining “is doing something with a proposition one has in mind” (Walton 1990:20).⁶ We can relate this statement with the BJP practices that how one’s culture, the way of socialization, and language, make an impact on individual consciousness. Hence, imagination simply means presupposition within mind which can be considered as conscious process. Moreover, we need imagination in order to artfully construct and represent the story. Likewise, BJP has created the meta-narratives from all the communities, Hindu forces have tried to represent the story of Dalits past and history because several reasons like, Hindu forces were threatened with the loss of Hindu identity, and they feared for the loss of their dominant social and cultural values and practices. That’s why they sometimes tried to eliminate the history of others and began to adapt some part of other’s history. The major aim of Hindu forces to establish a unified nation on the basis of common language and common culture. Hence, they started the ethnicization process for establishing an egalitarian Hindu society.

The whole BJP party and its leaders were soliciting Dalits support in the name of ‘Ram’. Likewise, one of the leaders has stated that "The whole life of Shri Ram was dedicated to the people of lower classes. The virtues, for which Shri Ram is revered, are the ones, which were established on the emancipation of Dalits. Dalits and the backwards have been the platform of the activities of Shri Ram." Moreover it was also emphasized that ‘Ramayana’ had been written by a Dalit. So, in the 1930s, the Dalit groups in northern India, who were called as Chuhras and Bhangis started to be called as 'Valmikis' by others and themselves. Hence, this group was the most favorable to the commencement of Hindutava and BJP in Uttar Pradesh. ‘Ram’ was used as a magnet to attract Dalits. All these are the important strategies adopted by the BJP to gather Dalits into its fold.

Although the RSS dare not openly treat Dalits as untouchables, it is opposed to any reformation that strengthens the Dalit populace - be it the Constitution, the law, or the reservation system. On February 6, 1950, the Organiser carried an article by a retired High Court Judge Shankar Subha Aiyar titled, “Manu Rules Our Hearts.” He wrote that “Even though Dr. Ambedkar is reported to have recently stated in Bombay that the days of Manu have ended, it is nevertheless a fact that the daily lives of Hindus are affected even in these

⁶ K. L. Walton, *Mimesis as make-believe, on the foundations of the representational arts*, Harvard University Press, (1990), Massachussets, p.20.

days by the principles and injunctions contained in the Manusmriti and other Smritis. Even an unorthodox Hindu feels himself bound at least in some matters by the rules contained in the Smritis and he feels powerless to give up altogether his adherence to them.”

It should be clear for them oppressed classes that ‘who are we’ is not ‘who are we against’. In their book ‘What congress and Gandhi have done to the untouchables’ Ambedkar explains Hinduism... “To the untouchables, Hinduism is a veritable chamber of horrors. The sanctity and infallibility of the Vedas, Smritis and shastras, the iron law of caste, the heartless law of karma and senseless law of status by birth are to the untouchable’s veritable instruments of torture which Hinduism has forged against untouchables.”⁷

In this context, it is clear warning to untouchables to far away from the hindutva fold. If people will not understand then it’s a responsibility of dalit movement not RSS. During field work discussion with Prant Karvyah⁸ on Ambedkar and dalit issues, I had asked him whether the RSS does work and assimilate dalits in their ideology, and if so, then can we call it dalit movement. The answer was ‘no’. RSS is doing work for country and for the weaker sections of the society. The question is that how the Hindutva ideologue has co-opts the dalits, who have suffered for centuries? Is it right place on the part of individual in the society to withdraw from the responsibility of countering the Hindutva?

There is always dialectical relationship between structure of society and consciousness. Individuals internalize the external world and externalize the internal and that’s how society and individuals forms. Both are responsible for the creation of each other as well as the development of consciousness is gradual process. So, we can assume that the views propagated by the BJP about other’s history and past, are majorly responsible for the distorted reality. This half reality is responsible for the reconstruction of the structure and again this reconstructed structure would develop the individual consciousness. As a result of it, by sharing thoughts and knowledge this individual consciousness would convert into collective consciousness. The consciousness of an individual is constructed by the system of social practices. Further, all structures are coercive and ideologically constructed for the continuation of the society in a particular manner.

⁷ Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, “What Congress and Gandhi have done to the Untouchables”, Thacker & Co, (1946), Bombay, pp.306-08.

⁸ Interview with Prant Karywah of RSS, village Palheda, Meerut, 13 February, 2017.

As B.R. Ambedkar argued that if at all there exists any consciousness then it is the dominance of Brahmanical consciousness which is rooted in socio-historical reality of centuries. With this analytical framework it can be contextualized that the project of co-option and appropriation is situated in socio-historical and political consciousness of hegemonic order at the cultural level. With this analytical framework it can be argued that the project of co-opting and appropriating dalits is a broader project of cooption and appropriation of dalit consciousness itself. The continuum of this hegemonic order practices itself through Brahmanical consciousness. In Hindutva ideology, through Brahmanical consciousness the part of constructing past is a revivalist of social order, where preservation of culture is entangled with 'practice of the past and present of the practice'. Co-option and appropriation produce through this past and present.

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Appendix 1

Interview Schedule

Name of Districts

Village

1. Name of Respondents.....
2. Age:
3. Sex: A) Male B) Female C) Transgender
4. Married Yes/ No
5. Education
6. Religion:
7. Caste:
8. Occupation:

Educational Details:-

s.no	Sex	Class	Name of the School	Year of enrolment	Medium of Institution	Distance from Home	Year of Dropout	Reason for dropout

DEMOGRAPHY/GENERAL PROFILE

1. What is the population of the village?
2. How many voters are there?
3. How many religious groups are there in this village?
4. How many castes are there in this village?

Social composition, Occupation and Education

1. Who is numerically largest caste in this village?

2. How is the nature of relationship between Dalit and other castes?

3. How is the nature of relationship within Dalit community?

4. Is there any caste that is active economically and politically?

5. What are the main jobs that people in the community do?

6. Do certain groups specialise in certain jobs? Yes/No
7. Ife yes, which groups do certain jobs?

8. Are you satisfied with this occupation? Yes/No
9. If yes, give reasons.....

10. If no, give reasons.....
11. Do you want to leave this occupation? Yes/No
12. If Yes, give reasons.....

13. If No, give reasons.....

14. Which type of name they call you? Like Chamar, Dalit, Harijan, and others.
15. You prefer sending your child to study in ---- a. Government b. Private c. Private Aided
Give reasons.....

16. What is the name of the school in which you are studying?

17. What is your perception about school curriculum?

18. What is your perception about teaching learning methods that your child learns in school?

19. Do you feel that the school environment is conducive for your child's study? Yes/No
20. If No, Give reasons.

21. Is there separate sitting arrangement for the students in the primary school?

22. Have you heard about Dr. Ambedkar? Yes/No

23. If yes, then what?

24. If no, then why?

25. Have you heard about Gandhi? Yes/No

26. If yes, then what?

27. If no, then why?

28. Have you heard the name of Jyotiba Phule? Yes/ No

29. If yes, what do you know?

30. Have you heard the name of Savitribai Phule? Yes/No

31. If yes, then what?

Social cohesion and integration

32. Are there any groups, organisations, associations or cooperatives in the village?

33. What are these? (e.g. women's savings groups, caste association, etc).

34. Who is founding father of organisation?

35. What is the source of funding?

36. What is the work of organisation?

37. What kind of benefit, they are getting from organisation?

38. Inside the organisation, what kind of practices going there, especially for dalits?
39. Has there been any conflict or tension on any issues during the past ten years in your village?
40. If yes, what was / were the reason(s) for the tension(s)/conflict(s)?
41. How do these disputes get resolved?

Question on Religion

42. Is there any temple in this village, where do you visit? Yes/No.
Give reasons.....
43. Is there any separate temple for dalit in this village? Yes/No
Give reasons.....
44. Whether the society gives respect to dalit? Yes/No
Give reasons.....
45. What is your understanding about religion?
46. Is there any compulsion to follow Hindu religion?
47. How it is different from other religion?
48. Have you heard about Hindutva? Yes/No
49. If yes, what is it?
50. Is there any difference between Hinduism and Hindutva?
51. Dalit are allowed to enter into the upper caste house? Yes/ No

52. On tea shop they are getting tea in different cup?
53. Is it compulsory to stand in the presence of upper caste?
54. Is there any sect in this village?
55. If yes, what type of ideology they promote?
56. Have you heard about Kumbh Mela? Yes/No
57. Do you go to Kumbh Mela? Yes/No
Give Reasons.....
58. Do you know about Manusmriti? Yes/No
59. If yes, what is it?
60. Do you know about Ramayana?
61. If yes, then which sources?
62. What message you are getting from the epics?
63. Do you know about any local deity?
64. If yes, who are they?
65. Are there any religious activities carried out?
66. If yes, are you a participant?
67. If yes, what often?

Question on Political Parties and other organisation

1. Since Independence is there any Panchayat president from Dalit community?
2. Are you getting the same respect after gaining the post in Panchayat election?
3. Are you getting benefit of reservation in Panchayat election?
4. Are you allow to vote?
5. If yes, you decide by your own or following some trends?
6. If not, what is the reason?
7. Do you feel empowered due to your representatives? Yes/No
8. If yes, why?
9. If No, why?
9. Do political parties approach you? Yes/No
10. If yes, who?
11. Are the approaches limited to elections or does it extend?
12. How do various political parties approach you?
13. Which party do you support? BSP, BJP, SP, RLD, CONGRESS and Other.
14. Why do you Support?
15. Do you know about BSP? Yes/No
16. If yes, give reasons.....

17. If No, give reasons.....

15. Who was the founding father of BSP?

16. Have you heard about 'Tilak Taraju or Talwar inko maro joote Char'? Yes/No

17. Who give this slogan?

18. What is the meaning of this slogan?

19. What is 'Bahujan Hitaye Bahujan Sukhaye'?

20. What is 'Sarvajan Hitaye Sarvajan Sukhaye'?

21. What is the difference between these slogans?

22. Have you heard about Arya Samaj?

23. If yes, how do you know?

24. What was the main agenda of Arya Samaj?

25. Have you heard about Hindu Mahasabha? Yes/No

26. If yes, how do you know?

27. Who was the founding father of Hindu Mahasabha?

28. Have you heard the name RSS? Yes/No

29. If yes, what is this?

30. Who was the founding father of RSS?

31. What is the ideology of RSS?

32. What is the influence of RSS on your village?
33. Are you a member of RSS or VHP?
34. If yes, what is your designation?
35. Why are you part of RSS OR VHP?
36. Why does RSS or BJP use Dr. Ambedkar?
37. Have you heard 'Bharat Mata Ki Jai'?
38. What is this?
39. Do you worship Cow? Yes/No
40. If yes, why?
41. Have you heard about Samrasta Saptah? Yes/No
42. If yes, who had organised this?
43. What was the purpose of this programme?
44. Is there any programme organised by RSS in your village?
45. Is there any Akhara in your village?
46. If yes, what is the work of this?
47. Are you member of this?

Questions on Dalit Movement

1. Are you aware of Dalit movement? Yes/No
2. If yes, how?
3. Are you a participant of the Dalit movement? Yes/No

4. What influence does Dalit movement have on your village?
5. What is the purpose of Dalit movement?
6. What do you think about caste system?
7. Is it legitimate to have caste despite constitution?
8. In the last ten years, has any Ambedkarite organisation come to your village? Yes/No
9. If yes, what was the purpose?
10. Have you read about Ambedkar? Yes/No
11. If yes, how?
12. If No, why?
13. Have you heard that Dr. Ambedkar opposed Hinduism? Yes/No
14. If yes, what were the reasons.....
15. If No, why?
16. Do you believe in Buddhism? Yes/No
17. If yes, why?
18. If No, why?
19. What is the meaning of reservation?
20. What is the impact of reservation on education?
21. Do you know about the debate between Gandhi and Ambedkar on reservation?

22. What was the Poona Pact?
23. Which party does oppose the reservation?
24. What do you think about the change in reservation policy?
25. Do you support the change in reservation policy? Yes/No
26. If yes, why?
27. If No, why?
28. What do you think about the Dalit-Muslim unity?
29. Do you support the idea of Dalit-Muslim unity by BSP?
30. In communal violence, which community do you support?
31. Is there any sense that before election communal violence occurs?
32. Do you support the BJP? Yes/No
33. If yes, why?
34. If No, why?
35. If any dalit join BJP, Congress or any other party, is it acceptable? Yes/No
36. If yes, why?
37. If not why?

Appendix 2

Questions for Focused Group Discussion

1. What is the meaning of Nation?
2. There is a debate going on Nationalism in last many years, what is your understanding about this?
3. What is Hindu Nationalism?
4. Is there any relation between Hindu and Nationalism?
5. Do you believe in Hindu Nationalism?
6. If yes why?
7. If no why?
8. Have you heard about RSS, VHP? Yes/No
9. If yes, then what is the work of this organisation?
10. What is the influence of RSS on your village?
11. Do you know about those people who oppose Hinduism?

12. If yes, who were they and why did they oppose?

13. Do you know about the Mandir-Masjid debate?

14. Why do you think BJP, RSS is too bothered about Nationalism?

15. Do you support it? Yes/No

16.If yes, why?

17.If No, why?

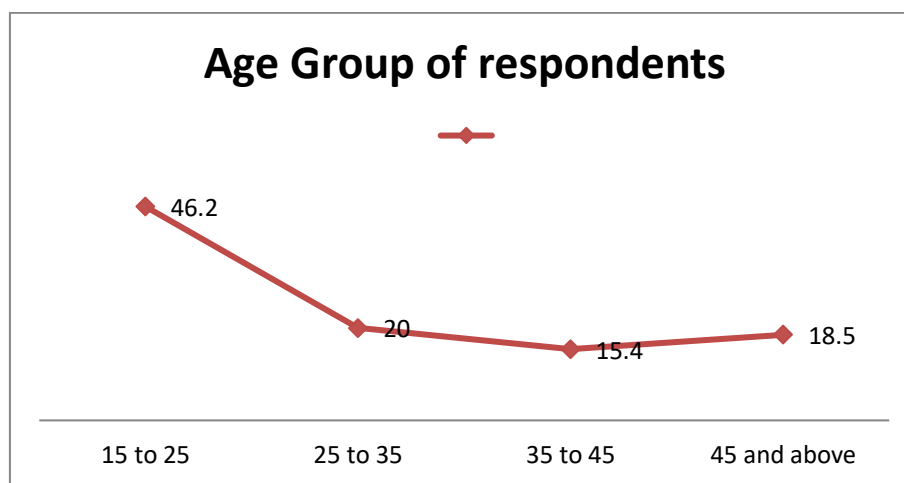
18. Have you heard about BAMCEF? Yes/No

19. If yes, what is it?

Appendix 3

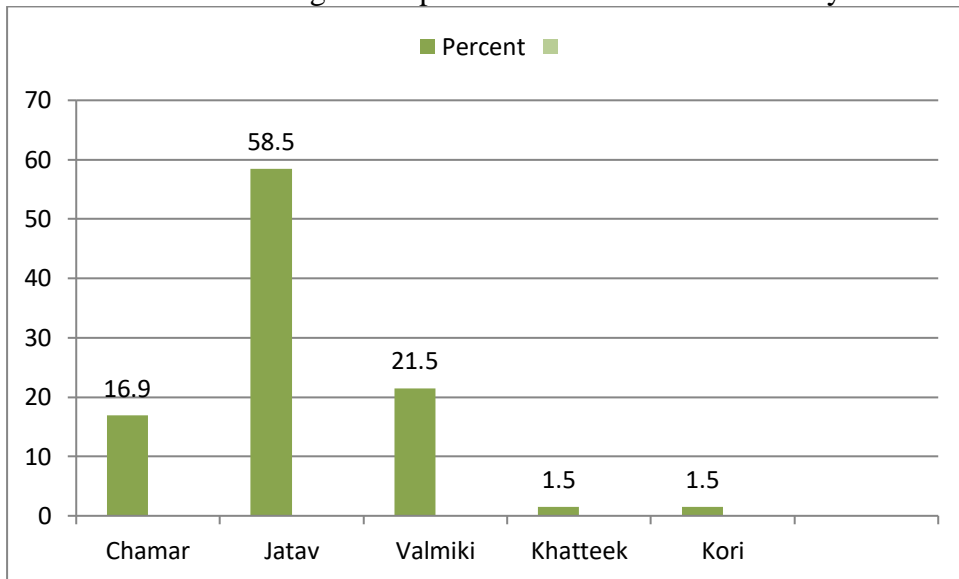
Table and Figures

	Frequency	Percent
15 to 25	30	46.2
25 to 35	13	20.0
35 to 45	10	15.4
45 and above	12	18.5
Total	65	100.0



	Frequency	Percent
Chamar	11	16.9
Jatav	38	58.5
Valmiki	14	21.5
Khateek	1	1.5
Kori	1	1.5
Total	65	100.0

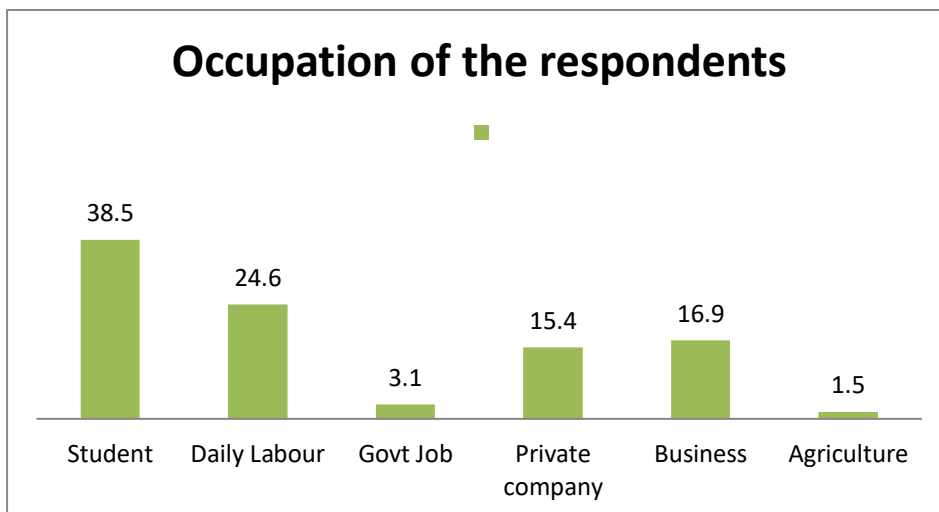
Percentage of respondents within dalit community



Occupation

	Frequency	Percent
Student	25	38.5
Daily Labour	16	24.6
Govt Job	2	3.1
Private company	10	15.4
Business	11	16.9
Agriculture	1	1.5
Total	65	100.0

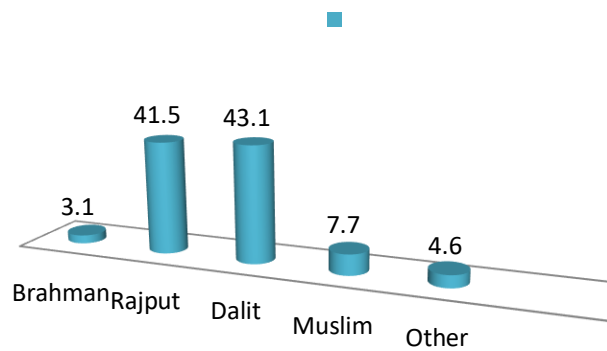
Occupation of the respondents



Numerically Largest Caste in Village

	Frequency	Percent
Brahman	2	3.1
Rajput	27	41.5
Dalit	28	43.1
Muslim	5	7.7
Other	3	4.6
Total	65	100.0

Numerically largest caste in the villages



Responses on Gandhi

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	64	98.5
No	1	1.5
Total	65	100.0

Responses on Mahatma Jyotiba Phule

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	38	58.5
No	27	41.5
Total	65	100.0

Responses on Savitribai Phule

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	22	33.8
No	43	66.2
Total	65	100.0

Compulsion to follow Hindu religion

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	3	4.6
No	62	95.4
Total	65	100.0

Responses on Manusmriti

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	33	50.8
No	32	49.2
Total	65	100.0

Responses on worship of cow

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	62	95.4
No	3	4.6
Total	65	100.0

Appearance of dalit movement

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	31	47.7
No	34	52.3
Total	65	100.0

Appearance of dalit organisation in village

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	4	6.2
No	61	93.8
Total	65	100.0

Awareness about RSS

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	54	83.1
No	11	16.9
Total	65	100.0

Have you read about Dr. Ambedkar

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	32	49.2
No	33	50.8
Total	65	100.0

Responses on Tilak taraju or talwar inko maro jote Chaar

	Frequency	Percent
Know	28	43.1
Don't Know	37	56.9
Total	65	100.0

Responses on Bahujan hitaye bahujan sukhaye

	Frequency	Percent
Know	22	33.8
Dont Know	43	66.2
Total	65	100.0

Responses on sarvajan hitaye sarvajan sukhaye

	Frequency	Percent
Know	23	35.4
Dont Know	42	64.6
Total	65	100.0

Responses on Arya samaj

	Frequency	Percent
Know	57	87.7
Don't Know	8	12.3
Total	65	100.0

Members of RSS or VHP

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	17	26.2
No	48	73.8
Total	65	100.0

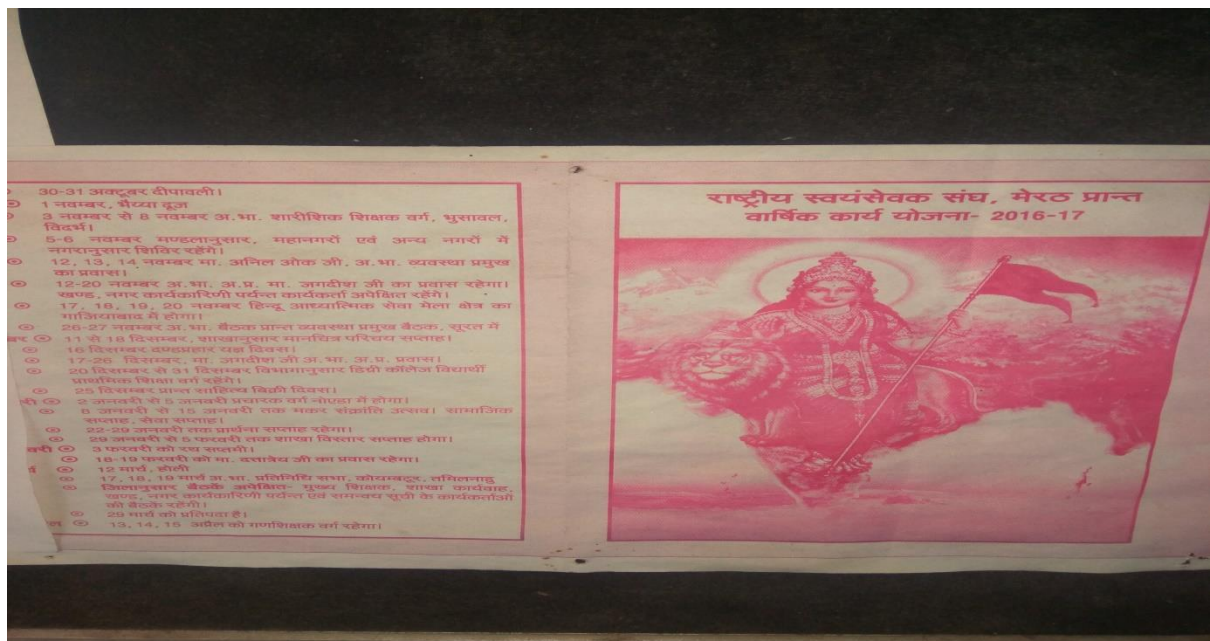
Responses on "Can dalit join BJP, congress and other party"?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	48	73.8
No	16	24.6
Dont Know	1	1.5
Total	65	100.0

Appendix 4



1. Photo from the samajik samrasta manch Delhi, on 14th April.



2. Annual programme list of RSS office Meerut.



3. Picture from BJP dalit leader house at Meerut.



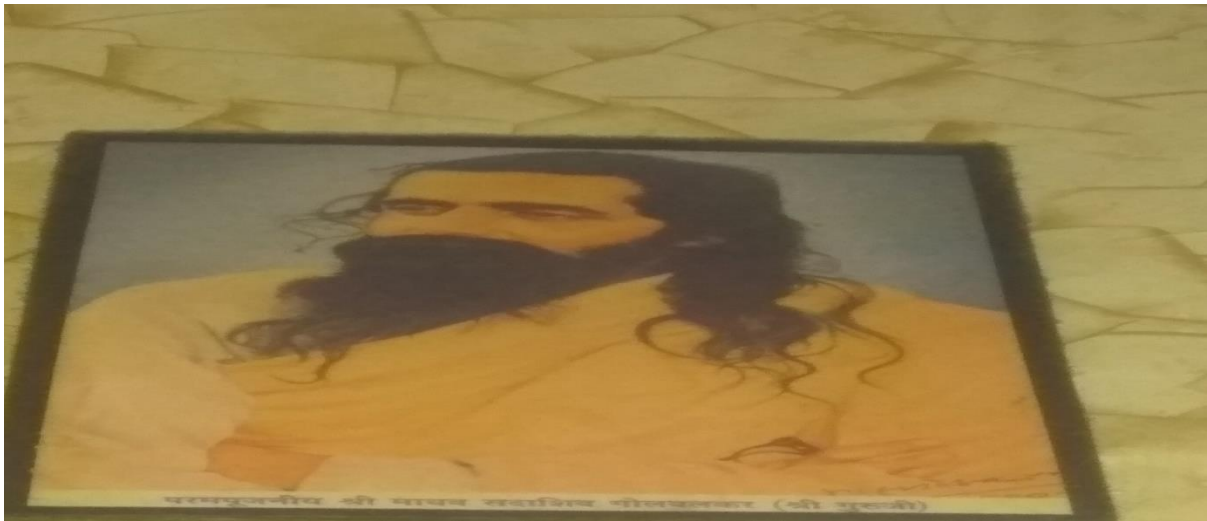
4. Picture of Dr. B.R. Ambekar Innard at village Kakkepur- Bhooni, Block Rajpura, Meerut.



5. Picture of calendar of Paramdham, Janae Kranti Abhiyan at Meerut.



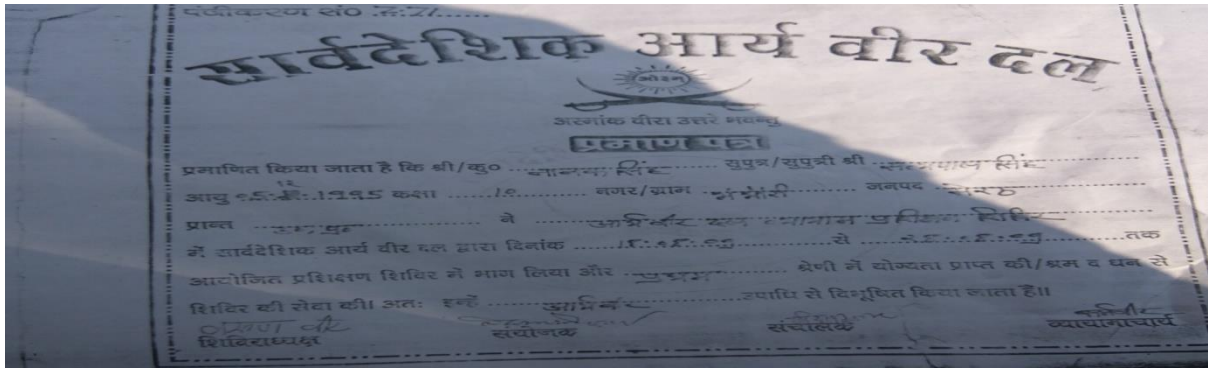
6. Political campaign by BSP candidate in Dalit Mohalla at Village Meghrajpur, Block Rajpura, in 2017 U.P. Constituent Assembly election.



7. Picture from Prant Karyavah house of RSS who belong to dalit community.



8. Certificate of personality development camp organised by Surya Foundation. It's affiliated from RSS and a boy confirmed that most of the dalit boys are involved in it. (Vill. Bhamouri, Sardhana Block)



9. A certificate got from a dalit young boy.



10. Paramdham (Janae Kranti Abhiyaa) volunteer deliver a cadre camp in dalit Mohallah, village saini, Meerut.



11. (<http://indianexpress.com/elections/uttar-pradesh-assembly-elections-2017/up-elections-results-bjp-shinning-in-muslim-stronghold-a-big-jolt-to-maya-akhillesh-samajwadi-party-bsp-bhartiya-janata-party-uttar-pradesh/>)

