

**CONSTRUCTING THE MILITANT HINDU AND THE
RAMJANMABHOOMI MOVEMENT (1986-90)**

Dissertation submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University
in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the award of the Degree of
MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

ASHISH JOSHI

CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF SOCIAL SYSTEMS
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI,- 110 067
INDIA
1992



जवाहरलाल नेहरू विश्वविद्यालय
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI - 110067

Centre for the Study of Social Systems

School of Social Sciences

July 20, 1992

C E R T I F I C A T E

This dissertation entitled, "CONSTRUCTING THE MILITANT HINDU AND THE RAMJANMABHOOMI MOVEMENT (1986-90)" submitted by Ashish Joshi in the partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy is an original work and has not been previously submitted for any other degree of this or any other University.

We recommend the dissertation to be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

PROF. M.N.PANINI

(Chairperson)

DR. ANAND KUMAR

(Supervisor)

TO

MY MAA AND PAPA

WHO MADE ME WHAT I AM TODAY

CONTENTS

	PAGE NO.
ACKNOWLEDGEMNTS	
PREFACE	
CHAPTER I	
INTRODUCTION	1-20
CHAPTER II	
WHAT IS HINDUISM ?	21-42
CHAPTER III	
HINDU REFORMISM VERSUS HINDU REVIVALISM	43-89
CHAPTER IV	
CONSTRUCTING THE MILITANT HINDU, THE RAMJANMABHOOMI MOVEMENT AND THE POLITICS OF RATH YATRA	90-124
CHAPTER V	
CONCLUSION	125-141
APPENDIX I	142-147
BIBLIOGRAPHY	148-163

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Words fail me to express my sincere gratitude to my Supervisor Dr. Anand Kumar without whose co-operation and scholarly guidance, this work would have never seen the light of this day. I have benefitted a great deal from his incisive analyses, erudite suggestions, constructive criticisms, unflagging interests and continuous support. Despite his busy schedule, he always had time to spare for me not only in regard to my academic work but also for my personal problems. My association with him has made me wiser in many respects.

I also owe a debt to my teachers Prof. Yogendra Singh, Prof. R.K. Jain, Prof. Nirmal Singh, Prof. K.L. Sharma, Prof. T.K. Oommen, Dr. Patricia Uberoi, Dr. Nandu Ram, Dr. Dipankar Gupta, Dr. C.N. Venugopal, and Dr. Tiplut Nongbri who have on innumerable occasions gone out of their way to help and guide me since my M.A. days.

My special appreciation and acknowledgement are due to my parents (Shri. D.N. Joshi and Smt. B. Joshi) whose unfailing love, affection, guidance and encouragement has made me sail through the ups and downs of my life. Had it not been for them, I would have never reached this stage of my academic life. My love and regards for them can only be felt and not expressed.

I am equally indebted to my Chacha and Chachi (Shri. P.C. Joshi and Dr. Rita Joshi) who have been a constant source of admiration and inspiration for me. Their love for me has in no way been less than their love for their own son. I extend my love and thanks to my little cousin Mayank for his brotherly affection toward me since his early childhood.

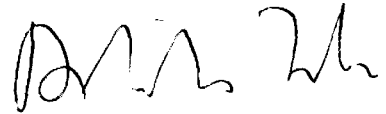
I also take this opportunity to express my sincerest thanks to all my friends and well wishers including my childhood friend Deepak who spared his valuable time to help me complete this work, Dinesh whose light-hearted jokes, on each occasion, acted as a welcome break whenever the chips were down, Niraj who lent me moral and vehicular support, Ajay Singh for his suggestion, as also P.C., Manish, Raghav, Hansvir, Bhagwanji, Partha, Rohan, Murti, Jahangir, Ajay ji, Jaffar, Nilay and many more. Naushad bhai and my cousin Bampa deserve special thanks.

I would also like to thank the staff of our Centre including Sunita Madam, Rawat ji, Bharat, Gupta ji and Sen Dada for being constantly helpful to me.

The staff of JNU library and Nehru Memorial Museum and Library extended their full co-operation to me whenever I needed their help. My sincere thanks to them.

Finally a note of appreciation and thanks to Mr. Sunny Mathews and Mr. Yogesh Kapoor for neatly and diligently typing out the draft of this work. Mrs. and Mr. Sharma of M/s. Sharma Photostat and all their staff also deserve thanks from my side.

Date : July 21, 1992



ASHISH JOSHI

PREFACE

Chapter I : Introduces the problem and attempts to trace briefly the historical background of the Ramjanabhoomi Babri Masjid Controversy. It also contains an outline of the subject matter contained in the subsequent chapters of this work.

Chapter II : Gives an account of the views expressed by the various students of Hinduism drawn from diverse backgrounds in an attempt to present their perception and understanding of Hinduism. This chapter tends to overlap with the next chapter at certain points on this issue.

Chapter III : Presents a detailed description of the two dominant trends within Hinduism in the last hundred and fifty years or so. These trends are that of Hindu Reformism and Hindu Revivalism. This exercise is undertaken to exhibit how these two trends sometimes tended to mutually converge and diverge as also to examine the fact that the present phase of Hinduism is a continuity of the earlier revivalist phase of modern Indian history and not an entirely new phenomenon.

Chapter IV : Traces in elaborate details the entire Ramjanabhoomi movement and contains vivid descriptions of the ways and methods used by the BJP-VHP-RSS combine to

convert the normally submissive Hindu into an aggressive and "militant" one. The events and description are covered till the commencement of the Kar Seva at Ayodhya for the building of the Ram Temple and the consequent firing on the Kar Sevaks by the security forces on October 30 and November 2, 1990.

Chapter V : Is the final and concluding section of this work which analysis the motives that prompted the BJP-VHP-RSS to take up the Ramjanmabhoomi issue and convert it into a movement. The role of the Indian state as a secular institution also comes under scrutiny in this section.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

"Pitched battle in Ayodhya"¹. "Kar Sevaks storm temple complex"² "Kar Sevaks storm Ayodhya Complex"³. "Many dead in Ayodhya firing"⁴. "Hundreds storm disputed shrine".⁵ "Communal violence breaks out as Kar sevaks killed in Ayodhya"⁶. So screamed the headlines in all the leading newspapers a day after hundreds of Kar sevaks, determined to pull down the Babri Masjid at Ayodhya, stormed the disputed structure of Ramjanmabhoomi - Babri Masjid on 30th October, 1990. Similar incidents took place on November 2, 1990. These events were a sequel to the aggressive campaign launched by the VHP⁷-BJP⁸-RSS⁹ combine to "liberate the Ram janmasthan" and consequently undo the "historical injustice perpetuated by the invading marauders", in this case Babur.

The genesis of the Ramjanmabhoomi - Babri Masjid dispute can be traced back to 1857 when the Mahant of Hanumangarhi temple takes over a part of the Babri Masjid

-
1. Newstime (Hyderabad) 31/10/90
 2. Financial Express (New Delhi) 31/10/90
 3. Hindustan Times (New Delhi) 31/10/90
 4. Statesman (New Delhi) 31/10/90
 5. The Times of India (New Delhi) 31/10/90
 6. National Herald (New Delhi) 31/10/90
 7. Vishwa Hindu Parishad
 8. Bhartiya Janata Party
 9. Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh

compound and constructs a Chabutra, through 1949 when suddenly an idol of Lord Ram was surreptitiously installed on the night of 22nd - 23rd December, resulting in the locking of the gates of the shrine, to 1st February, 1986 when Mr. K.M. Pandey, District Judge, Faizabad, ordered the opening of the locks to the Hindus for worship and the Muslim community was disallowed to offer any prayers.¹⁰ The final event triggered off a widespread debate¹¹ in the academic and political circles about the historicity of Lord Ram and the building of Babri Masjid by Mir Baqi, a nobleman in Babur's court, resulting in claims and counter claims.¹²

Meanwhile, the VHP had already launched its programme of demolition of Babri Masjid (relocation of Babri Masjid as we are often told) and build in its place the Ramjanmabhoomi Temple at the very site where Lord Ram was supposedly born and where a magnificent temple existed till it was destroyed on the orders of Babur. The programme included carrying of sacred water from all the rivers of

10. See Appendix I for the chronology of events

11. It is not my endeavour in this exercise to investigate questions of history regarding the existence of Lord Ram or whether Ramjanmasthan temple was destroyed by Babur to build the Babri Masjid. I shall confine myself to the socio-political aspects of the Ramjanmabhoomi-Babri Masjid dispute.

12. See in this context "The Political Abuse of History". CHS/JNU, New Delhi 1989 and Prof. K.S. Lal, "Ramjanmabhoomi-some issues" Organiser. Deepavali Special No. 1989 etc.

India, carrying of consecrated bricks from every village in India to Ayodhya for constructing Ramjanmasthan temple and the shilanyas (foundation laying ceremony) of the temple was held on 9th November, 1989 at a site very close to the Babri Masjid. The final act (and the most effective as well as genocidal one) was the launching of the Rath Yatra from the Somnath Temple in Gujarat to Ayodhya in September-October, 1990 under the aegis of BJP and led by its President Lal Krishna Advani as a part of the exercise to carry out Kar Seva on October 30th, 1990 to build the Ramjanmabhoomi temple with the help of Kar Sevaks assembled at Ayodhya from all over India. These events left a trail of blaze and blood behind them. The very fabric of Indian secularism seemed to be tearing apart. India stood at cross-roads - threatened and directionless. The Hindu religion which prided itself on tolerance and mutual brotherhood (sarva dharma sambhav) found itself facing darkness - darkness generated, perpetuated and perpetrated by Hindus themselves who claimed to be votaries of Hindutva¹³ and defenders of Hinduism - a religion which they

13. V.D. Savarkar defined Hindutva as: "The ideas and ideals, the systems and societies, the thoughts and sentiments which have centered round this name are so varied and rich, so powerful and so subtle, so elusive and yet so vivid, that the term Hindutva defies all attempts at analysis. Forty centuries, if not more, has been at work to mould it as it is. Prophets and poets, lawyers and lawgivers, heroes and historians, have thought, lived, fought and died just to have it spelled thus! Hindutva is not a word but a history. Not only the spiritual or religious history
contd..

claimed is threatened by "pseudo-secularists".¹⁴ In essence they wished to create the "militant Hindu" who could arrest himself and thus prevent himself from being "discriminated against in his own homeland."¹⁵

Vinayak Damodar Savarkar attached a great importance to the question : Who is a Hindu? and made it the sub-title of his book 'Hindutva' published in 1923. He offered his own definition which consisted of three attributes. First, "a Hindu means a person who regards this land of Bharatvarsha, from the Indus to the seas, as his Fatherland as well as his Holyland, that is the cradle of

of our people as at times it is mistaken to be by being confounded with the other cognate term Hinduism, but a history in full. Hinduism is only a derivative, a fraction, a part of Hindutva Hindutva is not identical with what is vaguely indicated by the term Hinduism. By an "ism" is generally meant a theory or a code more or less based on spiritual or religious dogma or system. But when an attempt to investigate into the essential significance of Hindutva is made, we do not primarily - and certainly not mainly - concern ourselves with any particular theocratic or religious dogma or creed. Had not linguistic usage stood in our way then "Hinduness" would have certainly been a better word than Hinduism as a near parallel to Hindutva. Hindutva embraces all the departments of thought and activity of the whole being of our Hindu race." For details see Savarkar, V.D., Hindutva. Loksangraha Printing Press, Poona city 1942.

14. A term very often used by BJP-VHP-RSS for those who do not conform to their brand of "secularism".
15. See various interviews and articles in Panchjanya and Organiser between 1986-90. Also see various pamphlets and advertisements by BJP during 1989 General and 1991 mid-term elections.

his religion.¹⁶ Second, an inalienable attribute for a Hindu is "the racial or blood bond or Jati."¹⁷ The racial attribute for a Hindu, according to Savarkar, is as important as it is for the Jews. "A Hindu may lose his caste but cannot lose Hindutva"¹⁸. Third, to be a Hindu one should be proud of the Hindu Sanskriti—the Hindu culture and civilization represented in common historical memories in common artistic, literary and judicial works, in common rituals and festivals and other media of collective expression.¹⁹

From the logical point of view, the explanation of the third attribute comes into contradiction with the second one. On the one hand, it is asserted that losing the sect or a caste the Hindu does not lose Hindutva, "since its most important substance is the inheritance of the Hindu blood". But on the other hand, "Muslims and Christians who have been converted from Hinduism cannot claim to be Hindus because they do not subscribe to Hindu culture". The contradiction lies in the fact that the converted preserve "the Hindu blood", if we are to believe in the second attribute.

16. See publisher's preface in Savarkar op. cit. However Savarkar cautioned that it would be dangerous to call all those (e.g. Muslims) as Hindus only because they reside in India. Savarkar op. cit. p. 67.

17. *ibid* p. 68.

18. *ibid* p. 73.

19. *ibid* pp. 73-83.

The reasoning of the present communal leaders considerably changes the evaluation of the "blood" attribute. Nagina Lal Jain writes in the weekly 'Organiser,' "A Muslim with Hindu blood coursing through his veins, should have no reason to feel ashamed of his old common bonds with Hindus. His ancestors have made an indelible mark on human civilization."²⁰

It is clear that this definition assigns a very modest place to religion. All the main attributes - territory, race and culture - are purely secular and worldly. Even V.D. Savarkar himself did not belong to the flock of religious fanatics. Having initially joined the extremists, who advocated terror against the British, in time he became an experienced and wise politician. Desh Raj Goyal writes that "V.D. Savarkar, the Chief theoretician of Hindu Rashtravad, was an iconoclast if not an agnostic, and certainly not a man of religious faith."²¹

Actually he makes a distinction between Hindutva and Hinduism, stressing that Hindutva is socio-political unity which is so necessary in this sharply competitive world, where the fight for power is going on. Unity and

20. Organiser. Jan 14' 1979.

21. Goyal, D.R., "Observations on the Origin of Communalism" in Asghar Ali Engineer (ed.) Communal Riots in Post-Independence India. Sangam Books, Hyderabad. 1984 p. 44.

solidarity are the necessary qualities for success. Consequently, according to Savarkar, the Hindus must overcome all internal differences, develop in their midst a sense of unity, and in this way become a "nation". He contrasts Hindutva with Hinduism : "Let Hinduism concern itself with the salvation of life after death, the concept of God, and the universe But so far as the materialistic secular aspect is concerned, the Hindus are a nation bound by a common culture, a common history, a common religion."²² Here we notice that the term "religion" takes the last position in Savarkar's understanding.

This fact should be noted for it is very important in understanding the problems considered here in the right perspective. The time of V.D. Savarkar, K.B. Hedgevar (1890-1940), Shyama Prasad Mookherjee (1901-1953), and later M.S. Golwalkar, was not a mere continuation of the reformist efforts by Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1833), the Brhmo Samaj and to some extent, the Arya Samaj. These persons and organisations did not set the goal for the continuation and completion of the reformation of Hinduism. Their interests lay not in Hinduism, but in the Hindu community. Hence the question : "Who is a Hindu?"

One might ask : Why did the concept of Hindutva and concern for the unity of the Hindu community arise and

22. For details see Savarkar op. cit.

acquire political connotations in the twenties of this century ? At the same time the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh was set up (in 1925), which took the leading position among the Hindu communal organisations, and the Hindu Mahasabha became more active. The answer to this is relevant to the present communal situation in the land. This was a period of growing national liberation struggle, when the Indian National Congress was at the forefront with its secular orientations and the policies of Mahatma Gandhi aimed at cooperation among all religious communities.

The growing liberation struggle prompted the colonial authorities to search for a means of dampening its ardour. The prospect arose for creating partially elected representative institutions, although with limited powers. There was an even more remote possibility of implementing the demands of India's Swaraj. In other words, the political struggle was acquiring quite a concrete aspect : at first for a share of involvement in power within the colonial structure, and later, in independent India, simply for power. Hence the pronouncements about a "sharply competitive world", where the rivals were the Muslims of the Muslim League and the Christians backed up by the colonial administration.

The British colonial authorities added fuel to the fire by creating electorates on the basis of religious affinity. "The numbers game" - the pursuit of votes and

mobilization of voters on the basis of communal slogans - was initiated consequently under the conditions of "colonial democracy". The British liked to emphasise their merits in preparing the Indians for self-government. One such "merit" was to put into operation the mechanism of communal strife and the involvement of religion in politics.

The idea of uniting the Hindu community formulated by V.D. Savarkar, was taken up and developed by K.B. Hedgevar. It was laid at the foundation of the programme of the RSS he set up in 1925. Having previously been an active leader of Hindu Mahasabha, Hedgevar came to the conclusion that the organization was too amorphous, too involved in political combinations. He viewed the RSS as an instrument for developing a sense of discipline and unity among the Hindus, which should be symbolised by the Sangh. Another favourite topic of his statements was strength - the individual physical strength of every Hindu and the collective political and social strength of a united and disciplined community.

Such directives predetermined the form of organisation and methods of the RSS' activities. It was based on shakhas where, under the supervision of instructors young men mostly from the urban middle class do physical exercises, learn hand-to-hand combat and the use of cold steel weapons, and undergo ideological training. Instructors

tell them about the glorious past of the Hindus, about their sages and heroes, especially those who fought the Moghuls and Muslims in general. Members of the shakhas are taught to think that their primary duty is to restore that glorious past, often associated with the so called Golden Age of India.

Because of a negative attitude of the founder of the RSS towards democratic ways and methods, the organisation has been built on the unconditional subordination of the junior to the senior, and the blind and unhesitating obedience of their orders. The RSS is headed by the Sarsanghachalak, or leader, an ideologist and his successor. The organisational and ideological directives of Hedgevar are preserved in the RSS to this day.

The development of the sense of oneness, the "Hindu Solidarity" was a direct goal and a preparatory stage. The main intention was to implement the doctrine of "Hinducha Hindustan" - Hindu India. But it was necessary to wait, to gather strength. "Whatever the attitude of the leadership, the youth who came into the RSS did occasionally feel restive, may be because of the general atmosphere of struggle prevailing in the country. They were told : 'we have to bide our time. The opportunity will come. We should conserrve our strength for that time'. Catharsis of youthful militancy was brought about by the fiery tone of speeches and occasional clashes with the Muslims. Thus the

anti-British sentiment was being channelled into anti-Muslim action", writes Desh Raj Goyal.²³ This view is confirmed by the fact that hundreds of youths are turned into the RSS fold every year due to the effective propaganda machinery of the RSS and its allies.

Years have passed. India has set out on the path of independent development, and has achieved impressive results. In some important fields it has acquired the status of an averagely developed agrarian and industrial state. A federal system has been established and is generally functioning successfully, as is the democratic system of the State. Before the mid-sixties secular tendencies were predominant (at least it appeared so on the face of it) in the political life of the country. On the surface, manifestations of communal strife were comparatively rare. But, as it turned out, this was a lull before the storm.

Communal circles continued their active propaganda of the thesis that the Hindus were still "not free" in independent India and that their interests were being "infringed upon" by the State and thus reducing the Hindus to "second class citizens in their own motherland". The

23. Goyal, D.R. "Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh" New Delhi 1979 p. 87.

idea of Hedgevar - "Hinducha Hindustan" - was transformed into the slogan "Bharat is a Hindu Rashtra", that is a "Hindu nation", or in the parlance of the Hindu Mahasabha "Akhand Bharat" or "indivisible India". Such definitions of militancy, of Hindu nationalism have been carefully picked up by the BJP and its allies to launch their militant campaigns off and on. The Central directive in communal politics is becoming a thesis of "Hindu revivalism"²⁴. The theme of revivalism was typical for leaders of Hindu communal politics in the colonial period. But now-a-days it has notably changed. As stated earlier, Savarkar gave a detailed answer to the question "who is a Hindu?" Nevertheless, Golwalkar, the RSS ideologue, again raises it : "When we say that the Sangh is dedicated to the rejuvenation of the great and unique Hindu way of life, there are many who confront us with the question, 'First of all, how do you define a "Hindu" ?' He answered this question as "We, the Hindus, have based our whole existence on God and therefore, it is probable that the Hindu Society developed in an all-comprehensive manner, with a bewildering variety of phases and forms, but with one thread of unification running inherently through the multitude of expressions and manifestations. All the sects, the various

24. Nandy, Ashis in "The Culture of Indian Politics," in The Journal of Asian Studies 30 (Nov. 1970) pp. 57-79 uses the term "restorationists" to those who are commonly called revivalists.

castes in the Hindu fold, can be defined, but the term 'Hindu' cannot be defined because it comprises all."²⁵

The heavy style of this statement attracts attention, and the words are lent with the significance of independent and exhaustive proof. But in fact it is a mystical or mystified definition, in no way explaining the acute intercaste and interdoctrinal disputes and conflicts which do not reveal the content or sense of the "thread of unification".

Right after his reply Golwalkar writes that it would be an "unhealthy and negative approach" to define the concept "Hindu" in opposition to the Muslims and Christians, that is on principle "a Hindu is not a Muslim and not a Christian". But the whole Chapter XII, "Inner Threats", in the quoted book, is devoted to this confrontation. Golwalkar names the Muslims, Christians and Communists as the Chief "enemies" of the Hindu community, accusing all of them, as the principle charge, of "extra-territorial loyalty". This motif, in various forms, is increasingly heard in the pronouncements of Hindu communal leaders and is sometimes brought into the foreground.

For example, K.R. Malkani, who for a long time had been the chief editor of the "Organiser", the RSS Weekly,

25. Golwalkar, M.S., Bunch of Thoughts. Vikram Prakashan, Bangalore 1966 pp. 46-7.

wrote : "India is one because the various sections of Indian population know that they are closer to one another than to any society outside India"²⁶. The cause of the unity is seen by the author in the "Hindu character". The mystical "knowledge of closeness" and "character" inherent in "us" is habitually opposed to "them", there, outside India, and those, in the country, who are loyal to "them".

Savarkar, Hedgevar and Shyama Prasad Mookerjee concentrated their attention on politics; although communal, it was politics. Modern communal leaders have shifted the emphasis, putting the accent on religion. They present Hinduism as virtually the only integrating factor. "One who feels he is a Hindu", R.P. Mishr maintains, "is a Hindu; he can have any name, any caste, any creed, he can be anywhere, he can be of any rank, he can be of any status, he can be of any colour. Hinduism provides you a perfect code of conduct through which you can know how to eat, how to drink, how to live in celibacy, how to live in married life, how to live when matured, how to live when aged, how to face death and even after that".²⁷ Mishr's book contains a good deal of mysticism but this definition stresses, with utmost realism, the regulating function of Hinduism which, in the author's

26. Malkani, K.R. in The Statesman. (New Delhi), July 30, 1980.

27. Mishr, R.P., Hinduism. The Faith of the Future, Delhi. 1981 p. 114.

view, serves as the most effective uniting force. The fact, however, is that every caste and every "creed" within Hinduism has its own code of behaviour, although they may have common features. At any rate, in this context, the main thing is the emphasis on religion and its postulates.

A newspaper observer, M.V. Kamath, noted a very important fact that engenders changes in the Hindus' attitude towards propoganda by communal politicians: "Now a new development is taking place : the RSS is getting a sympathetic response from the Hindu public. The RSS has not changed, but the Hindus are changing"²⁸. This conclusion was made in connection with the Ekmata Yagna sponsored by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad. This was a procession of chariots with the image of Bharat Mata and a copper cauldron containing holy water from the Ganges, moving from northern cities reversed by the Hindus, to Nagpur. This campaign conducted under the banner of Hindu revivalism, was condemned by the Central Government and many political figures of democratic orientation, but it was favourably met by the majority community in the areas through which the chariots were passing. According to eyewitness reports, some of the public was attracted by the festive atmosphere of the celebration. At the same time it was clear that the

28. Kamath, M.V., in The Illustrated Weekly of India (Bombay) February 12, 1984.

campaign slogans "Bharat is Hindustan, it is a glory of the Hindus" found ready response.

Increasing in number, petty-bourgeois in their mentality, the urban middle class and the new village elite, comprising the wealthy farmers who emerged after the agrarian reforms, live between two worlds. A great deal is written in India about these classes' pursuit of material benefits and "the foreign" - foreign goods, comfort and a prestigious way of life. On the other hand, the growing competition, threat of bankruptcy and unemployment are producing a negative attitude to Western values, Western culture and Western influence, which are regarded as the original cause of the troubles and uncertainty of the future. Under the influence of communal assertions about the so-called "extra-territorial loyalty" of minority communities, this negative reaction is picked up by heterodoxy, especially if violence and terrorism are associated with it. At the same time nostalgia for the "Golden Age of Hinduism" is cultivated and slogans of Hindu revivalism and appeals for the unity of the Hindu community are presented as a means for returning to that age.

Sometimes that nostalgia for the "Golden age" results in tragic events. The act of sati in the autumn of

1987 in Deorala village of Rajasthan²⁹ caused a shock in India. But a group of Rajputs advocated the legalisation of Sati and set up the Dharma Raksha Samiti, which was supported by many members of this caste.

These sentiments are not straightforward and they change as also their evaluations change. The authoritative observer, Giri Lal Jain had some revealing thoughts on this matter. He wrote in 1969 : "Secular-minded Indians must overcome the inhibitions of the pre-partition period and acknowledge the plain historical truth that every successful effort at nation-building has centred round a dominant community or tribe - the Prussians in Germany, the English in the United Kingdom, the Great Russians in the Soviet Union, the Anglo-Saxons in the United States and the Hans in China - and the Hindus alone can play this role in India".³⁰ Eighteen years later, in a series of articles under the heading "Conflicts within the Hindu Community", he comes to the opposite conclusion : Clearly such a community (i.e. the Hindus) cannot constitute the mainstream and expect the

29. In this case of young woman by the name of Roop Kanwar committed Sati (had to commit Sati according to some reports) when her husband died due to illness. This event caused a furore all over India and launched a fierce debate on this issue throughout the length and breadth of the country. It is ironical that at least one of the defenders of this act later went on to become a Central minister.

30. Jain, Girilal, in The Times of India. October 22, 1969.

others to join it. Clearly it cannot lay down norms to be enforced on others. Clearly it cannot serve as the nucleus round which a nation can successfully be built". Jain explains the reason for it in the following way : "A Hindu society at peace with itself is a myth which its 19th century apologists built up. The myth held for a pretty long time. It has now been shattered by events..... Seen in that perspective the intra-Hindu conflicts are at least as fundamental as the Hindu-Muslim one if they are not equally bloody".³¹ This observation can be confirmed if one were to look at the daily mushrooming of caste senas in Bihar as well as the frequent killings that are taking place on caste lines in various parts of Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra etc. Coupled with these events the clear polarisation of society on caste-lines at least in North India, as a post-Mandal³² legacy has confirmed the assertion that intra-Hindu conflicts are not only as fundamental as the Hindu-Muslim conflicts but often as bloody as well.

31. Jain Girilal, in The Times of India. June 17, 1987.

32. The announcement to implement the Mandal commission Report seeking 27% reservations in government jobs for the Other Backward Classes (OBCs) by the V.P. Singh led National Front government on August 7, 1990 created a turmoil all over India. It was acutely severe in Northern parts of India triggering off demonstrations against it and a series of self-immolations by young people against this announcement. On the other hand there was a tremendous support for it from the beneficiaries of the report. This created caste tension and even caste violence in certain regions
contd..

In this light, it becomes imperative to pose certain questions to ourselves to which serious consideration has to be given : In the absence of a "Hindu" and "Hinduism" in general and given the internal contradictions within Hinduism, how is it that the BJP-VHP-RSS combine in trying to forge a unity among this section of the Indian populace and being fairly successful in its endeavour ? Should the success in the elections for the BJP be taken as an indication of an impending unity among the Hindus which will subsume the caste and other contradictions in its fold ? Is such an unity or prospects of it only a myth ? How is it that the issue of Ramjanmabhoomi which is almost a century and a half old has come to acquire a sudden prominence ? How is it that the efforts of Hindu revivalism and attempts to make the Hindus adopt the path of militancy which have been going on since the last part of the nineteenth century and early years of this century, it is only recently that such efforts have borne fruits ? Is it only the Ramjanmabhoomi issue that has contributed to the Hindu resurgence or revivalism ? What has been the role of the State in the emergence and growth of communalism in

apart from generating a debate on this subject in the academic and political circles. The Supreme Court of India has put a stay on the implementation of this report and while the debate on it and hearing on the petitions against it in the Supreme Court go on the scars on the society and the body politic of this country which are a "contribution" of the MCR continue to persist.

general and the issue of Ramjanmabhoomi in particular over the years? And many more. Attempts to provide explanations and derive answers to these queries will be undertaken in the subsequent chapters of this work.

Methodology and Limitations of the Study

The source - material of this work has been derived from books; articles published in various journals, periodicals, magazines and newspapers; and pamphlets published and circulated by the BJP-VHP-RSS combine in propagation of their points of view as well as certain others published by other sources presenting a critique of these organizations and their ideology. Most of the references presented, are, therefore, taken from the written sources. An audio cassette circulated by the VHP has also been used to provide relevant references. This study suffers from a serious handicap of not being able to include much Sociological analysis as reference sources on the issue under study due to the remarkable absence of such material. This inadequacy has made the present study much poorer in many respects.

CHAPTER II

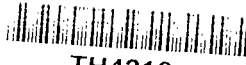
WHAT IS HINDUISM ?

As seen in the introductory Chapter, the Hindu communal discourse in India has presented its varying definitions of the Hindu and Hinduism. Still, it has not been able to arrive at a definitive definition or description of the two. One factor that comes out effectively from these attempts is the difficulty and hazard in venturing into such an exercise. It is often said that there are as many interpretations of Marxism as there are people reading Marx. This view holds good even in the case of Hinduism. Scholars only agree to disagree to come to a common definition, understanding and interpretation of Hindu religion. Jawaharlal Nehru could not have agreed more with this viewpoint when he said "At the very outset, one is confronted by the difficulty of defining what Hinduism is. To many it seems to be a name without any content. Is it a museum of beliefs, a medley of rites, or a mere map, a geographical expression? Its content, if it has any, has altered from age to age, from community to community."¹

Nevertheless, it will be a fruitful exercise to present a short description of the understanding of Hinduism by certain scholars and opinion-holders so that it

-
1. Nehru, Jawaharlal, The Discovery of India, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1982.



DISS
306.26
J78 Co

TH4216

can be depicted that save for certain common characteristics, each of these viewpoints have presented its comprehension of Hinduism, in some way or the other, in distinction to the other. These will be elaborated during the course of this chapter. This becomes essential because in the succeeding chapters we shall delve into the problems of Hindu Reformism and Hindu Revivalism - the latter manifesting itself in the Ramjanmabhoomi movement. Since, defining Hinduism is not our primary concern, this section of the present work will be rather brief.

Coming back to the question : What is Hinduism ? A straight answer is almost impossible because of its simplicity and its molecular character. To state simply, the term "Hinduism" defies any simple definition. It has an amazing capacity to include within its various contradictory and conflicting belief and practices. Polytheism,, theism and atheism have been accepted and tolerated in the household of Hinduism. Therefore, "In a sense Hinduism is nothing more than a generic term for a family of diverse religious tendencies from magical superstitious animism to lofty, abstract philosophical systems, almost all of which accept the authority of the Vedas and the religiously sanctioned system of social stratification"² Hinduism absorbs into itself the religious

2. Imran, Mohammad, "Idol worship vs God Worship", Islamic Book Centre, Lahore, 1980 p.1.

ideas, images and practices of the Dravidians, the Vedic Aryans, the Brahmanas, the upanishad, the Bhagvad religion of Krishna and also animistic and primitive notions and customs of the aborigines of India. It organizes the heterogeneous and apparently incongruous material into a loose system and leaves a Hindu free to believe in any conception of the ultimate reality.

It is due to the ambiguity in the nature of Hinduism that most of the definitions attempted so far are either too narrow or too broad. Thus one writer defined Hinduism as "that which a Hindu does, that is, it is a question of ritualistic and social observance".³ One census Report included among Hindus all those natives of India who did not belong to the Mussalman, Jain, Buddhist, Christian, Parsi, Jewish or any other religion and whose form of worship extended from monotheism to fetishism and whose theology was written in Sanskrit language.⁴ Another official publication suggested that, "the modern Hindu should be born of parents not belonging to some recognised religion other than Hinduism, marry within the same limits, believe in God, respect the cow and cremate the dead".⁵ The

3. Sen, Guru Prasad, "Introduction to the study of Hinduism", 1893, p.9.

4. Census Report , Baroda, 1901.

5. Census Report , Punjab, 1912.

aforesaid definitions not only circumscribe the sphere of Hinduism but some of them are no better than just begging the question.

On the other hand, a few other definitions are so wide of the mark as to signify little. Thus Robert E. Hume called Hinduism, "a religion of divine immanence". The Penguin Encyclopedia defined it as "a complex of religions and philosophical beliefs, developed in India on the basis of the teachings of Vedas.?" Broadly on these lines a definition is put forward as : "Hinduism's two most general features, subscribed to by all Hindus, are the caste system and agreement on the sacredness of the faith's most ancient scriptures, the Vedas".⁶ However M.N. Srinivas⁷ points out that "while the institution of caste is, in a sense, fundamental to Hinduism, it is not confined to the Hindus as the Indian Muslims, Christians and Sikhs are all divided into castes". He further adds, "Every belief considered as basic to Hindus have been rejected by one group or another. Thus the South Indian Shaivite sect of the Lingayats reject in theory many of the allegedly basic beliefs of the Hindus, including the revelatory of the Vedas" This is illustrated further by him when he says, "while there are no ideas,

6. The Columbia Encyclopaedia. Columbia University Press, New York. 1950 p. 950.

7. In The Encyclopaedia Britannica Vol. 11. William Benton, Chicago. 1961. pp. 574 - 77.

institutions and details common to the Hindus, certain ideas like Karma and Dharma, an institution like caste, and deities like Shiva and Vishnu are widespread among Hindus. It is only in the case of a few groups and individuals that it is difficult to say whether they are Hindus or not. In short while it is not possible to define a Hindu, it is not very difficult to identify a person as a Hindu".

"We, perhaps, best briefly describe a Hindu", wrote A.L. Basham, "as a man who chiefly bases his belief and way of life on the complex systems of faith and practice which have grown up organically in the Indian subcontinent over a period of at least three millennia" .⁸ According to Monier-Williams "starting from Vedas, Hinduism ends by appearing to embrace something from all religions and to present phases suited to all minds". One author went so far as to point out that "the distinction between a Hindu and a non - Hindu is a provisional one. Hinduism may in future include Christians, Mahomedans and Buddhists. What races it will absorb depends entirely on the circumstances."⁹ On the basis of its familiar characteristics one scholar¹⁰ defined Hinduism significantly as follows : It connotes :

-
8. "Hinduism" in R.C. Zaehner (ed) ; The Concise Encyclopaedia of Living Faiths' Hutchinson, London. 1971.
 9. Ketkar, Shridhar. V., "An Essay on Hinduism and its Future 1911. p. 33.
 10. Sarma, D.S. : "Hinduism Through The Ages" Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay 1989. p. 27.

- a) the conception of the impersonal Brahman and the personal Ishvara (God) ;
- b) the supreme authority of the Vedas ;
- c) the law of Karma (Action) and Re-birth ;
- d) the formulas of Varna Ashram Dharma ;
- e) the three fold paths of Karma (Action) ;
- f) the doctrines of Trimurti (triple God) and Avatara (Divine incarnation) of Isha - Devata (personal deity) and Adhikara (individual freedom) ;
- g) the rituals of image and temple worship ;
- h) the sectarian belief and practices of the Vaishnavas, Saivas and Saktas;
- i) faith in pilgrimages ;
- j) the sanctity of the cow etc.

Mahatma Gandhi also presented his perception of Hinduism. But before we go into that, let us first comprehend what he means by religion. He says, "by religion, I do not mean formal religion or customary religion, but that religion which underlies all religions, which brings us face to face with our Maker".¹¹ Further, he states, "Religions should pervade every one of our actions. Here religion does not mean sectarianism. It means a belief in ordered moral government of the Universe.

11. In "My Religion". Compiled and edited by Bharatan Kumarappa. Navjivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad. 1985. p 3.

It is not less real because it is unseen. This religion transcends Hinduism, Islam, Christianity etc. It does not supercede them. It harmonize them and gives them reality."¹² "Let me explain what I mean by religion. It is not the Hindu religion, which I certainly prize above all the other religions, but the religion which transcends Hinduism, which changes one's very nature, which binds one indissolubly to the truth within and which purifies. It is the permanent element in human nature which counts no cost too great in order to find full expression and which leaveas the soul utterly restless until it has found itself, known its Maker and appreciated the true correspondence between the Maker and itself,"¹³ he explains elsewhere. On Hinduism, Gandhi says, "Hinduism is a living organism liable to growth and decay, and subject to the laws of nature. One and indivisible at the root, it has grown into a vast tree with innumerable branches. The changes in the seasons affect it. It has its autumn and summer, its winter and spring. The rains nourish and fructify it too. Hinduism is like the Ganges, pure and unsullied at its source, but taking in its course the impurities in the way. Even like the Ganges it is beneficent in its total effect."¹⁴

12. Harijan. February 10, 1940 p 445

13. Young India. May 12, 1920 p 2

14. Young India. October. 6, 1926 p 131

From Gandhi's various writings a definition can be extracted thus:

Hinduism means belief -

- a) in the Vedas, the upanishads, the Puranas, and all that goes by the name of Hindu scriptures and therefore in Avataras and Rebirth;
- b) in the Varnashramdharma in a sense strictly Vedic but not its present popular and crude sense;
- c) in the protection of the cow in its much larger sense than popular.¹⁵

The credal belief of Hinduism was summed up by him at a public meeting at Quilon as under :

"I have fixed upon one mantra that I am going to recite to you, as containing the whole essence of Hinduism. I have now come to the final conclusion that if all the Upanishads and all the other scriptures happened all of a sudden to be reduced to ashes and the first verse in the Ishopanishad were left intact in the memory of Hindus, Hinduism would live for ever. This mantra divides itself into four parts :

- a) All this that we see in this great universe is pervaded by God;
 - b) and c) Renounce it and enjoy it or enjoy what He gives you;
 - d) Do not covet anybody's wealth or possession.
- Joined together, the mantra is 'God the ruler pervades all there is in the Universe . Therefore, renounce and dedicate

15. Young India. October 6, 1921.

to Him and then enjoy or use the portion that may fall to thy lot"¹⁶

Jawaharlal Nehru also had his views about Hindu and Hinduism. According to him the word 'Hindu' does not occur at all in the Indian ancient literature. He was told that the first reference to it in an Indian book was in a Tantrik work of eighteenth century B.C. where 'Hindu' means a people and not the followers of a particular religion. "But it is clear that the word is a very old one, as it occurs in the Avesta and in old Persian. It was used then and for a thousand years or more later by the peoples of the Western and Central Asia for India, or rather for the people living on the other side of the Indus river. The word is clearly derived from, Sindhu, the old, as well as the present, Indian name for the Indus. From this Sindhu came the words Hindu and Hindustan as well Indus and India."¹⁷

Nehru states further that, "the old inclusive term for religion in India was Arya dharma. Dharma really means something more than religion. It is from a root word which means to hold together; it is the inmost constitution of a thing the law of its inner being. It is an ethical concept which includes the moral code, righteousness and the whole

16. Harijan. January 30, 1937

17. Nehru, Jawaharlal, The Discovery of India. Oxford University Press, New Delhi. 1982. p. 74.

range of man's duties and responsibilities. Arya dharma would include all the faiths (Vedic and non-Vedic) that originated in India; it was used by Buddhists and Jains as well as by those who accepted the Vedas.¹⁸

Analyzing the difference between Hinduism and the other Indian religions, Nehru says, " Buddhism and Jainism were certainly not Hinduism or even the Vedic dharma. Yet they arose in India and were integral parts of Indian life, culture and philosophy. A Buddhist or a Jain in India is a hundred percent product of Indian thought and culture, yet neither is a Hindu by faith. It is, therefore, entirely misleading to refer to the Indian culture as Hindu culture. In later ages this culture was greatly influenced by the impact of Islam and yet it remained basically and distinctively Indian."¹⁹

Elaborating his understanding of Hinduism he writes, "Hinduism as a faith, is vague, amorphous, many-sided, all things to all men. It is hardly possible to define it, or, indeed to say definitely whether it is a religion or not, in the usual sense of the word. In its present form and even in the past, it embraces many beliefs and practices, from the highest to the lowest, often opposed to or contradictory to each other . Its essential spirit seems to be to live and let live."²⁰

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid. p. 75.

20. Ibid.

He feels very uncomfortable when he finds certain people using the word 'Hindu' or "Hinduism" for Indian culture and calls it "incorrect, even with reference to the distant past, although the various aspects of thought, as embodied in ancient writings, were the dominant expression of that culture. Much more is it incorrect to use those terms in that sense, today. So long as the old faith and philosophy were chiefly a way of life and an outlook on the world, they were largely synonymous with Indian culture; but when a more rigid religion developed, with all manner of ritual and ceremonial, it became something more and at the same time something much less than that composite culture. A Christian or a Muslim could and often did, adapt himself to the Indian way of life and culture, and yet remained in faith an orthodox Christian or Muslim. He had Indianized himself and became an Indian without changing his religion."²¹

Defining Indian, he says, "The correct word for Indian as applied to country or culture or the historical continuity of our varying traditions is "Hindu", from "Hind" a shortened form of Hindustan. Hind is still commonly used for India. In the countries of Western Asia, in Iran and Turkey, in Iraq. Afghanistan, Egypt and elsewhere, India has always been referred to and is still called Hind and

21. Ibid. p. 76.

everything Indian is called "Hindu". "Hindu" has nothing to do with religion, and a Muslim or Christian Indian is as much as Hindi as a person who follows Hinduism as a religion."²²

In a different tone, Nirad C. Chaudhuri, contends that the "Western orientalists facing the Indian religion found that the Hindus had no other name for the whole complex of their religious beliefs and practices except the phrase Sanatan Dharma or the Eternal way; they did not even had a word of their own for religion in the European sense; and so the orientalists coined the word 'Hinduism' to describe that complex of religion... Our religion has been given the imprecise label of 'Hinduism' because it is the jumble of the creeds and rituals of a people known as Hindus after their country."²³

Similar views have been expressed by an expert on religion J.P. Suda, who also considers that the name 'Hinduism' was invented by European scholars. The real name of Indian religion, according to him, is Sanatana Dharma. He says, "The first word (Sanatana) 'means eternal or everlasting. Eternal is that which has no beginning in time and therefore can have no end also; it is also independent

22. Ibid.

23. Chaudhuri, Nirad C., The Continent of Circe : An Essay on the Peoples of India, Bombay 1966, p.29. However the word 'Hindu' has been in use for people residing beyond Sindhu (Indus) since ages. Also see Savarkar op.cit. for details.

of individuals. There is no English equivalent of the Sanskrit word Dharma; in the absence of a more suitable word it is translated as 'religion'.²⁴

Philosopher, former President of India and a great scholar of Hindu religion, Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, feels that the term Hinduism "stands as much for a tradition as for religion. It is not possible to characterize Hinduism in terms of a clearly defined set of concepts... Compared to such neatly formulated religious creeds as Christianity and Islam, Hinduism appears to be a welter of beliefs, doctrines and practices that defy the understanding and interpretative ingenuity of even sympathetic students and scholars."²⁵

The Hindu Spirit has been described by Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan²⁶ as follows:

- a) Religion is a matter of experience. It is Brahmadarsana or an insight into the Reality, a direct awareness of the world of values, an exaltation of one's personality onto the plane of the Universal Spirit.

24. Suda, J.P., Religions of India. A Study of their Essential Unity, New Delhi, 1978, pp.44-45.

25. Radhakrishnan, S., The Hindu View of Life, George Allen and Unwin, London, 1974, p.11.

26. See Introduction to the First edition of "The Cultural Heritage of India" Ramkrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta. 1937.

- b) Each order of reality is only truly apprehended from a stand point higher than oneself. The significance of the physical world (anna) is disclosed in the biological (prana); that of the biological in the psychological (manas); that of the psychological in the logical and ethical (vijñana). The logical world finds its meaning in the spiritual (ananda).
- c) The reality of the self is the divine Universal Consciousness. God is the spaceless spirit of all individual spirits (Atman). Parmatman or the transcendental self functions in all individual selves.
- d) The mystery of God's being is outside the scope of all logical concepts. An austere silence is more adequate to all experience of God than elaborate descriptions.
- e) But, because of Catholicism, the descriptions of the Supreme are various. Hinduism provides enough freedom for a man to go forward and develop along his own characteristic lines. It admits that religion cannot be compressed with any juridical system or reduced to any one single doctrine. As with the same gold different ornaments are made having different names in different climes and ages, sectarian creeds are but different paths to reach the Almighty.
- f) As a matter of fact, religion cannot escape from symbolism, from icons, rules and dogmas. These forms

are applied to focus the fundamental faith. A symbol does not subject the Infinite to the finite, but renders the finite transparent. It aids the worshiper to see the Infinite through it. It is only those who confuse the symbol with the reality that call it idolatry which is a much abused term.

- g) The self is a composite of mind, body and activities. Surely one becomes good by good action and bad by bad action. Desire becomes action and action determines the course of life. Evolution of life goes on until salvation is reached. Two conditions are essential to salvation:
- i) inward perfection attained by self-intuition and ii) outer perfection is possible only through release from external bondages and attractions.

According to Sachchidanando Bhattacharya²⁷ the features of Hinduism are as below:

- a) It is apauresheya, i.e. not bounded by any particular human being
- b) It is also sanatana, i.e. eternal
- c) It insists on no creed to be believed in by its adherents
- d) It believes in one Supreme Being who rules the creation

27. See "A Dictionary of Indian History" University of Calcutta, 1967. pp421-2.

- e) But it does not exclude from its fold those who believe in many gods and goddesses as well as those who hold that God does not exist.
- f) It believes in the existence of the soul and that the soul transmigrates from birth to birth which is caused by the Karma or action of a being.
- g) It believes that Moksha or Mukti, i.e. freedom from birth and from all sorrows that human flesh and blood is heir to, can be secured by both Jnana (Knowledge) and good Karma (action).
- h) Moksha means merging of the individual soul into the Supreme Soul (Parmatman).
- i) It holds that the Supreme Being is formless, yet it recognizes the worship of images.
- j) It holds that sacrifices (yajna) are efficacious in propitiating the divine beings but considers these as inferior to knowledge and devotion.
- k) It is bold enough to declare that man is God (Soham) but at the same time recognizes the quality between man and his creator, to whom devotion can be cherished.
- l) Its outward symbol is adherence to the caste system and the recognition of the Vedas as the sacred scriptures, though modern Hinduism differs much from the ancient Vedic religion.

It is no wonder that India has been described as the cradle of world religions, 'earth's central shrine', 'the ocean where the rivers of different religions have

met', 'the true dharmasala' (above of religions) etc. As Romain Rolland pointed out, "if there is one place on the face of the earth where all dharmas of living men have found a home from the very earliest days when man began the dream of existence, i.e. India". "India in particular", wrote Bouquet, "furnishes within its limits examples of every conceivable type of attempts of the solution of the religious problems,"²⁸ In the words of another scholar, "the cultures of the Dravidian and non-Dravidian peoples before the so-called Aryan invasion, the actual "Sanskritized" Aryan culture, the culture of the later invaders, the influence of Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism (to which Hinduism gave birth) and Islam and Christianity (which came from outside, can be traced at various stages of the evolution of Hindu thought."²⁹

The term 'Hindu' itself is said to have been invented by foreigners to describe the inhabitants of the country to the east of river Sindhu. The word was used by the Greek historian Haerodotus in about 440 B.C. and is mentioned in an inscription on the monument of Darius Hystaspes near Pearsepolis and is dated 486 B.C.³⁰ Alexander

28. Bouquet, A. C, "Comparative Religious" Penguin Bookes, Harmondsworth. 1973. p. 15.

29. Sen, K.M., Hinduism. Penguin Books, Harmondsworth. 1973. p. 15.

30. See Hastings James, "Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics. T & T Clarke, New York, 1955. Vol VI, p. 686.

and his men also applied the term when they invaded in 326 B.C. Even in the seventh century A.D. when the Chinese traveler I-tsing visited India, he did not notice any use of the term for any religion; only the North Indian tribes called the land 'Hindu'.

It is a fact of great importance that Hinduism, the leading religion of the leading religious country of the world, does not have a founder. It grew gradually over a period of five thousand years absorbing and assimilating all the religious and cultural movements. So it has been said that : "The bottles of Hinduism have always proved capable of holding all the wine poured into them."³¹

About Hinduism another scholar says, "Hinduism is like a river making its way from small and distant beginnings, meandering in its course, as it finds the channels that will carry its flow until by the time it reaches the open sea, it has become so extensive as to seem unrelated to its distant past."³²

Throughout the history of Hinduism the leaders of thought and practice have been continually busy experimenting with new forms, developing new ideas to suit

31. Elliot, Sir Charles, "Hinduism and Buddhism", Routledge and Kegan Paul, London. 1954. Vol. II. pp. 166-68.

32. Stroup, Herbert, "Four Religious of India : A Primer", Harper and Row, New York. 1968. p. 37.

new conditions. The first instances of progress came when the Vedic Aryans came into contact with the native tribes. A similar impulse contributed to the protestant movements of Jainism and Buddhism when the Aryans moved out into the Gangetic Valley. Contact with the highly civilized Dravidians led to the transformation of Vedism into a theistic religion. The reform movements of Ramananda, Chaitanya, Kabir and Nanak show the stimulus of Islam. The Brahmo Samaj and the Arya Samaj are the outcome of contact with Western influences.³³

What is all the more remarkable is that Hinduism developed and spread itself, not through revolution or crusade, but by a process of evolution, through the formula of "give and take". "Difference did not breed rancour, religious animosity very seldom reached the stage of persecuting intolerance. Conciliation, concession and compromise are the weapons with which orthodoxy fought daring innovations in thought."³⁴ It is in this way that "Hinduism has outlived the Christian propaganda of modern times as it outlined the Muslim oppression of Middle Ages and the Buddhist schism of ancient days."³⁵ In the words of -----

33. For details of this account see Radhakrishnan, S, "The Hindu view of Life". George Allen and Unwin, London. 1954. p 22.

34. Das, Bhagwan, "Introduction" in Haridas Bhattacharya (ed) "The Cultural Heritage of India". Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta. Vol. IV. p. 12.

35. Sarma, D.S., "Hinduism Through the Ages" op. cit. p. 62.

Mahatma Gandhi, "the beauty of Hinduism has in its all-embracing character. What the divine author of the Mahabharata said of his great creation is equally true of Hinduism. What so substance is contained in any other religion is always to be found in Hinduism".³⁶ And again, "there is in Hinduism room enough for Jesus, as there is for Mohammed, Zoroaster and Moses".³⁷

According to Swami Vivekananda, "from the high spiritual flights of the Vedanta Philosophy to the low ideas of idolatory with its multifarious mythology, the agnosticism of the Buddhists and the atheism of the Jains, each and all have a place in the Hindu's religion. To the Hindu, the world of religions is only a travelling, a coming up of different men and women, through various conditions and circumstances to the same goal".³⁸

It follows from the above that Hinduism is a dynamic religion, a genuinely living and growing one." There has been no such thing as a uniform stationary, unalterable Hinduism whether in point of belief or practice. Hinduism is a movement, not a position; a process, not a result; a

36. Young India. September, 1925.

37. Harijan. January 30, 1937.

38. Swami Vivekananda, "Essentials of Hinduism". Advaita Ashram, Calcutta. 1973. p. 30.

growing tradition, not a fixed revelation. The dialectic of religious advance through tradition, logic and life helps the conservatism of Hinduism by providing scope for change. What is built for ever is forever building."³⁹

Further, "Hinduism is a living organism. One and indivisible at the root, it has grown into a vast tree with innumerable branches. Knowledge is limitless and so also the application of truth. Everyday we add to our knowledge of the power of Atman (soul) and we shall keep doing so."⁴⁰

Realising the problematic involved in defining a Hindu, the late Sarsanghachalak of the RSS, M.S. Golwalkar (Guruji, as he was popularly called by his followers) said, "We, the Hindus, have based our whole existence on God and therefore, it is probable that the Hindu Society developed in an all-comprehensive manner, with a bewildering variety of phases and forms.... and the sects, the various castes in the Hindu fold can be defined, but the term 'Hindu' (and Hinduism) cannot be defined."⁴¹

However, the evolutionary and dynamic character of Hinduism has given rise to one great difficulty, particularly to those who want to know what it is to explore

39. See Radhakrishnan, S. op. cit.

40. Young India. April 8, 1926.

41. Golwalkar, M.S. , Bunch of Thoughts, Vikram Prakashan, Bangalore, 1966, p.47.

its fundamental premises and guiding principles. There is no Bible, no Koran, no Dharmapada, to which controversies can be referred for solution. The scriptures are many. They are authoritative too, but none is exclusively so. Moreover, Hinduism has not only changed through time but at a particular time it showed different forms in different places or even in the same place. Hospitality, tolerance and adaptation have resulted in making it the most complex of all religions. And it makes the task of defining it in a definitive manner even more complex.

Despite the difficulty in defining with precision the answer to the question: "What is Hinduism?" still Hinduism has existed and flourished for centuries. Over the time, as noted above, it picked up distortions and rigidity in its fold which sometimes made it vulgar and intolerable. These tendencies have often given rise to reformism and revivalism within the fold of Hinduism. These tendencies have acted as the inner mechanism of dynamism within Hinduism. They have at times competed and at times cooperated with each other. A focus on Hindu Reformism and Hindu Revivalism will, therefore, be our concern in the next chapter.

CHAPTER III

HINDU REFORMISM VERSUS HINDU REVIVALISM

The nineteenth and twentieth centuries in India saw trends of both Hindu Reformation and Revivalism . The former trend was exhibited in the of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ram Krishna Paramhansa, Swami Vivekananda, Justice M.G. Ranade, Maharishi Dayananda and the like while the latter trend exemplified itself in the workd of Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, Balgangadhar Tilak, Sri Aurobindo and others. Sometimes the two trends tended to merge which can be a subject of an independent enquiry. This chapter will remain confined to an illustration of the two hands in Hinduism mentioned above.

Hindu Reformism

Hinduism for long has suffered from ills like the caste system, inferior position of women, heavy emphasis on rituals etc. Social reformers have been attempting to eradicate such evils since the days of the Bhakti movement. The works of Kabir, Rahim, Nanak and others carried important social messages directed towards the bane of Hinduism. However, it was only in the last century that an attempt was made at a conscious level to bring about reforms in the Hindu way of life. It is for this reason that this

period in Indian history has been aptly called the period of 'Indian Renaissance'. The succeeding section will briefly sketch the life and works of a few such reformers.

Raja Rammohan Roy (1772-1833):

Of the reformers, there is no doubt, Rammohan Roy was the pioneer. He has been aptly described as 'the father of Indian Renaissance', the arch between the medieval and modern India etc. He was not merely a religious reformer but a social rebel, a political propagandist and an ardent educationist. In the words of H.C.E. Zacharius, "Rammohan Roy and his Brahma Samaj form the starting point for all the various reform movements whether in Hindu religion, society or politics - which have agitated India during the past hundred years and which have led to her wonderful renaissance in these our own days."¹ When he went to England to personally present before the ruling people the case of Indian reforms, he was hailed by Jeremy Bentham as "Collaborator in the Service of Humanity"². It was he whose efforts resulted in the declaration of Sati Dahan as illegal in 1829 (with the promulgation of Sati Abolition Act, 1829);

1. For details see: Zacharius H.C.E., 'Renascent India'. Allen & Unwin, London, 1933. Also see Parekh M.C., 'The Brahma Samaj'. Brahma Samaj, Calcutta 1922 and; Crawford S.S., 'Rammohan Roy: Social Political and Religious Reforms in Nineteenth Century India'. Paragon House, New York, 1987.

2. Quoted in Banerjee M., 'Invitation to Hinduism'. Arnold-Heinmann, New Delhi. 1976 p. 135.

he who focussed public attention against polygamy; he who championed the cause of English education in India, initiated the move for a college to teach western science, supported the cause of the peasantry and propagated the freedom of press.

Roy was born in Hoogly in Bengal in an orthodox Brahmin family and himself a victim of polygamy, having had two wives in his childhood. As a child he was much influenced by his mother. In his early life he learnt a number of languages including English, Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian. It was while reading the Koran in original and reading the Persian Sufi poets that he developed his antagonism to idolatory. At the age of thirty - two he published a pamphlet in Persian named Tuhfat-ul-Muwahiddin (A gift of deists) in which he condemned image worship and preached monotheism.

The Brahma Samaj was established by Roy in 1828 in Calcutta. In its trust deed dated June 8, 1830, it laid down that, "no object, animate or inanimate shall become or be recognised as an object of worship. No sermon, prayer, preaching or discourse be delivered or used but such as have a tendency to the contemplation of the Author and Preserver of the Universe, to the promotion of charity, morality, piety, benevolence, virtue and to the strengthening of the bonds of union between men of all religious persuasions or

creeds."³ Thus the principal objects of the Samaj as established by him were: propagation of anti idolatory, the need for virtuous deeds and tolerance towards other religions. It was, however, something like a new sector of Hinduism. It has been said that "influenced in his early days by Islam and later, to some extent, by Christianity, he struck nevertheless to the foundations of his own faith. But he tried to reform that faith and rid it of abuses and evil practices that had become associated with it." The Vedas in the opinion of Roy, repeatedly urged the relinquishment of the rites of idol-worship and the adoption of a power system of religion. The system of Sadhna (spiritual practice) introduced in the Samaj was itself modelled on the Vedanta. It started with the Gayatri Mantra (hymn to the Sun God) and included recitations from the Upanishads.

In the negative side the tenets of Brahmoism are as follows:

- 1) It does not admit any of the Hindu scriptures as authority;
- 2) It has no faith in the doctrine of Avataras or divine incarnations;
- 3) It denounces polytheism and idol-worship as sinful;
- 4) It condemns the caste system and advocates inter-caste marriage;

3. Quoted in *ibid* p. 136.

- 5) It makes faith in the doctrines of Karma and Rebirth optional.

Another special feature of the Samaj is congregational worship. The Brahmos assemble in the temple and offer prayer to God jointly under a preceptor.

In positive terms, Brahmoism believes in the idea of a Supreme Being endowed with wisdom and love the freedom of the human soul and the doctrine of love and practice of prayer. The other points are given as under.⁴

- 1) The external world and the internal spirit of man are both from Him, in Him and of Him - manifestation of the supreme energy, wisdom and love. Yet they are different-different not only from each other but also from the Supreme in their manifested natures and proportions. The Supreme is in all, includes all and transcends all.
- 2) The Supreme being has so constituted the soul of man and endowed it with spiritual instincts that it naturally tends to mingle with him in loving communion as the river runs to mingle with the sea. In Him is the full satisfaction of man's spirit.

4. See Sastri Srinath., 'The Mission of the Brahmo Samaj'. Brahmo Sadhan Ashram Diamond Jubilee Publication, Calcutta. 1952 pp 3-5.

- (3) This lovely communion is natural as it does not depend on special and miraculous revelations. There is no miracle in nature nor in the world of the spirit. The soul's freedom moves according to its own laws and attains its objects.

The other important features of Roy's Brahmoism have been summed up as follows:⁵

- (1) Universality - It stands on the common element in all religions. It derives its spiritual part from Hinduism, moral part from Christianity, adopts the anti-idolatry of Islam and gets its monotheism strengthened by the doctrine of the Upanishads.
- (2) Spirituality - Following the sages of India it lays stress on living and loving communion with the indwelling Supreme Being and prescribes meditation as an effective means of promoting that communion.
- (3) Socially - It looks upon life with all its relations as divine ordinations for the education and perfection of man. According to Brahmoism, the family is a sacred institution and the position of woman important in it.
- (4) Morality - Morality is an essential part of spirituality. Purity of mind and conduct is a

5. Ibid pp. 43-46.

necessary condition of communion with the Supreme Being, establish direct spiritual relationship with Him and as a result receive divine revelations from Him. At such times spiritual and moral truths may intimately and instinctively come without the range of his inner vision and he can become a seer.

- (5) Immediacy - This is the opposite of mediation which instals one great master as the only source of spiritual guidance. It place a kind of screen between man and God. But each human soul has been spiritually endowed with the power of loving communion. There is no place for mediation in that great act of soul communion with the supreme.
- (6) Catholicity - It follows from the features of universality. There is no monopoly of religious truth. Every nation has developed a spiritual instinct according to its inheritance. Along with its universal element have got mixed up in many cases local prejudices and peculiarly national beliefs. Brahmoism has kept its eyes on what is good in every religion and passed by its narrow peculiarities, its erroneous notions and doctrines. It regards all sectarian bigotry as untheistic but adopts the doctrines of love of God and man as they run through different religious.

Brahmoism did not have any influence on the common Hindus. Generally it attracted a limited number of intellectuals. 'Many who are Brahmos', wrote the Census Report of India 1901, 'prefer to describe themselves as Hindus'. The position has not improved much since then, rather it has worsened. But still it rendered some useful service to Hindu society:

- (1) It prevented conversions to Christianity by creating a half-way house. If the Samaj were not there, many radical minded Hindus would have turned Christians.
- (2) It popularized and indirectly hastened social reform among the orthodox Hindus. The caste system weakened and many of the rigid rituals became relaxed. In the face of Brahma challenge orthodox Hinduism allowed many latitudes which it would not have otherwise done.

Dayananda Saraswati (1824-1883)

Another leading reformer was Dayananda. He was born in a well-to-do Brahmin family at Tankara in Morvi State of Kathiawar. His original name was Mulasankar. When he became a sanyasi, he assumed the name Dayananda and later became Swami. People out of appreciation of his deep knowledge of Sanskrit, the Vedas and so on suffixed the word Saraswati to his name. So Mulasankar came to be known as Dayananda Saraswati.

Dayananda wanted to reform the religion that was prevailing in his time which he described as Puranic. He dismissed the Puranas as fairy tales. The Mahabharata and the Ramayana were also mere literary treatise and nothing more. He sought to purge popular Hinduism of its gross and vulgar elements. He wrote a book, entitled Satyārtha Prakasha (Truth Manifest) in Hindi which gives his ideas. They constitute the guiding principles of the Arya Samajist movement too, which he pioneered. These are summarized as below:

1. The four Vedas are infallible. They are an authority unto-themselves. The Brahmanas, the six Vedanga (limbs of the Vedas). The six Upangas (sub-limbs of the Vedas), the four Upavedas (secondary Vedas), and the one thousand, one hundred and twenty-seven Shakhas (branches of Vedas) are all expositions of Vedic ideas. They are, therefore, works of a dependent character. Their authority is to be accepted only to the extent they conform to the teachings of the Vedas.
2. God, who is called Brahmana, Parmatman or Supreme Spirit, permeates the whole universe and is a personification of Sat-Chit-Ananda (Reality-Consciousness-Bliss). He is formless, almighty, just and merciful. He awards all souls the fruits of their deeds in accordance with the requirements of absolute justice.

3. God and the soul are two distinct entities, possessing dissimilar attributes. They are, however, inseparable from each other being related as the pervader and the pervaded. God and the soul are to each other like the space and an object in space. Prakriti (substance) is the material cause of the universe. The world is created by God out of Prakriti.
4. Salvation consists in emancipation of the soul from pain and suffering. The soul is a free agent for doing deeds but subservient to God in reaping the fruits thereof. Swarga (Heaven) is the enjoyment of extreme happiness. Naraka (Hell) is the undergoing of extreme suffering. On attaining salvation the soul merges in the all pervading God.
5. Dharma (true religion) is the practice of equitable justice together with truthfulness in word, deed and thought. Rightly acquired wealth is Artha (something meaningful). That which is acquired through foul means is Anartha (something harmful). The Varna (class) and the Ashrama (social status) of an individual should be determined on the basis of merit. Those who are wise, learned and virtuous are devas (god-like) and deserve to be honoured. Those who are wicked and sinful are to be condemned as rakshas (demons).

6. The means of salvation are the acquisition of true knowledge, performance of right deeds, purity of thought and devotion to God.
 - a. The object of prarthana (Prayer) is to solicit the gift of the highest knowledge.
 - b. Upasana (meditation) consists in conforming to the Divine spirit in purity and holiness and in feeling the presence of the deity in one's heart.
 - c. Yoga (communion) enables one to have direct cognition of God.⁶

The Arya Samaj was founded by Dayananda in Bombay in 1875. It was the very antithesis of the Brahmo Samaj as well as the Prarthana Samaj. Its initial success was great in Punjab. So its headquarters were shifted to Lahore in 1877 where its constitution was finalized. It asserted the monotheistic faith that worship is due only to God and the other emphasises that the Vedas constitute the true books of knowledge and every Arya must read and teach them to others. In other words, non-dualism and 'back to Vedas' were the main purpose of the Arya Samaj. It also laid stress on diksha or formal initiation, daily sandhya or prayer, recital of the Gayatri Mantra and the concept of fire

6. See for details Swami Dayananda Saraswati., 'Satyarthaprakasha'. Sarvadeshika Sabha, New Delhi. 1960 and Zacharius op.cit.

worship, including the homa. But there were no priests. The organization was run on democratic principles. There were no restrictions of caste and on women. The Samaj was open to every Hindu. The old Sanskrit legal literature had excluded the Shudras from the exalted category of Dvijas. On the status of Shudrs, Dayananda's remarks are somewhat different. He would want that the children of the better (Uttma) Shudras also be initiated in the path of scholarship⁷. He was of the firm opinion that through excellence of moral and intellectual qualities, the Shudra could rise to the highest status of a Brahmin while a Brahmin of evil character and wicked propensities could degenerate to the status of the Shudra. He was categorical that Varna has to be determined by one's qualities, actions and psychological propensities. He included the Shudras in the category of Dvijas⁸. But it is clear that he did not visualise an egalitarian society completely devoid of all artificial social distinctions of Varnas⁹.

Apart from being a reformist organization, the Arya Samaj has also been like 'a church militant' in the Hindu fold. Formally or informally it has advised its members not to take lying down the insults hurled against

7. Dayananda., 1960 op.cit. pp. 45-46.

8. *ibid* p 254.

9. *ibid* pp. 23, 257.

their religion by the followers of other religious. Although the Samaj did to undertake any crusade, it took up very strong attitudes against the proselytizing activities of so called foreign missionaries in India. A very important activity of the Samaj is the Shuddhi or purification. Klostermaier¹⁰ argues that in practice the Arya Samaj "advocated using persuasion or even moral and physical violence to convert Muslims and Christians" back to Hinduism. By this process, on the one hand, it invests the Harijan or depressed classes and untouchables with the sacred thread and gives them equal status with the upper caste Hindus. On the other, it reclaims those Hindus who have been converted to Islam or Christianity. This movement also helped in the spread of education. It has spread up a large number of schools and colleges in different parts of the country which go by the name of Dayananda Anglo Vernacular Colleges. Meanwhile in 1882, Dayananda formed the Gaurahshini Sabha (Association of Cow protection) which provided an early example of the semi-political use of the symbol, in this case the cow.¹¹ It is due to the great efforts of Dayananda and his followers that Arya Samaj continues to be an important movement within Hinduism till this day.

10. Klostermaier K.K., 'A Survey of Hinduism' State University of New York Press, New York, 1989 p 391.

11. Hinnells John R. and Sharpe Eric J., (ed) 'Hinduism: World Religion in Eduation'. Oriol Press, New Castle. 1972. p. 84.

Ramkrishna Paramhansa (1836-1886)

Hinduism found a great path finder, a passionate devotee, a glorious synthesiser, a true Yogi and a virtual God-in-man in Ramkrishna Paramhansa. He was born at Kamarpukur (in the Hooghly district of West Bengal) in February 1836. His parents were poor but respected Brahmins. Ramkrishna was given to the spiritual ways of life from his early childhood and liked to mingle with monks and holymen. He was a great devotee of Goddess Kali and worked as a priest in a Kali temple at Dakshinesvara where he is supposed to have received her darshan (vision). After undergoing several divine experiences Paramhansa set about propagating his religious doctrines. He was a simple man with no glamour round him. There was neither aristocracy of birth nor acquisition of wealth nor academic distinction nor power and prestige in the temporal sense. He knew neither English nor Sanskrit. Even his knowledge of Bengali, his mother-tongue was inadequate. He wrote nothing, disdained learning and shunned controversy. His conversations were crude and sometimes contained filthy language.¹² Yet they

12. For details on Ramakrishna's early life and teachings see Swami Nirvedananda: 'Sri Ramakrishna and Spiritual Renaissance' in The Cultural Heritage of India Vol. IV. Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta. 1956; Zacharius op. cit.; Farquar, J.N. Modern Religious Movements of India. Oxford University Press, Oxford. 1914; Zaehner, R.C.: 'Hinduism'. Oxford University Press, London, 1972; Sarma D.S., 'Hinduism through the Ages'. Bhartiya Vidya Bhawan, Bombay, 1989 and Hinnells and Sharpe op. cit. etc.

came from heart and were very effective. The parables with which he used to explain his doctrines were simple and enshrined in wisdom. It is nothing but strange that a simple, semi-literate man with a rustic background like him could contribute so much to the field of religion.

There are a few points of special interest in the religion which Ramkrishna propounded. They may be summarized as follows :

- 1) Personal Experience - To him realization was the essence of religion. Whatever he preached he learnt by experience. He moved from practice to theory. He arrived at his faith only after seeing , hearing and doing. As one scholar put it, "he traversed the entire region of religious experience by his own personal testimony the truths of Hindu scriptures. Yogabhyasa (practice of communion), Parabhakti (godly devotion) Ishwar shakti (omnipotence of God), Nirvikalpa samadhi (super-consciousness), Brahma-sak-satkara (vision of God) and sat-chit-Ananda (Reality-consciousness-Bliss) were no mere words to him but phases of experience which he knew first hand".¹³ In the words of Mahatma Gandhi, "the story of Ramkrishna's life is a story of religion in practice. His life enables in to see God

13. Sarma D.S., 1989 op. cit. p. 122.

face to face".¹⁴ According to Swami Nirvedanada, "he took a very firm stand on the bed-rock of realization and 'spoke like one in authority'. His entire being, from the centre right up to the circumference, was a marvellous web of spirituality. Spiritual ecstasy and realization were the yarn of which this wonderful texture was made"¹⁵.

- 2) Totality of concepts - His life and teachings represent the entire orbit of Hinduism and not a mere segment of it. It may be, as Swami Vivekananda wrote in one of his letters that, "it was no new truths that Ramakrishna Paramhansa came to preach". But "his advent brought old truths to light. In other words, he was the embodiment of all the past religious thoughts of India". He was a vedist as well as a Vedantist, a pantheist as well as a monotheist.

- 3) Supremacy of Devotion of God - Though both Jnana (Knowledge) and Bhakti (devotion) lead to the realisation of God, the latter is to be preferred, specially in this age. Knowledge comes automatically when a man is devoted to and loves God "Put yourself in the hands of the Divine Mother" said Ramakrishna, "and she will give you Viveka (discretion), Vairagya

14. Quoted in Banerjee M., 1976 op. cit. p. 148.

15. Swami Nirvedananda op. cit. p. 657.

(renunciation) and Jnana (knowledge)" Acquisition of knowledge is difficult. Therefore, it is better to shun metaphysical subtleties and hair splitting arguments.

- 4) Social Work as part of Religion - Love of God should have precedence not merely of knowledge but also of good work. Social service is necessary and useful, but it should be a part of divine service. The connect formula should not be 'good work first and God next' but 'God first and good work next'. In other words, it is not by mere social reform that the evils of society can be removed. It is only by releasing a flood of enlightened religious feeling that large scale social upliftment can be brought about.

- 5) Fundamental unity of all Religious - He not merely propagated all the different aspects of Hinduism but like a true Hindu he laid stress on the fundamental unity of all religions. "He sought to reconcile not only the rationalist doctrine with the emotionalism and ritualistic orthodoxy of the earlier ages, but also the different seemingly conflicting religious on the basis of experience gained through spiritual culture"¹⁶

16. Majumdar R.C., 'Evolution of Religio-Philosophic Culture in India' in The Cultural Heritage of India Vol. IV. 1956 op. cit. p. 62.

Hinnells and Sharpe¹⁷ summarized his views thus :
"The cornerstone of Ramkrishna's teaching was the omnipresence of God. In essence God is impersonal (the teaching of Advaita Vedanta) and yet God may be manifested in any accepted form of deity, male or female, and in any person. However, it is clear that he recognized the presence of the divine most clearly in the female principle, or Shakti. An God is in every person without distinction or exception, so according to Ramkrishna, God is in every religion and can be found through any religion."

Swami Vivekananda (1893-1902)

Swami Vivekananda was a comprehensive personality. He was a great intellectual, at home in the secrets of metaphysical Vedantism, European philosophy and elements of modern science and had a burning enthusiasm for the alleviation of human suffering. He had a deep and restless passion to apprehend the highest truth from his early young days. The world knows him as a gigantic mind who employed his stupendous will-power and energy to bring about a regeneration of India. He was a pilgrim of the city of God and a warrior for the cause of the suppressed. Hence the Swami's personality was almost unique in its comprehensiveness and deep sensitiveness to the events

17. Hinnells and Sharpe op. cit. p. 87.

prevalent in the socio-economic and moral structure of the country. He preached both monistic asceticism and social service. His intellectual vision was immensely clear and he could easily penetrate into the currents and cross-currents that were manifested in the history of India. The vigour with which he marched through Europe and America giving discourses on Hinduism prompted Romain Rolland to call him "the Hindu Napoleon."¹⁸ His brilliant oratorical skills in the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago in September 1893 helped India present a positive image of itself and of Hinduism. His views on Hinduism are presented in great detail in his "Essentials of Hinduism"¹⁹. A brief account of his views is attempted in the succeeding sections.

- 1) God - God, the creator, the cause of all manifestations is eternally pure, almighty, all knowledge, all merciful, omnipresent and formless.
- 2) Law of cycles - Creation is going on eternally. Nature, Prakriti, Maya - all are infinite without beginning or end. The whole of nature goes backwards and forwards, with a wavelike motion is throughout eternity.

18. Rolland R., 'Life of Vivekananda.' Advaita Ashram, Almora, 1953 p. 19.

19. See Swami Vivekananda: 'Essentials of Hinduism' Advaita Ashram, Calcutta. 1973.

- 3) Law of Karma - As life is eternal each one is the effect of the infinite past. Each man is the maker of his own fate. The cloud sheds rain on all fields. It is only the field, which is well cultivated that reaps the greatest advantage--whatever we are now is the result of our acts and thoughts in the past and whatever we shall be in future will be the result of what we think and do now.
- 4) Universality of soul - In every man and in every animal, great or small, there resides the same soul, which possesses all the qualities like purity and omniscience. So man should worship everybody as such. This leads to the brotherhood of all life, down to the ants.
- 5) Image worship - An image is the symbol, a kind of peg to hang the spiritual idea on. Different ideas of holiness, purity, truth, and the like are associated with different images. But external worship is the lowest stage. Mental prayer is the next higher stage. The highest stage is identification of the self with the Lord. Image worship is also not compulsory.
- 6) Guru - The shaping of one's destiny does not preclude the receiving of help from outside Books are of no avail. A guru or a spiritual teacher can convey impulse to the soul of his disciple. "The seed must be

a living seed and the field must be ready, ploughed. The true teacher has to be of wonderful capabilities and clever shall his hearer be"

- 7) Divine Incarnaion - The Avataras or divine incarnations represent another set of teachers. They are the teachers of teachers. "When an incarnation comes, a tidal wave of spiritualism breaks upon the world and people feel spirituality almost full in the air".
- 8) Goal - Eternal bliss is the goal. "The idea is to be free of external and internal nature. Nature must fall at your feet and you must be free and glorious by trampling it under feet and going beyond". There will be no more life, no more death, no more enjoyment, no more misery.
- 9) Means - The means is Yoga which means union. Yoga can be of different kinds:
 - (a) Karma Yoga, i.e., Union through deed;
 - (b) Bhakti Yoga, i.e., Union through love and devotion;
 - (c) Raja Yoga, i.e., Union through mysticism; and
 - (d) Jnana Yoga, i.e., union through the acquisition of knowledge.

Vivekananda was fundamentally a man of religion and philosophy. He was not a Sociologist and hence he could not make any great contribution to the analytical and conceptual side of social sciences. He wanted, however, to work out a radical reconstruction of society,²⁰ but judged from the achievements, he, personally could not do much. Nevertheless, he mercilessly condemned the iniquities of the caste system and untouchability. Vivekananda was inspired by the ideal of social harmony and synthesis embodied in the theory of varna system of ancient India. He, hence, earnestly felt that the caste system should be ennobled. The basic point is not to impose a system of dull uniformity on society but to help every body in attaining the status of true Brahmin.²¹ He, however denounced priestcraft in vigorous terms because it perpetrated social tyranny and disregarded masses²² Thus, although an outspoken missionary of India's cultural greatness, Vivekananda was an iconoclastic crusader against prevailing social conservatism.

20. See Rolland R., 1953 op. cit. p. 37 where it is reported that Vivekananda advocated inter marriage between castes and sub castes for the promotion of social solidarity.

21. 'The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, Vol.V' Advaita Ashram, Almora. p. 144.

22. 'The Life of Swami Vivekananda by his Eastern and Western Disciplines Vol II' Advaita Ashram, Almora. 1933 p. 353.

He condemned the old orthodox Brahmanical doctrine of adhikaravada.²³ This doctrine propounds the exclusion of the Shudras or the masses from the benefit of the vedic knowledge. He championed the concept of spiritual equality. He stated that all men are equal and equally entitled to spiritual wisdom and gnosis of the highest type. His democratic spiritualism was indeed a radical step. He wanted that the highest truth should be broadcast without any compromise. He said : "Thus you will confer the greatest blessing on the masses, unshackle their bondage and uplift the whole nation".²⁴

Vivekananda was a believer in moderation with regard to social change. Social customs are the results of the arrangements of society for self-preservation. But if these regulations are perpetuated, society may suffer decadence. But the way to do away with social regulations is not to destroy them violently but gradually to remove the forces which had necessitated the incorporation of those customs. Thus the particular social customs will wither away. Mere denunciation and condemnation create unnecessary social tension and antagonism and are not much

23. 'The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda Vol V' pp 190-92.

24. 'The Life of Swami Vivekananda by his Eastern and Western Disciples,' 1933. op. cit. p. 758.

of avail.²⁵ Hinduism has maintained vitality through its capacity for absorption.²⁶ It has been aggressive now and then but its fundamental attitude was oriented to the incorporation of the best elements of the systems and forces it had to encounter. The secret of its longevity lay in its catholicity and constructive capacity for absorption.²⁷ Hence in place of cataclysmic radical changes Vivekananda stood for organic and slow reform.²⁸

Mahadeva Govind Ranade (1842-1901)

An off-shoot of Brahma Samaj of Bengal was the Prarthana Samaj of Bombay. The greatest of those who joined the Samaj and worked ardently for social reform was Ranade who rose afterwards to be one of the judges of the Bombay High Court. Ranade was not only an eminent judge but also a historian an economist, an educationist, an ardent social reformer and one of the founders of the Indian National Congress. He was a man of massive intellect, saintly character and deep piety. He was the guiding spirit behind Poona Sarvajanika Sabha, founded by G.V. Joshi, for nearly a quarter of a century.

25. *ibid* p. 752.

26. *ibid* p. 790.

27. 'The Complete works of Swami Vivekananda Vo. IV'
p. 413.

28. *Ibid* Vol.I p. 294.

Under Ranade's able guidance, the Prarthana Samaj of Bombay avoided some of the errors of the Brahmo Samaj of Bengal. It did not cut itself off from the parent Hindu community and form a separate sect. It tried to affiliate its Theism to the older Theism of the Bhagvats and the Saints of Maharashtra. While it concentrated its attention on social reform, it kept its religious beliefs rather undefined. The members in spite of other heterodox opinions on religious and social reforms, continued to belong to their respective communities. Neither the abandonment of idol-worship nor the giving up of traditional rites and ceremonies nor the breaking away from caste was insisted on as a condition of membership of the Samaj.²⁹ Ranade with his historical insight knew that the reformers should build up on the past, they should work from within the community and should not arouse unnecessary opposition and above all should not secede and form a separate sect.

For Ranade social reform was not something separate from other national activities. One of the fundamental articles of his faith was that there should be an all-round progress at the same time in all fields of national activity - in politics, religion, literature, education, economics, industries and social reconstruction. He himself worked for reform in all these fields with

29. For details see Sarma D.S., 1989. op. cit p. 82.

indefatigable zeal. He believed that agitation should not be confined to politics. There should be agitation also for social reform, especially for the encouragement of women's education, the introduction of re-marriage for widows, the abolition of child marriage and the softening of the rigours of caste. There should be agitations again for industrialization, for encouragement of vernaculars, for more sympathetic forms of administration and for purer forms of worship.³⁰

In seeking reform, Ranade often pointed out that we are not imitating any foreign models but are reverting to our own ideals cherished in the days of our glory. Most of the social evils we now complain of are the heritage of our immediate and degenerate past, and not of our heroic past. They are the corruptions of Puranic age.³¹ In this manner Ranade was able to wage a relentless war against the ills afflicting the Hindu society. And in doing so he took care not to question the basic structure of Hinduism. In essence his social reform acted as a moderator of social evils.

30. Ibid p. 86. For further discussion on Ranade's Social Reforms see Roy M.N., 'India in Transition'. Edition De la Librairie, Geneva, 1922; Chintamani C.Y., 'Indian Social Reform Vol II', Thompson & Co. Madras. 1901; Karve, D.G., 'Ranade: The Prophet of Liberated India.' Aryabhushan Press, Poona, 1942; and Ranade's own writings in 'Essays in Religious and Social Reforms' (Edited by M.B. Kolaskar).

31. Ibid p. 87.

Bhimrao Ambedkar (1891-1956)

He was one of the great jurists, lawyers and political leaders of modern India. he was one of the prime architects of the text of the Indian Constitution and an outspoken militant champion of the aspirations and claims to equality of the so-called untouchables. His books on Indian Sociology touching upon the problems of the Shudras, untouchables etc.³² present a note of deep realism emanating from his own experiences as a Mahar (an untouchable caste in Maharashtra) and are also characterized by bitter denunciations of the old law-givers who perpetrated disabilities on this section of the Hindu society. Although, later, Ambedkar adopted Buddhism but his works and his crusade against the caste system have given strength to the Dalit movement in this country.

According to Ambedkar, the Hindu scheme of social structure based on the four Varnas or Chaturvarna breeds inequality and has been the parent of the caste-system and untouchability which are merely forms of inequality. He felt that the problems of the untouchables could not be solved by mere tinkering and palliatives. They demanded a radical social solution. As a consequence Ambedkar made sure that the Indian Constitution incorporated provisions to abolish all kinds of inequalities.

32. See for instance Ambedkar B.R., Who were the Shudras? Thacker & Co., Bombay 1946.

However, it appears that, Ambedkar was not satisfied with the Constitutional provisions for the untouchables in the Indian Constitution. During the days of the Round Table Conference, he had sponsored a demand for a separate electorate for the untouchables. His conversion to Buddhism shows that he contemplated a future for the untouchables somewhat in separation from the broad stream of the Hindu society.

Nevertheless, it can certainly not be denied that Ambedkar did a yeoman service to the cause of the Dalits and today's Dalit movement draws its inspiration from Ambedkar's writings and works. He fought incessantly against the caste system so that those sections of the society who had been denied their rights for centuries can get their due. To that extent, Ambedkar becomes a part of the Social Reform movement in India and an extremely important one.

Hindu Revivalism

The struggle in India in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries between the old indigenous religious culture and the new scientific and commercial civilization of Europe generated a spirit of keen revivalism. There was emphasis laid on the study of old scriptures like the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Bhagvadgita and sometimes it was believed that the great spiritual teachings of ancient India

alone could save the world from the morass of materialism, despair and self-destruction.

The phenomenon of "militant revivalism", therefore, is not entirely new but surprisingly large and potentially frightening. It had been coming for a long time and one cannot be sure which way it will go. In the context of the militant revival of religions elsewhere³³, it cannot but be taken very seriously indeed.

Traditional Hinduism, consisting of a great number of fairly independent and often conflicting denominations, is not yet in a shape to provide the ideology for a unified Hindu political activism. The Hindu Renaissance has spawned all manner of new understanding of Hinduism : from a humanistic, universalistic, tolerant and generous religiosity to an exclusivistic, fanatical, militant ideology.

Political Hinduism as such does not have a clear identity as far as its strategies and policies are concerned. However, Hinduism always had a political dimension and in the age of nationalism which reached Asia in the nineteenth century, Hinduism took a decidedly nationalistic stance. Terms like Holy Mother India were not

33. For instance the Islamic revivalism in the newly independent Central Asian republics of the erstwhile Soviet Union and the Neo-Nazi movement in the form of 'Skin-heads' in Germany as well as the resurgence of rightist political parties in France and other parts of Europe, today.

meaningless rhetoric for Hindus but signified a living reality, which every Hindu was called upon to defend, protect and foster. Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, the great Bengali novelist whose Anand Math depicted the 1770 Sanyasi uprising as a national war of liberation from foreign rule, made his patriotic ascetics sing a hymn to Mother India which for some time became the national anthem of the freedom movement, the Bande Mataram, in which India is identified with the Goddess.

Another Bengali, Sri Aurobindo Ghose, who first fought for India's political independence in a terrorist band, according to his own testimony had a vision of Krishna through which he was made to understand that his life's work was to be the restoration of the true dharma, i.e., Hinduism.³⁴ Bal Gangadhar Tilak and many others undertook their political agitation against the British Raj as a duty imposed on them by their religion ; their aim was the restoration of Hindu India on the socio-political level.³⁵

Tilak has been called the Father of Indian Nationalism.³⁶ He was a great Sanskrit scholar, an ardent

34. This incident is narrated in Klostermaier K.K., 1989 op. cit. p. 42.

35. See Harvey M.J., "The secular as sacred? The Religio-Political Rationalization of B.G. Tilak". Modern Asian Studies. Vol. 20 No. 2, (1986) pp. 321-31.

36. Sarma D.S., 1989. op. cit. p. 102.

patriot and a born fighter. He is the author of 'The Orion' and 'The Arctic Home in the Vedas' and of 'Gita Rahasya' in Marathi besides numerous other works. He was the fearless editor of the two leading newspapers of the Deccan-the 'Kesari' and the 'Mahratta'. He was instrumental in bringing about the famous Surat split in the Indian National Congress in 1907. And he was the first organiser of the Indian Home Rule Movement, which afterwards flourished under the leadership of Annie Besant.

As an educator, he was one of the important members responsible for the establishment of the Poona New English School, the Deccan Education Society and the Fergusson College. During the days of the Swadeshi Movement he was the prime mover and patron of the Samartha Vidyalaya. Tilak exhibited that he was a man of multi faceted personality.

The role of Arya Samaj in North Indian politics at the end of the last century and later is a case in point. Noman G Barrier maintains that during the period 1884-1908, "the Samaj was probably the most important factor in determining the character and direction of the Punjab Congress. Association with the Arya Samaj gave educated Hindus a political orientation and an impetus to carry on

political work".³⁷ A "religious" movement concerned with the revival and reform of Hinduism, having its basic attitudes shaped by what was held to be "purified" understanding of the Vedas and of traditional Hinduism, served as a primary motivation for participation in political activity.

Starting from this religious base, supported by his interpretations of the sacred and popular Bhagvadgita, Tilak insisted that only in the ancient values of Hinduism would India find the resources necessary for Swaraj. Independence must have Indian and, therefore, Hindu roots or it would not be true self-rule.³⁸ Without the indigenous and proper underpinnings, self-rule could not be ; at best such a rule would not be a rule by the "self" of India but one based on Western ideals and traditions. If this were to happen, India would no longer exist. Firmly convinced, therefore, that native Indian Political and social policy must be Hindu and not Western in its orientation, he opposed social reforms resulting from foreign ways of life.³⁹ When India had achieved its true political and

37. Barrier Norman G., "The Arya Samaj and Congress Politics in the Punjab 1894-1908". The Journal of Asian Studies. Vol. XXVI No. 3. (May, 1967) p. 363.

38. Ashby Philip H., 'Modern Trends in Hinduism,' Columbia University Press, New York. 1974. p.97

39. Ibid

social independence then, and only then, would a Hindu government exist that represented the true will of Indian people.

Festivals are symbolical adjuncts of nationalism. On the one side they are expressions of some deep bond of unity permeating those who are participants in them, and on the other hand they reinforce and accentuate these feelings of unity which can be canalized into creative forces by wise and discerning leadership. Flags, celebrations of independence days and observance of festivals are thus the symbolizations of deep sentiments. Some of the symbols may appear crude to a refined aesthetic sense, but the point of utmost importance is the power of the symbol to evoke common response. As a leader, Tilak wanted to create solid nationalistic following in Maharashtra and for the purpose he wanted to symbolise the permanent religious and historical traditions of the people. Seeking to mobilize the pride in Hinduism and dedicated action no towards independence, Tilak organized the celebration of two religious political festivals that, particularly in his home area of Maharashtra, served as rallying points for political action based upon a Hindu awareness. One festival, ten days dedicated to Ganesh (Ganapati festival), furthered Tilak's purposes in giving to its participants an awareness of their "Hinduism" in contradistinction to the foreign influences that were apparently over-whelming India politically and

religiously. The second festival honoured the seventeenth century warrior Shivaji who in his successful struggles against the Muslim Mughal Empire proved that Hinduism could produce heroic leaders able to stand up to foreign invaders and thwart their seeming invincibility. The ingenuity of Tilak and his colleagues consisted in giving a public character to festivals which were so long celebrated on a private basis. This public aspect could intensify the bonds of nationalism because there would occur the reinforcement of feelings evoked by participation in a common religious festival. Similar use of symbols (i.e Lord Ram) was adopted later by the BJP-VHP-RSS combine in their Ramjanmabhoomi campaign as we shall see subsequently.

Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya, an oriental scholar, an orator with equal ease and facility in Sanskrit, Hindi and English, the founder of Banaras Hindu University and a great religious and political leader, was one of the most important figures in modern India. His outstanding personality made its mark on the politics, society, education and culture of contemporary India. For some years he was the editor of 'Hindustan' , a daily Hindi newspaper and 'The Indian Union'. He also started the Hindi weekly 'Abhyudaya'. In 1880 he was mainly responsible for founding the Hindu Samaj of Allahabad. Malviya believed in the superiority of Hindu culture. He would refuse to sponsor a

concept of nationalism rid of the basic acceptance of the moral creeds of Hinduism.

In 1909 he, together with other leading Arya Samajists founded the Hindu Mahasabha, which soon developed into a right-wing militant Hindu political party. It thrived on a narrow definition of Hindu nationhood. The election manifesto of the Hindu Mahasabha declared: "Hindustan is the land of the Hindu from time immemorial. The Hindu Mahasabha believes that Hindus have a right to live in peace as Hindus, to legislate, to rule, to govern themselves in accordance with Hindu genius and ideas and establish by all lawful and legal means a Hindu state based on Hindu culture and traditions, so that Hindu ideology and way of life should have a homeland of its own. The cardinal creed of Hindu Mahasabha is (1) Loyalty to the unity and integrity of Hindustan; (2) It reiterates its clarion call, as given by Vir Savarkar, : 'Hinduize Politics and Militarize Hinduism'.⁴⁰

Vir Savarkar (1883-1966) referred to was the greatest theoretician of the Hindu Mahasabha . In countless speeches and publications, he fought under the Hindu banner for the violent liberation of India from everything foreign and a complete restoration of Hindu ideas and Hindu society.

40. The full text of the manifesto is reproduced in Pattabhiram M., (Ed): 'General Elections in India in 1967' Allied Publishers, Bombay, 1967. 217 ff.

India's independence from British rule in 1947 was not enough for him, he bitterly opposed Nehru's concept of a secular state and continued agitating for the total Hinduization of India, which earned him long spells under house arrest in his Bombay-Matunga house. In his book 'Hindutva', he developed the outlines of the new Hindu India. He distinguished between Hindu dharma (Hinduism as a religion), which he divided into countless sampradayas, and Hindutva (Hinduness) as the unifying socio-cultural background of all Hindus.⁴¹

One of the members of the Hindu Mahasabha, Dr. K.V. Hedgewar (1890-1940), a medical doctor who never practiced medicine, founded the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) in 1925. Its main aim was to instill a sense of military discipline among the Hindus and to reinforce their cultural consciousness. It was not a political association in the technical sense of term. Hedgewar believed in strength and wanted that there should be a physical and cultural reinvigoration of Hindu people. But besides strength at the individual level he wanted that the Hindus should be imbued with a sense of community or Sangh⁴².

41. See for details Savarkar V.D., Hindutva op. cit.

42. For details see Curran Jr. J.A., 'Militant Hinduism in Indian Politics: A study of the RSS' Institute of Pacific Relations, New York. 1951 and; Anderson, Walter K. and Damle Shridhar D., 'The Brotherhood in Saffron.' Vistaar publications, New Delhi. 1987.

Social solidarity was the keyconcept in his teachings, because strength is derived from solidarity; and discipline is the basis of strength . The community bond could be built only through an awareness of the glories and splendors of the past. This ,in effect, meant the revivalism of the glorious Hindu past. The element of revivalism was apparent not only in the ideology but also in the techniques of the RSS. The reverence paid to the Bhagwa Dhvaj was an act of symbolic identification with the ideals of purity and renunciation inculcated by Hinduism.

Gandhi's murder by Nathuram Godse was also an act of Hindu fanaticism.⁴³ Nehru's reaction to Godse's crime was swift and decisive: he banned the RSS and jailed tens of thousands of its members. However, a year later, the ban was lifted and the leaders were freed.

The events connected with partition, which had brought great suffering to many millions of Indians, were perceived by the Hindus in India as inflicting more than an equal share of sacrifice on the Hindus. Deferences over Hindu-Muslim policies caused several groups to break away from the monolithic congress party since 1948.

Events in East Bengal in early 1950 lead to the formation of the Jana Sangha Party, which had a clearly

43. A very well researched account of Godse and the events upto and including Gandhi's assassination is given in Collins L. and Lapierre D., 'Freedom at Midnight', Simon and Shuster, New York. 1975.

pro-Hindu and anti-Muslims orientation.⁴⁴ Millions of Hindus had fled from East Bengal to West Bengal telling about forcible eviction, Muslim brutalities and large scale repressions. The conciliatory talks between Nehru and Liaqat Ali were considered inadequate by a number of politicians in West Bengal and at New Delhi. The major figures involved were Shyamaprasad Mookerjee (Minister for Industries and Supplies) John Mathai (Finance Minister) and K.C. Neogy, who resigned from the union cabinet. They proposed their own set of conditions for Pakistan and while ostensibly promoting the cause of the Hindus in Pakistan, also articulated an alternative approach to Indian internal and external politics

The new party called itself Bharatiya Jana Sangh; in Bengal, it first appeared under its English name, People's Party of India while its origins were rooted in the dissatisfaction with Central Government policies, the founders of the Jana Sangh pointed out that it did not just constitute a break-away Congress party faction. As Deendayal Upadhyaya wrote, "The Jana Sangh was founded as an all-India party on 21st October 1951. It was not a disgruntled, dissident or discredited group of Congressmen

44. See Jhangiani M.A., Jana Sangha and Swatantra: A Profile of the Rightist Parties in India Manaktala, Bombay, 1967. For further details see Ghose S., 'Modern Indian Political Thought'. Allied Publishers, New Delhi, 1984.

who formed the nucleus of the party, as is the case with all political parties.....Its inspiration came from those who basically differed from the Congress outlook and policies. It was an expression of the nascent nationalism. It was felt that the ruling party had failed to harness the enthusiasm created by freedom to the task of realization of the great potentialities of the country. It was because of their anxiety to make Bharat a carbon-copy of the West , that they have ignored and neglected the best in Bhartiya life and ideals. The Jana Sangh predicted that Abhartiya and unrealistic approach to the national problems by the party in power would create more complications than solve any. Its forebodings have come true."⁴⁵

The leading light in the early years was Dr. Shyamaprasad Mookerjee. A man with a distinguished academic record and an early involvement in Bengal politics, he joined the Hindu Mahasabha in 1937. In 1946, Nehru offered him a Cabinet position. Mookerjee was one of the five non-congress party members of the fourteen members Cabinet. Dr. Mookerjee disagreed with the Hindu Mahasabha on many issues and demanded, after the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi, that it either withdraw from political activities altogether or shed its communal Hindu character.

45. Quoted in Jhangiani M.A., op. cit. p. 10.

The Hindu Mahasabha had not been very successful in the 1946 elections anyhow.

Eventually, Mookerjee left the Hindu Mahasabha and also resigned from the Nehru Cabinet in 1950 over the Bengal issue. He established links with the RSS leaders Vasant Rao Oak and Balraj Madhok. He tried to persuade the R.S.S. to become a political party. The R.S.S. leaders had rejected such an idea since its foundation : it had wider aims.

The Jana Sangh won considerable support in some state elections and became powerful enough on the national level to attract the attention and Vituperation of both the Congress and Leftist parties as being "fascist", "totalitarian", etc. Apart from its overall view to Indianize/Hinduize, Indian politics, it kept pleading for a reunification of India, the introduction of Hindi as national language, the recognition of Israel and the ban on cow slaughter.⁴⁶ Later it merged with a number of parties, among others the anti - Indira Gandhi wing of the Congress party, to form the Janata Party, which after the resignation of Indira Gandhi in 1977, won the General Elections in a landslide victory.

46. See the 'Election manifesto' in Pattabhiram. 1967. op cit. 204 ff; also Upadhyaya, Deendayal "Jana Sangha" Seminar 89 (Jan. 1967) pp. 34-7 and "A Democratic Alternative": Seminar 80 (April 1966) pp. 21-4.

The coalition, that was Janata, was shaky from the very beginning. Its lack of initiative and its increasing internal quarrels, largely about the relations of former Jana Sangh members with the R.S.S. created widespread disappointment. Eventually the party split, which brought about the downfall of the Janata government and a return to power of Indira Gandhi's Congress party. The party split further in March 1980 and again in April 1980, when the former Jana Sangh group formed a new party called the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP)⁴⁷.

Deendayal Upadhyaya, Lal Krishna Advani, Nanaji Deshmukh, Balraj Madhok, Lal Hansraj Gupta, K.R. Malkani, Balasahab Deoras, H.V. Seshadri - men who shaped national politics in the 1960s and 1970s - were all prominent activists of the R.S.S. The R.S.S. spawned a great number of other Front Organization like the Bhartiya Mazdoor Sangh, a trade union; the Akhil Bhartiya Vidyarthi Parishad, a students' organization; the Bhartiya Kisan Sangh, a peasants' union⁴⁸; and the Vishwa Hindu Parshad, a religious organization which was founded in the mid - 1960s, among others, which attempt to articulate a kind of universal

47. For details see Saxena K., "The Janata Party Politics in Uttar Pradesh (1977-79)" Indian Political Science Review. July, 1983. pp. 172-87.

48. For further details see Jayaprasad K., RSS and Hindu Nationalism, Deep & Deep Publications, New Delhi. 1991. pp. 206-32.

Hinduism that would embrace the different sects and at the same time possess a basic common creed and common practice.⁴⁹

It is always not clear where the borderline between the R.S.S. and the VHP lies, if there is one to begin with. Both organizations boast of thousands of centres all over India and millions of members and both are extremely active on behalf of Hindu jagran (Hindu awakening). They organize processions, meetings and festivities and they work towards bridging the differences between different Hindu denominations in the interest of a united, politically strong Hinduism. Membership figures mentioned are impressive, as are the violent confrontations. One of the immediate aims of VHP is to repossess of the areas of Krishna Janmabhoomi Temple in Mathura and of Vishwanath Temple in Banaras apart from the most important one in the current agenda - the Ramjanambhoomi Temple at Ayodhya - three of the holiest places of Hinduism, which were occupied and desecrated by the Muslim rulers in the Middle Ages.

49. The VHP publishes a monthly 'Hindu Vishwa'. In a special issue brought out before the Prayag Sammelan in January 1966, a number of prominent leaders spelled out the essence of the movement in Hindi and English articles. See for instance Apte S.S., "Vishwa Hindu Parishad Confluence of Hindu Society". Hindu Vishwa Jan. 1966. pp. 87-9.

Partly co-operating and partly competing with these organizations are others devoted to the same goals of Hindu awakening and Hindu political power : the Virat Hindu Sammelan, the Hindu Samajotsava, the Bajrang Dal, the Kesar Vahini etc. However, there can be no doubt that the major role in the Hindu revival has been played for quite some time by the R.S.S.⁵⁰

M.S. Golwalkar, the successor to Dr. Hedgewar, who died in 1973 wrote "Bunch of Thoughts" early in his career. In it he systematically and openly lays out the ideology and the policies of the R.S.S. He quite frankly declares Muslims, Christians and Communists (in that order) the major enemies of India and promises that they would not be citizens of a Hindu India shaped according to the R.S.S. principles⁵¹. According to Golwalkar, the Hindu nation has been given the divine mandate to spiritualize the world and this mandate has fallen on the R.S.S. in our time. With genuinely religious fervour, Golwalkar exhorts his followers

50. Information on the origin and the structure of the RSS is contained in various sources. Seminar 151 (March 1972) had a major article on RSS by D.R. Goyal and provided an extensive bibliography. More recent publications are referred to in Dixit P., 'Hindu Nationalism' Seminar 216 (Aug. 1977) pp. 27-36. Also see The Illustrated Weekly of India March 12, 1978 titled 'How powerful is the RSS?' See also Barthwal C.P., 'Rashtriya Swyam Sewak Sangh: Origin, Structure and Ideology' Indian Political Science Review (Dec. 1983) pp. 23.37.

51. See Golwalkar M.S., op. cit. for details.

to do their utmost for the re-establishment of this Hindu order. Thus he writes, "The R.S.S. has resolved to fulfill that age old national mission by forging, as the first step, the present day scattered elements of the Hindu society into an organized and invincible force both on the plane of the spirit and on the plane of material life verity this is the one real practical world-mission if there was one."⁵² He further says, "The mission of reorganising the Hindu people on the lines of their unique national genius which the Sangha has taken up is not only a process of true national regeneration of Bharat but also the inevitable precondition to realize the dream of world-unity and human welfare.... it is the grand world - unifying thought of Hindus alone that can supply the abiding basis for human brotherhood. This knowledge is in the safe custody of the Hindus alone. It is divine trust, we may say, given to the charge of the Hindus by destiny."⁵³

After Golwalkar's death, Madhukar Dattatreya, known as Balasaheb Deoras became Sarsanghachalak, the supreme leader of the R.S.S. He echoes Savarkar when stating: "We do believe in the one-culture and one nation Hindu Rashtra. But our definition of Hindu is not limited to

52. Ibid 9f.

53. Ibid. p.123

any particular kind of faith. Our definition of Hindu includes those who believe in the one-culture and one-nation theory of this country. They can all form part of the Hindu-rashtra. So by Hindu, we do not mean any particular type of faith. We use the word Hindu in a broader sense."⁵⁴

While the R.S.S. and its frontal organizations may be the most visible manifestation of extremist and radical Hinduism on the national level, it is not the only one. Thus in the late 1940s, Swami Karpatriji Maharaj founded the Ram Rajya Parishad (Kingdom of God party), which also contested in the national elections, objecting to Nehru's secular democracy.⁵⁵

In the 1960s numerous regional organizations developed in India, with the aim to either establish language or religion based separate states or to protect the natives of a particular state from the competition of out of state migrants. Regional interests and Hindu interests very often tended to overlap.⁵⁶ One example, the earliest, most active, and exclusive Hindu organization of this type, may suffice to make this point that of Shiv Sena.

54. Quoted in The Illustrated Weekly of India op. cit. p. 11.

55. For his views see his 'Ramrajya aur Marxvad' Gita Press, Gorakhpur, 1956.

56. Refer to Karunakaran K.P., "Regionalism" Seminar 87 (Nov. 1966). pp. 21-5.

The Shiv Sena was founded in 1966 in Bombay by Bal Thackeray, a former cartoonist for a local paper. It was to protect the rights and jobs of the Maharashtrians, especially in Bombay, which had become a metropolis with large contingents of Indians from almost all parts of the country. It demanded, among other things, that eighty per cent of government jobs be reserved for native Maharashtrians. By 1969, it had become powerful enough to call a general strike in Bombay, paralyzing the entire huge city for three days, burning buses and trains, terrorising non-Maharashtrians. Many South-Indian Coffee shops were burned down, many non-Maharashtrian businesses were vandalized. Not long afterwards, the Shiv Sena won the majority of seats in Bombay's municipal elections and became a major factor in Maharashtrian state politics.⁵⁷

Hindu interests and regional interests overlap in Shiv Sena. This is manifested in the eulogization of Shivaji as the great Maratha warrior who fought the Muslims successfully. The Shiv Sena does not hide the fact that it is a party fighting for the rights of the Hindus. However, whenever the regional sentiments became overbearing, it demonstrated its hostility to all non-Maharashtrians, Hindu as well as non-Hindus.

57. See for instance George A., 'Social Ferments in India' Athlone Press, London 1986; and Gangadharan K.K., "Shiv Sena" Seminar 151 (March, 1972) pp. 26-32.

The above detailed description was undertaken to comprehend the two main streams that Hinduism witnessed in the last century and the present one viz Hindu Reformism and Hindu Revivalism. Although the two trends were dealt with separately in this chapter, but one could identify symptoms of both convergence and divergence, of both fission and fusion between the two streams of Hindu social order. However, one tendency was quite manifest during the whole exercise. This was that elements of Hindu revivalism were more evident in the Hindu reform movements while in the former trend the latter symptoms were more absent than present. The common factor in both cases was the attempt of Hindu revivalism - whether intended or unintended. Such tendencies have been carefully picked up by the political parties espousing the cause of the Hindus over the time and its extreme manifestation can be witnessed in the Ramjanmabhoomi campaign of the Bhartiya Janata Party. This will be the topic of discussion of the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV

CONSTRUCTING THE MILITANT HINDU, THE RAMJANMABHOOMI MOVEMENT AND THE POLITICS OF RATH YATRA.

So far, in the preceding chapters, we have seen how the Hindu and Hinduism have been sought to be defined. Further, an attempt has been made to elaborate upon the various social reform movements within the Hinduism as well as the currents of Hindu revivalism in the last and the twentieth centuries. In this chapter we shall confine ourselves to the descriptive portion of the Ramjanmabhoomi movement which culminated in the Rath Yatra of L.K Advani and the beginning of Kar Seva on October 30, 1990 and the consequent firing on the Kar Sevaks by the security forces. The highlight of the section will be the effort to illustrate as to how the normally meek and passive Hindu was transformed into a "militant" one who could go to the extent of facing bullets to assert his aggressiveness in a symbolic manner by seeking to build Ram Mandir at the place where he was made to believe the Ramjanmasthan existed and which was destroyed at the behest of Babar and the Babri Masjid built in its place. In this context, it is worthwhile to go briefly into the historicity of the issue in order to get a fair understanding of the events.

Ramjanmabhoomi Controversy - a brief history

Surely enough, the Ramjanmabhoomi - Babri Masjid controversy is not of recent origin. It originated, thanks

to the British Policy of driving a wedge between the Hindus and Muslims, in the nineteenth century and to be more precise, it originated around 1855 i.e. just before the war of independence of 1857¹. This is supported by the JNU historians² when they point out that, "It is in the nineteenth century that the story circulates and enters official records. These records were then cited by others as valid historical evidence on the issue". Stories of destruction of the temple were spread by the British in the form of British records like P. Carnegy's Historical sketch of Tehsil Fyzabad, Lucknow, 1870 or H.R Nevill's Faizabad District Gazetteer, Allahabad 1905. Along with these, a propaganda based on these records was launched which led to the escalation of Hindu - Muslim tension and clashes between these communities in Ayodhya. However the controversy about the Babri - Masjid and Ramjanmabhoomi had almost died out after the British engineered events of nineteenth century³. The question hardly ever rose until after the partition when "on the historic morning of December 23, 1949 the idols of Sri Ramchandra and Sita Devi miraculously appeared in the Janmasthan." ⁴ The government on its part locked the gates

1. ✓ Engineer A.A., Babri-Masjid-Ramjanmabhoomi Controversy. Ajanta Publications. New Delhi. 1990. p.2.

2. ✓ See The Political Abuse of History - Babri Masjid-Ramjanmabhoomi Dispute. C.H.S/J.N.U., New Delhi. 1989.

3. ✓ Engineer op cit. p.8.

4. ✓ See Organiser. March 29, 1987.

of the shrine preventing the entry of people in it. The floodgates of the controversy were reopened with the opening of the locks of the shrine on February 1, 1986 on the orders of the Faizabad district court. This led to the subsequent campaign by the BJP-VHP-RSS combine to "liberate" the Ramjanmabhoomi.

Shilanyas and its aftermath

Thereafter, the issue was taken up several times by the BJP-VHP-RSS and even during the Lok Sabha General Elections in 1989. But before that, in July 1989, it was decided to carry out the Shilanyas (foundation laying ceremony) of the proposed Ram Temple at the disputed site in Ayodhya on November 9, 1989. The Ram Mandir was to be 270 feet in length, 126 feet in width and 132 feet in height, "to be constructed at a huge cost of Rs. 25 crores to wash off the shame and insult inflicted by invader Babar to the national honour."⁵ For this purpose a Shri Ramjanmabhoomi Mukti Sangharsh Samiti was formed. It sent out instructions to all the districts of the country to get Shilas (bricks) of normal size with "Shri Ram" inscribed on it locally. Instructions included mixing of Ganga water with the common water for their preparations. These bricks were to be distributed in each of the five lakhs and twenty-eight

5. See VHP advertisement on the inside of the cover page. Organiser Deepavali/Ramjanmabhoomi Special Number 1989.

villages of the country where they were to be consecrated in Yajnas on September 30. The same day their Yatra was to begin to reach Ayodhya on November 9. It was also declared that a volunteer force of over ten thousand young men would be prepared to make any sacrifice to guard the Shilanyas ceremony.⁶ Further, a target of collecting the required Rs. 25 crores⁷ for building the temple was sought to be raised by collecting a minimum of Rs. 1.25 from each household as contribution⁸ and in this way to involve as many people as possible⁹ in the construction work.

Meanwhile, a resolution of the RSS National Executive declared that "the holy birth place of Lord Shri Ram enshrined in the hearts of crores of Hindus from time immemorial cannot be made a subject of judicial probe. Although barbarant invaders might have tried their utmost to demolish the temple of Shri Ram erected there (at Ayodhya) and construct a mosque (Babri masjid) instead, yet the divine sanctity of that spot and the people's faith in it has remained unshaken and shall remain so forever. It is but proper, therefore, that all our patriotic people regard it as their sacred duty to remove every sign of such wanton aggression and construct an imposing temple commensurate with

6. See Organiser July 23, 1989. p.6..

7. Roy, P.K. in Organiser. Independence Day Special. 1989. p.18.

8. ibid. p.16.

9. See Organiser. October 8, 1989. p.6.

their profound faith and devotion of Shri Ram."¹⁰ Echoeing the same sentiments L.K. Advani said, "It is wrong to put Ram against Babar. There is nothing sacred about Babar. He was an invader who came from outside. The historical facts are not a matter of opinion or 'judicial interpretation'. Babar and Akbar cannot be glorified for political reasons (Implying thereby that Ram can be?). The future of Islam does not depend on the Babri Masjid. It depends on accepting the facts of history and by respecting the feelings of crores of Hindus in India."¹¹

The last sentence of Advani should be noted carefully. In numerous articles in the *Organiser* and *Panchjanya* - the two weeklies of RSS which toe the BJP line - as well as the propaganda material circulated by the BJP-VHP-RSS it is repeatedly asserted that since the Hindus comprise of eighty-five percent of the Indian population, therefore, as Advani implied above, the disputed shrine should be handed over to the Hindus and thereby respect their sentiments. This is put more aggressively by Badlu Ram Gupta when he states that, "it is the height of ingratitude on the part of the Muslims not to respect the feelings and

10. See Organiser. July 30, 1989. p.9. Similar Resolution was passed in the BJP National Executive Meeting held at Palampur on June 11, 1989.

11. Advani quoted in B.K. Kelkar's article in Organiser August 27, 1989.

sentiments of their Hindu coundre-parts even on an issue like that of Ramjanmabhoomi, which is of basic central importance to them especially when the latter have done numerous acts of favours and concessions to them since independence. Such magnanimity is perhaps foreign to the Muslim mind. They clearly forget that national or social life is ultimately a matter of reciprocation and adjustment."¹² To further, buttress the point of "sentiments" and "feelings" of the Hindus, Advani in an article entitled 'A Tale of Two Temples' in a BJP pamphlet called 'Ramjanmabhoomi', quotes Sardar Patel on the reconstruction of the Somnath Temple in 1947 as saying: "The Hindu sentiment in regard to this temple is both strong and widespread. In the present conditions, it is unlikely that that sentiment will be satisfied by mere restoration of the temple or by prolonging its life. The restoration of the idol would be a point of honour and sentiment with the Hindu public."¹³ Advani draws a parallel between the Somnath Temple and the Ramjanmabhoomi Temple by asking that why in the traditions of the Somnath temple, which was also destroyed by the invaders and rebuilt under the guidance of the Central Government and whose deity was formally inaugurated by Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the then President of

12. See Organiser. October 1, 1989. p.5.

13. Sardar Patel quoted in Advani's 'Tale of Two Temples' in 'Ramjanmabhoomi' a BJP pamphlet. 11 Ashok Road. New Delhi. p.13

India, the Ramjanmabhoomi temple is also not being allowed to be built?¹⁴

While such a campaign was going on, about two thousand Sadhus and Saints from Ayodhya, Varanasi, Nemisharanya, Haridwar, Mathura, Vrindavan, Chitrakoot and other parts of the country undertook a 'Dharma Yatra' in five thousand colonies of Delhi between September 17 and 21, covering a distance of nearly 200 kms. All the Shankaracharyas, Mahamandleshwaras and other senior Dharmacharyas participated in this Yatra.¹⁵ The purpose of this 'Dharma Yatra' was stated to be "to awaken the masses to the need of construction of Shri Ramjanmabhoomi Temple in Ayodhya."¹⁶ Along with this a Virat Hindu Sammelan was held in Delhi on September 22, "in which lakhs participated"¹⁷ to further create such awareness.

On the appointed date i.e. November 9, 1989, the Shilanyas was held in the complex of the Ramjanmabhoomi-Babri Masjid at a site a little away from the disputed structure. A triumphant Organiser announced, "The Hindu kept their date with the history at Ayodhya on November 9 by ceremonially laying the foundation stone of Ramjanmabhoomi

14. See for details Advani ibid pp.11-16.

15. See Organiser, September 24, 1989.

16. ibid.

17. See Organiser. October 1, 1989. p.5.

temple. The Shilanyas marked the culmination of a forty day long country-wide programme of Shila puja in over five lakh basties and sites across the length and breadth of the country. Shila yajnas were held at over hundred spots and the transportation of these bricks in hundreds of decorated trucks were received by thousands of devotees enroute Ayodhya. Nearly a million people had come to Ayodhya for the ceremony and visited the Shilanyas sthal (site), according to district authorities At the stroke of 1.35 pm, two consecrated bricks were lowered into the pit dug for the foundation by Rameshwar Chopal, a Harijan from Bihar. Earlier Bhumi Puja was performed by the (U.P) State VHP Chief S. C. Dixit and its all-India Vice President Badri Prasad Toshniwal."¹⁸ It went on to add, "So great was the enthusiasm for Shilanyas among the Hindu masses in the entire Hindi belt that seven hundred arches were erected from Allahabad to Ayodhya for the Shila Puja procession."¹⁹

Analysing the significance of the Shilanyas ceremony in Indian politics, the RSS leader H.V. Seshadri said, "The Shilanyas at Ayodhya - though apparently an ordinary foundation - laying ceremony for a Hindu temple - indeed potends a marked and significant turn in our national situation. It is also evident that the new turn will prove to be not only as a corrective to the self-deluding and

18. See Organiser. November 19, 1989. p.1

19. ibid. p.16.

self-destructive trend of the last several decades but also an affirmation of the Nation's resolve to stand up effluent in the light of its pristine cultural heritage illuminating up every single sphere of its life with that inspiring vision."²⁰ A more strident posture in this regard was adopted by Jay Dubashi when he thundered, "For the last so many centuries, the history of the Hindus has been created by non-Hindus, first the Moghuls, then the British. Even today, the Hindus are being denied their right to write their own history, which to me, is almost like genocide. Until we write our own history, this land cannot be ours The whole purpose of the Ramjanmabhoomi movement is to change the history of India, nothing less, nothing more The Ayodhya movement is, therefore, a historic movement, far more historic than Gandhi's Dandi March or the Quit India movement Freedom does not mean flying your own flag or having your own government. Freedom means making your own history, writing it in your own blood on the pages of time."²¹

Similarly, VHP leader Ashok Singhal writes, "In this country, whether the rule has been of Muslims and Britishers or in the independent India that of the so called our own government, there has always been discouragement of the Hindus by the appeasement of Muslims. It is due to this

20. H.V. Seshadri in Organiser. December 17, 1989 p.10.

21. Jay Dubashi in Organiser. November 19, 1989. p.2.

appeasement that a situation of partition of this country came in 1947. Since the very dawn of Indian independence, the vote-greedy politicians in order to maintain their political power coined terms like 'majority' and 'minority' and gave the minorities special rights by adding these to the Indian Constitution. Slowly the situation today has reached such a stage that these minorities are challenging the majority Hindus in their own country If things continue like this then the day is not far when Muslims create a situation of another partition of this country. Therefore, the Hindus should now with mountain like strength and determination start the reconstruction of the sacred temple at the Shri Ramjanmabhoomi in Ayodhya,"²² (in order to prevent such a situation).

After the Shilanyas, there was a brief lull due to the General Elections in India. The BJP always had been supporting whatever the VHP did on this issue. A large number of its party functionaries participated in the various programmes of the construction of the Ram Mandir. The Ramjanmabhoomi issue was being played up for sometime. The Shilanyas was held too close to the General Elections. The people had already started becoming increasingly aware

²². Translated from the Preface by Ashok Singhal to a VHP pamphlet titled "Hinduon Astitva Ko Pahchano. Abhi Nahin to Kabhi Nahin. Shree Ram Mandir Ka Virodh: Naye Pakistan Ki Bhoomika" by Suresh Khare. Sankat Mochan Ashram. New Delhi.

of the issue. The results were not too far to be sought. The BJP, though it had seat adjustments with the newly formed National Front and specifically with the Janata Dal, increased its Lok Sabha tally of seats from 2 in 1984 to 88 in these elections.²³ In addition, it was able to win a number of seats in the Legislative assemblies of the various states. Significantly enough, its impressive show remained confined to North India.

Hardening stance

Encouraged by the phenomenal rise in the number of seats won by it and emboldened by the fact that the newly elected National Front Government led by V.P. Singh had to depend on its support along with the Left Front due to lack of clear majority in the Lok Sabha, the BJP and its allies (the VHP and the RSS with whose active support the BJP was able to put up such a vastly improved electoral performance) embarked upon further plans of the construction of the temple. Hence, a "Vishal Sant Sammelan at Allahabad decided to start the construction of the Ram Temple from February 14, 1990. The VHP and the Ramjanmabhoomi Mukti Yajna Samiti also participated in this Sammelan."²⁴ However, the plans were postponed on request by V.P. Singh. He gave an impression that he was making efforts to find a peaceful solution between the Hindus and Muslims on this issue

23. Source BJP's Pamphlet - 'Nation's Hope'. p.58.

24. See Organiser. February 11, 1990. p.1.

through negotiations between their representatives.

While the negotiations went on, the propaganda also continued. V.P. Bhatia quoted Ashok Singhal as saying: "Building a temple is not fundamentalism but a national necessity to awaken national consciousness and national self-respect. The Hindu society which was scattered by foreign onslaughts, now seeks to reunite. The focus on Ram Temple is the instrument of emotional integration. Hindu society, persecuted for centuries, is the national society here but its rights have not been given to it yet."²⁵ The Ram Temple seemed to be the fulfilment of the hitherto deprived rights.

With the talks between the representatives of the Hindus and Muslims dwindling, H.V. Seshadri warned, "Let the government also remember that the Hindus have been fighting for the redemption of the honour of Ayodhya for the last four hundred years and have sacrificed over three lakh of their choicest youth in that cause. There can be no greater self-deception than to imagine that such a mighty national upsurge can be suppressed by batons and bullets. Let us also hope that our rulers also recognize the signs of our times. The Hindu is no longer the same meek, passive entity ready to kneel down before every kind of insult and injustice. The Hindu has learnt the lessons the hard way. They say, even

25. See Organiser. May 20, 1990, p.13.

the worm turns. Let not the rulers misjudge the present mood of the Hindus. After all, ours is a democracy and Hindus form eighty-five percent of the population. The Hindu outburst can certainly sweep all anti-Hindu forces from the political arena as well."²⁶

Kar Seva to begin

With the period of four months sought by V.P. Singh for negotiations between the leaders of the Hindus and Muslims on the Ayodhya issue, expiring in July, the programme for the commencement of Kar Seva for building the Ram Temple was announced. A joint meeting of the Sant Sammelan and the Kendriya Marga Darshak Mandal of the VHP was held at the Samanvaya Kuteer, Saptasarovar in Haridwar on June 23 and 24, 1990. The two day meeting was attended by sixty hundred and forty-four saints. The action plan approved by the Sant Sammelan was as follows²⁷:

August 1, 1990 - To observe Sant Sankalp Diwas. Central programme to be held at Vrindavan.

August 1-31, 1990 - Setting up of Shri Ram Kar Seva Samities at State, District and Block levels.

August 31-Sept. 15, 1990 - Constitution of Shri Ram Sankirtan Mandals and dharma yatras by saints.

26. See Organiser. July 8, 1990. p.4.

27. See Organiser. July 15, 1990. p.5.

Sept. 29, 1990 - Vijay Yatra led by eminent saints and religious luminaries to leave from hundred prominent places of pilgrimage and nerve centres on Vijay Dashmi day for Ayodhya.

October 30, 1990 - Commencement of Kar Seva at Ayodhya.

Announcing these decisions, Mahant Avaidyanath, President of Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Mukti Yajna Samiti, and Ashok Singhal, Secretary General of the Parishad said that "the 'garbha griha' (sanctum sanctorum) of the proposed temple will be at the very site where 'Ram Lalla' are virajman and where Hindus have been offering pooja/archana."²⁸ Terming these decisions as "irrevocable and non-negotiable", they said "(however) the Hindus would not shut the doors for a dialogue but would not compromise on the site of the temple and the date for launching the Kar Seva."²⁹ In the event of the Union and State Governments trying to obstruct the construction of the temple, Singhal warned, "the Rambhaktas going to Ayodhya to perform Kar Seva will court arrest every day. The Satyagraha will continue round the clock with jathas courting arrest every hour. At least five lakh people from all walks of life are likely to participate."³⁰ Noting that Ram Nam Kirtan was essential for

28. ibid.

29. ibid.

30. ibid.

creating an appropriate climate for any pious act, the Sannelan decided to make the Sankirtan Mandals undertake anusthans of Shri Ram Sankirtan in all villages and mohallas of all towns and cities till the completion of the temple. The Sannelan hoped that "Ram Nam Sankirtan will make the country Rammaya and surcharge the atmosphere with religious fervour."³¹ The process of confrontation had begun.

Amidst all this, occurred a monumental event in the history of India. It was the declaration of the implentation of the Mandal Commission Report (MCR) which reserved 27% of all government jobs for the so called other backward classes (OBCs) by invoking Article 340³² of the Constitution. This announcement by V.P.Singh came on August 7, 1990. Behind the facade of "social justice", it was the sinister design of V.P. Singh and Company to neutralize their opponents (specifically Devi Lal) and create a solid vote bank for themselves. As observed elsewhere in this work, this announcement sent shock waves down the spine of the nation. It offset a spate of self-immolations as a

31. ibid.

32. Article 340 clause(1) states "The President may by order appoint a Commission consisting of such persons as he thinks fit to investigate the conditions of socially and educationally backward classes within the territory of India and the difficulties under which they labour and to make recommendations as to the steps that should be taken by the Union or any state to remove such difficulties and to improve their condition and as to grants that should be made for the purpose by the Union or any state and the conditions subject to which such grants should be made, and the order appointing such Commission shall define the procedure to be followed by the Commission."

protest against the implementation of MCR and pitted castes against castes. However, V.P. Singh's nefarious designs could not succeed as the Supreme Court put a stay on its implementation which is in force till now. The BJP-VHP-RSS saw the implementation of the MCR as a blatant attempt to divide the Hindus³³ and consequently dilute the vote base of the BJP. These events had serious fallouts on the socio-political scenario of the country in the days that followed.

The tenor of the BJP-VHP-RSS increased after this. They chalked out more aggressive programmes in pursuance of their aims. A Sant Sammelan was held at Vrindavan which added a new dimension to the "mass awakening" programme chalked out at Haridwar. The Sammelan decided to hold "a grand Ram Yajna" at the Janmabhoomi on the first Navratra which fell on September 19, 1990. It was also decided to light a Jyoti at Ayodhya through Arnimanthan (rubbing of sacred woods) and to carry these jyotis on Jyoti Rathas from Ayodhya to all regional centres and consequently to all state capitals by September 24, 1990. The second phase to be completed between September 24 and 29, 1990 included the reaching of the Jyoti Yatra to all the two hundred and fifty points - carefully chosen because of their religious significance and geographical importance from where Vijay

33. See for instance Suresh Khare op cit. pp.4-6. Also see Girilal Jain: Naqli Secularism Banam Rashtriyata. p.28 and p.79.

Yatras were to commence on Vijay Dashmi day falling on September 29. The third phase had in its programme the carrying of Vijay Yatras on Jyoti Rathas to reach each and every block of the country between Vijay Dashmi and October 10, 1990. The next phase included the observance of 'Jyoti Pradan Saptah' between October 11 and 18, 1990 during which the Kar Sevaks were entrusted the task of carrying the Jyoti to every hearth and home in all the cities, towns and villages to light the Deepavali lamps and also to collect offerings from every family for the "holy cause". Finally, it was decided that the Vijay Yatra that was to commence on Vijay Dashmi day from two hundred and fifty centres would converge at Ayodhya when the constitution of the temple would be formally launched.³⁴ It was said that the Jyoti Yatra would be used "to motivate fifteen to twenty lakh Kar Sevaks for building the Ram temple."³⁵

Rath Yatra Launched

The BJP, which till now, at best, was playing a second fiddle to the VHP and RSS decided to jump into the act. It decided to launch a Rath Yatra, to be undertaken by its President Lal Krishna Advani, from Somnath to Ayodhya to participate in the Kar Seva on October 30, 1990. Another

⁹⁴
34. For detailed programme see Organiser. September 2, 1990. p.7.

35. See Organiser September 16, 1990. p.1.

purpose was stated to be to create an awareness about the issue among the masses of India and to inspire them to participate in the Kar Seva in huge numbers. This announcement came on September 12, 1990. This announcement assumes great significance which will be elaborated later. It was decided to start the Rath Yatra on September 25, 1990 which was to traverse 10,000 kms and pass through eight states viz. Gujarat, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, Haryana, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh as well as Delhi (which was then still a Union territory). The decision to embark upon this ambitious plan was hardly surprising because the BJP was quite aware that the ultimate beneficiary from the Ramjanmabhoomi issue would be BJP itself. It could clearly see the issue turning into votes. Hence the Rath Yatra.

Amidst a surfeit of saffron colour and gaiety and dancing by young dandia (a folk dance of Gujarat) performers and slogans that the Ayodhya temple would be built at the very spot believed to be the place of Ram's birth,³⁶ L.K. Advani embarked from the gates of the Somnath temple on the sea-shore in Gujarat on his 10,000 kms long "historic Rathyatra as a crusade for strengthening national unity and promoting nationalism in the country."³⁷ Organiser went on to say that the "whole town had come out to greet Shri

36. "Saugandh Ram Ki Khate Hain, Hum Mandir Wahin Banayenge."

37. See Organiser. October 7, 1990. p.1.

b 27

Advani at the start of what may go down as the biggest march in Indian history as in the four towns of Veeraval, Sherbaugh, Keshod and Vansthali he covered on the first day, the whole population - men women and children - had come out to watch Shri Advani pass through their town and to hear what he had to say on his yatra and Ramjanmabhoomi. No other march is known to have evoked such total response from and turnout of the towns and villages that fall on that way."³⁸ Advani said that "the Ram temple issue must not be seen as a quarrel between the Hindus and the Muslims."³⁹ As if to prove his point, Advani chose a Muslims youth as the driver for his auto-Rath.

Encouraged by reports of enthusiastic co-operation, support and participation in the Ram Jyoti processions by the prominent Sikhs and Sikh masses in even the terrorist-hit Punjab⁴⁰ Advani's juggernaut rolled on. Enroute it encountered at various places the bizarre exhibition of the militant Hindu response in support of the Ramjanmabhoomi temple. At Somnath, on the shores of the Arabian sea, as the roar of the ocean on the morning of September 25, mingled with the chantings of Vedic hymns and cries of 'Har Har Mahadev,' 'Saugandh Ram ki Khate hain, Hum Mandir Wahin Banayenge', Advani lifted a bow and arrow

38. ibid.

39. ²³ibid.

40. ibid. p.19.

towards Ayodhya as if to symbolize the seige and victory over Ayodhya. It was presented to him by the tribals of Ambaji. The priest of the Somnath Temple presented him a saffron dharma dhwaja (flag). The fishermen at Dwarka after presenting him a conch blew it to mark the occassion. The Gohil Samaj of Kshatriyas presented Advani with a sword. The mood of the milling crowd who came to wave-off the BJP President on his 36 days long "dharma yuddha" had one clear message to convey that they expected him to succeed and that they would even sacrifice their lives in the "fight for the cause".

For the milling crowd of Gujarat, through which the Rath passed, it took the form of a temple. Women and old men touched the tyres, took the sand below them, placing it on their forehead in reverence. Women and old men stood with folded hands, young women carried Kumbh (pitcher) on their heads to greet the Rath in a traditional manner. In some places it was aarti, in others it was garba (Gujarat folk dance). But at every place the most common offering was traditional weaponry.

Advani was presented with bows and arrows, dices and maces, swords, trishuls and Kirpans. At many places people made cuts in their bodies to smear tilak on Advani's forehead. At Jaipur, 101 Kshatriya youth offered him a bowl containing their blood. At Karnavati a BJP activist took out a Knife, made a deep cut on his hand and smeared a tilak on

Advani's forehead.⁴¹ At Bombay filmistars Shatrughan Sinha and Manoj Kumar as well as T.V star Arvind Trivedi met Advani and assured their support to him.⁴²

Through the seven states, through which Advani's Rath passed, it received enthusiastic support. Even in Delhi with almost total urban population the Rath was given a warm welcome wherever it went. A common feature at all the places, was the welcome given to the Rath in the traditional Hindu manner - performance of aarties, garlanding of the Rath as well as Advani, blowing of conches, breaking of coconuts in front of the Rath, collection of the dust under the tyres of the Rath and treating it as tilak etc - and offering, besides other things, traditional weapons to Advani. People would come out in large numbers wearing saffron clothes or caps with 'Jai Shri Ram' printed on them. Sadhus often joined in the welcome in saffron robes and carrying tridents (trishuls). Others also brandished mini trishuls in such ceremonies.⁴³ The Rath received good response even in areas where the BJP support base was almost negligible - i.e. in the Southern States - much to the

3A 41. For details see Organiser October 14, 1990 p.5 and other issues of Organiser and Panchjanya during the period of Rath Yatra.

42. *ibid.* p.14.

26 43. For further details on the response to Advani's Rath and the mode of welcome given to it, see the local dailies of the 7 States and Delhi through which the Rath passed between September 25 and October 23. National dailies like The Times of India, The Hindustan Times, The Indian Express etc. also carried detailed reports on it.

surprise of even many BJP leaders. This was hardly surprising because the BJP-VHP-RSS combine had already begun a systematic, vigorous and aggressive campaign in favour of the temple, as outlined earlier in this chapter, quite early. It was this campaign which made people sometimes go hysterical in enthusiasm. Now let us examine the kind of campaign unleashed by these forces during the entire Ramjanmabhoomi movement to get a fair understanding of the emotive response of the people - i.e the Hindus - engendering in them a sense of aggressiveness and militancy which was so very manifest during the Rathayatra and culminating ultimately in the events of October 30, 1990.

We have, during the course of this chapter, described in detail the mode of mobilization through the print media utilized by the BJP-VHP-RSS right from the Shilanyas to Advani's Rathayatra. Now, we shall discuss another form of mobilization that was seen during this movement. This mode is that of verbal campaign. Volunteers of Shri Ram Yajna Samiti went door to door campaign for the temple. Most importantly, some VHP leaders and Sadhus gave fiery speeches in public meetings to arouse the passions of the Hindus in order to motivate them to become aggressive and militant. Militant slogans were raised in these meetings and tape recorded speeches were distributed among the people or sold in the markets. These speeches and slogan had a tremendous impact on the psyche of the masses and this

helped in their around as was evident subsequently.

Rhetorical Onslaught of Ritambara

One person who was most effective in her endeavours in this regard was 'Sadhvi' Ritambara. In her speeches she whipped up blatant anti-Muslim sentiments. During the later phase of the Ramjanmabhoomi movement she started touring various parts of the country and rendering fiery speeches. Her cassettes were distributed so that her 'message' could reach every 'nook and corner of the country'.⁴⁴ She laments that the corrupt politics and the corrupt politicians of this country in past forty-four years (of India's independence) have been continuously discriminating against the Hindus due to their vote politics. It is these forces who have forced the saints to come out of their mathas and temples and temples and take to streets and speak aggressive language. She feels that it is a trial that this country is facing and challenges "every Rambhakta to come out victorious on October 30, 1990". It is her contention that in Kashmir the Hindus are being beaten to pulp while in Punjab the Hindus are pitted against their Keshdhari (Sikh) Hindu brothers. All this is the handiwork

~~44.~~ Ritambara gave her speeches in Hindi. I have tried to transcript her speeches and translate them into English from a cassette distributed by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad. I have tried to present the translation as close to the original as possible. I am solely responsible for any errors in translation.

of the politicians. It is a consequence of this distorted politics that in this country for the past forty-four years "we (the Hindus) are being looted and beaten. Those very people who were born of our own blood (the Muslims) are betraying us today."

She goes on to history to show how the Hindus have always fought the invaders. She says "Hindus have a history and those people who think that Hindus are coward and impotent and that is why they faced alien rule for centuries are mistaken. We Hindus, are the progeny of those brave people who have foiled the sinister designs of people from Mohammad-bin-Qasim to Mohammad Ali Jinnah to convert India into an Islamic nation" She then poses a question to the audience, "How can you forget the sacrifice of Maharana Pratap, Prithvi Raj Chauhan, Shivaji, Amar Singh Rathore, Durgavati, Guru Gobind Singh and Maharaja Ranjit Singh?" She sees a lack of such heroes today in India. She says, "The partition of the country took place not because of any external factor but because of the sons of mother-India themselves who for gaining power became power-brokers - people who epitomized Jaichand and Man Singh. Today, the people in power are following their footsteps. These people cannot see Ram. They cannot see Ram imprinted on the hearts of seventy-crore Hindus. It is they who cannot see Ramjanmabhoomi." She then describes the importance of Ram in Indian culture. She remarks that we greet each other by

saying 'Ram Ram'. We say He Ram! (O Ram!) when we are troubled. We start our lives with Ram and end it with Ram when 'Ram Naam Satya Hai' is chanted in funeral processions. "But V.P. Singh wants proof of Ram and therefore the youth and masses of this country should take to streets and show him the proof of Ram. Vote hungry politicians have adopted the policy of appeasement and they cannot see the truth of Ramjanmabhoomi as that requires strength of character which they do not possess." She then passes the sentence that "whoever is opposed to Ram is not an Indian."

She ridicules the suggestion that the disputed shrine should be converted into a national monument. She questions this by saying, "should a national monument be built to commemorate a bandit and an invader who came to India to outrage the modesty of Mother-India?" She again considers this as the trick of the politicians who are out to exploit the Muslim vote bank for power. But she cautions that "today the children of Mother-india have woken up and will not allow this to happen". She thunders, "Today we want those youth who can give comfort to our weeping mother-earth and those who can spray the chest of the anti-national forces with bullets. We want such people to restore our honour."

Her tone then becomes more incitive when she says, "Those people who are anti-Hindu, even though they might be Hindus themselves, will not be tolerated by the Hindu

masses". She advises the Muslims to remember and follow Rahim and Ras Khan - "that Rahim who searched in the dust of India the dust of Ram's feet". She is saddened that today the Muslims have left Rahim and Ras Khan and have forgotten them. Instead they claim to be descendents of Babar and Aurangzeb. She warns, "O Muslims! Live like the descendents of Rahim and Ras Khan and we will honour you. But if you call yourselves as Babar's children then we have no relationship with you. We shall no longer tolerate the descendents of Babar and Aurangzeb because it is these people who tried to spread Islam by sword." She expresses surprise as to how the Muslims can take the name of Babar and Aurangzeb with pride. She explains that the Hindus have never taken the name of Kansa and Ravana with pride who were as wicked as Babar and Aurangzeb but the Muslims have always eulogized the wicked. She cautions such Muslims because "they are becoming the fuel for Shahabuddin's politics."

Further, she gives the differences between the Hindus and the Muslims and says, "The Hindus have never desecrated any mosque but the Muslim invaders have always destroyed Hindu temples and made our mothers and daughters impure. Why is it that riots take place only on Deepavali and Dussehra and not on Muharram? Whenever we take out shobha yatras, they are stoned from masjids. Masjids are full of explosives and we are being called communal." She adds further, "Gandhi gave a lot of slogans of Hindu-Muslim unity. But, while we (the Hindus) became prepared to listen

to the Azaan along with the bells of the temples, the Muslims refused to do so because their culture prohibits them to do so. Their culture tells them that wherever you are small in numbers, you organize yourselves secretly and in silence but wherever you are equal to the others you create riots. And in this way to establish the Islamic nation even if you have to sacrifice your lives, you will straight away get a passage to the heaven. Their Quran orders them to catch hold of the idol-worshipping Kafirs, skin them and torture them to such an extent that they beg forgiveness. However, our culture tells us that even if an ant comes under our feet, we have to do penance for it. That is the difference between the two culture". Truly inflammatory indeed and without any evidence. She states further, "In order to create brotherhood, we sacrificed 'Bande Mataram' and adopted 'Jana Gana Mana', sacrificed the religious symbol of Bhagwa Dhwaja (saffron flag) in favour of the tricolour and called Akbar, who dishonoured the Hindus, as Akbar the great. But today, we are called communal because we are talking about Ramjanmabhoomi. And that Azam Khan (a minister in the then U.P. Cabinet) who calls Mother-India as a "witch" has become a partiot because he gets Muslim votes for Mulayam Singh Yadav". "Hindus can never be communal", she feels, "because Hindus always keep the nation above religion which Muslims don't. Mulayam Singh Yadav cannot see this and speaks nonsense she asserts. He can also not see Ramjanmabhoomi. However, he will see it,

"when on the chest of each Ali (Muslim) tens of Bajrang Balis (Lord Hanuman) will mount".

A little later in her speech she says, "Everybody is talking about sacrifice. We will not only sacrifice (ourselves) but also make others do it. We will not only shed our blood but that of the others also. If anybody challenges your honour then you should have the strength in your arms to give a fitting reply to it. We have had enough of tolerance but will not have of it any more or else they will consider you as coward and impotent." She then exhorts the audience by saying, "How long will you fear blood-shed? Let it happen once and for all. Let it happen in the construction of the temple. He who does not understand the language of dialogue will be made to understand the language of force. O. the youth of this country! Wake up and arise for the Ramjanmabhoomi is waiting for you. If you do not rise then you will be unable to raise your heads for centuries. Ramjanmabhoomi was for Hindus, is for Hindus and will remain with Hindus. October 30, will decide your future. It will tell you whether in this country the Hindus would live or the Muslims would. Whoever does not love this country has no right to live in this country." She then advises the Hindus to "forget the barriers of caste, of region, of language etc. and unite like a fist to fight the onslaught on Hinduism."

• Another unidentified person also speaks in the

cassette and explains that "if the Ramjanmabhoomi issue had been an issue of a few yards of land then Hindus would have given up claim over it long ago because Hindus have always been generous. Pieces of lands can be at various places but not a birth place and therefore Ramjanmabhoomi is important for us." He warns that if "V.P. Singh wants to maintain his chair then he should go to October 30, and help in the Kar Seva." He declares, "on October 30 along with the inauguration of the construction of the Ram temple and the start of Kar Seva will be the declaration of the Hindu Rashtra" and gives the slogan, "Give us co-operation and we will give you Ramjanmabhoomi."

As noted earlier, such fiery and inflammatory speeches bore fruits and people became motivated to join the Kar Seva slated for October 30, 1990. Along with these speeches, slogans like "Garv Se Kaho Hum Hindu Hain!", "Jis Hindu Ka Khoon Na Khaula, Woh Khoon Nahin Paani Hai!"; "Bachcha Bachcha Ram Ka, Mandir Ke Hai Kaam Ka!"; "Lathi Goli Khayenge Par Mandir Wahin Banayenge!"; Hindutva Ne Pukara Hai, Garam Khoon Hamara Hai"; "Jan Jan Ki Yahi Pukar, Ram Bina Jivan Bekar"; "Jo Hindu Hit Ka Kaaj Karega, Wohi Desh Pe Raaj Karega" etc... coupled with religious slogans like "Jai Shri Ram" and "Har Har Mahadev" rent the air and created a terrific impact on the minds of the people. This also, to a certain extent, explains the large turnouts in Advani's meetings during the Rath Yatra. However, to the

credit of Advani, he maintained a restraint in his speeches during the Rath Yatra. Now, let us come back to the Rath Yatra once again.

While such inciting and disturbing speeches were ringing in the ears of the people, Advani was continuing on his Rath Yatra. Meanwhile, the U.P. government banned the ram Jyoti Yatras fearing disturbance in peace. The Organiser retaliated by saying, "the confrontationist approach adopted by the U.P. government in banning the peaceful Ram Jyoti Yatras and 'the anti-communal' rallies being addressed by Mulayam Singh Yadav across the state to scare the Hindus away from the Kar Seva for the reconstruction of the Ramjanmabhoomi temple in Ayodhya are coming home to roost reconstruction of the temple, the Jyoti Yatras are not only being joined by thousands at each and every place but more and more Kar Sevaks are coming forward to enrol themselves for participation in the reconstruction work beginning on October 30."⁴⁵ It was also argued that "Hindus as a political force will always be the builders of the destiny of India. They will be liberal and will have the humanist perspective about all religious minorities in India. But Hindus will not be non-Muslims in Indian politics as they have been treated for the last seventy years Ramjanmabhoomi issue (is) the acid test of a real judicious democracy and of nationalist Hindus as a political force.

45. See Organiser. October 14, 1990.

Hindus will organize themselves as a political power to regain the glory of pre-Muslim India."⁴⁶

Swapan Dasgupta writing in an article says, "Call it communal, abuse it as antidiluvian and denounce it as irresponsible. Yet no amount of secularist vitriol and Left wing decision can detract the reality that Mr. L.K.Advani's Rathyatra across Western and North India has been spectacular success. Irrespective of whether or not, he is allowed to enter Uttar Pradesh and perform Kar Seva in Ayodhya on October 30, the Rath Yatra has succeeded in momentarily uniting a deeply fragmented Hindu society in a symbolic show of strength Mr. Advani has certainly triggered one of the biggest upsurges in post-independence history whose impact will be felt long after."⁴⁷ He goes on to say that "the accusations that the Ramjanmabhoomi movement is an attempt to foist a regimented, monotheistic and codified religion on an unsuspecting mass are completely misplaced. If anything, the recent Hindu resurgence is based on devotionism and implicit acceptance of the multiplicity of local traditions. The mobilization around the Rath Yatra || has not been effected through the "high church" of the Brahmanical faith, but through the folk tradition of

46. Kelkar, B.K. in Organiser. December 3, 1989.

47. Dasgupta, Swapan: "Journey To Ayodhya: Hindu Nationalism Comes of Age." p.11 included in BJP pamphlet titled "Nation's Hope". Kathak Bhavan, Phalke Road. Bombay.

roadside temples."⁴⁸ In this way the BJP-VHP-RSS were able to sustain the propoganda at a high pitch.

Advani's Arrest and the Events of October 30

After passing through six States and Delhi and while passing through Bihar - where also Advani's Rath was given a 'rousing welcome' especially in the tribal belt - Advani was arrested at Samastipur on October 23, 1990 just when he was a week away from Ayodhya. It was done on the orders of the Bihar government. Advani was taken to a guest house under arrest while his Rath was confiscated. This was done with a view to stop Advani from reaching Ayodhya and also to make sure to prevent any communal disturbance as a consequence. BJP withdrew its support to the National Front government and reduced it to the minority government status as a retaliatory measure against Advani's arrest.

Advani's Rath was stopped. Nevertheless, the Hindu upsurge that it generated showed no signs of subsiding. On the contrary, it seemed to receive an impetus. The aggressive campaign had already started showing signs of militancy. These symptoms were unfolded in the events of October 30, 1990 at Ayodhya when despite prohibitory orders and the heavy deployment of security forces, hundreds of Kar Sevaks managed to break the security cordon and amidst the use of heavy force by the security forces were able to

48. ibid. p.13.



77-112/6

damage the disputed shrine and managed to hoist saffron flags atop its domes. Pitched battles were fought in the streets of Ayodhya between the security forces and the Kar Sewaks. This resulted in many Kar sewaks being killed. Another attempt to perform Kar Seva on November 2, met with similar fate leaving more dead in the process. The Organiser described the events of October 30 and November 2 in going terms under the headlines: "Jallianwala re-enacted in Ayodhya."⁴⁹

The Ramjanmabhoomi-Babri Masjid dispute still continues and no solution seems to be in sight. Nonetheless, it can be safely said that high profile campaign launched by the BJP-VHP-RSS did manage to drive the Hindus to an extent which was unheard of in modern India. This was interpreted in other ways when Lal Krishna Advani exclaimed, "If the Rath Yatra has unified Hindus, that itself is no mean achievement."⁵⁰ Swapan Dasgupta considered the Ramjanmabhoomi movement as a remarkable success because, ¹¹ "for the first time, the Hindu nationalists have been able to link their appeal to religion as practised at the grassroots in drawing upon the little traditions of Hinduism, symbolized by a common attachment to Ram."⁵¹ We

37⁴⁹. See Organiser. November 11, 1990.

50. See Advani's interview in "Nation's Hope" op. cit. p.30.

51. See Dasgupta, Swapan op cit. p.13.

might not agree with these analyses and assertions but the fact remains that the Ramjanmabhoomi movement exhibited in ample measure that the normally meek and passive Hindu can be transformed into a militant one if repeated appeals on a high pitch and with aggressive contours is made to his religious sensibilities.

This was quite evident throughout this movement. The ball was set rolling by the aggressive campaign by the BJP-VHP-RSS combine and the people followed. The use of water from the Ganga for preparing the Ram Shilas (bricks), the carrying of these bricks through the various parts of the country, the Jyoti Yatras and the lighting of Deepavali lamps by these Jyotis, the holding of Sankirtan singing "Ram Naam" etc., all had religious (Hindu) overtones which made people emotional about the issue and the repeated enactment of these tactics increased their involvement manifold. Further, the presentation of weapons and their open display during the various processions was meant to provide an aggressive fillip to the movement which was so necessary for them. Along with this the smearing of Advani's forehead with blood and presentation of blood to him was done to convey a message that the Hindus are ready to shed their own blood as well as that of the others whoever came in their way as an impediment. All the articles and symbols used in this campaign have traditionally been a part of the Hindu cultural ethos and, therefore, helped in creating an euphoria among the Hindus. These tactics were much similar

the ones adopted by Tilak and others during the early phase of the Hindu revivalist movement as we had seen in the early part of this work. Further, provocative speeches by Ritambara and others added fuel to the fire by whipping up the Hindu passions during this particular movement. The campaign, in itself, was quite systematic as the literate section of the Hindu society was mobilized by the BJP-VHP-RSS by explaining their stand on various issues in which "discrimination" against the Hindus were highlighted and made accessible to them through the written material as also by playing up of the Ramjanmabhoomi issue, while the rural folks were reached by the various volunteers of these organizations who played the speeches in the cassettes and also campaigned personally among them. The whole campaign was able to deliver its goods as several eminent people from various walks of life joined the BJP bandwagon very soon. In this way it was the symbol of Ram - who is undoubtedly ingrained into the lives of the majority of the Hindus - which was exploited to the hilt by these parties. In the process the BJP reaped rich benefits in the subsequent elections.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

So far in this work we have remained confined to the descriptive aspect of the problem at hand - of attempting to understand Hinduism: exhibiting the two dominant trends within Hinduism in the last century and the present one i.e. Hindu Reformism and Hindu Revivalism and; presenting a detailed account of the resurgent Hindu revival with aggressive militant overtures as witnessed during Ramjanmabhoomi movement. In this section we will provide an analysis of the entire Ramjanmabhoomi movement - which is our core problematic - in an attempt to answer the queries raised in the introductory section.

As stated earlier in this work, and after a careful scrutiny of the available literature, it can be said that the Ramjanmabhoomi movement for the restoration of the Babri Masjid to the Hindus for the construction of the Ram temple is indeed that of yet another phase of Hindu revivalism in modern India. It is certainly a continuation of the revivalist tendencies within Hinduism that had emerged in the last couple of decades of 19th century and early part of this century with Sri Aurobindo, Savarkar, Tilak, Madan Mohan Malviya and others. All of them used religion i.e. Hinduism, as a tool for political mobilization. Only in the case of some it was quite subtle while in others it was more manifest. They showed in ample measure that political

mobilization of Hindus around certain symbols and issues is a promising possibility. This promise appealed to the others who gave shape to the RSS and later to the Jana Sangh and the BJP, with VHP, like RSS, providing an effective back up to their endeavours. It was this promise that prompted the BJP-VHP-RSS to take up the symbol of Lord Ram and the issue of the "liberation" of the Ram temple which in effect meant the assertion of majoritarian will and sentiment in the garb of nationalism.

(Throughout the Ramjanmabhoomi movement, Lord Ram was depicted as a "national hero". Nationalism, by implication, meant honouring Lord Ram by reconstructing or agreeing to reconstruction of the Ram temple. Any hindrance on this count was treated as an impediment to nationalism. This becomes clear in Advani's statement when he says: "Over a period of time, many streams contributed to the culture of this country, to the nation concept of this country, but Hinduism is the essential ingredient (of which, in turn, Ram is the essential ingredient). Any approach which tries to undermine this essential ingredient, or to deny it, or to delink Indian nationalism from this cultural heritage would weaken nationalism to that extent."¹

"Nationalism" has been the catchword of the entire Hindu revivalist discourse. In the pre-independence era, political mobilization along religious symbols was construed

1. See Advani's interview in Nation's Hope, op cit., p.24

as the assertion of nationalism. Hindu revivalism, therefore, became an anti-colonial exercise as repeated appeals were made to the "nationalist conscience" of the people of India. The latent energies of the masses was needed to be tapped in order to motivate them to fight a political battle for independence. Hence the use of religious symbols and the consequent Hindu revivalism. Situation in the post-independence India has assumed a different dimension and with it nationalism has also taken a different direction. Its connotation now has changed from anti-colonialism to anti-secularism (or should we say anti "pseudo-secularism"?)

(After the partition of India, Pakistan adopted Islam as the State religion while India opted for the path of secular democracy. In the West, secularism was Europe's response to the European scene after the Renaissance and was an integral part of the Renaissance.² It evolved during the course of struggle between the Church and the rulers for political supremacy and at last the rulers won and asserted their hegemony³ and, therefore, it was a movement against the high-handedness of the Church in matters relating to civil life.⁴) When there no more existed the supremacy of the

2. See Malkani, K.R., "Concept of Secularism and Controversy around Ayodhya." Mainstream. Annual No. October 27, 1990. p.27.

2. See Engineer, Asghar Ali, "On Secularism and Pseudo-secularism." Mainstream. Vol.XXIX No.35, June 22, 1991. p.6.

3. Gahrana, Kanan: Right to Freedom of Religion. South Asian Publishers Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1992. p.6.

Church over the worldly rulers, that is, when the theological supremacy was done away with, the rulers were called secular rulers and secularism, which then assumed the form of an ideology, came to mean separation of the Church from political rule. (Secularism, therefore, means above all separation of politics from the hegemony of religion.⁵ In a truly secular State religion will not influence, let alone dictate, the sphere of politics. Both the spheres will remain separate and shall enjoy perfect autonomy.)

Secularism was not, however, alien to the Indian ethos. In India, secularism in its widest sense, stood for tolerance.) ~~W~~ Indian secularism subscribes to the Hindu philosophical tenet that all religions have elements of truth. From ancient times, Hindu philosophers have consistently proclaimed that all religions lead to God, and, unlike some other religions, Hinduism has never put forth the claim that it alone is the true religion. The spirit of toleration is the foundation of the theory of secularism."⁶

~~W~~ Max Weber pays a similar tribute to the spirit of tolerance which has permeated India. He says, "It is undoubted fact that in India, religious and philosophical thinkers were able to enjoy perfect, nearly absolute freedom for a long

5. Engineer, op cit., p.6.

6. Gajendragadkar, P.B.: Secularism and the Constitution of India. University of Bombay. Bombay 1971. p.40.

period. The freedom of thought in ancient India was so considerable as to find no parallel in the West before the most recent age."⁷ In essence, Indian secularism was based on the premise of Sarva Dharma, Sam Vichar Sambhava since time immemorial.

✓ The post-independent India adopted the admixture of both the Western and the traditional Indian forms of secularism. The Constitution of India envisages a secular democracy whose distinguishing features are:

- (a) there shall be no state religion, which means that the state will not identify itself with or be controlled by any religion;
- (b) that it guarantees to each one living within its territory the right to freedom of religion, which means that every person has a right to profess any religion;
- (c) that the State shall not discriminate against any person on grounds of his religion;
- (d) that the right of every citizen subject to the condition of law, to enter any office under the State will be equal to that of his fellow citizen.

Nehru considered Indian secularism as that of "equal protect to all religious by the State."⁸ These provisions

^{7/5} Max Weber as quoted in Smith, Donald Eugene: India as a Secular State. Oxford University Publication. Bombay 1963. pp.61-62.

8. Engineer, op cit., p.6.

are enshrined in Articles 25 to 30. Realising that in independent India the rights of the minorities have to be protected and that care should be taken to preserve their cultural uniqueness, the framers of the Indian Constitution provided certain special rights and privilege in Articles 29 and 30.⁹

However, these special provision for the minorities in the Indian Constitution have often been interpreted as "concessions" by the BJP-VHP-RSS. Advani says, "The essential part of secularism is that a secular State rejects theocracy and has no official religion"¹⁰, but he laments that "secularism has come to mean a premium on belonging to a minority and, sometimes in the case of some perverse politicians, an euphemism for Hindu baiting."¹¹ Like Advani, others of the BJP-VHP-RSS school of thought have given a critique of secularism as being practised in India today.) Sita Ram Goel, in a pamphlet, believes that, "In India it (secularism) means only one thing - eschewing everything Hindu and espousing everything Islamic."¹² he says elsewhere that "the principle of secularism adopted by the new Indian Constitution has from the start been imbued

9. For details see Basu, D.D.: Introduction to the Constitution of India. Prentice-Hall of India Ltd., New Delhi. 1990.

10. Advani in Ramjanmabhoomi, op cit., p.1.

11. Quoted by Bardhan, A.B. in "BJP: In Search of an Ideology". Communist Party Publication p.13.

12. Goel, Sita Ram in Perversion of India's Political Parlance. p.13.

with animosity towards Indian society and culture."¹³ This has been termed as "minorityism" and is also often referred to in the BJP and its allies' parlance as the "appeasement of the minorities". This, they feel, is making the minorities develop a minority complex which is so detrimental to the national integration.¹⁴ The instances cited, among others, for such appeasement are:

- (a) Absence of a Uniform Civil Code¹⁵;
- (b) Existence of the Minorities Commission instead of which these parties want a Human Rights' Commission¹⁶;
- (c) Existence of Article 370 which grants special status to the state of Jammu and Kashmir (which has a Muslim majority population). These parties want the abrogation of this Article¹⁷;
- (d) The Shah Bano Case in 1986 in which the Parliament overruled the Supreme Court verdict to grant

13. Goel, Sita Ram in Secularism: Rashtradroh Ka Doosra Naam. p.22. Also see the Presidential address of Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi at BJP National Convention, Jaipur, Feb. 1-3, 1991.

14. See BJP election manifestoes of 1989 and 1991 elections.

15. Currently the provision for the Uniform Civil Code is enshrined in the Part IV, Article 44 of the Indian Constitution as the Directive Principles of State Policy. The BJP and its allies want it to be adopted in the main constitution. See election manifestoes of BJP in 1989 and 1991 elections.

16. *ibid.*

17. *ibid.* Also see Advani's interview in Nation's Hope. *op cit.*, p.29. Also see Khan, Arshi, "Dragon Teeth of BJP". Mainstream. Vol.XXIX No.25. April, 13, 1991. p.9.

maintenance to a divorced Muslim lady Shah Bano by introducing the Muslim Women's Bill in the Parliament on February 25, 1986.¹⁸ At least in this case the State's role as the arbiter of neutrality was in serious question. Even the Left parties severely criticized this move of the Union Government.¹⁹

The BJP calls the phenomena of "minorityism" or "appeasement of minorities" and "Hindu baiting" as "pseudo-secularism". Thus Jay Dubashi writes that, "If you are a Hindu then you are non-secular or communal by definition. If you are a Muslim or a Christian, no matter how communal, you are secular by definition."²⁰ Similar views are expressed by Badlu Ram Gupta when he says "Under the present peculiar and perverted interpretation of the concept of secularism, Hindu-baiting or denigrating Hinduism has become the fashion of the day, in fact the favourite pastime of most politicians. Things have reached such a pass that you just dare utter a word in favour of Hinduism and Hindu interests and sentiments and the brand of pseudo-secularists waiting in the wings are sure to pounce upon you like hungry wolves and dub you a die-hard communalist. The more you sing paeons

18. This case was cited as the result of the ills of the
14 absence of Uniform Civil Code. Also see Advani's
interviews op cit., p.25.

19. See various pamphlets and publications by the Communist
Parties after this case. See for instance the various
issues of the New Age and People's Democracy.

20. See Organiser. December 23, 1990. p.2.

in praise of minorities, particularly the Muslims, the greater your chances of rising higher and higher in their scale of estimation. Secularism in this country has unfortunately become a totally one-way traffic, indeed a synonym for blatant Muslim appeasement and Hindu baiting."²¹ Thus, "The so-called secularists (pseudo-secularists) are the only communal force in the country"²² and, therefore, "Hinduise politics: Secularize the nation in the sense that it (the State) would be rescued from the clutches of the pseudo-secularists."²³

While discussing the role of the State as the arbiter of neutrality, let us come back to the Ramjanmabhoomi issue in which also the State had an ambiguous role. In 1949, the government acquiesced in the installation of idols inside the disputed shrine by some unknown persons. The police guard on duty could either do nothing, or refused to do anything, to prevent this illegal act. "The then District Magistrate and his personal assistant may have had a hand in this acquiescence."²⁴ On February 1, 1986, the Faizabad District and Sessions Judge decided that the gates of the shrine should again be opened

²¹. See Organiser. October 1, 1989. p.5.

²². Nijhawan, P.K. in Organiser. June 10, 1990.

²³. Sankdher in Organiser. February 10, 1990.

²⁴. Pandey, Gyanendra: "Ayodhya and State". Seminar No.364. December 1989. pp.42-3.

to allow the entry of worshippers arguing that their locking was no longer necessary either for the preservation of law and order or for 'the protection of the idols'.²⁵ the locks were opened the same day and Television cameras were ready to televise the whole operation. That itself showed that the whole thing was pre-planned.²⁶ It is clear that the Indian State had acted in a partisan manner/in all these cases mentioned above. This becomes clearer on taking a look at the chronological sequence of events.

On October 31, 1984 Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India was assassinated by her own security guards who both happened to be Sikhs. Their action was said to one of retaliation against 'Operation Blue Star' in which the Indian army was ordered to flush out Sikh terrorists from the Golden Temple at Amritsar. The Sikh psyche was hurt over this action and Mrs. Gandhi was assassinated to avenge this "insult to the Sikhs". As an aftermath of the killing of Mrs. Gandhi anti-Sikh riots broke out in Delhi and several other parts of India and continued unabated for several days. In the General Elections that followed less than two months later, the Congress (I) under the leadership of Rajiv Gandhi won a massive majority in the Lok Sabha and the outcome of these elections were termed as the "Hindu backlash".

25. For details see Noorani, A.G.: "The Babri Masjid Case" Economic and Political Weekly. January 17, 1987.

26. Engineer, 1990 op cit., p.11.

Meanwhile, the Supreme Court delivered its judgement in the Shah Bano case on April 23, 1985. This verdict raised a storm of protest among the conservative Muslim. There were huge demonstrations by the Muslims throughout India as it was thought to be an interference in their personal law by the judiciary. The Rajiv Gandhi Government felt threatened by the unprecedented agitation and agreed to enact the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Bill. This Bill was to be later introduced in the Parliament on February 25, 1986 while it was formally, enacted in 1986 by the Parliament. This Bill was enacted with the twin objective of getting rid of the communal and pro-Hindu image the Congress had gathered during the anti-Sikh riots as also to pacify the fundamentalist forces within the Muslim community who were sore with the Supreme Court's Shah Bano judgement.

However, the Government could not tide over the storm when on learning about the plans of the introduction of this Bill the BJP-VHP-RSS, the secular minded people as well as the Left Parties severely criticized this move as an attempt to tamper with the secular values of the Indian Constitution. The opposition to this Bill was most vociferous from the militant section among the Hindus. Therefore, now to co-opt this section, the Government played a role which was not above board in the opening of the locks of the disputed shrine on February 1, 1986. Significantly enough, this was done before the introduction of the said

Bill in the Parliament. It can, therefore, be inferred that the State in all these instances played a double game to please both the Hindus and the Muslims by turns.²⁷ Later, the Government made no sincere efforts to stop the Shilanyas at a spot in the disputed shrine complex on November 9, 1989. There are reasons to believe that such an inaction on the part of the Government was due to the General Elections that were to follow and with the Congress (I) badly tainted by charges of corruption at high places. Once again the conduct of the Indian State raised several questions and eyebrows as well.

The BJP, on its part, came to realize that the political mobilization of the Hindus on an emotive issue like Mrs. Gandhi's murder can be achieved as was seen during the 1984 elections and in which the Congress (I) reaped a rich harvest. As a consequence the propoganda and the agitation for the reconstruction of the Ram Temple increased slowly in tempo and peaked just before the General Elections in 1989 when the Shilanyas took place. In this case the emotive catalyst was the symbol of Lord Rama. The BJP fared handsomely in these elections. Later, one of the reasons for launching the Rath Yatra was also done with an eye on the impending mid-term elections given the inner contradictions

27. Broadly the same conclusions on the role of the Indian State are drawn by Pandey, 1989 op cit., p.43 and Engineer, 1990 op cit., p.11.

and the resultant instability of the National Front Government.

A look at the nature of constituencies from which the BJP's candidate were winning since its inception in 1980 would reveal that it drew its support basically from the urban voters. This in effect meant that the support base of the BJP was the urban middle class which was often impressed by the BJP's definition of nationalism; its economic programme which was definitely a departure from the Nehruvian economic policies; an urban middle class trait of experimenting with something new; communal riots generally take place in the urban areas and therefore BJP held a greater attraction to the affected Hindu population than other political parties and; the projection of BJP about itself as a disciplined party among other reasons. These issues are normally of no great significance to the rural populace. Hence, in order to make inroads into the rural votes an issue had to be found and played up. It was with this motive in mind that the Ramjanmabhoomi movement was launched so that it could appeal to the rural voters as well and thus create a vote base that transcends the regional barriers.

Finally, the announcement for the implementation of the Mandal Commission Report (which as we have observed before was purely a politically motivated exercise) was considered as a conspiracy to break the unity of the

Hindus.²⁸ This did not fit in the BJP scheme of things because complete Hindu unity was the basic pre-requisite for its line of thinking. This move was, therefore, very unwelcome. Moreover, since the caste base of BJP had been till then mainly among the high castes, it could ill-afford to support the implementation of Mandal. P.K. Nijhwan writes, "(V.P.Singh) is using MCR decision to divide the upper caste Hindus from the castes and classes that fall in between them and the lower strata of the Hindu society. And he is going to use the Ramjanmabhoomi agitation to consolidate the Muslims behind him."²⁹ Swapan Dasgupta is quoted as saying, "For the BJP, the political fallout of Mandal is potentially devastating. As a party that has tried to project the idyllic notion of an undifferentiated Hindu society, the legitimisation of caste as a basis of Hindu consolidation by reinforcing a set of alternative social allegiances. In practical terms, this casteist segment may mean that the BJP will once again have to confront the problem of being nationally identified with the Brahmin-Bania core. Having recently made inroads among the so-called backward castes in the whole of North India, the BJP is threatened, if caste polarization extends to electoral behaviour, with being reduced to a rump."³⁰

28. See in this regard Khare, Suresh op cit.; Jain, Girilal op cit. and; Gopal, S.: Introduction to Anatomy of Confrontation. Viking. New Delhi. 1991. p.19.

29. See Organiser. September 30, 1990. p.5.

30. See Organiser. October 7, 1990.

As noted above that due to its upper caste vote base the BJP could not support the MCR while an eye on the backward castes votes prevented it from opposing it categorically. An attempt was made earlier to win over the Harijans to its side by making a Harijan perform the Shilanyas. However, their support was dispersed among the various political parties. Faced with this dilemma, the BJP-VHP-RSS were forced to look for some way through which a total consolidation of the Hindu votes, unhindered by caste cleavages, could take place. It was, therefore, hoped that the Rath Yatra could bring about that consolidation³¹ which would submerge the internal contradictions of the castes. This can be easily explained by the fact that the BJP first criticized the Government for acting in "undue haste" on this matter and announcing the MCR without a "national debate and consensus" and thereafter launched its Rath Yatra. This yearning for the unity of the Hindus (for votes) is aptly summarized in Girilal Jain's words, "Ramjanmabhoomi is a three-pronged tool. It is not against the Muslims or the mosque. It is primarily directed towards the Hindus. Its aim is to provide platform and an ideal to the Hindus around which they can unite."³²

31. See Nayak, Pradeep and Sikand, Yoginder: "Party Politics and Communal Mobilization in Faizabad". Mainstream. Vol. XXIX No.33, June 8, 1991, p.7. They have also shown that in these endeavours the BJP-VHP-RSS gave slogans like "Jaat Paat Chhod Diya, Shri Ram Se Naata Jod Liya". p.8. Also see Sharma, Narendra, "Whither BJP?". Mainstream. Vol.XXIX No.17, February 16, 1991 pp.4-5.

32. Jain, Girilal., op cit. p.42.

But the talk about the Hindu unity is a myth. Hindus voting for BJP on an emotive issue like Ramjanmabhoomi cannot be taken as an indicator of Hindu unity because caste tensions are evident even in areas where this movement received a great support. Caste-clashes and caste-riots have taken place in, BJP ruled states like Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan after this movement. It can, therefore, be said that the success of BJP in the elections, is an incorrect indicator of the inter-caste or intra-Hindu contradictions having been wiped away.

To conclude it can be deduced from this exercise that despite the repeated protestations of the BJP-VHP-RSS that the entire Ramjanmabhoomi movement has no political motives, the fact remains that a careful scrutiny of the movement would reveal that it was and still is an exercise for the acquisition of political power.³³ After its abjectly dismal performance in the 1984 General Elections the BJP had to look for issues that could make themselves attractive for the voters to vote for them. The Ramjanmabhoomi issue was, therefore, taken up to make itself more appealing. The basic issue thereafter became gathering support and "so long as the support-gathering continues, one need not be worried by the delay in the actual construction of the proposed temple.

33. This is easily seen from the fact that in the 1991 elections that closely followed the heels of the events of October 30 and November 2, 1990 resulted in BJP acquiring 119 Lok Sabha seats and gaining power in 4 State Assemblies. The Ramjanmabhoomi movement, to my mind, is the single most significant factor in this spectacular change of fortune for the BJP.

In fact, that would be the right time for the construction of the temple. Then, it would be able to signal the onset of a new dawn, properly."³⁴

The Rath Yatra also exhibited that acquisition of power was the chief aim of the Ramjanmabhoomi movement of which the former was a part. This is exemplified in the fact that Advani's Rath Yatra was ostensibly launched to inform people about the Ramjanmabhoomi issue and motivate them to participate in the Kar Seva. However, Advani's Rath had Lotus (BJP's election symbol) prominently displayed on it at various points. This gives a fair idea that Advani was undertaking the Rath Yatra guided by no altruistic motives but by political motivations. The Rath Yatra in effect was serving as an election campaign for Advani and his party -an election which the BJP was very clear was not very far.

Modern day Indian politics has taken such dimensions that caste, religion, language, region etc have all become vote-catching devices. It is the unscrupulous politics of today's politicians that we are facing a severe national crisis. We have been forced into a dark tunnel where there seems to be no light at the other end. Unless we take lessons from history and stop politicizing issues that should remain at the periphery of politics, we cannot look for a better, united and prosperous India. Till then our hands will be full. Ramjanmabhoomi-Babri Masjid dispute is a case in point.

34. Jain, Girilal op cit. p.34.

APPENDIX I

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

January 15, 1885: Reghubar Das claiming to be the mahant of the Janmasthan instituted a suit in the court of the sub-judge, Faizabad. Pandit Hari Krishan, sought permission to build a temple on the Chabootra called the Janmasthan, an area of 17 feet by 21 feet.

February 24, 1885: The sub-judge refused permission to build the temple on the ground that it was too close to the existing masjid. The suit was dismissed.

March 17, 1886: Appeal filed by Raghubar Das. District judge, Col. J.E.A. Chambier, after an inspection of the land dismissed the appeal.

May 25, 1886: The mahant appealed before the judicial commissioner of Oudh contending that the district judge was wrong in stating that the masjid was built by Emperor Babar.

March 1934: The slaughter of a cow in Shahjahanpur led to communal riots during which Hindus demolished a part of the wall surrounding the mosque was subsequently rebuilt by the government.

1936: An inquiry by the commissionery held that the masjid was built by Babar, a Sunni.

February 20, 1944: The inquiry report, published in the official waqf gazette, figured in the 1945 litigation between the Shia and Sunni Central Board of Waqf in the court of the civil judge, Faizabad.

March 23, 1946: The civil judge held that the mosque was founded by Babar and was used by members of both sects.

December 22, 1949: Some Hindus reportedly entered the masjid at night when it was deserted and installed a deity there. The police picket on duty did not act. This incident was reported by constable Mata Prasad at the police station at 9 am and was followed by a message to this effect at 10.30 am on December 23 to the Chief minister, Chief secretary, Home secretary and the District Magistrate, K.K. Nayar.

The Chief secretary and the IGP sent frantic messages to Nayar to remove the idols but he refused on the ground that it would lead to widespread rioting. Finally, a consensus was reached to maintain the status quo till such time as the courts decide the ownership.

December 29, 1949: Priya Dutt Ram, chairman, municipal board, Faizabad-cum-Ayodhya appointed as receiver.

January 1950: Civil Suit filed by Gopal Singh Visharad in the court of the Civil judge, Faizabad, praying

to be entitled to worship the idols installed in the Janambhoomi and to restrain the defendants, from removing the idols. Among the defendants, five were Muslims. The civil judge granted an interim injunction.

The district administrator moved for modification of the order on the ground that the site in dispute is claimed by both Hindus and Muslims and that if the public is freely allowed for puja and darshan, it would amount to only one party exercising its rights.

April 24, 1950: The deputy commissioner of Faizabad, in a written statement before the civil judge said: "The property in the suit is known as the Babri masjid and it has been for a long period of time in use as a mosque for the purpose of worship by the Muslims.

December 18, 1985: VHP pleaded with the DM that the padlock on the structure be removed.

January 26, 1986: Ayodhya lawyer moved the court of Sadar Munsif seeking an order to restrain the authorities from imposing restrictions on darshan and puja. The munsif refused to pass the order.

February 1, 1986: The district judge, allowed an appeal against the Munsif's order and directed the state and district authorities to open the locks forthwith and not to impose any restriction on darshan and puja.

Within 40 minutes of this judgement, the locks of the building were opened by the city magistrate.

February 3, 1986: An application for stay was moved by Mohammed Hashmi before the Lucknow bench of the High Court contending that the district judge had adopted a manner unknown in judicial history.

February 3, 1986: Court issued notice and directed that the disputed property should not be interfered with.

February 5-6 1986: Syed Shahabuddin called for observance of Feb 14 as a day of mourning and sought the Prime Minister's intervention.

May 12, 1986: UP Sunni Central Board of Waqf filed appeal against the order.

1987: An application moved by government praying that the hearing of the writ petitions be deferred till the final disposal of the four suits pending in the High Court.

1988: VHP conference in Hyderabad ruled out further talks with government.

April 1, 1989: VHP announced that Shilanyas will commence on September 30.

May, 1989: VHP announced plans to raise Rs. 25 crore for the construction of the temple.

July 7, 1989: The High Court ordered all suits to be withdrawn and heard by a bench of three judges. It also ordered the withdrawal of a suit filed by Deoki Nandan Agarwal.

August 7, 1989: The UP government filed an application restraining the parties in all suits from disturbing the status quo.

August 14, 1989: Court issued an interim directive to maintain status quo.

Sept 18/19, 1989: Arguments were heard on the application and judgement reserved.

Sept 27, 1989: The VHP signed an agreement with the Union government that it will abide by the directive of the Lucknow Bench of the High Court on August 14, 1989.

November 7, 1989: The full Bench clarified that the Shilanyas could not take place at the disputed site.

Novemeber 9, 1989: The VHP performed Shilanyas and declared intent to start construction from February 8, 1990. This was postponed twice, till October 30, 1990.

January 1, 1990: The Court ordered that a Survey Commission be appointed. Photographs of the disputed site were also ordered to be taken by the UP archaeological department.

January 22, 1990: The Sunni Waqf board file an application for setting aside the ex-parte order dated January 12, 1990. The Supreme Court clarified its order that since they have given no directions the High Court can move freely on the matter.

June 23, 1990: The VHP met at Hardwar and decided to begin construction from October 30. Soon the BJP President, Mr. L.K. Advani announced his rathyatra.

September 25, 1990: Rathyatra started from Somnath.

October 17, 1990: The BJP warned the NF government of withdrawal of support if the rathyatra is stopped.

October 19, 1990: Presidential ordinance issued containing three point formula to acquire the disputed land.

October 21, 1990: The government withdrew the ordinance.

October 23, 1990: Mr. Advani arrested in Samastipur. The BJP withdrew support to the government which later fell.

October 30, 1990: Violence in Ayodhya, kar sevaks fired on.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

Pamphlets

- Advani L.K., Ramjanmabhoomi 'Honour People's Sentiments
Published by BJP Central Office, New Delhi.
- Agrawal V.D., Hindu Rashtra Published by VHP, New Delhi.
- Agrawal V.D., Mockery of Secularism Published by VHP, New Delhi.
- Bardhan A.B., BJP : In Search of An Ideology Communist Party Publications New Delhi.
- Curran J.A., R.S.S. Ka Asli Chehra Published by Kaumi Ekta Prakashan, New Delhi.
- Gupta J.R., Role of Foreign Money in Conversion of Hindus
Published by VHP, New Delhi.
- Khare, Suresh., Hinduon Astitva Kopahchano. Abhi nahin to kabhi nahin. Shree Ram Mandir Ka Virodh : Naye Pakistan Ki Bhoomika. Published by Sankat Mochan Ashram, New Delhi.
- Lodha G., How long Sri Ram will be insulted in Ayodhya ?
Published by VHP. New Delhi.
- Malhotra V.K., Is it a Sin to be Hindu in India. Published by VHP, New Delhi.
- Mehra C., Understanding Hinduism : 'Quest for Unity" Hindu Heritage Series Published by Shruti Prakashan, Nairobi, Kenya.
- Pandya A., Relevance of Hinduism in Modern Age Published by VHP, New Delhi.
- Sharma D., Isaikaran Ya Arashtriyakaran Published by VHP Publications, New Delhi.
- Sharma R.P., Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Ki Balidani Gatha
Published by VHP, New Delhi.
- Sharma R.P., VHP Ke Uddeshya, Karya Tatha Uplabdhiyan
Published by VHP, New Delhi.

Singhal A., 25 Years of V.H.P. Published by V.H.P, New Delhi.

Sister Nivedita, Aggressive Hinduism Published by Udbodhan Office, Calcutta, 1974.

Srivastav M.P., Upasana Bhed Par Raktapaat Kyon? Published by VHP, New Delhi.

Swami Vivekananda, Hindu Dharm ke Paksha Mein Published by Ramkrishna Math Nagpur

Swami Vivekananda, Naya Bharat Garho Published by Ramkrishna Math Nagpur 1984.

Verma M, Govansh - Raksharn Tatha Samvardhan Published by VHP, New Delhi.

Vyas H.K., VHP : Ugra Hindu Sampradayika Jahar Phailane Ke Liye Rastriya Swayamsevak Sangh Ka Naya Mukautha Published by Bharatiya Communist Party .

The Great Betrayers Published by B.J.P. Central Office, New Delhi

The Hindu Awakening : Restrospect and Promise Published by VHP, New Delhi.

Communalism Takes a Dangerous New Form An AIRSF Publications Bomaby, Dec. 1989.

Nation's Hope Published by B.J.P. Phalke Road, Bombay.

'The Political Abuse of History'. Central for Historical Studies (CHS) Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. 1989.

Address by Maharana B.S., Mewar, Udaipur at 10th Hindu Conference, New York. July 1984. Published by VHP, New Delhi.

Secondary Sources

Books

- Ambedkar B.R., Who were the Shudras ? Thacker & Co., Bombay. 1946.
- Anderson B, Imagined Communities Verso. London. 1983.
- Andersen Walter K., and Damle Shidhar D., The Brotherhood in Saffron. Vistaar Publications, New Delhi. 1987.
- Ashby Philip H., Modern Trends in Hinduism. Columbia University Press, New York. 1974.
- Bakshi S.R., Gandhi and his Social Thought. Criterion Publications, New Delhi. 1986.
- Bakshi S.R., Lajpat Rai: Swaraj and Social Change 1907 - 18 Vol I and II H.K. Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi. 1990.
- Banerjee M., Invitation to Hinduism. Arnold - Heinmann, New Delhi. 1976.
- Bashman A.L., "Hinduism" in R.C. Zaehner (ed.) "The Concise Encyclopedia of Living Faiths". Hutchinson, London. 1971.
- Basu D.D., The Essence of Hinduism. Prentice-Hall of India Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi. 1990.
- Bhagwan Das., "Introduction" in The Cultural Heritage of India". Ramkrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta. 1956.
- Bhalla G.S., et al (ed.) India National State and Communalism. Patriot publishers, New Delhi. 1989.
- Bhattacharya Haridas., (ed.) The Cultural Heritage of India Ramkrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta. 1956.
- Bhattacharya Sachchidando., A Dictionary of Indian History University of Calcutta, Calcutta. 1967.
- Bose Nirmal Kumar., Selections from Gandhi. Navjivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad. 1972.

- Bouquet A.C., Comparative Religions. Penguin Books, Harmondsworth. 1956.
- Brown Brian., The Wisdom of the Hindus. Heritage publishers, New Delhi. 1973.
- Chadha Kumkum., The Ten Year File Sanchar Publishing House, New Delhi. 1992.
- Chakravarti Sitansu., S, Hinduism: A way of Life. Motilal Banarsidas Publishers, New Delhi. 1991.
- Chatterjee Margaret., Gandhi's Religious Thought. Notre Dame, Ind : University of Notre Dame Press. 1986.
- Chaturvedi Jagdishwar., (ed.) Ramjanmabhoomi - Babri Masjid Vivad. W. Newman & Co. Calcutta. 1991. ✓
- Chaudhari Nirad C., Hinduism : A Religion to Live By. B.I. Publications, New Delhi. 1979.
- Chintamani C.Y., Indian Social Reform. Thompson & Co, Madras. 1901.
- Collins L., and Lapierre D., Freedom at Midnight. Simon and Shuster, New York. 1975.
- Crawford S.S., Rammohan Roy : Social Political and Religious Reforms in Nineteenth Century India. Paragon House. New York. 1987.
- Curran Jr. J.A., Militant Hinduism in Indian Politics; A Study of the RSS. Institute of Pacific Relations, New York. 1951.
- Dandekar R.N., Insights into Hinduism. Ajanta Publications, New Delhi. 1979.
- Dube S.C., and Basilov V.N., (ed.) Secularization in Multi - Religious Societies. Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi. 1983.
- Dumont Louis., Homo Hierarchicus. University of Chicago Press, Chicago. 1970.
- Elliott Sir Charles., Hinduism and Buddhism. Routledge and Kegan Paul, London. 1954.
- Elst Koenraad., Ayodhya and After: Issues before Hindu Society. Voice of India, New Delhi. 1991. ✓

- Engineer Asghar Ali., Babri - Masjid - Ramjanmabhoomi Controversy. Ajanta Publications, New Delhi. 1990. ✓
- Engineer Asghar Ali., and Shakir Moin., (ed.) Communalism in India. Ajanta, New Delhi. 1955. ✓
- Engineer Asghar Ali., (ed.) Communal Riots in Post-Independence India. Sangam Books, Hyderabad. 1984. ✓
- Farquar J.N., Modern Religious Movements in India. Oxford University Press, Oxford. 1914. ✓
- Fischer Louis., The life of Mahatma Gandhi Harper and Row, New York. 1983. ✓
- Gahrana Kanan., Right to Freedom of Religion : A study in Indian Secularism. South Asia Publishers Pvt. Ltd, New Delhi. 1992. ✓
- Gandhi M.K., Hindu Dharma. Navjivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad. 1950. ✓
- Gandhi M.K., My Religion Navjivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad. 1985.
- Gandhi M.K., The Story of My Experiments with Truth Navjivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad. 1940.
- George A., Social Ferment in India. Athlone Press, London. 1986.
- Ghose S., Modern Indian Political Thought. Allied Publishers, New Delhi. 1984.
- Golwarkar M.S., Bunch of Thoughts. Vikram Prakashan, Bangalore. 1966.
- Gopal S., (ed.) Anatomy of Confrontation : The Babri Masjid - Ramjanmabhoomi Issue. Viking, New Delhi. 1991. ✓
- Gupta Giri Raj., (ed.) Religion in Modern India. Main Currents in Indian Sociology Vol. IV. Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd, New Delhi. 1983.
- Gupta Rameshchandra., Janmabhoomi Vivad, Urmila Publications, New Delhi. 1991. ✓
- Hastings James., Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics. T & T Clark, New York. 1955.

- Herman A.L., A Brief Introduction to Hinduism. Westview Press, San Francisco. 1991.
- Hinnells John R., and Sharpe Eric J., Hinduism : World Religion in Educations. Oriental Press, New Castle. 1972.
- Imran Mohammad., Idol worship versus God worship. Islamic Book Centre, 25/B Mason Road, Lahore. 1980.
- Jackson Robert., & Killingley Dermott., Approaches to Hinduism. John Murray Publishers Ltd. London. 1988.
- Jayaprasad K., RSS and Hindu Nationalism. Deep & Deep publications, New Delhi. 1991. ✓
- Jhangiani M.A., Jana Sangha and Swatantra : A Profile of the Rightist Parties in India. Manaktala, Bombay. 1967. ✓
- Karve D.G., Ranade : The Prophet of Liberated India. Aryabhushan Press, Poona. 1942.
- Kinsley David R., Hinduism : A Cultural Perspective Prentice-Hall. Inc. 1982.
- Klostermaier Klaus K., A Survey of Hinduism. State University of New York Press, New York. 1989.
- Koller John M., and Patricia, A Sourcebook in Asian Philosophy. Macmillan Publishing Co. Inc. 1991.
- Koller John M., The Indian Way Macmillan & Co. New York. 1987.
- Krishnamurthy V., Essentials of Hinduism. Narosa Publishing House, New Delhi. 1989.
- Lal Ramji., (ed.) Communal Problems in India - A symposium. K.P.S, Gwalior. 1988. ✓
- Madhok B., Rationale of Hindu State Pub. by :- Indian Book Gallery, New Delhi. 1982.
- Majumdar J.K., Raja Rammohan Roy and Progressive Movements in India. Brahma Mission Press, Calcutta.
- Majumdar R.C., "Evolution of Religion-Philosophic Culture in India" in The Cultural Heritage of India Vol. 4. Ramkrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta. 1956.
- Malkani K.R., The RSS Story Impex India, New Delhi. 1980. ✓

- Mashroowala Kishorelal., Gandhi Vichar Dohan Sasta Sahitya Mandal Prakashan, New Delhi. 1991.
- McDermott Robert A., and Naravane V.S., (ed.) The Spirit of Modern India Thomas Y Crowell Co., Yew York. 1974.
- Mehta J.L., Philosophy and Religion. Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi. 1990.
- Mishr R.P., Hindusim : The Faith of the Future. New Delhi. 1981.
- Mishra Dina Nath., RSS : Myth and Reality. Vikas Publishing House, New Delhi. 1980.
- Morris-Jones W.H., The Government and Politics in India. Hutchinson University Library, London. 1964.
- Mukerjee Bithika., The Hindu Tradition. Amity House, New York. 1980.
- Nehru Jawahar Lal., The Discovery of India. Oxford University Press, New Delhi. 1982.
- Narang Gokul Chand., Glorious Hinduism. New Book Society of India, New Delhi. 1966.
- O'Malley L.S.S., Popular Hinduism : The Religion of Masses. Cambridge University Press, London. 1970.
- Organ Troy Wilson., Hinduism : Its Historical Development Woodbury, New York. 1974.
- Pandya Anandshankar., Hindu Thought and World Harmony. Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay. 1989.
- Panikkar K.M., Hindu Society at Cross Roads. Asia Publishing House, Bombay. 1955.
- Parekh M.C., The Brahma Samaj. Brahma Samaj, Calcutta. 1922.
- Patel Satyavrata., Hinduism : Religion and Way of Life. Associated Publishing House, New Delhi. 1980.
- Pattabhiram M., (ed.) General Elections in India in 1967. An Exhaustive Study of Main Political Trends. Allied Publishers, Bombay. 1967.
- Radhakrishnan S., My Search for Truth. Agrawal, Agra. 1946.

- Radhakrishnan S., The Hindu View of Life. George Allen and Unwin, London. 1954.
- Rai Lala Lajpat., The Arya Samaj. Longmans, London. 1932.
- Rajgopal P.N., Communal Violence in India. Uppal Publishing House. 1987.
- Ram G.M., The Bible of Hinduism. Allied Publishers, New Delhi. 1985.
- Rolland Romain., Life of Vivekananda. Advaita Ashram, Almora. 1953.
- Roy M.N., India in Transition. Edition De la Librairie, Geneva. 1922.
- Sarma D.S., A Primer of Hinduism. Bhartiya Vidya Bhawan, Bombay. 1984.
- Sarma D.S., Hinduism Through the Ages. Bhartiya Vidya Bhawan, Bombay. 1989.
- Sarma D.S., Studies in the Renaissance of Hinduism in the Nineteenth and Twentieth centuries B.H.U. 1944.
- Sarma N.S., Hindu Renaissance. B.H.U., Banaras. 1944.
- Sastri Sivanath., The Mission of the Brahmo Samaj. Brahma Sadhan Ashram Diamond Jubilee Publication, Calcutta. 1952.
- Savarkar V.D., Hindutva. Loksangraha Printing Press, Poona. 1942.
- Sen Guru Prasad., Introduction to the study of Hinduism. 1893.
- Sen K.M., Hinduism. Penguin Books, Harmondsworth. 1973.
- Seshagiri Rao K.L., (ed.) Hinduism. Punjabi University, Patiala. 1969.
- Shakir Moin., Secularization of Muslim Behaviour. Minerva, Calcutta. 1973.
- Sharma Arvind., 'What is Hinduism' : A Sociological Approach. in Giri Raj Gupta (ed.) 'Religion in Modern India main currents in Indian sociology Vol. IV. Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi. 1983.

- Sharrock John A., Hinduism : Ancient and Modern. Bhartiya Publishing House, New Delhi. 1979.
- Singh Karan., Hinduism. Criterion Publications, New Delhi. 1987.
- Smith Bardwell L., Hinduism : New Essays in the History of Religion. E.J. Brill, Leiden. 1976.
- Sondhi M.L, and Madhuri., (ed.) Hinduism with a Human Face. Raaj Prakashan, New Delhi. 1990.
- Srivastava Sushil., The Disputed Mosque. Vistaar Publications, New Delhi. 1991.
- Stroup Herbert., Four Religions of India : A Primer. Harper and Row, London. 1968.
- Suda J.P., Religions of India. A study of their Essential Unity. New Delhi. 1978.
- Swami Dayananda Saraswati., Satyarthaprakasha. Sarvadeshika Sabha, New Delhi. 1960.
- Swami Karpartriji Maharaj., Ram Rajya Aur Marxvad. Gita Press, Gorakhpur. 1956.
- Swami Nirvedananda., "Sri Ramakrishna and Spiritual Renaissance" in The Cultural Heritage of India. Vol. 4. Ramkrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta. 1956.
- Swami Vivekananda., Essentials of Hinduism. Advaita Ashram, Calcutta. 1973.
- Swami Vivekananda., Hindu Dharma. Ramkrishna Math, Nagpur. 1984.
- Swami Yogeshananda., The Way of the Hindu. Hutton Educational Publications, Bucks. 1980.
- Thapar Romilla., Historical Realities. in Ramji Lal (ed.) 'Communal Problems in India A - Symposium' K.P.S., Gwalior. 1988
- The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda. Advaita Ashram Almora.
- The Life of Swami Vivekananda By his Eastern and Western Disciples. Advaita Ashram Almora. 1933

Urumpackal Thomas P., Organised Religion According to Dr. S. Radha Krishnan. Universita Gregoriana Editrie, Roma. 1972

Vanaik Achin., The Painful Transition : Bourgeois Democracy in India. Verso, London. 1990.

Wilkins W.J., Modern Hinduism. Cosmo Publications, New Delhi. 1987.

Zacharius H.C.E., Renascent India. Allen and Unwin, London. 1933.

Zaehner R.C., Hinduism. Oxford University Press, London. 1972.

Articles

- Ahmad I., 'The Political Economy of Communalism in India' Economic and Political Weekly June 2, 1984.
- Ahmed I., 'Secularism and Communalism' Economic and Political Weekly. Dec. 1970.
- Ahsan S., 'Communal Danger and Muslims' Mainstream. Vol. XXVIII No. 20 March 10, 1990. pp 14, 23.
- Apte S.S., 'Vishwa Hindu Parishad confluence of Hindu Society' Hindu Vishwa Jan 1966.
- Barrier Norman G., 'The Arya Samaj and Congress Politics in the Punjab 1884-1908' The Journal of Asian Studies Vol. XXVI. No. 3. May 1967.
- Barthwal C.P., Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh : 'Origin Structure and Ideology' Indian Political Science Review. December 1953.
- Chatterjee P., 'What I saw at Ayodhya' Mainstream. Vol. XXIX No. 3. November 10, 1990. pp. 3-34.
- Chaturvedi J.P., 'Secularism and Minorityism in Indian Polity' Mainstream. Vol. XXIX, No. 17. Feb 16, 1991. pp. 21-26.
- Dhamji U., 'Jawaharlal Nehru and Hindutva' Mainstream. Vol. XXIX No. 33. June 8, 1991, pp. 5, 34-35.
- Dixit P., 'Hindu Nation' Seminar. 216 (August 1977).
- Engineer A.A., 'Masjid - Janmabhoomi Dispute : Historical Aspects' Mainstream Vol. 10. 1990. p. 7-13.
- Engineer A.A., 'Muslim Minority in India and Hindu Minority in Pakistan : A Comparative Review.' Mainstream Vol. XXIX. No 21. March 16, 1991 pp. 11-12, 14.
- Engineer A.A., 'On Secularism and Pseudo - Secularism' Mainstream. Vol. XXIX. No. 35. June 22, 1991 pp. 6, 35
- Gangadharan K.K., 'Shiv Sena' Seminar. 151, (March 1972).
- Ghosh K., 'Search for a Secular Identity' Mainstream. Vol. XXVII. No. 43. August 18, 1990. pp. 11-14.

- Gopal S., 'Dissecting Ayodhya Confrontation' Mainstream. Vol. XXIX, No 28. May 4, 1991. pp. 17-22.
- Harvey M.J., 'The Secular as Sacred ? The Religio Political Rationalization of B.G. Tilak' Modern Asian Studies. Vol. 20, No. 2. 1986.
- Jaitley J., 'Rituals, Religion and Reason' Mainstream. Vol. XXX, No. 16. Feb 9, 1991. pp 23-24.
- Kant K., 'Religion, Culture, Politics and Nation : Search for a New Equilibrium in India Society' Mainstream Annual 1990. pp. 15-18, 136-147
- Karunakaran K.P., 'Regionalism' Seminar. 87 (November 1960).
- Khan A., 'Dragon's Teeth of BJP' Mainstream Vol. XXIX , No. 25 April 13, 1991. pp. 19-20, 24.
- Krishna G., 'Communal Violence in India' Parts I and II Economic and Political Weekly January 12-19, 1989.
- Kumar P., 'Crisis in Secularism : Some Issues', Mainstream. Vol. XXIX. No. 32. June 1, 1991. pp 20-22, 26
- Malkani K.R., 'Concept of Secularism and Controversy Around Ayodhya' Mainstream. Annual No. 1990. pp. 37-38.
- Menon S.M., 'Hindu Upsurge in Perspective' Mainstream Vol. XXIX. No. 29. May 11, 1991. pp. 17-25.
- Miller D., 'Six Theses on the Question of Religion and Politics in India Today.' Economics and Political Weekly. July 25, 1987.
- Mojumdar M., 'Destroying the best in Hinduism' Mainstream Vol. XXIX. No. 25 April 13, 1991. pp. 17-18.
- Mukhia H., 'Ayodhya Dispute : Historical Evidence and BJP's Aim,' Mainstream Vol XXIX. No. 3 Nov. 10, 1990 pp. 9-10, 12.
- Nadeem A., 'A Mosque Where Ram Lives' Mainstream Vol. XXIX. No. 5. Nov. 24, 1990. pp. 11-14.
- Nagar V., 'What will happen if Ram gets defeated' Mainstream Vol. XXIX. No 29. May 11, 1991. pp. 11.

- Nayak P. and Sikand Y., 'Party Politics and Communal Mobilization in Faizabad' Mainstream Vol. XXIX. No. 33. June 8, 1991. pp 6-9.
- Noorani A.G., 'History of BJP (1980-1990)' Mainstream Vol. XXIX. No. 23. March 30, 1991. pp. 7-12.
- Noorani A.G., 'Judges Indict RSS, Shiv Sena's Anti - Hindu Role' Mainstream Vol. XXIX. No. 35. June 22, 1991. p. 31.
- Noorani A.G., 'Resolving the Ayodhya Tangle Through History' Mainstream Vol. XXIX. No. 13. JAN 19, 1991. pp. 9-13.
- Paranjape H.K., 'Secularism : Real and Pseudo' Mainstream Vol. XXIX. No. 30. May 18, 1991. pp. 8-10.
- Pati B., 'Hindu Fundamentalism's Battle for Respectability' Mainstream Vol. XXIX. No. 30. May 18, 1991. pp. 17-18.
- Puri Y., 'Re-examining Religion, Communalism and Communal Riots' Mainstream Vol. XXIX. No. 22. March 23, 1991. pp 13-15.
- Roy D., 'From Ram to Babar and Beyond' Mainstream Vol. XXVIII. No. 33 June 9, 1990. pp. 20-24.
- Rustamji K.F., 'Babri Masjid : Plea for a Magnanimous Gesture' Mainstream Vol. XXVIII. No. 30. May 19, 1990. pp. 5-35.
- Saberwal Satish., 'Elements of Communalism' Part II Mainstream March 28, 1981.
- Saxena K., 'The Janata Party Politics in Uttar Pradesh (1977-79)' Indian Political Science Review, July 1983.
- Sharma N., 'Wither BJP' ? Mainstream Feb. 16, 1991. Vol. XXIX. No. 17. pp. 4-5
- Singh Randhir., 'Theorizing Communalism' Economic and Political Weekly, July 23, 1988.
- Singh S., 'Ain-i-Akbari and Ayodhya' Mainstream Vol. XXVIII. No. 20. March 10, 1990. pp 13, 30.
- Singh S. and A., 'How Mahatma Gandhi's Plan Can Solve The Temple Issue' Mainstream Vol. XXIX. No 13. Jan 19, 1991. pp 19-20, 25.

- Tyabji B., 'For Sanity Over Ayodhya' Mainstream Vol. XXIX.
No. 8. Dec. 15, 1990. p 9.
- Vergheese B.G., 'The Essence of Ayodhya' Mainstream Vol.
XXIX. No. 3. Nov. 10, 1990. pp 5-6, 18.
- Wariavwalla B., Religion and State' Mainstream Vol. XXVIII.
No. 14. Jan 27, 1990. pp 59-60.
- Yadav M., 'The Content of Hindu Rashtra' Mainstream Vol.
XXIX. No. 30. May 18, 1991. pp. 12-16.
- Zakaria R., 'Is Islam Secular' ? Mainstream Vol. XXVII.
No. 30. May 19, 1990. pp 6-8, 10.

Newspapers

Organiser (New Delhi)

Panchjanya (New Delhi)

News Time (Hyderabad)

Financial Express (New Delhi)

The Hindustan Times (New Delhi)

The Indian Express (New Delhi)

The Statesman (New Delhi)

The Times of India (New Delhi)

National Herald (New Delhi)

Magazines

India Today

Sunday

Pratipaksha

Dharmayuga

Frontline



1802