

Communal Politics Facts Versus Myths

Christianity has been present in India since at least the third century, but the faith remains a small minority. Even so, Christianity is growing rapidly in parts of the subcontinent, and has made an impact far beyond its numbers. Yet Indian Christianity remains highly controversial, and it has suffered growing discrimination and violence. This book shows how Christian converts and communities continue to make contributions to Indian society, even amid social pressure and violent persecution. In a time of controversy in India about the legitimacy of conversion and the value of religious diversity, Christianity in India addresses the complex issues of faith, identity, caste, and culture. It documents the outsized role of Christians in promoting human rights, providing education and healthcare, fighting injustice and exploitation, and stimulating economic uplift for the poor. Readers will come away surprised and sobered to learn how these active initiatives often invite persecution today. The essays draw on intimate and personal encounters with Christians in India, past and present, and address the challenges of religious freedom in contemporary India.

This anthology addresses the topic of "fundamentalism and gender" from inter- and trans-disciplinary perspectives. By referring to three major themes--"Literalism, Religion, and Science," "Nation, State, and Community," and "Body, Life, and Biopolitics"--the book focuses on the analytical diversification of the term "fundamentalism" and on intersections between religion, gender, sexuality, race, and nation. International scholars in cultural history and theory, religious studies, Christian theologies, Islamic studies, history, social sciences, anthropology, comparative literature, and women and gender studies examine the historical and current specifics of religious as well as of secular forms of fundamentalism. They also take a critical look at the Western discourse about religious fundamentalism and the ambivalent role feminism plays in this context, considering questions such as, Why do all religious fundamentalisms claim normalizing definitions of sexuality, gender roles, and intergender relations? In what way do gender and sexual politics play a role in secular criticism of religious fundamentalism? And how are forms of secular fundamentalism characterized by gender constructs and sexual politics?

A major new contribution to comparative and multidisciplinary scholarship on the alignment of religion and violence in the contemporary world, with a special focus on South and Southeast Asia. *Religion and Conflict in South and Southeast Asia* shows how this region is the site of recent and emerging democracies, a high degree of religious pluralism, the largest Muslim populations in the world, and several well-organized terrorist groups, making understanding of the dynamics of religious conflict and violence particularly urgent. By bringing scholars from religious studies, political science, sociology, anthropology and international relations into conversation with each other, this volume brings much needed attention to the role of religion in fostering violence in the region and addresses strategies for its containment or resolution. The dearth of other literature on the intersection of religion, politics and violence in contemporary South and Southeast Asia makes the timing of this book particularly relevant. This book will be of great interest to advanced undergraduate and postgraduate students of Asian politics, security studies and conflict studies.

Though not all people are religious believers, religion has played important historic roles in developing political systems, parties, and policies—affecting believers and nonbelievers alike. This is particularly true in the United States, where scholars have devoted considerable attention to a variety of political phenomena at the intersection of religious belief and identity, including social movements, voting behavior, public opinion, and public policy. These outcomes are motivated by “identity boundary-making” among the religiously affiliated. The contributors to this volume examine two main factors that influence religious identity: the communication of religious ideas and the perceptions of people (including elites) in communicating said ideas. *Exploring the Public Effects of Religious Communication on Politics* examines an array of religious communication phenomena. These include the media’s role in furthering religious narratives about minority groups, religious strategies that interest groups use to advance their appeal, the variable strength of Islamophobia in cross-national contexts, what qualifies as an “evangelical” identity, and clergy representation of religious and institutional teachings. The volume also provides ways for readers to think about developing new insights into the influence religious communication has on political outcomes.

This lucid and absorbing book explores many facets of communalism and its growing threat to the social fabric of the nation. Ram Puniyani argues that one of the main reasons for the ascendancy of communal politics is the misconceptions and distortions spread by those bent upon constructing an identity based on suspicion and hatred. These misconceptions (or myths as the author calls them) are drawn from different arenas such as history and culture and are built upon a partial projection of events and `facts` combined with a skewed assertion of norms and practices of the `other` community. A mountain of hatred, says the author, is then built upon these totally selective `facts` which misinform and mould common perceptions. Overall, this fascinating book dispels, in a novel and logical manner, many distortions which have been responsible for arousing communal passions and which have created an external or `enemy` image of religious minorities and the socially disadvantaged.

Human Rights and the Third World: Issues and Discourses deals with the controversial questions on the universalistic notions of human rights. It finds Third World perspectives and seeks to open up a discursive space in the human rights discourse to address unresolved questions, citing issues and problems from different countries in the Third World.

Describes peacebuilding performances in different regions of the world fractured by war and violence.

This Handbook is based on the conviction of its editors and contributing authors that understanding and acceptance of, as well as collaboration between religions has essential educational value. The development of this Handbook rests on the further assumption that interreligious education has an important role in elucidating the global demand for human rights, justice, and peace. Interreligious education reveals that the creeds and holy books of the world’s religions teach about spiritual systems that reject violence and the individualistic pursuit of economic and political gain, and call their followers to compassion for every human being. It also seeks to lead students to an awareness that the followers of religions across the world need to be, and to grow in, dialogical relationships of respect and understanding. An essential aim of interreligious education is the promotion of understanding and engagement between people of different religions and, therefore, it has great potential to contribute to the common good of the global community. Interreligious education has grown from the interfaith movement, whose beginning is usually identified with the World Parliament of Religions held in Chicago in 1893. This was the first time in history that leaders of the eastern and western religions had come together for dialogue, and to consider working together for global unity.

This Brief looks at the illustrative case of the Hindu-Muslim conflict in India, with the aim of understanding the dynamics of lived secularism as it exists in traditional multi-faith societies such as India. The data analyzed in this Brief comprise many interviews, conducted amidst Hindus and Muslims, with respondents of both sexes living in slum and middle class regions in the city of Mumbai. The volume begins by giving a brief summary of the historical and cultural background to the present situation in India. It then traces complementarities and similarities of opinions across diverse constituencies which cluster around three main anchoring points: communication, re-presentations and operationalizing of a shared dream. The first point explores the need to understand and to be understood, encourages processes of mutual acculturation, and describes the sensitive decoding of cultural symbols such as dress codes. The second point discusses changes in mind sets and mutual perceptions, where Muslims and Islam are portrayed in a balanced way and exploitation of religion for political purposes is stopped. The third main point is the involvement of the common, regular person, and a focus on children, as the unifying hope for the future. Throughout the volume, emphasis is on moral maturation, cultural interpretation in lieu of cultural imposition and creation of a sensitive media policy. The issues raised may help craft interdisciplinary and international frameworks, which address conflict resolution in culturally diverse multi-faith societies. Accordingly, the book concludes with policy recommendations for supporting the peaceful coexistence of secularism and

religion in society from a peace psychological perspective.

Viewed? from the perspective of evolution, different sexes originated from a single sex, biologically equipped to reproduce without any compulsion of getting engaged in sexual act. But it was in the story of evolution that different sexes would emerge and "meeting/mating" would be necessary for reproduction of similar creatures with occasional accidental outcome of some sexes bearing cross-sex physical or mental features. The story also included another principle of Nature—the principle of attraction and generated eco-biologically. The time it came to be included in human vocabulary under the umbrella term 'love', religion or organized social supervision started categorizing things under binary basis, of course, for the sake of exercising authority and control on the member of a group. The rest is a long history of such exercises from different institutions which into being as part of power mechanism. So it happened that every religion or sect condemned any form of sexual or mental relationship outside the binary male-female combination and 'laws' were passed favour of such authentication. But throughout the historical times the relationship outside the category always existed, not just among the human beings but also among the animal beings. So to call such relationship 'unnatural' is to go against Nature itself, which is full of contradictions and anomalies and accidents; for, because of those things evolution could take place as a dynamic process moving through selection and deselection. It is apparent that the LGBTQ issues arose out of complex human condition on this planet, and approaching the issues requires high level of multidisciplinary holistic researches and perspectives. Recently a verdict of the Supreme Court of India recriminalizing same-sex relationship brought into forefront the LGBTQ issues in India. Criticism of the verdict burst out across the media followed by symbolic protests and violations of the law, and the honourable judges came under sharp criticism from many corners. People, however, must bear in mind that the judges just interpreted what is coded in the constitution in the form of law. The Section 377 IPC was, in fact, imposed under Judeo-Christian codes in 1861 during the British rule. What has been ruled out as "against the order of nature" is actually supposed Judeo-Christian injunction on any form of sexual relationship outside the institution of marriage following heterosexual norms. Earlier many 'progressive' people rejoiced in the 2009 judgement of the Delhi High Court allowing consensual homosexual act between adults. It is everybody's fundamental right to approach the court, and to expect the court to go beyond the structure of the constitution may not be prudent. One question can be raised here: whether law can properly understand and address the complex issues of LGBTQ questions. The court can deliver only if it is equipped with the necessary provisions supplied by the Parliament through comprehensive multidisciplinary researches, discussions and conclusions fit for our age. The state must take up such initiatives to minimize the rising frustrations of certain sections of the society.

With the rise of the Hindu fundamentalist BJP as a significant electoral force nationwide, Indian politics are in the process of a major shift in character. Not only is the shaky hold of Congress on power threatened by this dynamic party with its overt appeal to religious chauvinism, but the secular nature of the Indian state and delicate balance of relations between diverse religious communities are at stake. The eminent scholars who have collaborated in this book examine both the flash point issue of the mosque at Ayodha (demolished by militant Hindus), as well as the deeper causes - historic and contemporary - underlying rising communal tension in India today/ This book constitutes a profound but accessible re-examination of many basic features of Indian society and politics.

"The Sikh militant movement spanned one-and-a-half decades during which a considerable loss of life occurred in and outside Punjab. In terms of its spread, it almost became international in character largely due to the presence of diaspora Sikhs in most of the western world. This work is based on the analysis of the speeches and messages of the leaders of the militant movement. It has been argued, without essentializing the problematic, that the nature of discourse of the militant movement could be traced back to the construction of Sikhism in the second half of the nineteenth century. The ideology of the Singh Sabha movement and its attempt at the construction of singular religious identity provided the dynamics to the Sikh community. In the process, the religious tradition was invented, which emphasized the singular Sikh identity by paving the way for the fundamentalist discourse of separatism. The composite religious tradition in Sikhism was put at the margin of the community as a result of which it became possible to construct Sikh nationhood. Coupled with this construction was the attempt of the militants to purge the community from all syncretism practised by the Sikhs. It has been argued that despite this construction, the Sikh community has continued to observe the composite tradition though the threat of militant violence greatly reduced the eclectic space of inter-subjective communitarian understanding and interaction."

This volume brings together important and original perspectives from South Asia on the relationship between violence---an increasingly important issue in multicultural societies---and the process of othering. The contributors state that societies create 'others' through deliberate acts of selection over a period of time. The objective of the process of othering is to deny rights and privileges that one sets for one's own group. This volume affirms that central to the understanding of violence in any society is the understanding of othering processes. Violence and nonviolence are influenced by the nature of othering processes as well as the kinds of others in a society. Groups engaged in mutual othering are also the ones that are often involved in violent relationships. Renowned scholars from diverse fields provide multidisciplinary perspectives on violence and othering, discussing the concepts of violence and nonviolence in multicultural societies, communal harmony, constructions of the other, truth commissions, state censorship of 'sensitive' issues, fundamentalism and secularism in multifaith societies, and specific cases from recent violence-prone areas. This volume focuses on the South Asian, and more specifically, the Indian context, but is relevant for researchers seeking to understand these issues anywhere in the world.

In recent years, peace psychology has grown from a utopian idea to a means of transforming societies worldwide. Yet at the same time peacebuilding enjoys global appeal, the diversity of nations and regions demands interventions reflecting local cultures and realities. Peace Psychology in Asia shows this process in action, emphasizing concepts and methods diverging from those common to the US and Europe. Using examples from China, India, Indonesia, the Philippines, and elsewhere in the region, chapter authors illuminate the complex social, political, and religious conditions that have fostered war, colonialism, dictatorships, and ethnic strife, and the equally intricate personal and collective psychologies that need to be developed to encourage reconciliation, forgiveness, justice, and community. Peace Psychology in Asia: Integrates psychology, history, political science, and local culture into concepts of peace and reconciliation. Highlights the indigenous aspects of peace psychology. Explains the critical relevance of local culture and history in peace work. Blends innovative theoretical material with empirical evidence supporting peace interventions. Balances its coverage among local, national, regional, and global contexts. Analyzes the potential of Asia as a model for world peace. As practice-driven as it is intellectually stimulating, Peace Psychology in Asia is vital reading for social and community psychologists, policy analysts, and researchers in psychology and sociology and international studies, including those looking to the region for ideas on peace work in non-Western countries.

Despite the teachings of Babasaheb Ambedkar against Hinduism and its pernicious caste system, which he forsook to become a Buddhist, many Dalits have turned to Hindutva. The RSS under Balasaheb Deoras began to appropriate Ambedkar, engaging with Dalits and Adivasis, Hinduizing their beliefs, providing social welfare and binding them in a political alliance. Hindutva and Dalits: Perspectives for Understanding Communal Praxis takes a comprehensive view of the birth and growth of the Hindutva movement and its specific impact on Dalits. Part I, Theoretical Perspectives, explores the attitude of Hindutva vis-à-vis Dalits in its various manifestations. Part II, Hindutva in Operation, covers empirical evidence of its impact on Dalits. The contributors, distinguished scholar-activists, offer a provocative analysis on why both Dalits and Adivasis are drawn to Hindutva. As analysed by Tanika Sarkar in her incisive Foreword,

Hindutva's hegemonic agenda lets 'subalterns develop a stake in their own subordination, ... not in resignation or despair but in eager self-identification with it'. The great strength of this collection is that it asks difficult questions that need to be asked and yet have no easy answers. The book, thus, makes an invaluable contribution to the debate and takes it forward.

This book offers a comprehensive and interdisciplinary account of religious identities in the Global South. Drawing on literature in various fields, Felix Wilfred analyzes how religious identities intersect with the processes of globalization, modernity, and postmodernity. He illustrates how the study of religion in the Global North often revolves around questions of secularism and fundamentalism, whereas a neo-Orientalist quality often attends study of religion in the Global South. These approaches and theorizing fail to incorporate the experiences of lived religion in the South, especially in Asia. Historically, the religions in the South have played a highly significant role in resistance to the domination by the colonial forces, an important reason for the continued attachment of the peoples of the South to their religious universe. This book puts the two regions and their scholarly norms in conversation with one another, exploring the social, political, cultural, and economic implications.

The papers in this volume are organised in three parts: scriptural, contextual and theological. The central question being addressed is: how do Christians living in contexts where Islam is a majority or minority religion, experience, express or think of the cross? This is therefore an exercise in listening. As the contexts from where these engagements arise are varied, the papers in drawing scriptural, contextual and theological reflections offer a cross-section of Christian thinking about Jesus and the cross.

RSS, School Texts and the Murder of Mahatma Gandhi undertakes the novel experiment of juxtaposing three apparently quite different issues, the nature of the RSS school textbooks, the murder of the Mahatma and the basic ideology of Savarkar and Golwalkar. While deeply delving into all three aspects, it brings out the deep connection between them.

The book, which brings out the basic ideological underpinnings of the Hindu Communal Project, is divided into three parts. Part I discusses how this ideology is propagated among young impressionable minds through school textbooks. Part II studies the role of the Sangh combine in the murder of Mahatma Gandhi and Part III analyses the basic elements of the Hindu communal ideology, as propounded by some of its founders like Savarkar and Golwalkar. The book brings home to us in a dramatic manner the great threat communalism poses to our society, thus making it a must-read for the general educated reader, including politicians, political workers, social activists and journalists.

Babri Masjid-Ramjanmabhumi issue is the most complicated and tension provoking in India, as whole of the country was in the grip of communal tension and hatred for the last three decades. It was a matter of grief that Ramjanmabhumi i.e. the birth place of Ram (according to Hindu community), which ought to be a sacred place of worship, took the shape of battle-field for both, the Hindus and the Muslims.¹ The communal fire lit from here spread to the whole country. Ayodhya is now in every one's mind, not due to its affiliation with Ram the God, but due to the fact that communal forces in various political parties made it their main political agenda for obvious electoral gains. This dispute, in recent years has become the most important reason for a deep deterioration of inter-communal relationship and communalisation of Indian political process. This dispute, undoubtedly one of the most sensitive communal issues after partition and biggest controversy after the Shah Bano case. In the year 1986, the doors of the disputed shrine (Babri Masjid) were opened for the Hindus, so that they may be enabled to perform worship of deities, enshrined there, on the order of Faizabad court,² emotions were aroused on both the sides. The Hindus felt a new courage for they had won a long fight, fought to regain their lost heritage, while the Muslims considered it, their defeat, as they were forced to lose control over a place of worship, they claimed to belonged to them. During the year 1992, the dispute took the form of a national crisis, when the Masjid was demolished with an intention to build a temple at that very site. Still it did not conclude the controversy, whether the mosque was constructed first or the temple was already present there. There are also conflicting records put fourth, by different groups about the question of Mandir or Masjid. The situation became more curious and multi dimensional because of the involvement of different actors like, state, political parties, religious leaders, media and intelligentsia. The identification of present Ayodhya (Uttar Pradesh) with Ramjanmabhumi is based upon the faith of the Hindu community and has no solid evidence. There is no conclusive proof that the mosque build at the time of Babar, was on a temple site or that a temple had been destroyed to build it.³ Outwardly, it was a dispute fought for mere ownership of a piece of land, but in a deeper sense, it was related with the right to freedom of religion, guaranteed in Article-25 of the constitution.

Compared to Shah Bano case, and the discussion on Uniform or separate Civil Codes, this controversy is not a clear cut matter of legislation on the minority rights, rather, it deals with the legal practices of supposedly secular state India and the need to practically secure the minority rights.⁴ Because the Ramjanmabhumi movement lays emphasis on myths and beliefs, rather than facts and democratic decisions, the issue also includes confrontation between religious and secular ideals within politics.

The basic objective of this book is to explore the possibilities of reform in Muslim Personal Law and Hindu Personal Law from women rights perspective. It is a long, complex discourse. But the key factor in the whole discourse is gender . The issue of Uniform Civil Code (UCC) is being hugely politicized and communalized by communal forces in the name of religion. But the endeavour here is to see the whole issue objectively through the lens of gender equality.

Muslims have been present in South Asia for 14 centuries. Nearly 40% of the people of this vast land mass follow the religion of Islam, and Muslim contribution to the cultural heritage of the sub-continent has been extensive. This textbook provides both undergraduate and postgraduate students, as well as the general reader, with a comprehensive account of the history of Islam in India, encompassing political, socio-economic, cultural and intellectual aspects. Using a chronological framework, the book discusses the main events in each period between c. 600 CE and the present day, along with the key social and cultural themes. It discusses a range of topics, including: How power was secured, and how

was it exercised The crisis of confidence caused by the arrival of the West in the sub-continent How the Indo-Islamic synthesis in various facets of life and culture came about Excerpts at the end of each chapter allow for further discussion, and detailed maps alongside the text help visualise the changes through each time period. Introducing the reader to the issues concerning the Islamic past of South Asia, the book is a useful text for students and scholars of South Asian History and Religious Studies.

This book spans 70 years of the dark history of Anti-Muslim violence in India that have caused over tens of thousands of deaths and refugees. Violence against Muslims in India is frequently in the form of violent attacks on Muslims by Hindus. These attacks are referred to as communal riots in India between the majority Hindus and minority Muslims, and have been connected to a rise in Islamophobia.

This Is An Expose On The Real Savarkar Of Pre-Independence India Based On Original Documents Available In The Archives Of The Hindu Mahasabha, The Rss, The Government Of India And The Memoirs Of Revolutionaries.

In Indian context.

This Book Attempts To Look At Hindutva`S Fascist Cyenda Unfolding In The Country Today.

Hindu nationalists in the west Indian state of Gujarat repudiate the pluralist vision of Gandhi and Nehru and foment state-sponsored violence and ethnic cleansing against Muslims and Christians. In 2002, the burning to death of 59 rightwing Hindu militants in a train in Gujarat set off waves of state-condoned communal riots in which as many as 2,000 predominantly Muslim Gujaratis were murdered and 200,000 made homeless. In the wake of these atrocities, secular peace-building organizations have redoubled their efforts to heal the rift between Hindus and Muslims in Gujarat. A certified mediator, Janet Powers bases her book on interviews with workers in twenty of these peace-building NGOs and grassroots peace organizations, which are locked in struggle with politicized Hindu religious organizations largely funded by money raised in the United States. This is the first book to examine Hindu-Muslim relations in Gujarat in the frame of ongoing peace and conflict resolution efforts. Gujarat is the state of origin of most of the entrepreneurial Indians who own motels, convenience stores, and gas stations in the United States and United Kingdom. Much of the funding for the rightwing Hindu parties that foment extremist violence, ethnic cleansing, and re-conversion campaigns against the Muslim and Christian minorities in Gujarat comes from Gujarati expatriates in the U.S. and UK. Gujarat is the home of Mahatma Gandhi, who was assassinated in 1948 by an agent of the RSS, a violently anti-Muslim Hindu nationalist organization that flourishes today in Gujarat in virulent association with the ruling BJP and VHP parties. Equally dangerous to the peace of Gujarat are violent Wahhabist organizations based in Pakistan but operating in India. Powers assesses the prospects for long-term healing in Gujarat based on historical precedents, and she applies the lessons of Gujarati grassroots peace-building organizations in Gujarat to zones of state-sponsored religious conflict in other parts of the world.

The book is a collection of essays and articles written over a period of 5 years. The essays numbering 40 in number have been divided into nine main sections. Section I discusses essays on religion and society, Section II contains articles on Hindutva, Section III has essays on Hindutva and minorities, Section IV selected articles on Hindutva threat protection Islam and terrorism, have been given. Section V has essays on communalism and violence, Section VI has articles on political chess board, Section VII has essays on Hindutva and Dalits, Section VIII discusses women and Hindu right and lastly Section IX contains articles on faith and reason.

Most of the papers presented at the Workshop on Violence and the State in India, held at Amherst during 30 April - 1 May 2004.

As India celebrated the sixtieth anniversary of its independence, much praise was lavished on its emergence as a major player on the global stage. Its economic transformation and geopolitical significance as a nuclear power are matched by its globally resonant cultural resources. This book explores India's rich popular culture. Chapters provide illuminating insights into various aspects of the social, cultural, economic and political realities of contemporary globalised India. Structured thematically and drawing on a broad range of academic disciplines, the book deals with critical issues including: - Film, television and TV soaps - Folk theatre, Mahabharata-Ramayana ,myths, performance, ideology and religious nationalism - Music, dance and fashion - Comics, cartoons, photographs, posters and advertising - Cyberculture and the software industry - Indian feminisms - Sports and tourism - Food culture Offering comprehensive coverage of the emerging discipline of popular culture in India, this book is essential reading for courses on Indian popular culture and a useful resource for more general courses in the field of cultural studies, media studies, history, literary studies and communication studies.

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Terrorism has been a very major phenomenon disturbing the peace of the planet today. While acts of terror have been recorded in recent history from last several centuries, this phenomenon has come to prominence from the ghastly tragedy of 9/11 2001. With this the American media popularized the word Islamic terrorism, and worldwide this propaganda against Islam and Muslims picked up. Al Qaeda, a product of US policies to control of oil wealth in West Asia, has been the major tormentor of people and its worst victims have been people of India and Pakistan. Parallel with this the likes of Sadhvi Prgya Singh Thakur and Swami Aseemanand also came up with the goal of 'Bomb for a bomb' and for pursuing the politics of Hindu Rashtra (Nation). This book is a graphic presentation of the whole issue. It focuses on the definition of terrorism, and the genesis of Al Qaeda through indoctrination in the specially set up Madrassa by America in Pakistan. The phenomenon of Osama bin Laden and his support by US is presented in the book. The book also takes up the theory of 'clash of civilization' and its fallacies. The series of blast from Nanded 2006 to Ajmer and Malegaon blasts are also analyzed. The book demystifies the phenomenon of terror and shows that terrorism has nothing to do with religion but there are political goals behind the same.

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