Right-wing Authoritarianism in India and its Impact on Tribal Communities

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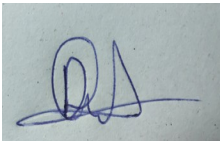Associate Dean (Student and Campus Activities),
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This is to certify that this dissertation entitled "**Right-wing Authoritarianism in India and its Impact on Tribal Communities**" towards the partial fulfilment of the BS-MS dual degree programme at the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research, Pune represents study/work carried out by Divyansh Tandon at the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research, Pune under the supervision of Dr. Chaitra Redkar, Associate Professor, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, during the course of December 2021-December 2022.

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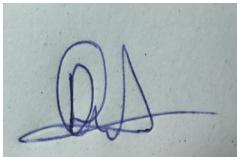
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This thesis is dedicated to all the people who stand for the idea of India as was envisioned by the founders of our great nation and as it is jotted down in the Constitution.

Declaration

I hereby declare that the matter embodied in the report entitled "**Right-wing Authoritarianism in India and its Impact on Tribal Communities**", are the results of the work carried out by me at the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences at Indian Institute of Science Education and Research, Pune, under the supervision of Dr. Chaitra Redkar and the same has not been submitted elsewhere for any other degree.

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Once I begin to write a few lines on this blank page, I realise that my stay at IISER is coming to an end. This long journey could not have such a great and transformative significance for me without the support of several people.

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Abstract

There has been a rise of right wing authoritarianism in general in the global context. It can be seen in various forms, in terms of increasing majoritarianism, increasing attacks on minorities, communalisation of vast sections of the society and in many places religious fundamentalism. India is no exception. In India there has been a dramatic rise of the political right in the recent years. Scholars observe that in India the political right manifests itself in the form of Hindutva ideology, which basically pursues the idea of making India a religious nation-state. This challenges one of the basic structure of the Indian Constitution, secularism. The proponents of the Hindu right like RSS and BJP have been quite successful in firstly, Hinduising and secondly Hindutvising a large sections of the Indian society. India is a representative democracy and follows First Past The Post system in election for Lok Sabha and the state legislatures. This necessitates electoral mobilisation across communities. Therefore, the main aim of these proponents of the Hindu Right in India is to make sure that more and more people subscribe to their ideology. The ideological spread of the Hindu nationalism and the electoral success of the Hindu right are thereby closely associated. The Hindu right has expanded its natural base or social bloc of Hindu upper-caste-middle-class to various other marginalised section of the Indian society, like the OBCs, the Dalits and the tribals. Studies show how the electoral success and ideological spread of the Hindutva ideology has given rise to Right-wing authoritarianism (RWA).

The present work is a review of studies focussing on RWA. It takes an overview of the debates surrounding RWA in the broader global context, what are its indicators and trends and how to identify such phenomenon. We also take a critical overview of the evolution of the Hindu right and Hindu nationalism starting from 1857 up until the recent times to understand how the phenomenon of RWA has propagated over space and time in the Indian context. Finally, this work takes a review of scholarly articles focussing on the interactions of the Hindu right with the Indian tribal society and how such interactions have simultaneously changed the fundamental characters of both the tribal society and the Hindu right. The scope of this study is to analyse the research done on the evolution of the forces of Hindu right and the process of Hinduisation and Hindutvisation of tribals. An attempt is made to understand how the process of Hinduisation and Hindutvisation has helped the proponents of the Hindu right like the RSS and the BJP to expand its foothold even in the regions which earlier were thought to be socially and politically out of reach of the Hindu right.

CHAPTER 1

1.1 Introduction

In the current times, India is going through a major transition in its experience of democracy. Scholars by and large agree that the rise of the Hindu right (Jaffrelot, 2007.) has emerged as a challenge to the idea of India. (Jaffrelot, 2017: 59-61) There is a debate among scholars over describing these changes, particularly on considering them as a transition to Fascism or neo-fascism. Fascism (which may manifest itself as a national phenomenon but actually has a lot of regional variabilities inscribed in it) among other things is believed to be a character of a peculiar kind of capitalist growth (Rueschemeyer, et al. 1992). But there are other social and political indices too which brings out the changes in the political culture. And in the sight of such things, it becomes very important to properly characterize and study such developments in order to better gauge and respond to the various dynamism that is being witnessed in the Indian political culture. It is not just in India, but the phenomenon of right-wing authoritarianism (RWA) has seen a dramatic rise in the global context, (Rosenberg, 2020, also Jayasuriya, 2020.) and indeed there are regional and cultural variations to the modes and methods through which such a rise in RWA has been witnessed. Different regions pertaining to their regional histories, social realities and cultural backgrounds display different expressions of RWA to attain the overall similar objective. This has challenged the basic tenets of liberal democracy, like the rule of law, individual and minority rights, emphasis on collaborative decision-making among other things. With special reference to India, this phenomenon of RWA which is aided by right-wing populism (RWP) manifests itself in the form of Hindutva ideology. Hindutva is an ideology based on the concept of ethno-nationalism, which choses religion as the center point of its dynamism. Hindutva ideology was properly codified and publicized in the early 1920s by Vinayak Damodar Savarkar through his book 'Essentials of Hindutva'. One of the major aims of Hindutva is to make India a 'Hindu Rashtra' (Hindu nation-state), and the main method which is employed in achieving this goal is the Hinduisation of the people of India. Hinduisation is the process of assimilating people who are outside (generally on the margin of) the fold of the larger Hindu society by replacing their 'lesser' traditions and cultures by the 'greater' Hindu one, and since the dominant Hindu group claims that this brings prosperity (cultural and economic) to the people who are assimilated, they are expected to occupy one of the

lower strata of the hierarchical Hindu society. The ideology of Hindutva finds the most resonance in the Hindu upper-caste-middle-class, as they form the most powerful (socially, economically as well as politically) section of the Indian society. (Basu, 1996: 30-31) Since Hindutva legitimises their hegemony, they unanimously extend their support to this supremacist ideology (obviously with some exceptions). But what is interesting is that, Hindutva has found significant base in the minority communities of India, the biggest of whom are those considered by the Indian state as the OBCs (other backward classes) They are numerically large and hence it is absolutely essential for the forces of the Hindu right to keep them on their side, and many techniques like Sanskritization has been deployed for this effect. On the other hand, even though the proponents of Hindutva, who may not necessarily raise their voices against atrocities and discrimination against the Dalit community have still managed to find sympathisers and supporters of the Hindutva ideology amongst them. Scholars like Ghanshyam Shah have shown that there is more resistive force in accepting Hindutva ideology amongst Dalits than it is there amongst the OBCs. (Shah, 2002.) While these two marginalised communities are certainly considered part of the larger Hindu caste-society, there is yet another marginalised group which one thing or the other definitely lies on the margin of this larger Hindu caste-society, the Tribals. Some scholars argue that they are part of the Hindu society while some place them outside it, we will get back to this debate in the later part of this review, but what is important here is that, these tribal people (STs in technical terms) comprises a significant portion of the Indian society. According to the census of 2011 Schedule Tribes comprise 8.6% of the total Indian population. (Ministry of Tribal Affairs, 2011) These people have from generations lived in relative isolation and have been relatively cut off from the mainstream Indian society, but with the advancement of technology and better communication these people are getting more and more connected to the larger Indian society, and so has been the efforts of the Hindutva forces to assimilate this community into the larger Hindu one. Starting from the very early days of Hindutva, there have been a constant effort to get this minority, on the margin community assimilated into the Hindu fold and surprisingly the Hindutva forces have found major success in doing so, many communal riots in which the tribals openly participated can be the evidence for it.

The present work takes critical overview of the studies undertaken to understand how the right-wing authoritarianism has first of all evolved in the Indian context starting from the very early signs of communalisation in the Indian society taking 1857 as the beginning point, and how the ideology of Hindutva which is the biggest proponent of RWA in India has evolved to become what it is at the current moment. This work also overviews how these forces of the Hindu right have affected tribal

population. This study has used the sources available on the digital platforms like JSTOR and Google Scholar. JSTOR is a digital library having a large collection of academic journals, books, published articles and other primary sources in the field of Humanities and social sciences. On the other hand, Google Scholar is a web search engine particularly dedicated to a large array of scholarly literature across various disciplines. During the course of this work we would review the phenomenon of RWA in the general context, its definition, its manifestation and various socio-political indicators that flags it. Using JSTOR and Google Scholar to search for articles related to keywords such as right wing authoritarianism, authoritarianism, Fascism, right wing populism etc. And then look at the Indian version of it in the form of Hindutva by again using the platforms like JSTOR and Google Scholar by searching for articles related to keywords like Hindu right, Hindu nationalism, Hindutva, RSS, communalism in India, etc. And observe how it is taking hold of this secular, democratic country, by focussing on its Hinduising and saffroninsing techniques giving special emphasis on the tribal community, the major keywords used for this purpose were, tribes in India, Hindu nationalism and tribes, tribals Hindutva, tribal riots India, communalism tribals etc. **Table 1** below shows the results of such keyword searches and the operations that were then carried on over such searches. Apart from JSTOR and Google Scholar I also used the online website of connectedpapers.com it is an open source website (although you can also upgrade to its premium services) for building graphs of scholarly articles. You put in the source article as input and the website designs a graph of all the articles and publications related to the source input, based on the content, temporal difference between different articles and relevance meter to compare the relevance on any two articles. The node size of each node in the graph represent the number of citations of that particular article, whereas the node colour represent the year of publication, the darker the colour the recent the publication. Similar papers have strong connecting lines and cluster together. Overall it turns out to be a great tool for the purpose of literature review in order to remain focussed on the topic of review and have relevant studies on your fingertips.

Coming back to the Hindutvisation of this particular community (tribals), it certainly answers a lot of interesting question, but at the same time brings up equally many thought-provoking questions like how a right wing populist ideology like Hindutva is making grounds in a complex minority landscape while at the same time being highly supremacist which had to support the hegemony of a few? And why in spite of its discriminatory, oppressive and communal environment, it is appealing to so many, especially the backward classes? The uniqueness or the novelty of this study lies in the fact that it proposes to explore and analyse the emerging trends and tendencies in India's political

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landscape which may facilitate the growth of RWA or the like, by looking at the political and historical evolution of the forces of the Hindu right in India starting from the revolt of 1857 up until the present times and observe how these authoritative forces have slowly captured the Indian political landscape. In the later parts, the study will focus on a particular section of the society (tribals) to understand how they are being drawn into the political mainstream of India, by looking at various studies that have focussed on the Interaction of Hindutvising forces and the tribal communities, and try and conglomerate the information which is brought up in such an enquiry. The idea of conglomerating such information in an orderly fashion is also prompted due to the fact that, there is a huge lack in the analytical approach for understanding such authoritative political dynamism especially in form of literature review studies, representing varying subjective opinions. By the end of this study we hope to understand what are the different academic perceptions present on the evolution of the forces of the Hindu right as a form of RWA in the Indian context and also on the interaction of the two contrasting forces namely the ideology of Hindutva and the secluded, mostly backward tribal society and its intricacies in terms of traditions and cultures. And hope that this study proves as a base for any further analysis on this particular interaction of these two unusual, incompatible worlds and their ideologies.

Table 1: Keyword searches and further operations

Keywords	Number of results		Remarks
	Jstor	Google scholar	
Right wing authoritarianism	9672	197000	Too many results to go through all of them, so for Jstor went through the first 10 pages and for Google scholar went through first 20 pages to search for relevant articles.
Authoritarianism	53395	445000	Too many results to go through all of them, so for Jstor went through the first 10 pages and for Google scholar went through first 20 pages to search for relevant articles.

Fascism	85490	576000	Too many results to go through all of them, so for Jstor went through the first 10 pages and for Google scholar went through first 20 pages to search for relevant articles.
Right wing populism	14389	195000	Too many results to go through all of them, so for Jstor went through the first 10 pages and for Google scholar went through first 20 pages to search for relevant articles.
Right wing extremism	10616	95900	Too many results to go through all of them, so for Jstor went through the first 10 pages and for Google scholar went through first 20 pages to search for relevant articles.
Hindu Right	68731	558000	Too many results to go through all of them, so for Jstor went through the first 20 pages and for Google scholar went through first 300 pages to search for relevant articles.
Hindu nationalism	23726	205000	Too many results to go through all of them, so for Jstor went through the first 20 pages and for Google scholar went through first 30 pages to search for relevant articles.
Hindutva	3790	27800	Too many results to go through all of them, so for Jstor went through the first 20 pages and for Google scholar went through first 30 pages to search for relevant articles.
			Too many results to go through all of them, so for Jstor went through the first

RSS	26005	7690000	20 pages and for Google scholar went through first 30 pages to search for relevant articles.
Communalisation in India	110985	39600	Too many results to go through all of them, so for Jstor went through the first 20 pages and for Google scholar went through first 30 pages to search for relevant articles.
Tribes in India	67469	563000	Too many results to go through all of them, so for Jstor went through the first 20 pages and for Google scholar went through first 30 pages to search for relevant articles.
Hindu nationalism and tribes	4051	57900	Too many results to go through all of them, so for Jstor went through the first 20 pages and for Google scholar went through first 30 pages to search for relevant articles.
Tribals Hindutva	316	8270	Went through all of the articles in Jstor to look for relevant pieces and in case of Google scholar it was too many results to go through all of them so went through the first 30 pages.
Tribal riots India	4988	74500	Too many results to go through all of them, so for Jstor went through the first 20 pages and for Google scholar went through first 30 pages to search for relevant articles.
Communalism tribals	2593	17900	Too many results to go through all of them, so for Jstor went through the first 20 pages and for Google scholar went through first 30

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1.2 A need for review

We are proposing a review on the evolving nature of the forces of the Hindu right, their trends and tendencies and how they managed to make themselves extremely comfortable in the Indian political landscape along with the interaction of two very different ideologies and social realities namely the Hindu right and the world of tribals. This will help us in understanding the rise of RWA in India and how it is interacting with a specific section of the Indian society and transforming it in the process while also getting transformed at the same time. It will also help us in navigating the intricacies of such interaction which might help us in suggesting slightly alternative methods of looking at the interaction, whether be it instrumentalist or purely analytical based on recorded data. Studies from all across the country will help us in gaining a somewhat complete picture of how the process of Hindutvisation of a very excluded community becomes possible. Along with that, it will also help us in understanding firstly that before reaching out to these unorthodox support bases (like that of tribals) how the forces like the Hindu right builds on its natural base (of upper-caste-middle-class) in various region of the country. India is a plural and diverse country, the strategies and the tactics that might have worked for the Hindutva forces in the 'Hindi heartland' might not work in other places even though, the society there might be considered to be under the general canopy of the larger Hindu society. Even in the Hindi belt, there is so much regional variations that a unifying common ground might be quite hard to reach. Therefore, to establish in any region first, these forces of Hindu right might have to switch their narratives and identities to resonate with the region. This is what makes Hindu nationalism so special as it is able to do that seamlessly as is also mention by John Zavos when he says "*It could, indeed, be argued that Hindu nationalist ideology is characterized by its ability to mould and adapt and to acknowledge a wide diversity of traditions as Hindu.*" (Zavos, 1999: 58)

The review begins by exploring literatures on the origins of authoritarianism as an academic topic of study. It will particularly focus on RWA, how it is indicated by various socio-political factors and what are the trends in the same. We will then narrow down our review to focus on the Indian case and see how the RWA with the aid of Right-wing populism (RWP) manifest itself in the form of

Hindutva in the Indian context. This will be done by looking at the history of the ideology and how it has propagated over time and space, first in the Indian subcontinent and then in independent India. The review of studies on Right-wing authoritarianism in the Indian context in the form of Hindu nationalism begins its course from 1857 and goes on up until the present times. This period could be further divided into three sections. First looking at the era from 1857 to 1947, then from 1947 to 1990 and then finally from 1990 to the present day. These three phases too could be further divided. Since the focus of this work is to understand the evolution of RWA in the Indian context and finally its impact on tribes, these broad periods have been considered. This kind of politico-historical review of the studies will give us a good idea about the trends the forces of the Hindu right have been following and how they navigate in the complex socio-political terrain of India. At the very outset, it is necessary to mention that there is no such entity as an 'Indian tribal community'. The different regions in India have different tribes. Even the same group of tribes from different region exhibit different societal conditions in terms of their traditional practices and cultural nuances. Hence, it is important to understand how the phenomenon of RWA acts simultaneously at the national level and the regional level. How does it portray itself in order to gain grounds and rise towards the bigger objective of Hindutvisation of as many sections of the Indian society as possible? This review also presents a brief profile of some of the tribes. This is done with a view to facilitate a nuanced understanding of the nature of their interaction with other the socio-political forces. This requires that first, attempt is made to explore the whats and hows of the community including various debates amongst the scholars on how to define them, how to see them from a comparative perspective and in the bigger context of the larger Indian society and also how to observe them as a distinct society of their own. All these perspectives and analysis on the tribal community of India would be helpful for us to understand their interaction with the forces of the Hindu right. The study also reviews how the interaction (both temporal and spatial) between these two social world-views are being analysed and jotted down by scholars. Finally, it will also help us to understand the research gaps. The scope of this study is to analyse the research done on the evolution of the forces of Hindu right and the process of Hinduisation and Hindutvisation of tribals. An attempt is made to understand how the process of Hinduisation and Hindutvisation has helped the proponents of the Hindu right like the RSS and the BJP to expand its foothold even in the regions which earlier were thought to be socially and politically out of reach of the Hindu right. Any other derivation from the review might find itself to be out of scope of this exercise.

CHAPTER 2- Right-Wing Authoritarianism and the Indian Variant

2.1 Authoritarianism, RWA, its Indicators and Trends

Right wing Authoritarianism has been on the rise globally since the past two decades, be it in the North America, Latin America, Europe, Africa or Asia. Lately there has been an increasing trend of people choosing a 'firm', 'authoritative' leader to represent them, even if it comes with suppression of some civil values or rights. (Berberoglu, (Ed.). 2020.) Now a curious reader might think what exactly is right wing authoritarianism, but instead I would argue one should first ask what actually do we mean by authoritarianism, and how it comes about, this might be a complex question resulting in complex and multitude of answers, but in extremely simple words authoritarianism can be defined as the tendency to show/expect submission towards authority, it can be looked at from a psychological perspective, socio-political perspective, cultural perspective or a mixture of all of them. (Reich, 1970) (Who talks about the mass psychology involved in such phenomenon and how conformation bias plays a huge role in fuelling these mass political movements), (Adorno, et al. 2019) (Who talks about how Ideology propagated using socio-political tools aids authoritative tendencies in general masses and talks about the 'pulled along the masses' phenomenon which states one gets washed away in such mass movements with or without one's desire and had to immerse in it for a smooth transition through this temporal phase of the society), (Rokeach, 1960)

However, authoritarianism was first started to be studied in the late 19th century when the approach of authoritarianism as a crowd phenomenon became famous, and soon after, with the coming up of the age of fascism this topic of authoritarianism took a special place in academic studies and various other approaches to understand it came about, like the one propagated by (Milgram, 1965) concerning situational authoritarianism which tested the phenomenon of showing authoritarian tendencies in certain situations which fulfilled certain conditions in laboratory environment, where subjects were instructed to follow commands (giving shocks to other 'victims') obediently under varying conditions of the 'victim', this study showed that even in hard condition for 'victims' who seemed to be in distress these normal 'subjects' followed the authority although sometimes with reduced intensity of the orders, showing one doesn't necessarily blame themselves for what they are

doing but on a higher authority hence giving themselves a justification of submitting to the authority even if that means hurting another person. Some other approaches are mentioned above. The first work however on the topic of right wing authoritarianism is attributed to (Altemeyer, B. 1981.) who built up on the works of Adorno et al. (1950), while contributing novel concepts to it and retaining relevant concepts from before. With this study Altemeyer defined right wing authoritarianism (RWA) as the covariance of three concepts: 'authoritarian submission', 'authoritarian aggression', and 'conventionalism', The covariation of these attitudinal clusters is key. By attitudinal clusters, Altemeyer means "orientations to respond in the same general way towards certain classes of stimuli (viz., established authorities, targets for sanctioned aggression, and social conventions)." And even though LWA and RWA parallels each other in many aspects, he still distinguishes between them by bringing the focus on different types of authority (For the right-wing authoritarian, the establishment serves as the authority. The establishment comprises the dominant political, economic, and religious actors in a society, while for the left-wing authoritarians —anti-establishmentarians—they oppose the conventional establishment and have their own preferred authorities. However once any of the faction comes into power and become 'established' the main difference which is left to identify LWA from RWA is the ideological factor on economic, political and social front) which comes into play under each phenomenon and of course the differing ideology on economic, political and social front. In his later work he defined how group authoritarianism works and different groups are formed and used for specific purposes. (Altemeyer, R. A., & Altemeyer, B. 1996) The most current approach to look at authoritarianism in general and RWA in particular is put forward by (Duckitt, et al. 2010) who built up on previous personality based approach on authoritarianism and combined it with the group phenomenon related to it and stated that the RWA is manifested and propagated with the help of specific groups and these groups have fundamental 'fractalism', that is no matter how much you zoom into a particular group some fundamental ideas which makes them a group remains present and which helps in propagating the phenomenon of authoritarianism. Although the studies discussed above remains groundbreaking in their own respect, they have some flaws as well, which requires further attention and hence new ideas to fill these scientific gaps. One of the major issues with most of these studies on authoritarianism and RWA is that of generalism, these studies tend to generalise much more than what actually might be the scope, one other flaw that might be encountered is limited diversity and variation in studies, for example most of the studies on RWA tends to focus on issues like anti-Semitism and on areas like Western Europe only, many other such flaws are also reported by (Etchezahar, & Brussino, 2013, also Whitley Jr, 1999) and some solutions are given like how social dominance orientation which is "the extent to which one desires that one's in-group dominate and be

superior to one's outgroups" (Pratto, et al. 1994) is a much better tool in understanding RWA than many other individualistic psychological behaviours and how SDO is aided by conventionalism (as talked by Altemeyer (1981) to give rise to strong right wing authoritative tendencies.

There have also been studies concerning factors that are attributed with an authoritarian state, many of these include features like 'elite favouritism', authoritarian aggression gauged by increased investment in law and order agencies, regression of democratic values and institutions, 'puppetization' of media for narrative building and propagation, 'weaponization' of language, push for 'conventionalism', 'intellectual intolerance', 'traditionalism' among many other things, and this is not just the case of studies from the first world (Doty, et al. 1991, also Pascale, 2019, and also Hammack, 2011) but is also indicated in some studies close to home, like from Philippines. (Quimpo, 2009) It is also important to keep in mind that these features of RWA comes about as a result of a somewhat support which it garners from the general public, and hence it also becomes important to explore what other factors influences them. One of the major reason for the evolution of such features in the society as claimed by many studies (Lambert, Et al. 1999, also Choma, Et al. 2014) is risk perception and its under-compensated reality and over-compensated response, because a general assumption is that people who perceives themselves under risk try and protect themselves which becomes their top most priority. This perception of risk is also supplemented by the presence of authoritarian personality and high SDO which in turn helps the growth of RWA in the society, and just like indicators of an authoritarian state there are many indicators and gauges for an authoritarian personality like right-wing extremism, negative attitudes toward immigrants and women, blind faith in authority, etc. (Oesterreich, 2005, also Adorno, et al. 2019) To conclude these are some of the academic perspectives on the topic of authoritarianism in general and RWA in particular around the globe, we will now narrow down our approach and look at how the Indian variant of the similar concept looks like, what is its history, what are its forms and how does it navigate the Indian social landscape.

2.2 Hindutva and the Hindu Nationalism

The modern form of communalism in India can be traced back to the revolt of 1857, after the revolt the British figured that the biggest threat to their domination is the Indian unity irrespective of religion, caste or culture, and they made sure that such unity is always kept under check. They did

everything possible to keep the Indian people divided, from the divided religious regiments in the British Indian army to various constitutional reforms for separate electorates for different communities. (Ayoob, 2020.) All this only increased the friction amongst Indians, belonging to different communities, even the greatest of the greatest spiritual leaders like Swami Vivekananda can't help but fall in this pit of communalism when he talked about the 'Hindu Hitt' (Beckerlegge, 2013.) The efforts of the British did not go in vain, well before Independence 'fundamentalist right wing' organisations like the Muslim league and the Hindu Mahasabha came into existence (1906 and 1915 respectively), all they would do is oppose the national integration and support the Britishers against such efforts in order to gain 'sympathy' for themselves so that their 'cause' could be favoured, we all know what was the major consequence of this, the Partition in the subcontinent. The Hindu fundamentalism that sprung in that era (early twentieth century) became the foundation of today's phenomenon of the 'Hindu right'. Many scholars like Jaffrelot believes that the ideology of the Hindu nationalist movement was derived from various socio religious movements of the 19th century initiated by the upper-caste Hindus like the Arya Samaj. However, it must not be confused that these reformist movements in themselves were nationalist, but rather scholars argue that they provided the ideological base for what was to emerge as the phenomenon of Hindu nationalism. And hence we see a lot of linear articulation of the emergence of Hindu nationalism of the 20th century from the Hindu reformist movements of the 19th century. (Jaffrelot, 2007, Chapter 1,5 and 10) Here I would like to mention John Zavos (Zavos, 1999: 73-77) who investigated the links between the Hindu reformist movements (the Arya Samaj in particular) and the 20th century Hindu nationalism, because he feels that a lot of focus has been given to such link in general and the link between the Arya Samaj and the Hindu nationalist movement in particular because a lot of Arya Samajis went on to build the Hindu politics, starting from the formation of the Hindu Mahasabha. He went ahead in his analysis and showed that most of the ideas of the reformist Arya Samaj were rejected by the Mahasabha as they looked for other mode to represent Hinduism in an effort to build a narrative around the Hindu nation-state. He showed how many aspects of the Arya Samaj which were non-reformist but rather adhered to some basic Hindu traditions like cow as a symbol of religion etc were adopted in the building of Hindu nationalism, however many other aspects of the reformist movement which were actually transformative towards the Hindu religion like the Issue of caste by birth which the Samajis (mostly followers of Dayanand and other radicals) believed should be abolished and be replaced by a system of 'varna by karya' were vehemently opposed (and sometimes even justified for example Savarkar in his book 'Essentials of Hindutva' rejects the stigma of hierarchical oppression almost entirely through what he sees as the overriding

commonality of Hindu blood. All castes, untouchables, and Adivasis are part of the same organic whole which is Hindutva.) by the Hindu nationalists who were of the thought of keeping the orthodoxies of the Hindu religion. This analysis of his clearly suggest many disjunctures between the 19th century reformist movements and the 20th century phenomenon of Hindu nationalism, and put the linear analysis of others like Jaffrelot up for debate. However, it is also interesting to note here, How the strategy of Suddhi as reform by the Arya Samaj was converted into a strategy of Hinduisation by the nationalists while at the same time refusing the sanskritising effects of the Suddhi movement for the oppressed and low castes. (Zavos, 1999: 68-69) This debate against the linear connection between the reformist movement and the Hindu nationalism of 20th century is best summed up in the words of Zavos when he says "*What emerged in the 1920s (and after) (unlike the reformist era)...was an amorphous notion of Hindu nationalism which stoutly preserved the 'cultural equilibrium' of contemporary Brahmanical dominance.*"

This movement of religious fundamentalism was strengthened by various organisations which sprung up after the Hindu Mahasabha, like the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (the RSS), Vishwa Hindu Parishad, the Bhartiya Jana Sangh (predecessor of BJP) etc. The fundamentals on which these organisations and parties run is simple, they believe India to be a Hindu state, some accept that openly while some show that indirectly through their actions. (Sundar, 2004.) who talks about how the RSS is deploying its Hindutva machinery on the education ethos of India, sometimes by using direct state power (where they influence the government to bring in 'Hindutva favouring' narratives in the school education) while other times by the use of the instrument of Civil society, where they use the social welfare scheme of schooling to spread the Hindutva propaganda and build a distorted sense of Indian identity paralleling and generally coinciding with the Hindu identity to create false notion of citizenships and national loyalties to the nation-state, this helps them build a social base on which electoral gains can be incurred without much hindrance. There are other topics on which these nationalist (Hindu) try and create a national debate which they cleverly turn in their favour, one of such topic is that of Conversions, one of the major agendas of the Hindutva organisations like the VHP and Bajrang Dal is to 'stop' the proselytisation by other religions like Christianity and Islam, at least that's what they portray on the surface, but the real game is of numbers, they don't want other religions to grow in number even if conversions are totally voluntary as that will endanger them in the electoral ground. As Ambrose Pinto argues, even though the population of Christians have decreased from 2.7% in 1981 to 2.4% in 1991, these right-wing organisations still allege forceful and induced conversion by the minority communities, specially Christians. (Pinto, 2000: 3633) Pinto further argues that this analysis of his provide a dominant

perspective vs a subaltern perspective on the issue of conversion, he argues (using many of the speeches by Ambedkar) that the subaltern view on conversion is in strike contrast with that of the Hindu nationalists', according to him the subaltern (or what he calls Ambedkarite view) view on conversion is that the oppressed people see that as a device of protest which provides them with a sense of social equality, self dignity and a social standard along with some material and mental wealth. While on the other hand the view on conversions by the Hindu right is that, the minorities especially the Christians convert poor, backward people forcefully and deceitfully, using large funds which is garnered using International support as a bigger conspiracy to evangelise whole of India, he counters this Argument by stating the fact that the funds received from foreign lands by the right-wing organisations like RSS is way more than what the Christian missionaries might receive. He also counter the 5 major points that the Hindu right bring as the defence in the debate against conversion using the speeches of Ambedkar who absolutely destroys those points by sheer logic. (Pinto, 2000: 3633-3635)

This fundamentalism which portray itself in the form of Hindu Nationalism was pretty much latent for many years after independence, but that status changed when in 1980 the Jana Sangh withdrew itself from the Janta party alliance and formed a new political party called the Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP), which threw its political support behind Vishwa Hindu Parishad's 'Rama Janmabhoomi Movement'. This era (after 1980s) in the Indian politics is considered by many as pivot in bringing the Hindu Nationalism back in public discourse with a fresh energy. (Shani, 2005.) who showed how distinct methods were adopted by the Hindutvawadi organisations like RSS in Gujarat during the 1980s and especially during the end of the decade when the Ram Janamabhoomi movement was picking up pace, although his focus was on Ahmedabad, he briefly touched on how even in the rural areas these right-wing organisations tried to spread communalism by provocative sloganeering, mandatory collection of funds for Ramshilapujan, and organising meetings to 'inform' people about what was going on. (Saxena, 2018.) Although it is not to assume that this 'latent' period of Hindu nationalism from 1947 to 1980 is irrelevant, this is the period when these right wing organisations (whose supporters as stated by Altemeyer and Pratto had high SDO and are engulfed by strong conventionalism (which is culturally different from western societies) and authoritative submission and target minorities like Muslims and lower castes as part of their authoritative aggression and hence showing right-wing authoritarian tendencies) worked behind the scenes building mass support and observing how different state agencies and the masses in general react to ideas and actions which are not 'centrist' from the point of view of a thriving democracy, building more and more RWA in the Indian society. (Jaffrelot, 1999.)

But something changed in 2014, the general elections of 2014 saw the rise of the BJP as the single largest party with an absolute majority for the first time ever since its inception, the BJP for the first time was in a state to form the government without the help of any other party, it won on the campaign ideas of bringing 'acche din' and removing corruption, benefitting from the recent 2G scam involving the Indian National Congress (INC). This election also changed the social and civil fabric in the country, the right-wing organisations became more aggressive and many of their controversial agendas were thrown open to the genral masses, one example could be the campaign of 'Ghar wapsi' as reported by Katju Majari, (Katju, 2015: 21-23) she talks about how "*the message from Sangh parivaar is clear*" that they have won the state power and now is the time to grab on the social and civil fabric of India quiet openly with brute force both physical and verbally. She also brings attention to how this 'ghar wapsi' or 'parivartan' campaign which also gained popularity in the 90s is now launched with full force and vigour with now the backing of the state. This has not been limited to just reconversions but have been accompanied by large scale violence against the Christians and other minorities and this surely has a sign of worry for a country whose constitution gives the right for the freedom of religion and conscience. Earlier things which were quite intolerant in the public discourse slowly became the new normal, media and press became the tool to 'advertise' state's agenda without any due consideration of journalistic ethics, increasing RWA was showing in people's perception on critical social issues like caste inequalities, where people, victim of the three characterisation of RWA goes along with the 'conventionalism' of caste hierarchies in India. (Cotterill, et al. 2014.) The BJP of 2014 brought the confidence with them that the supremacists in India were looking for (the established authority) and also the courage and ability to turn non-believers in their favour. In 2014, we saw the birth of a new kind of right wing populism which uses the new technology of communication (the internet) to the best of its ability and after 2014 even more than what is acceptable in a democracy, this gave them the edge that the right wing politics in India was looking for since independence. (McDonnell, & Cabrera, 2019, also Chakravarty, & Roy, 2015.) The right wing populism (authoritative submission and obedience to conventionalism) has been ingrained in the Indian population to such an extent that even after many failures (like Demonetization, declining growth rate, increasing communalism, etc.) (Potnuru, 2017.) in the first term of the BJP at the national stage, they were re-elected for their second term in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections with even more number of seats in the lower house of the parliament than it garnered in 2014, and as a bribe for voting them to power it gave its supremacist supporters the 'sweet gifts' in the form of abrogation of Article 370 and a verdict in the favour of Hindus at the Ayodhya issue (this was in their 2019 manifesto, which i am sure they used as a bait to retain the power at the center). From 2014 onwards the right wing extremism (RWE) which is a subset of

RWA mainly focussing on the authoritative aggression part of RWA, which is manifesting itself in the form of Hindutva in India (Leidig, 2020.) both by the state and individual actors is on the rise. And these incidents and structural changes (manipulation of mass media, 'saffron terror' supported by the state, increased crackdown on dissenting voices etc. (Bhat, & Chadha, 2020, also Iqbal, 2019.)) Is threatening the democratic fabric of India and hence has become the interest of this research.

2.3 The Rise of the Hindu Right (1947-1990)

The Nehruvian era(1947-1960s)

The partition of the country in 1947 saw massive riots between the Hindu and Muslim communities, unimaginable atrocities were carried out from both sides, from mass murders to full public rapes, from burning people alive to slaughtering whole compartments of trains taking people from one side to another of this newly created 'bloody border'. This partition was the result of almost a century long brewing communalism between these two religious communities, especially starting after the 1857 revolt, after which the Britishers realized that the Hindu-Muslim unity would be detrimental to the colonial rule, and as stated by (Bhambri, 1990: 22-23) *"The British evolved two strategies to rule over India. First, the British rule made every effort to promote religious divisions by following the strategies of preferential and discriminatory treatment of different religious communities. Second, the British recognized the complexities of Indian society and they followed a policy of neglect and non-interference in many areas of the social life of Indians."* the result of this was the gradual build-up of contrasting caste and religious feeling among different communities of the Indian society. And this legacy of communal disharmony was carried on even after the Independence of the country. One more interesting thing to note here is that during the late 19th and early 20th century, the terminology particularly of the word 'communal' took a very interesting turn, this particular word for centuries has been used in a positive light indicating harmony between community, collective ownership, collective struggle and so on and so forth imparting a cohesive sense to the word, in the western societies, but interestingly when we here the word communal, in the Indian context we quickly associate it with struggle between two or more communities, a social

disharmony per se, how has this come to be? The blame of this goes somewhat equally to both the British and the Indian national movement. You see, when during the early 20th century the demands of the minorities (both religious and caste) were increasing to safeguard their interests against the majority upper-caste-middle-class Hindus, there were many policy reforms that were brought in by the British like the separate electorates for Muslims, Christians and the Sikhs in 1909, or reforms to protect the interests of Dalits in 1927, they were (maybe intentionally, but most probably unintentionally) were termed as 'communal' electorates which according to the western uses of the word would mostly mean that they aim at protecting the interests of a section of society in collective manner. But on the other hand the INC and some of the more religious minded groups later (especially the Hindu groups) came to see any attempts by the British government to provide for the protection of the interests of vulnerable groups as an attempt to create social disharmony in the country by having differential treatments, it was because this was the time when most of the nationalists were running on the high of nationalism which was about to peak, and as a result as (Singh, 2015: 49) says *what may have been a mere terminological convenience has resulted over a period of time in creating a substantive difference in meaning and connotation.*" and hence whenever I use the term communal in this article it would refer to the Indian context having a kind of negative meaning unless otherwise stated.

Nonetheless as I said the tensions between different religious communities (which was certainly greater than the tensions within the Hindu fold amongst its different castes) continued to rise in the early 20th century with occasional spurts of violence, which also grew in intensity and scale as the year of Independence came close. As mentioned India got independent in the year 1947 which was followed by the haunting of partition of the subcontinent engulfing the whole of it under the numerous riots and horrors that took place in the couple years to come. Interestingly the period after the first Indo-Pak war, was of relative peace, there was almost no sign of communal violence or disharmony anywhere in this new nation-state of India, most people including Nehru thought that the partition has solved the communal problem for India, Nehru also thought that as time is progressing, with India becoming a republic in 1950 adopting a secular stance where citizenship is not affected by one's religion and with having equal respect of all religion and with more and more scientific and technological knowledge being imparted on the Indian population the issue of communalism would die a slow death. And for this reason as well the Nehru led government establish the first IIT in Kharagpur in 1951, but this endeavour of his was not met even in the slightest of sense. Forget about the technological or scientific knowledge, even proper primary education was still a far-fetched reality, as the literacy rate during his 16 years in office rose by only

10 percent from 18.33% to 28.3% (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2003) which was far from ideal, if we consider that his assumption that increase in scientific and technical knowledge would result in the drop in communalism. Now this might not necessarily be true, as according to (Chandra, 1990: 38) *"Communalism is an ideology and to some extent politics organised around that ideology.......The word ideology..... (here) mean a belief system-a belief system based on certain assumptions regarding society, economy and polity"* indicating that the ideology of communalism is not based on any single element but certainly has many communal element, of which scientific temperament and knowledge may be one. But to assume that just by increasing scientific temperament and having better technical and scientific knowledge we would eradicate communalism form the society is just irrational. Communalism is a complex phenomenon comprising of various communal elements be it in the economic, cultural or political sphere, and to fight it we need to first of all not let anymore elements join the communal cadre and also try and suppress all other elements which are already present in the communal cadre of any society, this battle is both ideological and material, buth historical and contemporary and both active and passive, to just claim or assume that suppressing one element comprising the ideology or material force of the phenomenon of communalism would be a grave mistake for the people who seriously consider fighting it. And hence Nehru's assumption of defeating communalism by just improving the ideological aspect (even just a part of it comprising of scientific elements) of it without touching or even understanding the material aspect of it was just errorneous and which sincerely costed him.

As I mentioned the period after the first Indo-Pak war until the early 1960s was a period of communal peace with almost negligible communal violence, which assured many of the national leaders that the issue of communalism is slowly getting eradicated, this might have been a sweet period of imaginary harmony amongst community, because what was going on within the fabric of the Indian society was far from what was appearing superficially, here i would like to quote (Chandra, 1990: 38) to substantiate my argument *"One must not confuse communalism with communal violence, rioting, etc. No doubt, communal violence acts as a means of spreading communal ideology, hot-house fashion; also, communal ideology leads to communal violence. But under no circumstances should one equate the two. Communal violence is a consequence of the spread of communal ideology. But it is not the crux of the communal situation at all. Communal ideology can not only exist, but can grow for decades before it takes the form of violence."* as mentioned by Chandra the ideology of communalism does not necessarily need the tool of communal violence to grow, it can spread without it for a long time. Sure, communal violence is a method of spreading communal ideology and indeed a time-tested, quite successful one, it makes

sure that the communal ideas are spread rapidly and with high intensity across the society, and it indeed helps the communal ideology reach the nooks and crannies of the society where, any other normal way of propagating the ideology might not able to reach. But the fact is it is just another method of spreading the ideology, and when Chandra says that communal ideology leads to communal violence, it actually is a circular argument but always starting with the communal ideology. In a sense the communal ideology grows to substantial levels using various methods of expansion and propagation to help various elements of communalism grow, this in turn eventually leads to communal violence when the already present tensions in the social fabric of any society, with the help of any spontaneous spark bursts out in the form of communal violence. Then what happens is this violence which actually is a mode, a vehicle of the propagation of the communal ideology leads to exactly that, the spread or propagation of the ideology to even wider spaces, which again helps the ideology grow and increase the tension in the social fabric to once again lead to another event of violence, and the cycle continues.

This is exactly what was happening during the first decade of independence, because of the highly secular and socialistic nature of the early Indian polity due to leaders like Nehru, the communal ideology was not getting the space to rear its ugly head, another reason for it was the fear of getting rejected first by the state and then even by the masses. Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh or the RSS which was the major proponent of the ideology of communalism in India in the form of Hindutva, which basically sees India as a Hindu nation-state, and wants to establish a majoritarian religious state on the expense of the plural nature of the Indian society, was afraid of being banned (which they were for almost a year after the assassination of M. K. Gandhi) and did not wanted to portray themselves in the extremist light, but rather wanted to play it down, adapting itself and its ideology to match the ideology of this newly formed nation-state which was quite different and many a times contrasting with the fundamentalist ideologies of the Hindu right represented by RSS at that moment, and as a result the first decade of independent India was free of communal violence. But behind the scene various institutions like even the educational system under the state control was somewhat propagating the communal ideas which were carried on from its colonial past, literature being popped up spreading the communal ideas, state actions for the protection of minority and vulnerable group interests were being perceived by the Hindu right as partialism and discrimination resulting in the Hindu right expanding in the field of social service (inspired and to a major extent copied from the idea of social service by the Christian missionaries) by opening schools, medical facilities in rural, backward areas, by organizing social awareness programs, by establishing 'shakhas' (which gave ideological as well as physical training to the recruits to further the notion of

Hindutva.) and also by Hindutvising various of their subjects in various spatial locations. All these activities of the Hindu right and even sometimes the state itself went somewhat unnoticed by the state leadership as they were busy in the 'economic development' of India to make it competitive in front of other world economies, these social dynamics which were going behind the economical dynamics of the state were thought of as just the result of the modernization of the Indian society, and this was one of another grave misconception which the leadership had.

The Jan Sangh came into existence in the 1950s and the ban on RSS was also lifted, with the Jan Sangh as the political outfit of the RSS, it began to spread the ideology of communalism in the Indian society which was started to getting some significant subscription even from within the ranks of the presumably secular Congress party. All this spread of the virulent ideology of communalism in the 1950 lead to the outburst of the first communal violence of independent India in 1962 in Jabalpur, Nehru's assumptions that communalism has taken a back seat, that increasing scientific temperament and knowledge (no matter how small such an increase was) helped, that the partition would have solved the communal problem turned out to be wrong. The 1962 violence of Jabalpur was the first major-scale communal riots after the partition, and it brought back the memories of the horrors of pre independent India to the first generation leadership who have not only witnessed that but actually have fought those violences on both side, of curbing it and enraging it. This did two things for the socio-political fabric of the country. on the one hand, it evoked fear in the secular leadership like the ranks of Jawaharlal Nehru, so much so that he constituted the national integration council, whose job was to analyse such violent events and propagate the communal harmony within the country and make sure that such eruptions does not become a frequent thing. While on the other hand, this event (which is an event of communal violence) helped spread the ideology of communalism even deeper in the Indian society. Earlier only the urban middle class were infused with and subscribed to the agenda of Hindutva but this event, helped the ideology to penetrate some untouched (by communalism) sections of the society, resulting in the circular cycle which I talked about earlier about how the communal violence gives room and space to spread the ideology, which eventually again leads to further such communal violence. And this is exactly what happened in the decade to follow, the 1960s was plagued by various communal riots throughout India in places like Ranchi, Durgapur, Jamshedpur and other parts of West Bengal. The NIC failed to meet its objectives, it's obvious because a mere organization with some legal authority cannot play the role of a secular party in fighting the ideology of communalism which is the most crucial thing to do if one wants to curb it. But even Congress and leader like Nehru himself failed to grasp this, what resulted was the strengthening of the RSS and therefore the Jan Sangh. Indicated by a

quote by (Engineer, 2002: 5049) "*The more the RSS and the Jan Sangh communalized society, the more Congress leaders inclined towards communalism.*" in the end Nehru's assumption and theory that majority communalism is reactionary and aggressive and their communalists were go-getters while the minority communalism is defensive came to be true as much more religious minorities (mainly Muslims) were killed in the riots of the 1960s than the number of Hindus killed as claimed by (Engineer, 2002).

Indira Gandhi came in power in the second half of the 1960s, she was seen as a champion of secularism, as the champion of protection of minority interests, as a strong-willed lady who ruled with an iron fist. Indira Gandhi coming to power is a whole another interesting topic to dwell in, but it is not the scope of this article, suffice to say that she came in power by dividing the congress into Gandhi loyalist and Gandhi opposers (Congress(O)). This was one of the first instance where the Jan Sangh would be able to grasp some political support from outside its cadre base and would prove extremely helpful in them strengthening their position as the opposers of the secular India. The Congress(O) along with the Jan Sangh and Swatantra party organized massive communal riots in Ahmedabad in 1969, it was the biggest communal riot independent India has ever seen until then, and was also the most intense the country has ever seen, slogans like was "Gaddar har Musalman.Bhagao usko Pakistan" were being raised, RSS activist-cum-leaders like Balraj Madhok were arguing and spreading hateful propaganda against Indian Muslims, in very anti-secular rhetoric, like what needed to be nationalized were not banks but Indian Muslims, and they all must be sent to Pakistan etc. What this did was that for the first time, the Jan Sangh (political arm of the RSS) was able to communally influence the then Congress stronghold state of Gujarat, which would later on become their political hub. Prior to the 1970s what majorly drove the communal discourse in India was the cultural-communal ideology from both Hindus and Muslims (although mostly Hindus) which have been on the backs of these religious communities since and even before independence, but what majorly changed after 1970s was the economic fabric of the society. With industrialization picking up pace, middle classes were popping up here and there in all sections of the Indian society (but again we can strongly argue that the Upper-caste Hindus got the most ripe fruits from the basket of industrialization, as can be seen by the proportions of them in the categories of middle and upper classes.) including both Hindus and Muslims. But, the ideology of communalism particularly in the Indian context in the form of Hindutva feeds on the legitimacy and

socio-economic powers of minorities (especially religious minorities), a just prosperity for any religious minority is generally seen in the Hindu right world-view as a threat to their social, economic and political dominance over the minorities, they might blame the state (if it is not under their control obviously) of preferential treatments of the minorities by discriminating against Hindus, the Hindu right cleverly ignores the substantive equal treatment (based on the historical disadvantages that have been meted out to these minorities and hence they require a compensatory treatment) of the minorities (both religious and otherwise.) and claim that injustice is being served to them. This was their novel strategy coming up in the 1970s when they started campaigning against some of the state industries which (merely due to their geographical presence) happen to employ more Muslims than Hindus and started heating the communal surface of the country once again. To substantiate my argument I want to cite here an analysed point by (Chatterji, 1985: 2) who claims that "*Since 1971 what has been emerging as an increasingly important factor is the economic rivalry between Muslim craftsmen, cultivators and others, and Hindu competitors, often of the lower castes.*" following this claim he argues how the Moradabad riots of 1980 was on the basis of economic factors where the Brassware factory exporting Brassware to West Asia, was hurting the profiteers and middlemen of Brass work who were mainly Hindus, and hence all that I have argued above was brought into play, showing the 'unjust' treatment the state is meeting out to these 'poor' Hindus, which finally culminated in the August of 1980 in the form of riot.

Since we are talking about riots so much it is important to understand how this vehicle of communal ideology propagation works in general, like I said before there is as much difference between communal ideology and communal violence as there is between apples and oranges, communal ideology to say is a much bigger set and communal violence is the special subset of this set, which helps in actually in expanding the bigger set spatially and temporally. Communal violence is basically the culmination of three things, first, the obvious one is the communal ideology on which it builds on, second is the hate campaign and narratives that are built in order to heavy the armour on the vehicle of communal violence from both parties, the party with the heavier armour would be able to impart much more damage to the other party and reach at the heart of the ideology of the other party with the aim to destroy it. And last is the trigger point, which more often than not is a spontaneous random event no matter how small it may be, and boom the two vehicle of two different ideologies collide. Now one must also understand that to drive this vehicle of communal violence one needs a driver, who is particularly trained for it, i.e. actors having the right ideological mindset and the ability to implement such ideologies on the ground. Therefore, when such actors and the training organization (like the RSS, the Jana Sangh) which trains those actors are itself

absent or are 'closed' for some reason, the vehicle of communal violence even if having a full fuel tank (that is having the base of hatred, environment of enmity, and exclusionism ready) still fails to move from its place. It is evident from the example of 1971 when during the war with Pakistan all opposing factions from the Hindu right (because of their historical enmity with the ideology of Pakistan and in general Muslim Community I guess) to the secularists backed the formation of Bangladesh out of the East Pakistan, and interestingly during this period of 3-4 years not much communal violence took place, because the drivers and their training organizations were on the leave to support some other external issues. But this communal peace did not last long, soon the corruption scandals of Congress was exposed to the public by the efforts of Jaiprakash Narayan who led an anti-corruption movement against the Indira Gandhi led government, and she did not liked this one bit and imposed a national emergency both technically and metaphorically on the secular nature of this country as this would be a major turning point in the story of the Hindu right in India, because this would be the start of a major downfall of a strong faction which has/had the ability to country the virulent ideology of Hindutva, which was going to rise both socially and political to an extent from here that the main protagonists in the Hindu right camps themselves might not have expected. And as I said the vehicle of communal violence needs a driver, the period of emergency saw communal peace as the drivers and training organizations heads were put behind the bars and except the pre-existing ideology there was not much the proponents of the Hindu right could do about spreading it.

This phase (the emergency from 1975-1977) also saw the degradation of the Congress party from a secular, inclusive front to an Authoritarian party, this indeed is a balck spot on the long history of democracy in the land now called India. However, I will argue that this kind of act by the congress party still does not make it eligible to be labelled as a right wing authoritarian government. If we recall the first section on right wing authoritarianism of this chapter two, we might remember that the way right wing authoritarianism was defined (by Altmeyer) as the "covariance of three concepts: 'authoritarian submission', 'authoritarian aggression', and 'conventionalism', *The covariation of these attitudinal clusters is key*." Now during the period of emergency we find examples of 'authoritarian submission' as people only who were loyal to Gandhi irrespective of their ideological stand (the example of Shiv Sena, in spite of being a highly communal party supported the idea of a national emergency, resulting in their continual existence and hassle-free movement during the highly resistive environment of the emergency period, comes to mind) were essentially given a free pass at continuing their normal existence without any state interference. Next, we also find examples of 'authoritarian aggression' by looking at the crackdowns on any kind

of opposition that might be faced by the state apparatus, people were put into jails, fired upon and some even disappeared, these kinds of aggressive actions might lead someone to fall into the trap and call the Congress a right wing authoritarian government. But the crux is here, we do not find any kind of 'conventionalism' from the congress party rather strikingly we find that the congress party during this time and after that shed their old ideological and party conventions, for example when during the emergency, crackdowns on the Hindu right increased but some of the Muslim parties were given a free hand (primarily because they submitted to the authority), the Hindu right began to call out the 'pseudo-secularism' (a term which will gain much more importance in the 1980s as the Ram Janamabhoomi movement took pace) of the Congress party and claimed that they are attacking the secular fabric of the Hindu nation. To counter this, Congress shed its conventional base of minorities and the 'seculars'and started appealing to the Hindu masses. The congress until now has had the conventionalism from the time of Nehru of politics not letting overtake the ideological base from where the party drew inspiration, but such conventions were being dropped to be relevant in the political struggle, and hence one of the major elements defining right wing authoritarianism was absent in the functioning of the congress party, and therefore it cannot be called such. To substantiate the argument, I would like to quote (Chandra, 1990: 45) who argues that he "*believe that while weak secular parties...(like congress)....may not have taken proper action against communal rioting, may not discipline communal officials, may not be very conscious of communal ideological elements within their ranks, they do not spread communal ideology.*" the point that Chandra is trying to make is the de-ideologised, de-cadreised, corrupt bourgeois government can become authoritarian, but only a communal government or party with its cadre backing and stiff ideological stance, focussing as much on 'conventionalism' as on other aspects of right wing authoritarianism can spread communal ideology and be truly labelled as having the right wing authoritative stance.

The emergency was lifted in 1977 and many of the opposition parties joined hand to form the Janata party, even the Jan Sangh joined the coalition even though its ideological head organization RSS was totally against it, as the Janata Party was committed to principles like secularism and Gandhian socialism. This new coalition did not work out because of many internal skirmishes amongst different ideologies that comprised it, and eventually it broke in 1979, again the Hindu right failed, and again the Congress grabbed power in 1980 though with much lesser majority. Also, as I have stated earlier Congress party shedding its conventional image of being an absolute secular party, being the champions of the minority groups started appeasing the Hindu fold to compensate for some of the votes it has lost from the Muslim base. The Congress again led by Indira Gandhi not only started appeasing the Hindu fold but also started using the tensions which the Hindu right has

built in the social fabric of India since and even before independence, the congress cleverly without changing its actually ideological stance of being secular (due to the fear of losing much of minority support) started taking advantage of socio-economic conditions and even political conditions of some geographical places like Moradabad to start communal riots believing that their appeasement to Hindus while at the same time their championing of the minority groups will balance each other out, and the electoral benefits of the riots would go to them. (it turns out this was true for a short term) witnessing all this was the RSS and the Jan Sangh which has renamed itself as the Bhartiya Janata Party or the BJP in 1980, they saw how the political grounds which they have essentially built, the place (the centre-right) in the political spectrum which was somewhat empty (as the Jan Sangh or now BJP would be positioned at far-right) was now creepily getting filled by the congress party which has a very broad space in the political spectrum from the centre-left to the centre-right, and this was a worrying sign for the RSS and the BJP as their potential space was shrinking resulting in the shrinking of their electoral potential. And as I mentioned earlier as well, the Jan Sangh since the period of emergency was starting to take a somewhat moderate stance (at least that was what they were trying to portray), the attacks on congress on the basis that the party was 'pseudo-secular' and was degrading the democracy of our ancient nation were stepped up in the 1980s, the BJP and other proponents of the Hindu right (by this decade there would be many like the VHP, the Bajrang Dal, the Akhil Bhartiya Vidyarthi Parishad(ABVP), Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram, and many other such social organization) started claiming that only Hindus are truly secular, because the Hindu religion is the most tolerant religion in the world. However, this wasn't anything novel even the founders of Hindutva like Golwalkar has had the view from the very beginning that secularism is just another name of the Hindu nation and that Hinduism is secularism in its noblest form. (Cossman, & Kapur, 1996: 2622) Now it is better at this point that we first discuss what exactly do we mean by secularism, basically the liberal idea of secularism (mostly followed in the western societies) has three component in it, 1) Liberty and freedom of religion, 2) right to equality and no discrimination based on religion and 3) the separation of state and the church (or religion). (Bader, 2007.) and if we look closely we find that the Indian variant of secularism is also quite similar to this liberal idea of secularism while at the same time being different. First of all the first two components or principles of the liberal secularism and its Indian variant are same, for instance the principle of liberty and freedom of religion is enshrined in article 25 of the Indian constitution and the principle of no discrimination is enshrined in article 14 and 15 of the Indian constitution. However, the difference that arise in the liberal idea of secularism and its Indian variant is at the third principle. The way in which the state and religion are exclusive in the liberal idea of secularism does not actually suit the Indian environment. Our national leader and member of

constituent assembly debated this for a long time, many discourses arose but mainly two ideas contested to make their place in the constitution, they were the Gandhian philosophy of 'Saarva Dharma Sambhava' which stated that in the Indian context state and religion cannot be separated and rather all religion must be respected equally. The second view was the Nehruvian view of separation of religion and politics, finally what came on top was the Gandhian philosophy of 'Sarva Dharma Sambhav', the equal respect of all religion. It was this idea that in India society is structured in such a way that politics and hence state may need to interfere with religion at some point of time simply to defend the other two principles of secularism that this view of Gandhian philosophy was chosen.

Now, interestingly as I mentioned from the 1980s the Hindu right started attacking congress on various fronts like being undemocratic, being authoritarian and also being pseudo-secular. These claims of their specifically of the secularity of the Congress party while boasting themselves as the true seculars were a cleverly disguised moderate way of propagating an extremist ideology like Hindutva. The proponents of the Hindu right started using their earlier clever leaders like Deendayal Upadhyaya and their views on the issues like that of making India a Hindu Rashtra (or a Hindu State) where these earlier generational leader have stated the entity of 'Dharma Rajya' (Upadhyaya, 1965.) where every *individual* would have the right to profess any religion and follow any faith. These proponents of Hindu right have cited these kinds of views and have disguised Hindutva in a more secular and moderate kind of way. But the truth is, it is just a disguise, notice how I have put emphasis on the word individual, this is their brilliant masterstroke, they state that they are true to the first principle of liberty and freedom of religion, but the truth is this is only true on an individual scale. The moment the minority religious group starts asserting itself more openly more communally (word used here is in positive sense as in more collectively), try and use their right to propagate and freely profess their religion, the same proponents of the Hindu right comes running stating there has been a violation in the principle of toleration of religion, claiming if there has to be toleration of religion there can never be conversions. On the other hand if we look at the second principle of Indian (or liberal, it doesn't matter because they are the same) secularism which is the right to equality and no discrimination, the Hindu right who boast itself as the proponents of the philosophy of 'Sarva Dharma Sambhav' starts creating problem with this as well. To substantiate my argument I would like to quote (Cossman, & Kapur, 1996: 2622) when they say that "*One of the very cornerstones of democracy - the protection of minorities from the rule of the majority-is simply discarded (by the Hindu right).*" What the RSS and the Hindu right essentially do is they stand against any concession given to any kind of minority while claiming that they as Hindus never demand anything special from the state and hence by giving special treatments to

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religious minorities (like article 30 of the Indian constitution which provides that the religious minorities have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice. Which is sometimes aided by governmental grants and other kind of financial and technical help) the state is discriminating against Hindus on the basis of religion and hence the state (which happens to be run by the congress party at that time) is not 'truly' secular. While the truth is beneath all this secular boasting and drama lies the brute majoritarian urge to assault the very legitimacy of minority rights, which as stated by cossman, B. (quoted above) is the very cornerstone of democracy. Along with this, the Hindu right also gained much support when they claimed that the Congress government is violating article 14 and article 15 of the Indian constitution, when they supported the report of the Mandal commission. The Hindu right was adamant that reservations were a violation of article 14 which states the equality before law.

So why has this come to be? How an extremist ideological faction is able to mould itself in a 'secular' container containing nothing but disguised Hindutva? The answer to this might lie in the way certain things are defined in the constitution and also the clever ways in which the Hindu right is being able to adapt itself to changing political environment without actually changing their ideological stance. For instance when the Hindu right oppose the unequal treatments meted out to them on the basis that the minorities were getting reservations, or help from the state to promote their religious, cultural and traditional identities, they seem to be using the concept of formal equality, which simply means equality in all respect to all the players irrespective of their current standing which has obviously been affected by the historicity of social events. They (the Hindu right) cleverly and carefully avoid the mention of substantive or compensatory equality, which aims at providing special treatments to the disadvantaged communities in order to provide them with a playing level field. Now this is because in our constitution the concept of equality is vaguely termed and not a detailed analysis of different kind of equal treatments have been provided, the Hindu right takes advantage of exactly this vagueness of concepts, and it indeed has made them quite successful in reaching the social sections of the Indian society which they orthodoxically may have never reached, including Tribals and lower castes, and that is why the rise of the Hindu right in the 1980s is so striking and interesting.

The decade of 1980s also came with the drama of Khalistan, resulting which were the massacre of the Golden temple and the anti-Sikh riots of Delhi, and eventually the assassination of Indira Gandhi in 1984. The happenings of Punjab in terms of the separatist movements were actually a form of minority communalism, which is very different from the majority communalism. To substantiate my argument that the separatist movements in Punjab were a kind of minority

communalism, I would like to quote here (Chandra, 1990: 42) who argues "*Communalism in India is a form of fascism..........This fascist form, in the case of the minorities, because of the way they are structured in Indian society, can only take the form of separatism; communalism in Punjab cannot take the form of conquest of India. It can only take a separatist form. On the other hand, Hindu communalism cannot take a separatist form; it inevitably takes a fascist form.*" however the scope of this article is not to review communalism in general in India but rather the rise of the Hindu right, and hence what is interesting to note here is the response of the Hindu right (which itself is a communal ideology, however a majoritarian one.) to another communal ideology of the Punjabi separatists who were propagating minority communalism. First and foremost we have to remember that majority communalism and minority communalism are two very different things, they must not be equated, as can also be seen by the writings of (Singh, 2015: 53) who argues "*minority racial groups do not have institutionalised power to systematise their harassment of the members of the dominant racial group.*" in Indian case this is applied as the religious group when we look at the phenomenon of institutional communalism, hence minority communalism doesn't have much significance. And hence it is obvious that the two brands of communalism will show different behaviours to same socio-cultural questions. And therefore in the light of it, it is not very surprising that the Hindu right was very much against the separatist ideas of minority communal Punjabis, after all, one of the major rhetoric of the Hindu right is the establishment of a Hindu Rashtra (some fanatics even propagate the idea of 'Akhand Bharat' (or united India) which comprises of territories of modern day India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, some portion of Afghanistan and also some parts of Thailand. These fanatics propagate that Indian empire has been to such and such extent geographically in its 'Golden age' and hence it becomes the duty of the Hindu nationalists to one day bring all these regions under one nation-state just like the old times.) and they would under no circumstance want to give up a part of modern day India to any minority group. And hence it is also not surprising that during the anti-Sikh riots of 1984 one of the major perpetrators were the members of the Hindu right, including member, activists of RSS, VHP, Bajrang Dal etc. During the anti-Sikh riots the Hindu right specifically targeted the Gujarat government of Solanki, which built its support base on the formula of KHAM (Kshatriya, Harijan, Adivasi and Muslims), RSS who was targeting the Gujarat region did not liked this one bit, how dare they exclude the supremacist upper castes, they therefore organized massive riots in Ahmedabad (an urban centre for middle-class-upper-castes, who happen to be the Hindu right vote bank) in 1985-86 in an attempt to topple the Solanki government, in which they succeeded. But also interestingly these are the same majoritarian communalists who try and equate majority and minority communalism which are clearly not the same, they try and equate them so as to enable

them to play the victim card and justify their own majoritarian communalism as a form of reactionary defensive communalism. (Singh, 2015: 53-54) talks about two strains of views in India that equate majority communalism with minority communalism, one strain derive its ideology from Indian nationalism, it sees minority communalism as separatism and hence a major threat to the integrity of the nation, it also sees majority communalism as a danger to the country not because of its oppressive, majoritarian nature exclusively but because such actions of majority communalism leads to the alienation of the minority community and which may lead to increased minority communalism, so to say this strain actually put much more emphasis on minority communalism than it does on majority communalism. The other strain is of the secularists who see any kind of communalism as dangerous to the society and opposes any kind of communal action, even if such communal action (positively, that is in a sense of collective action) is for the legitimacy of minority rights and interests, what this does is overall it only puts stress on the minority community as the majority community does not necessarily need those kinds of collective actions, since they have the support of institutional power, and the Indian society is structured in such a way that the majority Hindu community would easily survive without such kind of communal action, due to the social, political and economical capital distribution in the society. There is yet another strain which not just equate the majority and minority communalism but actually claims majority communalism is the result of minority communalism, this is the strain of the Hindu right they claim that whatever they do is in general retaliation against the minority plot to destroy the 'Indian' culture.

As I mentioned earlier, the political atmosphere for the Hindu right started changing significantly after the emergency, and this actually changed strikingly during the 1980s. In 1984 Lok sabha elections the BJP got merely two seats in the parliament, but this was the same year when the VHP launched the Ram Janamabhoomi movement with full vigour. The Ramjanmabhoomi movement was something the Sangh Parivar had been associated with since 1948 when idols of Lord Ram "appeared" inside the Babri Masjid, but this issue had been sidelined for decades, first due to ban on RSS and then because of them changing their strategy from hardline communalism to soft 'secular-appearing communalism' which helped increase their base and legitimacy. But now the Hindu right believed that this is the right time to rejuvenate the issue of Ayodhya, and they were right. As soon as the VHP started campaigning, the BJP put its political support behind it, this increase their support base significantly. The Shah Bano case of 1985 also gave the Hindu right to charge on the Rajiv Gandhi led Congress government stating that they are again showing their 'pseudo-secularism' by appeasing the Muslim community and as a result the Rajiv Gandhi Government threw the locks open in the Babri Masjid to allow Hindu worshippers to worship there, in order to

balance the act, but this only gave the Hindu right (the VHP, the BJP and in reality the RSS) the opportunity to push the Ayodhya issue more vehemently, and this indeed came out to be fruitful. In order to defeat the Congress V.P. Singh collaborated with the BJP, and the party which has won merely 2 seats in the last Lok Sabha elections won a whopping 88 seats, this definitely increased the confidence of the Hindu right, which was about to explode in the coming decade.

2.4 The Rise of the Hindu Right (1990-present)

The Exponential Rise(1990-2002)

As stated in the previous section the decade of the 1980s, brought the political wing of the Hindu right, that is the BJP to the forefront, they not only capitalized on the Ram Janamabhoomi movement but also many other issues like the Shah Bano case, the Bhiwandi riots of 1984 (and although the major proponents in this one were the Shiv sena who also played the Hindu card after their anti-south rhetoric started to fade, the Sangh parivaar welcomed these kinds of actions to consolidate the ideology of Hindutva in the Indian society even though this might mean they will have to face another competitor in the political arena the main proponents of the Hindu right were ready to compensate their electoral space in order to spread the ideology of Hindutva, because they realized that in the long run this is what going to get them power) , the Assam riots of 1983, the Ahmedabad riots of 1985-86, the Anti-Sikh riots of 1984 etc. This decade of the 80s is seen by many as the strengthening of one of the greatest majoritarian ideology in the world. Before the 80s the major base of the Hindu right both politically and socially has been the upper castes, the lower classes, the minorities within the Hindu fold, the Adivasis were mostly out of touch with the ideology of the Hindu right, but this changed significantly in the 80s and 90s the Hindu right starting with the Ram Janamabhoomi movement by the VHP, started reaching out to socially, culturally and geographically inaccessible spaces, they started moving out of their hubs like Ahmedabad in Gujarat to places like Dangs (a majority tribal district of Gujarat) as stated by (Engineer, 2002: 5050) "*The BJP chalked out a strategy to use this controversy to expand its political base in rural areas and among lower castes too. Lord Ram is universally respected and worshipped by all Hindus whatever their caste. Thus the BJP saw a golden opportunity in exploiting this controversy for political purposes. Ram Lalla could bless them with the Hindu*

votes." there were strong campaigning around the whole of North India (mainly in the Hindi belt) for the construction of Ram temple in Ayodhya, this was not just the case of the urban regions but interestingly much more aggressive and rigouros campaigning were seen in the rural, backward areas (because the Hindu saw this as the exact ripe moment to pluck the fruit of expanding its natural base.) for example in the Dediapada and the Sagbara district of Gujarat, which is a backward, rural Tribal area, many events like Ramshilapujan, mini Rathyatras, Ramjyoth and 'kar seva' were carried out in the late 80s and early 90s, Rs 1.25 was collected from each household in this rural region for the building of Ram temple in Ayodhya, those who refused to pay were called out as being from a 'Muslim womb' and bricks were also collected from various villages of the region for the same purpose of Building the Ram temple. (Lobo, 2002: 4845) What this did was it not only created (in the minds of people of these rural regions) some sort of attachment with the cause of the Hindu right, as they (the rural, tribal people) have had some social and economical capital contribution to the cause, but also even if they personally did not revere Lord Rama or identified with the cause, they were peer pressured into believing in it, otherwise anyone who would want to go against it would have been socially outcasted, and in a rural environment where the whole life of the people revolve around interactions with the neighbouring social community, such outcasting might take a very heavy toll in their day to day functioning. The other thing which is also important to note here is that this was the first time these rural, tribal people (not only just the case with people of Dediapada or Sagbara, but true for any rural community who was having their first encounter with the ideology of the Hindu right) were getting introduced to the ideology of Hindutva, and they were just as much confused as they were afraid to go against it. They were confused as in why they need to subscribe to so and so ideology to which they exactly don't identify with, their gods are different, their traditions are different, they think of nation in different terms, they speak different languages (not always though) and most importantly they could not afford the pleasure of engaging in political, ideological discourse when they are struggling to meet their days end, it is much more important for them to just go to work any particular day earn (or grow or collect from forest depending on different regions) enough to feed themselves and their family and repeat the same process again the next day, they just don't had enough time or socio-economical wealth to indulge in these kinds of political discourse, therefore they felt quite confused as to why anyone if they themselves would try and engage with some sort of thing like that. But at the same time they were also afraid of going against it firstly, because as I mentioned they were afraid of getting outcasted for not doing something (subscribing to an ideology and contributing your socio-economic wealth to it) which their community is doing. Secondly, many rural regions have started witnessing the riots that these forces of the Hindu right brought with them, they saw anyone who is

not of their identity were getting targeted be it Muslims, Christians or other rebellious minority group within the Hindu fold, and therefore they realized that the best way to counter these kinds of attack would be to identify themselves in the Hindu right terms, they didn't see any harm in socially pronouncing themselves as proud Hindus, mainly because by then a strong regional identity might not have crystallized within their community or that the particular regional identity was just not strong enough for them to believe that they will be able to oppose the strong tide of the Hindu right. And hence this confusion and fear gave the Hindu right the opportunity to expand the natural base, in the regions whose support would be extremely necessary if they want to grab the state power. Other scholars have also commented on the confusion on part of the rural, unorthodox base of the Hindu right, which helped them consolidate the ideology of Hindutva in these regions, as can be seen when (Lobo, 2002: 4849) states that "*Thus the problems of adivasis are related to 'Jal' (water), 'jungle' (forests) and 'jameen' (land). The transfer of their resources to non-tribal areas is the question. Religion is not their problem. Instead of addressing issues of political economy the Sangh Parivar and BJP whose social base is among upper castes and middle classes divert the attention of adivasis to misguided targets like Muslims and Christians.*"

Another interesting phenomenon to note here is the rise of women in the folds and proponents of the Hindu right. This has especially been seen during the Ram Janamabhoomi movement of the late 80s and early 90s, eminent figures like Sadhvi Rithambara and her fiery speeches has been some key moments of the movement, she has been portrayed by the media and even herself as a valiant warrior fighting for her dignity, just like historical symbolic figures like Rani of Jhansi, Ahilyabai Holkar and even unconventional historical figures like kaikeyi. The role of women in the Hindu right has been significant from even before independence. With the proper formulation and articulation of the ideology of Hindutva which resulted in the formation of organizations like the RSS, women of that era especially women from the upper-caste-middle-class echelon started mobilizing, now if we go back in the last centuries there have been many women leader who have fought against the conservative and orthodox nature of the Hindu society, most of these were the so-called upper caste women, because even though the men of the upper-caste-middle-class echelon have been enjoying power and social status for centuries it is only their women who were denied basic rights like education, remarriage, etc, the names of Pandita Ramabai, Savitribai Phule (although she was from lower caste), Ramabai Ranade comes to mind when we think of women leaders and reformer in the 19th century. Coming to the 20th century, again the situation of these Women (from the upper-caste-middle-class echelon) did not improve that much, however some of the social evils like that of sati has been abolished, and widow remarriage legalized (although it was

still looked down upon as a social taboo). These women were in somewhat better social position than their counterparts from the last century, and were now starting to play active role in the nationalist movement both from the secular front and the Hindu right front of course obviously without forgetting their 'real' duties towards their family and not questioning the traditional patriarchal hierarchy, this is supported by (Sethi, 2002: 1546) when she argues that "*by the end of 19ᵗʰ century, the woman's question had been resolved within the nationalist dis- courses by demarcating the domains of private, spiritual and the feminine on the one hand and the public, materialist and the masculine on the other.*" clearly showing the rise of women as active agents in the political happenings within the country. While some of the major credits of feminizing the Indian national movement goes to Gandhi who employed feminine symbols like 'charkha', 'khadi production' etc which were seen as the work of women, there was indeed other virulent form of nationalism (Hindu) which was preparing to portray women in strikingly different light. Many proponents of the Hindu right some of them interestingly were also Hindu reformers (a type which the RSS could not stand as they rely heavily on conventionalism (one of the principle of right wing authoritarianism)) started publishing ideas of a shrinking Hindu population, for example take the work by Swami Shradhananda (who was a major Arya Samajist and a radical in that) who wrote 'Hindu Sangathan: saviour of a Dying Race', and also the work of U.N. Mukherjee 'Hindus: a Dying Race.' These kinds of discourses in the Hindu right were portraying Muslims as aggressive, sexual go-getters and Hindus as mere spectators, whose women were being lured converted, raped and as a result the population of the religious minorities were on the rise, while that of the Hindus was shrinking. The only reasonable narrative then that they could have adopted was of portraying Hindu women as a strong character devoted to her religion, family and other social ties, she sacrifices private identity for the greater good of the Hindu nation by being a good sister, wife and mother, the sexuality of the Muslims could not lure her and she inspires her brother, husband and sons to fight for her and millions other women like her in the Hindu community who are being

preyed upon by a devil called Muslim man. Thus, the women in the early 20ᵗʰ century were seen as a breeding machine as is also stated by (Sethi, 2002: 1547) when she says, "*Women were thus approached as 'breeders' and their bodies seen as vessels or reservoirs of future Hindu warriors. The thematic of Hindu impotence from now was beginning to be employed not as defeatist resignation but as a clarion call for action and preparedness for a war of apocalyptic proportion*".

This kind of narrative flowed through the Hindu right through the early 20ᵗʰ century (I would argue, it is somewhat the same narrative that is propagated even today amongst the Hindu right sphere, of course obviously with some temporal adjustment) and eventually led to the creation of Rashtra

Sevika Samiti (the women branch of RSS) in 1936. It was founded by Laxmibai Kelkar, who initially approached Hedgewar with a proposal to allow women in the shakhas of RSS, but the proposal was rejected as Hedgewar believed that there are much difference between men and women to allow them under one roof and that too to teach them a disciplined life? No way! He believed and even convinced Kelkar that Women in the shakhas, would create unnecessary 'distractions' for the men and would hamper in the ideology propagation of the RSS and interestingly even the current samiti sanchalaks have this view till today as (Sethi, 2002: 1548) reports "*In fact, Asha Sharma in-charge of Sevika Samiti, north India, said that intermingling between sexes leads necessarily to perversion and all organisations that did not practice sex segregation - as in a Buddhist 'math' - were bound to fail.*", and hence it was very important according to him to separate the private life filled with worldly desires (like sexual among other things) from the ideological life for which they train in the shakhas. And therefore a separate women wing was established, these Sevika Samitis were quite similar to RSS in functioning and the modes of teaching values, like discipline, the art of self-defence using lathis and even learning martial arts. The aim of the Samiti was developing the woman's abilities of leadership and a sense of duty and motherliness so in a sense balancing both the avenging character as well as the tender motherly character to not upset the traditional hierarchy of social order, as also beautifully stated by (Sethi, 2002: 1545) "*(the role of these samitis in building the Hindu nationalist womenm was to) enable these women to take up particular subject positions - as 'Ram bhaktas', as Hindu nationalists and as Hindu nationalist women - and allows them expression of certain kinds of agency - virulent and avenging, seemingly independent and spontaneous and yet not upsetting the traditional hierarchies of personal relationship.*"

Now one might wonder why I am talking about the history of these Hindu right women organizations, it is because what culminated in the early 90s have had a lot of women inspiration, as stated earlier women leaders like Sadhvi Rithambara who have connections with the Sevika Samiti were at the forefront of the Ram temple agitation, VHP's Maitrishakti (a cultural organization affiliated to VHP, dedicated to oppose, other women organization which give women the perception of 'Westernized' ideals of private rights and equality with men and forgets the divine role of women as mothers) even after being a solely cultural organization raised their voice in support of the Ram Janamabhoomi movement. But the main fuel from the Hindu right feminists came from the Durga Vahini (women wing of the Bajrang Dal, affiliated to the VHP) which generally take out agitational programmes on issues like dowry, pornography, 'Westernized concept of women' etc. This is the same organization which has been on the agitational forefront of opposing M.F. Hussain's painting

Nude saraswati, of Opposing Lesbian portrayal of women in films, etc. Hence, it is not surprising to see when the Ram Janamabhoomi movement culminated at its peak in 1991-92, this organization was able to mobilize thousands of young women and girls in support of the movement. Of the estimated two lakh kar sevaks at Ayodhya, some 55,000 were women (Arora, 1993) and just like their male counterparts these organisations have managed to recruit heavily from the lower caste-class females while at the same time maintaining an upper-caste leadership so as to steer the organisation in the right direction at the right moments.

The culmination of the Ramajanambhoomi movement, which politically started with the rath yatra organised by L.K Advani in the 1990 starting from the Somnath temple in Gujarat, and aiming to reach Ayodhya, finally came with the demolition of the Babri Masjid in december of 1992. From wherever the initial rath yatra passed, communal riots followed it which resulted in worsening communal relations between various different communities, however that was the aim of the BJP-to drive the vehicle of communal violence as much as possible and that to as many places as possible-only then would the ideology of Hindutva be propagated enough to translate it into electoral gains. And this is exactly what happened, in the 1996 Lok Sabha election BJP turned out to be the largest party in the house, however such a victory did not come innocently as stated by (Engineer, 2002: 5051) *The Ram Janmabhoomi movement was fundamentally political in character and was a clever ploy by the BJP to increase its strength in parliament, in which it succeeded eminently but at the cost of thousands of human lives.* The BJP did form the government in 1996, but was very soon ousted by the coalition of the united front, which was supported by the Congress and CPI(M) from outside so as to maintain the majority in the house. But this didn't mattered to BJP that much, it had successfully shown that it is now in a position to grab state power whenever it feels, it had given them the confidence that the Indian society was ready for the kind of extreme communalism that they represent as a party and most importantly as an ideology. They realized that they have the potential to tap into various vote banks which till now had been way out of reach, because now they feel that they were able to better exploit people's emotion and religiosity for their electoral gains. The most haunting fact remains that they realized (most probably the Hindu right has realized this way before the elections of 1996) that the ideology of Hindutva now does not necessitate much disguise and can be propagated with full authenticity (however, they were still careful, in disguising themselves as a 'secular' party, which fights for equality and against the 'pseudo-secularism' of other parties like the Congress). And this is exactly why they didn't stopped after demolition of the Babri Masjid, the demolition in 1992 was followed massive riots throughout the country in places like Delhi, Bhopal, Mumbai, Surat etc. Gujarat particularly remained

hypersensitized after the demolition (after all this was their stronghold, and where a full-fledged training institute of drivers is present and well established we can only hope to see the vehicle of communal violence raging up and down the streets.) Earlier, riots which used to take place in old cities and rural settings, were now rearing their ugly heads in urban settings like Ahmedabad.

Gujarat has traditionally been a Congress stronghold for decades, but as I mentioned earlier as well the Hindu right were eying it since the late 1960s, and finally after the demolition, they got the chance to do so. An anti-corruption drive against Chimanbhai Patel's government which was headed by Jayprakash Narayan since the late 70s was hijacked by the BJP, they threw all in on it, after all, after so much communal violence that they had spread they needed some kind of legitimacy in the eyes of people to get the state power, and they indeed saw this even as that opportunity, Narendra Modi was an RSS activist at that time and was highly engaged in campaigning against the Chimanbhai Patel's government. This finally bore fruit when ion 1995 the BJP came in power in Gujarat for the first time, they at the time gave the slogan of 'party with a difference' (which ironically they also gave in 2014 lok sabha election). And as expected when this party or so to say the ideology of Hindutva came to grab the state power for the first time, they did what was expected of them, attack the minorities. This once again reminds me of (Chandra, 1990: 43) who warns us to never let communalists grab state power because according to him "*State power today (in the hands of the communalists) means, above all, control of education, it means control of media, it means control of ideological State apparatuses in general.*" which can lead to only one thing which is the furthering and consolidation of communal ideology and hence making their opposition even weaker. And what is even more interesting is that when the communalists take control of the state power, they generally reduced the extent and intensity of direct communal violence in order to portray themselves as more moderate and claim that only when the opposition were in power the state was fused with violent communal activities, this is their clever ploy to continue their disguise as the representors and promoters of 'true-secularism' and equality, as is also stated by (Chandra, 1990: 43) who argues that "*Communalists in control of State power, in fact, may not encourage violence for some time. They may not promote violence and, therefore, on the surface it might appear that where the communalists rule there is much less communal rioting and communal violence; that communal violence takes place only in Congress-ruled or Janata Dal-ruled states, and that, therefore, the Congress is communal and not the BJP. This can happen because, as I have said, violence is not the heart of communalism. The communalists subdue or reduce the level of communal violence and take steps against it, even while spreading communal ideology through various instruments. They may not attack trade unions; they may not attack kisan sabhas.*

Disagreeing with Prof. Bhambri, I would say that they may not even attack the Communist Party, but they will attack the secular and communist intellectuals." this is definitely substantiated when we see that after coming to power in 1995 in Gujarat the communal violence that has been plaguing the state since the demolition event, suddenly becomes very less frequent, although one might argue that the 1995 Gujarat government was short-lived, and they only truly came in power in 1998, but then again if that is the case then the violence should have increased as soon as the BJP was ousted from the government. But I think the Hindu right in Gujarat realized that they are very close to state power and starting riots after a splinter group (Rashtriya Janata party) have just split from your party and formed a government would negatively affect the legitimacy of the party as 'secular' and democratic. And this is the reason why we do not see much communal violence in Gujarat until late 1998, when again the violence against the religious minorities like Christians and Muslims would be stepped up, after all the Hindu right have to spread its ideology in some way or the other and what's better than communal violence? While at the same time keeping its intensity lower (than what was present during the rule of the opposition) and disguised it in the name of fight against conversion by proselytizing religions blaming their religion and claiming their own as superior.

This brings me to an interesting question, is communalism due to religion? Or, to ask a more accurate question, what role does religion plays in the ideology of communalism? From my understanding of the literatures that I have reviewed, most scholars are of the view that religion alone is not the cause of communalism, it actually is used by the communalists to tap into the emotional niche of their targets to gain sympathy and support for their ideology. To substantiate my argument here, I would like to quote (Bhambri, 1990: 25-26) who argues that "*In this stage of crisis(of the monster of communalism growing stronger and stronger) a large number of people belonging to all the social strata have taken to religion to escape from their growing misery and deprivations. But apart from the exploited classes a powerful section of the exploiting classes has also adopted the ideology of religion to legitimise exploitation in society.*" we see from Bhambri's arguement that the exploiting classes (which are the Hindu majoritarians in the context of communalism in India, and actually in most other context as well) have turned religion in a tool which helps them legitimize their majoritarian actions, like attacks on minorities, creating a religious based history of India to further the argument of establishing a religious state, or homogenize society in terms of religion and religious practices to further the ideology of Hindutva, etc. We see how the Hindu right manages to do so with the help of religion, while at the same time other sections of the society are taking refuge under the shade of religion which clearly proves that the mere existence of religion does not lead to communalism, it is the way in which the religion is exploited to obtain various kind of personal, social and in some cases communal gains, which turns

religion into a tool to be used by the communalists. Another strain of argument come from a noted religionist Shamoun Lokhandwala who was present in a seminar on which Engineer has reported (Engineer, 1984: 752), Shamoun while presenting his paper quotes a 9th century writer stating *"Religion is a boon if it caters to the spiritual needs but becomes an instrument of violence when it is combined With power."* this is definitely true in today's time as well, the Ram Janamabhoomi is a great example, the main agenda of the Hindu right was to capture state power by building and strengthening the Hindutva ideology by tapping into the emotional and spiritual niches of as many people as possible, they combined religiosity with power and what culminated was extreme violence and bloodshed. One can argue this has been the strategy of the Hindu right from the very beginning, to exploit religion to gain power. And hence to blame all the wrongs that negative communalism bring to the society on religion would be a very big mistake, after all there are many other elements of communalism that do just one job that is the spreading of the ideology of communalism however it is rather the reverse for religion, it is only one way in which religion is exploited and mixed with power to make it a tool for communalism apart from that religion is something that we humans definitely needs as it brings with it the shade of spiritualism, selflessness, which helps us in shedding our egos and going out of our way to help others, in the end religion is true humanism and humanism in turn is the true religion, no matter what name you might want to assign it.

Coming back to our review on the rise of the Hindu right, one of the turning point in their history was 2002. It was the year of Gujarat riots which were followed by the Godhra incident, it was the first time that we saw, what the true ideology of Hindutva with the backing of full state-power can do, the horrors of those riots still echoes in the secular chamber. As mentioned earlier the BJP government was in power in the Gujarat state since 1995 and hence has been able to propagate and consolidate the ideology of Hindutva quite strongly, even the Adivasis who are generally considered outside the larger Hindu community fold (will come to this in the next chapter) were firstly Hinduized, which helped in them getting easily Hindutvised. Other minority groups as well, like many of the lower castes also fell in line with the ideology of Hindutva, mostly because of the two reasons I explained earlier which are confusion and fear. Along with that, since the Hindu right were in control they had access to all the instruments of state power like the media, both print and video, which further helped in disseminating the ideology of the Hindu right, which unfortunately people consumed to a great extent, the general notion of distrust against the Muslim community, questioning their loyalty to the country was present along with the notion that most of these religious minorities especially the Muslims were fundamentalists and Hindus were liberal and

secular, these kinds of narrative further widened the gap between the religious communities, the gap in which the forces of the Hindu right would soon shove its ugly vehicle of communal violence, which conveniently for them (the Hindu right) has been surrounded by the armour of extreme ideology which is as thick as the depth to which this ideology has been ingrained in the minds of the people of Gujarat. Another very important factor leading to the pogrom of 2002 was the possibility of the BJP losing the upcoming 2003 state elections in Gujarat, they had seen a downfall in U.P, Punjab and even Uttranchal (now Uttarakhand) and they were fearing to lose their stronghold as well, and they needed something to save them, something to consolidate their rule, and again what could be better than a massive streak of communal violence? Strengthening their ideology, which in turn helps them strengthen their rule. The triggering point of the riots of 2002 was the burning of a train coach in Godhra, which was carrying kar sevaks, and that was it, without any investigation with full (alleged) support of the state agencies a massive crackdown on Muslims started. As (Engineer, 2002: 5053) reports the Narendra Modi led government either naively or intentionally (most probably this is the case (Jaffrelot, 2003.)) put the Gujarat administration in a state of sedation, no preliminary precautions were taken for the Bharat band, no use of CRPF or the BSF was reported near Godhra, and the state machinery found itself incapable of handling this grave situation, however the incapability was intentional or actual is a way another debate, but most of the evidence leans towards the former case. Even the state employees (including High court Judges and high ranking IPS officers) who were from the minority religious community found themselves under fire and were taken a back during this pogrom. Now what is interesting to note here is the stance that the central leadership took which was also under the Hindu right at that time, the Prime minister on the one hand claimed that these riots were a black spot in the history of India while at the same time claiming that until the Islamic fundamentalist stop their communalism and fundamentalism, these kinds of 'retaliatory' actions from the Hindu front will keep coming, this is interesting because what Vajpayee was trying to do here is to create confusion, which when combined with the fear of the riots, only leads to the expansion of the ideology of Hindutva as also explained earlier.

The Turbulent 10 years (2002-2014)

The Hindu right remained in power at the center from 1996 to 2004, although some discrepancies were present during the early days when in 1996 the Atal led government failed to prove majority in the floor of the house and the United front succeeded them. Nonetheless, they very much enjoyed the state power at the highest level till 2004. In the general elections of 2004, the Congress led UPA

government defeated, the BJP led NDA alliance and got back to power after a record 8 years out of office. The 90s has been a very fruitful decade for the Hindu right in terms of their electoral performances, as mentioned the issue of Ram Janamabhoomi movement broadened the social bloc of the BJP and eventually which culminated in them coming to power in the 1999. Another factor which helped the Hindu right during the 90s was the legimisation of their ideology, which they got from the apex judicial body in the country, the supreme court. During the Manohar joshi vs Nitin Bhaurao patil case, the supreme court ruled that the ideology of or appeal to Hindutva is not an appeal based solely on 'religion' and that Hindutva represented 'a way of life for the Indian society'. This simple statement by the supreme court and its failure in differentiating or rather equating Hindutva with the religion Hinduism itself created a lot of ideological and narrative loopholes that the proponents of the Hindu right exploited a lot for their benefit. As soon as the statement came the Hindu right was celebrating the victory of the ideology of Hindutva, claiming it to be the 'truly-secular' way to live, as indicated by a headline in one of the articles in Organiser (the mouthpiece of the RSS) stating "*The apex Court has fully and unambiguously endorsed the concept of hindutva which the [BJP] has been propounding since its inception.*" as reported by (Cossman, & Kapur, 1996: 2615) These important event is the 90s led to consolidation of the ideology of Hindutva which led to the increase of the support base of the Hindu right, which finally resulted in them becoming the largest party in the Lok Sabha in 1996 and as mentioned earlier this status quo was maintained until 2004. However, with the slowing down of the Ramajanambhoomi movement and in light of the 2002 Gujarat riots in which the Central forces of Hindutva clearly failed to act in the interest of the minorities, their legitimacy in the eyes of the Indian population started to erode. This led to the shrinking of their social bloc, which they have managed to create during the 90s. And there wasn't also any international conflict with another nation-state to help them exploit the situation for their political and electoral gains. For example the 1999 Kargil war helped the forces of the Hindu right a lot in consolidating the ideology of Hindutva where they can play the 'two-form enemy' card, which basically is a narrative tool, developed during the 1920s in Germany based on the fascist ideology of Hitler who at that time claimed that there are two forms of enemy of the German state one, that is the outside forces of the Bolsheviks and second the internal enemies in the form of Jews. This narrative tool was also exploited by the forces of the Hindu right during the Kargil war stating that there are two forms of enemy of the Indian state, one, the outside forces of the Pakistan, and second the Muslims in India who were loyal to the Pakistani state, and they didn't have to do much work as by the forces of the Hindu right have been constantly propagating the narrative that the loyalties of the Indian Muslim must be questioned and this was somewhat ingrained in the minds of Hindutvised Hindus by that time, so it indeed did pay them off

nicely by putting them (the Hindu right) in power in the 1999 Lok Sabha elections. But as stated this was not the case this time, with their shrinking social bloc and nothing sort of a geo-political situation to exploit they were destined to lose the elections of 2004, however it's not to say that they had lost all of the legitimacy, their vote count was still in the three digits, and they lost the elections only narrowly. But what one must actually appreciate here is the exponential rise in the 90s which they managed to hold on until 2014 after which it exploded, (Yadav, 2004: 5397) sums up this argument in a very nice fashion, stating "*In that sense it is not the verdict of 2004 that is surprising; it was in fact the victory of the BJP in a decade of upsurge of the lower orders that was surprising in 1999.*" What Yadav means by the 'upsurge of lower order' is the Mandalisation of the Indian politics which to an extent strengthened the identity of minorities and should have actually shrank the political space for the Hindu right, but interestingly not only BJP grew in the 90s but even in the

first decade of the 21st century when the political forces of the Hindu right faced two consecutive defeats they managed to hold on to that political space which they have created and eventually actually make it expand substantially.

This trend of shrinking social bloc and the absence of critical geo-political issues plaugued the plans of the Hindu right and resulted in a yet again loss in the general elections 0f 2009. Even though the 26/11 attacks brought a critical issue of national defence to the surface, the forces of the Hindu right somehow were not able to convert those socio-political discourses and its attack on the UPA government into electoral gains. Maybe they didn't saw the gains immediately as in the results of the 2009 elections, but surely enough these issues were building pressure behind the scene, which would culminate in a blast of votes in 2014. Speaking of blasts, in 2008 one of the most gruesome act of terror was committed by the proponents of Hindu right, when they exploded a bomb in Malegaon, an organization named Abhinav Bharat was accused of the Blast, and surprisingly one of the main perpetrators of the event and also one of the founder of Abhinav Bharat was one lieutenant colonel Purohit among other people like 'Sadhvi' Pragya Singh Thakur (a woman Ascetic who has been a very active member of the women wings of the RSS and VHP and is famous for her hate speeches and unbased narrative spreading against the minorities.). (Jaffrelot, 2010: 52-54) It is very sad and disheartening to see that a high ranking army officer was involved in such terror attacks, army is an institution which provides confidence in the citizen to live freely and without any fear of any outside and many a times inside threat, but when the persons responsible for protecting the citizens themselves start attacking them, it means something has gone horribly wrong in the society. This just shows the extent to which communalism has been institutionalized in the society. Taking about institutionalization, when this attack happened the forces of the Hindu right initially distanced

themselves from it, as the Abhinav Bharat is a more extreme form of Hindutva which believes in revolutionary violence, but soon the more 'moderate' organizations of the Hindu right like the Bajrang dal started supporting the Abhinav Bharat activists as reported by (Jaffrelot, 2010: 58) when he quotes the Bajrang Dal chief Prakash Sharma declaring that "*policymakers should be worried if the Hindus were taking to arms because of the government's skewe approach to war on terror.*" so in a sense the forces of the Hindu right are again declaring these kinds of extremist activities as a retaliatory response of the growing terrorism of the Muslims. Nonetheless, as I said these extremist activities and the pressure which was building behind the popular political stage which even though might not have shown immediate results was finally released with a blast of votes for the BJP in 2014.

An Unstoppable force: BJP (2014-present)

Something changed in 2014, the general elections of 2014 saw the rise of the BJP as the single largest party with an absolute majority for the first time ever since its inception, the BJP for the first time was in a state to form a government without the help of any other party, it won on the campaign ideas of bringing 'acche din' and removing corruption, benefitting from the recent 2G scam involving the Indian National Congress(INC). There were many factors which helped gain BJP the state power, as mentioned above, people were fed up with the daily reports of corruption from the Congress faction, and they wanted some kind of change in the political surface of the country. Although some scholars claim that this was long due as the centre of politics has already shifted a bit towards the right or in technical terms the Overton window had shifted towards right since the beginning of 21st century and maybe even before that, this argument is further substantiated by (Yadav, 2004: 5398) when he states that "*The BJP stands defeated precisely at a point when the middle ground of public opinion may have actually shifted to the right*." referring to the defeat of BJP in the 2004 general election. So people indeed were noticing the shift in the Overton window much long before the BJP grabbed power in 2014 (however, one can argue that after 2014 this window has shifted even further towards the right.). One of the main agenda on which the BJP fought the 2014 elections was economy. The GDP growth which was almost about 9% in the first decade of the 21st century, was down to less than 5% due to the economic depression of 2008-09, this economic stress on the national economy was further aggravated when the UPA government exceeded its fiscal deficit target, recording a deficit of 4.5% of GDP for 2013–14. (Wyatt, 2015: 41-42) These economic hits along with major corruption scandals with an overall

shift in the Overton window towards the right led to the opening up of political space for the Hindu right and the BJP grabbed this opportunity with both Hands, campaigning strongly against the corruption and UPA government fiscal mismanagement, by offering the public an alternative in terms of 'acche din' and a 'party with a difference' these kinds of campaigning both offline and to a very much extent online helped BJP delegitimize the rule of the Congress, their leaders were targeted as incapable of even leading their own party let alone the whole country, cards against Sonia Gandhi were played targeting her of being an Italian and controlling the whole government using Manmohan Singh (the former P.M) as a Puppet, while stating 'would the Indian people like to be ruled by a foreigner?'(this kind of targeting was not anything novel, it has been a ploy of the Hindu right since the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi, but what changed this time was the extensive campaigning that was carried online, and hence reached a lot many people than it could have if it was just an offline campaign) even 'unpolitical' people started believing that there was something wrong in the leadership of the current government and if we are to become a 'superpower' we need somewhat of a strong leader. The credit goes to BJP for politicizing the country as never before, even people who until then have had almost no sense of politics or its discourse started discussing it. And what was the result? As stated, the BJP became the single largest party in the Lok Sabha, large enough to form a government of its own.

After 2014 the forces of the Hindu right became extremely bold, and started propagating Hindutva on the next level, knowing they have the state power. The campaign of Hindutvising whole of India could now begin in full pace. The BJP government, using the state power, did what is most crucial for the forces of the Hindu right to survive, disseminate Hindutva. Unlike what (Chandra, 1990.) has suggested the large scale communal violence actually saw an increase after 2014, although it is still significantly lower than what was present during the BJP as opposition. (Mallapur, 2018) This certainly suggest that they are trying to portray themselves as non-communal while at the same time, since they have to propagate their ideology of Hindtuva, they need the vehicle of communal violence, whose drivers are nor ironically the drivers of the national government. There are other methods as well which have been employed by the BJP for the propagation of its ideology, for example the rejuvenation of the "ghar wapsi" campaign by the Hindu right is basically about shoring up the numerical strength and political power of the Hindu community by reconverting Muslims and Christians back to the Hindu religion, this has been one of their ideological tool to spread Hindutva since the very beginning however after 2014 it has got a new energy and again conforming Chandra's agrument the violence during this campaign currently has been somewhat muted as also stated by (Katju, 2015: 23) when she says "*if physical violence has, as yet, been*

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muted, verbal aggression and intimidation, has been prominent in the present day drives by the VHP, Bajrang Dal and their associate groups." Not only this but the BJP has tried its best and mostly succeeded in piercing into non-orthodox territories like that of Assam, this region has been very different from the ideological home ground of BJP in the Hindi-heartland of the country, but BJP by carefully adapting to the local sociopolitical conditions has managed to make its way deep into this unknown social terrain. They have carefully converted the issue of cross-border migration, initially which was against the Hindus from Bangladesh to an issue of Hindu-Muslim and the cultural identity of the Assamese people, (by convincing them of their historical Hindu lineage and hence identity) The forces of the Hindu right have appropriated local traditions and culture and have given them a Hindu tinge in order to make connections with the people of this region and interestingly they have succeeded to quite an extent which was seen in the 2016 state elections, this clever strategy by the BJP has also been noticed by (Bhattacharjee, 2016: 86) when she states that "*Moving away from its standard techniques of mobilising support through the invocation of Hindu stereotypes like "Ram" or "Ayodhya," it (the forces of the Hindu right) instead focuses on adapting local cults and symbols such as those associated with Kamakhya and Sankardev-sattra tradition*".

There have been many controversial policies by the BJP government which were followed by the victory at the central level, like that of demonetization in 2016 to 'bring-back' the black money and the GST implementation both of which have been critically viewed by some scholars either for their ill thought policy mandates or due to their poor implementation. (Dasgupta, D. 2016: 70)) and how he states "*the short- to medium- run scenario does not appear to be too rosy. None of the economic variables of importance are likely to move in a healthy direction. Further, if corruption itself cannot be addressed, we may very well end up with a scenario where new black money will drive out old black money from the system.*" while talking about his analysis on demonetization, Also see (Majumder, 2016.). Despite all this criticism and clearly visible growing communalism in the Country, the BJP government again won the 2019 general elections and this time with even more seats than before. It is not surprising, this victory of theirs if we look at Yadav's comment on how there has been a clear shift of politics towards the right, and with the help of state apparatuses like Media, education and the administration to legitimize their actions and ideologies behind them, and also due to the absence of any major opposing power to oppose their communal ideology, they were easily able to retain power and actually increase it. The whole political discourse in the country now favours their ideology, and any narrative they throw at the public is legitimized and absorbed quite comfortably. Soon after winning the 2019 election, they implemented two greatest master-strokes in the entire history of the political Hindu right, first the Revocation of article 370 and second, the

Ayodhya verdict in the favour of Hindus. These two issues has been in their political discourse since very long, but they felt this is the right time to actually convert them into reality. This has been their clever ploy to homogenize the society, by culminating the efforts of the 90s which brought them so much power and also clearly give out the message that the Hindu right in power is firm with its ideology and no compromises are to be made with it, either you can appreciate that or be called out an 'anti-national' who works against the interest of the nation, which again legitimizes for them the idea that the Hindu nation and the Indian nation are the same thing and the majoritarian discourse is what will define the Indian nation as well as the state. We must also take attention of two important events which were seen as big thorns in the normal propagation of the Hindu right ideology. These are the Anti-CAA protests and the Farmer's protest, both of these protest were an eye-opener for the BJP who thought that they could throw anything at the Indian public, and they would swallow it. Both these events saw major protest against the majoritarian, authoritative, capitalist government in which not only their usual Minorites like Muslim, Christians or Sikhs were present but people from various sections of the society came up to speak against the Authoritative regime, and indeed as expected when the BJP saw its ideology withering even for a bit, the rolled down the vehicle of communal violence following both of these events to again strengthen up their ideology. This rise of BJP during the 90s and especially after 2014 seems very random and spontaneous but as we have seen in our review these have been the follow-ups of decades and even centuries of struggle by the Hindu right to legitimize its ideology and its hunger for power, their extremist views and belief in a homogenized society is a real threat to a secular democratic country like India. An alternative to the ideology of communalism has to come up from within the society be it in the form of 'reformed secularism' which counters all the vagueness and misinterpretations that the ideology of secularism has carried or rather as portrayed by the Hindu right or be it in a form sustainable development, which is not compatible with the idea of communalism and once this happen-which can only happen by active struggle by the forces opposing communalism, no passive actions or the technique of going with the flow will work here-that an alternate to this virulent ideology of communalism is established in the society, these forces of the Hindu right will crumble in its own gravity as is also suggested by (Chandra, 1990: 40) *"If a communal party uses communalism to capture power, but knowing that it cannot build society on that basis it wants to give up communalism, it will not be able to do so."* knowing the nature of the ideology of the Hindu right, if the opposing factions of communalism are able to establish an alternative in terms of sustainable development and a 'reformed-secularism' which is well absorbed in the Indian society (which I believe is very much possible considering the history of India and how diverse, tolerant and absorbent of a society it has been) the forces of the Hindu right would suffocate to their own death.

2.5 Nationalism and federalism

Now there is no surprise that there are varying scales in which authoritarianism can be manifested, for the purpose of our research we want to establish relation between the rising RWA in India in the form of the ideology of Hindutva and its interaction with the tribal community of India which are dispersed unevenly across the country with having no unitary national tribal identity (even the same group of tribes from different region exhibit different societal conditions in terms of their traditional practices and cultural nuances) but only regional identities and that too varies from tribe to tribe (however the situation is changing a bit now). And hence it becomes necessary to understand how the phenomenon of RWA acts at the national level vs how it has to portray itself in the regional level in order to gain grounds and rise towards the bigger objective of Hindutvising as many sections of Indian society as possible.

The first thing therefore that we need to explore is how RWA is manifesting itself in India and what are its conflicts with federalism, as many studies have shown that increasing authoritarianism in general and RWA in particular in any society is directly proportional to the subjugation of federal values and strong centralising tendencies of the state. (O'Driscoll, 2017, also Sud, 2022.) As mentioned before, the RWA in India is mostly due to 'Hindutva', in the form of 'Hindu nationalism' and now with the main political party which builds on these prospects in power since 2014, this RWA is unleashing itself hard on the democratic surface of India. Centralisation of power in India started right after Independence in the 'Nehru era' where many crucial industries like iron, steel, energy, air transport etc were nationalised, the role of federal states were reduced to meagre maintenance of law and order, which at that time was crucial to stabilize the newly independent country both economically and politically, but this grew to an unacceptable level during Indira Gandhi's era to the point where she seemed like a dictator, and hence a strong people's movement (particularly through electoral process) started to emerge with the demand of proper and just federal powers, after all it is the constitution of India that gives states, special federal power and autonomy of sorts, because as it is said 'India is a quasi federal state with a unitary tilt'. (Venkataramanan, 2019) Even though since independence the federal power in India has been on an objective rise (Ghosh, 2020.) the process of subjugation of constitutional guarantee of federalism in several aspects, is again starting to take pace after the 'nationalists' (The BJP) took the central stage, the very first thing that this government did was the centralisation of politics, now (after 2014) even in the state elections people were asked to 'vote for Modi ji' even though 'Modi ji' is their PM and is

not going to play any role in their state politics. (Tillin, 2018.) Who talks about how Indian federalism is different from other federal constitutional system and how centralising tendencies are on the rise both politically and economically, separating the Indian voters from the parliamentary electoral conventions even more. Other centralisation schemes that this BJP government is trying to bring includes a one Nation, one Ration Card scheme, under which beneficiaries would be able to collect their food entitlements under the Public Distribution System from any ration shop. The government has also introduced legislation to create a single national river water disputes tribunal. It would also like to move ahead with a proposal to streamline the timetable of elections across all tiers of government (One Nation, One Poll). Not only politically but even economically there were many centralisation schemes which were put forward by the BJP government after 2014, for example The invocation of One Nation, One Market brings together a number of policies such as those intended to unify agricultural markets, the introduction of the Goods and Services Tax (GST), the promotion of a national grid for states to purchase short-term power requirements and others. (Tillin, 2019) And with the recent 2022 budget announcement, with increased capital expenditure the central government is trying to use Article 293 of the Indian constitution (Legislative Department, 2016) to their advantage by playing 'debt trap diplomacy' with the states, which(the debt trap diplomacy) it has been employing ever since the BJP came to power, using various national schemes like PMAY (Pradhan mantri awaas yojana), Pradhan mantri suraksha bima yojana etc. There have been many instances when the central government has used these schemes to manipulate or harass state governments which try and oppose the centre, even after the government planned for fiscal decentralisation during its early years after 2014. (Yamini Aiyar & Avani Kapur 2019.) Abrogation of Article 370, and extension of the armed forces special powers act (AFSPA) in the northeastern states are other such examples which only points to the centralising tendency that this 'nationalist' government has and is willing to pursue.

CHAPTER 3- A Parasitic Relationship: Tribals and the Hindu Right

3.1 Tribes in the Indian context

The concept of tribes in India has many departures from the same concept in the context of other societies like that of the Americas, Australia or even Africa. The concept of tribes in India is actually a quite novel concept which has been introduced by the imperialists, but this doesn't mean that the structure of tribes was not present in the Indian society, for millennials this Land which we now call India has been home to so much variety of cultures and societies that it becomes obvious to assume that there would be many 'fringe' societies or civilizations which would have been cut off from any major 'larger section' of the society. This is also resonated by (Xaxa, 2005: 1363) when he says, "*Hence although the tribe as a category and as a point of reference may be treated as a colonial construction, the image and meaning underlying the category was far from being a colonial construction.*" What this indicates is the British for some reason or the other wanted to categorize Indian society along various lines, the reason which seems most logical is for the purpose of administration. Xaxa argues that there have been many 'marks of differences' in the Indian society for a very long time in terms of caste, language, religion and region to which another category of tribe was added in, during the colonial period. Britain which ruled over India (directly or indirectly) for more than 200 years, were discussing (since the mid of the 18th century.) the importance of categorization of population for better administration, for which the tool of census recording have to be used, but it will not be until 1801 that the first census in Britain will be carried out. (Bhagat, 2001: 4352) soon they (the British) realized that if they wanted to retain colonial power throughout the world and have the most efficient administration of their colonies, they must carry out census in the colonies too. The first census in India was carried out in 1872 and since the goal of the Britishers in India was the economic exploitation of the resources without actually caring about any socio-polical issues, they did carry out census structured in a way that most benefitted the British Raj in terms of efficient administration, without thinking of the social outcomes of the process, as is also stated by (Bhagat, 2001: 4352) "*As both gazetteers and census were initiated under a foreign and authoritarian government, neither public opinion nor the*

representative in- stitutions existed to limit the subjects investigated either in gazetteers or in the census reports." it is reported by Bhagat that the census in Britain were carried out very cautiously, careful thought have been put behind each detail that was present in the census reports and the question on religion was either completely ignored, or very cautiously approached. This exact question of religion in the Indian census from the very beginning in 1872 was used very extensively, there were question about castes, religion, region, language among other thing. It is interesting to note that the section on religion in the census reports was introduced for the Indian census way before it will first appear in the British census reports. This is so because the Britishers cleverly wanted to infuse the identities of religion, language and castes in order to continue their implementation of the policy of divide and rule, they understood that once Indians are conscious about their various identities a strong unity is unlikely to develop which will be in the interest of the colonizer. However, coming back to the point, this categorization of religion in Indian census was also the first instance that the category of tribes appears in the Indian society. As (Xaxa, 1999a: 1519) reports "*In the census reports of 1881, when the first 'proper' all-India census was under-taken, the term used was not 'tribe' but 'forest tribe', and that too as a sub-heading within the broader category of agricultural and pastoral castes.*" what Xaxa is reporting here is that the term Tribe slowly got into the nomenclature of the colonial government and hence slowly solidified in terms of a category to say a 'mark of difference' in the Indian society.

In the 'marks of differences' that i have mentioned earlier it is important to note that in the Indian context the mark of differences of language and region are intermixed, while that of religion and caste cuts across them. What this means is in the Indian context the mark of differences particularly religion and caste have more weight or intensity that mark of differences like language or region, for example, a Bihari Brahmin will easily get along with a Marathi Brahmin as opposed to a Bihari Brahmin getting along with a Bihari Dalit. And why is it important to appreciate this difference, you ask? It is because, only against this backdrop of religion and caste, the ethnographers and the sociologists have defined tribes in the Indian context and not necessarily against the backdrop of language or region which may have been an important factor in the context of Americas and Africa. As stated by (Xaxa, 2005: 1363) who argues that "*tribes came to be constituted as peoples who practised animism or tribal religion*" so what he is claiming here is that, even the colonial ethnographers understood the extent to which the concept of religion and caste was ingrained in the Indian society and hence respecting that they have to work around categorizing this vast land with vastly different people.

Now there are two schools of thought concerning the status of the Indian tribes, the first school which Xaxa terms as the social science perspective argues that the difference between the tribal society and the larger Indian society is a difference of type and not of kind that is the two societies are different typologies implying that the tribal society in general lies outside the sphere of the larger Indian society, and the larger Indian society through its constant interaction with these tribal societies continuously absorb or assimilate them into the larger Indian society. And there are many different views on how such assimilation takes place, take for example the idea of 'the Hindu method of tribal absorption' put forward by (Bose, 1941.) according to which, because the larger Indian society is technologically advanced than most of the tribal societies in India, it proves as a pull factor for the members of the tribal societies who see the economic and social benefits of such a society and migrate to urban places, leaving the traditional settings behind and slowly but surely in the social life of the 'larger society' they start shedding their previous identities and pick up the identities of the new social reality. But at least in this school of thought tribes having their distinct tradition, language, culture and religion are recognized. The other school of thought, as reported by (Xaxa, 2005.) which he terms as the 'Right Wing Political Thinking' starts from the analysis of G.S. Ghurye who refuses to recognize the differences in typologies between the larger Indian society and the tribal societies in India and claims that the tribal societies are part of the Indian society just with different levels of integration and hence he term them as 'backward Hindus' (and if you are wondering why Xaxa decided to give this school of thought the name of right wing political thinking, it is simply because the proponents of the Hindu right like the RSS and BJP often base their argument in support of their aggressive campaign of converting tribals into Hindus (or bhagats) on the analysis G.S Ghurye. In fact, this analysis of his complement the ideology of Hindutva as propagated by Savarkar so nicely that, this strain of thought that the tribals are part of the larger Hindu society has become the dominant mode of thinking not only amongst the Hindu right circle but also among the majority Indians today). What is surprising here is that G.S. Ghurye bases his argument on reports of certain election commissioners during the colonial period. I argue that this is not very reliable, because as mentioned earlier the main aim of the Britishers to conduct the census in India was for the better administration of their precious colony and to do that they not necessarily relied on the actuall social realities, but rather the census were based on preconceived notions and practices which would make the job of both the election officers as well as the administrators easy. The reason some election officers might have reported tribals being part of the Hindu society could be because first that made their job a lot easier and secondly because they saw no harm in including a backward society which has been much out of touch of the British administration into the larger Hindu Fold (I would argue if Muslims were in the majority these

tribes would have been reported as being part of the Muslim society) because politicizing the tribal separately might not have earned the Britisher much, than them being included in the Hindu fold and the whole Hindu fold being then politicized so as to play their card of divide and rule.

As mentioned earlier this right wing political thinking in terms of describing tribes as society, parallels very nicely with the Hindutva ideology as propagated by Savarkar. The Savarkarites toady argues that since all people living south of the Indus River are termed Hindu, the idgenous people would also be termed Hindus. But here's the catch, the term indigenous and tribal are not exactly the same. As described by International Labour organization, the term indigenous refers to people firstly who were the inhabitants of any particular land before the advent of western (European) colonizers and secondly, people who were marginalized due to such colonization by the foreigners and lastly the people who regardless of their legal status and the presence of other social order and institutions, largely follow their own set of rules, regulations and customs. While the same organization while defining tribals, doesn't talk about any foreign colonization and hence marginalization as a result of it. (ILO, ND) Now as a result, there are two things that needs to be considered, firstly in case of indigenous people there is a clear demarcation of outsiders vs locals and secondly there's the issue of marginalization, which is totally absent while defining tribals, what this implies is there may be many communities who are considered tribal but would not be considered indigenous. Another thing which is important here in the definition of indigenous people is the decision on the date, after which any arrival in a particular territory would be considered as a foreign entrance. Since this is quite vague in the Indian context as, if we take the date of Aryan arrival as the cut-off, almost all the Indians would be considered indigenous. Also, if we take up such a historic date as the cut-off, the third argument of the definition of indigenous people which is their separate rules, regulations and customs also fails as the tribal with such a long time for exposure and interaction with the larger Indian society would get assimilated with it and hence cannot be equated with indigenous people. This argument is also substantiated by (Xaxa, 1999b: 3593) who states that "*In short the use of the term indigenous to describe tribal people in India is fraught with difficulties. It does not reflect an empirical reality but is more of a political construction.*" Nonetheless, coming to the point that such appropriation of Ghurye's argument by the Hindu right for their political purposes by equating tribals and the indigenous people is fundamentally flawed and hence must be rejected and countered as much as possible.

It is also crucial to note here that the concepts of tribe and caste are not similar. The British in their initial days of census practice in India often got confused between the two, and therefore many a

times reported tribal people as belonging to the lower strata of the Hindu society. But if we go ahead with the social science perspective (this nomenclature suggest that the majority of the discourse on any particular topic has the backing of many social scientists) as termed by Xaxa to observe the difference between the tribal societies and the larger Indian society, we come to the conclusion that the tribal society actually lies outside the fold of the larger Indian society and hence the caste hierarchy which is the structure within the Hindu fold (which can also be termed here as the larger Indian society) must also lie exclusively of the tribal society and its structures, which simply implies that caste and tribes are not the same thing. This argument is further substantiated by (Xaxa, 1999a: 1519) when he states that "*It has generally been assumed that tribe and caste represent two different forms of social organisations - castes being regulated by the hereditary division of labour, hierarchy, the principle of purity and pollution, civic and religious disabilities, etc, and tribes being characterised by the absence of the caste attributes*." So one should or better could not equate the two. This is where another flaw of Ghurye's argument presents itself, he terms tribals as backward Hindus which also means people of lower caste and hence trying to establish that tribes in fact lies within the structure of caste hierarchy of the Hindu society. But if we assume that, then other arguments of Ghurye about the necessity of Hinduisation of the tribals does not make any sense. Hinduisation which is the process by which community lying outside the majority Hindu fold are brought into the caste hierarchy of the Hindu society by making them adopt the various tradition, values, belief system and the overall culture of the larger society, but since the Hindu fold argues that coming under the umbrella of the Hindu society would benefit the other community in terms of improved standard of living, economic (according to Bose's Hindu method of tribal absorption) condition and overall social status, the new entrants must occupy one of the lower strata in the caste hierarchy. Since Hinduisation assumes that the other society lies outside the larger Hindu society, Ghurye's argument on the one hand that the tribal are part of the Hindu society while at the same time campaigning for their Hinduisation makes for two contradictory statements. Further differentiation of tribes and caste is also on behavioural aspects, people from tribal society generally openly display their satisfaction of drinking, sexual pleasures and various rituals, while the same kind of pleasures are somewhat of a private matter in the caste societies. Now if the caste and tribe are different social structures why then, many reports them as similar? The reason being that many a times tribes transform into castes, and many even consider tribes as being something having a continuous flux, that is, they are at any moment transforming into castes, so these kinds of inferences might lead people to believe that tribe is just a form of caste separated temporarily which may result in them reporting the two as same.(Xaxa, 1999a: 1520) But more than anything, more than the conversion of tribes into castes, more than their Hinduisation or Sanskritisation, more than

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their assimilation into the regional linguistic community different from their native one, what we ought to remember is that even after all these processes has taken place the tribal society still to the very extent remain a society as is reminded to us by (Xaxa, 1999a: 1522) when he proclaims that "*A tribe which is drawn into a larger society does not cease to operate as a society. Does a society cease, by virtue of cultural change, to be a society? Does Bengali society cease to be a society in the wake of westernisation and modernisation within it? Nobody denies the existence and identity of Bengali society, but if cultural transformation occurs in a tribal society the general trend is to negate its existence.*" this clearly shows that when dealing with tribal societies, no matter what their level of integration or even assimilation is, it is very important to treat it as just another society, when we talk about their interaction with the Hindu right this point creeps up quite frequently as what the forces of the Hindu right are trying to do exactly that, deny them the privilege of being termed as a society.

With the independence of the country, the tribal question seemed to come into the forefront much regularly. At the time of independence there were two major school of thoughts regarding the tribal question in independent India, these were of Verrier Elwin, who was of the view that a policy of isolation must be pursued when dealing with the tribal question stating that their traditions, culture and way of living and interaction is very much different from the larger Indian society and hence it is best to leave them on their own with no interference of state as much as possible so that they could be the creator of their own destiny. The second school of thought was of Ghurye's who was of the view of assimilation of the tribals into the larger Indian society (he again contradicts himself here by pushing for assimilation, when he already considers tribals to be part of the larger Hindu fold, then why is there a need of assimilation? (which actually means bringing some societies under the umbrella of a larger society)) he argued that, it is the duty of the larger society to share the benefits of its technological, ideological and social achievements with the 'lesser' societies and hence assimilation would be the best bet. But instead the Indian state went ahead to pursue the policy of integration, which means that providing the tribals with means to get involved in the affairs of the larger society while at the same time being able to retain their native culture and identities, and indeed after some time both Ghurye and Elwin agreed that this is the best answer to the tribal question and started campaigning strongly for the integration of tribals in the Indian society. But the forces of the Hindu right had some other plans.

3.2 Tribals and the Hindu Right

The discourse in the Hindu right circles concerning the tribal question is mainly informed by and rooted in the works of G.S. Ghurye, as mentioned in the previous section, Ghurye's viewpoints were that tribals are already part of the Hindu society just that their level of assimilation has not reached the societal norm and hence he termed them 'backward Hindus'. But what I want to make clear from the start is, as I have shown and argued in the previous section, this approach of Ghurye was flawed on several accounts, firstly his analysis bases itself on reports and comments of colonial census commissioner and as I have argued, the main job of the colonialists were to exploit India of its resources as much as possible and hence their census practices were not necessarily suited for the benefit of the common people, there were no representational institutions present during the census process in India as they were present in Britain, hence the main aim of census in India was to improve the efficiency of the administration and hence the categorization of Indian people does not generally resonated with the social reality on ground. Secondly, in the arguments of Ghurye we find many contradictions leaving it open to scrutiny, for example he talks about the Hinduisation of tribals but, when his initial point itself is that tribals are part of the larger Indian society what is he then talking about the Hinduisation process. The next thing we see, during the time of independence and shortly after that he aggressively campaigns for the assimilationist mode of approach towards the tribal question, but again when his initial point itself is the unity of tribal and larger Hindu society, this does not necessarily make sense, and i argue that the whole narrative which the Hindu right tries to build on the tribal question is fundamentally flawed and cannot be taken seriously. Now that out the way, let's see what actually this discourse of the Hindu right on the tribals look like.

As we saw in earlier sections of this review that, as early as 1857 the seeds for communalism were sown and the fruits of it for the colonizers were starting to become ripe during the early 20th century. The Initial decade of the 20th century saw the emergence of hardline religious politics in India, and since it was becoming clearer and clearer that the Indian society will be based on the ideals of Democracy, every community wanted to build up its numerical strength, to get the most representation in power. The same goes for the Hindu community, from the beginning of the 20th century Hindu organizations were trying to bring everyone doubtful back under the Hindu fold. For example as (Zavos, 1999.) reports the 1890s movement of Hindu reform in terms of the Suddhi

movement, which was during that time focussing more on lower caste Hindus than on people from other religion like Christianity or Islam, was already becoming a sharp thorn in the back of the proponents of the Hindu right (who at that time were the non-Samajis, who tried their every bit to hinder the process of reform in the Hindu society), who were trying their best to hinder this reform strategy as, converting people from other religion to their would be beneficial to the Hindu right but not the upliftment of their own lower caste brother and sisters, in Zavos's words *"From the early 1890s, some Arya-led suddhi ceremonies incorporated significant new characteristics. First, the practice of individual ceremonies was gradually superseded by multiple or mass purifications. Second, the subjects of suddhi ceremonies were increasingly low-caste Hindus or untouchables as opposed to Christians or Muslim..........For non-Aryas, the shift in emphasis meant a direct assault on established Hinduism. Where the reconversion of individuals from Christianity and Islam was questionable, it at least had the merit of providing resistance to the perceived incursions of these 'foreign' proselytizing religion."* Another important thing to note here is that the Indian state itself in a way helped the proponents of the Hindu right to legitimize their claim of tribals being Hindus. As, before Independence the tribals in the census were categorized as people following Animism, or tribal religion or sometimes even mentioned as people of tribal origin, but soon after Independence in the first census count all these categories to describe tribals were abandoned, and they were put under Hinduism, if they were not already a part of any major religion, what resulted is that most of the tribals who have had not much contact with the larger Indian society, just got assimilated (just on paper for now) into the Hindu fold without them even knowing it, obviously this didn't affect even a bit on their cultural or traditional ideas, beliefs and practices, but at least the Hindu right got a starting point on which they can build to spread their ideology to the deepest portion of the Indian society as possible. Also, it is not the case that this majority Hindu society (which is somewhat steered by the forces of the Hindu right) genuinely care for the tribals and by assimilating them into the Hindu fold they want to uplift their lives, as stated earlier one of the assimilation techniques is that of Hinduisation and according to it when the new entrant in the Hindu fold are welcomed they are situated in the lower strata of the caste society, indicating that the Upper caste Hindu right just wants to build its numerical strength by trying to convince these tribal societies that they are part of the larger Hindu fold but at the same time don't want them to be equal in social status with themselves, they are discriminated against, treated unfairly, the social services which have been employed as a tool to garner tribal support in tribal areas are just not adequate and only on a superficial level, this indeed have caused some trouble for the Hindu right themselves to which we will come to later.

Talking of the social services by the Hindu right, this method has actually been copied directly from the Christian missionary activities. The Christian missionaries were given a free hand in the early 19th century by the British government, to convert the population of India into Christians. But that conversion does not necessarily meant a conversion by force, but rather from the very beginning the Christian missionary activities were based social service and social reform (obviously they only wanted reforms in the caste Hindu society but not Christianity itself, against which Raja Rammohun Roy too spoke as mentioned by (Chandra, 1982: 122) when he states taking about Roy that "*He, therefore stood for the reform of Hinduism and opposed its suppression by Christianity.*"). They nonetheless tried to counter the oppressive and discriminatory nature of the caste Hindu society by establishing schools, medical facilities, social organizations to promote brotherhood, etc and they specifically targeted tribal and rural areas (they obviously had their own agenda behind this move, but they also genuinely tried to help the rural and tribals as is also stated by (Chandra, 1982: 115) "*They thought that the light of Western knowledge would destroy people's faith in their own religions and lead them to welcome and embrace Christianity, They therefore opened modern schools, colleges, and hospitals in the country.*"). The Hindu right saw, how successful the Christian missionaries has been, and decided that they should also follow the policy of social assimilation using social services to reach the rural tribal people, and this indeed has played out as a successful strategy for them. As mentioned earlier as well these forces of Hindu right does not necessarily fight or stand for the real tribal issues like 'jal', 'jungle', 'jameen' but rather, they raise their own agendas of religion and conversions which does not really resonates with the tribals, but they are somehow convinced. The Hinduized tribals are known as 'Bhagats' (they call themselves that) and does not necessarily mention themselves as Hindus and this the Hindu right knows very well, it is the fact that even after Hinduisation tribal societies are not fully assimilated into the larger Hindu fold, for which a proper structural change in the Tribal society is essential so that they become compatible with the caste hierarchy structure particular of the Hindu society and hence the Hindu right tries hard to do that by exploiting the already present inequalities and social statuses in any particular tribal society. For example, the chief or leaders of any tribal society would generally be given a higher social status after Hinduisation as compared to other 'normal' member of that tribal society. Another difficulty that the proponents of the Hindu right faces is that of a lack of uniform tribal Indetity. Since unlike the non-tribal population who had a much greater presence during the Indian nationalist movements which helped them build a somewhat uniform national identity over which any ideological building can be laid, Indian tribal population lacked this uniform identity. This is because of their constraints and hesitations to join the Indian national movements, resulting in a

disjuncture between a common uniform national identity and the non-uniform, non-common tribal identity. This argument is also substantiated by (Xaxa, 2016: 228) when he reports that "*(the) responses of tribes to the Indian national movement were far from uniform........(and hence) This had a bearing on tribes with respect to their identification with Indian national identity*." the Hindu right must overcome this issue of non-uniform identity base of tribal if they wanted to spread the homogenized ideology of Hindutva amongst the tribal folds. This issue of non-uniform tribal identity is problematic in case of tribal who are in the process of Hinduisation, but it is even more problematic to the Indian tribes who have adopted other foreign religions like Christianity. There have been constant attacks on Christians tribals and even social and legal movements to deschedule chritian tribals from the scheduled tribe category. (Katju, 2015: 23) Another very interesting argument concerning the legitimacy of the Hindu right in claiming that the tribals are Hindu is put forward by (Das Gupta , S. 2019: 113) when she states that "*the Census Commissioner of Bengal, J.A. Bourdillon (in 1881 census reports) stated that: No answer in fact exists for the term (Hindu), in its modern acceptance denotes neither a creed nor a race, neither a church nor a people, but is a general expression devoid of precision, and embracing alike the most punctilious disciple of pure Vedanta, the Agnostic youth who is the product of Western education, and the semi barbarous hillman ... [who] is ignorant of the Hindu theology as the stone which he worships in times of danger or sickness*" what this suggests is that, the category of Hindu itself is not very well-defined so claiming a whole society to be a part of it (the Hindu society) might be problematic, another thing to note here is that it was a statement of a election commissioner of the colonial times, the same category of person on whom Ghurye has based his analysis, so concerning the subjective nature of the reports by the election officer, his analysis on which the Hindu right tries to answer the tribal question seems flawed. Regardless, these kinds of theoretical hurdles doesn't bother the forces of Hindu right who try and legitimize their claim through direct action.

In 1952 the Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram was established as an affiliation of RSS by Balasaheb Deshpande, the vision of the organisation as mentioned in its official website is to "eliminate the chasm between Hindu community and their Vanvasi brethren with affection and good faith." (VKA, 2021.) So as can be seen by the vision of the organization it from the very start assumes the tribals (which they call vanvasi (or forest dwellers) or junglee, which in the literal sense means inhabitants of the forests but is oftenly used as an insult for someone uncivilized; or not normal as per the norms of the larger society.) part of the larger Hindu society and works as that being the base. And interestingly enough from the very start the VKA under the guidance of RSS critiqued Nehru of allowing proselytization by Christians in early years of independence, but if we look closely we find

that both the secular front and the Hindu nationalist front were always on the same page of trying and assimilating tribals into the larger Hindu fold as is suggested by (Das Gupta, S. 2019: 119) when she declares "*in a language very similar to that of Nehru's, they (the proponents of the Hindu right) declared their intention to engage in their objective (of spreading disguised form of Hindutva) giving them (the tribals) 'due respect to their way of life, religion and culture, rites and rituals.*" There are many statistics (by the government itself) showing that the population of Christians decreased from 1981 to 1991 (as reported by Pinto, 2000: 3633), the period when the Hindu right was in full swing and was about to enter its explosive phase, why then the proponents of the Hindu right still clinged to the narrative that 'Hindus are in danger from these proselytizing religions'? It is simply because these forces do not care about facts and figures but rather in any way possible want to expand their base, for which they have to build popular narratives that even the victims will swallow as was the case with Christian Tribals, who were targeted by the Hindu right forces during the 80s and 90s especially because that was the time of the resurgence of the Suddhi movement (Pinto, 2000: 3635) Another important campaign that these Hindu right forces has deployed for harassing tribals having religion other than Hinduism is the campaign of Ghar wapsi, this was a very popular movement during the late 80s and early 90s, to convert the tribals (mostly Christians) back to what the Hindutva forces believed their true culture is, Hinduism. During the Ram Janamabhoomi movement, this was a pretty violent movement, in which heinous attacks on minorities were reported. However, this movement has again gained traction after the Hindu right returned to power in 2014, the only difference is this time the battle is more verbal than last time, which actually fits in line of though as argued by Bipin Chandra who claimed that after coming to power the communalists would not resort to violence that much but, they will surely attack the secular thoughts and ideas, and this is what we are witnessing, an attack on a fundamental right of the citizens, the freedom of religion.

One of the major cases of communalization of tribals by the Hindu right comes from the state of Gujarat, it is often argued that the tribals of Gujarat are much more Hinduized as compared to their other tribal counterparts of let's say central or north-eastern India. But still, communalization of a community which essentially was outside the major Hindu fold for millenniums is interesting. In Gujarat communal violence in tribal areas was a recurring theme, but the tribals themselves were never involved, their involvement during the 90s also coincide with the exponential rise of the Hindu rise in the popular discourse of the country. The communalization of politics in the 80s and 90s based on the Ram Janamabhoomi movement led to the speedy Hindutvisation of the tribal communities in Gujarat, which was planned process by the Sangh parivar in order to achieve two

things at once, first carry on the attacks on the minority communities with high intensity and secondly assimilate as much tribal population in the Hindu fold as possible in the process so as to increase the vote bank. And this indeed was very successful in Gujarat. The process of Hinutvisation of tribals in Gujarat is well documented by (Lobo, 2002: 4846) when he writes that "*The Parivar began by propagating Hindutva through various existing Hindu sects inthe area........Sangh Parivar established branches of the Bajrang Dal (BD) and Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP). Attempts were made to visit each village and make non-Christian adivasis members of the BD. Deeksha was given to persons joining the BD in which 'trishuls' (tridents) and saffron headbands were distributed. Non-Christian sarpanchs of the villages were made members of Hindutva organisations. Economically better-off persons were made members of Sangh Parivar outfits. Unemployed youth of villages were enrolled as members. Sangh Parivar published and widely distributed a calendar depicting the Hindu god Hanuman. Idols of Hindu gods and goddesses were distributed by the BD and VHP during Navaratri and Ganapati fes- tivals. Financial help also given. Dangs alone saw construction of 41 Hindu shrines during the last three years most of which were dedicated to Hanuman. Sangh Parivar distributed anti-Christian pamphlet.*" even in the post Godhra riots a lot of tribal took part in the riots, however it is also reported that most of the tribal engaged in activities like looting and theft, rather than more heinous crimes like murder or rapes, indeed the economic situation might have led many tribals to join in on the rioting, in order to get the sweet economical fruits out of it. But the reality is most of the people arrested for rioting were people of tribal identity and people from lower caste, hence in a sense they were used by the Hindu right for their benefits of the propagation of the Hindutva ideology. (Lobo, 2002: 4848) Another instance of a more Hinduized tribal community comes from the state of Odisha. Odisha is a majority Hindu state, but with a lot of regional specificities, when the RSS was trying to establish itself in the region it had to mould itself a lot in order to appeal to the local population which also include a lot of tribal people, the cult of Jagannath is said to be a tribal cult, which has been Hinduized over centuries, but when the forces of the Hindu right tried to enter this territory for propagating their homogenized version of Hindutva, they had to take refuge under the shade of 'regional-hinduism' and hence perhaps that's why (Kanungo, 2003: 3294) says "*Thus, the Hinduisation of Orissa needs to be seen as a two-way process in which not only were some features of Hinduism incorporated into the adivasi cults, but also vice versa.*" It is also important to note how the Hindu right forces exploits the presence of already existing social tensions within different communities in the society and use it for their advantage for the advancement of the ideology of Hindutva by pitting one faction against the other, by promoting the feeling of 'us vs them' and they do this quite effectively in tribal societies. For example (Kanungo, 2008: 17-18) in Odisha they

have pitted the Kandha tribe against the Panna Christian Dalits by playing the card of Us vs Them, and fuelling the tensions between the communities which was already present based on socio-economic conditions of the two communities and playing the card of the protectors of Hindu interests by siding with the Kandhas. Another example comes from Chhattisgarh where they have pitted a Hindu tribe against Oraons (a Christian tribe) again based of the pre-existing socio-economic strain between the two communities as the Hindu tribals try and blame the Christians for taking advantage of the Hindus by selling them cheap booze and making huge profits. (Froerer, 2006: 43-46) It is also interesting to note how apart from the natural base of Hindutva in some regions like Gujarat, Odisha etc the forces of the Hindu right were able to encroach some unorthodox areas like the central Indian forested region of M.P and Chhattisgarh, or the North-eastern region of Assam. All of these encroachments of their unnatural base had one common feature, the Hindu right were flexible enough to mould itself according to the regional environment and capture and incorporate the regional identities on themselves and then mix it with Hindutva in such a way that the major identity which present itself to any local viewer still look mostly like their regional identity except for a few changes which could be compromised with, in exchange of various social services that these forces of the Hindu right were willing to provide.

Now one question that might come in mind of the reader is that, why have I name this chapter as 'A parasitic relationship'? The answer to this is simple, just like a biological parasitic relationship in which one organism feed on another basically utilizing all its energy and strength while in return giving the other organism nothing, the relationship between the Hindu right and the tribal is a kind of 'social-parasitism' in which the forces of the Hindu right uses the tribals for their advantage be it increasing their community's numerical strength or using the tribals for communal violence, endangering their future and legitimacy of any future claims, while giving the tribals nothing in return. Let us first discuss what the tribals provide for the Hindu right in particular and the Indian nation in general. As mentioned earlier the tribals are used by the forces of the Hindu right for their advantages like expansion of their ideological and hence electoral base and as a feedback loop, where once a tribal community is communalized, the Hindu right might not have to care about that particular region that much because the tribes of the region may have already been addicted to the communal taste and would make sure to counter any activities or ideologies which pose a threat to the ideology of upper caste Hindus. (Lobo, 2002: 4848) who talks about how Tribals got the taste of looting in the communal riots of Gujarat and from then on, not much mobilization has been required from the Hindutva side if any communal situation comes up, also, important to note that the price is also paid by the tribals themselves by getting arrested, criminalized and portrayed as a violent tribal

society, so that any future claims of their regarding some 'real' issues like land, forest rights, displacement etc might be delegitimized. (this indeed is called 'ek teer se do nishane' or 'two targets simultaneously from one arrow.') Next the tribal contribution to the Indian society in general has been equally impressive if not more, with increasing threat of climate change, there has been an aggressive push towards sustainable development, and the tribal community has shown its potential in achieving sustainable development. As stated by (Heredia, 2002: 5176) there have been two paradoxes of ecological impact of different modes of resource use, one is that the greater the distance of the user (of any particular resource) the more the ecological impact. And the second is that with the increase in scientific knowledge, there has been an increase in ecological degradation. But here's where our tribal communities have shown their capabilities as Heredia states "*unlike tribal societies, both agro-industrial groups and peasant farmers have shown themselves almost totally unable to manage sustainably and produce effectively in such environment.*" so in a sense these tribal knowledges about the environment and nature is a precious capital to us, and we must preserve them, but what actually is happening is a way different story. The price that these tribal communities has paid against the contribution of the society to ours almost seems parasitic, although constitutional provision like the reservation in higher education and government jobs have brought somewhat of an upliftment in the tribal community, it has not been anywhere near ideal, the majority Hindu community which is the same community which supposedly works for the 'upliftment' of the tribal societies has been firmly opposed to these kinds of reservation policies stating their age-old rhetoric of 'pseudo-secularism' and inequality. But despite this constitutional provision of reservation and other directive principles of state policy mentioned in the constitution, advising the government to work for the upliftment of the tribal and backward communities, the majority of the Indian tribes still live under the poverty line, with backward social environment. Apart from this the Indian state has constantly encroached on their ancestral land and have demanded them to relocate for the 'national developmental' projects , this has not only stripped them of their ancestral identities but have also stripped them off of their economic and social activities which are so much connected with concept of 'Jal', 'Jungle' and 'Jameen' and hence as price for their contribution to the society tribal have only been exploited, harassed and left alone without any support, even from their so called Hindutva saviours. (Xaxa, 2016: 232-235)

As a result of all this exploitation and the use by the Hindu right a new tribal identity has been on the rise, you see, one of the major components or principles that Hindutva builds on is the presence of a homeland a territory that is occupied by the Hindus, this exact right or privilege is being denied to the tribal communities and their claims on land, natural resources and hence their traditions

related to them is being delegitimized, this has created a sense of solidarity amongst the tribals to oppose these non-tribal intruders and sometimes even the state, who are encroaching on their lands and resources, and a tribal identity is born as states (Xaxa, 1999b: 3595) when he says "*The adivasi consciousness and the articulation of indigenous people status is not so much about whether they are the original inhabitants of India as about the fact that they have no power whatsoever over anything (land, forest, river, resources) that lies in the territory they inhabit..........It is the same kind of yearning that the various dominant communities of India articulated in the period before independence or after independence.*" With special reference to Jharkhandi tribes (Louis, 2000: 4087-4088) explains how tribal identity culminated in Jharkhand (but which is also true for most of India) stating that there were many factors in consolidating a tribal identity in Jharkhand which led to the struggle for Jharkhand (which started way back in 1950s) being successful with the formation Jharkhand state, according to him the tribal identity in Jharkhand consolidated because of 4 reasons, first the sense of being a tribal itself was a strong integrating force to make people come under one banner, however this was only possible because the major tribes in the region were not separated geographically (which is the case for some tribes in Gujarat and Maharashtra and hence the low sense of tribal identity in those regions), the second factor is the fact of people realizing that they are the real Adivasis (or original inhabitant, indigenous) of the region and must have a common identity, third, he states that Christianity provided a lot of ground for cohesion, gave tribals the needed history, social environment, memory of a golden age and hence helped in consolidating the tribal identity, and finally the narrative of 'Us vs Them', we tribals vs they 'Dikus' (outsiders). I argue that some of the factors he mentioned for the Jharkhand case has been common for many of the other Indian tribes, the biggest is the 'Us vs Them' narrative. This Us vs Them narrative has actually led to two types of tribal identity formation in Madhya Pradesh, one that is obvious which demarcates the line between tribals and non-tribal on the basis of the material exploitation of the former by the latter, but at the same time another non-obvious type of tribal identity has also emerged, which has actually encouraged the tribals to emulate the upper-caste non-tribal lifestyle so that the stigma of being backward and savage can be removed from the tribal society and these two identities are often in conflict as is stated by (Baviskar, 1997: 210) when she says "*While the former movement espouses to revive the tribal past, the latter wants to erase it, in order to remould the adivasi identity to suite the higher status in the Hindu hierarchy.*" This Us vs Them narrative has also given rise to one other serious issue, the Issue of Naxalism. Today, many parts of India especially the North-east and central India covering regions of southern Chhattisgarh, eastern Maharashtra, north-eastern Telangana and Northern Andhra Pradesh is infested with Naxalite activities, which is a form of left wing extremism. Apart from these region, small groups of

Naxalites are also active in parts of Karnataka, especially near the kudremukh national park. But what this kind of left wing adventurism does is it simply help the forces of the Hindu right as it delegitimizes the social movements by the tribals for their genuine demands and rights, this is substantiated when (Assadi, 2004: 885) says "*Naxalite adventurism helps the Hindutva lobby to consolidate and expand its bases (more) than the social movements, and the liberal space.*"

But if there is so much obstacle in the path of the Hindu right in terms of tribal identity, consolidating Adivasi consiousness, Naxalism and many of the constitutional provisions protecting the minorities what makes them so successful? It is the fact that the Indian tribal society is vastly different in terms of their social advancement and hence require a fine-tune approach to deal with each specific tribal community of a specific region and only a genuine effort from the part of the outsiders towards the tribal involvement in issues related to them will make a genuine bond between the tribals and the outsiders, the Sangh parivar has mastered this art, they have provided such social services at such levels of the unscathed tribal populations of India, that their bond have only strengthened with the tribals due to high intensity involvement of the tribals in local affairs as arranged by the Hindu right and as a result the tribal have come to trust them as their genuine ally, but what lies beneath this disguised alliance is actually the vicious Hindutva ideology of exploitation and gain.

Conclusion

This thesis presents a review of the scholarly articles on the evolution of the Hindu right and its ideology of Hindutva, and its nature of the relationship with the Indian tribal society. As we saw, there is a general consensus on the rise of RWA worldwide and specifically in India, where it manifests itself in the form of Hindu nationalism based on the ideology of Hindutva. We argued that the relevance of this study is because of lack of such reviews on the evolution of the Hindu right and its interaction with the tribal society of India. We further argued that such conglomeration of information helped us answer the three research questions of this work, which are 1) How RWA has evolved over time in the Indian context in the form of Hindu nationalism basing itself on the ideology of Hindutva? 2) How the forces of the Hindu right have first of all Hinduised the tribals and more interestingly Hindutvised them?(the process) and lastly 3) Why have the forces of the Hindu right been so successful in Hindutvising the tribals? We hope that this study proves as a base

for any further analysis on this particular interaction of these two unusual, incompatible worlds and their ideologies.

By starting the review, we saw how different Authors have viewed the phenomenon of RWA in general. It can be looked at from a psychological perspective, socio-political perspective, cultural perspective or a mixture of all of them. But we took the explanation given by (Altemeyer, B. 1981) as our focal point while discussing RWA. Altemeyer talks about how RWA is the covariance of three concepts: 'authoritarian submission', 'authoritarian aggression', and 'conventionalism', and how the covariation of these attitudinal clusters is key. Mapping this explanation of RWA in the Indian context, we found that the phenomenon of Hindu nationalism matches all the requirements to be qualified as RWA. This Hindu nationalism is based on the Ideology of Hindutva, which we saw culminating from the late 19th century but was properly codified by Vinayak Damodar Savarkar in the 1920s. The most basic tenet of the ideology of Hindutva is the transformation of India from a secular nation-state to a Hindu religious nation-state. This brought us to our first question, how this phenomenon of RWA has evolved over time in India? To answer that we saw how from 1857 onwards with British intervention, communal tensions started to rise in the Indian society, which certainly helped the British to maintain their supremacy. This communalisation of Indian society, initially by the British and then by religious fundamentalists, slowly but surely gave rise to the phenomenon of RWA in India in the form of Hindu nationalism. Some scholars argued that there is a linear relationship between the religious reform movements of the 19th century and the rise of the Hindu right in the 20th century, but such kinds of claims have been dismissed by authors like Zavos. Hence, from 1857 to 1947, the phenomenon of RWA was building gradually up to its modern form, initiated by the communalisation of the Indian society which was then supplemented by some parts of the religious reform movements of the 19th century along with the conventionalism of religious fundamentalists. We saw how after independence, for more than a decade there was communal peace in the country mostly due to the fear on the side of the communalists that they would be labelled as extremists in the newly formed secular country. But that changed eventually as we saw the era of communal violence started from the early 1960s, which only grew intense with the passage of time. Then we argued how this act of communal violence is actually a vehicle for spreading the ideology of communalism (which in India can also be equated with the ideology of Hindutva), which further strengthen the shield (which is made out of the consolidated communal ideology) of this vehicle, which further help it spread the ideology of communalism more efficiently, triggering a feedback loop. The communalism and communal violence grew, for sure,

but there were also times when there was communal peace, like the era of emergency. And as Bipin Chandra showed that this vehicle of communal violence cannot move from itself, it needs a driver, and those drivers are basically the proponents of the Hindu right in the Indian context. The event of emergency in the 1970s also paved the way for the forces of the Hindu right to portray themselves in a new light. They now started to portray themselves as 'secularists' and democratic, while claiming parties like Congress are communal. This is due to the fact that where communalists are in power, communal violence is somewhat of a rare occurrence. The Ramajanmbhoomi movement as we saw gave a huge boost to the forces of the Hindu right and saw the emergence of the women of the Hindu right in the limelight. This boost helped the forces of the Hindu right to expand its natural social bloc to a much broader base, due to which they were able to capture the state power for the first time during this era. The 2002 Gujarat riots showed what the communalists were capable of, when they have the state power, and it definitely warns us just like Bipin Chandra to not let communalists near state power. The Hindu right was able to maintain its expanded base throughout

the first decade and a half of the 21st century, which further expanded exponentially after 2014, and there seems no retardation of such expansion in the present time. Unnatural regional bases like Assam shows the extent to which these forces of the Hindu right have penetrated the Indian society.

This expansion of its social base brings us to our next research question, which is, how the forces of the Hindu right have managed to Hinduise and eventually Hindutvise the tribals of India (the process)? To answer this question, we firstly understood what the term tribe signifies in the Indian context. We saw how the categorisation of tribes was a colonial construction. Britishers, who had just one aim, which was to exploit the resources of India, wanted the best administration they could afford. And exactly for that reason, that is for improving the efficiency of the administrative process, the Britishers categorised Indians in various shapes and forms. As was shown, how the same Britishers who dodged the categorisation in terms of religion in their own country, did exactly that kind of categorisation in India, and tribals were one such of their categories. We also argued that even though the category of tribes was a novel construction during the colonial era, the concept itself of tribes in India is quite historical as there have been many societies and communities in the past, even before the colonial era, which have laid outside the construct of the larger Indian society. This brought us to the various discourses on tribals in India. The Hindu right for its discourse on tribals is mainly informed by the works of G. S. Ghurye, who claims that the tribals in India are part of the larger Hindu society. While most other scholars like Xaxa have argued that the tribes in India are generally out of the larger Hindu society. These discourse by the Hindu right claiming that the

tribes are part of the larger Hindu society was then critiqued. Since they are mainly based on the arguments by Ghurye, we argue with the help of Xaxa's ideas, that Ghurye's analysis on tribes is fundamentally flawed and his arguments contradictory. By doing this, from the very outset, we established that the claims of the Hindu right have been informed by a flawed reasoning and hence critiqued their legitimacy. But this in no way has hindered the forces of the Hindu right in spreading its ideology deep in the tribal landscape of India. First and the foremost thing that these forces of the Hindu right do is emulate the strategies of Christian missionaries (whom they have seen become successful from over a century). The setting up of social services like educational facilities, medical services, social and cultural organisations, etc. in the rural tribal setting helps them connect with the local people at the ground level. This becomes the first level in spreading the ideology of Hindutva in the tribal regions, using schools and social organisation which conduct pro-Hindutva events on a frequent basis. Once these forces are established in a region and observe that they have some kind of support and confidence of the local population, they move to their next level for the spread of communal (Hindutva ideology). During this level, since they have established their grounds in the local region, they make use of the local pre-present social, cultural or economical tensions with different groups of the region and turn these tensions into communal ones. They throw their support behind one of the groups and start spreading the idea of 'Us vs Them'. These transformations of local social tensions into communal tensions bring a lot of fruits to the proponents of Hindutva. They on the one hand spread Hindutva even deeper in the tribal society, expanding their social base, while at the same time they make sure that these new subscribers of the ideology of Hindutva furthers the ideology without much help so that the main proponents of the Hindutva can focus on other regions and societies. This was supported by our review of various communal riots of the 90s and early 2000s, when for the first time tribals participated in such kind of communal rioting. And once they got the taste of communal violence (which as mentioned above is the vehicle for the spread of communal ideology), there was no stopping them. And this exactly is the third level of the spread of Hindutva ideology, where the new subscriber of the ideology spread the communal ideology mostly using the vehicle of communal violence recruiting new subscribers in the process, this de centralised way of operation of the Hindu right makes them so efficient, as the main forces of the Hindu right becomes free of the duty of the spread of communalism which people downstream are taking care of and hence the main proponents can focus their attention and energy elsewhere. This brings us to our final question, which is, why is the Hindu right so successful with the tribals? To answer this question, we saw how the de-centralised nature of the mechanism of spreading of the Hindutva ideology helped the forces of the Hindu right become very efficient. We also discussed how the 'parasitic relationship' between the tribals and the proponents of the Hindu

right helps the latter in becoming a strong force. This 'parasitic relationship' first of all, weakens the tribal society as the do not get their fair share of legitimisation as compared to what they contribute of the larger Indian society. They still remain poor, marginalised and their rights over 'jal', 'jungle', 'jameen' are infringed upon from time to time. Even the Indian state sides with the proponents of the Hindu right is doing so, and after these forces have captured state power, this marginalisation of the tribal community has only intensified. Secondly, by using the tribals in various events of the spread of Hindutva like communal riots, the Hindu right makes sure that only their cadre strengthens. The tribals are jailed, shot upon and an overall disunity prevails in the Indian tribal society on the line of religion and caste. What this does is the tribal identity, which would have otherwise crystallised, never actually consolidate and hence one more chance of opposing the communal forces of the Hindu right is lost. This also pushes the tribals towards extremism in terms of Naxalism in search of a common identity and effort to make a claim on their rights. But what it actually does is further delegitimise the claims of tribals as being a distinct society with unique traditions and cultural history and weakens them as a political force, which in search of solidarity gets attracted to the ideology of Hindutva disguised in the form of their provisions of social services and backing up in case of pre-existing social conflicts. But what is most important in considering why the forces of Hindu right are so successful in their encounter with tribals, comes from the fact that the Indian tribal society is vastly different in terms of their social advancement and hence require a fine-tune approach to deal with each specific tribal community of a specific region, and only a genuine effort from the part of the outsiders towards the tribal involvement in issues related to them will make a genuine bond between the tribals and the outsiders, and to everyone's surprise the Sangh parivar has mastered this art.

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