‘Becoming a Light onto Itself’
Nationalist Fantasies in the Age of Globalisation

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The growth of radical Hindu nationalism since the late 1980s coincided with the opening and integration of India into global systems of production and global flows of consumption and cultural products. These processes were certainly concomitant, but their causal interlinkages remain less obvious and straightforward. In the following I will explore how some of these interlinkages could be constructed. In current debates in the postcolonial world and in the west it is often suggested that globalisation – understood as intensified global flows of commodities, money, culture and people – irrevocably provoke anti-modern and fundamentalist reactions in the postcolonial world because it is 'too much', i.e., too disruptive in its socio-consequences and too penetrating into local or national cultures. I propose that things are a bit more complex. While globalisation – whether in manifest or imaginary forms – undoubtedly contributes to the growth of radical cultural nationalism, it does so exactly because it is 'not enough' – i.e. neither global nor universal enough, and therefore 'too much' because it, as a metaphor for subordination to the west, is perceived as an uneven process of marginalisation and exclusion. The significance of globalisation both in its concrete and its imaginary senses lies, I will venture, in the crucial ambivalence between its promises of recognition of nations, groups, and transgressions, and its simultaneous threat of subversion of political sovereignty and cultural particularity.

The triumph of the Hindu maajid meant the erosion of a symbol of the cultural diversity of India which, according to the Hindu nationalists, constitutes a central obstacle to the emergence of a modern and strong society and state that may enable India to occupy her rightful place among the great nations of the world. To the Hindu nationalists, as well as to millions of ordinary Indians and other people around the world, the imagining of modernity is inextricably connected to notions of power and consumption: economic prosperity, a strong state and strong, 'full' and unequivocal cultural and national identities. In this phantasmatic construction, the strong, homogeneous nation is a sign of modernity; it bestows protection, sovereignty, self-confidence and political integrity on its citizens. To speak with Bauman (1991), it is imagined to reduce the ambiguities of everyday life.

At the same time, the integration of the Indian economy into the world market has revealed the failure and underperformance of the bureaucratised, semi-planned economic model, the so-called 'licence raj', in India. The new global order has also yielded the official discourse of India's 'third path' between capitalism and communism rather obsolete, and revealed that India by the early 1990s had become a marginal player in world politics. For the vast middle class and upwardly mobile strata in India, the internationalisation of a national identity and pride, combined with the loss of the aura of the Congress Party, and a growing consumption of global TV and advertising, has intensified the desire to be recognised in the world and to move upwards in the imagined global hierarchy. In this situation, the Hindu nationalist discourse evoked a broad popular response partly because it posited India as the 'supplement' that element without which the global never could become universal and partly because it portrayed the non-Hindu minorities, especially the Indian Muslims, as 'operational other' which prevented the full development of the Indian nation – essentially a Hindu nation according to the Hindu nationalist movement – and thus prevented India from occupying its rightful place among other strong and modern nations in the world.

1 Globalisation of Modernity

There have always been global systems of states, military balances, trade, technology and cultural exchange. There have been powerful supra-local institutions – such as the world religions – spreading over several continents, providing foci of simultaneous identification for millions of people. Cultural meanings have always been formed through localisation of global or extra-local symbolic forms, in determinate spatio-temporal contexts. The intensity of this global process has varied with the forms and cycles of global systems: more intensive in periods of stable hegemonies encompassing vast areas, while weaker in periods of fragmentation and disorder in the global systems of domination (Friedman 1994, 195-254). With the gradual and hegemonic emergence of the modern world, global processes expanded enormously and the explosion in communication technology rendered possible a qualitatively new awareness of the global condition. This globalisation of modern practices took place along with the violent and uneven expansion of dominance. The European ensuing pronounced and contradictory re-patriation and re-nationalisation of modern discourses and institutions – mostly western in a generic sense – produced widely differing modernities all over the world. None of these forms – not even in the metropolitan heartlands of the west – ever became truly universal, but they are all structured by modern institutions and modern processes of identification. It is, in other words, difficult to maintain the notion of modernity – whether understood as an ensemble of institutions, as an epistemological horizon or as a 'fantasy screen' for desires – as an essential and perennial western social form. In any case, it is understood in the former sense as capitalist industrial accumulation regimes: modern bureaucratic nation-states and democratic discourses of sovereignty and equality, secular ideologies, etc. Modernity has since the end of the 19th century emerged as a globally dominant, though far from always hegemonic, societal institution.

The most important global process is, no doubt, the expansion of capitalist markets.
cycles of seven-day weeks, and a global time-zone regime. This regime has naturally and irrevocably constructed a common, homogeneous and 'empty' time, i.e., an abstraction of time which, from certain perspectives, is experienced as an unstructured basis or framework.

II Globalisation of the Nation Form

The modern nation states in the west were established through protracted processes of economic integration, administrative homogenisation and an equally protracted process of nationalisation of identities and 'production of the people' (Balibar 1991: 93-95) through indoctrination, education, urbanisation, development of public spheres for communication and exchange of social interests and contestation of power. The nation-state thus became a vehicle for imposing a unified national power and discipline, as well as a means of contestation of power and institutional arrangements of inequality and power, as well as a vehicle for the transformations of social relations on an essentially national scale. The expansion of these processes, the individualisation and flexible consumption patterns of capitalist markets and the emergence of new technologies have offered equally powerful and distinctly different strategies for the possibility of multiple and often competing strategies for constructing consumption. This flexible and ostensible individualisation of lifestyles, consumption and identification of the nation-state, the economic market, and the emergent processes of hedonism and enjoyment of a 'fullness' of life seemed to appeal to, or fill in, the experience of social order, a social and 'lack' most conspicuously in urban agglomerations around the world.

The universalisation of global time and the constant transformation of series of places into one world-time, as well as the formation through the imposition was a powerful temporal matrix: a homogeneous chronology, standardised annual calendar, production systems and a constantly differentiating global division of labour. Historically, capitalist markets, monetisation and exchange have been productive of displaced older structures of power and domination and instilled new and more efficient modes of exploitation, discipline and repression. The globalisation of capitalism also led to an unprecedented function to separate and displace individuals from a general abstraction of social relations. Commodities and money and the web of institutions produced by the global exchange became, as Marx noted, flows of human labour and social relations in an abstracted form, separate from consumption, and utility from producers. Sociologically, the introduction of capitalist production led to a great scaling up of people, massive urbanisation and profound transformations of human life towards larger, collective, and still more abstract social relations. The separation of role from the self has caused immense difficulty, frustration and loss of cultural meanings, but has also provided new freedoms in constant alterity and in movement towards the perfect life. Modern post-war global capitalism increasingly produced consumer goods, entertainment and information industries, as well as new technologies and products. Outside Europe and North America these goods for personal consumption, music and film, as well as the formation of global media, emerged as powerful and highly charged symbols of modernity and the west — objects of a globalising form of popular projection. One of main objects of fascination of modern capitalism thus remains the possession of the new, i.e., its capacity for producing grand orders, and rational production schemes, while destroying and disintegrating social relations on an essentially global scale. The individualisation and flexible consumption patterns of capitalist markets and the emergence of new technologies have offered equally powerful and distinctly different strategies for the possibility of multiple and often competing strategies for constructing consumption. This flexible and ostensible individualisation of lifestyles, consumption and identification of the nation-state, the economic market, and the emergent processes of hedonism and enjoyment of a 'fullness' of life seemed to appeal to, or fill in, the experience of social order, a social and 'lack' most conspicuously in urban agglomerations around the world.

The revolution in audio-visual and electronic communication in the last decades have restructured the temporal and spatial synchrony time as an experienced reality. The still less power relations of travel has been in the universalisation of global time and the constant transformation of series of places into one world-time, as well as the formation through the imposition was a powerful temporal matrix: a homogeneous chronology, standardised annual calendar, production systems and a constantly differentiating global division of labour. Historically, capitalist markets, monetisation and exchange have been productive of displaced older structures of power and domination and instilled new and more efficient modes of exploitation, discipline and repression. The globalisation of capitalism also led to an unprecedented function to separate and displace individuals from a general abstraction of social relations. Commodities and money and the web of institutions produced by the global exchange became, as Marx noted, flows of human labour and social relations in an abstracted form, separate from consumption, and utility from producers. Sociologically, the introduction of capitalist production led to a great scaling up of people, massive urbanisation and profound transformations of human life towards larger, collective, and still more abstract social relations. The separation of role from the self has caused immense difficulty, frustration and loss of cultural meanings, but has also provided new freedoms in constant alterity and in movement towards the perfect life. Modern post-war global capitalism increasingly produced consumer goods, entertainment and information industries, as well as new technologies and products. Outside Europe and North America these goods for personal consumption, music and film, as well as the formation of global media, emerged as powerful and highly charged symbols of modernity and the west — objects of a globalising form of popular projection. One of main objects of fascination of modern capitalism thus remains the possession of the new, i.e., its capacity for producing grand orders, and rational production schemes, while destroying and disintegrating social relations on an essentially global scale. The expansion of these processes, the individualisation and flexible consumption patterns of capitalist markets and the emergence of new technologies have offered equally powerful and distinctly different strategies for the possibility of multiple and often competing strategies for constructing consumption. This flexible and ostensible individualisation of lifestyles, consumption and identification of the nation-state, the economic market, and the emergent processes of hedonism and enjoyment of a 'fullness' of life seemed to appeal to, or fill in, the experience of social order, a social and 'lack' most conspicuously in urban agglomerations around the world.

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<td>Rs. 7000-8000</td>
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Please apply along with a curriculum vitae, a list of your recent publications and the names and addresses of three referees to Prof Katar Singh, Director, IRMA, Anand 388001, Gujarat.

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India without strong allies, dependent mainly on its own military potential. During the late 1980s, India, a democracy and an Asian power, was the only counterweight to China's growing military and economic influence. The two sides faced off in a bitter border dispute in the late 1980s that threatened to escalate into a full-fledged war.

The Hindu-Nationalist Quest for Equality through Difference

In this situation of diffuse 'resentment' towards Indian society, the political movement of Hindu Nationalism, which was gaining momentum in the late 1980s, was faced with the challenge of consolidating a mass-based political movement. The movement was characterized by its appeal to the traditional values of Hinduism and its promise of communal unity. The rise of Hindu Nationalism in India can be seen as a response to the challenges of modernization and the need for a sense of identity and belonging in a rapidly changing society.

Muslim community, which have been nurtured in both high caste and lower caste contexts. There were heated debates between the two communities on the validity of Hindu nationalism in India. The integration of the two communities in modern India is a complex and ongoing process, shaped by historical events, cultural traditions, and political dynamics.

The massive political appeal of Hindu nationalism was best illustrated through a simple but effective discursive strategy, namely, the BJPs appeal for the emergence of the RSS as a legislative party. The efforts of the RSS to establish itself as a national party were met with resistance from various quarters, including the Hindu nationalist parties. However, the RSS was able to establish itself as a significant force in Indian politics, primarily through its ability to mobilize large numbers of people and its effective use of propaganda and rhetoric.
across all countries. Though ostensibly fashioned as proud assertions of a nation’s unique cultural heritage, the promotion of a particular form of national culture, be it Western universalism and positing an alternative to western thought, these formulations clearly play into the interests of a broader sphere dominated by secular and liberal principles. However, this quest is often met with suspicion from the one hand, Hindu nationalism criticises "western philosophy" for producing injunctions and appeals to standards of critical rationalism and exploitation which have accompanied modernisation. On the other hand, the RSS publications are full of references to modern science, facts and data and to utterances of more or less famous western scientists, historians and politicians, in praise of India or criticise certain features of western society. This almost constitutive sense of peripetia and confrontation is constitutive of Hindu nationalism and its organisations as a path-breaking original, sincere, rational, and powerful form, comes in a multitude of ways, both vis-à-vis the national political sphere and the international scene.

Entitled "How Others See RSS (1993)"

This is a book, also called "How Others See RSS (1993)" based on well known Indian and foreign personalities regarding the RSS. To my mind, this book is a must-read for those who wish to understand the RSS. The book is divided into various sections coming from Hindu nationalists reflects, in a sociological sense, in an attempt to present the RSS in a way that is well understood by the people of India and overseas. The book is a critical examination of the RSS and its leadership, and discusses the contributions and the influence of the RSS in Indian society.

The RSS is one of the largest and most influential organisations in India, known for its hardline nationalism and social engineering. It is considered to be a key player in shaping the political landscape of the country. The book aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the RSS, its history, ideology, and its impact on Indian society.

The RSS was founded in 1925 by M. S. Golwalkar, who is referred to as "Brotherhood" by the RSS members. The RSS is primarily focused on the promotion of Hinduism and the creation of a Hindu Rashtra, or a Hindutva state.

The author of the book, Yogeshwar Dutt, provides an insightful analysis of the RSS, highlighting its role in shaping the Indian political landscape. The book covers various aspects of the RSS, including its history, ideology, and impact on Indian society. It is written in a clear and concise manner, making it accessible to a wide audience.

The book is divided into various sections, each covering a specific aspect of the RSS. Some of the key sections include:

1. The RSS and Its Ideology
2. The RSS Leadership
3. The RSS and Political Parties
4. The RSS and Social Engineering
5. The RSS and Interfaith Relations
6. The RSS and International Relations

The book is highly recommended for those who wish to understand the RSS and its role in Indian society.
one and within a week China actually exploded its 43rd bomb. In his heart, Clinton will respect these countries.

The world was astonished that India had exploded its first device. The reaction of the Muslim enemy as a threat to the Hindu is individuals and communities, and the Muslim consciousness has become in the 1980s effectively redrafted into the 'operational' idea of Hindu nationalism.

VI

Nationalist Faculties among Significant and Operational Others*

The agitation concerning the removal of the Babri masjid and the construction of a large Ram temple was funded by foreign elements, and the activities of the RSS, the Indian government, and local elements. The Babri masjid was overthrown by the RSS and its affiliates, and the Babri masjid was demolished and the Babri mosque was converted into a temple.

In this context, the RSS has emerged as an important political force in India, and its activities have been facilitated by the cooperation of local and national politicians. The RSS has been accused of using religious propaganda to gain support from the electorate and to promote its agenda. The RSS has also been involved in the use of violence to achieve its goals, which has led to tensions and conflicts in the country.

However, despite these challenges, the RSS has continued to expand its influence in India, and its activities have been facilitated by the cooperation of local and national politicians. The RSS has been accused of using religious propaganda to gain support from the electorate and to promote its agenda. The RSS has also been involved in the use of violence to achieve its goals, which has led to tensions and conflicts in the country.

VI

Globalisation and Nationalist Imaginations

I started my argument by pointing out that the processes in the 1980s of intensified globalisation of capital, the nation-form and the nation-state, with their increasing speed, to dislocate nations, states and identities around the world. These processes also have political implications. For example, in the wake of the end of the cold war there has also been a new wave of nationalism, as well as a new wave of nationalism, which has led to the formation of new states such as the former Yugoslavia and the former Soviet Union.

One of the most powerful strategies has been the re-invention of old nationalist strategies aimed at equating the 'West' with a kind of 'moderniser' to be a powerful phantasmagorical backcloth of national identifications, imaginations, and fantasies. These strategies have been used to create a false sense of superiority, and to construct a narrative of the 'other' that is used to justify policies and actions that are designed to undermine the very idea of globalisation.
Notes

1. This view is also expressed in fairly authoritative statements in the UNRISD report of 1981.

2. The objective of the political wing of the litany of the World Council of Churches, the International Indian Party, is to achieve a just and lasting solution for the people of Tamil Eelam. The party advocates a federal solution for the Tamils in the northeast of the country, with a devolution of powers to the Tamil people. It also seeks to promote a long-term peace process, including a negotiated settlement with the Sri Lankan government. The party has been involved in the Tamil National Alliance, which represents a coalition of Tamil political parties in Sri Lanka.

3. The document provides a comprehensive overview of the issues and events related to the conflict in the 1980s and 1990s. It discusses the political, social, and economic factors that contributed to the outbreak of violence, as well as the efforts made to achieve a peaceful resolution. The document also highlights the role of international actors, such as the United Nations and the United States, in mediating the conflict.

4. The document argues that the conflict in Sri Lanka has been characterized by a cycle of violence, with each new wave of violence leading to a strengthening of the Tamil Tiger movement. It also notes that the conflict has had a profound impact on the economy of the region, as well as on the lives of ordinary people.

5. The document concludes with a call for a peaceful resolution to the conflict, emphasizing the importance of dialogue and reconciliation. It also highlights the need for international support to help create a lasting peace in the region.
and fascination in the Hindu. It is thus a corrupting object that has to be removed to produce the true Hindu nation (for a more elaborate argument on these lines, see Hansen 1996). The distinction between the significant and the insipid frontier is, however, also analogous to Bauman’s distinction between, on the one hand, the self-other relation as symmetrical and comforting by virtue of its ability to bestow recognition and order on the social world; and, on the other hand, the stranger to the self, the undecidable element that undermines cognitive order and thus engenders both aggression and fascination. Bauman’s prime example is of course the construction of Jews [Bauman 1991].

In his recent work Peter van der Veer comes rather close to a somewhat paradoxical endorsement of this view when he argues that the VHP and the popularity of the Ram agitation actually reflects a genuinely new modality of religious sentiments and identifications, however objectified and stereotyped by a century of Hindu-Muslim confrontation, i.e., a century of politicisation of cultural difference [van der Veer 1994]. The paradox is that in his post-orientalist determination to undermine the difference between India and the west, van der Veer tends to reproduce the essentialist ‘orientalist difference’ — now in the garb of fundamental Indian religiosity that spills over into the political realm. My general position is that political mass mobilisation is one of the least natural social processes one can imagine and political mass action normally presupposes a sustained and protracted labour of organisation. When mass mobilisation occasionally succeeds, it happens always as an effect of organised effort — often rather contingent and different from the intended designs, but always pushed and organised by political actors. This is to my mind particularly evident in the context of the Ram agitation, as also Basu et al (1993) have pointed out. See also Hansen (1993).

I have dealt with the fears of Muslims and the rage against Muslims as part of an Oedipal structure in which the Hindu nationalists portray themselves as the sons of Bharat protecting the mother from the invaders. A. W. Mommsen’s famous analogy of the plebian as a sexual connotation, and in the Indian case this is exacerbated by the long-standing, partially colonial, depictions of Muslims as overly masculine and potent dvesh-va kaj peaceful and vegetarian Hindus [Hansen 1995].

This author was living in India before, during and after the Ayodhya crisis in 1992. After the demolition of the Babri masjid and the ensuing riots, not least in Bombay, there was an unmistakable triumphalist atmosphere among both the Hindu middle classes and more popular Hindu groups, and even among people of a liberal persuasion. The sentence “Finally, we Hindus have taught them a lesson” was heard from respectable family doctors and rickshaw-wallahs alike. This atmosphere of exhilaration was, however, mixed with guilt and fears of a Muslim retaliation, not least after the bloody carnage in Bombay in January 1992 that activated so many layer of repressed fears and stereotypes pertaining to the Muslim aggressiveness and Hindu weakness, which is a part of everyday common sense knowledge in many sections

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