

## Savarkar's Quest for a Modern Hindu Consolidation

SURESH SHARMA  
Indian Institute of Advanced Study  
Shimla

Whenever the Hindus come to hold such a position whence they could dictate terms to the whole world—those terms cannot be very different from the terms which *Gita* dictates or the Buddha lays down. A Hindu is most intensely so, when he ceases to be a Hindu; and with Shankara claims the whole earth for a Benares '*Varanasi Medani!*' or with a Tukaram exclaims, '*Amuche Swadesh! Bhuvanryamadhyare Vas!*' My country! Oh! Brothers. The limits of the universe—there the frontiers of my country lie?

—V.D. SAVARKAR  
*Essentials of Hindutva*

Just as matter misplaced becomes dirt, reason misused becomes lunacy.

—M.K. GANDHI  
*Young India*, October 14, 1926

### I

Theological clarification and metaphysical restatement were seen by Hindus, almost to the end of the nineteenth century, as the prime means of ensuring survival and salvation in a world overshadowed by Europe. This response, despite its apparently timid acceptance of British rule in its early phase, was sustained by an intense longing for parity with the West.<sup>1</sup>

Rammohan Roy's (1772-1833) fervent critique of the Hindu obsession with meaningless rituals sanctioned by religious prejudices consciously sought to restore the 'natural texture of society.'<sup>2</sup> Self-recovery, aimed at establishing parity with the West, was elaborated within a complex epistemic texture. Rejection of unacceptable beliefs entailed an affirmation of the universalist possibilities regarded as unique to the Hindu tradition and India. Such responses never envisaged a monolithic projection of Hindu society.

Reform and renewal of Hindu society in the changed modern context required, of course, a definitive referent that Hindus, bound as they were to diverse social codes and practices, would accept as legitimate and valid. The Upanishadic texts, Rammohan Roy argued, could become precisely that kind of a referent. Swami Dayananda Saraswati (1824-1883), pursuing the same impulse, perceived in the Vedas a Bible-like text.<sup>3</sup> This marked a significant cognitive shift.

Unlike Rammohan Roy, a definitive referent for Swami Dayananda meant

the unqualified acceptance of a supreme measure to validate religious beliefs and social conduct. Fluid demarcations, characteristic of Hindu social life, were to him a cause of anxiety. The survival of Hindus in the modern world required, Swami Dayananda felt, a firm demarcation of Hindus as distinct and separate from 'others.' Such a demarcation was believed to be well-established with regard to Muslims and others.

In the early years of this century, Har Dayal (1888-1939), a gifted and very self-conscious Hindu, sought to outline a conception of Hindu resurgence in terms of an avowedly political vision.<sup>4</sup> While for Swami Dayananda, religious belief and culture constituted the prime terrain of discourse and action,<sup>5</sup> Har Dayal, though sensitive to questions concerning religion and culture, posited the political realm as the prime mover of Hindu society. The imperative need was to forge a Hindu polity of decisive consequence. But in his search for a definition of Hindus, like Dayananda, Har Dayal sought to locate a set of beliefs and practices shared by all or almost all Hindus.

Savarkar's conception of a '*Hindu rashtra*' (Hindu nation) signifies, as it were, the completion of a cognitive shift initiated by Swami Dayananda. Metaphysical statements and theological debates concerning religious beliefs were of no interest to him. His quest was not the realisation of some religious-metaphysical vision or fundamental truth of Hinduism, the location of cohesive definitive referents in the modern age. Previous attempts to define Hindus, he felt, were seriously flawed, sanctified as these had been as the measure of religious legitimacy, the beliefs and practices of the largest sect within the Hindu fold (Sanatanis). So far as Savarkar was concerned, Hindus need not bother to search for a Bible-like Hindu text. He was clear that if the political realm was to become the prime mover of Hindu society, a definition of Hindus could only be grasped beyond the realm of religious beliefs and practices.

Vinayak Damodar Savarkar (1883-1966)<sup>6</sup> is remembered today as the spokesman of a militant *Hindu rashtra*. Indeed, the last forty years of his life were a crusade to weld the Hindus into a powerful homogenous solidarity. Towards the end of his life it was his wish to be remembered not so much as a '*swatantryaveer*' (warrior of the freedom struggle), but as the 'organiser of the Hindus.'<sup>7</sup> A man of formidable courage and convinced of the justness of his cause, Savarkar, after nearly sixty years of public activity, died a bitter man, for his vision of a *Hindu rashtra* remained unfulfilled. His bitterest reproach was directed against the Hindus, particularly Gandhi, for what he felt to be their perverse unwillingness to recognise the gravity of the threat of the eventual annihilation of Hindus by the Muslims.<sup>8</sup>

In contemporary India, Savarkar's espousal of *Hindutva* (Hinduness) and *Hindu rashtra* is seen as the persistence of archaic sentiments and beliefs, unable and unwilling to adjust to the modern world.<sup>9</sup> They look like a peculiarly Indian variant of responses of pre-modern social formations and sentiments to the impact of modernity. Hence the supposition that communalism in the modern context signifies an attempt to resurrect the

old order of things, smothered or about to be smothered by the inevitable thrust of development and history. Communalism is thus understood as not only evil and a negation of basic human values, but also as a sensibility in conflict with the forward, progressive movement of the historical process.

Placing communalism in the framework of progress and modernisation has certain vital implications. It assumes that human conflicts are primarily rooted in socio-economic antagonisms. Communalism disguises and misdirects conflicts that in fact express rage against the inequities of socio-economic structures. Such misdirection, when effective, reconsolidates the archaic social base and divides the national polity. Hence the perception of communalism as a threat to the consolidation of the modern nation-state.

The modern belief is that a steady erosion of the social substance engendering communal sensibility and passions would dissolve the sustaining power of communalism. Hence the hope that rapid industrial growth and the reasonable, even if not equitable, distribution of its benefits would rescue stagnant backward societies from endemic scarcity and eliminate communalism.

This does not quite explain the stubborn persistence and mounting ferocity of old animosities and the steady spread from cities to the countryside of communal passions. Nor can it explain the fact that the only place in Pakistan where Hindus have managed to stay in significant numbers is the backward countryside of Sindh and Baluchistan, somewhat removed from the reach of the state and its modernising influence.

## II

Savarkar was acutely aware of the irreversible change ushered in by the modern age. He mocked the 'simplistic and suicidal' rejection of modern science and technology by Gandhi. In the 'light of wick lamps', cautioned Savarkar, 'ignorance and poverty' would flourish.<sup>10</sup> To the very end he was certain that he understood what Gandhi was incapable of understanding: the modern age and the rational requirements of survival in it. To Savarkar, British rule signified, even during his early years of revolutionary terrorism and the unqualified rejection of that rule, the possibility of a unique beginning for India. To him, India's past was precious only if it could serve the future.

The perception of British rule as the possibility of a new beginning has indeed been integral to most critiques of imperialism. The invocation of British rule as a 'civilising mission' by Surendranath Bannerjee (1884-1926),<sup>11</sup> in a sincere attempt to rouse Indians to their common destiny as a nation, the characterisation of British rule by Karl Marx as the 'unconscious tool' of history,<sup>12</sup> and Savarkar's conviction that British rule could and ought to become an occasion for forging a powerful Hindu solidarity—they all belong to an integral complex of faith in modernity. This faith was rooted in the certainty that British rule, however oppressive and unacceptable, was

nevertheless a transition from ahistorical stagnation to the dynamic realm of history. Savarkar, unlike Surendranath Bannerjee, was emphatic that this fact and the possibility of a historic transition precipitated by British rule was despite the exploitation that sustained British imperialism. In this respect he was closer to Karl Marx.

Like Mohammed Ali Jinnah, the triumphant warrior for Pakistan, Savarkar represents several paradoxes. His personal life was marked by a near-absence of religious faith and rituals. In fact, his stark rational appraisal of ritual and religion seems incredible in the cause of a militant Hindu consolidation. Despite a fast undertaken by women at his doorstep, Savarkar refused to perform the obsequies after the death of his wife.<sup>13</sup> Before his death, Savarkar instructed his followers that no religious ceremony be performed on his death and his body be carried to the electric crematorium not on 'human shoulders' but on 'mechanical transport.'<sup>14</sup> Responding to the declaration by Babasaheb Ambedkar, a leader of 'depressed Hindu castes, that he was thinking of changing his faith', Savarkar was categorical that 'irrationality' was 'inherent in all religious beliefs' and, therefore, it would be perfectly acceptable if Ambedkar were to renounce religion in any form. But conversion to another 'non-Hindu faith', Savarkar felt, would be an act of bad faith.<sup>15</sup>

Savarkar's appraisal of British rule and Hindu society was formulated in terms of the rational-instrumental requirements of establishing parity with the most powerful modern nation-states. He was unsparing in his denunciation of caste inequalities and of the numbing consequences of superstitions and rituals sanctioned by religious tradition. It is a measure of the fierce rational rigour of Savarkar's quest that he emphatically declared that if the issue was the survival of the Hindu nation, it would be perfectly correct for Hindus to kill and eat cows.<sup>16</sup> One need hardly remind any one in India that this issue still retains an explosive potency. Even in his writings on 'Muslim rule' in India, Savarkar conceded that to harbour 'any ill feeling' towards 'our Muhammedan countrymen of this generation' simply because of past 'hostilities and combats' would be 'suicidal and ridiculous.'<sup>17</sup> Yet there remains the incontestable fact that Savarkar's critique of British rule and Hindu society led him to deny a legitimate place to Islam and Muslims in India and, ultimately, seek cooperation with British rule.

In terms of a modernist framework, the radical and in themselves acceptable elements in Savarkar's critique (rejection of British rule and the Hindu caste order) may be explained by his limited understanding of modernity. One could argue that since his grasp of modernity was shallow and distorted, his critique of Hindu society lacked depth and genuine conviction. Revolutionary terrorism of Savarkar's early years (1903-1910) was inspired by a sense of wounded racial pride. The near absence of a critical understanding of colonial political-economy resulted in a gradual softening of his attitude to British rule. Muted hostility to British rule inevitably tamed his social radicalism. Hence Savarkar's eventual regression into Hindu

revivalism and cooperation with British rule.<sup>18</sup>

This transition, from an opponent of British rule to a fanatic missionary, committed to forging a victorious Hindu solidarity against a 'monolithic' Islam, and that too by striking a clever bargain with the colonial rulers, is a fact of exceptional interest. Savarkar's espousal of *Hindu rashtra* and muted opposition to British rule were almost simultaneous. But the comforting inference that it signifies a logical causal chain between a disposition to compromise with foreign rule and a regression into conservative Hindu revivalism, would be a serious error. Ambedkar and Ramaswamy Periyar, both crusaders against the inequalities and oppression engendered by the Hindu caste social order, accepted foreign rule as a protective presence. In the aftermath of 1942, the Communist Party of India looked upon British rule as helpful in keeping alive the prospects of a 'socialist revolution' in India. In fact, British rule, after the mutiny of 1857, found support from incredibly diverse and opposed segments in India: Hindu Mahasabha, R.S.S., Muslim League, C.P.I., M.N. Roy, Periyar and Ambedkar, and, of course, the Indian princes. The disturbing congruence of radical social critique and support in varying measure of British rule raises basic questions concerning the structure of cognition in colonial India and its particular mode of validation.

Our discourse concerning change and modernisation invariably assumes that the apparently frequent inability of thought and life in India to imbibe the vigour of an emancipated modern consciousness and acquire the social-political basis to sustain it, arises from the stubborn persistence of categories and modes of comprehension rooted in tradition. This tends to blunt and distort all impulses towards change, and modernisation in our life and thought.

Certain presuppositions implicit in this formulation merit consideration. Thinking and ideas are seen as inseparable from the social structure in which they arise. Modern ideas are considered manifestly beyond the range of Indian social structure and history. Yet these ideas are seen as desirable despite their origins in the social structure of the West. Hence the confined relevance of Indian social reality as a fact that conditions receptivity to ideas of modern change but is incapable of defining their content and meaning.

Such a mode of comprehension forecloses the theoretical possibility for those colonised by Europe in the Age of Reason and Progress, of defining reality as it is and as it ought to be. Its logical consequence is the instrumental manipulation of India's past. The natives have no choice but to accept that the West shall continue to possess the 'word' while the natives will have to learn as best as they can.

Savarkar's vision of a *Hindu rashtra* is not an instance of a smothered tradition reasserting itself. Like an M.N. Roy or a Jawaharlal Nehru, his deepest longing was for a new modern future for India. True, their perceptions of what was to be done to usher in a modern future differed sharply. Savarkar's perceptions in the early phase negated the concept of

*Hindu rashtra*. The attempt in this presentation is to outline their common locus of validation and clarify its implications. One could illustrate that locus with the help of two well-known, seemingly irreconcilable statements of Savarkar: *The First War of Indian Independence—1857* (1909),<sup>19</sup> and the novel, *Kala Pani* (1937).<sup>20</sup>

Between *1857* and *Kala Pani* stretches an enigmatic relationship. *1857* is the manifesto for national consolidation: a heroic invocation of the first truly national battle ever waged. It signifies the moment of historic self-recognition: 'Hindustan' as a nation in the modern sense. Bahadur Shah Zafar, the last Mughal emperor, is remembered as the supreme symbol of the unity of 'Hindustan.'

*Kala Pani* is the story of the resurrection of Hindu society as a homogenised monolith. It is intended as an example, and a warning to Hindus against the eventual annihilation of Hindus by the Muslims. *Kala Pani* marks out the political destiny of a restructured Hindu society: an impregnable analogue of Dar-ul-Islam and Christendom.

### III

Two historic statements concerning traditional India and its modern fate were published in the year 1909: *The First War of Indian Independence—1857* by Savarkar and *Hind Swaraj* by Gandhi.<sup>21</sup> Savarkar's concern was to weld the fragmented communities of India into a cohesive, powerful modern nation-state. *Hind Swaraj* voiced concerns that belong to a different cognitive order. It sought to identify the meaning and possibilities available to Indian civilisation in the modern world.

Written in the form of a dialogue, *Hind Swaraj* was in substantial parts a restatement of the conversations and debates between Gandhi and Savarkar.<sup>22</sup> *1857*, as befits a manifesto, was an impassioned plea to prepare for a decisive combat with the might of the British empire. In the shadow of the impending battle that would decide the destiny of India, there was no room for a dialogue.

The publication of *1857* was a momentous event. Both the British rulers and the nationalist intelligentsia seemed to agree that *1857* had to be noticed. It is perhaps the only book to have been proscribed by the British government before it was published. Until 1947, copies of the book were not placed on the shelves of even the British Museum. In India, copies of it were vigorously hunted down. In fact, the only copy of the original Marathi version that seems to have survived was in the custody of one Dr. Cutino, an Indian resident in the USA. Yet *1857* exercised a momentous sway over nationalist politics in India and abroad.

*Hind Swaraj* met with an entirely different response. Beyond the not very large circle of Gandhi's disciples it was rarely taken note of. When the second edition of *Hind Swaraj* was published (1938), Savarkar was already confined to the margins of political life in India, and Gandhi had been for nearly

twenty years the pivotal presence in the national movement. Yet, Jawaharlal Nehru, Gandhi's chosen political heir, thought it necessary to clarify that *Hind Swaraj* had always stuck him as 'completely unreal.'<sup>23</sup> But, to the end of his life Gandhi categorically affirmed *Hind Swaraj* to be his seed text. Savarkar in later life rarely took note of 1857.

1857 was conceived by Savarkar as a historical testament on behalf of a conquered people. Fifty years after the 'war of 1857', an account of those events, proclaimed Savarkar, had to cross 'the limits of current politics' and be 'relegated to the realm of history.'<sup>24</sup> This clarification was clearly intended to enhance the contemporaneity of the recent past as history: a 'nation that has no consciousness of its past has no future.'<sup>25</sup> But the awareness of one's past ought not to mean a refusal to face the future. The past had to be harnessed to master the future and history. According to Savarkar: 'A nation must develop its capacity not only of claiming the past but also of knowing how to use it for the furtherance of its future. The nation ought to be the master and not the slave of its own history.'<sup>26</sup>

It was an audacious undertaking. Savarkar was barely twenty five years old. He had spoken to Gokhale and other national leaders of the need to reinterpret the events of 1857. Gokhale's response was one of cold dismissal.<sup>27</sup> During the fifty years after 1857, public discussion by Indians of the uprising was marked by a sense of fearful distance. No Indian dared to affirm as legitimate the aspirations and acts of the vanquished of 1857.

The memory of 1857 troubled both the Imperial rulers and their conquered subjects. S.B. Chaudhry, in his meticulous examination of the English historical writings on 1857, points out their blatant 'racist tone.' Most of them consisted of an obsessive 'celebration of Imperial valour' in the midst of overwhelming odds.<sup>28</sup> Seventh May, 1907, was celebrated in England as the day of the fiftieth anniversary of the grand triumph of Imperial arms and valour.

The Indian National Congress, extremely careful in its early years to function within the legitimate ambit of constitutional agitation, nevertheless passed resolutions for the repeal of the Arms Act which had 'emasculated the manhood' of India.<sup>29</sup> Sir Syed's politics was self-consciously oriented to helping the Imperial rulers to foreclose the possibilities of another 1857.<sup>30</sup> For both, the rulers, confident of their potency, and the subjects, fearful of having lost their virility, 1857 remained until 1919 the ultimate metaphor of rebellion. 'The spectre of 1857' was a recurring refrain in the confidential despatches of the Lahore district administration during April-May 1919. They clearly harken to the awful memory of 1857.<sup>31</sup> Sir Michael O'Dwyer justified the massacre of hundreds of unarmed people at Jallianwala Bagh and the vengeful outrages during the Martial Law in the Punjab as a grim necessity to prevent another 1857.<sup>32</sup>

Savarkar's 1857, in the words of S.B. Chaudhry, for the first time questioned the Imperial 'assumptions and prejudices' concerning 1857. It marked a 'turning point in the historiography of the Indian Mutiny.'<sup>33</sup> The

study of 1857, so long dominated by British writers began to change hands. After Forrest and Holme in 1912-13, hardly any 'serious works'<sup>34</sup> appeared from British sources.

Clandestine editions of 1857, printed by emigre Indian groups in Europe and America, were smuggled into India. Even before the book was published, news spread of the defiant observance of 10th May 1908, as Martyr's Day by Indian students in England led by Savarkar. Harnam Singh and R.M. Khan were turned out of the classroom for wearing badges honouring the 'martyrs of 1857.'<sup>35</sup> On this day fifty years ago, declared Savarkar, the 'first campaign of the war of Independence' had commenced. That battle, once begun, is 'handed down from sire to son.'<sup>36</sup> The challenge was to discover and reinvoké the 'magic' that made possible the 'grand unity of the Mother', secure in the 'common consent of Hindus and Mohmedans.'<sup>37</sup> Almost immediately, 1857 became the rallying point for the Gadar Party and the group of revolutionary terrorists led by Rash Bihari Bose. The INA experiment of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose could be seen as the culmination of 1857 and as the metaphor of rebellion against colonial subjugation.<sup>38</sup>

Savarkar's 1857 could be represented as the invocation of a counter-metaphor of virility and manhood regained, to the Imperial metaphor of the native castrated. Based almost entirely on the published accounts of 1857 in English, Savarkar boldly affirmed that 1857 was a war against colonial subjection and for the 'freedom of Hindustan.' He conceded that India at that time had not evolved into the kind of compact homogeneity that was a salient attribute of leading nations of Europe. Like medieval Europe, religion had often been a source of bitter conflict between Hindus and Muslims. Hindu society itself was fragmented by severe divisions of caste. But the emergence of a more evolved historic identity that seeks to transform entrenched social demarcations necessarily entails a complex process of combat and adjustment. Colonial rule by subjugating all alike—Hindus and Muslims, *brahmins* and *sudras*—to a state of inferiority unwittingly paved the way for the emergence of Hindustan as a nation in the modern sense. The uprising of 1857 was a 'test to see how far India had come towards unity, independence, and popular power.'<sup>39</sup>

1857 signified, Savarkar argued, an affirmation in the battlefield of the will and capacity of powerless fragments steeped in petty squabbles to unite for a national cause. Hence the swift spread of the uprising from army cantonments to the countryside. As the uprising gathered momentum, the civil populace in many towns and regions rose in rebellion entirely on their own and assumed the task of governance on behalf of the Mughal emperor. Thus it was that long after the last remnants of sepoy rebels had been routed in the battlefield and the Mughal emperor despatched to Mandalay in chains, armed resistance to colonial rule stubbornly persisted deep in the hinterland.<sup>40</sup>

Savarkar's mode of formulation requires careful consideration. He would



say that collective self-identity represents a specific way of demarcating the contours of memory and allegiance. Collective memory, which defines the bounds of allegiance, hinges on the nature and details of the struggle for survival. The critical conditions for survival are defined by the impingement of another equally or more powerful collective identity. War is the moment of irrevocable affirmation of belief and allegiance in the struggle for survival. Hence, for Savarkar, the protean significance of bloodshed and death in battle as self-purification, which, in moments of historic transition, reorients the contours of collective memory.

In 1857, Savarkar perceived such a moment of historic transition. Hence his concern to ascertain the Indian's capacity for determined resistance to the seemingly irresistible might of Europe. Valour and the death of a 'martyr' in the battlefield signified the will to organise and resist in the midst of insuperable odds. He had a keen eye for heroic gestures and military details. But always, the military details were outlined as the visible edge of a not-so-visible societal dynamic. Much as he admired the daring and sacrifice of Moulvie Ahmed Shah, the prime concern in 1857 was to direct attention to the popular upsurge which had brought the Moulvie to the forefront.<sup>41</sup> Savarkar was deeply stirred by the detachment of Kunwar Singh as he cut off his injured hand and offered it to the eternal flow of the Ganga. But Kunwar Singh's example acquired the possibility of shaping history from his capacity to harness popular support in guerilla warfare against the British.<sup>42</sup> The true significance of the 'will to organise and resist' could only be grasped beyond the confines of the battlefield. That 'will' could endure and shape a new reality only in relation to the Indian's capacity for consolidating internal social-political cohesions. For Savarkar, courage and skill in battle were of critical significance, but only as the immediate tangible evidence of the level and firmness of internal cohesions consolidated by Indians.

The most promising feature of 1857, according to Savarkar, was the demonstration of the capacity of the '*brahmin* and the '*sudra*, Hindus and Muslims, to forget their petty quarrels and old animosities for the sake of Hindustan.'<sup>43</sup> While they could not consolidate this grand unity, 1857 demonstrated that the inhabitants of Hindustan could overcome their age-old divisions and offer united resistance to foreign rule. Thus, in the 'evil of foreign rule' inhered the promise of a 'new era of freedom' and unprecedented power for Hindustan. Savarkar concludes his 1857 with a poem by the emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar, the 'supreme embodiment of National unity':

*Ghazion mein bu rahegi jab talak iman ki  
Takht-e-London tak chalegi teg Hindustan ki.*<sup>44</sup>

(So long as the warriors remain true to the faith,  
To London shall stretch the sword of Hindustan.)

But the question that most troubled Savarkar was why, despite the daring and valour, the British could so effectively crush the 1857 uprising. In answer to this question Savarkar's mode of thinking is most clearly revealed. In the

midst of a chaotic and conflicting play of seemingly entrenched facts, the future was for him the sovereign referent. It was the ultimate touchstone that gave meaning to the present as a future in the making. In the words of Savarkar:

Though the plan of the destructive part of the revolution was complete, its creative part was not attractive enough. Nobody was against destroying the English power; but what about the future? If it was only to re-establish the former internecine strife, if it was only to bring again the same state of affairs as before, the same Moguls, and the same Marathas, and the same old quarrels—a condition, being tired of which, the nation, in a moment of mad folly, allowed foreigners to come in—if it were only for this, the more ignorant of the populace did not think it worthwhile to shed their blood for it. If there had been set clearly before the people at large a new ideal attractive enough to captivate their hearts, the growth and completion of the Revolution would have been as successful and as grand as its beginning.<sup>45</sup>

Between the novel *Kala Pani*, published in 1937, and the *The First War of Indian Independence—1857*, published nearly thirty years earlier, stretches an enigmatic relationship. During this period, following his fourteen years of solitary incarceration in the Andamans (1910-24), Savarkar hardly invoked 1857 as the metaphor of rebellion against foreign rule. When he did refer to 1857, it was to affirm that 1857 signified a continuation of the struggle initiated by Shivaji to establish 'Hindu Padpadshahi'.<sup>46</sup> He was unable to perceive anything worthwhile either in Islam or among the Muslims in India. They had become a threat more dangerous and insidious than even British rule. Hence his willingness to strike a bargain with the British that would be to the advantage of Hindus.

Literature for Savarkar represented an instrument of subtle power to mould social sensibility in the direction of desirable change. His letters to his brother from the Andaman cellular jail—he was allowed only one letter a year, and that too not always—are replete with long passages on the urgent need to promote the writing and popularisation of literature that would expose the folly of the Hindu caste system.<sup>47</sup> Besides, in the long years of his confinement at Ratnagiri (1924-37) after his 'conditional release' from the Andamans, Savarkar was not allowed to participate in political activities. In those bitter years of enforced political silence Savarkar, with careful deliberation, sought to use literary writing as his political voice.

*Mopla* (1924), Savarkar's first novel, was intended to be simultaneously a merciless indictment of Hindu caste prejudices and a warning against the imminent threat of the conversion of 'depressed caste Hindus' to Islam.<sup>48</sup> It combines a denunciation of an 'expansionist Islam' with a castigation of caste inequalities and injustice. Savarkar felt that the conditions which defined the requirements of 'survival' for the Hindus had irrevocably changed. To the end of his life he would concede that the ideal of an 'Indian Nation' definitely represents a 'higher ideal'.<sup>49</sup> But the 'grand unity' Savarkar himself had invoked in his 1857 was no longer a possibility. The Hindus, insensitive to religion as the basis of 'social cohesion' and 'political power',

had to survive in the face of an Islam imbued with an aggressive sense of its unity and cohesive power. Therefore, it was imperative for Hindus to 'wield the sword without and the law within.' But even as the past for him kept changing, he remained certain of the future: India as a powerful modern consolidation.

*Ushap*, a play published three years later in 1927, was an assault on the Hindu institution of untouchability. Located in the fourteenth-fifteenth century, like the *Mopla* it also regards the 'Muslim threat' as decisive for defining the rational needs for 'Hindu survival.' Yet its subversive *resonance* is unmistakable. The honour of the Hindus is avenged by a Mahar girl (Kamla) and a prostitute (Gangabai). The high caste Hindu characters are invariably portrayed as self-seeking bigots, always keen to serve the rapacious Muslim subedar (Bangash Khan). Even as they debase themselves in the service of the Muslim tyrant, the high castes seek out every possible occasion to humiliate and tyrannise their defenceless Hindu kin. But the most contemptible character in the play is a much-revered religious preacher whose name (Satyakam) and utterances ('truth is God', *dharma*, etc.) have an unmistakable similarity to Gandhi.<sup>50</sup>

*Kala Pani* is an unusual composition in the context of Savarkar's literary beliefs and practice. Even though *Kala Pani*, like his other literary works, bristles with anti-Muslim emotions, denunciation of the caste system and faith in the future, it was apparently not conceived as a single-point instrumental undertaking. It seems more like a final autobiographical testament seeking to render more accessible the vision Savarkar first sought to transmit in his banned Marathi work, *Mazi Janmathep*.<sup>51</sup> Andamans, and its banished Hindu outcastes as modern Hindu exemplars.

The story unfolds around young Malti, the daughter of a Maharashtrian widow living in Mathura. She is kidnapped and raped by a Muslim ruffian, Raiffudin Ahmed, who is not just brutal and lecherous but also a clever impostor. His capacity to devise perfect camouflages for his evil designs makes him dangerous. Raiffudin has a tremendous reputation as a religious guru in the pilgrimage town of Mathura. The Hindus, timid, gullible and blinded by religious superstitions, inevitably provide a hunting ground for this murderer. Raiffudin, gangster and rapist that he is, is not always very kind to his Muslim kin. Among his innocent victims are many Maharashtrian Muslims. But he is not just a gangster who happens to be a Muslim. He is seen by the Muslim community as a warrior in the noble cause of Islam. The looting and brutal murders of Maharashtrian Muslims is forgiven by the Muslims, because for the north Indian Muslim the Maharashtrian Muslim is in any case 'half-Hindu.'

Malti is finally rescued by Krishna, a Hindu accomplice of Raiffudin. Both of them are arrested and sentenced along with Raiffudin to transportation for life in Andamans, for the murder of another Muslim accomplice of Raiffudin who had also raped Malti.

Malti's brother, whose real name is never mentioned, is already serving a

long sentence in Andamans. He was in the army and because of some daring act, never spelt out, he had been banished to the Andamans. Eventually, Raiffudin is also nabbed by the police and sentenced to a life-term in the Andamans.

It is significant that the geographical space in which the final testament unfolds is the Andamans. The Indian subcontinent is a perceptible presence but always at a distance. This distance is used to posit a relationship between space and time that would secure for the future an unqualified sovereignty. Andamans represents a space with only a geological past, devoid of collective memory and untouched by human volition in any significant historical sense. It is the quintessential field of activity to be worked upon. History intrudes into this void in an ironic way.

For the British, it is the land where the more troublesome and dangerous subjects of its Indian empire are to be banished forever. To the banished, the Andamans is the land of supreme misfortune—a dark hole of no return. Everything they had known and valued is beyond reach. Whatever happens to them is condemned to leave not a trace in historical memory. Yet the sheer duration of their growing presence gradually awakens them to a new, revolutionary possibility.

While those banished to the Andamans are there as the chosen victims of History, the fact that they alone constitute a significant collective presence entails the possibility of a reversal of roles: the victims could—and ought to—become the makers of History. As in India, the overwhelming majority of those banished in Andamans comprise Hindus. They have been pushed here by a variety of misfortunes. Prejudices and superstitions of their religion, so pervasive in India, have made Hindus vulnerable. Hindu society, senselessly fragmented within, is defenceless as much against Muslim ruffians as those Hindus who torment and brutalise their own kin. Only a few among these victims have consciously chosen to suffer by daring to challenge the British. The unyielding distance between all these victims of varied misfortunes and India dissolves the distances within. The struggle for survival, incessant and grim everywhere, is in Andamans direct and impossible to disguise. Here the past survives as pure memory beyond the reach of ugly social facts. Hence the clear possibility of an unfettered play of human volition guided by reason and self-interest alone. The past is to abide in the future but only as selectively appropriated elements in a reconstituted homogenised 'Hindudom.'<sup>52</sup>

For Appaji, the last grand survivor of 1857, this vision is an assurance that his long years of self-chosen suffering have not been in vain. He has served his full term and has chosen to settle in Andamans. His son is married to a Bengali widow convicted for the murder of her brother-in-law who had forced her into sexual relations after the death of his brother. Appaji, a true warrior in the cause of 'Hindu Padpadshahi', alone but undaunted, invokes Andamans as the field of historic endeavour for the true Hindu patriot. Appaji tells Krishna:

Here in the Andamans all the diverse distinctions of Hindu society have been dissolved. Children born here of convict mothers and fathers are growing up with a sense of pride and self-respect. Look at my grand-children, Usha and Mohan. They are as bright and noble as the best back home. They would not even know what it is to be a Bengali, Marathi, *sudra* or a *brahmin*. They would know themselves only as Hindus.

Yet, in another sense, the colony of Andamans is of great value to the nation. Other nations have had to wage war to acquire colonies. But our nation has acquired this new colony entirely as a free gift of the labour of the convicted and the despised of our society. Had they been imprisoned in our country our nation would have been denied the benefit of their labour and intellect. Andaman is not just a new region, but here, a new *janpad* of our Hindu civilisation is slowly striking firm roots. Like the British in Australia and Canada, the Hindus have conquered a new colony for their country.<sup>53</sup>

#### IV

The political positions affirmed with such daring and passion in the *The First War of Indian Independence—1857*, are completely reversed in *Kala Pani*. In 1857, the ability of Hindus and Muslims to forget their old animosities and offer united resistance to British rule signifies the emergence of India as an identity in the modern sense. Entrenched social categories and bonds of allegiance—be they in terms of Hindu and Muslim, Maratha and Mughal, or *brahmin* and *sudra*—are seen as of merely transitional relevance. All of them were to dissolve in the more evolved entity of a modern nation-state. In *Kala Pani*, the old animosities between Hindus and Muslims are posited as an unalterable fact. Their quarrels are no longer petty squabbles. They mark out, instead, the details of a grim struggle for survival. To forget this fact is to disregard the imperatives of survival, and is certain to invite the annihilation of Hindus.

Despite the sharp reversal of political positions, the implicit rationalist-instrumentalist framework persists unchanged. Both *Kala Pani* and 1857 are grounded in a common locus of validation. Its cardinal referents are 'survival' and 'parity with the West.' Savarkar recognised that the quest for 'parity' required that within the territorial unit of India, social-political unity be consolidated on the most extensive basis possible. Such a unity was inconceivable without the fullest participation of Muslims. Hence Savarkar's emphatic insistence, during his early phase of the crusade against imperialism, upon the need for Hindu-Muslim unity. The longing for this unity flowed out of, in what could only be characterised as, a distinctly modern mode of understanding.

However, for Savarkar cohesion and unity never signified a value and possibility in themselves. All cohesions were for him a specific way of demarcating the realm of 'law and harmony within' so as to effectively harness the power to 'wield the sword without.' The limitless changeability of

facts constitutes the only abiding value. Hence the paradox: commitment to the limitless changeability of facts, and treating the facts as value.

Social cohesion and political authority came to acquire significance in India as elsewhere, argued Savarkar, during the arduous struggle of Man to master nature. The capacity to sustain this struggle is predicated on the unique ability of human beings to remember and weave a shared memory. Collective memory represents, in this context, a Janus-like impulse. In its absence, cohesions and collective memory will never acquire substance and historic reality. But its ineluctable presence has often transformed the struggle for mastery of nature into wars of conquest to subdue or vanquish other cohesions. The boundaries of a cohesion are, of course, not invariant and immutable. They expand or shrink through a complex process of combat and adjustment.<sup>54</sup> Invariably, the perception of a common threat from another powerful entity compels cohesions, tenuously linked or even hostile to each other, to mould a more evolved unity at a higher level. Thus it was natural and logical to expect that the entire human species would unite, explained Savarkar, only when the earth is invaded by the inhabitants of another planet.<sup>55</sup>

Savarkar's 1857 was premised on the belief that Hindus and Muslims had come to perceive in British rule a common threat. Besides, if India were to truly attain parity with the West, Hindu-Muslim unity was of critical significance. The categorical exclusion of Muslims in Savarkar's concept of *Hindu rahstra* is not the result of a sudden longing in middle age for the consolation and promise of Hinduism. In fact, to the very end, Savarkar was keen to affirm that irrationality is common to all religions and that science alone was the true religion of modern man.<sup>56</sup>

Savarkar reneged his earlier commitment to the ideal of Indian nationalism, not because *Hindu rashtra* represented a higher ideal. His crusade for a *Hindu rashtra* was premised on the belief that it represented a realisable project: facts as they can be. According to Savarkar, pan-Islamic sentiments and loyalties were too deeply ingrained in Muslim collective memory to allow among Muslims the sense of unqualified identity with India. They were keen instead on a bargain with the British at the expense of Hindus. Therefore it was only rational that the demands of 'survival' (*Hindu rashtra*) be accorded precedence over the longing for 'unity' (Indian nationalism).

The crusade for *Hindu rashtra*, so far as Savarkar was concerned, was not intended to revive the lost Hindu order of things. 'Young India', Savarkar was emphatic, ought to 'live in the future.' Vedanta and philosophy, with its 'old puzzles of God and soul and man', were best left to 'widows, old men and pensioners'. Benares, steeped in Vedantic learnings, had not 'produced a single martyr.' Bajirao II, the 'great Vedantist', could scarcely see the 'difference between a kingdom and a pension.' The imperative need was to 'study History, political science, Science, economy' so that life in India could attain to its 'fullness, richness and manliness—to Kshatriyahood.'<sup>57</sup> His

attempt was to work out a non-metaphysical and non-sectarian basis of Hindu identity.

According to Savarkar, the word 'Hindu', signified two clearly separable elements: 'Hinduism' and '*Hindutva*.'<sup>58</sup> Any attempt to define a Hindu in terms of Hinduism would inevitably precipitate sectarian schisms. The Hindu fold was a web of innumerable sects—Sanatanis, Vaidkis, Vaishnavites, Lingayats, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Nastikas (atheists), to name a few. 'Hinduism' concerned religious beliefs and practices. It was of no direct political relevance and, therefore, almost entirely the concern of the individual. '*Hindutva*' (Hinduness) was the crucial referent in defining Hindu identity. It signified a definitive sense of historical-cultural identity with India. The ultimate touchstone of this sense of inseparable identity was the belief in India as the 'fatherland' and 'holyland', thereby fusing, in the words of Savarkar, 'myth and history.'<sup>59</sup> But the past, even the Hindu past, was only a resource for building a worthy future and never a measure for things as they ought to be.

Of the two historic statements—Gandhi's *Hind Swaraj* and Savarkar's *The First War of Indian Independence—1857*—concerning the modern fate of traditional India, it is Gandhi's statement that has defined the pivotal space of Indian public life. Around 1909, such an outcome would have seemed impossible. While in London, on behalf of South African Indians, Gandhi conceded that even though he was irrevocably committed to the creed of non-violence and *satyagraha*, he had yet to meet a single Indian who believed that freedom for India could be won without armed combat.<sup>60</sup>

On the occasion of Vijaydashmi in the year 1909, Gandhi and Savarkar shared a platform at the Nizamuddin restaurant in London, to debate what India is and ought to be. Gandhi, as yet a distant presence in Indian national politics, was recognised as the unquestioned leader of Indians in South Africa. Savarkar, though barely twenty six, had acquired a formidable reputation as a patriot. Years earlier, while still a young student in Bombay, Savarkar had shared a public platform with Tilak. Both Gandhi and Savarkar were acutely sensitive to the possibilities of cultural metaphors, albeit in terms that belonged to very different cognitive realms. Both spoke of Rama and his epic quest. Gandhi invoked Rama as the embodiment of 'self-denial and suffering.' Savarkar affirmed that suffering indeed was true service. But he warned that to believe that righteousness triumphs through meek suffering and self-denial alone is foolish and suicidal. Before righteousness could triumph even Rama must slay Ravana.<sup>61</sup>

In 1911, Savarkar was sentenced to fifty years in prison. On the metal plate hung around his neck was engraved the legend: 'Imprisoned in 1910—to be released in 1960.' His family property, valued at Rs.27,000 in 1911, was confiscated. Even the clothes and spectacles he was wearing at the time he was sentenced, were auctioned. The Bombay University cancelled his degree. His young son died while he was in England. His elder brother had been sentenced to 'transportation for life' to the Andamans. His younger brother

was in prison. Through this and the worse that followed in the Andamans he retained a forbidding equanimity.<sup>62</sup>

In 1924, when he was given 'conditional release', Savarkar's record in courting suffering for the cause of the nation was perhaps unequalled by any other living person. In 1937, all restrictions on the public activities of Savarkar were removed. Nehru and Bose asked him to join the Congress. Gandhi alone chose to be silent. He did go to Ratnagiri (1927) to reaffirm their common bond of suffering, but did not suggest that Savarkar should join the Congress.<sup>63</sup> Much as people admired the heroism of Savarkar, they chose not to follow his politics. Around that time, Mohammed Ali Jinnah was coming to be accepted as the 'sole spokesman' of Muslims soon after he chose to espouse the cause of Islamic Pakistan.<sup>64</sup> By the time India won freedom (1947), Savarkar's political presence was inconsequential. Despite his unchanged belief in *Hindu rashtra*, Savarkar offered (April 26, 1950) to refrain from public utterances and activities that would incite 'communal hatred.'<sup>65</sup>

For Savarkar, Indian civilisation was a raw resource for building modern cohesion. The past for him was significant and vital, but essentially as museum pieces to be selectively appropriated to extend and invigorate the logic of progress. Gandhi's vision of tradition and civilisation as a unique texture of possibilities, capable of self-recognition and self-criticism in terms of its own categories, was rejected by Savarkar as an instance of morbid sentimentality. To him Indian civilisation represented an archaic order. The imperative need was to identify the realisable limits of a viable cohesion. Hence his conception of social and political consolidation as an analogue of technology and science. Hence also his firm belief that the quest for human identity could only mean a rational attempt to work out the unfettered play of the telos embedded in technology. Power, in this vision, is the final arbiter of fact and value. Justice is no more than the rational projection of altered power equations.

The failure of Savarkar to become the 'sole spokesman' of Hindus merits close attention. Nothing so gravely embittered the fierce warrior, determined to the end to fight for the cause of a monolithic '*Hindu rashtra*', as the decades of loneliness following his release in 1937.<sup>66</sup> This indifference of the Hindus was, to Savarkar, incomprehensible. Independent India, while building the elaborate structure of a modern state—industrialisation, modern bureaucracy, armed forces, etc.—seemed to take merely ritual notice of Gandhi's definitive presence during the struggle against British rule. Yet, not many Hindus cared to listen to Savarkar's warning: 'Muslims as the most insidious threat to the emergence of India as a vigorous modern polity.'

The fact that so fierce and fearless fighter as Savarkar was reduced to seethe in meek rage on the fringes of political life is an illuminating comment on Gandhi's mode of political intervention. Gandhi was never tempted by the facile promise of modern demonology. He never sought to



demarcate his political practice and beliefs as a counterpoint to some demonic embodiment of evil.<sup>67</sup> True, Gandhi cherished in his political vocation the voice of truth and goodness. But his political quest could never be to implant a new, indestructible and perfect order of things. Invigoration of truth and goodness in public life was an act of affirmation. For Gandhi, the social-cultural realm remained the ultimate fount of reference and validation.

Savarkar's conception of his political vocation was etched on a different cognitive terrain. He perceived the social-cultural realm as a diffused and fragmented resource that had to be harnessed and reconstituted in accordance with the requirements of modern progress. Like the radical left, he was certain that an indestructible and perfect order of things could and indeed should be forged. His ultimate quest was for an unqualified universality. But that very quest entailed, according to Savarkar, the seemingly antithetical requirement of reconstituting Hindus into a vigorous and aggressive modern cohesion. And whenever in the grim dialectic of fierce combat and rational adjustment, Hindus attain to the power from 'whence they could dictate terms to the whole world'; these terms shall be what the 'Gita dictates or the Buddha lays down.' All parochial bounds of memory and social fact would dissolve. Hindus, in 'ceasing to be Hindus', would most truly affirm their Hinduness. But such a truly universal order had to be enforced and dictated.

Like Gandhi, Savarkar often invoked images and metaphors from India's past. When Savarkar and Gandhi shared a public platform for the first and only time, both of them invoked Rama as the motif for India as it ought to be. For Gandhi, Rama exemplified self-denial and suffering. For Savarkar, Rama was the embodiment of the will and power to vanquish evil. And as it is perhaps always with arguments that seek to influence the fate of a civilisation, this argument between Savarkar and Gandhi was lived in their immensely different lives.

Savarkar often thought of prison and suffering as akin to Rama's fourteen years *vanavas* (exile in forests). Suffering is the cement that binds and moves a people.<sup>68</sup> Like his brothers, wrote Savarkar in his 'Will and Testament', in claiming the 'Honour' to be sacrificed, he was responding to Rama's 'challenge' to his 'votaries.'<sup>69</sup> The long years of self-chosen suffering, Savarkar felt, had prepared him in a measure that hardly anyone else could claim to lead the battle for a *Hindu rashtra*. The rest of his life could be characterised as a long wait for the historic moment of final combat.

For Gandhi, there never was—as indeed there never could be—the moment of ultimate finality. His quest was to seek and affirm the eternal resonance of Rama and *Ramayana* in the everyday rhythm of living. Rama's *vanavasa* signified to him the unending quest for self-purification through self-denial and sacrifice. Just when the long struggle for freedom from foreign rule was about to conclude, Gandhi chose to walk the blood-stained village paths in Noakhali. At that time, the entire area was in the senseless

grip of terrible communal killings. The journey to Noakhali was for him a pilgrimage undertaken in deep humility. The blood and bones of innocent victims of communal hate had rendered Noakhali sacred. Gandhi—though very frail and close to eighty—walked barefoot, as one would in a place of pilgrimage. As he set his bare feet on the long, muddy paths in the midst of lush green forest, singing Rabindranath's *Ekalo Jane Re* (O! pilgrim, walk alone), Manubahen felt as if she were a witness to what another great poet, Tulsidas, had rendered as Rama's entry into the Dandakaranya forest. Like Rama, Gandhi too was 'entering this forest to end the sorrows of the horror-stricken.'<sup>70</sup> Late one evening, when Gandhi returned to his little hut with bleeding lacerated feet and two coconuts given to him by a 'deaf and infirm very old man' and his 'old and feeble wife', Manubahen felt 'inevitably taken back to the episode of Rama meeting the old dame Shabari.'<sup>71</sup>

Gandhi and Savarkar responded in profoundly different ways to what both recognised as the fluidity in everyday life-rhythm of our civilisation. To Savarkar, the fluidity of boundaries and the absence of cognitive referents to firmly mark out a definitive terrain of cohesion, was a disturbing reality. It was a reality that had to be, and indeed could be, changed in consonance with the requirements of the modern age. To Gandhi, this fluidity signified an abiding assurance against tyranny. Gandhi knew that in resisting Savarkar he was ranged against a distinctly modern expression of the 'lunacy of reason misplaced.' In invoking the 'common bond' of suffering with Savarkar, while clarifying his unyielding distance from Savarkar's politics, Gandhi affirmed the creative power of this fluidity in India's civilisational texture.

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. This response was marked by the recognition that Hindus belonged to a fallen civilisation. Hence the acceptance of British rule, as also the implicit affirmation that what was now a 'fallen civilisation' had known a more worthy order of things.

The quest for parity was modulated in metaphors that invoked the universalist promise of metaphysical insights and a mode of comprehension regarded as unique to Hinduism and India: the inherence of certain universal truths as common to all religions. Rammohan Roy represents the earliest and formative articulation of this response. See Rammohan Roy, *The Precepts of Jesus* (1820), in eds. K. Nag and D. Burman, *The English Works of Rammohun Roy, Pt. V*, Calcutta: Sadharna Brahmo Samaj, 1948. Also see his earlier exposition in Persian, *Tuhfatul Muwahhiddin* (1804), Calcutta: K.P. Bagchi, 1975 (trans. Moulavi Obaidullah El Obaide, *Gift to Deists*, 1883).

*Tuhfatul*, written in 'abstruse' Persian and barely twenty-two printed pages in English translation (1883), is a work of exceptional significance. It was intended as a more accessible statement of Rammohan's more comprehensive Arabic work, *Manazarutul Advan* (Discussion of Various Religions). Clearly, what came to be categorised later in the nineteenth century as the study of 'comparative religions' was a familiar pursuit in India well before modern Europe began to define the categories of discourse. This pursuit was qualitatively distinct and

distanced from the rich and prolix tradition of religious polemics in medieval Europe.

2. Rammohan characterised the social and religious practices of Hindus as 'a system which destroys, to the utmost degree, 'the natural texture of society, and prescribes crimes of the most heinous nature, which even the most savage nations would blush to commit. . . .' *English Works*, op. cit., Pt. II, p.23.

Though exceedingly well-informed about contemporary politics and not untouched by political passion, Rammohan refrained from direct political activity. His critique of Hindu society, sustained and severe, formed a part of an elaborate reiteration of what he regarded as the essential philosophic truths of Hinduism, See *English Works*, op. cit., Pt. II.

3. Dayananda Saraswati, the founder of Arya Samaj, while in Calcutta (1873) was avidly sought, among others, by Debendranath Tagore and Keshab Chandra Sen of the Brahmo Samaj. But Sen's reverence of Christ and Debendranath's refusal to recognise Vedic revelation as final foreclosed the possibility of close identification with Brahmo Samaj. See Charles H. Heimsath, *Indian Nationalism and Hindu Social Reform*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964, pp.123 ff.

Foreign rule, even if it were utterly just and benign, was unacceptable to Dayananda Saraswati. But he insisted that his followers refrain from active politics. Dayananda never learnt English and yet exercised a lasting influence on the English-educated Hindus. An uncompromising rationalist and determined to cleanse Hinduism of all irrational beliefs and practices, Dayananda sought to impart a new aggressive assertiveness to Hinduism. Dayananda's universalism was based, not on the belief in the 'inheritance of certain universal truths' in all religions, but the manifest superiority of the Vedic creed. Different religions were opposed to each other 'as night and day are opposed to each other.' Dayananda's letter to Blavatsky (November 23, 1880), cited in Heimsath, op. cit., p.122.

For Dayananda's aggressive appraisal of Islam and Christianity, as also contemporary Hindu sects. see Swami Dayananda Saraswati, *Satyarth Prakash*, New Delhi: Sarvadeshik Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, 1975, chaps.xi & xii (Hindu Sects); chap.XIII (Christianity and Judaism); chap.xiv (Islam).

4. Har Dayal, endowed with a phenomenal memory and always keen to keep up with the latest in radical political thought in Europe, was an important intellectual presence among the emigre groups of Indian revolutionaries (1906-1918). His political beliefs changed often, and were always voiced in a language of unqualified certainty. Har Dayal was the first Indian to write on Karl Marx, hailing him as a 'Modern Rishi' (March 1912). He founded the 'fraternity of the Red Flag' (October 1912). Among its 'eight principles' were: abolition of private property, religion, marriage and the state.

For Har Dayal's views during his intensely Hindu phase, see, Har Dayal, 'The Social Conquest of the Hindu Race', *Modern Review*, VI: 3, September 1909, pp.239-248. See also, C. Brown, *Har Dayal—Hindu Revolutionary and Rationalist*, New Delhi: Manohar, 1976, pp.36ff.

5. This fact is of prime significance. Culture is not a realm amenable to drastic manipulation. Arya Samaj (founded by Swami Dayananda, 1875), despite its enormous influence in the spheres of education and social reform, remained, even in regions where it became the largest presence, as in Punjab before partition, merely a militant Hindu element of limited power.

6. Savarkar's involvement with politics began while he was still a high school student at Nasik. He was the moving spirit of 'Abhinav Bharat' (Young India), comprising young militants committed to 'absolute Independence' through an 'armed revolt.' He participated in the Swadeshi movement against the partition of Bengal. When he left for England (June 1906) to study law, Savarkar had already acquired public recognition as a leader of young radical militants in Maharashtra.

Like many others in the national movement, Savarkar was deeply influenced by Mazzini and Garibaldi. 'Abhinav Bharat', his first experiment in revolutionary activity, was conceived as an Indian analogue of Mazzini's 'Young Italy.' His daring acts and writings during his years in England (1906-1911) were a carefully considered attempt to mark out the path for India towards armed uprising. The discovery that the pistol used to assassinate Commissioner Jackson in Nasik had been despatched by Savarkar, led to his extradition and imprisonment (1910) for fifty years. Despite his removal from active politics, the prospects of 'armed revolt' he had so audaciously invoked proved to be of abiding significance: the Gadgar movement, the Free India Berlin Committee during World War I and the I.N.A. of Subhash Chandra Bose during World War II.

When Gandhi commenced his unique experiment in mass civil disobedience, he was acutely conscious of having to mark out his mode of thought and practice as a countervailing presence to the established belief that freedom could only be won through armed action.

By 1924, when Savarkar was granted 'conditional release', Gandhi's mode of political action had come to be an established fact in national politics. During this phase (1924-1966) Savarkar's attempt was to weld Hindus into a homogenous solidarity.

In 1937, when all restrictions on his movements were finally removed, Savarkar joined the Hindu Mahasabha and was elected its president. Savarkar's *Essentials of Hindutva* (1924) had been a crucial influence in the formation of another militant Hindu organisation, the RSS. But his relationship with the RSS and its founder K.B. Hedgewar was marked by tensions and bitterness. Savarkar regarded the RSS decision to refrain from active politics as a great folly and, in his moments of bitter desperation, a stance on the verge of treason. Nathuram Godse, the assassin of Mahatma Gandhi had been his disciple. Savarkar was one of the accused in the Gandhi Murder Trial. He was acquitted. His political influence, however, remained confined and insignificant. When the RSS decided to support the formation of a political party (Bharatiya Jan Sangh, 1951), Shyama Prasad Mookerjee tried very earnestly to persuade Savarkar to join the Jan Sangh. But Savarkar felt cheated and outraged by the Jan Sangh's decision to admit members from all communities. He stubbornly resisted similar moves within the Hindu Mahasabha.

For a comprehensive and sympathetic account of his life and ideas, see Dananjay Keer, *Veer Savarkar*, Bombay: Popular Prakashan, 1966. An earlier biography by Chitra Gupta, though useful concerning certain details of his early life and activities, is essentially in the nature of an utterly unblemished heroic projection of Savarkar. See, Chitra Gupta, *Life of Barrister Savarkar*, Delhi: Hindu Mission Pustak Bhandar, 1939.

Of all the writings by Savarkar's admirers, Anand's study is the only attempt to assess Savarkar's place in the development of the idea of nationalism in India.

See, Vidya Sagar Anand, *Savarkar—A Study in the Evolution of Indian Nationalism*, London: Woolf, 1967.

For Savarkar's relations with the RSS and Jan Sangh, see Walter K. Andersen and Shridhar Damle, *Brotherhood in Saffron: Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and Hindu Revivalism*, New Delhi: Vistaar Publications, 1987, pp.10-70. Also see, Craig Baxter, *The Jan Sangh—a Biography of an Indian Political Party*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1969, pp.130-31; and B.D. Graham, 'Syama Prasad Mookherjee and the Communalist Alternative', in ed., D.A. Low, *Soundings in Modern South Asian History*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968, pp.333 ff and 350 ff.

7. Keer, op. cit., pp.498-99.
8. For his sense of isolation and bitter reproach against 'well meaning Hindu patriots', see, V.D. Savarkar, 'Is this mission of Mahasabha narrow, anti-Indian and parochial aim?', *Samagra Savarkar Wangmaya*, Vol.VI, Poona: Maharashtra Prantik Hindusabha, 1964, pp.285-89. See also, Keer, *ibid.*, pp.554-57.
9. Savarkar's definition of *Hindutva* and *Hindu rashtra* was emphatic in excluding Muslims; but Christians, albeit with certain qualifications, could be recognised as a legitimate presence. Parsis, Buddhists, Jains and the entire diverse range of folk-tribal beliefs could all be legitimately included as partaking of '*Hindutva*.' See, V.D. Savarkar, *Essentials of Hindutva, Savarkar Wangmaya*, op. cit., pp.1-91.
10. Keer, op. cit., p. 471.
11. See, Sir Surendranath Bannerjee, 'Address on Indian Unity', delivered at a meeting of the Students' Association, on March 16, 1879, at Calcutta, in ed., K.P. Karunakaran, *Modern Indian Political Tradition*, Allied Publishers, New Delhi, 1962, pp.31-45.
12. See Karl Marx, 'British Rule in India' (*New York Daily Tribune*, June 25, 1853) and 'Future Results of British Rule in India' (August 8, 1853) in Karl Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol.I, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1969, pp.488-99.
13. Keer, op. cit., pp.592-93.
14. *Ibid.*, pp.544ff.
15. *Ibid.*, pp.196ff. Ambedkar's eventual conversion to Buddhism (1956), Savarkar believed, was a 'sure jump into the fold of Hinduism.' *Ibid.*, p.498.
16. *Ibid.*, pp.443ff and p.206. It is interesting that Swami Dayananda Saraswati, another staunch Hindu rationalist, had approved of eating beef in the first edition of *Satyarth Prakash* (1874). But in the second authoritative edition (1882) these remarks were excised. P.C. Ghosh, *The Development of the Indian National Congress* (1892-1909), Calcutta: Firma K.L. Mukhopadhyay, 1960, p.69.
17. *Savarkar Wangmaya*, op. cit., pp.96ff.
18. For an extensively documented and forceful statement of this argument, see, Bipan Chandra, *Communalism in Modern India*, New Delhi: Vikas, 1980, in particular pp.86 ff and 340ff.
19. The original manuscript in Marathi (1908) was first published only after Independence (1947). The English translation was first published clandestinely in Holland in 1909. See, V.D. Savarkar, *The First War of Indian Independence—1857*, New Delhi: Rajdhani Granthalaya, 1970.
20. See, V.D. Savarkar, *Kala Pani*, Allahabad: Kitab Mahal, 1956.
21. See, M.K. Gandhi, 'Hind Swaraj', in *The Selected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Vol.IV, Ahmedabad: Navjivan Trust, 1968, pp.83-201.
22. For a lucid narrative of the Gandhi-Savarkar interaction in London (1907-1909),

see James D. Hunt, *Gandhi in London*, New Delhi: Promilla & Co., Delhi, 1978, pp.52-53, 64-67, and 133-37. Also see, Harindra Srivastava, *Five Stormy Years—Savarkar in London* (June 1906-June 1911), New Delhi: Allied Publishers, 1983, pp.25-37, and 175-88.

Bhai Parmanand (ardent Arya Samaj preacher and, later, along with Savarkar, a fierce votary of *Hindu rashtra*) was perhaps the earliest link between Gandhi and India House, described in Chirol's 'Indian Unrest' as 'the most dangerous organisation outside India' (p.148). Parmanand, while in South Africa (1905 and 1909), was greeted by Gandhi as a person of 'education and culture' and presented with a 'public address.' But Gandhi was emphatic in distancing himself from the Arya Samaj doctrines. Gandhi also met Parmanand often in London. See *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, New Delhi: Publications Division, Vol.V, p.48 (article, 'Professor Parmanand', *Indian Opinion*, August 26, 1905), and p.108 ('Address to Professor Parmanand').

J.C. Mukherji of the India House group led by Savarkar wrote regular despatches for *Indian Opinion*. See *Collected Works*, op. cit., pp.17-18 and 37-38.

India House was established by Shamaji Krishna Verma (1905) as a residence for students committed to the cause of India's freedom. Shyamji first came to England (1879) as a 'Research Assistant' to Sir Monier Williams. A distinguished Sanskrit scholar, selected by the Secretary of State for India for the Berlin Orientalist Congress (1881). Acquired considerable wealth and settled in England (1897). Instituted several scholarships for Indians keen to study in England. Regarded Herbert Spencer as his guru. Began publishing the 'Indian Sociologist' (January 1905). Donated a Spencer Chair at Oxford and was fervent promoter from a safe distance of dangerous revolutionary projects. See, Indulal Yagnik, *Shyamji Krishna Verma—Life and Times of an Indian Revolutionary*, Bombay: Luxmi Publications, 1950.

Gandhi, on his 1906 visit to London, stayed two days at India House and met resident students. Gandhi cancelled the appointment with his close friend J.M. Polak to talk to Shyamji on 'three long Sunday evenings.' Published an appreciative note on Shyamji in the *Indian Opinion*. See, *Collected Works*, op. cit., Vol.VI, pp.17, 28, 40, 73, 83-84 and 175-76. Also see, Vol.IV, p.458. Years later, Gandhi, in his essay on the *Gita*, remembered: 'When I was in London, I had talks with many revolutionaries. Shyamji Krishna Verma, Savarkar and others used to tell me that the *Gita* and the *Ramayana* taught quite the opposite of what I said they did.' *Collected Works*, op. cit., xxxii, p.102.

23. *A Bunch of Old Letters—written mostly to Jawaharlal Nehru and some written by him*, London: Asia Publishing House, 1960, p.509.

Nehru in a letter to Gandhi, dated October 9, 1945, wrote: 'It is many years ago since I read *Hind Swaraj* and I have only a vague picture in my mind. But even when I read it 20 or more years ago it seemed to me completely unreal. In your writings and speeches since then I have found much that seemed to me an advance on that old position and an appreciation of modern trends. I was, therefore, surprised when you told us that the old picture still remains intact in your mind. As you know, the Congress has never considered that picture, much less adopted it.' *Ibid.*, p.509.

This letter forms a part of an extremely significant series of letters and talks between Gandhi and his political heir, Nehru. Gandhi was anxious that if the 'difference of outlook' between them was of a fundamental kind, 'the public

should also be made aware of it.' Nehru thought that the Congress 'should not lose itself in arguments over such matters.' Ibid., p.505. So far as Nehru was concerned, *Hind Swaraj* did not merit even a serious discussion.

This correspondence is preserved in the Nehru-Gandhi papers with the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. See, *ibid*, pp.505-12.

24. Savarkar, 1857, op. cit., p.ix.

25. Ibid., p.9.

26. Ibid.

27. Keer, op. cit., p.45.

28. See, S.B. Chaudhry, *English Historical Writings on the Indian Mutiny (1857-1859)*, Calcutta: World Press, 1979, pp.87-134.

29. The Arms Act (1878) severely restricted the right of Indians to carry arms. It was an issue that aroused frequent and passionate debate at the annual Congress gatherings.

The Madras Congress (1887) adopted a resolution asking for a repeal of the Act. A somewhat softened version of that resolution was adopted by the Bombay Congress (1889). For a text of the two resolutions, and excerpts of speeches on the resolutions, see eds. A. Moin Zaidi and Shaheda Zaidi, *The Encyclopaedia of Indian National Congress*, Vol.I: 1885-1890, New Delhi: S. Chand & Co., 1976, pp.206-08, 227-28, 386-91 and 441.

30. See, Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan, *Causes of the Indian Revolt*, Benares, 1873. Sayyid Ahmed, the founder of the Aligarh Mohammedan College and a seminal influence in articulating political interests and aspirations of 'Muslim India', wrote a long essay ('Asbab-e-Baghawate-e-Hind') in Urdu in the immediate aftermath of 1857 (1858). It was translated into English by Sir Auckland Calvin and Col. Graham (1873). An earlier translation (Lees, Calcutta, 1860) contained an important memo by Sir Richard Temple.

Sayyid Ahmed sought to convince the British that as someone intimate with Mughal rule he was in position to tell the British the requirements of Imperial control in India. And the British and Muslims, both 'Children of the Book', had much to gain by cooperating.

Sayyid Ahmed in his vigorous campaign against the Congress, reminded the Muslims that 'Hindus having bathed in the Ganges became as they were before 1857, Muslims and 'all their noble families were ruined.' ('An open letter to Badruddin Tyabji', President Madras Congress (1887). Sir Sayyid Ahmed, *The Present State of Indian Politics*, Allahabad, 1888, p.62.

See also, the polemical tract by Sir Sayyid Ahmed's follower, Choudhri Nusarat Ali, 'The coming Mutiny in India' in *The Seditious Character of Indian National Congress*, Allahabad, 1888, pp.92-122.

31. As a characteristic instance, consider the following excerpt:

'Railway stations between Kasur and Amritsar looted. British soldiers killed and two British officers injured at Kasur. Bands of rebels reported on move. Kasur and Taran Taran treasuries attacked. State of open rebellion exists in parts of districts of Lahore and Amritsar.' Lahore, 13th April 1919. Daily wires to the Government of India. Ed. V.N. Datta, *New Light on the Punjab Disturbances in 1919*: Vol. 6 & 7 of the Disorders Inquiry Committee Report, Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla, 1975, pp. 524. Also see the speech of Gen. Sir Havelock Hudson, *ibid*, pp.1101-06.

The description of events by Chief Secretary J.P. Thompson (Punjab) is even

more starkly reminiscent of the Mutiny: 'as in 1857, hot summer, troop in India of poor quality, the preceding disturbance (1914-15) organised by Ghadriles....' Ibid., pp.21 and 56.

32. Sir Michael O'Dwyer, Lt. Governor of Punjab for six years, testified before the Hunter Committee: 'It is very significant that sepoys should try to burn buildings. It was one of the first symptoms of the 1857 mutiny. . . .' Ibid., 135.

A telling illustration of the still alive 'Mutiny mentality' is the 'revolver test' proposed by O'Dwyer; was it 'safe' for a British Officer to visit 'an ordinarily peaceful locality' without a revolver. Ibid., p.153.

33. Ibid., p.171.

34. Ibid.

35. Srivastava, *Five Stormy Years*, op. cit., pp.43-45.

36. See, V.D. Savarkar, 'Oh Martyrs' (10th May 1908), in Savarkar, *1857*, op. cit., pp.547.

For Savarkar's basic understanding of the nature and requirements of a modern national cohesion, see his preface to the Marathi translation of Mazzini's autobiography.

V.D. Savarkar, 'Prastvna' in *Kranti Ki Nad*, New Delhi: Rajdhani Granthagar, 1968, pp.1-32.

37. Ibid., p.548.

38. To mark out 'armed struggle' as a crucial motive force in Indian history has been a vital concern of the 'Right' as much as the 'Radical Left' in India. For a cogent rendering of the freedom struggle in terms of Savarkar's argument, see, Balashastry Hardas, *Armed Struggle for Freedom: Ninety Years War of Independence, 1857 to Subhash*, trans. S.S. Apte, Poona, 1958.

The 'India House' group led by Savarkar sought close links with revolutionary groups from Ireland, Russia, Egypt, Turkey and China. Savarkar extremely keen to make the cause of Indian independence a 'living issue' in international politics. Published several articles in 'Gaelic American' (New York). Besides the 'Indian Sociologist', 'Vande Mataram' and 'Talwar' published in Europe. Often talked of a simultaneous uprising in the colonised countries and Egypt blocking the Suez Canal. Also thought of a 'world conference' of nations colonised by England. Sent two Indian volunteers to join the resistance led by Abdul Karim against the Spanish occupation of Morocco. Madam Cama unfurled the flag of 'Indian Independence', designed by the group, at the Second Socialist International at Stuttgart (August 1907). See Keer, op. cit., pp.36-42; Chitra Gupta, op. cit., pp.48-72 and 191ff; Yajnik, op. cit., pp.209ff, 233ff and 309ff; David Garnett, *The Golden Echo*, New York, 1954, Vol.I, pp.136-62; and Balu Roy Chowdhury, *Madam Cama—A Short Life Sketch*, New Delhi: People's Publishing House, 1977, pp.15-19 and 29-33.

39. 'The Revolution of 1857 was a test to see how far India had come towards unity, independence, and popular power.' Ibid., p.544.

British conquest, Savarkar believed, had infused in the continually fragmenting social cohesions a new energy and purpose. The 'fetters' of slavery were the 'necessary price' of what British rule had unknowingly accomplished: 'to melt and mould the disintegrating factions of our Motherland and hammer us into a one people.' Savarkar's letter to his brother, 9.3.1915. D.D. Savarkar, *An Echo from Andamans*, Nagpur: Viswanath Vinayak Kelkar, n.d., p.37.

40. Ibid., pp.417-56.



41. Ibid., pp.88ff and 443-56.
42. Ibid., pp.436-37.
43. Ibid., p.542.
44. Ibid., p.545.
45. Ibid., p.542.
46. See, V.D. Savarkar, 'Hindu-Pad-Padshahi', *Savarkar Wangmaya*, op. cit., pp.95ff.
47. See, Savarkar, *Andamans*, op. cit., pp.24ff, 28ff and 50ff. Also see, 'Nationalist and Author' in Keer, op. cit., pp.207-14.
48. See, V.D. Savarkar, *Mopla*, New Delhi: Rajdhani Granthagar, 1981.
49. *Savarkar Wangmaya*, Vol.VI, op. cit., pp.285ff.
50. See, V.D. Savarkar, *Ushap*, New Delhi: Rajdhani Granthagar, 1977.
51. See, V.D. Savarkar, *The Story of My Transportation for Life*, Bombay: Sadbhakti Publications, 1950.
52. Savarkar's plea for adopting a national calendar to be named 'Yudhishtar Samvat' and beginning with an assumed figure of 5000 years is most instructive in this context. Keer, op. cit., pp.437-39.
53. Savarkar, *Kala Pani*, op. cit., pp.227-28.
54. See, *Essentials of Hindutva*, *Savarkar Wangmaya*, Vol.VI, op. cit., pp.3-10.
55. Keer, op. cit., p.459.
56. Ibid., p.471.
57. Savarkar, *Andamans*, op. cit., pp.24-25. According to Savarkar, England and America, having attained to full 'Kshatriyahood', could legitimately claim access to the 'sublime thoughts' of Vedanta philosophy. But Indians in the modern age were 'all *sudras* and cannot claim access to Veda and Vedanta.' Ibid., p.24.
58. *Essentials of Hindutva*, *Savarkar Wangmaya*, vol. VI, op. cit., pp.1-91.
59. According to Savarkar, 'The ideal conditions, therefore, under which a nation can attain perfect solidarity and cohesion would, other things being equal, be found in the case of those people who inhabit the land they adore, the land of whose forefathers is also the land of their Gods and Angels, of Seers and Prophets; the scenes of their history are also scenes of their mythology.' *Savarkar Wangmaya*, Vol.VI, op. cit., p.87.
60. 'I have practically met no one who believed that India can ever become free without resort to violence.' Gandhi to Lord Amphyll, London, October 30, 1919. *Collected Works*, op. cit., Vol.IX, p.509.
61. For a sober account of the public meetings and the debate on *Ramayana* (October 24, 1909), see, Hunt, op.cit., pp. 135-37; and Srivastava, op.cit., pp. 180-87.

A few days earlier, Gandhi had spoken on the 'Ethics of Passive Resistance.' During question hour B.C. Pal, whose trip to London was financed by Savarkar's patron Shyamji Krishan Verma, had fiercely countered Gandhi: 'soul-force would be powerless without physical force.' See, *Collected Works*, op. cit., Vol.XI, pp.471, and 474.

Regarding his reasons for accepting Savarkar's invitation for the Vijaydashmi meeting, see *ibid.*, p.504. For a summary of Gandhi's speeches, see *ibid.*, p. 498. For Gandhi's summary of Savarkar's speech, see *ibid.*, p.499.

62. Savarkar's account of his long grim years in Andamans is remarkable for its factual rigour and restraint. When he wrote 'My Transportation' (1923-24), Savarkar was already convinced that Islam and Muslims in India posed the most dangerous threat to Hindu survival. Yet he records the help of a Muslim 'convict

warden' in Thana jail. Though a hardened criminal, at great risk, he volunteered to carry messages between Savarkar and his brother who happened to be in the same prison. See, Savarkar, *My Transportation*, op. cit., pp.26-28.

On the first day after he was sentenced, a British officer in Dongri Jail complemented Savarkar on his 'fortitude.' Savarkar's response: 'Do you really believe—this does not terrify me? But as I am determined to face this danger, I have now grown impervious to it—in the same plight, you would have proved as resolute. . . .' Ibid., pp.1-3.

Savarkar was subjected to exceptionally harsh treatment in the Andamans. Long periods of solitary confinement, bad food and long hours yoked to an oil press in place of a bullock had reduced his weight to a bare 95 lbs. Both the Savarkar brothers were excluded from the amnesty announced after the war. And yet Savarkar wrote to his brother (July 6, 1920): '... the sight of hundreds of our political comrades and co-sufferers' release makes us feel relieved and repaid. . . .' Savarkar, *Andamans*, op. cit., p.87.

63. Keer, op. cit., pp.233 and 481. Gandhi visited Ratnagiri (March 1927) where he also met and talked with Savarkar. The summary of Gandhi's remarks preceding his speech: 'After describing Ratnagiri as a place of pilgrimage for the whole of India as it was Lokmanya's birth place and after a feeling reference to Sjt. V.D. Savarkar. . . .'

64. See the meticulously documented account of Jinnah's politics, in Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman—Jinnah, the Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan*, London: Cambridge University Press, 1985.

Mohammad Ali Jinnah's politics in the early phase was firmly within the 'tradition of moderate nationalist politics.' Even when he joined the Muslim League (1913), Jinnah insisted upon an assurance from his sponsors that 'loyalty to the Muslim League' would never imply 'even a shadow of disloyalty to the National cause.' His stated ambition was to be a 'Muslim Gokhale.'

Gandhi's emergence as the definitive voice in the nationalist politics, and his unqualified support to the Khilafat movement caused Jinnah deep unease. At the Nagpur, Congress (1920), Jinnah, speaking for the 'intellectual and reasonable' section, alone opposed the 'ratification' of the 'Non-Cooperation' and Khilafat movement, as it was certain to arouse 'religious frenzy' and 'harm' the national cause.

Throughout the twenties Jinnah remained politically isolated. He returned to active 'Muslim League politics' around 1934. In March 1939, Muslim League appointed a special committee to consider various schemes predicated on the belief that Muslims were a nation. On March 23, 1940, the Lahore League session adopted the resolution of Pakistan. Barely two months before Jinnah's public position had been: India to be one state comprising two nations—Hindus and Muslims. But at the Lahore session he vehemently espoused complete separation: Pakistan. And almost instantly he came to be accepted as the final voice of 'Muslim India.'

65. Keer, op. cit., pp.430 ff. Savarkar and other Hindu Mahasabha leaders were put under preventive detention (April 4, 1950) to clear the way for a pact between Nehru and the Pakistan prime minister Liaquat Ali (April 8, 1950) for the restoration of 'communal peace' in East Pakistan. Savarkar made the offer to abstain from public activity while in detention at Belgaum. At the trial, Savarkar went further and said: 'against his will and principles', he would 'exhort people

to observe' the pact. *Ibid.*, p.433.

66. By the time India attained freedom, Savarkar felt utterly alone even among his closest followers. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee, who took over as the president of the Hindu Mahasabha at Savarkar's behest, began a campaign to persuade the Hindu Mahasabha to abstain from politics or throw open its membership to 'non-Hindus.'

Consider in this context, Keer's account of Savarkar's meeting with Shyama Prasad Mookerjee, an ardent admirer of Savarkar and the foremost leader of Jan Sangh. On August 26, 1952, Shyama Prasad met Savarkar to persuade him to join the Jan Sangh. Savarkar warned that Jan Sangh would meet the fate of the Congress since Jan Sangh had opened its membership to the Muslims. Shyama Prasad said that in 'Bengal Hindus and Muslims lived in harmony.' Savarkar was furious that even a leader of a Hindu party could not understand that a Muslim always remains a 'Muslim first and an Indian never', Keer, *op. cit.*, pp.448-49.

67. Gandhi's refusal to castigate his political opponents as 'demonic' was in the tradition of 'sacrifice.' On August 8, 1942, Gandhi, while giving the call for a final struggle against British rule, congratulated the communist delegates at the AICC for their 'courage' in opposing the 'Quit India' resolution. It was their 'duty', even if in a hopeless minority, to stand by what they believed to be true and correct. Perhaps no other political leader in such a moment of awesome peril and possibility could evince such equanimity and sense of fairness. See, *Collected Works*, *op. cit.*, Vol.LXXVI, pp.384ff.

Consider in this context Gandhi's letter to Ramnarayan Choudhri, February 27, 1928. *Pratap*, in an editorial, had 'caustically criticised' Savarkar's article on Gandhi in the *Shradanand*. Gandhi wrote to *Pratap*, but that letter is unavailable to Choudhri. Gandhi wrote: 'I do not want anyone to defend me. Moreover it hurts me that someone should be attacked on my account.' See, *Collected Works*, *op. cit.*, Vol.XXXVI, p.64ff.

68. See, Savarkar, *Andamans*, *op. cit.*, p.49.  
 69. *Ibid.*, p.112.  
 70. Manubahen Gandhi, *The Lonely Pilgrim—Gandhiji's Noakhali Pilgrimage*, Ahmedabad: Navjivan, 1964, p.75.  
 71. *Ibid.*, p.116.