SOCIAL INTELLIGENTSIA AND THE SEARCH FOR A NEW ORDER FOR 'NATIONAL' REGENERATION

The history that introduced communal stereotypes also brought a Hindu version of national regeneration in which the progress of jatiya bhavana (community consciousness) was looked upon as a natural way to advance jatiyata (national consciousness). Paul Brass has argued that the formation of a nationality involves the articulation and acquisition of political rights for the dominant group. In the process of the making of the nation state, one nationality dominates, and this results in the movement toward communal consciousness in an ethnic group. Processes of assimilation and inclusion, as well as differentiation or exclusion accompany this. 432

In the writings of the Hindi Intelligentsia one can discern three tendencies working at the same time: First, a concern for their country; second, concern for their religion; and third, a concern for the safeguarding of age-old customs and traditions. For Harischandra's generation there was no intrinsic contradiction between the emerging national consciousness and communal identities. 433

These writings were also respectful of varnashram dharma, which accepted the caste system as the basis of Hindu society. This complexity makes the study of national regeneration

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a study of social transformation and a change of consciousness as well in the nineteenth century context.

There is an interesting instance of a writing in which the caste sabhas and their activities are criticised, as those sabhas do not respect the norms of *varnashram*. The writer says:

"*Varnashram dharma ka prachar chahane walon ko chabiye ki we usi sabha ko jatiya sabha samjhe jisme dharma ka aakar ho, varnashram ka prabhav ho aur brahmanadi varga vidyaman hon.* [All those people who wish well for *varnashram* dharma should consider only those sabhas as national sabha which respects *varnashram* norms, and Brahmins are present]"\(^{434}\)

The writer believes that the organisers of the caste sabhas were afraid of dharma and they did not have any respect for *varnashrama* dharma. That is why they organised their sabhas in which Brahmins are absent. Criticising the Arya Samaj the writer says that they are also following the Brahma Samaj in criticising Hindus and thus going downhill (*adhogami*).\(^{435}\)

Radhacharan Goswami had written a satirical piece in *Hindi Pradip*, which is indicative of his thinking. He had prepared a ‘dictionary’ in which he said that the four varna meant English, Muslim, Buddhist and Hindu. In the column under Shudra he wrote Hindu.\(^{436}\) In another writing formatted in a questionnaire mode he asked a question: “Who are the original inhabitants of this country?” His answer was, “The Aryas are the original people of this country. Till the time of Prithviraj we ruled this country. Thereafter came Muslim rule. This was followed by English rule.” His conclusion was that, “We are the people of this country and the Muslims and the English are the foreigners in this country.”\(^{437}\)

In one article the author prays to God to re-emerge to save this great land. He says, “This

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\(^{434}\) For detailed discussion on this see Chapter 6.

\(^{435}\) *Saran Saroj*, June, 1888.


\(^{437}\) 'Deshopkari Pustak' (1882) cited in Radhacharan Goswami, *Radhacharan Goswami ki Chuni Hui Rachnayein*, p.176.
land was once so dear to you. You took on avatars and came down to take birth to save it. Alas! We do not know for what faults your divine face is not seen any more in this land. Oh destroyer of Dhanush! Oh you who lifted the Govardhan mountain! Oh the saver of Prahalad! Where have you gone leaving us without a saviour? Today India is in deep darkness. The light of knowledge is extinguished, the country is enslaved, all enlightened souls have gone, all brave men have lost their bravery; all religious people have lost faith in it, oh the lord of Bharat! Forgive us."438

The article, however, finds some hope of national recovery as the flag of Go-raksha is once again flying, Dharma Sabhas are being organised, Sanskrit schools are being started, orphanages and hospitals are being opened and more importantly the welfare of the country is becoming the concern of people once again.

What is perhaps most important is that it appeals to all Hindus, Muslims and even Englishmen to join the rising Sun called Congress. Using many adjectives for the Congress it does not fail to add that religion must not be forgotten and the mantra of raj bhakti must not be forgotten so that the sun of progress never sets in this land.439

There is the desire to distance itself from the word ‘Hindu’ for the community. Bharatendu had expressed an opinion in 1874, that the Muslims coined the word ‘Hindu’ as a derogatory term and people who call themselves Hindus should stop doing so. Arya was the term he wanted to use.440 Radhacharan expresses a similar opinion in his book written in 1882. He asks, “Isn’t your real name Hindu?” His answer is “No. Hindu means Kafir and slave. The Muslims out of jealousy gave this name to us. Our real name is Arya. To call us Hindu is to

438 Saran Saroj, November 1888.
439 Saran Saroj, November 1888.
abuse us.” On this issue an interesting article *Arya, Hindu va Indu* was published in *Bharat Deepika* in 1881. The issue was discussed in great detail. It said that some scholars found the name Hindu abusive and it was given to the *varnasrami* people in *virodh* (opposition). The Aryas without realising the intention of the Muslims started calling themselves Hindus, which in the language of the Muslims meant, black, thief or slave. It was ultimately argued that the real term is neither Hindu nor Arya but Indu.

In the article mentioned above Radhacharan Goswami poses another question: “If somebody becomes a Christian or a Muslim leaving his own community, can he be accepted back if he is ready to rectify his mistake?” His answer is that a person should be ready to do anything for the sake of cow protection. He should always work for cow protection.

The caste system was criticised yet there was no hesitation in thinking in terms of caste. It has been discussed before that Khadagvilas Press had a great role in shaping what is called the Hindi renaissance in Bihar and the United Provinces. The man behind this institution, Ramdeen Singh also started a magazine called *Khatrya Patrika* in 1881. “To show the wider concerns of the magazine,” it stated that, “although this has taken birth in a Kshatriya’s home the Brahmins are revered. For fellow Kshatriyas the caste religion (*jati dharma*) is there. Vaishyas are obviously our associates and without the Shudras the superiority of all these castes cannot be established.” All Hindus were welcomed to support this magazine, but the manner in which all castes were addressed is a clear indication of how the orthodox Hindu view, supportive of caste hierarchies, were at work. Ishwari Prasad

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442 See a very important article: “Hame apne aapko kis nam se pukarna chahiyen?” *Bharat Deepika*, Bhadrapad, Samvat 1938 (1881), which gives an idea how the writers thought on issues like Hindu, Yavan and Arya.

443 Ibid.

Sharma, one of the leading writers of Arrah, who had influenced other prominent writers like Shivapujan Sahay, wrote in his book *Dadabhai Naoroji* published in 1921, “India is an enslaved country. She does not enjoy liberty even in namesake. So many things have been said and we have remained ignorant for years. But, with the benefit of new knowledge we started realising the importance of independence.”

Up to this point he was nationalist. But, after this, he wrote: “There was a time when we were independent. But, due to the misdeeds of Jaichand we invited bondage for ourselves, and once we became enslaved the darkness of slavery started spreading everywhere. The unity of the Hindus was broken and Muslim rule reigned: sometimes Akbarshahi and sometimes Aurangzebshai.”

Very clearly Ishwari Prasad Sharma slides into what can be considered a communal interpretation of the country's past. He writes: “The Muslims ruled over this country for 800 years but they had to fight against the freedom fighters.” To understand what was being conveyed he wrote: “The country was not without any brave freedom fighters. As long as the Prataps and Shivajis were there, they kept showing them what we had been and what we have now become.”

Dealing with the decline of Muslim rule he observed: “Even when the Muslim Sultanate had disintegrated, the Hindus could not shake off the shackles of bondage as they could not get united.” He then laments how a third jati (nation) took over the authority and became our master. What he writes after that is interesting: “For some time we enjoyed our slavery. We listened to sweet talk and promises and started believing that an intelligent mali (gardener) had come to make this county a place of prosperity. Our dress, our language and

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445 See p. 50 of this thesis for biographical details if Ishwari Prasad Sharma.


our sentiments would again be respected and given their place. Imagining all these things coming we started learning the basics of a new civilisation and started seeing the world differently.\footnote{Iswari Prasad Sharma, \textit{Dadabhai Naoroji}, Calcutta, 1921, p. 7.}

This passage is an interesting analysis of the mind of a Hindu nationalist of the early 1920s. This Hindu national view of history was coloured by a communal outlook in which Indian history had witnessed eight centuries of Muslim rule, which meant the slavery of the Hindus and then the rule of a third \textit{jati} (nation/race), the British. The passage admits that in the early stages the Hindus wrongly hoped that the rule of the British would be a welcome break and ultimately the older brothers (Hindus, being the majority could claim this) would be preferred over the minority (Muslims).

The biography of Naoroji was 240 pages long, well written, well researched and it used the book \textit{Speeches and Writings of Dadabhai Naoroji} extensively. It was a part of \textit{Bharat Ke Bhagya Vidhata} series in which the biographies of great Indians were written. The biographies were referred to as ‘the biographies of sacred lives’.

This Hindu nationalist mindset can be seen clearly linked to Hindu awakening in second half of the nineteenth century. This period was clearly the period of the rise and growth of the vernacular press. It can be found in all kinds of literary material of the period. It was also the period of the making of nationalism and the two are invariably interwoven. This chapter seeks to prepare an account of the making of Hindu nationalist mindset.

In the Hindu understanding of national regeneration the Hindus needed to learn unity from other nations. Their inability to act collectively was seen as the greatest weakness and without overcoming this weakness the development of the country was not possible. The

“Aur jati ke logo mein bahut aise paye jate hain jo desh aur jati ki bhalai ke kamo mein tatpar ho pran tak sankalp kar dete hain. Angrez mein sabhi aise hain aur Musalmano mein bhi saikaro aise paye jate hain ki jis kam mein dekho hekari ke sath dat jate hain. Hum Hinduo mein na jane kya ho geya haiki aankh hi nahi khulti. Vidya alog roti hai, dharma alog para chillata hai, mel milap ki koi fikra hi nahi. [In other nationalities there is love for their nations. All Englishmen have this quality. The number of nation loving people among the Muslims is also in hundreds. But, among us, the Hindus, God knows what has happened. We are not caring even when our knowledge and religion are showing signs of degradation. There is no unity among us.]”

Pratap Narayan Mishra, the editor of *Brahman*, wrote: “We, being the original inhabitants of this country are the Indians. This Hindustan is ours. Whatever be our condition today only we have the right of being Hindustani as we are Hindus. People of other religions also live here but they are minor citizens. Our development is the development of this country.” Twelve years later he wrote: “The rule of the Alauddins and Aurangzebs is no more.”

We find all kinds of literature about the past that does not bother too much about its validity. In this literature, most of the Brahmin writers had the tendency to present history in a

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452 *Hindi Pradip*, January 1878.
453 *Brahman*, 15 November, 1890.
454 Ibid.
way that gave centrality to the Brahmin’s role in Hindu society. Pratap Narayan Mishra wrote an article *Nirmay Shatak* in 1892, in which he said, “The Brahmins used to take all decisions about everything. In religious and social affairs even today they take the decisions. But, since Muslim rule began (and thereafter British rule) all political decisions were taken by them not the Brahmins.”

It must, however, be kept in mind that occasionally some writings also appeared which underlined the fact that Muslim rule was better than British rule in some respects, as the Muslims had accepted India as their homeland while the British never did. This can be seen in an article, which appeared in *Hindi Pradip* and also stated: “Due to British rule, now there is no difference between the Muslims and Hindus. We Indians suffered a lot during Muslim rule but whatever they earned through their labour remained in this country and not even an iota of that went out of the country. Now, Hindus and Muslims have come so close that for some they are like brothers.”

All along, however, attempts were made to unite the Hindus so that a strong and organised Hindu nation could be formed. There were some tensions in this as many of the writers were strong supporters of the *varnasram dharma* and the unity of the Hindus demanded the devaluation of *varnasram*. This desire explains why so many articles were written in different Hindi newspapers against the continuance of the *varna* system as a divisive force in Hindu society. But we must also pay attention to the fact that in Bihar, Sanatan dharma supporters staunchly backed the caste system and were very critical of any attempt to disturb it. That is why they were against the reformists who were facilitating the upward mobility of the lower castes by giving them the authority to wear the sacred thread.

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455 *Brahman*, February 1892.

456 *Hindi Pradip*, February 1878.
Saroj wrote in December 1888 gives us an idea about how strongly the Sanatan Hindus felt about the social changes taking place at that time. They believed that as a result of English education and reformist propaganda the lower castes were dreaming of being at par with their higher caste counterparts. This was undesirable and it was not considered beneficial and rewarding for the lower castes. It would ultimately leave them nowhere to fall back as they would be discarded even by their own castes.457

We find a number of articles and letters to editors that ridiculed and opposed any kind of upper castisation of the lower castes. In one letter a writer laughs at the wishful thinking of Koris (Koeris) and Chamars (low castes) to be vipra (Brahmins) due to their association with reformists.458

It would be misleading, however, to say that all writers had been supporters of caste or that they were against social reforms. Hindi Pradip wrote in 1889: “Without the annihilation of the caste system we and our country will not progress with all our efforts.” Using very strong language in condemning the system that was weakening our nationalism, it added: “Oh God! What wrong had we committed that we had to take birth in this, the worst kind of society where a caste system exists.” Towards the end the writer wished that in his next birth he could be born in any place, be it the deserts of Sahara, but not in this sinful society of Bharat.459

Radhacharan Goswami wrote that the country’s progress, the National Congress, social reform and women’s liberation were the dearest issues for him.460 The order in which he lists the issues is probably similar to that of most other Hindi writers of his age. He wrote that

457 Saran Saroj, December 1888, pp.5-7.
458 Saran Saroj, June 1889.
459 This remarkably radical piece appeared in Hindi Pradip, April 1889.
Hindu is the name of the Nation in which Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaishya, Shudra, Antyaz, Chandal, Brahmo, Jains, Sikhs are all included.\footnote{Bharatendu, 1 March, April, May, June, 1891.}

There were efforts to mobilise all Hindus under one head. The reference point was the nationalism of the European kind, which had proved to be so beneficial to them. A booklet\footnote{Hariaudh wrote a booklet in support of Sanatan dharma. The title and year of publication is not given in the brittle copy which was consulted at National Library, Calcutta. In the text there is a mention that this booklet was written on the sixtieth year of Annie Besant which means the year of publication should be 1907. (Annie Besant was born in 1847).} by Hariaudh begins with these lines: “Sanatan Dharma is a very lovely name. All those who are born of Hindu blood must feel elated hearing these words. Today attempts are being made to weaken and destroy this great Sanatan Dharma.”\footnote{Ibid, page number is not clear.} He talks about the importance of our ancient texts. “Our ancestors were great people who could see the past, present and future \textit{(trikaldarsh)} . Now we do not have great souls like Manu or Yagyavalyakya nor are Vashistha or Vyas with us today. But, there are many great souls amongst our twenty crore strong Hindu nation who can guide us during this troubled and difficult time.”\footnote{Ibid, p. 20.} Appreciating the likes of Bhagwandin, Pandit Tulsiram, Lala Lajpat Roy, Lala Hanraj for their services to the Arya Samaj he says, “These people might be great enemies of our Hindu dharma or Hindu nation but there cannot be any soul who would not appreciate their devotion to their own religion.”\footnote{Ibid, p. 21.} He was disappointed that there were not even three to four similar selfless great people present today amongst the Sanatan Dharma supporters.

He compares the devotion of the Arya Samajis to that of the Sanatani: “Every year one or two people come forward to help the Arya Samaj in organising annual conferences. But, he is pained to add that for last 15 years of the existence of the Bharat Dharma Mahamandal
nobody has ever come forward to help the organisation. As a result the organisation was unable to make progress. He writes that more than 20-25 lakh Hindus had gathered at this conference, which showed how the Hindu jati needed to be mobilised organisationally through similar efforts. Hariaudh says that the population of the country was 29 crores. Of that 9 crore were non-Hindu. Even within those 20 crores, the Sikhs, Jains, Arya Samajis etc. were ashamed to call themselves Hindus. As a result, Hindu Samaj and Dharma were disintegrating. His call was to be united. Rich men and scholars were called upon to come forward and help the cause.

How Hindu idioms were being employed to convey modernist and progressive messages can be seen in this remarkable piece which appeared in Bihar Bandhu in which the flight of all Hindu gods and goddesses to Europe is mentioned as a result of the failure of this country’s people. To get them to come back, the article argues, the Indians must go to Europe.

The New Hindu

Nineteenth century colonial India was an ‘age of definition and redefinition’ in which a ‘wide range of experimental explorations of the definition of the community’ was done. The socio-religious movements that swept the country initiated it. For many, religion became a matter of creeds that were explained, defined and elaborated upon. Complexity was added to it due to

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466 Ibid. p. 21. This speech was written for the Allahabad Conference where he had anticipated that 20-25 lakh people would attend the sabha. He, however, could not attend this meeting.


468 Kenneth W. Jones, Socio-Religious Reform Movements in British India (New Delhi: 1994), p.1. To Jones the term ‘social’ meant an attempt to reorder society in the areas of social behaviour, custom, structure or control. The religious refer to the type of authority used to legitimise a given ideology and its accompanying programme. This authority was based on the scriptures.

the ignorance of the colonial authorities. Colonial Government documents show confusion in their approaches to these issues. The concept of Hindu was defined in terms of those who were not Hindu, and was probably reinvigorated in the first half of the nineteenth century in the context of the religious assaults by Christian missionaries. 470

The government's official report also took a similar view of the word 'Hindu'. "The word 'Hindu' is used...in a twofold sense, implying a distinction of race as well as religion. The old meaning of the word comprehended nothing more than an Indian origin. All nations of India were broadly spoken of as Hindus. When it began to assume a religious sense, its use was confined to designate that great section of the people that was not Muslims as Hindus. All those who were not Muslims were Hindus." 471

Even the Census report notes that no one has ventured as yet to lay down any definition (of Hinduism). 472 "What is a Hindu? ... No answer exists; for the term in its modern acceptance denotes neither a creed nor a race, neither a church nor a people, but in general expression devoid of precision." 473 The Census report says, "There are many religious sects in both the Hindu and Muslim communities." Bihar Bandhu refers to Amrita Bazar Patrika for the origin of "Hindu". 474

Most remarkable in this connection is the desire of many writers not to use the word 'Hindu' but to use 'Arya' for denoting their community. Kavi Vachan Sudha, edited by Bharatendu Harischandra, expressed this desire most strongly in 1874 by saying that in the ancient texts our people are denoted not as Hindus but as Aryans so we had better use the

471 Census of India, 1872, p.129.
472 Census of India, Bengal, Vol I, p.72.
474 Bihar Bandhu, 9 June 1874. It refers to Amrita Bazar Patrika of 28 May 1874.
term Arya for our community. It requested writers and the editors of all papers not to use the
term ‘Hindu’.\footnote{Bharatendu Harischandra, \textit{Kavi\textasciitilde vachan Sudha}, 13 Samvat 1931 (1874). \textit{Kavi Vachan Sudha} wrote asking why we should call ourselves black slaves, pirates and other derogatory things by calling ourselves Hindus.} The discourse around the term ‘Hindu’ took place in this confusing scenario. The process began at one level in Bengal during the time of Ram Mohan Roy and since then it was constantly debated.

Renan has reminded us that ‘getting its history wrong is part of being a nation’.\footnote{Renan, quoted by Hobsbawm, \textit{Nations and Nationalism} (Cambridge: CUP 1992), p.12.} The notion of a glorious Hindu past was consolidated when the cultural-cum-religious concept of ‘Hindu’ was equated with the ethnic concept of ‘Aryan’, thanks to the linguistic research of Max Mueller. This theory of Hindu being equated with the Aryans swayed a large number of people. The Indian nation thrived on the twin myths of ‘Hindu’ and ‘Aryan’.\footnote{Anuradha Roy, \textit{Nationalism As Poetic Discourse in Nineteenth Century}, pp.6-7.}

The writings suggest that a clear Hindu bias can be seen in other places as well. Anguished by the participation of Hindus in Muslim festivals like Muharram \textit{Bihar Bandhu} published a long article on its front page. The writer was anguished that Hindus could not find their own symbols and rituals for celebrations and mourning. It says, “If the Hindus of Patna are fond of mourning, then the exile of Rama to the forest and the death of his father Dasarath in anguish and pain is no less a matter fit enough for a mourning. Is not the theme of King Rama sending his queen to the forest a good enough theme for mourning? Are the episodes of King Harishchandra, Nala, or the Pandavas less tragic than Hasan Hussain of the desert of Arabia?\footnote{\textit{Bihar Bandhu}, 16 January 1878.} The paper had reservations about Hindus participating in Muslim festivals:

\begin{quote}
"Muharram ke liye Patne ka nam mashhoor hai, ke bais sirf yehi hindu hi hai. Hai ab wah din aa gaye ki Dussehara aur"
\end{quote}
Holi ke deevano ko kaun poochhata hai, Muharram mein dhoomdham karne ke liye Hindu marne lage. Woh Muharram, jisme dhoomdham ke bone ko Musalman khud bura samajhate hain. Kya yeh Hinduo ke liye sharma ki bat nahi hai ki unke saher ka nam Ramlila ke liye mashboor na ho mashboor ho iske liye ki chand Musalman jo Shiye khalate hain...[Patna is famous for its Muharram. Even Hindus take part in it in large numbers. Who cares for Holi and Dusserah. Hindus are dying to celebrate Muharram. Is it not a disgrace that the city is not famous for Ramlila?]

It clearly suggested that the writer believes that Hindus should celebrate primarily their own festivals rather than involving themselves in the festivals of other religions. Later on similar suggestions were made from other quarters regarding the celebration of Holi and the observance of festivals in the name of Krishna and Parvati. In this context some papers very effectively expressed various suggestions that conveyed that these were part of their traditions.

Manoranjan of Arrah wrote:

“Gaij jama mein me bhi nai jan dalane wali pyari Holi aati hai...Aha! abhi jana kyon Holi ka nam hi sunkar Hinduon ke prano mein anand labari prawahit bone lagati hai? Braj chand anand kand Srikrishnachand jiska nam Hinduon ke liye aapuddharak, kalyankarak aur sarvadukhsangharak hai...Srikrishna avatar aadarsha purush the, Iswar ke awatar the...[Even half dead Hindus get charged up to see Holi, the festival of great Lord Krishna, the emancipator of Hindus...]

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479 Bihar Bandhu, 16 January 1878.
480 Manoranjan, March 1913.
Again, *Bihar Bandhu* published a letter that asked, "Should Hindus keep their heads down for ever?" 481

With the passage of time the writings related to Hindu-Muslim issues became even more anti-Muslim. *Bihar Bandhu* wrote in 1902:

‘Musalman Keval Fatke Hi Nabin Rahte, Varan Fatke Rahne Ka Poora Poora Udyog Karte Hain. Aligarh Ke Budhe Saiyyad 482 Ne Unhein Wah Mantra Padha Diya Hai Ki Ye Kabhi Kisi Samajik Udyog Mein Hinduon Ka Sath Nabin Denge... Musalman Aur Hindu Ye Do Viruddha Taiva Kya Kabhi Bharatvarsha Ko Sir Uthane Denge ? Jab Tak Hindu, Hindu Aur Musalman, Musalman Rabenge Tab Tak Bharatvarsha Ki Unnati Ki Aasha Dho Rakhein. Dono Mein Paraspar Sambandha Kaisa Hai, Jaisa Choohe Aur Billi Mein. Ek Ki Bhalai Mein Doosre Ki Burai Hoti Hai. [The Muslims do not try to come close to the Hindus and they want to keep a distance from Hindus. The old Syed of Aligarh has taught them a lesson that they must not cooperate with Hindus. ... Muslims and Hindu are rivals to each other... until these two rival communities would allow the country to progress? The relationship between the two communities is like the relationship of cat and mouse. In one's progress the other suffers. ] 483

In fact, this trend of holding the community perspective above anything else was the order of the day since the early days of Hindi journalism in Bihar. In 1885 *Bihar Bandhu* published a letter that said that there were justifications for the continuance of early marriages and that the Aryans had decided in its favour after the experiences of many years. The young

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481 *Bihar Bandhu*, 15 September 1901.
482 *Bihar Bandhu*, 1 May 1902.
483 *Bihar Bandhu*, 1 May 1902.
are mistaken in criticising this, as are the Muslims who blame Hindus for the practice of worshipping idols.\textsuperscript{484}

\textit{Bihar Bandhu} regularly published such material that had distinct communal overtones. It wrote that between Akbar and Aurangzeb the latter was better for the Hindus. The reason given was that Akbar had conspired to finish off the Hindus by his clever manoeuvrings. It argued that thanks to the steps taken by Aurangzeb a revitalisation of the Hindus took place. The world saw the rise of Hindus resulting from the policies of Aurangzeb.\textsuperscript{485} On the same day the paper commented that Hindu-Muslim unity would have been good but if they did not get united then what could be done? Remarks like these must be seen in the context of the widening gulf between the intelligentsias of the two communities. \textit{Hindi Pradip}, was convinced that it was folly to treat the anti-Arya Muslims as brothers.\textsuperscript{486}

Hindu causes were the primary concern for most of the articles in \textit{Bihar Bandhu}. Since the early years events were seen in Hindu and Muslim terms. An anonymous correspondent writing from Patna observed that although there were comparatively few Muslims in Bihar they nevertheless possessed a good deal of power and influence; and this accounted for their being so wealthy in this province and being held in such high regard by the government. This induced them to exert all their abilities to have their letters and language introduced into the courts here, which places of resort, possessing as they do the capabilities of making one rich, are in the hands of the Muslims.\textsuperscript{487} Muslims were bracketed with the advanced communities

\textsuperscript{484 \textit{Bihar Bandhu}, 29 January 1885.}
\textsuperscript{485 \textit{Bihar Bandhu}, 15 May 1902.}
\textsuperscript{486 \textit{Hindi Pradip}, August 1881.}
\textsuperscript{487 \textit{Bihar Bandhu}, 8 November 1876.}
when it said, 

"... by this means other great remedies, known to the villagers of Bihar and unknown to European, Bengali and Muslim doctors will now become public."\[488\]

Even when the issue of the need to defend the country against the Russians was discussed the paper commented: "The Muslims are not as loyal as the Hindus."\[489\] The paper lamented that a Marwari decided to get converted to Islam to marry a Muslim girl. This was seen as a sign of the times in which religion becomes so degraded.\[490\] Pandit Keshavram Bhatt, who by any standards can be considered a very enlightened and respected writer and editor, during the phase that can be called the Bharatendu era, edited the paper. The paper was in touch with the various debates related to the term ‘Hindu’ that had been discussed in English newspapers like *Amrita Bazar Patrika* of Calcutta.\[491\]

Other newspapers of Calcutta also kept publishing reports and views that saw things from a communal perspective. *Hindi Pradip* wrote that the partiality in favour of the Muslims, in which the anguish of the Hindus not being able to be treated justly by the government, is clearly stated.\[492\]

In Hindi newspapers the atrocities perpetrated by the Muslims and their cruelty were vividly described whenever an opportunity arose. These reporting gave the impression that the Muslims conspired against the Hindus. *Bangavasi* reported that a Muslim of Ballia had been distributing handbills inciting his co-religionists in Azamgarh, Ghazipur, Ballia, Shahabad, Chhapra and other places to rise against the Hindus.\[493\]

\[488\] *Bihar Bandhu*, 29 December 1874.

\[489\] *Bihar Bandhu*, 10 August 1875.

\[490\] *Bihar Bandhu*, 23 June 1874.

\[491\] *Bihar Bandhu*, 9 June 1874.

\[492\] *Hindi Pradip*, July 1881.

\[493\] *Bangavasi*, 2 December 1893.
Papers regularly carried reports like these: “The people are in terror of the government’s attitude towards Gaurakshini Sabha and other Hindu religious movements.” Maryada wrote an article in December 1912 which says, “If the story of the heroic conduct of those worthy children of India does not excite any enthusiasm in the Hindus of the present day, it may well be said that the Hindu nation is no longer living.” The paper also urged Indian historians to come forward and write authentic accounts of Indian history depicting their heroes in the proper light.

Even an essay on a religious festival like Janamastami (to mark the birth of Lord Krishna) included these lines:

“Shrikrishna Janmastami
Yeh Shrikrishna janmastami Hindu jati ka dedipya man Itihas bai aur jab tak Bharatvarsha apne is param pyare utsav ko manata raha ga, tab tak kootnitik chabe kitne bi jai bichha de jaye, kintu Hindu jati Himalay ki tarah atal aur achar bani rahi gi. Hindu ! aaj bhi tum par maha bhayankar anachar ho rabe hain tatha krmabhoomi Bharat mein swarthalalu ne jaravad ke aavran mein dharma par prabar karna aarambh kar diya tha. Aajbhi is karmabhum ki theek vaisi bi duravastha ho rahi hai jaish Shrikrishna ke janma ke samey thi. Aaj bhi aasuri bhavon ke vashibhut hokar swarhandha manavguno ko nashta-bhrasth kar rakhe bhi bhavon ka vistar kar raha bain. Aisi dasha me yeh nischit hai ki yadi yeh aasuri bhav seeghritsheeghra roke na jayenge to bharat se Hinduva tak ke lop bone ki naubat aa jayegi. Istdye aaj Shrikrishna janmashtami ke awasar par pratyek Hindu ko adamya bhakti ke sath nhakta-vatsal Bhagawan Krishna ki prarthana karte huye yeh pukar karni chahiye ki he nath ! Bharatvarsha tatha Hindu jati ki laj tera hath hai ab use veg bachao. Smaran rakho, ki

494 Ibid, 23 December 1893.
495 Maryada, December 1912.
kamillochan Bhagawan ko ...Bharat ki vartaman durdasha bhi vidit hai... yadi tum Bhagawan ki phir kripadrasti arjan karna chahate ho to apne antahkaran se sabbi kusanskaro ko door kar aaj Gopal ke charanarvindo mein annaya bhhakti ke satr shradhhanjali arpan karte hue Bharatvarsha tatha Hindujati ke kalyan ke liye prarthana karo. [Bharatvarsha and Hindu nation is suffering today the way it was suffering in the days when Lord Krishna came and saved the country and the nation. We should all come together and remove all bad elements from ourselves and pray to Lord Krishna to come over again to save this country and the Hindu nation.]

A poem was published in Hindu Punch that contains these lines:

"Kahate hain achhoot we mehtar chamar ko, chhaya bhi parne se ati ghabarate hain/ jate bain hotel jahan khate hain miyan ke sang roti aur biscuit bhar pet to udate bain/ aane nabin dete pas pyare bandhu bandhav ko kintu mirjafer ko satr mein bithate bain. [They call Chamars and Mehtar (castes) untouchables, but they go to hotel and eat bread and biscuit with Muslims. They do not allow brothers to come close but they have no hesitation in befriending Mirjafer (Muslims).]"

Similar poems were published in Sanatan Dharma Pataka also. In Kalikal (Kaliyug) the poet says: “See the state of our Kaliyug/ Leaving varnashram, even the Bhangis are having 'bhele'/ touching those people your father would have bathed/ assembling 6-7 in numbers in every
village people are out to start a new religion/ These people are being treated as Brahmins by lower people- Bheel and Chamars.⁴⁹⁹

The idea of national regeneration ran so close to Hindu regeneration that a poet, Maithili Sharan Gupta, found no difficulty in appealing to Hindus to arouse Hindu national consciousness for the development of the country. His widely successful collection of poems, Bharat Bharati, had an appendix that had so much for Hindus that an independent collection of poems was published under the title Hindu. In these poems Maithili Sharan Gupta, the ‘national poet’ says:

“Utho Hindu hua prabhat”⁵⁰⁰ “Kis prakar ho ab uddhar/ sab kuchh gaya, jaye, bas ek/ rakho Hindupan ki tek/…aisa wab hai kaun vivek/ karta bo jo humko ek /?/aur badha sakta bo man? Keval ek Hindu-Hindustan.⁵⁰¹ Rakho Hindupan ka garva/…/kiske liye mita chittaur jagohe Rajput sirmaur ?/Rahi padmini roopii sakhb/ Paye bas ripunon ne rakhb/ Veer shivaji Baji Rao/ rakbkar kabo kaun sa baby/karte the kiska vistar?/ Hindupan ka karo vichar/ champat ksatrasal arikal/ bane Hindwani ki dhal/ Guru Govind aur Ranajit/

Rakhte the ni bhav puniit/ ‘Badhe dharma Hindu’ yeh chband/ gaya hai kisme sanand?/ Karji lekar laal quran/ diya kiya satwa farman/kintu baquebat saka na kbo rabe baquebat rai adol/ jajja lage, kate sir lakh/ rabhi kintu tab bhi yeb sakbh/ tab bhi tum bais karon/ ab bhi kaun tumbara zor? [Hindus must keep the honour of

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⁴⁹⁹ Dekho Kalyug ke sab bal apne nazaro se dikhahate
Varnashram chhod kar Bhangi bhele khate
Pita tumhara jisse chhookar, Ganga jakar nabate
Ek gaon mein paanch sat mil, apna dharma chalate

Bhujav Bhi Chamara chakar jinka vipra banate.[ see how Kaliyug has changed people as people are ignoring the norms of varnashram dharma. Bhangis are having good time. Your fathers would have had bathe after those people (Bhangis). Very few people come together and dare to start a new religion.]”

Sanatan Dharma Pataka, 1926, p.34.


⁵⁰¹ ‘Jatiyata’, (poem) of Maithilisharan Gupta in Hindu, p.46.
Hinduness. They must not forget why Chittaur chose the path of elimination than to surrender. What for great Shivaji and Baji Rao fought? Kazi with Quran in hands kept giving dictates...Jazia was imposed on Hindus and millions of their heads were chopped off.

Even in those poems where the Congress-type reformist approach is evident in many poems, the poet did not want to speak against the ideals of varnashram dharma. He only lamented in his poem 'Chaturvanya' (Four Varnas):

"Aaj dwijatu kahan nij hay!/ hum sab hain bas, vrishalpary/ ya to bhojshuk hain, ya bhritya/ bhoj gye hain kriyakriyay/ koi aak janev dal/ ban jawe jo chabe hal/ bana yahn wab ulta pash/ hai aayurabalejonash/ / Jis tis ko Brahman kar aaj/ tum na badhao nashta Samaj/ karo chhabte ho yadi siddhi/ Sacche brabamanata ki vriddhi. Apni Sanskriti kar abbiman/ karo sada Hindu santan. Apni Sanskriti karo sanyukti/ Hindu Tumhein milegi Mukti/...Tumse, hai ithas praman/ hua bhuvan bhar ka kalyan/ rabe wahi apna dhrwa lakshya/ Hai Hindutva is se rakshya. [Today the honour of Dwija has been lost and we all are like Shudras these days. The Kshatriya has lost its dharma... All Hindus should be proud of their culture. Organise yourself. Hindus would be liberated one day. On this rests the future of Hindutva."

These poems clearly reveal the Hindu mind of our national poet. In these poems in Bharat Bharati Maithili Sharan Gupta had taken up all issues which could be considered vital for the Congress-supporting nationalist people and the poet appealed to all concerned Hindus, Muslims, Christians, lower castes, supporters of the entry of lower castes into temples to come forward for the sake of national regeneration, but the terms of the exposition are such that the

502 'Swabhiman' (poem) of Maithilisharan Gupta in Hindu, pp.49-52.
503 Vrishalpary means 'like the Shudras'.
504 ChatiiTV01" (poem) of Maithilisharan Gupta in Hindu, 1987(1912),p.89.
Hindu ideological moorings are quite clearly seen. Even the reluctance to criticise varnashram is evident. The poet was pained to see that low caste men were trying to be like their *dives* (upper caste men) by wearing the sacred thread.

This continuous support for *varnashram dharma* is also present in the statements of the leaders of Bihar in the 1920s. The meetings organised to mobilise the Hindu masses heard speeches by Hindu leaders like Madan Mohan Malaviya at the Gaya session in which varnashram dharma's ideals were clearly accepted. At the Gaya session of the All India Hindu Mahasabha, the great Hindu leader said: “Gentlemen! The Hindu nation is divided into four varnas who are assigned different duties. The Brahmans are given the job of the mind and it is their job to think and show the true path of religion to all. The Kshatriyas have been assigned the job related to force and the Vaishyas have the power of money and the Shudras are assigned the job of service to all others. All varnas are brothers and like different parts of the same body they cannot harm any other varna. There is nothing to fight about amongst us. Yet, we remain divided. We are organisationally weak. The census indicates that the number of Hindus is declining consistently. Diseases affect Hindus more. Whenever there is any natural calamity like the plague or cholera we Hindus get killed in large numbers. Muslims are poor too, but they eat well and remain fit. Whenever there is a riot the Hindus keep themselves behind closed doors. The rioters loot and we cowards allow them to do so. In this country of Hindus this is shameful. This is so because we are not united. ... For us, religion should be more dear than our lives.” Malaviya reminds the Hindus of Gaya that it is because of Hindu weakness that Hindus get killed in Malabar and elsewhere. After giving graphic details of riots in which Hindus were killed and their women humiliated and molested he called upon the Hindu women to be strong enough to protect themselves like the Christian women of Europe. He even advocated the women should be trained to fight with guns, so that their attackers
could be countered. Up to this point he was saying what had been said for decades. Then he talked about the organisation of Hindus in every locality and advised that this Hindu organisation should meet at least once every fortnight. Even Bhangis and Chamars should be welcomed in this assembly of Hindus. He told the upper caste Hindus to be kind to the low castes as a sympathetic attitude would be sufficient to win their hearts. He did not forget however to add: “I do not say that the differences of marriage relations and food habits be removed. If the Brahmins are offered the high seats in the assembly then the Raidases should be allowed to sit below. But allow them to come and attend the meeting of the Hindus.” How he was conscious of maintaining the ideals of varnashram dharma can be understood by his narrating a story.

He said: “There is a story in the Puranas that once a king was passing through a village when he saw that a katha, a religious one, was taking place in a house of Ahirs. The Ahirs requested the king to come and attend the katha and offered him the ‘prasad’. The king did not accept the Ahirs’ prasad and returned. When he reached his home he found that all his sons had fallen sick. The moral of the story is that the devotees of God must not be disrespected.”

During the entire speech he was passionately advocating the unity of Hindus but without disturbing the ideals of varnashram dharma.

The ideals of varnashram dharma and the regeneration of Hindus were two important motifs of the speech delivered by Darbahnga Maharaj on 10 January 1923 in Bombay on the theme: ‘The ways for the development of Sanatan dharma’. He said: “Let us think over the issue which is becoming a life and death question for the Hindu nation. As I can see it, resolving this issue is the crux of our problem. That crucial question is the question of our

See the reproduction of his speech’s in Brahman Sarvanva, January 1923. This meeting was held at Gaya during the annual Congress conference. It was delivered on 30 December 1922.
varnasram dharma and our social organisation.” He declared that, “If a Hindu gets the highest post by losing Hindutva he deserves no respect from me.” Elaborating on his views he added that Western education and influences had adversely affected the social organisations of the Hindus.

In this age, which he describes as “the age of commercialisation”, if the Hindus did not try hard, their Hindu nation and Hindutva would be in grave danger. To defend the ‘national individuality’ (used in the text) he advocated respect for language, dress and feeling (‘bhasha’, ‘bhesli’ and ‘bhaiv’). He added, “To those people who believe that varnasram dharma and the caste system are hurdles in the path of the progress of national consciousness, I want to say that if we progress in commerce and political fields by ignoring our national (here implying caste) identities that progress would not be the progress of Hindu Bharat.” He advocated the formation of a Defence Association of Hindus (along the lines of the Salvation Army of the Christians), which he calls the fauj (soldiers) of Sanatan dharma. In this army of Sanatan dharma he wanted millions of sanyasis, who could not fight without leadership. Through these types of Sanatan dharma sevaks he hoped the country would progress. He also mentioned that there was a need to educate young boys for which there were no real arrangements, to instruct

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508 This speech was reproduced in the different Indian newspapers. For a complete text of his speech see ‘Sanatandharmoddhar ka upay’ in Brahman Sarvaswa, January 1923, pp.58-63.

509 To get the real feel of his speech it is imperative to read his speech in the language he delivered it. On this point he remarks: “Doosre kisi rashtre mein siken hokar hum aaj us rashtre ke swatwa aur adhikar prapt a kar sakte hain. Sisi bankar aap angrez nagarik ke, musalman ya yahoodi bankar musalman ya yahoodi nagarik ke swatwa prapt kar sakte hain. Par sobha, pratishta, gaurav aur jivan in mein hai ki ischte hindu ki baizyat se satya Sanatan dharma ki ruksha kante hae aap sanat ke aage badhnein. Uti ko Hindu jati ki unnati kahenge aur jis jatiya vyavastha ki aapke purva purushon ne dhan, jan aur jivan sabhi kuchh dekar ruksha ki hai woh vyavastha jisit rahegi. [By merging ourselves with other nations and religions we can gain much. But, we should try to progress along the path of Sanatan dharma. Only that can be considered the real progress.]”
them on their history through education. He called for young people to join the army of the Sanatan dharma Sena. He also wished to see a close collaboration between all Sanatan dharma organisations including Bharat Dharma Mahamandal. All these Sanatan dharma organisations were urged to elect only Sanatan dharma followers in any election.

This attitude of the Sanatan dharma supporters was common in all their forums. The magazines were particularly severe at the Arya Samaj for bringing disorder into Hindu society. Criticising the Arya Samaj and Brahmo Samaj, Priyajan Sankhyatirtha wrote some extremely damaging pieces in Sanatan Dharma Pataka in 1926.

The attitude of the Sanatan dharma supporters can be understood by studying their criticism of Hindu leaders like Madan Mohan Malaviya whom they considered akin to the Arya Samajis in their reformist attitudes. In Chhapra there was a shastrarlha (discourse) between the Sanatan dharma supporter, Pandit Kaluram Shastri, and the Hindu Sabha leader Babu Chandrika Prasad. Pandit Kaluram Shastri was furious to see that his opponent was citing ancient religious texts to prove that one could mix with the Shudras for the broader solidarity of Hindus. While he was not against the development of the Shudras he could not accept the ideals of Hindu dharma, which he equated with varnashram dharma being violated. He quoted extensively from Parashar Smriti to say that:

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\text{Chandal ke ghat ka jal yadi koi dwijati bhoolkar pee le to sauran kai(vomit) kar dena chahiye. Kae karke samast jal ko nikkal de tatha phir prajapata upeas kare yadi us jal ko usi samay na nikkal diya jaye tatha pet mein bajam bo jaye tab phir krichha shantapan karna chahiye.}
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\[510\] On this point he says: 'Kisi jati ne ya vyakti ne asadharan kam kiye bain to dharma se prerit hokar hi kiye bain. Satvein shatabdi ke musalmane ke jehad , eggavhitin shatabdi ki Europe ke crusade aur solahwun shatabdi ke germany ke dharmik uplayon ka smaran keejiye. We jeste jale praman bain is bat ke ki dharma bhav manushya ko kaise kaise asadharan kamo ko liye tariyar kar sakta hai. [If any body or any nation has done something extraordinary it is only due to his religion. Remember the jehad of seventh century by Muslims, crusades in the eleventh century by Europeans and the religious movement of sixteenth century Germany. These are burning examples how religion can inspire even ordinary people to achieve extraordinary things.]

\[511\] This obviously is a remarkable summary of the approach of a leading person of Bihar who was a revered and acknowledged supporter of nationalism and the Hindu cause throughout Bihar.
Brahman kricchashantapan kare, kshatriya prajapatiya kare, aadha prajapatiya vaishya kare tatha chaturansha shudra kare. Ina prayaschit karne par shuddha hota hai [If a dwija (upper caste man) take water from a chandal he should vomit the entire intake to be pure. He should do prayaschit].

He also quoted Manusmriti to say this:

Chandalo tatha swapachon ka nivas gram ke babar ho tatha inke patra ashpristhya hain tatha inka dhan kutta tatha gadha hai. Inke kapre wa purane chithare hon tatha poorte bartano mein bhajan, lohe ke aabhushan tatha ghoomana swababu [yeh inka lakshan hai]. Dharmanushthan ke samay in [chandal swapach ityadi] ke sath dekna bolna aadi vyawahar na karein. Unka vyawahar aur vivah barabar walon mein bo. Inko khapre aadi mein rakhkhar alg se pardeene anna dena chahiye tatha we rat ko gramon tatha nagron mein na ghoomein... be warrs murdon ke o jayein yeb mryada hai. Yatha shashtra raja ke hukma se nirantar phansi devin tatha vadbya (who is executed) ke kappe shayya tatha gahano ko gahan kare. [Chandals should be allowed to live out of the village and they should be allowed to possess as wealth dogs and donkeys only. Their clothes would be the left over of the dead or the old ones. During the time of any religious occasion do not see, talk or interact with them at all. They should interact and marry among equals. They must not wander at night in village or cities].

Any review of the Hindi papers and magazines of the 1920s reveals that faith in varnasram dharma was strongly asserted by writers. Faith in the greatness of the Brahmins was asserted.

The anti-Brahmin speeches of the Arya Samajis were criticised. In Madhuri of 1927 Ramsevak Tripathi counters the accusations against Brahmins made by Santaram of the Jat Pat Torak Mandal in Lahore. He says,


512 Sanatan Dharm Dhaara, year 26, No.9, p.11.
mohraj rabe. Unke niswartha tyag ka phal unhe kya mil? kara samman. Woh bhi hamare hi bhai nabin dekh sakate tatha unhi ko doshi banate hain... hamari shiksha, hamara rahan sahan, hamara dharam, hamare achar ni char sabhi pashtimi siddhanto par aadharit bate ja rabe hain. Shiksha kram hi gairon ka hai, phir hum gair ho jawein to kya aascharya? Kavivar Hali ke shabdo mein ab to din hi raha na rahi rat apni/ja pari gairon ke hath mein har bat apni. [You can’t respect the Brahmins. They have always kept themselves engaged with knowledge selflessly. They have never bowed before the Muslims. Brahmins have given power to Kshatriyas and commercial power to Baniyas. These days we all are blindly following the West.]

The appeal of varnashram dharma did not lose its appeal even in the writings of such reputed authors like Shivapujan Sahay. He wrote an article ‘Siksha Paddhati aur Sanatan Dharma’ (Education System and Sanatan Dharma) in which he advocated the teaching of history in a proper manner, in which the greatness of Hindus, Sanatani Hindus, comes through. He observes: “These days the kind of education given to students is so poisonous that it kills the deeply imbibed and rooted ancient, sacred Hindu sanskara in their hearts. They forget the greatness of their forefathers. They take no pride in the greatness of their great ancient civilisation. They do not know how many jewels our civilisation has produced. They do not know how developed we Hindus were centuries ago.”

Deeply suspicious of the content of the histories taught in educational institutions he says: “In the name of history what is being taught to them is not fit to be called history at all. That is a curse (kalank) in the name of the Hindu nation (jati). That informs us that Hindu civilisation is merely a two or two-and-half thousand-year old civilisation. It tells us that we are not the original inhabitants of this country. We came from outside... Can this kind of history give any pride in history to the students who study it?” About varnashram he says: “About varnashram what is taught is condemnable and ignoble. Students learn that varnashram never

\[164 \textit{Madhuri, year 6, khand 1, Sankhya 1, p.164.}\\
\[165 \textit{Shivapujan Sahay, Bharat Mitra, 9 July 1925, Calcutta.}\\
\[166 \textit{Ibid.}\\
existed. As the Aryas were not civilised their necessities were minimal. As their requirements grew they started doing things which were required for their convenience. ... As a result those who did the work of priests became Brahmins, those who were militant became Kshatriyas and the traders became Vaishyas and the servants became Shudras. This is how society got organised and the Aryas became civilised." To Shivapujan Sahay this was all illogical, absurd and wild imagination.

Shivapujan Sahay wanted Hindu boys to be taught the history of their civilisation in such a way that they could feel proud of their history. He says: "If Hindu boys learn history the way Muslim boys learn their history, that their ancestors had established rule by conquest and by force of their military strength they would not have remained so pale (nested). When the history of the Muslim and British period is taught the version of only one side is taught. Hindus are depicted in a poor light and as objects of ridicule. If they had been taught that their ancestors had fought so bravely for the pride of their religion then the Sanatan dharma would not have fallen into such difficult days as it has today. Unless the polluted education system is not rectified, its destructive impact will not stop working on the minds of Hindu boys. The faith in Sanatan Dharma cannot be restored without this." In conclusion, Shivapujan Sahay said that students should be taught the stories of the Vedic and Puranic ages and the stories of the great heroes of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. Unless the stories of great heroes like God Ram, Krishna, Bhishma, Arjun, Pratap, Shivaji, Ramtirtha, Vivekanand and the great heroines like Sita, Rukmini, Savitri, Damayanti, Anusuyya and Mirabai were not taught to Hindu students they would not get to know how great their Sanatan Hindu civilisation was.

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517 Ibid.
518 Ibid.
These ideas actually led him to write stories like ‘Mundamal’ in which the greatness of a Rajput lady and the bravery of a Rajput king are dramatically narrated.519

Shivapujan Sahay was not alone in preaching this faith on the virtues of Sanatan dharma that was being polluted by modern education. The Sanatan Dharma ideals can be seen as dominant in the ideas of many contemporary writers.520 The most striking names in this category would include Ishwari Prasad Sharma who had edited three important journals—Manoranjan, Lakshmi and Hindu Punch between 1912 and 1927.

The faith in Sanatan Dharma was often accompanied by treating Muslims as ‘others’, who had always been a threat to Hindus. It was common in the 1920s to write against the atrocities, cruelty and dishonesty of Muslims in newspapers articles and cartoons.

A Hindi newspaper writes in an editorial in 1928:

“Hinduon ke pavitra teerthsthano ko apavitra kame. Unki poojya murtijyon ko tودne, din dahade unke utsaon aur juluson par aakruman karne, ghar mein ghush kar yuvati babu betiyon ko uda le jane, Hindu nariyon par atyant nechta ke saath pashwik atyachar karne, hindu vidhwaon par giddh ki si drishtie gadoye rahne, nityaprati naye naye sawal paida kar hinduon se jhagara mol lene ...(wale) Musalmano [O Muslims! you attackers of the sacred places of and their sacred idols of Hindus! you come to our houses to forcibly take away our women! You keep a greedy eye to Hindu widows! You always look for new excuses to quarrel with Hindus].”521

While writing on these themes the writers did not find any difficulty in writing about nationalistic themes, about patriotism and the issues related to the developments of India. For the writers and journals where these writings appeared there was no contradiction between these community upliftment ideals and the ideal of working for the nation. Hindu jagaran

519 In this story the newly-wed king is so fond of his new bride that he goes to the battlefield with a divided mind. Sensing her husband’s weakness of the brave queen cuts her own head and sends it to the beloved husband as a mark of their togetherness even in death. Dividing her blood-filled long hair into two halves the king hangs her head on his neck like a garland and moves ahead to the battlefield. This story was taught in the schools of Bihar for many years.

520 To appreciate the kind of ideas some of the writers followed one can see the life sketches of the prominent writers in Hindi Sahitya aur Bihar Vols. II, III and IV.

521 Hindu Punch, 4 October 1928.
(awakening) and desh-jagaran (national awakening) went on side by side. It is noticeable that on the same page in which the above mentioned excerpt is taken from Hindu Punch Jawaharlal Nehru was quoted as saying that he was very happy to be with Hindu Punch and had expressed his hope that Hindu Punch would work towards complete independence (purna swaraj). In his speech he primarily dealt with his experiences with 'Socialist Russia' but the reporting was such that Hindu Punch's struggle against communalism was highlighted. In an interesting piece of reporting to highlight the achievements of the paper appeared in the newspaper.

Hindu Punch published a cartoon showing a Muslim forcibly taking away a Hindu woman in front of her husband and other sacred Hindus. Bihar Bandhu expressed similar feelings repeatedly. Even in 1902 when there was no apparent immediate factor at work to write negatively about the Muslims it wrote that it would have been better if the Hindus and Muslims could have come together but if they do not come together then what could be done?

(Hindu Musalmano mein mel bona ascha tha par jab we nabin milte to kya kiya jaye).

As a result of the long and persistent Hindu ideological positions taken up by Hindi newspapers by the 1920s it was possible to even read Gandhi in Hindu terms. A book Gandhi Gita was advertised in a magazine called Hindu Punch with these words: 'The way Lord Krishna inspired Arjun, Gandhi has arrived to inspire the weak and demoralised Indians to lead them

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522 Ibid.

523 In the 'Felicitation address presented to Jawaharlal Nehru said: "Hindu Punch had never compromised and it had always fought for nationalism against communalism." In the reporting which appeared in 4 October 1928 issue all details suggested that what Hindu Punch was doing should be seen as a part of national project. Nehru came to Calcutta to attend a Youth Conference meeting organized by Subhash Chandra Bose and others. He went to Hindu Punch’s office on 24 September accompanied by Abdul Bari, a prominent Congress leader from Bihar. This report was particularly interesting as an example of misreporting as even the speech which supported socialist ideals were reported as if it was part of the kind of 'national' propaganda in which Hindu Punch was involved. Report began how Nehru entered in the office amidst the cry of 'Bharat mata ki jay' and Bande Mataram and how Nehru gave aathirvat (blessings) to Hindu Punch. See, Hindu Punch, Calcutta, 4 October, 1928, p. 41 and editorial.

524 Hindu Punch, 24 October 1928.

525 Bihar Bandhu, 15 May 1902.
towards political progress, universal brotherhood, patriotism, swadeshi, ahimsa and asahayog'.

On the front page Gandhi is sitting in a yogic posture.\textsuperscript{526}

The magazines which were valued for their literary contents had no hesitation in talking in community terms as this editorial of \textit{Madhuri}, edited by Pandit Krishna Bihari Mishra and Munshi Premchand suggests: "\textit{Madhuri} would be delighted to serve the cause of the Hindu religion and the Hindu nation and it would be our good fortune to be able to do so. All those movements, which work for the defence of the Hindu nation and the Hindu religion, will have our sympathies. In plain words, the magazine would unhesitatingly support Hindu organisations' ongoing \textit{shuddhi} and \textit{sangathan} if it is done properly."\textsuperscript{527} Speaking largely through the terms of the expositions used by Hindu leaders on the issue of saving women from the hands of barbaric Muslims it adds in an editorial on women's safety: "In the present Hindu society neither is there any respect for women nor are there arrangements for their safety. This is a matter of deep anguish. But our anguish mounts a thousand times more when we see how Hindu women get molested in the hands of Muslim rogues. Still, the Hindus do not get enraged enough."\textsuperscript{528} The magazine is convinced about the nature of Hindu-Muslim tensions when it says: "Hindus try to avoid any confrontation. Muslims interpret this attitude as cowardice... As there is poverty and laziness among Muslims the number of hooligans are greater in the Muslim community. Now even Hindus, forced by circumstances, are allowing these elements to grow. (Till now) the hooligans were considered degraded among the Hindus. But largely due to bitter experiences, Hindus have learnt that society (Hindu) needs even these hooligans."\textsuperscript{529}

\textsuperscript{526} \textit{Hindu Punch}, 23 September 1926, cover page.


\textsuperscript{528} \textit{Ibid}, p.345.

\textsuperscript{529} \textit{Ibid}, pp.345-347.
It is important to note that the great writers of Hindi literature were writing poems that clearly addressed community relationships in terms that were close to the interpretations of the Hindu leaders and they found it necessary to arouse Hindu national consciousness. Ramchandra Shukla, probably the greatest literary historian Hindi has ever produced, wrote a poem, *Goswami aur Hindu jati* in which he laments that the Hindu nation is losing all its vigour. Great *Chhayavad* poets like Jaishankar Prasad and Surya Kanta Tripathi Nirala had written about the great Hindu heroes in terms that were similar to the Hindu leaders' view of them. The theme of retrieving lost pride was used for arousing this Hindu national consciousness. This does not, however, ignore the fact that these great writers later proved too great to be reduced to merely communal persons. In and around the 1920s, this historical interpretation that the Hindus had fought against the barbaric rule of the Muslims for centuries suggests that it became a part of Hindu common lore. Herein lies the success of the writers of the nineteenth century who had successfully introduced this historical understanding to the readers.


531 Great modern romantic literary movement which shaped the literary taste of an entire generation of poetry lovers of Hindi.

532 Particularly noticeable are poems like *Maharana ka Mahatva* and *Peshola ki Pratidhwani* (See Prasad Granthavali Vol.1, pp.129-142; pp.379-80) and *Jago Phir Ek Bar 2, Shivaji ka patra* (See Nirala Rachnavali, vol.1, pp.152-154 and pp.156-172). In the poem *Shivaji ka Patra* it is clear that the poet believed that the struggle between Shivaji and Aurangzeb was a struggle between Hindus and Muslims and the fate of the Hindu religion depended on its outcome. The poet describes Aurangzeb as evil and warns the Hindu king Raja Jai Singh to whom the letter is addressed that Aurangzeb is cutting the heads of Hindus with the swords of Hindus and thereby ensuring the destruction of the Hindu religion and Hindustan. The poet says in a stanza: "Hinduon ki lopta keerti/ Phir se jag jayeji/ aayeji maharaji/ Bharat ki gayi jyoti/ Prathi ka bahl par/ Purna Suryodaya bhoji".
**The Role of Textbooks**

The role of textbooks can similarly be found to impart the common interpretations of the Hindi writers that the Hindu Rajputs had fought against the cruel Muslims to maintain their dignity. The textbooks used in schools carried stories, which gave Hindu interpretations of historical developments. Most significant were the literary textbooks carrying stories of the valour of Rajputs and the cruelty of the Muslims, which were accepted as historical truths. As if this was not enough the first question that a student was supposed to answer was to explain how much he knew about the atrocities committed by Aurangzeb. Clearly it was not in the text and the only intention of asking the question was to remind students that Aurangzeb, a Muslim ruler, was a cruel man.533

In the same textbook another story depicting the valour of the Rajputs is included in which the Prithviraj-Sanjukta incident is dealt with. The story is very long so the editor divided it into two sections with a poem inserted between them. The story ends with this sentence: “In those days the Rajputs used to feel proud to sacrifice their lives in the battlefield.” Again, in the same book there is a long poem by the obscure poet, Bakshi Hansraj. Probably the real merit of this poem was its content as it dealt with the cow and godhan (cow wealth). The textbook ends befittingly with these lines by Maithili Sharan Gupta:

“Kavi hona iswardhin hai, Ishwar santat sukritin hai.’[To make somebody a poet is in the hands of God]

A story by Shivapujan Sahay, a famous Hindi writer of Bihar is included in a Hindi textbook for Class 6. This story gives us some idea of his understanding of history. Using the backdrop of Rajput rule in Rajasthan, to underline the bravery of Hindus, he writes:

533 See the textbook- *Bhasha Sar* which was used for many years in the schools of Bihar.
“The Hindu king is going to crush the pride of the king of Delhi. He was to pay back for the brutal assaults of Aurangzeb.” The sight of his newly wed wife moves this eighteen-year-old hero of the story. Sensing this, his wife evokes the memory of great women—Sumitra (wife of Lakshman), Uttara (wife of Abhimanyu), Tara (wife of Bali), to inspire him. Moved, but still emotional Churavat goes. The wife sensing that her beloved would not fight wholeheartedly if he kept thinking of her decides to send her head (cut by herself) as a token of love. This inspired Churavat to march ahead! 534

One can find a number of biographies, histories and fiction published by R.L. Burman and Co., 367 Upper Chitpur Road, Calcutta that narrated the heroic tales of Arya/Hindu heroes and barbaric and brave Muslims like Nadirshah. What is obvious in their books is that during the days of Muslim rule there had been wars between the brave Rajput Hindus against the mighty and ‘durdant’ (‘dreaded’) Muslim. This was sufficient as background, and then the stories roll. This axis took all struggles as struggles between Hindus and Muslims and was easily accepted by the readers. To get an idea of this kind of acceptance one can see the advertisements that were published. A book on the life of Sita carried this advertisement: “Sita is most suitable book for the Hindu young girls and housewives. This is the gist of the Ramayana and it is a great repository of good knowledge and it is an ornament of Hindi literature.” Another book Sati Sukanya carried this advertisement: Sati Sukanya’s character is a model for every Hindu young girl. It deserves respect.” When the publisher printed a series on the jewels amongst the women it published two series separately. The first was titled Arya

Mahila Ratna in which the stories of thirteen great Hindu women were narrated. In the second book the stories of twelve begums were narrated.\(^{535}\)

\(^{535}\) All this information is based on the advertisements carried in the book Tikendraceet Singh, Kartikeyacharan Mukhopadhyay, (Calcutta: n.d.).