

religious leaders, the author includes three appendices with information on Goma and al-Qaradawi.

In terms of methodology, the author employs a current history approach. He arranged the events that happened in Egypt starting in 2011 and continuing through 2017. He then examined how scholars viewed these events. Repetition results from this method as the discourses do not change in a few years. Alongside this historical approach, al-Azami offers thorough theological and ethical examinations of the various religious authorities' perspectives. His comprehension of Sunni political thought enabled him to effectively articulate the meanings of these debates.

The book's major flaw is that the author overtly supports revolutionary voices. Al-Azami

does not approach the topic of investigation with the necessary scholarly and critical detachment. Yet, as a scholar of Islamic studies, he comprehends the political and theological arguments put forth by the anti-revolutionary voices. Often, anti-revolutionary scholars were shown to be on the wrong side of history.

Overall, this book is thorough and informative, using various sources and providing contextualization of religious discourse in light of the political shifts brought about by the Arab Spring. It demonstrates that Islam is a variable –possibly not the most defining one or even not as significant enough as many might think– but it is nonetheless politically and discursively engaged in political events, serving to either validate or undermine the revolutions against the Middle Eastern ruling regimes.

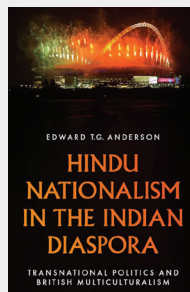
Hindu Nationalism in the Indian Diaspora: Transnational Politics and British Multiculturalism

By Edward T.G. Anderson

C Hurst & Co Publishers Ltd, 2023, 504 pages, \$32.56, ISBN: 9781805260547

Reviewed by Kerim Sert, Middle East Technical University

In *Hindu Nationalism in the Indian Diaspora*, Edward T.G. Anderson provides a thorough and illuminating exploration of the complex interplay between Hindu nationalism, diaspora communities, and global politics. Edward T.G. Anderson is an assistant professor in History at Northumbria University, Newcastle. He was previously the Smuts Research Fellow in Commonwealth Studies at the University of Cambridge, where he also studied for a PhD in History.



The book, structured around the central theme of Hindu identity and its manifestations in various contexts, unfolds a nuanced narrative that spans continents and decades. The book consists of 6 chapters, an introduction, and a conclusion. Its chronological and thematic approach helps weave a comprehensive tapestry of the multifaceted aspects of Hindu nationalism. In the first chapter, Anderson delves into the historical evolution of Hindu nationalism, particularly focusing on

its diasporic expressions in East Africa and Britain. In chapter 2, Anderson's meticulous research is evident in the detailed examination of a network of Hindu-nationalist groups known as Sangh Parivar and their training camps abroad. Exploring education camps and conferences as tools to forge direct links between the diaspora and the homeland adds depth to understanding the dynamics at play. Chapters 3 and 4 highlight the diaspora's significant role in influencing Hindutva policies during pivotal moments in Indian history. The book's strength lies in exploring the diaspora's reverse impact on India during critical periods like the Indian Emergency (1975-1977) and the Ayodhya temple dispute, where Hindus believed that Babri Masjid was built by Mughal rulers on top of the birthplace of Rama, a Hindu deity.

Chapter 5 explores Hindu nationalist engagement in charitable and public service domains. The analysis of the development of Sewa Day (service) in the diaspora elucidates how this element became a fundamental aspect of the Hindutva movement, othering Indian Muslims, both in India and abroad. The author also discusses the 2001 Gujarat earthquake fundraising campaigns and the remittances for funding media and other services of Hindu Nationalism. The final chapter ventures beyond the ideological and institutional boundaries of Sangh Parivar, uncovering how Hindu nationalism transcends its traditional forms. The author adeptly showcases the innovative and dynamic expressions of Hindutva in the diaspora, emphasizing its impact on mainstream Hindu identity representation in Britain.

The purpose of the book is to understand the development of Hindu nationalism in the Indian diaspora and to explore the impact of this ideology on diaspora communities.

Anderson's rigorous research suggests that Hindu nationalist organizations (such as religious, caste, and other community groups) can also offer positions of prestige and leadership in the social mobility experienced by many after migration; that participation in the Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh (HSS) belongs to a minority of Hindus in Britain; and that it is only one of many responses to marginalization, racism and the desire to maintain (or build) homeland values. The book's central theme is to portray these communities as essentially a group or organization with ulterior motives rather than their overall expression or perspective. This gives the impression that ideological constraints have led to the book being presented as if it were a mainstream account of Hindu identity in Britain. Particularly for those distant from the identity or faith, reading the book, the real-life accounts of Hindu nationalism and the involvement of politicians in these activities give the impression that the Hindu diaspora in Britain and beyond has supported all these organizations.

One of the other criticisms is that the theoretical framework used to understand the impact of Hindu nationalism on the diaspora is sometimes inadequate or open to criticism. The book can also be criticized for not focusing enough on the critical points and negative effects of Hindu nationalism. Indeed, it is worth noting that the book adopts a descriptive approach rather than a more critical view of Hindu nationalism. It can be argued that in some chapters, the book does not examine the criticized elements sufficiently by presenting a more descriptive perspective rather than addressing the negative social and political effects of Hindu nationalism in the diaspora. Although the chapters describing political developments and events in the book are engaging, in some parts, the author

does not include much history and discussion in the historical context, which disrupts the flow of the subject. These chapters could have been shorter or placed at the beginning of the chapter. While reading the book, I thought that Hindu nationalism is not only in South Asia but also in the rest of the world, as it is in this region. After all, there was a Hindu nationalist government that pursued a foreign policy in line with Western countries, and it was obvious that common interests basically required shuttle diplomacy to keep conflicts quiet. So, the lack of education and democracy was partly a factor in fueling Hindu nationalism since colonial times. In this respect, I think it would have been a better narrative if, instead of a Hindutva ideology, there had been a basic method of linking the past with the present.

The formative period in East Africa established the transnational networks, institutional structures, organizational hierarchies, and ideologies that would become the beginnings of the Sangh in Britain. However, the Swayamsevak Sangh was not simply the product of an exported and transplanted ideology. Instead, it evolved localized and adapted to the Hindu diaspora's specific needs and aspirations.

According to the author, Hindu nationalist organizations often maintain long-standing links with their homeland. This has had a profound effect not only on members of the Indian diaspora and the communities in which they live, but also on the Hindu nationalist movement in India and on Indian political and social life more broadly. These links are multifaceted –they include deliberate efforts by Hindu nationalist groups and political organizations to influence politics in various places outside the Indian subcontinent, to

lobby on various issues, to control the opposition, to forge alliances with like-minded partners and to improve the image of Hindutva. This perspective has even brought the two poles of foreign policy closer together, and the author has analyzed in detail why Hindutva and Zionism have converged in the diaspora. In particular, the analyses in chapters 5 and 6 are the most original parts of the book in this respect. Reading the book with the conceptual map at the end is a very good approach to understanding the narrative more clearly and explaining the issue better.

Carefully explaining the complex layers of direct and indirect influences for understanding diasporic Hindu nationalism is an in-depth analysis of an understanding of homeland and diaspora that transcends the dualism of here and there and appreciates the seemingly contradictory levels of interdependence, autonomy, and synthesis. The result is a work that could be described as a bedside book, analyzing the extent to which it has the potential to understand Indian communities around the world, historically and today, as well as diasporic identity and politics more broadly.

Despite some criticism, the book has attempted to illuminate the long and complex history of Hindu nationalism in the Indian diaspora. *Hindu Nationalism in the Indian Diaspora* is a commendable work that sheds light on the intricate dynamics of Hindu nationalism's global reach. The book is essential reading for those interested in understanding the complex intersections of identity, politics, and diaspora within the context of Hindu nationalism. Edward T.G. Anderson's insightful exploration will undoubtedly contribute significantly to the scholarly discourse on this multifaceted subject.