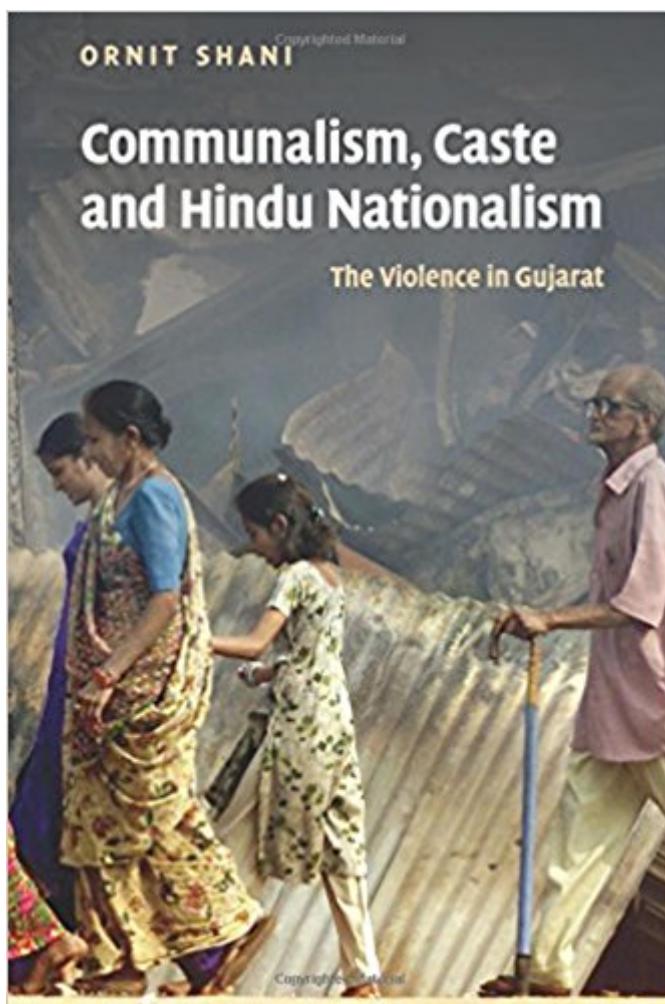


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Communalism, Caste And Hindu Nationalism: The Violence In Gujarat



Synopsis

Belligerent Hindu nationalism, accompanied by recurring communal violence between Hindus and Muslims, has become a compelling force in Indian politics over the last two decades. Ornit Shani's book examines the rise of Hindu nationalism, asking why distinct groups of Hindus, deeply divided by caste, mobilised on the basis of unitary Hindu nationalism, and why the Hindu nationalist rhetoric about the threat of the impoverished Muslim minority was so persuasive to the Hindu majority. Using evidence from communal violence in Gujarat, Shani argues that the growth of communalism was not simply a result of Hindu-Muslim antagonisms, but was driven by intensifying tensions among Hindus, nurtured by changes in the relations between castes and associated state policies. These, in turn, were frequently displaced onto Muslims, thus enabling caste conflicts to develop and deepen communal rivalries. The book offers a challenge to previous scholarship on the rise of communalism, which will be welcomed by students and professionals.

Book Information

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'This is exactly the kind of sophisticated study we need at this juncture in the development of scholarly literature on the Hindu nationalist movement, and its relationship to other seismic shifts in contemporary Indian democracy.' India Review' Shani makes her case with telling detail. The extensive bibliography is an excellent guide to the study of communalism and of ethnic competition and violence in India.' Journal of Interdisciplinary History' Among the many analyses of the violence, Ornit Shani's contribution is especially useful because she pays careful attention to ground realities.'

Ornit Shani examines the rise of Hindu nationalism, asking why distinct groups of Hindus, deeply divided by caste, mobilised on the basis of unitary Hindu nationalism, and why the Hindu nationalist rhetoric about the threat of the Muslim minority was so persuasive to the Hindu majority.

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