Narendra Modi and the Indian Election
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Key Terms
Narendra Modi
Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)
Hindutva
Hindu nationalism
Vinayak Damodar Savarkar
Congress party
Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS)
Gujarat
Human Rights Watch
Congressman John Conyers, Jr.
Non-alignment
Legitimacy
Sartaj Aziz
Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG)
Goods and Service Tax (GST) reforms

Case

“I will fight against Narendra Modi because I know how to give a fitting reply to him. We will cut him into pieces.” Indian Congressional candidate Imran Masood said these words in front of a crowd in Uttar Pradesh, a province in northern India. At the same time, Indian business leaders are excited about Modi’s potential election; Anil Ambani of Reliance Groups called him “the lord of men, a leader among leaders and a king among kings.” This clash of words fits a common theme that follows the Indian prime minister candidate front-runner Narendra Modi, the chief minister of Indian province Gujarat and the national leader of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), a Hindu nationalist political party.

Modi has become a controversial figure in the region. He has overseen significant economic upturn in Gujarat, where the state’s GDP has tripled and the poverty rate has fallen from over 40% to under 11%. At the same time, he governed during the communal riots in Gujarat in February 2002, where thousands of Muslims were killed, raped, and tortured. Many accuse Modi of tacitly accepting the violence and doing nothing to stop such human rights violations, though he has repeatedly stated he did all that he could and was found guilty of no wrong-doing by the Indian Supreme Court in 2012. Still, his fervent adherence to the concept of Hindutva, or the embrace of all things Hindu, has labeled him “the No. 1 enemy of India’s Muslims” and has made many of his neighboring Muslim countries, such as Pakistan and Bangladesh, nervous about the changes he will bring. Modi’s rise to power has revealed the religious passions of the area and their power to affect the relationships in the region – a man who was once denied a visa to the United States for his perceived human rights violations is now poised to be the governmental leader of one of the world’s nuclear states.
Hindu Nationalism

Though Hindu nationalism has a history that can be traced hundreds of years into the past, the current strand of modern Hindu nationalism, based on the concept of “Hindutva”, or the core essence of “Hinduness”, began at the turn of the twentieth century. Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, a pro-Indian independence politician and poet who sought to create a unique collective Hindu identity, articulated many of the core beliefs while fighting with the British colonial authorities. Born in India in 1883, Savarkar went on to live in both India and London while he studied law, all the while engaging in a wide range of political activities. He was eventually arrested in 1910 for his role in supplying the weapon in a murder case and eventually charged with smuggling arms and conspiring against the government. Due to subsequent escape attempts, he was sentenced to life imprisonment; this only added to his aura, as he was regarded as a national hero in India. He was eventually released in 1924 on condition to not leave the region of his jail; after that condition was lifted in 1937, he went on to become the President of the Hindu Mahasabha, a far-right Hindu nationalist political party.

While Savarkar was imprisoned, he produced numerous papers on Hindu identity that proved to be more influential than any of his other activities. The most significant of these writings was a pamphlet published in 1923 as Hindutva – Who is a Hindu?, which remains a cornerstone of Hindu nationalism. Savarkar aimed to define what constituted Hindu identity, contrasting it with “Hinduism”, which he considered another Western “-ism” that was weakened by infighting. He moved away from using religion as the foundation of the Hindu identity and saw the Hindus in a more nationalistic and racial sense, going on to explain the various aspects of Hindu identity. According to Savarkar,

India belongs to those people whose religion has originated in India (Hindus, Jains, Buddhists); for too long have outsiders – i.e. Muslims and Christians – ruled over India, which has drained the wealth and resources of India’s original inhabitants. Now that India has finally been freed from these oppressors the country should become a ‘Hindu Rashtra’: the values and concerns of the Hindu majority should guide the functioning of the Indian state. Unfortunately political parties like the Congress party have appeased the Muslim minorities to get their votes; under the banner of ‘secularism’ these parties have in fact pampered the Muslims at the expense of the Hindu community. As a result the violent and criminal nature of Muslims continues to be a threat for peace-loving Hindus. This has to be stopped; if Muslims want to live in India they have to submit to the rule of the Hindu majority.

Hindu nationalists still follow the basic tenets of this ideology in today’s India, using Hindutva as their guiding principle to their political stances.

With this ideology, the current Hindu-nationalist movement began around 1925 with the creation of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), or otherwise known as the National Volunteer Organization. Its purpose was to unite the Hindu community, as its founders believed that the Hindus were weaker than the organized Muslims of India – the founder, H.B. Hedgewar, explained that “the snake of Muslim fanaticism… is now baring its poisonous fangs and spreading the venom of violence and riots all over the country.” The paramilitary organization, having established for its members a daily routine of exercise, drills, weapons training, ideological teaching, and Hindu nationalist prayers, went on to become a major political force in
India by launching many national organizations, including the Bharatiya Jana Singh (BJS) political party that would eventually become in 1980 the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). The BJP experienced a gradual rise of power from the early 1980s by pushing an agenda based on Hindu nationalism and mobilizing the Hindu nation in India. Hindu nationalists aroused fears of a Hindu nation under siege from rising Islamic fundamentalism, which translated into electoral success for the BJP. By the 1998 elections, the party emerged as the single largest party in the Indian Parliament, ending up with 25.6 percent of the vote and 182 seats, allowing it to create a government that lasted until 2004. Even after it lost congressional plurality, the BJP has been the principal opposition party in parliament, gaining many loyal followers and members, such as Narendra Modi.

Modi was immersed in this style of thinking for most of his life. He was born in Vadnagar in the Mehsana district of Gujarat in 1950 to a family of grocers, and at an early age he became involved with the RSS. In 1970, he joined the group as a full-time “pracharak,” or propagandist, remaining in this role while he completed his Master’s degree in political science. After the RSS assigned him to the BJP, he rose through the ranks until he was appointed the Chief Minister of Gujarat on 7 October 2001, put there to prepare the BJP for the upcoming elections the following year. It was during his first term that the violence in Gujarat erupted, adding an indelible mark to his governing record.

The Violence of Gujarat

On 27 February 2002, a coach on a train that was on its way to Ahmedabad, the largest city in Gujarat, caught fire in the town of Godhra, and 59 people, mostly women and children, were burned to death. Several of those on board were Hindu workers from the RSS and other Hindu nationalist organizations that were campaigning for the construction of a new Hindu temple. Members of the ruling party of Gujarat, the BJP, were convinced that Muslims were to blame – Modi, as Chief Minister of the state, called the incident a “pre-planned, violent act of terrorism.”

One Hindu Nationalist organization, the Vishal Hindu Parishad (VHD), called for a strike, and its general secretary said, “Hindu society will avenge the Godhra killings.” In the following days, hundreds gathered in Ahmedabad and listened to the rumors of how Muslims set fire to the coach, and, as one witness said, “The rumor spread that Muslims were about to attack. So people felt the need to attack. People became afraid, so they started to attack.”
Mobs went on a rampage all over Gujarat, with official figures stating that 790 Muslims and 254 Hindus died while 2,500 people were injured in acts of torture, burning, raping, and maiming. 18,000 homes were destroyed, and hundreds of thousands of people were displaced. In one incident, an attack on the home of a former Congress MP killed the former MP and 68 others.\textsuperscript{17} The police at hand for the carnage actually assisted the mob, firing on Muslim inhabitants and supplying the rioters with petrol for crude bombs and other devious purposes.\textsuperscript{18} Human Rights Watch stated that the police “actively supported” the mobs; in a report, the organization stated that “in some cases [the police] were merely passive observers. But in many instances, police officials led the charge of murderous mobs, aiming and firing at Muslims who got in the way.”\textsuperscript{19} Muslim witnesses reported that the police told them that “we have no orders to save you.”\textsuperscript{20} Many suspected that the attacks were coordinated by various Hindu organizations in the area, with politicians communicating with the rioters via intermediaries.\textsuperscript{21} Intense violence continued for days after the train incident, and on March 1 government troops were flown in to handle the situation; however, rioting continued intermittently for several months.

The Aftermath

Many accused Modi of complicity in these acts, stating that there were numerous actions he could have taken to reduce tensions.\textsuperscript{22} Others accuse him of actually sanctioning the violence.\textsuperscript{23} Modi denied all accusations of wrongdoing, saying that “we feel that we used our full strength to set out to do the right thing” in the riots and that he “absolutely” did the right thing in his handling of the situation.\textsuperscript{24} To explain the violence, Modi has said in the past that the riots were a “spontaneous reaction” to the events in Godhra and that “every action has an equal and opposite reaction.”\textsuperscript{25} In a 2013 interview, in response to a question asking if he regretted what happened, Modi explained,

I’ll tell you… any person if we are driving a car, we are a driver, and someone else is driving a car and we’re sitting behind, even then if a puppy comes under the wheel, will it be painful or not? Of course it is. If I’m a chief minister or not, I’m a human being. If something bad happens anywhere, it is natural to be sad.\textsuperscript{26}

A 2012 investigation by India’s Supreme Court found Modi clear of any official wrongdoing, though there were accusations that the special investigation team was suppressing incriminating evidence. Others were found guilty, and one of his ex-ministers was imprisoned for 28 years for inciting the mobs.\textsuperscript{27} Regardless, according to Indian authorities Modi was not complicit with the rioting.\textsuperscript{28} Many doubt this assessment, however – the head of the opposition in Gujarat believed Modi could have stopped the massacre, saying that “if you are chief minister, with all kinds of powers… you own the state, the machinery, the police department.”\textsuperscript{29} The Economist also pointed out in 2013 that “a clean legal slate, however, does not mean Mr. Modi was not, at best, fatally incompetent.”\textsuperscript{30} The scandal seemed to endanger Modi’s political career at the time, and he offered to resign his post, though his party declined his resignation.\textsuperscript{31} But in the elections held in late 2002, Modi would become Chief Minister, going on to be the head of Gujarat for the next decade. His international image became tarnished, however, as the riots were widely publicized in the global media. Many countries in the West, including the UK and the US, created a de facto travel ban on Modi, with ministers and government officials “boycotting” the Gujarati minister for his role
in the violence. Foreign ambassadors and high commissioners in Delhi agreed to not deal with the chief minister for his role in the violence.

In fact, the US State Department denied Modi a visa in 2005 after he was invited by the Asian American Hotel Owners Association (AAHOA) to speak at a conference they were going to hold in Florida in March 2005. Soon after this was announced, South Asian groups from across the US formed the Coalition Against Genocide in order to protest Modi’s invitation, citing his glorification of Hitler and his extreme Hindu nationalist movement as troubling for Indians around the world. In a letter to the AAHOA, the group stated that “by honoring Mr. Modi at the AAHOA Meeting, you dishonor the victims of the Gujarat pogrom, and insult the moral dignity of all Indians and world citizens,” saying that the decision to do so was “morally repugnant.” Congressional members also spoke up – on March 16, Congressman John Conyers, Jr. introduced a resolution to the House, which condemned “the conduct of Chief Minister Narendra Modi for condoning or inciting bigotry and intolerance against any religious group in India, including people of the Christian and Islamic faiths.” Two days later, on March 18, the State Department denied Modi a visa by applying the Immigration and Nationality Act, which bars those responsible for violations of religious freedom.

The 2014 Indian Elections

Despite this massive controversy, Modi continued to rise in the Indian political scene and soon became one of the biggest political stars in the country. He turned his image into one of a modernizer – during his term Gujarat’s economy tripled in size, and its GDP has grown 10% a year – the state, though only hosting 5% of the Indian population, accounts for 16% of Indian manufacturing and a quarter of Indian exports. Other economic indicators have improved under his watch as well, including improving the power grid, attracting outside investment, and keeping the government bureaucracy effective. Though his economic successes have also been criticized, many Indians, especially business leaders, see Modi as a leader that can drastically reform and improve India’s economy.

During the year prior to the election many predicted that Modi would win the 2014 election, which was to be the largest democratic election in history with over 800 million participants. In September 2013, the BJP announced that Modi was their prime ministerial candidate for the Indian general election in 2014. He quickly became the frontrunner as the Indian people saw him as a needed change from the ruling Indian National Congress. Having been in power since 2004, under Congress’s tutelage India’s growth rate fell by half, creating a high demand for political change. The party’s prime ministerial candidate, Rahul Gandhi, is seen as an extension of the past, as he is the great-grandson of Jawaharlal Nehru; Modi, on the other hand, is seen as a fresh break, as he comes from a low caste and worked his way up through the political ranks.

Given Modi’s economic strengths, many European countries began opening up to the idea of doing business with the Hindu nationalist – given the likelihood that he would be the new Indian prime minister, the rationale is that countries will need to do business with Modi and so need to change their stances for their national interest. Britain was the first country to open up to Modi; on October 11, 2013, the British government announced that its high commissioner in India will visit Gujarat, despite the fact that three British nationals were killed in the 2002 riots.

The US also followed suit in February 2014, announcing that the travel ban would be lifted and that the American ambassador in New Delhi would visit Modi. Initially, following
Modi’s appointment as the BJP’s prime ministerial candidate, the US State Department announced that it would maintain its stance; a State Department spokesman said, “There’s no change in our longstanding visa policy. He is welcome to apply for a visa and await a review like any other applicant.” Things quickly shifted, however, as Republican Tea Party and Indian lobbyists pushed to grant Modi a visa. As Joseph Brieboski, founder of the Institute on Religion and Public Policy, stated,

> When the US denied Mr. Modi a visa in 2005, it was like the US denying a visa to the governor of Iowa... The US did not see it as a big deal. And back then, it seemed clear to everyone in this town that Modi was involved in the riots. Now the picture is fuzzier, and many are intrigued by Modi.

Though the US state department denied that the US’s decision was influenced by Modi’s potential election, many still believe the decision was made because of the upcoming elections. One member of the Centre for Policy Research in New Delhi stated,

> He’s a major political figure. They [the US] have also realized that Indo-US relations are at a pretty low point and the last thing you want is a potential prime minister nursing a deep seated grudge against the US. I don’t think they had a choice really.

Many other countries have followed, quietly opening up their relationship with the former international pariah.

**Modi’s Internationalism**

Modi has taken unprecedented actions in conducting India’s foreign policy since his 2014 election. He has turned away from the country’s traditional policy of non-alignment, instead engaging directly with as many leaders from around the world as possible, which has significantly helped to secure his own legitimacy as India’s leader. He travelled to 26 countries in 2015 alone and continues to add to that list in 2016, all with one goal in mind:

> Foreign policy is about finding the common meeting points. Where do our interests converge and how much? We have to sit and talk with every country. It’s our ongoing effort.

And many of these interests align economically, which supports Modi’s foreign policy initiative of promoting India’s economic growth.

**A) Bangladesh**

Additionally, one of the Gujarati’s campaign promises was to accommodate Hindu migrants from India’s Muslim neighbor, Bangladesh, who are currently held in detention camps. He aspires to have the migrants “settled across the country with facilities to begin a new life.” In a public rally before the election, Modi stated, “As soon as we come to power at the Centre, detention camps housing Hindu migrants from Bangladesh will be done away with.” He went on to say
We have a responsibility toward Hindus who are harassed and suffer in other countries. Where will they go? India is the only place for them. Our government cannot continue to harass them. We will have to accommodate them here.\textsuperscript{45}

Modi believes there are two kinds of people from Bangladesh settling in India: those who are part of a political conspiracy to impact Indian politics and those who were harassed. He wants to push away the first group while welcoming in the legitimate Hindu refugees. Modi explained in a meeting in February 2014,

You have to decide whether you will continue to tolerate Bangladeshi harassment or put an end to it. I have come to you for your answer. Trust me and as soon as we come to power we will take immediate steps to redress these problems and ensure that justice prevails.\textsuperscript{46}

But Modi’s efforts thus far have been met with little success. While Hindu minorities in Bangladesh continue to implore him to take stronger actions against their oppression in the neighboring country, Modi has done little to incite any effective change.\textsuperscript{47} He struggles in the face of harsh criticism for his lack of action by domestic and international Hindu populations and simultaneously for his promises and attention to the cause by a largely domestic Muslim population.

B) Pakistan

The potential of the Hindu nationalist’s election also worried India’s other prominent Islamic neighbor, Pakistan. Modi is still closely linked with the Gujarat riots, as Gujarat is one of the few Indian states that shares a significant border with Pakistan. Abuar Sharif, a Pakistani journalist in Karachi, explained,

…for Pakistanis he was the mastermind of the massacre. Nobody has any proof of his role in the riots, but here in Pakistan, perceptions are stronger than reality. Modi is considered not only an anti-Pakistan politician, but also an anti-Islam Hindu fanatic.\textsuperscript{48}

But the Pakistani government stated that it would not be concerned if Modi won the election. The acting foreign minister for Pakistan during the Indian elections, Sartaj Aziz, stated that he did not believe that Pakistan’s recent efforts to ease tensions with India would be affected by the BJP member’s election, citing how the previous BJP government’s leader actually paid an official visit to Pakistan in 1999 and did not aggravate the relations between the two countries. Mr. Aziz told the media,

Personally I’m not worried. Firstly, we should deal with anybody who the people of India elect and secondly, let’s not forget that the last time we had a breakthrough in our relationship was also with a BJP government… I think before an election, politics is slightly different – more nationalistic and so on – but after elections you handle state affairs.\textsuperscript{49}

He went on to say,
Our platform for better relations with India and with Afghanistan is the enormous economic opportunities that lie ahead, for regional cooperation and regional connectivity with Central Asia and West Asia and trade opportunities. These are opportunities that we all can’t afford to miss.\(^5^0\)

Since his election, relations have remained as tense as is expected given the two nations’ contentious history. At points, Modi has taken a hard stance with Pakistan, cancelling planned meetings and refusing to talk with the Pakistani army.\(^5^1\) But, while still denying a solid confirmation, it appears as if Modi will be visiting Pakistan for the 2016 SAARC summit,\(^5^2\) where he will perhaps address the rising tensions over Jammu and Kashmir.

C) China

Pre-election, the Hindu nationalist also caught the attention of another Indian neighbor: China. On the campaign trail, Modi warned the Chinese government against laying claim to Arunachal Pradesh, a northeastern Indian state that shares a 1,080 km border with China. China claims almost the entire state, which is administered by India, and refers to it as South Tibet.\(^5^3\) At a rally in Arunachal Pradesh, he asked China to give up its “expansionist attitude,” going on to say

No power on earth can take away even an inch from India. Moreover, the present world does not accept an expansionist attitude. Times have changed, China should give up its expansionist attitude and adopt a developmental mindset.”\(^5^4\)

Though initially reluctant, the Chinese government responded to these remarks a few days afterwards. A Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson told the media that China had “never waged a war of aggression to occupy an inch of land of other countries” and noted that the lack of serious clashes between India and China shows that the two countries “have the capability to maintain peace there.”\(^5^5\) The spokesperson would go on to say

Given the neighborhood [sic] relationship and economic interdependence over the years, India and China have more common demands for cooperation rather than confrontation. Future bilateral relations won’t be affected a lot due to changes in leadership. There is no need to exaggerate the significance of Modi’s remarks.\(^5^6\)

The Chinese media echoed these remarks – the Global Times, the flagship publication of the Communist Party of China, ran a piece titled “Modi’s China bashing won’t shake Sino-Indian ties” that said the remarks would not hamper the relationship between the two countries.\(^5^7\) And while India’s interests do not always align with China’s, the two countries have successfully maintained open channels of bilateral communication despite significant challenges. Most recently, for example, China blocked India from joining the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), which denies India a direct stake in the global trade of nuclear technology.\(^5^8\) But Modi was not dismayed, going on to say

Even when the views are contradictory, talks are the only way forward and problems should be resolved through dialogue… There are some basic differences… but the most
important thing is that we can speak to China eye-to-eye and put forth India’s interests in the most unambiguous manner.59

Modi did just that on the sidelines of the G-20 Summit, discussing the NSG as well as the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, a contentious topic between the two countries.60 Modi’s demonstrated commitment to this bilateral dialogue, including visits by Prime Minister Modi and President Xi Jinping to Beijing and New Delhi respectively, will only help advance his larger foreign policy initiatives.

D) The United States

The US and India seek a mutually beneficial relationship: the US supports the rise of India as a strong Asian partner to balance China and India draws on US investments as a means of accelerating the growth of its economy.61 And this relationship advantageously manifests itself in other ways as well, as evidenced by the completion of an India-US nuclear deal62 and the countries’ climate and clean energy cooperation initiative.63

But perhaps most striking is the Prime Minister’s personal rapport with President Obama. Since 2014, the two leaders have become increasingly close, visiting each other seven times in the last two years, a dramatic shift from 2005 when Modi was denied a US visa. The two even wrote a joint Op-Ed for the Washington Post in which they discussed the renewal of the US-India partnership in the 21st century:64

Today our partnership is robust, reliable and enduring, and it is expanding... Still, the true potential of our relationship has yet to be fully realized. The advent of a new government in India is a natural opportunity to broaden and deepen our relationship. With a reinvigorated level of ambition and greater confidence, we can go beyond modest and conventional goals.

Obama’s most recent support for Modi’s proposed Goods and Service Tax (GST) reforms65 is just one example of the benefits Modi gains from this relationship both in terms of legitimacy and power. And Modi seems to have won over more than the just the US Commander in Chief, selling out Madison Square Garden on his first visit to the States as prime minister.66 So while President Obama may be nearing the end of his term in office, it is clear that Prime Minister Modi will continue to work on broadening and deepening India’s relations with the United States and other countries—and will likely be welcomed to do just that.

6 Bhatt, Hindu Nationalism, 84
8 Bhatt, Hindu Nationalism, 118
9 Ibid., 119
11 Hardgrave Jr., Prospects for Peace, 203
13 Berenschot, Riot Politics, 3
14 As quoted in Berenschot, Riot Politics, 3
15 As quoted in Berenschot, Riot Politics, 3
16 As quoted in Berenschot, Riot Politics, 3
17 “A man of some of the people,” The Economist, 14 December 2013
18 Berenschot, Riot Politics, 4
19 “A man of some of the people,” The Economist, 14 December 2013
20 http://www.hrw.org/reports/2002/04/30/we-have-no-orders-save-you
21 Berenschot, Riot Politics, 6
22 “A man of some of the people,” The Economist, 14 December 2013
25 As quoted in Berenschot, Riot Politics, 5
26 “Interview with BJP leader Narendra Modi,” Reuters, 12 July 2013
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30 Ibid.
34 Condemning the conduct of Chief Minister Narendra Modi for his actions to incite religious persecution and urging the United States to condemn all violations of religious freedom in India, HR 160, 109th Cong., introd. By Rep. John Conyers Jr., 16 March 2005, http://beta.congress.gov/bill/109th-congress/house-resolution/160?q=%7B%22search%22%3A%5B%22narendra+modi%22%5D%7D
36 “A man of some of the people,” The Economist, 14 December 2013
39 Aakrati Tandon, “India’s Foreign Policy Priorities and the Emergence of a Modi Doctrine,” Strategic Analysis, 7 August 2016, http://dx.doi.org/libproxy1.usc.edu/10.1080/09700161.2016.1209909
44 Ibid.
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47 Shoaib Daniyal, “On granting citizenship to Bangladeshi Hindus, Modi has been high on rhetoric but low on action,” Scroll.in, http://scroll.in/article/732274/on-granting-citizenship-to-bangladeshi-hindus-modi-has-been-high-on-rhetoric-but-low-on-action
49 Ibid.
50 Ibid.
53 China also administers a northeastern region of Kashmir.
57 Ibid.

Appendix 1: Background on Islam and Hinduism

**Basics of Islamic Faith**

6 articles of faith:

1. Oneness of God: A Muslim believes in one God. None is equal to him, he is god to all humankind, not a special tribe or race. God has no father or mother, no son or daughter.

2. Messengers and Prophets of God: Muslims believe that Allah’s message was given to numerous prophets including Noah, Abraham, Moses, Elijah, and Jesus as well as other prophets common to Christianity and Judaism, as well as Muhammad. Muslims believe that Muhammad is the last prophet. The key message brought by all the prophets was the same: to believe in One God and not to associate partners with Him, to stay away from sins and to lead a life devoted to earning God’s pleasure.

3. Revelations and the Quran: A Muslim believes in all scriptures and revelations of God, as they were complete and in their original versions. Muslims believe in the original scriptures that were given to previous messengers; David reviewed the Psalms, Moses the Torah and Jesus the Gospel. However, the previous scriptures do not exist today in the original form for which they were revealed.

4. Angels: Creations of God. They cannot be seen by the naked eyes. Each Angel is charged with a certain duty. In contrast to human beings they do not have free will.

5. Day of Judgement: Muslims believe a day will come when the world we know it will end and all men and women from Adam to the last person born will be resurrected from the state of death. Everything we have ever done will be judged on this day.

6. Predestination: A Muslim believes in the ultimate Knowledge and Power of God to plan and execute His Plans. God is all loving and whatever he does must have good motive even if one does not fully understand it yet.

**Basics of Hindu Faith**

Hinduism lacks any unified system of beliefs and ideas. It is a phenomenon and represents a broad spectrum of beliefs and practices which on one hand are akin to paganism, pantheism and the like and on the other very profound, abstract and metaphysical ideas.

Some common beliefs are idol worship, reincarnation, karma, dharma (teachings), and pursuit of liberation from the cycle of reincarnation, loss of the egotistic self and union with the “creative principle which lies realized in the whole world (Brahman).”

5 Principles:
1. God Exists: One Absolute Om. One Trinity: Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva who each appear in several divine forms
2. All human beings are divine
3. Unity of existence through love
4. Religious harmony
5. Knowledge of Ganga (sacred river), Gita (sacred script), Gayatri (sacred mantra)

10 Disciplines:
1. Satya (truth)
2. Ahimsa (non-violence)
3. Brahmacharya (Celibacy, non-adultery)
4. Asteya (No desire to possess or steal)
5. Aparigara (Non-crupt)
6. Shaucha (Cleanliness)
7. Santosh (Contentment)
8. Swadhyaya (Reading of scriptures)
9. Tapas (Austerity, perseverance, penance)
10. Ishwarpranidhan (regular prayers)
### Appendix 2: Indian Population by Religion

<table>
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<th>Religion</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>State Majority</th>
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<tr>
<td>All Religion</td>
<td>100.00 %</td>
<td>1,210,854,977</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hindu</td>
<td>79.80 %</td>
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<td>Muslim</td>
<td>14.23 %</td>
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<td>Christian</td>
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<td>Sikh</td>
<td>1.72 %</td>
<td>20,833,116</td>
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<td>Buddhist</td>
<td>0.70 %</td>
<td>8,442,972</td>
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<td>Jain</td>
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<td>Other Religion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not Stated</td>
<td>0.24 %</td>
<td>2,867,303</td>
<td>-</td>
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Study Questions

1. How did Savarkar frame Hindu Nationalism as separate from Hinduism? What are the distinctions between the two?

2. How has Hindu Nationalism grown to such influence in Indian politics? How did Modi become a proponent of Hindu Nationalism?

3. How has Modi utilized Hindu nationalism to consolidate power within the Indian government?

4. How has Modi used other factors besides Hindu Nationalism to cement his rise to power?

5. What is the reasoning behind America’s pivot regarding Modi’s acceptance? How did Modi go from being denied a passport to meeting with President Obama?

6. What is the foreign policy narrative that Modi employs after he gets elected?

7. Using levels of analysis, examine India’s foreign policy with the United States, China, and Pakistan.

8. Why is Modi embracing an internationalist foreign policy narrative?

9. What do you think Modi’s goals are regarding India’s sphere of influence? How does China factor into this equation?

10. How has the thawing of the relationship between Modi and the United States impacted Indian economic expansion?

11. How has the American embrace of India benefitted Modi in terms of legitimacy and power?