

Propositions

Attached to the thesis

Making the Pitrubhumi: Masculine Hegemony and the Making of the Hindu Nation

by *Prem Kumar Vijayan*

International Institute of Social Studies
Erasmus University Rotterdam

1. Hindu nationalism, which is the central concern of this thesis, is not just a political phenomenon, nor is 'Hindutva' a form of cultural nationalism; they are more than projects to socially organize around a religious identity, they are the epiphenomena of a much wider, more pervasive array of social practices and conjunctions. This array of social practices and conjunctions constitutes a caste-based hegemonic formation that I have referred to as Brahmanical hegemony (*this thesis*).
2. All hegemonic formations are gendered; all patriarchal hegemonies are masculine hegemonies. Therefore, Brahmanical hegemony is Brahmanical masculine hegemony and Hindu nationalism is a gendered nationalism founded on this hegemonic formation (*this thesis*).
3. All hegemonic formations operate through a combination of coercion and consent. Hindu nationalism has tended to draw on two models of each: it has organized along the lines of religious and caste identities, as well as participated in the parliamentary electoral process (consent); and it has unleashed communal violence, as well as deployed both its own and the state's disciplinary machinery when necessary (coercion) (*this thesis*).
4. These strategies of yoking coercion and consent have evolved out of the colonial encounter, partly through emulation of the colonial economic and administrative machinery, partly through the reinforcement of the existing organization of power in the colonized societies. This has been referred to in the thesis as the employment of two forms of discipline, Order and *Danda* (*this thesis*).
5. Post-colonially, this combination of coercion and consent witnessed repeated adjustments to accommodate two fundamental social transformations: caste mobility and mobilization, leading to caste based political formations; and modernization and 'development', initially under severe state control, and subsequently, from the nineteen nineties, through liberalization, under corporate control. These adjustments have led to the establishment of Hindu nationalism as a serious determining factor in Indian politics, but have not allowed it dominance as yet (*this thesis*).
6. Non-violence requires an audience to be successful as a political strategy; but it must also be the active denial of a real potential to unleash violence, in order to become meaningful.
7. 'Terrorism' is not so much a product of poverty, inequality and racial and religious discrimination, as the label for the reactive emulation by smaller forces, of strategies of violent domination employed by hegemonic powers.
8. Contrary to the claims of postmodernists, the world is not available only in and through discourse; the world is also constituted of physical, material entities, forces and dynamics, that may be constituted in discourse but operate in and on the world independent of discourse.
9. If the 'aesthetic' is the category of discourses dealing with the constitution of the beautiful, 'desire' is the corresponding phenomenon in the non-discursive world. The constitution of the 'aesthetic' then is the ceaseless attempt to comprehend and control desire.
10. The relations between reality and representation are a direct function of changes in technologies of representation.
11. The speed of light is an absolute only because humans do not possess sensory organs capable of registering anything faster.

