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H. No. 5-11-559, Srinagar Colony, Naimnagar,

Hanmakonda, Warangal- 506009. Telangana State (India)

Website: [www.spwingo.org/www.spwijournal.com](http://www.spwingo.org/www.spwijournal.com)

Email: [spwi.ngo.2014@gmail.com](mailto:spwi.ngo.2014@gmail.com)/ [devathasuresh@gmail.com](mailto:devathasuresh@gmail.com)

[editor@spwijournal.com](mailto:editor@spwijournal.com) Ph: 9959026635

[spwijournalforsocialwelfare@gmail.com](mailto:spwijournalforsocialwelfare@gmail.com)

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Email: [spwi.ngo.2014@gmail.com](mailto:spwi.ngo.2014@gmail.com)/ [devathasuresh@gmail.com](mailto:devathasuresh@gmail.com)

[editor@spwijournal.com](mailto:editor@spwijournal.com) Ph: 9959026635

[spwijournalforsocialwelfare@gmail.com](mailto:spwijournalforsocialwelfare@gmail.com)

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**RELIGIOUS VIOLENCE AGAINST HINDU  
COMMUNITY – A STUDY**

**Aruna Badavath**

Department of Sociology & Social Work,

Acharya Nagarjuna University,

Guntur, Andhra Pradesh

**Abstract:** *In today's world, religion and violence are often seen as phenomena that go hand in hand. Many religions are labelled as inherently violent and Western, secularized countries often condemn the close relationship between religion and politics in many non-Western countries as a breeding ground for violent extremism. A great deal of research has been done into the role of religion in extremist violence, war, and rioting, which will be discussed further in this paper. Less attention, however, has been paid to the role of religion in bringing an end to violence and in promoting reconciliation. In my view, it is important to examine both together to fully understand the ambivalent nature of religion. Religion has been described as a double-edged sword that can promote and has promoted both violence and peace. At present-day human beings are living on the edge of the sword, because everywhere in society or country people look forward to harm, injury and always afflicting nature towards others. Because of these activities, there is the growth of telling an illegal lie, deceiving, cheating viz. Hence criminal indulgences such as we are developed in the field of technology and scientific field. Why we do not lead peaceful harmonious life in society? Now we are in the completed 21<sup>st</sup> century we are already facing a painful situation with the growth of population. Due to this, we as human beings have polluted air, water, and earth in the name of development. The conflict between Muslims and Hindus is perhaps nowhere more acute than in India, where historically Hindu and Muslim populations have struggled with co-existence. This conflict is not merely a matter of incompatible theologies; it also has to do with clashing lifestyles. In Muslim and Hindu societies there are differences, for example, in social expectations and behaviour, diet and views on gender, which can make harmonious co-existence challenging for these two religious groups.*

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**Keywords:** *Hindu, Muslim, Violence*

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## Introduction

Religion has a dual legacy in human history regarding peace and violence. Conflict resolution theory must examine more systematically the decision-making of religious actors and leaders for strategies of peace-making to be effective in the relevant contexts. It is the argument here that the study of religion and conflict resolution will yield an important new field of inquiry. A series of topics need to be addressed, including the mixture of religious and pragmatic motivations in behaviour, the struggle between inter-communal moral values and other traditional values that generate conflict, multifaith dialogue and pluralism as conflict resolution strategies, the socio-political impact of religious leadership on conflict generation and resolution, the limited scope of religious ethics regarding the rejection of non believers and traditional outgroups, and the promising role of interpretation of sacred tradition in generating peace-making strategies.

According to Mr M.K. Gandhi, the greatest proponent of non-violence in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it is not merely a personal virtue, so it ought to be cultivated at and extended to social, national, and international levels. Most celebrities believe that the Gandhian technique of non-violence can redeem today's world. Global society is made up of constantly changing relationships, yet non-violence is still useful since it springs from the inner realization of the equality of all living beings and intimacy with the nature of the ecosphere.

In Islam, Qu'ran had good intentions about peace which mention; "The servants of the Most Merciful are those who walk upon the earth easily, and when the ignorant address them [harshly], they say [words of] peace" and eat up not one another's property unjustly (in any illegal way e.g., Stealing, robbing, deceiving, etc.), nor give bribery to the rulers (judges before presenting your cases) that you may knowingly eat up apart of the property of others sinfully. It helps to mention peace in society one must support him.

Hindu Scriptures always wanted to implement the concept of peace in the whole world this is a quotation from (Yajur Veda 36 Buddhist scripture) "May there be peace in the heavens, peace in the atmosphere, peace on the earth. Let there be coolness in the water, healing in the herbs and peace radiating from the trees. Let there be harmony in the planets and the stars, and perfection in eternal knowledge. May everything in the universe be at peace. Let peace pervade everywhere, always. May I experience that peace within my own heart?"

**Hinduism** and **Islam** are the third and second most popular religions in the world respectively. They differ in many respects - including idol worship, monotheism, and their history.

**Islam** is a monotheistic Abrahamic religion, founded by Prophet Muhammad in the Middle East in the 7<sup>th</sup> century CE.

**Hinduism** on the other hand is a religious tradition that originated in the Indian subcontinent in the pre-classical era (1500–500 BCE) and does not have a specific founder.

### Muslims in India

With over 172 million followers (2011), Islam is the second-largest religion in India after Hinduism. Muslims are the second largest community after Hindus forming 14.6% of the total population in the Republic of India. Although the history of Islam religion in India dates to the 12th century, the nation is currently home to over 10% of the world's Muslim population. After Indonesia and Pakistan, India is home to the third-largest Muslim population in the world. Muslims or people following Islam are significantly present in large numbers all over India. Almost half of Indian Muslims (47%) live in 3 states of Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, and Bihar. Muslims form an important part of the religious population in India as it is the second largest community after Hindus. Hindus and Muslims together form an integral part of vibrant Indian culture.

### The population of Muslims in India in 2016

Islam as a Religion has witnessed a sharp growth in its population in various states of India. According to data from the Census of India, Muslim Population is estimated to be 184 million in 2016.

### Hindu Population in India

India is known as the birth place of many religions but Hinduism is the most significant one. It is believed that Hindu Religion started in India many thousand years ago. Since then, it has been the most dominant in Indian culture and society. With more than 79.8% population of Hindus in India, Hinduism has the largest number of followers in India. The overall population of India is dominated by Hindu Religion and its traditions. The Hindu religion is spread throughout the length and breadth of the country. Almost all the states and union territories in India have a larger Hindu Population. Madhya Pradesh and Orissa have more than 90% of people as Hindus. The rest 10% are from other religions like Muslims, Christians, Jains, Sikhs and so on in these two states. There are Hindu fairs and festivals celebrated throughout the year. The annual Kumbh Mela is attended by Millions of Hindus from India and worldwide.

Census Year	Total Population	Hindu Population	Proportion
2001	1028610328	8275788868	80.5%
2011	1210854977	966345841	79.8%
2015	1288727391	1018094638	79%

### Violence against Hindus in India

The Muslim conquest of the Indian subcontinent began during the early 8<sup>th</sup> century AD, when the Umayyad governor of Damascus, Hajjaj responded to a casus belli

provided by the kidnapping of Muslim women and treasures by pirates off the coast of Debal, by mobilising an expedition of 6,000 cavalries under Muhammad bin-Qasim in 712 CE. Records from the campaign recorded in the *Chach Nama* record temple demolitions, and mass executions of resisting Sindhi forces and the enslavement of their dependants. This action was particularly extensive in Debal, of which Qasim is reported to have been under orders to make an example while freeing both the captured women and the prisoners of a previous failed expedition. Bin Qasim then enlisted the support of the local Jat, Meds and Bhutto tribes and began the process of subduing and conquering the countryside. The capture of towns was also usually accomplished using a treaty with a party from among his "enemy", who were then extended special privileges and material rewards. However, his superior Hajjaj reportedly objected to his method by saying that it would make him look weak and advocated a more hardline military strategy, saying "Henceforth grant pardon to no one of the enemies and spare none of them, or else all will consider you a weak-minded man."

Following these early instances of persecution, Bin Qasim is said to have been liberal in his religious policy. Nearly 60% of the Arab success in Sind was secured through treaty rather than conquest. Hindus and Buddhists were treated as *dhimmi* (protected people) and left free to practise their faith other than the obligation to pay *jizya* (tax on non-Muslims). Historian Mohammad Habib has said, "Alone among the many Muslim invaders of India Muhammad Qasim is a character of whom a conscientious Mussalman need not be ashamed." Bin Qasim's policies were followed by the later Arab governments and Sindh prospered through the new Islamic networks of trade and commerce.

### **Mahmud of Ghazni**

Mahmud of Ghazni, Sultan of the Ghaznavid empire, invaded the Indian subcontinent during the early 11<sup>th</sup> century. His campaigns across the Gangetic plains are often cited for their iconoclast plundering and destruction of temples. Mahmud's court historian Al-Utbi viewed Mahmud's expeditions as a *Jihad* to propagate Islam and extirpate idolatry. Mahmud may not have personally hated Hindus, but he was after the loot and welcomed the honours and accolades in the Islamic world obtained by desecrating Hindu temples and idols. Of his campaign on Mathura, it is written:

Orders were given that all the temples should be burnt with naphtha and fire and levelled with the ground. The city was given up to plunder for twenty days. Among the spoil are said to have been five great idols of pure gold with eyes of rubies and adornments of other precious stones, together with a vast number of smaller silver images, which, when broken up, formed a load for more than a hundred camels.

The loot from Mathura is estimated at 3 million rupees and over 5,000 slaves.

According to military historian Victoria Schofield, Sabuktigin, the Turkish ruler of Ghazni and father of Mahmud, "set as his goal the expulsion of the Hindus from the

Kabul valley and Gandhara (Khandar), as the value of Peshawar was still called. His son and successor, the Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni, continued his work, carrying the holy war against the Hindus into India." Till the year 980 CE, this area of Gandhara was under Hindus until Sabuktigin from Ghazni invaded it and displaced its last Hindu Shahi king Jaya Pala. Shahi was an important kingdom in Northwest India at that time. According to some sources (like Ibn Battuta), the name of the Hindu Kush mountains of the region means "Hindu kill" probably because raiders would capture Hindu slaves from the plains and take them away but they would die of cold in the mountains.

Mahmud of Ghazni sacked the second Somnath Temple in 1026, looted it, and the famous Shiva lingam of the temple was destroyed. Following the defeat of the Rajput Confederacy, after deciding to retaliate for their combined resistance, Mahmud had then set out on regular expeditions against them, leaving the conquered kingdoms in the hands of Hindu vassals annexing only the Punjab region. By 1665, the temple, one of many, was once again ordered destroyed by Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb.

Mahmud utterly ruined the prosperity of the country and performed their wonderful exploits, by which the Hindus became like atoms of dust scattered in all directions, and like a tale of old in the mouth of the people.

Alberuni, a historian who accompanied Mahmud of Ghazni, described the conquests in North Western India by stating that Mahmud impoverished the region and that the civilisation of the scattered Hindus declined and retreated from the North West.

This is the reason, too, why Hindu sciences have retired far away from those parts of the country conquered by us, and have fled to places that our hand cannot yet reach, to Kashmir, Benares, and other places.

Holt *et al.* hold an opposing view, that he was "no mere robber or bloody thirsty tyrant". Mahmud shed no blood "except in the exigencies of war", and was tolerant in dealings with his Hindu subjects, some of whom rose to high posts in his administration, such as his Hindu General.

### **Tilak Timur's campaign against India**

Timur began a trek starting in 1397 to invade the territory of the reigning Sultan Nasir-u Din Mehmud of the Tughlaq Dynasty in the north Indian city of Delhi. He crossed the Indus River at Attock on 24 September. The capture of towns and villages was often followed by the massacre of their inhabitants and the raping of their women, as well as pillaging to support his massive army.

Timur's invasion did not go unopposed and he did meet some resistance during his march to Delhi, most notably by the Sarv Khap coalition in northern India, and the Governor of Meerut. Although impressed and momentarily stalled by the valour of Ilyas Awan, Timur was able to continue his relentless approach to Delhi, arriving in 1398 to combat the armies of Sultan Mehmud, already weakened by an internal battle



forascension within the royal family. The Sultan's army was easily defeated on 17 December 1398. Timur entered Delhi and the city was sacked, destroyed, and left in ruins. Before the battle for Delhi, Timur executed more than 100,000 captives.

During the ransacking of Delhi, almost all inhabitants not killed were captured and enslaved. Timur left Delhi in approximately January 1399. In April, he returned to his capital, beyond the Oxus (AmuDarya). Immense quantities of spoils were taken from India, to erect a mosque at Samarkand, which historians today believe is the enormous Bibi-Khanym Mosque. Ironically, the mosque was constructed too quickly and suffered greatly from disrepair within a few decades of its construction.

When Timur invaded India in 1398-99, a collection of slaves formed an important object for his army. 100,000 Hindu slaves had been seized by his soldiers and camp followers. Even a pious saint had gathered fifteen slaves. Regrettably, all had to be slaughtered before the attack on Delhi for fear that they might rebel. But after the occupation of Delhi, the inhabitants were brought out and distributed as slaves among Timur's nobles, the captives including several thousand artisans and professional people.

### **Delhi Sultanate**

Firuz Shah Tughlaq was the third ruler of the Tughlaq dynasty of the Delhi Sultanate. The "*Tarikh-i-Firuz Shah*" is a historical record written during his reign that attests to the systematic persecution of Hindus under his rule. It records atrocities committed against Hindu Brahmin priests who refused to convert to Islam:

An order was accordingly given to the Brahman and was brought before Sultan. True faith was declared to the Brahman and the right course was pointed out. But he refused to accept it. A pile rose on which the Kaffir with his hands and legs tied was thrown into and the wooden tablet on the top. The pile was lit in two places his head and his feet. The fire first reached him in the feet and drew from him a cry and then fire completely enveloped him. Behold Sultan for his strict adherence to law and rectitude.

Under his rule, Hindus who were forced to pay the mandatory Jizya tax were recorded as infidels, their communities monitored and, if they violated Imperial ordinances and built temples, they were destroyed. An incident in the village of Gohana in Haryana was recorded in the "*Insha-i-Mahry*" (another historical record written by Amud Din Abdullah bin Mahru) where Hindus had erected a deity and were arrested, brought to the palace and executed en-masse.

In 1230, the Hindu King of Odisha Anangabhimha III consolidated his rule and proclaimed that an attack on Odisha constituted an attack on the king's god. A sign of Anangabhimha's determination to protect Hindu culture is the fact that he named his new capital in Cuttack "Abhinava Varanasi." His anxieties about further Muslim advances in Odisha proved to be well-founded.

### **In the Mughal empire**

The Kesava Deo temple in Mathura marked the place that Hindus believe was the birthplace of ShriKrishna. In 1661 Aurangzeb ordered the demolition of the temple and constructed the Katra Masjid mosque. The traces of the ancient Hindu temple can be seen from the back of the mosque. Aurangzeb also destroyed what was the most famous temple in Varanasi- the Vishwanath Temple. The temple had changed its location over the years, but in 1585 Akbar authorised its location at Gyan Vapi. Aurangzeb ordered its demolition in 1669 and constructed a mosque on the site, whose minarets stand 71 metres above the Ganges. The traces of the old temple can be seen behind the mosque. Centuries later, emotional debate about these wanton acts of cultural desecration continues. Aurangzeb also destroyed the Somnath temple in 1706. In addition, during the reign of Aurangzeb, the Sikh guru, Guru Tegh Bahadur, aided the Kashmiri Pandits in avoiding conversion to Islam and was arrested by Aurangzeb. When offered a choice between conversion to Islam and death, he chose to die rather than compromise his principles and was executed.

More recently, the Hindus have claimed that the Mughals destroyed the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya located at the birthplace of Rama and built the Babri Masjid on the holy site, which has since been a source of tension between the Hindu and Muslim communities. Following an archaeological survey, the Allahabad High Court ruled in 2010 that the Babri Masjid stood on the site of an earlier structure of a "non-Islamic character" and divided the 2,400 square feet (220 m<sup>2</sup>) disputed land between three parties: the Ramlalla (infant Ram) for the construction of a temple, Sunni Wakf Board for a mosque and the Nirmohi Akhara for *Sita ki Rasoi* and *Ram Chabutara*.

Writer Fernand Braudel wrote in *A History of Civilizations*, Islamic rule in India as a "colonial experiment" was "extremely violent", and "the Muslims could not rule the country except by systematic terror. Cruelty was the norm – burnings, summary executions, crucifixions or impalements, inventive tortures. Hindu temples were destroyed to make way for mosques. On occasion, there were forced conversions. If ever there were an uprising, it was instantly and savagely repressed: houses were burned, the countryside was laid waste, men were slaughtered and women were taken as slaves."

### **Haidar Ali and Tipu Sultan**

Some historians state that Tippu Sultan was a religious persecutor of Hindus. C. K. Kareem also notes that Tippu Sultan issued an edict for the destruction of Hindu temples in Kerala. Hindu groups reviled Tipu Sultan as a bigot who massacred Hindus. He was known to carry out forced conversions of Hindus and Christians.

Tipu got Runmust Khan, the *Nawab* of Kurnool, to launch a surprise attack upon the Kodava Hindus (also called Coorgs or Coorgis) who were besieged by the invading Muslim army. 500 were killed and over 40,000 Kodavas fled to the woods and concealed themselves in the mountains. Thousands of Kodava Hindus were seized along with the

Raja and held captive at Seringapatam (Srirangapatna). They were also subjected to forcible conversions to Islam, death, and torture.

In Seringapatam, the young men who were forcibly circumcised were incorporated into the Ahmady Corps, and they formed eight *Risalas* or regiments. The actual number of Kodavas that were captured in the operation is unclear. The British administrator Mark Wilks gives it as 70,000, Historian Lewis Rice arrives at the figure of 85,000, while Mir Kirmani's score for the Coorg campaign is 80,000 men, women and child prisoners. In a letter to Runmust Khan, Tipu himself stated:

We proceeded with the utmost speed, and, at once, made prisoners of 40,000 occasion-seeking ands edition-exciting Coorgis, who alarmed at the approach of our victorious army, had sunk into woods, and concealed themselves in lofty mountains, inaccessible even to birds. Then carrying them away from their native country (the native place of sedition) we raised them to the honour of Islam and incorporated them into our Ahmady corps.

In 1788, Tipu ordered his governor in Calicut Sher Khan to begin the process of converting Hindus to Islam, and in July of that year, 200 Brahmins were forcibly converted and made to eat beef. Mohibbul Hasan, Prof. Sheikh Ali, and other historians cast great doubt on the scale of the deportations and forced conversions in Coorg in particular, and Hasan says that the British versions of what happened were intended to malign Tipu Sultan and to be used as propaganda against him. He argues that little reliance can be placed on Muslim accounts such as Kirmani's *Nishan-e Haidari*; in their anxiety to represent the Sultan as a champion of Islam, they tended to exaggerate and distort the facts: Kirmani claims that 70,000 Coorgis were converted when forty years later the entire population of Coorg was still less than that number. According to Ramchandra Rao *Punganuri*, the true number of converts was about 500.

Tipu sent a letter on 19 January 1790 to the Governor of Bekal, Budruz Zuman Khan. It says: Don't you know I have achieved a great victory recently in Malabar and over four lakh Hindus were converted to Islam? I am determined to march against that cursed Raman Nair (*Rajah* of Travancore) very soon. Since I am overjoyed at the prospect of converting him and his subjects to Islam, I have happily abandoned the idea of going back to Srirangapatanam now.

The following is a translation of an inscription on the stone found at Seringapatam, which was situated in a conspicuous place in the fort:

Oh, Almighty God! dispose of the whole body of infidels! Scatter their tribe, cause their feet to stagger! Overthrow their councils, change their state, destroy their very root! Cause death to be near them, cut off from them the means of sustenance! Shorten their days! Be their bodies the constant object of their care (i.e., infest them with diseases), deprive their eyes of sight, and make black their faces.

He also corresponded with the Sringeri Shankaracharya – expressing grief and indignation at a raid by Maratha bandit horsemen (called Pindari), which killed many and plundered the monastery of its valuable possessions, patronised the Melkote temple (which has gold and silver vessels with inscriptions indicating that they were presented under the Sultan), for which a Kannada decree was issued that the Shrivaiishnava (Hindu sectary) invocatory verses there should be recited in the traditional form. Tipu Sultan also presented four silver cups to the Lakshmikanta Temple at Kalale and probably presented to the Ranganatha temple at Srirangapatana with seven silver cups and a silver camphor burner. Some historians have argued that the seacts happened after the Third Mysore war, where he had to negotiate the terms of surrender. They claim that these acts were motivated by a political desire to get the support of his Hindu subjects.

Historian Hayavadana C. Rao wrote about Tippu in his encyclopaedic work on the History of Mysore. He asserted that Tippu's "religious fanaticism and the excesses committed in the name of religion, both in Mysore and in the provinces, stand condemned for all time. His bigotry, indeed, was so great that it precluded all ideas of toleration". He further asserts that the acts of Tippu that were constructive towards Hindus were largely political and ostentatious rather than an indication of genuine tolerance.

### **In Kashmir**

The Hindu minority in Kashmir has also been historically persecuted by Muslim rulers. While Hindus and Muslims lived in harmony for certain periods, several Muslim rulers of Kashmir were intolerant of other religions. Sultān Sikandar Butshikan of Kashmir (AD 1389–1413) is often considered the worst of these. Historians have recorded many of his atrocities. The *Tarikh-i-Firishta* records that Sikandar persecuted the Hindus and issued orders proscribing the residency of any other than Muslims in Kashmir. He also ordered the breaking of all "golden and silver images". The *Tarikh-i-Firishta* further states: "Many of the Brahmins, rather than abandon their religion or their country, poisoned themselves; some emigrated from their native homes, while a few escaped the evil of banishment by becoming Mahomedans. After the emigration of the Bramins, Sikundur ordered all the temples in Kashmir to be thrown down. Having broken all the images in Kashmeer, (Sikandar) acquired the title of 'Destroyer of Idols'".

### **Conclusion**

In my opinion of Conclusion is to try to understand the ultimate reality of human nature and the welfare of the country and people. The belief system is ok but at the same time, we have to maintain brother goodness also. This leads to peace and harmony.

India needs this climate now. I am trying to stand the point of religion has its good and it tells the peace but our understanding is different, now we Indian people are needs to realize we are the same and living as humanness. Peace is a very important aspect of tradition. India needs peace. I hope very soon the conflicts will resolve and cultivate peace and harmony.

### **References**

1. Information compiled from web sources and newspaper clips.