ONE

Introduction

Constructs of Nation and Gender

[F]or the creation of men and women with muscles of iron and nerves of steel
to fulfill their duties in the great up-hill battle of nation-building that await
us today . . . is the paramount duty of all national-minded children of India.
—Anthony Elenjimittam, *Philosophy and*
Action of the R.S.S. for the Hind Swaraj

You will understand the *Gita* better with your biceps, your muscles a little
stronger. . . . You will understand the *Upanishads* better and the glory of Atman,
when your body stands upon your feet, and you feel yourselves as men.
—Swami Vivekananda, nineteenth-century Indian nationalist

Characteristics associated with "manliness," such as toughness, courage,
power, independence, and even physical strength, have, throughout history,
been those most valued in the conduct of politics, particularly international
politics. Frequently, manliness has also been associated with violence and
the use of force, a type of behavior that, when conducted in the international
arena, has been valorized.
—J. Ann Tickner, *Gender in International Relations:*
Feminist Perspectives on Achieving Global Security

A GROUP OF YOUNG, tough Hindu men follow my American husband, who
is white, and myself along the River Ganges in the holy city of Varanasi. They
call out to me, tauntingly, "What does he have that we don't have?" This
male behavior in conjunction with two powerful images—a young Hindu
man holding a staff, face distorted in anger, on the cover of an Indian news
magazine reporting on Hindu-Muslim riots, and the presence of saffron-robed

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Hindu *sadhvis* (celibate women who have renounced worldly pleasures) stridently calling for aggressive action against (perceived) Islamic betrayers of the Hindu nation—captures a provocative nationalist narrative currently at work in modern India. A particular interpretation of manhood—armed masculinity—informs them. When armed masculinity intersects with the idea of nation, it disseminates an ideology centered on enacting aggressive, sometimes violent defense of the national community.

The youthful male figure on the cover of the Indian magazine is representative of an ideology, one linking armed masculinity and nation, that is disseminated by a network of powerful Indian organizations. The *sadhvis* have erased outer markers of their womanhood—jewelry, makeup, and feminine dress—to enter the realm of this discourse. The young men who followed my husband and myself had signaled their distress at seeing me, an Indian woman, with a white man; obviously, their anxiety stemmed from perceived slights to Indian male honor. This incident was by no means an isolated event but one of several similar encounters. In another example, a muscular young man in Mumbai stepped up to my husband and claimed, "First you rule us, then you steal our land, and now you take our women." These experiences raise serious questions: If an Indian woman chooses a white man over an Indian man, is she denigrating an Indian man's virility and strength, that is, markers of his manliness? In the Indian context, does this anxiety draw on memories of colonialism and British critiques of Indian manhood? And what does this manhood have to do with nation? Male and female bodies as well as societal ideas defining cultural interpretations of masculinities and femininities are potent metaphors for expressing nation.

In this book, I examine a particular intersection of armed masculinity and nation: Hindu nationalism (Hindutva). I argue that two dominant models of masculine Hinduism—the Hindu soldier and the warrior-monk—have mediated a visible and powerful interpretation of Hindu nationalism in India. These images emerged out of the interaction between the British and Indian colonial elite in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century India. The British had categorized Indian men as the "effeminate other" by using a gender hierarchy rooted in a specific Anglo-Protestant interpretation of manhood—Christian manliness—defined by values of martial prowess, muscular strength, rationality, and individualism. Some Indian elite resisted this categorization by forging an oppositional masculine identity that I term masculine Hinduism. Masculine Hinduism has had considerable impact on the modern interpretation of Hindu nationalism evoked by powerful Hindu organizations—the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP)—and political parties, the Shiv Sena and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), leader of the last ruling coalition in the Indian Parliament. It is important to acknowledge that although these organizations may

not represent the entire spectrum of Hindu nationalist activism in India, currently they are the most visible and powerful.

This masculinization of nationalism carries important implications for women's activism. Do women get written out of this masculine narrative? I argue that they do not. Women in visible Hindu nationalist groups such as the Rashtriya Sevika Samiti (Samiti) and Sadhvi Shakti Parishad (Parishad), affiliated with the RSS and VHP respectively, draw on images of women as heroic mother, chaste wife, and celibate masculinized warrior to negotiate their way into this landscape. Careful negotiation within this masculinist landscape, however, has created tension with ideas of feminism in Indian society. For example, if certain Indian feminists argue that domestic violence or women's limited access to power is tied to women's roles as wife and mother in the family, then can we contend that Hindu organizations such as the Samiti and the Parishad are antifeminist? I will argue that any analysis of this issue cannot be contained within the binary opposition feminism/antifeminism. Rather, analysis needs to be rooted in a more complex and nuanced idea of feminism and "woman" in the Indian context. Notions of female virtue and chastity inherent in Hindutva interpretations of female identity form the point of departure for exploring the relationship between Hindu nationalist women and feminism.

The nationalism defined by masculine Hinduism is a unique cultural manifestation that fits into the schema of a more general narrative. For example, consider two seemingly disparate images: a young Israeli woman dressed in army fatigues, eyes hidden behind mirrored sunglasses, patrolling Jerusalem and the catastrophic sight of the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center crashing to the ground on September 11. The young Israeli soldier, like the sadhvi, also has shed all explicit expression of her femininity (clothing, cosmetics, and jewelry). The tension between certain Arab elite and the United States as the "other" of an amorphous pan-Arabic nation plays out in the language and action of martial prowess, militarism, and violence. Osama bin Laden poses with a machine gun among his followers (all men), attacks symbols of American capitalism and military might (to prove his masculinity?), and interprets the massive destruction in New York City as a symbol of American weakness, rooted in moral corruption. President George Bush, the second, in the meantime, with his vocal advisor Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defense, vows to assert American strength, martial prowess, and military might in response.

The gendered story of nationalism nested within masculine Hinduism as well as in the images described above begins with a dominant political doctrine defined by the idea of a nation or a people. It usually locates an "other" that is used to reinforce communal unity. In other words, a coherent community exists because "we" are ethnically, linguistically, religiously, and/or ideologically distinct from "them." It has become a truism to acknowledge

that nationalism, in the oft-quoted words of Benedict Anderson (1991), is imagined. The theoretical rooting of the process of nation-building in imagination denies malicious intent to deceive or falsify; rather, it highlights the creative attempts on the part of communities to build an intersubjective identity marked by common cultural myths, symbols, heroes, and heroines.

Identity draws on the grammar of everyday life. In other words, daily communication takes place because ordinary people have a shared cultural context that forms the basis for why they feel an affinity toward a certain identity and with other members who share it. Identities are fluid and multiple. They are fluid in that over time new interpretations of identity may emerge. For example, the relational meaning of the American and Indian nations has been renegotiated over the course of the past hundred years within a context of changing demographic patterns and emerging identity politics. Identities are multiple in that during one particular period in a specific nation-state various interpretations of identity contesting for dominance may exist, or even new readings of an identity may emerge to challenge a dominant interpretation. For example, currently, the communities of America and India are open to multiple interpretations as minority groups resist official, mainstream views of nation within these states. Thus, the process of imagining a nation is contested as well as being historically, socially, and politically constituted. One of the more important dichotomies that has shaped the debate on nationalism is that of civic versus cultural nationalism.

In Bosnia, the nation is defined by religion (Christianity versus Islam) and ethnicity (Serbian versus Croatian); in Northern Ireland the marker of the national community is religion (Protestant versus Catholicism) as it is in Algeria, Egypt, and Iran (Islam versus non-Islamic infidels). In Germany, France, and England, certain groups like the National Front of France and the British National Party have used race (white versus non-white) to imagine a nation, and members of the French community in Canada have used both language and religion to distinguish themselves from the so-called English nation. These constructions of nation are seen by some scholars (e.g., Greenfeld, 1992; Ignatieff, 1994) as examples of "cultural nationalism," that is, a view of nation defined by markers rooted in religion, language, or ethnicity. The idea of "we the people" may vary over time in one cultural context or historical period, with competing views of cultural nationalism even occurring within one society. Finally, internationally, interpretations of cultural nationalism will also differ. In other words, most probably the idea of a Serbian or Egyptian or Quebecois nation has changed over time or within a particular historical era. Multiple ways may exist in which Serbians or Quebecois interpret cultural nationalism. Serbians or Egyptians or the Irish obviously construct the nation dissimilarly. Some scholars view cultural nationalism with suspicion, believing that volatile emotions arising from an inflexible

loyalty to a certain cultural category are exclusionary and circumvent possibilities of compromise, and, as a result, may provide the basis for conflict.

In contrast, civic nationalism purports to define nationhood by rejecting cultural markers and emphasizing allegiance to an ideology (e.g., democracy) and legal rights (e.g., a constitution guaranteeing individual freedoms and rights). Supposedly, such markers transcend religion or linguistic or ethnic affiliation to create a nationalism perceived to be more open to negotiation and, consequently, less prone to violent conflict.

The tension between cultural and civic nationalism is played out in the Indian context. "Communalism" or cultural nationalism in India refers to prejudices dividing and defining communities (usually Hindus and Muslims). The term sometimes is used to describe the politics of Hindutva because many believe that parties espousing this viewpoint do not support religious pluralism and hence can construct policies that may violate minority rights or in some cases justify outright aggression against minorities. Communalism or cultural nationalism is seen in opposition to secularism or civic nationalism.

Civic nationalism is silent about the notion of "us and them," claims to be inclusionary (as opposed to the potentially exclusionary implications of cultural nationalism), and hence assumes that the issue of "us versus them" by definition will disappear. In reality, of course, this rarely happens, and the boundaries between cultural and civic nationalism become blurred. According to Anderson (1991) this slippage occurs because abstract formulations (democracy, socialism)—empty of the building blocks of life (religion, ethnicity, language)—address human fears about day-to-day struggle with impatient silence and may not be adequate to attract human loyalty. Resolute, nonemotional levels of thinking can neither elicit nor sustain the degrees of loyalty necessary for a nation to survive and, if need be, to persuade its citizens to die for its sake. Put another way, historical evidence seems to indicate that passionate human loyalty reaches unprecedented heights when the nation, imagined as a monolithic community, faces another undifferentiated community constructed as the enemy. (For example, we saw the outpouring of American patriotism in the wake of the September 11 attacks.) As elites and masses draw on nationalism to support sovereignty and independence, even those nationalisms that are firmly civic can easily slip into the realm of cultural nationalism. For example, when Americans feel pride at the sight of their flag, are they responding to the abstract rights enshrined in their nation's Constitution or resonating to an imagined community peopled with English-speaking, white Christian descendants of the players of the American revolution? There is no way to disentangle the two; certainly, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Malcolm X, protesting cultural constructs of intolerance, perceived that America contained both cultural and civic nationalism.

In the interests of social order, some individuals, both elite and mass, try to control the slippage, while others perceive benefits in encouraging it, even to the extent of supporting violence in the name of nationalism. The implicit condemnation of cultural nationalism or the Indian interpretation, communalism, found in many works is based on fears that if passionate appeals based on intolerance and exclusion enter politics, they may easily be (mis)used to support ideas leading to violence. This complicated relationship between civic and cultural nationalism will form the implicit background of this study's gendered analysis of Hindu nationalism. The salient dichotomy shaping the construction of this national identity valorizes "we the people" as manly (strong, aggressive, brave in battle) while it denigrates an effeminized "other" as weak, passive, and cowardly.

Not until the emergence of feminist analysis has the gendered nature of imagined political identities been uncovered and deconstructed (e.g., Blom, Hall, and Hagemann, 2000; Enloe, 1989, 2000; Mayer, 2000; McClintock, Mufti, and Shohat, 1997; McClintock, 1995; Yuval-Davis and Anthias, 1989). But how precisely does gender play itself out within forms of nationalisms? Usually, a nationalism is gendered in that it draws on socially constructed ideas of masculinity and femininity to shape female and male participation in nation-building as well as the manner in which the nation is embodied in the imagination of self-professed nationalists.

The values defining manhood, manliness, masculinity—perceived to be a collection of features necessary for being and becoming an adult male in specific cultural and historical contexts—will be illustrated in the narrative of nationalism considered in this book. Using masculinity as a point of departure, this book goes on to explore the location of women, womanhood, and femininity in the Hindu nation. If sex refers to the physical attributes signaling biological male and female bodies, then gender is the collection of cultural traits deemed socially necessary for acting as adult men and women in specific moments of history within a single culture. There is no biological link between sex and gender per se; men can take on "feminine" traits and women can take on "masculine" ones. However, such crossover may impose social costs, such as ostracism, ridicule, and even bodily harm on both men and women.

In the slightly paraphrased words of Simone de Beauvoir, one is not "born a man" but becomes one. Moreover, cultural understanding of this process of becoming a man has implications for female participation in all social spaces including nationalist politics. As Anne McClintock (1993) points out, no nation has been equitable in its distribution of resources to men and women. Enloe (1989) describes nation as a masculinized space springing from masculine hopes. In other words, masculinized imaginations construct the dominant view of nation; indeed, it may be feasible to envision the nation as a male fantasy. Thus, women can enter this male fantasy

according to the terms of masculine rules or overthrow it to create an equally powerful female fantasy or choose to renegotiate a completely different vision by transcending the binary dichotomies of gender. But whatever path is chosen, the terms of masculinity and its historical evolution need to be examined. Susan Faludi's book *Stiffed* (1999) and Gardiner's edited collection *Masculinity Studies and Feminist Theory* (2002) are two of many contemporary works that signify a feminist interest in the construction of masculinity. Further, in the passage below taken from her study of gender and nationalism, Tamar Mayer (2000) also calls for a focus on masculinity:

> Much of this scholarship has focused on women's marginality *vis à vis* the construction of nation and as a result these discussions have, for the most part, neglected to analyze *men* as an equally constructed category. This imbalance has arisen, I believe, from Women's Studies' tendency until recently to concentrate on recovering women's experience, without necessarily positioning it in the larger context of gender construction, and from the unmarked status of masculinity within the nation and in nationalist discourse. (p. 5)

My study will address this imbalance by focusing on masculinity within a specific construct of nation, that is, Hindutva, in India. It is one that offers a unique cultural configuration of a more general gendered narrative set within a dominant view of nationalism, wherein "the ideal of the glorified male warrior has been projected onto the behavior of states" (Hooper, 2001, p. 2). For the purposes of this book, the word "nation" will be substituted for "state." Existing gendered studies of nationalism in various cultural contexts buttress the idea of a connection between masculinity and nationalism.

Patriarchy and male dominance have meant that masculinity has been seen as immutable and natural. The dominant discourse, because it sets the terms for societal debate, does not have to examine or justify itself. It is there. It exists. But in reality, like other forms of identity, masculinity is historically, politically, and culturally constituted. As a result, in twenty-first-century United States or Canada or Britain or India there may be various competing forms of masculine identity. However, as Nagel (1998) claims, one form always becomes dominant:

> Whatever the historical or comparative limit of these various definitions and depictions of masculinity, scholars argue that at any time, in any place, there is an identifiable "normative" or "hegemonic" masculinity that sets the standards for male demeanour, thinking and action. (p. 247)

In the nineteenth, twentieth, and early twenty-first centuries, militarism formed and forms an important component of Anglo-American hegemonic masculinity (hereafter, hegemonic masculinity): "Soldiering is characterized as a manly activity requiring the 'masculine' traits of physical

strength, action, toughness, capacity for violence. . . . It has historically been an important practice constitutive of masculinity" (Hooper, 2001, p. 47). Hooper (2001) identifies four ideal types of hegemonic masculinity: (1) the Greek citizen-warrior, wherein the manly citizen is characterized by a rational militarism; (2) the more domesticated, patriarchal Judeo-Christian model, rooted in the idea of paternal authority in the family; (3) the aristocratic ideal defined by male camaraderie, risk-taking, and military heroism; and finally (4) the Protestant bourgeois-rationalist model, emphasizing competition, individualism, reason, self-control, and self-denial (p. 65). To the list of these values, I would add the zero-sum notion of strength. Put another way, any attempt to negotiate or compromise is interpreted by all involved in this discourse of masculinity as weakness or a retreat from a position of power. These models of hegemonic masculinity also shape ideas of citizenship. Macchiavelli, for example, cast civic virtue, to be embodied by an ideal citizen, as virile political action wedded with armed masculinity. This masculine construction of citizenship was opposed to an effeminacy marked by weakness, impotency, and cowardice (Snyder, 1999, p. 24). Macchiavelli's vision has become a vital part of Anglo-American hegemonic masculinity. In using this model to order my narrative, it will become obvious that when men and women create a discourse centered on hegemonic masculinity, the ideal types discussed above are not completely discrete and do overlap.

Hegemonic masculinity has had a complex relationship with empire and imperialism. Research reveals clearly how the values of hegemonic masculinity colored the imperial lens through which British colonial administrators, military commanders, and historians categorized colonial subjects. Lord Macaulay (1878) claimed that "[t]he mission of England in the east is to elevate the people of India, to emancipate them from the chains of ignorance, error, and superstition, to lead them onward to a higher career of social, intellectual and political life" (p.3). This mission was a masculine affair: "In the 1850s Charles Kingsley helped create a masculinist image of an imperial English nation concerned with formal territorial expansion" (Wee, 1994, p. 66). But the process of masculine categorization guiding imperialism was dynamic. On the one hand, imperialism configured its ideas of hegemonic masculinities by defining itself against a supposedly effeminate colonial "other," and on the other hand, the colonized subject created a masculine cultural space that resisted this effeminization. With colonizer and colonized locked in struggle, the terms of which had been set by Britain's imperial authority, not surprisingly various nationalist responses to incorporating the values of hegemonic masculinity occurred. This incorporation did not merely duplicate British ideas but was itself an imaginative configuration of nationalist myths and icons based on traditional cultural ideas aimed at challenging alien colonial rule. Creation of imaginative constructs of an oppositional masculine iden-

tity is not limited to the Indian context; remarkably similar constructions are found in many other cultural settings.

In mid-nineteenth-century Ireland, for example, the nationalist discourse also became marked by values of hegemonic masculinity. McDevitt (1997) notes that "[t]he creations of the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) in 1884 and the subsequent standardization of hurling and Gaelic football marked . . . a nation-wide campaign to resurrect the physical stature of the manhood of Ireland, which was deemed debilitated because of the . . . effects of British rule" (p. 262). The Irish forged an ideology of "muscular Catholicism" in opposition to "muscular Christianity"—a concept that will form an integral part of my analysis—to assert their manliness. Masculinity was connected to the Gaelic games in many ways. They were seen to be a civilizing tendency by their imposition on the individual of team ideas (from the bourgeois rational model) of organization, discipline, and control. This configuration was meant to resist British depictions of the Irish as unruly, brutish, and lacking self-control. The GAA promoted "hurling," a dangerous type of sport that functioned as a metaphor for war. This link was further reinforced for the players by the retention of overlapping memberships in both the Association and various sectarian militia. Finally, the games helped define separate spheres for men and women within the nationalist terrain. For example, Ireland was represented as a woman—Eire, Erin, Mother Ireland, Cathleen ni Houlihan, and Shan Van Vocht—whom the manly warriors of Ireland were to protect with their lives if need be. As we shall see, this cultural metaphor—nation as woman (usually mother)—is also visible in Hindu nationalism. Most importantly, this masculinization of Ireland was coupled with a counter effeminization of British men, who were configured as weak, effete fops incapable of martial or athletic prowess (p. 272).

A similar masculinization of nationalism occurred in another colonized cultural space far away from Ireland—Palestine. Despite cultural differences, actors in this arena also resisted the impact of British imperialism rooted in ideas of hegemonic masculinity. The Palestinian national elite view liberation "as a transaction between men over the honor of a woman-mother whose ownership passes through paternity" (Massad, 1995, p. 473). The actors within Palestinian nationalism are masculine, "bourgeois-in-the-making, . . . young and able-bodied—free from the physical vulnerabilities of old age" (p. 479). According to Massad, the Zionist enemy is masculinized, and Palestinian nationalists are urged to equal the enemy in martial prowess and muscular strength as they defend Palestine, embodied as a nation as woman. Although he does not discuss in detail the cultural metaphors defining this masculine Palestinian identity, Massad is very clear that the forging of this vision was shaped by "European colonial culture as a paradigm through which tradition is (re)interpreted" (p. 468).

Finally, in an attempt to reinforce the reach of hegemonic masculinity, two other gendered nationalisms are presented: Australian and Serbian. In Serbian nationalism, again, the nationalist actors—defined by the values of hegemonic masculinity—fight to protect Mother Serbia. The feminine "has been employed to include virtually everyone—men and women alike—not conforming to the accepted 'nationalized' versions of masculinity" (Sofos, 1996, p. 76). Rape is seen as a tool of war. According to this masculinized Serbian nationalist narrative, Serbian women remained in danger of being raped by Kosovar Albanians and it was up to the Serbian manly warriors to protect them.

Australian nationalism also unfolded using the values of hegemonic masculinity. According to Australian national mythology, in the 1915 Battle of Gallipoli, male citizen soldiers—through their martial prowess, bravery, and physical strength—gave birth to the Australian nation. In other words, nation and manliness originate in war; indeed, war becomes the test of manliness and national independence. So, mothers and citizen-soldiers were connected by the act of "giving birth." According to Lake (1992) mothers gave birth to the soldiers who in turn gave birth to the Australian nation. But mothers were not equal in power or value to these male citizen-soldiers. The major actors within the nationalist terrain are masculinized; women's bodies associated with the feminine either become a threat to these masculine citizens because of their unpredictable sexuality or can only enter the fray in roles validated by hegemonic masculinity, for example, as mothers. In Lake's story of Australia, male martial heroism was the basis of nation-making.

The above examples emphasize clearly that masculinity, war, and nation create and inform each other. As George Mosse (1996) argues, "Nationalism, a movement which began and evolved parallel to modern masculinity, . . . adopted the masculine stereotype as one means of self-representation. . . . Modern masculinity from the very first was co-opted by the new nationalist movements of the nineteenth century" (p.7). Most importantly, masculinity needs an image against which it can define itself. Outsiders formed such an image and, more often than not, were constructed with effeminized qualities opposite to those of hegemonic masculinity; that is, outsiders were not strong, not martial, and so on. Further, even within the parameters of hegemonic masculinity, masculinity was multifaceted, never just the sole exercise of raw power. The next chapter's discussion of Christian manliness will illuminate this multiplicity.

The cases described above emphasize that hegemonic masculinity's connection with nation was not limited to the Western world but also found in the non-Western world (e.g., Palestine). In many non-Western cases, hegemonic masculinity became an integral defining component of the nation because of the impact of the British Empire's gaze as it categorized and evaluated its colonized subjects. The pivotal influence of British imperialism also

can be highlighted by the example of the emergence of "muscular" Catholicism in Ireland. Although, Ireland is perceived as part of the Western world, it was (and parts of it remain) a British colony. Thus, although Palestine, Ireland, and India were and are located in different social, political, cultural, and economic spaces, certain similarities in the delineation of masculinity underlying their forms of nationalist resistance can be explained to a certain extent by the construct of empire.

My analysis of a case study of India adds depth to the evidence for the existence of a link between nation and hegemonic masculinity in various cultural milieus. This linkage needs to be analyzed for two reasons. One, it contains important implications for female participation in the nation and women's access to national resources. Two, given that the figure of a martial hero is central to this construct, militarism and violence are likely outcomes of assertive nationalism defined by hegemonic masculinity. The war raging between the antiterrorist coalition led by the United States against Osama bin Laden and Al-Qaeda is the most contemporary example of such an outcome. It can easily be seen that hegemonic masculinity comprises part of the nationalism defining the antiterrorist coalition (the United States, Germany, Canada, and the United Kingdom). Al-Qaeda has obviously eagerly incorporated this vision of assertive nationalism as it projects values of hegemonic masculinity (martial prowess, strength, muscularity) on its own actions. The issue is not so much whether the values of hegemonic masculinity are alien to or part of an Islamic politics but that in a world dominated by Western ideas of nationalism, hegemonic masculinity is the language that has to be spoken so that nations can be heard. Al-Qaeda and bin Laden have chosen to speak this language spectacularly.

Additionally, the conflict between Israel and Palestine is also being waged in such terms. I have already alluded to the location of hegemonic masculinity in certain dominant imaginings of the Palestinian nation. Such values also exist in the Israeli nation. Mosse (1996) argues that the most potent "outsider" figure in Western Europe has been the Jew. Jews were defined as dirty, ugly, crooked, diseased, nervous, and sexually promiscuous. "But it was Otto Weiniger's famous and perversely popular book *Geschlecht und Charakter* [*Sex and Character,* 1903] that proved to be the most important source book for the feminization of the Jews. Here Jews and women were equated as creatures of passion and emotions, lacking true creativity; both were without any individuality, devoid of self-worth" (p. 69). A dominant response to this "othering" was the idea of the "New Jew" or the "Muscle Jew" that defined itself both against European feminization as well as in contrast to the diaspora Jew, who was seen as timid and effeminate (Mayer, 2000a). The "muscular Jew" became the martial hero, constructing and defending the Israeli nation at all costs. So once again in the Middle East, we have the clash of hegemonic masculinities: the "Muscle" Jew and the "manly" Palestinian.

A similar clash of masculinities is occurring in Kashmir as India and Pakistan amass their troops along the Line of Control dividing the two states. So as not to appear weak or effeminate the Indian Hindu man and the Pakistani Muslim man are locked in a struggle defined by the valorization of martial prowess, physical strength, and the unwillingess to compromise.

Given the real geopolitical impact of a nationalism constructed with values of hegemonic masculinity, a genealogy and an articulation of this interpretation of nation within various cultural milieus become vital if communities are to resist the dangerous implications of this construct, that is, the exclusion of women, femininity, and womanhood from politics as well as the potential threat of masculine and military violence. This book will provide such an analysis by focusing on Hindu nationalism. In presenting this narrative of gendered nationalism, I would like to draw on the inspiring words of the great philosopher Hannah Arendt, who remarked once that it was far less important (and rather presumptuous) for a scholar to tell others what to do. More fruitful by far would be for scholars to help make society aware of and/or think about what it is doing. In other words, her advice is a variation on the Platonic injunction to lead an examined life. If we do not excavate and trace the values of hegemonic masculinity defining contemporary nationalisms that are eagerly accepted by the elite of both Western and non-Western states because of a legacy of European and British imperialism, then militarism and violence will never cease. We must think about what we are doing.

Having said this, I must again point out that I am not arguing that former colonies were devoid of indigenous martial traditions and heroes and/or values of militarism, nor am I positing that a nationalist elite blindly copied the values of hegemonic masculinity introduced by imperialism. Rather, I have pointed out that nationalist resistance movements creatively incorporated these ideas by drawing on their own cultural memories and vocabularies of militarism.

The point of departure for my analysis is the manner in which women intersect a nationalism defined by hegemonic masculinity. Women as social reproducers of cultural forms teach children rituals and myths aimed at locating them within a specific national context; in other words, by learning about brave warriors or courageous pioneers through song, stories, or pictures, children develop a loyalty to a certain idea of nation (Peterson, 1998). As shown in the brief description of Ireland above, motherland or nation as woman to be protected by brave citizen-warriors is a common metaphor for nationalism. For example, the "Marseilles" implicitly calls upon soldiers to protect the French nation embodied by the beautiful young Marianne. Similarly, many Indian nationalists vow to protect Bharat Mata, "Mother India." Britain is sometimes embodied as "Brittannia," a female figure based on images of Athena, the Greek goddess of war. Nation as woman also intersects the nationalist discourse through socially constructed ideas of honor. In many

contexts (e.g., in Serbian nationalism), women symbolize national honor; thus any act (e.g., rape) that defiles and violates their bodies becomes a political weapon aimed at destroying the enemy nation's honor. Consequently, the point of departure of an analysis of the social construction of gender and how it informs nationalism is the relationship between woman as a signifier of the nation and the warriors exhorted to defend the homeland. Further, the gendered manner in which the image of the warrior is constructed within nationalist narratives as well as the notion that women embody national honor influences to a certain extent how women participate in nationalist politics.

Such a process of masculinization does not necessarily eliminate women from active nation-building. Women may simply join the project of nationalism by taking on the masculine traits approved by the hegemonic masculine interpretation of nation. Indeed, it is possible that some women may do so. But we must not forget that when women challenge societal ideas of femininity by taking on masculine traits, they may face censure and sanction from the (usually male) elite leading the project of masculinization. Further, that elite may not welcome such women, seeing their female presence as diluting the resolute masculinity of the nation. Therefore, it can be argued that women as political actors may become invisible when faced with such a process of masculinization. In reality, however, women within the many interpretations of nationalism have created a space within this framework, delicately negotiating their way through culturally dominant ideas of masculinity and femininity by means powerful and visible.

One important way in which this has occurred is by women taking on masculine traits to become citizen-warriors defending the nation. Women may do so in two ways. One is to protect national possessions (goods and land) and the other is by fending off attacks on their bodies. The latter act is crucial because according to the conceit of "nation as woman," women actually embody national honor, which can be sullied if enemy soldiers rape women. Women also intersect the masculinized discourse of nationalism by playing on their roles as wife and mother as well as on culturally endorsed ideas of wifehood and motherhood.

The above ideas shape the gendered lens I employ in analyzing the narrative of Hindu nationalism unfolding in contemporary India. I draw upon the role and construction of masculinity within Hindutva in the Indian context to examine the influence of the masculinization of nationalism on female political participation. I argue that while there are multiple interpretations of Hindu nationalism, an image central to the more militant of these views is that of the male warrior. It is important to acknowledge that the notion of militancy, within the context of Hindu nationalism, is contested. Social organizations such as the VHP and RSS and political parties such as the Shiv Sena and BJP all represent aspects of militant Hindu nationalism. However, ideological differences exist among them. For example, VHP

members define their nationalist mission as conserving tangible representa-
tions of Hindu religion (i.e., temples and idols) and participating in religious
rituals. RSS activists visualize themselves as social workers, building a strong
nation with education and discipline. Despite celebrating Hindu spirituality,
however, protecting temples, preserving idols, and observing Hindu rituals
are not the primary features of the RSS's nationalist vision. This difference
is succinctly illustrated by one RSS activist who was interviewed in New
Delhi in February 2002. He stated, "My first allegiance is to Bharat Mata
[Mother India] and not Ram [a Hindu deity revered and used by the VHP to
justify many of its militant activities]."[1] Further difference—for example,
evidence of tensions between BJP Prime Minister Vajpayee and the RSS
leadership, centered on the degree of militancy defining their respective
visions of Hindu nationalism—has been noted by Indian scholars (Kanungo,
2002, pp. 264–71).

However, despite internal dissensions, all these organizations do overlap
somewhat in their ideology because of close interpersonal relations and a
common commitment to establishing a powerful Hindu nation regardless of
certain fine distinctions made in articulating that national vision; for exam-
ple, Ashok Singhal, VHP leader, was also a member of the RSS. Similarly,
many activists of the Sena, BJP, and the VHP have close ties with the RSS
and at times with each other. The idea of the Hindu warrior referred to above
is an ideological commonality. This image, rooted in a notion of masculinity
defined by attributes of decisiveness, aggression, muscular strength, and a
willingness to engage in battle, is opposed to a notion of femininity that is
defined by traits such as weakness, nonviolence, compassion, and a willing-
ness to compromise. The image of the warrior—reflecting (as I term it) mas-
culine Hinduism—is the culmination of a series of gendered historical and
social processes playing themselves out in the Indian context. In addition to
this model, masculine Hinduism yields another image of manhood, the war-
rior-monk. This figure although still a valorization of physical strength also
incorporates ideas of spiritual strength and moral fortitude.

Further, militarism has not necessarily been an exclusively masculine
trait in India. Goddesses such as Kali and Durga illustrate that violence and
militarism have also been associated with the divine figure of the feminine.
The cult of the mother goddess as a symbol of martial strength and prowess
even inspired some nineteenth-century nationalist movements. Indeed, the
existence of multiple ways of mapping gender and militarism in India has, to
a certain extent, enabled female visibility in the Hindu nationalist project.
As the discussion below will highlight, women who participate in this project
are aware of and use various strategies to deal with masculinist fears that
female political presence may challenge socially prescribed gender roles and
hence weaken and feminize the image of the powerful, masculine nation.
Three models of female activism that I have chosen to order women's pres-

ence in Hindutva are: heroic mother, chaste wife, and celibate masculinized warrior. Although divergent in their articulation at the grassroots, all three representations of female behavior do draw on a common theme: female virtue and chastity. Whether as mother, wife, or warrior, woman's sexual nature is erased, and the need to be pure, modest, and chaste is emphasized. To sum up, a particular vision of Hindu nation informed by representations of hegemonic masculinity—Hindu soldier and warrior-monk—and associated ideas of femininity—heroic mother, chaste wife, and celibate warrior—has been ascendant in contemporary India over the past decade.

It is important to stress that these cultural processes did not emerge in a material vacuum but unfolded against a context of political and economic anxiety that may have heightened the salience of armed masculinity and models of female behavior rooted in notions of chastity and purity. The story of Mumbai and the Shiv Sena illustrates the background of political and economic frustrations that make this particular incidence of gendered nationalism meaningful. It is important to remember that while the details of the Mumbai case may be unique, the general theme of frustration, given failing industries, political stagnation, and growing inequities, is pervasive at all levels of Indian society (Talbot, 2000, pp. 225–27).

Fifty percent of Mumbai's population lives in horrific urban slums (D'Monte, 1993). The population of these slums keeps growing as migration from surrounding rural areas continues unabated. This demographic change has been occurring in tandem with deindustrialization. As a result the number of jobs in the manufacturing sector is decreasing while the only new jobs being created are service jobs that require sophisticated training and skills not available to the urban poor (D'Monte, 1993).

The failed 1982–1983 strike signalled the almost complete collapse of the textile mill industry in Mumbai. As textile mills were a major employer in the formal sector, this collapse meant the displacement of thousands of securely employed formal sector workers. Jogeshswari, a slum that has seen some of the worst Hindu-Muslim clashes in Mumbai, was home to a large proportion of millworkers. Further, it is significant that Hindu Maharashtrians, who form a majority of the Shiv Sena's followers, are well represented in all levels of the textile industry while they are underrepresented in other industries (Katzenstein, 1979). As the formal sector has shrank, the informal sector—daily wage labor, street vending, and domestic employment—has expanded. But these occupations do not pay well and offer no job security. Rather than dissipating the feeling of economic deprivation, it is possible that jobs in the informal sector may actually increase frustration, as well-paid factory workers who turn to these occupations out of desperation may resent their fall in status.

Additionally, economic hardship creates destructive self/other perceptions. For example, many uneducated Muslim youth in Mumbai feel they are

not benefiting from the fruits of modernization because of Hindu biases. In
contrast, many poor Hindus in the slums of Mumbai see the presence of tele-
visions and VCRs in some Muslim houses in the slums and immediately
assume that these are bought with money sent by a family member working
in the Middle East. These remittances, in the Hindu mind, are seen as proof
of the fact that other Islamic countries are subsidizing Indian Muslims who
are loyal not to the Indian nation but to Islam. Coupled with this belief is the
perception that a Congress Party (the Indian National Congress founded in
1885 and until recently the dominant party in India) hungry for votes has
been distributing votes to Muslims while ignoring Hindu needs. As a result,
there is a view circulating among many Hindus that Muslims are not loyal to
India, and in the past the Congress Party, in its greed for electoral power,
instead of condemning these alleged traitorous links to other Islamic coun-
tries, actually rewarded such behavior. Hindu resentment against Muslims is
further exacerbated by Muslim dominance in the powerloom industry in
Maharashtra (the state where Mumbai is located). After the 1982 strike
destroyed the large textile factories (dominated by Hindu Maharashtrian
workers) in Mumbai, textile manufacturing shifted to the powerloom sector.
Unlike the factories of Mumbai, the powerloom industry has a low capital
outlay, employs very few people, and is housed in a room or a shed on the
owner's property. In small towns like Bhiwandi in Maharashtra, the power-
loom industry has created a substantial section of middle-class Muslims. Dis-
gruntled and displaced Hindu textile workers and unemployed youth view
this affluence as another example of the Muslim community benefiting from
Hindu misery (Banerjee, 2000, pp. 61–84).

Coupled with this economic frustration is India's growing crisis of gov-
ernability. Atul Kohli (1991) points to the following causes for the Indian
state's declining capability to govern: the changing role of the elite and the
decline of the Congress Party's dominance in Indian politics (until 1996 the
Indian state was run by the Congress Party, except for a brief hiatus in 1977),
weak and ineffective political organizations, and the mobilization of new
groups for electoral participation (pp. 13–21). Many of these new groups have
resonated to the ideology of Hindu nationalism disseminated by parties like
the BJP and Shiv Sena. Another aspect of the crisis of governability in India
is the ever increasing public perception that the Congress Party's allegiance
to a politics that is tolerant of diversity and protective of minority rights is
faltering. This perception is shored up by the Congress Party's implication in
Hindu violence against Sikhs after the assassination of Indira Gandhi, this
administration's inability (some would say lack of willingness) to decisively
halt both the destruction of the Babri Mosque, and the all-India Hindu-Mus-
lim riots that followed in 1992–1993 as well as its willingness to ally with par-
ties like the Shiv Sena for local political advantage (e.g. during the seventies
in Mumbai, the Congress forged electoral alliances with the Sena to defeat

the Communist opposition). To sum up, although the exact details of decay and crisis may vary according to region, there is no doubt that economic and political frustration have created a context in India generally wherein Hindu nationalism resonates among a certain section of Hindus.

Against this context, armed masculinity denoting action, resolution, and most importantly the willingness to strike back and seize one's rightful share of the benefits is an extremely powerful cultural construct. While male Hindu warriors are resisting political and economic decay, their women, pure and chaste, are with them in the fray. An emphasis on the chastity of women and control of female sexuality during times of social uncertainty can be interpreted as a form of resistance to uncontrollable external changes. Certainly scholars (e.g., Asfar, 1987; Chhacchi, 1994; Derne, 2000; Mayer, 2000; Nagel, 1998) have argued that regulation of female sexuality occurs in a context where patriarchal authority structures are being challenged as economic changes enable the entry of women into the labor force and the rise of female-headed households. So it is not unreasonable to surmise that this form of control becomes a resistance to political decay situated in a national discourse wherein women's bodies and womanhood actually represent the nation. Consequently, controlling women and womanhood may be read as a metaphorical control of the nation. The theme of chastity and purity running through the multiple expressions of female activism within Hindu nationalism seems to illustrate this form of control. Having made the above argument, I must caution that I am not drawing a direct causal link, but delineating the material context within which the gendered discourse of Hindutva is expressing itself.

But even if women enter the nationalist project as citizen-warriors or mothers, it does not necessarily follow that they become involved in constructing a feminist nationalism. While the concrete political goals of feminist nationalisms will vary according to context, some common goals may include a restructuring of power relations within patriarchal families, fighting violence against women, and insisting on an equality of rights under the law. As will be discussed in this book, women's participation in Hindu nationalism reveals an interesting tension between feminine nationalist activism and feminist nationalism. This tension derives from the ideals of female virtue and chastity defining all three models of female activism and the discourse of the harmonious Hindu family within which they are embedded. As will be discussed more fully in chapter six, ideas of female virtue and the ideal of the Hindu family shunt aside a comprehensive critique of the multiplicity of women's lives, power relations and sexual aggression within families, and ideas of shame and sexual respectability that inhibit many Indian women's freedom. From the point of view of the Indian women's movement, the considerable empowerment Hindutva women derive from activism must be seen in conjunction with the above implications as well as the fact that female

political participation is perpetuating a vision of nation built on a monolithic masculinized self/other model closed to negotiation and compromise and implicated in intolerance as well as episodes of violence.

There is a body of work analyzing female participation in militant Hindu nationalism (e.g., Sarkar and Butalia, 1995) as well as gender and nation in India (e.g., Chowdhury, 2001; Gupta, 2001; Mankekar, 2000, 1998; Roy, 1998; Sinha, 1995). The Sarkar and Butalia book offers a collection of studies on women's activism in the Hindutva movement. However, most of these authors neither draw on current feminist theorizing on gender and nation for their analysis nor explicitly discuss the construction and implications of a nation built by hegemonic masculinity for women. Further, most authors who have discussed gendered nationalism in India predominantly focus on colonial India and do not explore various vital aspects of the historical evolution of masculinity in colonial times and its continuity within modern India, and/or do not explicitly link feminist theorizing on gender and nation to the modern Indian context. My work adds to these studies in three ways. One, while the works above do allude to ideas of masculinity, I find that many of them do not provide a detailed examination of an important cultural construct: Christian manliness and its dynamic reciprocal relationship with masculine Hinduism. This concept forms a vital component of my study, as it plays an integral role in illuminating the masculinization of the Hindu nation. Two, although I do discuss colonial India, my discourse primarily highlights the historical evolution of masculine Hinduism. Specifically, then, the main focus of my study is on gender and nation in modern Hindutva. Three, by explicitly locating the gendered Hindu nation within contemporary feminist theorizing on nationalism, I link the Indian case to a global system wherein a certain interpretation of masculinity becomes an important part of the vocabulary and behavior of states and provides cultural depth to current work on gender and nation. In sum, my study weaves together various isolated strands of theorizing on masculinity and nation in an attempt to offer a holistic analysis of gender and nation in an Indian context, currently not found in the literature.

The following chapter traces the gendered impact of British colonialism on Indian society by focusing on the construction, internal evolution, and use of Christian manliness by the imperial gaze. Chapter three highlights elite Indian response to this construct and the early nationalist delineation of masculine Hinduism. Chapter four explores the continuities and discontinuities between colonial visions of masculine Hinduism and modern ideas of Hindu nationalism. Chapter five analyzes the relationship between the masculinization of Hindu nationalism and female participation. Chapter six explores the implications of such participation with particular attention given to the tension attendant between women's activism in nationalism and feminist nationalism.

Finally, I would like to mention a few words on multiplicity before proceeding further with my analysis. Indian, indeed Hindu, nationalism has unfolded in multiple ways as various elite and common folk imaginatively responded to colonial and postcolonial conditions, essentially turning to their own cultural traditions to make sense of their realities. In this work, I shall focus on a single dominant strand—masculine Hinduism—that exists within the whole of the intricately woven cultural cloth that is India, for the reasons delineated above. My emphasis by no means denies the importance or existence of multiple other strands.