

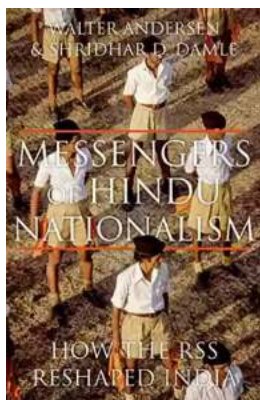
# How The RSS Reshaped India



India, a country rich in culture, history, and diversity, has witnessed numerous socio-political movements and organizations that have shaped its trajectory over the years. Among these influential groups, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) stands out as one of the most prominent organizations that have reshaped the nation.

## Understanding the RSS

The RSS, founded in 1925 by Keshav Baliram Hedgewar, is a right-wing Hindu nationalist organization. Its main objective is to promote the ideals of Hindu nationalism and instill a sense of pride in Indian culture and heritage. The organization believes in the concept of "Hindutva," which emphasizes the cultural, linguistic, and historical unity of Hindus.



### Messengers of Hindu Nationalism: How the RSS Reshaped India by Andri Snaer Magnason (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 2188 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 432 pages
Lending	: Enabled



With its roots in Nagpur, Maharashtra, the RSS has grown exponentially over the years and is now one of the largest voluntary organizations in India. Its members, known as "Swayamsevaks," engage in various activities aimed at nation-building, including social service, cultural preservation, and political activism.

## The RSS and Indian Politics

The RSS has played a significant role in shaping Indian politics since its inception. Although the organization does not directly participate in electoral politics, it has been instrumental in influencing the policies of political parties and

leaders. Many prominent leaders in India, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, have had affiliations with the RSS.

One of the ways the RSS has reshaped Indian politics is through its network of affiliated organizations. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is one such organization that shares ideological similarities with the RSS. The rise of the BJP, fueled by the support of RSS members and sympathizers, has resulted in a shift towards a more nationalist and conservative political landscape in India.

## **Influence on Education and Culture**

Education and cultural nationalism are key areas where the RSS has made a significant impact. The organization's focus on promoting a sense of national pride has led to the establishment of educational institutions and cultural centers across the country. These institutions aim to impart values rooted in Indian traditions and heritage.

The RSS's influence on education is also reflected in the revision of school textbooks, where emphasis is placed on highlighting the contributions of Hindu icons and historical figures. Critics argue that this approach could lead to a distortion of history and undermine the secular fabric of the country.

## **Controversies and Criticisms**

Despite its significant influence, the RSS has faced its fair share of controversies and criticisms. Critics argue that the organization's ideology promotes exclusivity, as it primarily focuses on Hindu nationalism. This approach has raised concerns among religious and ethnic minority groups, as well as those who advocate for a more inclusive and diverse India.

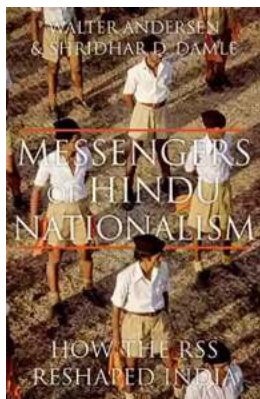
Moreover, the RSS has been accused of promoting an agenda that undermines the principles of secularism enshrined in India's constitution. Critics argue that the organization's influence on education and culture could lead to the marginalization of minority communities and threaten the pluralistic nature of Indian society.

## The Future of the RSS

As the RSS continues to shape India's socio-political landscape, its future will undoubtedly be marked by ongoing debates and discussions. The organization's ability to adapt to changing times while remaining committed to its core values will determine its long-term impact.

Furthermore, the RSS's influence on Indian politics is likely to persist, as many of its members and sympathizers occupy influential positions in the government. However, striking a balance between promoting nationalism and preserving the country's diverse identity will be crucial in maintaining social harmony and unity.

The RSS undeniably reshaped India, leaving an indelible mark on the nation's politics, education, and culture. While opinions regarding the organization may vary, its impact on shaping the narrative of India's national identity cannot be ignored.



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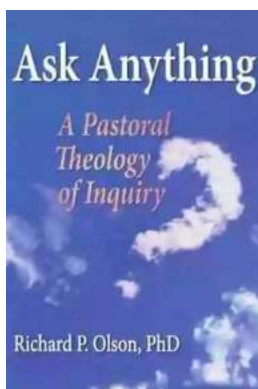
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The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) is a Hindu nationalist volunteer organization. It is also the parent of India's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party. Prime Minister Modi was himself a career RSS office-holder, or pracharak. This book explores how the RSS and its affiliates have benefitted from India's economic development and concurrent social dislocation, with rapid modernization creating a sense of rootlessness, disrupting traditional hierarchies, and attracting many upwardly mobile groups to the organization.

India seems more willing than ever to accept the RSS's narrative of Hindu nationalism--one that seeks to assimilate Hindus into a common identity representing true 'Indianness'. Yet the RSS has also come to resemble 'the Congress system', with a socially diverse membership containing a distinct left, right and center. The organization's most significant dilemma is how to reconcile the assault from its far right on cultural issues like cow protection with condemnations of globalization from the left flank.

Andersen and Damle offer an essential account of the RSS's rapid rise in recent decades, tracing how it has evolved in response to economic liberalization and assessing its long-term impact on Indian politics and society.



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