

Genocide in Gujarat
The International Community Looks Away
by Martha C. Nussbaum

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Martha C. Nussbaum is the Ernst Freund Distinguished Service Professor of Law and Ethics at the University of Chicago

On February 27, 2002, the Sabarmati express train arrived in the station of Godhra, in the state of Gujarat, bearing a large group of Hindu pilgrims who were returning from the alleged birthplace of the god Rama at Ayodhya (where some years earlier, angry Hindu mobs had destroyed the Babri mosque, which they claim is on top of the remains of Rama's birthplace). The pilgrimage, like many others in recent times, aimed at forcibly constructing a temple over the disputed site, and the mood of the returning passengers, frustrated in their aims by the government and the courts, was angrily emotional. When the train stopped at the station, passengers got into arguments with Muslim vendors and passengers. At least one Muslim vendor was beaten up when he refused to say "Jai Sri Ram" ("Hail Ram"), and a young Muslim girl narrowly escaped forcible abduction. As the train left the station, stones were thrown at it, apparently by Muslims.

Fifteen minutes later, one car of the train erupted in flames. Fifty-eight men, women, and children died in the fire. Most were Hindus. Attempts to determine what really happened by reconstructing the event have shown only that a large amount of a flammable substance must have been thrown from inside the train. We will never know who threw it. Because the area adjacent to the tracks contained Muslim dwellings, and because a Muslim mob had gathered in the region to protest the treatment of Muslims on the train platform, blame was immediately put on Muslims. (One former chief minister of Gujarat, Amarsinh Chaudhary, argued that the blaze was set by Hindu nationalists. Many others agree, especially in light of later evidence that the subsequent rioting had been elaborately prepared.) No evidence has been found linking alleged Muslim perpetrators to any organized movement or group.

In the days that followed, wave upon wave of violence swept through the state. The attackers were Hindus, many of them highly politicized, shouting Hindu-right slogans, such as "Jai Sri Ram" and "Jai Hanuman" (an aggressive monkey god), along with "Kill!" "Destroy!" "Slaughter!" There is copious evidence that the violence was planned before the precipitating event. The victims were almost all Muslims (with an occasional Christian or Parsi thrown in). There was no connection between victims and the alleged

perpetrators; attacks took place, for the most part, far from the original site. Many families of the original dead implored the mobs to stop the violence. Nonetheless, more than two thousand Muslims were killed in a few days, many by being burned alive in or near their homes. Nobody was spared: young children were immolated along with their families.

Particularly striking were the mass rapes and mutilations of women. Typically, a woman would be raped or gang-raped, often with gruesome tortures, and then set on fire and killed. Historian Tanika Sarkar, who played a leading role in investigating the events, has argued that the evident preoccupation with destroying women's sexual organs reveals "a dark sexual obsession about allegedly ultra-virile Muslim male bodies and overfertile Muslim female ones, that inspire[s] and sustain[s] the figures of paranoia and revenge." This sexual obsession is evident in the hate literature circulated during the carnage, of which the following "poem" is a typical example:

Narendra Modi [chief minister of Gujarat] you have fucked the mother of [Muslims]
The volcano which was inactive for years has erupted
It has burnt the arse of [Muslims] and made them dance nude
We have untied the penises which were tied till now
Without castor oil in the arse we have made them cry
Wake up Hindus, there are still [Muslims] alive around you
Learn from Panvad village where their mother was fucked
She was fucked standing while she kept shouting
She enjoyed the uncircumcised penis
With a Hindu government the Hindus have the power to annihilate [Muslims]
Kick them in the arse to drive them out of not only villages and
Cities but also the country. [The word rendered "Muslims" (miyas) is a word meaning "mister" that is standardly used to refer to Muslims.]

As Sarkar says, the incitement to violence is suffused with anxiety about virility, and the treatment of women seems to enact a fantasy of sexual sadism far darker than mere revenge.

During the violence, many Muslim cities and villages were burned to the ground. Muslims of all social classes fled for their lives. One former chief justice of the Rajasthani High Court, living in retirement in Gujarat, fled, later commenting to an investigative tribunal that there was "a deliberate conspiracy to stifle criminal law."

What this witness meant was that the carnage was aided and abetted both by the police and by local politicians. Police egged on the inciters, either passively, by failing to respond to calls for help or, in some cases, more actively. It is now clear that police received orders not to intervene in

the carnage, and that those who disobeyed these orders were punished by demotions and transfers. After the fact, police made it virtually impossible to register criminal complaints. Meetings were held between police and local government leaders, at which Hindus were called "we" and Muslims "them," and pleas of some officers to take action against rioters were rejected. Meanwhile, local leaders of the Hindu-right were seen shouting slogans and inciting the mob to further violence.

Particularly upsetting was the active participation of tribal and lower caste Hindus, adivasis and dalits, in the violence against equally poor Muslims. The Hindu nationalist party, Bharatiya Janata (BJP), has succeeded all too well in its strategy of getting many lower caste Hindus to put religion ahead of caste and class and to fear as their enemies not the wealthy and upper caste Hindus who have long oppressed them, but the Muslims who in most cases share their economic misery.

Ideological Background of Hindu Nationalism

The events of March 2002 emerged from a long history of deliberate construction of hate. For some time, a lot of money (whose sources I shall discuss later) has been poured into the creation of camps for young Hindu men, where they are taught hatred and fear of Muslims and partisan fervor is cultivated. For older folks, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP), the cultural wing of the Hindu nationalist movement, organizes pilgrimages to Ayodyha, which invariably stir up sectarian emotion.

But the history of the episode goes back much further. We need to consider the origins of the BJP (the political arm of Hindu nationalism) and its allied organizations, the umbrella Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), the Bajrang Dal (paramilitary), and the VHP (cultural). When we examine this history, we see that the tensions between Hindus and Muslims expressed here are not "ancient" or even indigenous hatreds. They result from a borrowed fascist ideology of purity, which has gradually been imposed, transforming a Hinduism that in its origins is plural, diverse, and tolerant.

The ideologue whose views were central in the formation of the RSS and BJP, M. Golwalkar, derived many of his views from German romantic nationalism, and especially from its National Socialist formation. In his 1939 tract *We, or Our Nationhood Defined*, Golwalkar argues that only Hindus are true Indians, and that Muslims, Christians, Parsis, and Jews are all foreigners, who should stay in the territory only on terms set by the Hindus.

[T]he foreign races in Hindusthan must either adopt the Hindu culture and language, must learn to respect and hold in reverence Hindu religion, must entertain no idea but those of the glorification of the Hindu race and culture, i.e. of the Hindu nation, and must lose their separate existence to merge in the Hindu race, or [they] may stay in the country, wholly

subordinated to the Hindu nation, claiming nothing, deserving no privileges, far less any preferential treatment-not even citizen's rights.

Golwalkar portrays the Muslims, particularly, as outsiders and "despoilers" who must now finally be "shake[n] off." Expressing his sympathy with the Nazi program, he writes:

To keep up the purity of the Race and its culture, Germany shocked the world by her purging the country of the Semitic Races-the Jews. Race pride at its highest has been manifested here. Germany has also shown how well nigh impossible it is for Races and cultures, having differences going to the root, to be assimilated into one united whole, a good lesson for us in Hindusthan to learn and profit by.

As late as 1966, Golwalkar repeated the same views, calling Jews and Parsis "guests," and Muslims and Christians "invaders." And he explicitly attacked the Indian Constitution (drafted in 1950) for its pluralism and secularism: "Unfortunately in our country our Constitution has equated the children of the soil with the aggressor, and given equal rights to everybody."

Such attitudes have nothing to do with the history of the Hindu religion or with any religious doctrines dating from before the 1930s. Hinduism, rather like ancient Greek religion, has traditionally been plural, loosely organized, regional, and highly varied. The very idea that Rama is the one central god in the Hindu pantheon is itself a BJP political construct. In some regions Rama was important, in others not, and in some he was not even thought of as an admirable deity. Hindus and Muslims have traditionally borrowed a lot from one another, and it is futile to inquire into the origins of a given practice. Most salient differences that studies of human well-being measure (for example, differences regarding the status of women) are regional rather than religious; that is, Hindus and Muslims in a given region have similar practices in many important matters. Over the years, however, the BJP has worked very successfully to create the public perception that Hinduism really is what the BJP says it is, and that Islam is very different, dedicated to violence and subversion and to the oppression of women. Through highly effective use of mass media, and, lately, through linking its propaganda to international anxieties about Islam, it has achieved a wide success.

BJP leaders sometimes try to distance themselves from Golwalkar and his somewhat more polite fellow ideologue V. D. Savarkar, but there should be no doubt what the program really is. The recent rewriting of textbooks under the auspices of M. Joshi, current minister for education, has led to systematic falsification of the history of Hindu-Muslim interactions, with Hindus portrayed as virtuous victims and Muslims as bloodthirsty aggressors. (A part of this effort has been a vicious campaign, in both India and the

United States, to smear the reputation of Romila Thapar, a distinguished historian of ancient India, now holding a prestigious chair at our Library of Congress, who has courageously insisted on the truth about past events.) The pluralism and syncretism that have always characterized Hinduism is also effaced, and the absolutely clear fact (clear from the Vedas themselves) that Hindus once ate beef may not be mentioned. The new literature textbook contains sentences such as, "Kabir is a nice boy, even though he is a Muslim." In history texts the Nazi regime is described admiringly. The official Gujarat high school textbook on social studies for Class IX makes the blatantly false claim that in most states Hindus are in a minority and that Muslims, Christians, and Sikhs are in the majority-even though Hindus are approximately 85 percent of the population and Muslims less than 10 percent. In short, the agenda of the BJP, clean it up as they may for electoral purposes, would deny to minorities, especially Muslims and Christians, full equality under the Constitution. In the service of this agenda, appeals to fear of minorities and incitement to threatening and sometimes violent actions against them are absolutely central.

Violence from the RSS is a daily threat in many parts of the nation. In Lucknow, a city with a history of warm cooperation and syncretism between Hindus and Muslims, saffron-clad youth brigades now parade around the university campus and threaten young women who wear blue jeans or celebrate Valentine's Day, practices that they deem Western and Christian. Five years ago, the female acting vice chancellor of the University, Roop Rekha Verma, a philosopher and a courageous activist for women's rights and minority rights, found her office occupied by three hundred such youths. She managed to get them to disperse peacefully. This is the way things are in areas where the BJP is strong: a general atmosphere of threat prevails, and essential civil liberties are fragile. In many regions, economic boycotts directed at Muslim businesses have had a major impact.

Gujarat has been unusually prone to outbreaks of both anti-Christian and anti-Muslim violence, and its elected BJP officials ran on a strong Hinduization platform. Why should tensions run high in Gujarat, the state that gave birth to Gandhi's campaign of nonviolence, the state that saw the birth of Ela Bhatt's now world-famous movement to organize female workers? One plausible conjecture is that the Muslims of Gujarat play a somewhat different role in society than Muslims elsewhere in India. Elsewhere, Muslims are on average poor, ill-educated, downtrodden. In Gujarat, although most Muslims are very poor, a significant number have been a merchant class, well off and socially prominent. They can thus be compared to the Jews in Europe: as successful people they more easily arouse fear and resentment. Still, before the advent of the BJP and RSS, Hindus and Muslims for the most part lived side by side in amity.

Reactions and Aftermath

As I have said, the mass killings and rapes of innocent Muslims were aided and abetted by the police and leading politicians. Let us look more closely at the reactions of people higher up.

The main response of BJP officials was to deploy a logic of action and reaction: yes, these things are tragic, but what do you expect? Once someone starts it, events take their inevitable course. In other words, once a small number of Hindus are allegedly killed by a small number of Muslims, it is inevitable that Hindus will riot and murder lots of innocent Muslims and nothing will be done about that. BJP chief minister Narendra Modi during the events, stated, "What is happening is a chain of action and reaction." Shortly after that, he said, "It is natural that what happened in Godhra the day before yesterday, where forty women and children were burnt alive, has shocked the country and the world. The people in that part of Godhra have had criminal tendencies. . . . And now they have done this terrible crime for which a reaction is going on." Modi's statements not only justified the violence as a response to an alleged long history of "criminal tendencies," they also portrayed it as unstoppable, more like a natural cataclysm than a set of blameworthy human acts. Local VHP leader Ashok Singhal took this "Newtonian logic," as it was called in the press, one step further: the rioting was "a matter of pride," "a befitting reply to what has been perpetrated on the Hindus in the last 1000 years. Gujarat has shown the way and our journey of victory will begin and end on the same path."

At the national level, the government followed a similar rhetorical strategy, a little more deviously. Although some BJP leaders, as well as the opposition, called for Modi's resignation (which the national party could require), other influential leaders defended his conduct. Among his most ardent defenders was Arun Jaitley, minister of law. (Jaitley, a smooth Westernized man who goes down well with the Indian American community, was briefly shifted to a party post, but now he is back in the Law Ministry.) Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee, who is usually considered a moderate, the "decent" face of the Hindu right, showed his true colors in a speech given to a party congress at Goa, on March 3, 2002, in which he said:

What happened in Gujarat? If a conspiracy had not been hatched to burn alive the innocent passengers of the Sabarmati Express, then the subsequent tragedy in Gujarat could have been averted. But this did not happen. People were torched alive. Who were those culprits? The government is investigating into this. Intelligence agencies are collecting all the information. But we should not forget how the tragedy of Gujarat started. The subsequent developments were no doubt condemnable, but who lit the fire? How did the fire spread? Wherever Muslims live, they don't like to live in co-existence with others, they don't like to mingle with others; and instead of propagating their ideas in a peaceful manner, they want to spread their faith by resorting to terror and threats. The world has become alert to this

danger.

Although other parts of Vajpayee's speech appear to defend the concept of a pluralistic, tolerant India, here he adopts Modi's logic of action and reaction and fails to condemn either the actions of the Hindu perpetrators or the inaction of the police. The government's official inquiry into the events is plodding on, and is unlikely to deliver or to act on the truth.

The opposition Congress Party did condemn the events but not very strongly. In contesting the subsequent election in Gujarat, it chose a course of moderate Hinduization, trying to capture votes by moving to the center (a familiar tactic!), rather than rejecting the Hindu-nationalist program and defending pluralism and equal rights. It thus lost all moral credibility, as well as the election.

Who behaved well? Although the Gujarati press systematically concealed the real nature of the events (apart from the one Muslim newspaper), the national press on the whole covered events admirably and dissected the statements of leading politicians with suitable skepticism. The national Electoral Commission also played a good role, postponing new elections until the rule of law could be reestablished and at least some Muslim refugees were able to return home. (Of course, in many cases they had neither homes nor jobs to return to. The government was quick to build roads and temples over the ruins of Muslim homes. Relief and reconstruction are still virtually nonexistent.) Several investigative groups did heroic work, going to the refugee camps to collect data. Most important was the independent Concerned Citizens' Tribunal, chaired by former chief justice Krishna Iyer, one of the most distinguished jurists in India's history. This commission, which included lawyers, judges, and academics, produced as complete a record of the events as we are ever likely to get, collecting 2,094 oral and written testimonials, interviewing hundreds of witnesses, gathering pamphlets and other texts, and identifying culpable individuals. Now we know who should be charged with various offenses, even if it is unlikely that charges will ever be brought.

In the course of its work, the commission found chinks in the BJP's armor. One leading minister testified at length under condition of anonymity. And there were numerous prominent Hindus from Gujarat who came forward to deplore the events and to give what information they could. A particular favorite of mine is Piyush Desai, CEO of the Gujarat Tea Processors and Packers Limited, which produces the popular Wagh Bakri brand of tea. Mentioning that his business was started a hundred and ten years ago through the help of a Muslim who gave his grandfather a large loan, he spoke eloquently of the history of cooperation between the religions in Gujarat, deplored the crimes, and said of the help he had received from Muslims, "However can we repay such a debt?" The commissioners comment, "This witness was a

fresh and welcome ray of hope for the Tribunal." They mention that he paid for tea for all the refugee camps out of his own pocket, "along with paper cups that are hygienic."

In December 2002, Modi won reelection by a landslide, playing the cards of hate and fear. Muslim businesses in many areas of Gujarat have been taken over by Hindus, as their owners have fled, and so the condition of Muslims in the state is worse than ever. The continuing economic boycott deprives even those who remain of much of their livelihood. Indiscriminate arrests of Muslims continue, often under the screen of the national Prevention of Terrorism Act, a favorite BJP piece of legislation. There is one ray of hope: the BJP, trying to use this same hate politics in other recent state elections, has not prevailed. In particular, in Himachal Pradesh, the party went down to a solid defeat last winter. So the implications of the carnage for national politics are as yet unclear, and one may still hope for a multireligious democracy in India.

Genocide and Law

How should concerned citizens of the world think about these terrible events? I suggest that six features are especially relevant.

1. Genocide. It is an undisputed fact about Gujarat that there were mass killings and rapes on grounds of religion. Muslims were sought out not because of any even imagined complicity in the precipitating event at Godhra, but simply because they were Muslims. Slogans shouted by the mob indicate that their intent was to assert Hindu superiority, to exterminate Muslims, and to destroy Muslim society: for example, "Kill them all, destroy their society." "Finish off all Muslims; our people were not spared by them, don't have mercy."

In light of these facts, it seems beyond dispute that the violence in Gujarat meets the definition of genocide offered in the UN Convention on Genocide:

Article 2. In the present Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: (a) Killing members of the group; (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

Indeed, given the centrality of rape in the events that took place, usually rape followed by murder, we can say that the intent to destroy the group is enacted in all the ways the Convention specifies-with the exception of the

removal of children to another group, since children were murdered here along with their parents.

Moreover, the evidence of long and deliberate construction of hatred undermines any claim that these events were just the acts of a mob that got out of control.

2. Abrogation of the Rule of Law. To most commentators on the events, the most disturbing feature was the complicity of officers of the law at all levels. Modi and other government officials actively egged on the violence. The prime minister failed to show concern for the violation of the fundamental rights of Indian citizens. The national BJP government has made no effort to conduct a serious investigation into the crimes and has repeatedly refused calls for Modi's resignation.

In all these ways, Gujarat signals a fundamental breakdown of the rule of law. This was not simply mob violence but rather the infiltration and cooption of the law itself by the engines of hate and fear. The very existence and meaning of India's pluralistic democracy are deeply compromised by these events, which show that some citizens can count on the law's coming to their aid and others cannot. The Concerned Citizens' Tribunal presented a series of recommendations for trial and punishment of the main offenders, but there is no sign that these recommendations are being taken seriously by law enforcement officials.

Sarkar argues compellingly that these events highlight a difficulty for some fashionable versions of the politics of difference. Insofar as proponents of identity politics neglect the importance of traditional notions of citizenship, equality, and rights, they undercut "the only ground on which cultural difference can be sustained and asserted. We reject this truth . . . as an old and therefore unusable brand in the marketplace of ideas at our peril. The only opposite term to equal citizenship rights is unequal citizenship or the denial of citizenship. That is precisely what happened in Gujarat."

3. No Genuine Security Issue. Repeatedly, Vajpayee and other Hindu fundamentalist leaders tried to link the Muslims who allegedly attacked the train to both Pakistan and international terrorism. The current world atmosphere, especially the indiscriminate use of the terrorism card by the United States, has made it easier for them to get away with this. There is no evidence that either of these links has any reality. Muslims in India are a highly diverse group, but it is obvious that one thing they have in common is that they did not go to Pakistan. One cannot always infer choice from such facts, but one certainly cannot infer Pakistani sympathies either, far less complicity in alleged Pakistani plots against India. As the political philosopher Pratap Mehta has written, Indian Muslims are perhaps the largest

Muslim community in the world that has never produced either a massive fundamentalist movement or a rush to join terrorists. Moreover, because Indian Muslims are mostly poor (in good part because of the persistent discrimination they have encountered), the attempt to portray them as a dangerous social force sowing dissent from within is unrealistic-even though in Gujarat such threats derive more surface credibility from the relative prosperity of Gujarati Muslims.

As for al-Qaeda, all one can say is that Vajpayee, like others we know, is only too ready to use this name as a scare tactic, in the absence of any evidence at all making the connection. We don't even know how the train was set on fire, much less who did it, so a fortiori we don't know if any of these people is connected to al-Qaeda. Given that the background to the train incident involved violence against Muslims on the platform at Godhra station, retaliation is a far more likely motive, if indeed the perpetrators of the torching were Muslims.

In short, the Indian nation faces no serious security threat from within that might have explained, even if it would not have justified, restrictive measures against Muslims and a climate of fear and hostility toward them. Insofar as India does face a serious security threat from Pakistan, the Gujarat victims are far more distant from the Muslims of Pakistan than most Japanese Americans were from the Japanese regime at the time of World War II. For one thing,, fifty-five years had passed since Partition; for another, the vast majority of Indian Muslims are not immigrants at all, but native-born Indians.

4. Massive Funding from U.S. Sources. A very important issue to ponder, and one that Americans may be able to alter, is funding. The Indian community in America has strong ties to Hindu nationalism. The VHP is highly organized here and is often regarded as the legitimate voice of the Indian community-as, for example, when it succeeded in stopping the screening of a film by Anand Patwardhan at the Museum of Natural History in New York on the grounds that its (socially radical) portrayal of caste tensions was offensive to Hindu sensibilities. Americans should be very clear about what this organization is and what it supports. It does not speak for India or for Hinduism; it speaks for the politics of Hindu nationalism, including its hate politics. Highly significant in the funding of the Gujarat violence were private donations organized through the American VHP and various charities that it has organized. The connection of these charities to the funding of hatred has now been amply documented in a report entitled *The Foreign Exchange of Hate: IDRF and the American Funding of Hindutva* that may be accessed online (IDRF being the acronym of the India Development and Relief Fund, the chief charity in question).

What this report shows (and other sources have confirmed) is that almost no money from this allegedly charitable organization goes to fund welfare or general poverty relief. Funds are targeted, first, at organizations for Hindus only. Second, the money is largely used for cultural activities that are highly inflammatory in character, in particular for the camps of the Bajrang Dal, where young Hindu boys are taught the ideology of Hindutva and where hatred and fear of Muslims are openly advocated.

Some Americans of Indian descent probably give to this charity in ignorance, truly believing that it funds general charitable activities. (One cannot get a tax deduction for contributing directly to a charity in India, so one must seek out these U.S. conduits.) Some, and these days the larger number, give to the IDRF because they know exactly what the money will be used for, and they think these purposes are good. Widespread opposition to congressional investigation of the funding issue shows fear that the links may be cut. The American VHP has also taken the lead in the recent attacks on historian Romila Thapar.

5. The Importance of the Truth. It is sometimes still fashionable to denigrate the pursuit of historical truth. No doubt postmodernism has alerted us to important questions about any attempt to construct a historical narrative. And yet the events of Gujarat vividly demonstrate the great importance of historical truth for any state that thinks of itself as democratic and committed to human freedom and equality. Both the general attempt to rewrite history in textbooks for the young and the very specific attempts (through legal delay, failure to investigate, and false reporting) to conceal the truth about Gujarat, substituting a narrative of terrorism foiled, show us exactly why the search for truth is so important for us all. The attempts of members of the Indian American community to conceal the nature of their "charitable" activities tell the same tale.

In all these cases, however difficult it is to give a philosophically adequate account of historical truth, we can all see what the truth is not, and we can also see that the efforts of the tribunal to document what happened have a profound political importance, the same importance history has in George Orwell's 1984, as an essential bulwark against tyranny. As Sarkar eloquently writes:

There can be no political implication, no resource for struggle, if we deny the truth claims of these histories of sadism, if we . . . denigrate the search for true facts as mere positivism, a spurious scientism. For the life and death of our political agenda depend on holding on to the truth claim, to that difference with VHP histories, to that absolute opposition to their proclamation that they will make and unmake facts and histories according to the dictates of conviction . . .

6. The Silence of the World. The events of Gujarat have led to few large-scale public statements. The government of Finland did protest at the time-and was denounced by the Vajpayee government for foreign interference. Our State Department has included an accurate summary of the events in its 2002 International Religious Freedom Report, but the U.S. government has not foregrounded these events in its foreign policy; indeed I cannot locate any major statement made by a member of the current administration condemning the attacks. The Democrats have also been silent-with the exception of former president Bill Clinton, who in March 2003 issued a long statement for a conference sponsored by the journal India Today, in which he condemned the atrocities and criticized the national government for its failure to stand against the politics of hate: "To identify and categorize people based on faith will keep India from becoming the right kind of giant in the 21st century." He added that efforts to rebuild Gujarat after the 2000 earthquake, for which he helped raise funds, showed him that Hindus and Muslims can work together in the state.

Clinton always took a particular interest in India, and he knows a great deal about it, so this does not surprise me. What does surprise me is the silence of everyone else. Here is a clear case for heavy diplomatic pressure, and possibly economic sanctions, given the complicity of the government in the terrible events. But nothing like this has even been suggested.

As for the academy, there is naturally a lot of writing about Gujarat by academics in India; some were members of the Concerned Citizens' Tribunal, along with judges and lawyers, thus continuing India's honorable tradition of continuity between scholarship and social activism. Americans who work on India have no doubt contributed to this literature, although not very prominently so far as I can see. But I know of no organized efforts by American academics to express moral outrage: for example, publishing petitions or advertisements condemning the carnage or organizing movements to seek economic sanctions against the state of Gujarat, or even divestiture of university stockholdings in businesses that operate heavily in the state. Whether these actions would be correct is unclear to me; but we should be asking what actions are correct and debating the alternatives.

At the very least, concerned citizens of the world, academic and nonacademic, should be educating themselves about the situation and expressing their views. One way of doing so, for those of us who have a close relationship with the Indian American community in the United States, is to work on producing the facts for, and trying to persuade, those in that community who are ready to listen. For those who don't have this sort of relationship, there are many other things that can be done: teach about these events; invite speakers who talk about them to organizations both academic and nonacademic; write about them in the course of whatever writing

you do on human rights issues. This educational effort needs to include getting to know the work of important scholars in India, such as Thapar and Sarkar, who are not household names in America, but who have put themselves on the line for justice.

And there are actions that we can all take as citizens (actions that many more U.S. citizens take with regard to the Middle East). We can write to our representatives in Congress to urge the full investigation of the alleged charities that fund hatred. We can write expressing overall concern with a U.S. policy that is basically silent about this genocide. In short, we can try to promote knowledge, debate, and the circulation of the truth, knowing that silence and indifference are the allies of tyranny.

Martha C. Nussbaum is Ernst Freund Distinguished Service Professor of Law and Ethics at the University of Chicago, appointed in the Philosophy Department, Law School, and Divinity School. She is an Affiliate of the Committee on Southern Asian Studies and a Board member of the Human Rights Program.

Most of the information in this article can be found in the "Report of the Concerned Citizens' Tribunal," which is online at www.sabrang.com. See also Siddarth Varadajan, ed., *Gujarat: The Making of a Tragedy* (Penguin Books, 2002), an excellent collection of documents and articles to which I am also indebted. On the funding issue, see "The Foreign Exchange of Hate: IDRF and the American Funding of Hindutva," also at www.sabrang.com. Tanika Sarkar's statements are cited from her article "Semiotics of Terror," in *Economic and Political Weekly*, July 13, 2002; Pratap Mehta's from his article "Facing Intolerance," in the *Hindu*, December 20, 2002. I am grateful to Zoya Hasan for comments and discussion.