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Negotiating Malaviya's Place in Modern Indian History

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Negotiating Malaviya's place in Modern Indian History*

Abstract

Madan Mohan Malaviya (1861-1946) was among the leading lights of the Indian national movement. He had the longest stint as a leader of the Congress, participating and leading since its Calcutta session in 1886. He also steered the Hindu Mahasabha during its formative phase. However, in the narratives of modern Indian history and politics, he is projected more as a Hindu communal leader, appropriating conservative sentiments, and therefore, fit to be ignored. However, as this paper proposes, that along with his concern for Hindu unity and opposition to separate electorate, he was also a firm advocate of Hindu-Muslim unity. To Malaviya, the cause of dharma, in a very broad and expansive sense, reigned supreme. While this concern brought his Sanatanist outlook into the public domain, he was able to deftly connect it with a resurgent sense of patriotism. The aim of this paper is to contextualize Malaviya's role and contribution in ushering in a larger goal of Hindu sangathan while strengthening Indian nationalism. In his scheme of things, and in the situation that he saw the country in, he found the two objectives inseparable.

Keywords: Malaviya, Gandhi, Congress, Hindu Mahasabha, Congress Nationalist Party, Hindu University, Poona Pact, Sanatan dharma, Sangathan

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Introduction

In the standard history of modern India, Madan Mohan Malaviya's role and contributions have received less attention than they deserve. His stint of more than fifty years as an important member and leader of the Indian National Congress (its president in 1909 and 1918, besides getting the unique honour of presiding over the two banned sessions of the party in 1932 and 1933);¹ his founding of the Indian National Party and the Independent Congress Party in 1926 and of the Congress Nationalist Party in 1934; president and leader of the Hindu Mahasabha in its formative years; leader of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan and the Sanatan dharma organizations; and various other bodies ought to have earned him a more distinctive place in our narratives than what has been attributed so far. He was a distinguished member of the UP Legislative Council (1902-1913) and later of the Imperial Legislative Council and the Central Assembly (1910-30) for over a quarter of a century, raising noteworthy issues concerning India and its people.² He founded, edited, nurtured and supervised several newspapers in Hindi and English turning them into significant voices of Indian nationalism. And though the Hindu University is among his stellar contributions to India's national life, his role is either confined to founding and nurturing of this university, or alternatively, he gets painted as a Hindu conservative, a revivalist and a communalist.

Though a prominent 'Moderate', Malaviya hardly figures in discussions on the debates between 'Moderates' and 'Extremists'. An important leader of the anti-indenture movement, he finds less of a mention while discussing the response of the Indian nationalist leadership to the plight of the indentured labour. In many significant works of history and politics dealing with the growth of nationalism and communalism, he is either shown as creating right wing pressures within the Congress or his role is reduced to being a Hindu revivalist within the party.³ In several other instances, when social scientists sit down to list notable icons of our

¹'Malaviya's Life: A Dedication to India's Service', *Hindustan Times*, 13 November 1946.

² Under the Indian Council Act of 1892, municipal boards of the province were divided into two, each of which could send one person to the provincial legislature. The municipal boards of Allahabad, Agra and Benaras comprised one group. It was this group which unanimously elected Malaviya to the UP Legislative Council in 1902, re-electing him unopposed in 1904, 1906 and 1908. Under the Indian Council Act of 1909, the number of elected non-official members rose which enabled the Allahabad Municipal Board to send one member on its own. Also the term of the members was now extended to three years. In the re-constituted Council, Malaviya was elected unopposed for a term of three years 1910-13. The reformed Council, in its inaugural meeting on 5 January 1910, elected Malaviya and Majid Khan to the central legislature or the Imperial Legislative Council. He continued to get elected to the central legislature till 1930, except during 1920-23, when he did not contest adhering to the boycott of the councils during the Non-Co-operation movement.

³ For example, Sumanta Banerjee blames Malaviya for revival of Hindu communalism in the 1920s through the Hindu Mahasabha. See Sumanta Banerjee, 'The Communists, the Congress and the Anti-Colonial Movement',

past, or, in major writings on modern Indian history, Malaviya finds little mention.⁴ This is symptomatic of a larger trend. It is often forgotten that there was a wide spectrum of leadership within the Hindu Mahasabha and that leaders such as Malaviya and Lajpat Rai were eager to bring unity among different communities while not forgetting the need for Hindu unity.⁵

As president of the Congress in 1918 and as a well known Indian leader in the Imperial Legislative Council, Malaviya's deliberations on important legislations such as the Montague Reforms, Rowlatt Bills and the Indemnity bill are less known. He was instrumental in setting up the Congress sub-committee for inquiring into the Punjab wrongs in 1919. In 1923, appearing in the Allahabad High Court after more than a decade of having relinquished the Bar, he was able to secure the death sentences reversed in the Chauri Chaura case in more than 150 cases. He also sought commutation of death sentence awarded to Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev. On 14 February 1931, he wrote to the viceroy pleading with him to exercise his prerogative of mercy, arguing that the action of these revolutionaries was not prompted by any personal or selfish consideration, rather by a patriotic impulse. Their execution, Malaviya emphasized, would give 'great shock to public feeling in the country.'⁶ At the Karachi Congress session on 31 March 1931, while seconding the resolution related to

Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. 19, No. 29 (Jul. 21, 1984), pp. 1168-1172. Chris Bayly admits that it was 'difficult to find evidence of active anti-Muslim behaviour' in Malaviya and that he (Malaviya) anticipated Gandhi in 'deploring the status of untouchables'. But he concludes that it was the 'obscurity of his character and real political aims' which resulted in 'widespread distrust which seems strangely at variance with his moral uprightness and relative mildness of personal ambition.' See C.A. Bayly, *The Local Roots of Indian Politics: Allahabad, 1880-1920*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1975, pp. 216-17.

⁴ In *Makers of Modern India*, Ramachandra Guha (2011), while including many iconic figures (including some lesser known too) who he thought contributed to shaping the country during the past two centuries, ignored Malaviya. This list has such names as Rammohun Roy, Syed Ahmed Khan, Phule, Periyar, Gokhale, Tilak, Gandhi, Jinnah, Tarabai Shinde, Ambedkar, Verrier Elwin, Golwalkar, Jawaharlal, Lohia, JP, Hamid Dalwai and Rajaji. The leader did not find mention even among those who had been left out due to lack of space or due to changes in ideological emphasis across ages. In another recent book- *Incarnations: India in 50 Lives* (2012), Sunil Khilnani picks up thirty personalities of the modern period from William Jones to Dhirubhai Ambani, but Malaviya is again a significant omission. These personalities include- Rammohun Roy, Lakshmi Bai, Phule, Deen Dayal, Jansetti Tata, Vivekananda, Besant, Chidambaram Pillai, Gandhi, Jinnah, Manto, Iqbal, Subhas Bose, Sheikh Abdullah and Ambedkar. Karan Singh has noted that just because Malaviya was a devout Hindu, many historians have generally overlooked his remarkable achievements. See Karan Singh, 'Mahamana Madan Mohan Malaviya', *India International Centre Quarterly*, Vol. 39, No.2 (Autumn 2012), pp. 41-44.

⁵ Lajpat Rai once clarified in a letter to the *Tribune*, that along with Malaviya, he had stuck to the Congress, in spite of their 'strong differences' with the party, because it represented the 'only national movement of importance in India' which deserved to be supported by all patriotic Indians. Quoted in M.R. Jayakar, *The Story of My Life, Vol. II, 1922-1925*, Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1959, p. 715.

⁶ Parmanand, *Mahamana Madan Mohan Malaviya*, Vol. II, Malaviya Adhyayan Sansthan, BHU, 1985, pp. 782-783.

Bhagat Singh and other revolutionaries, Malaviya underlined that ‘it was not selfishness’ but a desire for ‘real independence’ that had guided Bhagat Singh and his friends to this path.⁷

From 1886 to 1937, Malaviya was a regular in the conferences and developments in the Indian National Congress, and subsequently, even when his health started failing, he continued to express opinion on critical issues facing the nation. He was thus the longest-serving member and leader of the grand old party during the colonial period. An unflinching supporter and leader of the anti-British movements participating in the Simon-boycott and the civil disobedience, he also took part in the Second Round Table Conference in 1931 along with Gandhi, and was instrumental in bringing about the Poona Pact. He made remarkable efforts, at times with Gandhi, and at another all by himself, in bringing back the so-called ‘untouchables’ to the Hindu fold, and pleading for equal rights to them. Political leaders of all hues looked up to him for guidance and inspiration. His vast political and legislative experience won him followers and he, in turn, mentored them.

What did Malaviya stand for?

Calling Malaviya a ‘great public character’, Pattabhi Sitaramayya emphasized that starting from the day that he (Malaviya) made his maiden speech at the Calcutta Congress in 1886 he continued ‘with unbroken zeal and unabating passion’, to serve this national institution—at times as a humble worker, at another, a leader, a ‘whole-hogger’ and in yet another a part protestor, and as a true Satyagrahi and civil resister in the British jails:

When the Non-co-operation movement was inaugurated, he kept himself aloof from it but never from the Congress. The Moderates had manned the Congress in their day and abandoned it; Mrs. Besant captured it and surrendered it. But through storm and sunshine, through good report and evil, Panditji has stuck to it; Panditji is the one man who has had the courage to be alone in what he considered to be the right. At one time he was on the crest of a wave of popularity, at another he was listened to with indifference on the Congress platform. He never yielded to the current forces either by sheer inertia or by fear of popular reprobation ... His *magnum opus* is the Benares Hindu University, but

⁷ Parmanand, *Malaviya*, Vol. II, p. 785. Malaviya was also a member of the working committee of the All-India Bhagat Singh Memorial Committee set up on 20 April 1931.

he is an institution by himself. He epitomizes India in all her achievements and reverses, in all her hopes and delusions and disillusionments.⁸

Sachchidanand Sinha had heard him speak for the first time at Allahabad Congress in December 1888. Sinha, who was then still a student at Patna College recalled that Malaviya's speeches combined 'rare eloquence with remarkable sweetness and suavity':

Pandit Malaviya is unique in the sense of being the only public speaker who tries to persuade the audience, not by reason of the power and vehemence of his language, but by great tact, wonderful gentleness and extraordinary charm, coupled with the most easy flowing fluency which, all combined, produce upon the hearer's mind and attention a soothing sense and at once carry conviction to it.⁹

Proposing his name as the Congress president in December 1909, Surendranath Banerjea referred to him as the 'silver tongued orator' of the Congress.¹⁰ Acharya Kripalani, who had been Malaviya's private secretary when he took over as the Congress president in 1918, said that Malaviya never opposed Gandhiji's movements. His outlook was liberal and more inclined towards Gokhale's school of thought: 'Yet he was too good a patriot to oppose the movement of Non-cooperation.'¹¹ Gandhi considered Malaviya a great patriot who had served the country better than anybody. Addressing BHU students in November 1920, he remarked: 'No doubt the University is Panditji's very life, but it seems to me truer that India is his life. He is an optimist.'¹² Writing in 1931, Gandhi called himself a 'worshipper of Malaviyajiji': 'Today, who can rival Malaviyajiji in patriotism? From his youth till today, the spirit of his patriotism has flowed unabated.'¹³ Speaking on the occasion of the silver jubilee convocation of BHU in 1942, Gandhi referred to Malaviya's simple life style and noble thinking and advised students to emulate him.¹⁴

⁸ Pattabhi Sitaramayya, *History of the Indian National Congress*, Volume-I (1885-1935), S. Chand & Co, Delhi, 1969, pp.101-102.

⁹ *Malaviya Commemoration Volume*, BHU, Varanasi, 1932, pp. 997-998.

¹⁰ *Leader*, 29 December 1909.

¹¹ *Oral Transcript of J.B. Kripalani*, Nehru Memorial Museum & Library (hereafter NMML), Manuscript, p. 52.

¹² *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Vol. 19, p. 25.

¹³ In Gandhi's own handwriting in Hindi, 7 September 1931, *Malaviya Commemoration Volume*, pp. 1-2 (translation author's).

¹⁴ Tendulkar, *Mahatma: The Life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi*, Vol. VI, Publications Division, Delhi, 1953, pp. 83-88.

Sanatanist at the core

Malaviya's traditional upbringing, his strong grounding in Sanskrit, his deep sense of reverence for the *shruti-smriti-puranic* texts and for the great Hindu epics naturally turned him into a Sanatani. The socio-religious public space of the late nineteenth century Allahabad in which Malaviya had grown up was one of intense metamorphosis and so were Calcutta and Benaras which he frequented. While the Brahma Samaj movement had matured and spread its wings to many parts of north and eastern India, the Arya Samaj that grew later during the 1880s and the 1890s, spreading to the Punjab and populous regions of the Hindi heartland, clearly adopted an anti-Brahmo posture. Being strongly critical of the missionary influence on the Hindu society the Arya Samajis advocated a return to the age of the Vedas and also criticised the ritual-ridden private as well as public space, and attacked caste-system and its hierarchy. Between these two extremes rose the Sanatanist movement.

Malaviya's activity in the public sphere had started at an early age when, as a student in Muir Central College, Allahabad, he developed keen interest in the Madhya Hindu Samaj founded in 1880 by Pandit Aaditya Ramji Bhattacharya, professor of Sanskrit at this same college. Bhattacharya, revered by Malaviya as his guru, left a strong and lasting influence as a teacher and mentor.¹⁵ This organization soon emerged as a hub of public and political activity in the city pursuing its objective of creating a bond among the Hindus of different castes, promoting education in the Indian languages, reforming social abuses, and presenting the desires and aspirations of the Hindus to the government.¹⁶ Bhattacharya was keen to chart a middle course at a time when different Hindu reform societies were preaching only certain parts of the Hindu tenets while abhorring others. Malaviya, as a devoted disciple, followed the same path. Padma Kant Malaviya¹⁷ underlined Malaviya's pioneering effort in uniting diverse forces in the midst of multiple Hindu reform movements:

Prarthana Samaj, Brahma Samaj and Arya Samaj and so many *samajas* were there in order to protect Indian culture against Western onslaught, but they could not take the entire Hindu community along with themselves...It was given to Pandit Malaviya to combine all these forces on one single platform and preserve the old traditions. But he

¹⁵ After his retirement in 1902, he was appointed as Principal of the Central Hindu College in Benaras (1904-06). In the setting up of the Hindu University, Malaviya received his active support. He also served as the University's Pro-Vice-Chancellor during 1916-18.

¹⁶ 'Sketch of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya' in *Speeches and Writings of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya*, G.A. Natesan & Co., Madras, 1919, p. 3.

¹⁷ Padma Kant Malaviya, son of Malaviya's nephew Krishna Kant Malaviya, later an editor of *Abhyudaya*, a Hindi weekly founded by Malaviya.

also was well aware that if we cut ourselves off completely from modern new ideals and technical progress that was being made in the West, then just like the old *pundits*, we would not be able to preserve the culture and it could not be in the interest of the country either. Therefore Malaviya's greatest contribution has been a synthesis of old traditions with modern knowledge, scientific knowledge, technology and all that the West had taught us and has to teach us.¹⁸

In his Sanatanist endeavour, his association with Din Dayalu Sharma, the great Sanatanist scholar and reformer, whom he had met in Calcutta during the Congress session in 1886, proved crucial. Their close camaraderie lasted their lifetime. And aided by the patronage of the maharaja of Darbhanga, this triumvirate proved crucial in pushing the Sanatanist movement and the cause. Though, not as well-knit and as well-organised as the Brahmos or the Aryas, the Sanatanists argued in favour of a greater Hindu tradition flowing from the Vedas and then developing further through the Shastric-Puranic tradition.

Impressed with the pan-Indian character of the Congress congregation at Calcutta, Din Dayalu felt the need for a similar all-India body for preserving Indian culture. And very soon, Din Dayalu and Malaviya started discussing plans for setting up an all-India organisation for Sanatan dharma.¹⁹ Accordingly, a meeting of Sanatanists was organized at Haridwar on 17 April 1887 which decided to hold a conference for setting up an all-India body. Consequently, a major conference was organised in the same city on 29 May-31 May 1887, in which it was decided to preach Sanatan dharma based on the Puranas and appoint preachers for this purpose; spread the teaching of Sanskrit; promote Hindi— attempt to make it a language in courts and also try to make it a medium of instruction in schools; bring together and unify different sects like Shaivism, Vaishnavism etc. considering their core is the same. This all-India organization was named Sanatan Dharma Mahamandal.²⁰ Malaviya was appointed its *mahopadeshak* or great preceptor.

The Mahamandal, steered by Din Dayalu, made slow but steady progress, holding conferences, helping found schools and colleges, and propagating the tenets of Sanatanism. These efforts culminated in the holding of a grand conference of the Mahamandal in Delhi on 8-12 August 1900, attended also by the maharaja of Darbhanga and Malaviya. Among the

¹⁸ *Oral Transcript of P.K. Malaviya*, NMML, Manuscript, pp.4-5.

¹⁹ Harihar Swarup Sharma, *Pandit Din Dayalu Sharma Commemoration Volume*, Dev Publishing House, New Delhi, 1985 (in Hindi), p. 23.

²⁰ Harihar Swarup Sharma, *Din Dayalu Sharma*, pp. 24, 31.

subjects listed for deliberations at the conference were—religious education in official curriculum, women education, establishing Sanskrit colleges, use of Devanagari (*prachar* and its inclusion in courts), setting up of the office of the Mahamandal.²¹ The Mahamandal merged with the Nigamagam Mandali of Haridwar led by Swami Gyananand in 1901. However, very soon Din Dayalu got disenchanted with Gyananand's style of functioning and left the organization in March 1902. The Mahamandal was officially registered in 1902 and a Board of Directors was appointed. In 1903, it opened a branch in Benaras. Gradually Benaras became the base of the organization.²² In view of this breach in the Mahamandal, Malaviya founded another Sanatanist organization called the Sanatan Dharma Mahasabha, in whose inaugural convention at Allahabad in early 1906, he got his scheme of the Hindu University passed.

Defining the essence of Dharma

Sanatanism sought to combine values inherent in dharma with the sustenance of the society. It reasoned that, though there had been many ups and downs ever since civilized societies came into existence, the moving spirit of the Sanatan dharma had remained intact. Malaviya emphasized that though life is commonly seen as most precious, Aryas had been advised that dharma should not be ignored even if it cost life. He lamented that during modern times, the faith of Aryas in dharma was on the decline:

Dharma which was seen as priceless, which was considered as everything to man, which was seen as more precious than life itself... which was seen as the moving force for the society and its advancement, in the eyes of innumerable Arya progenies, alas, today the same dharma is seen as insignificant, responsible for the destruction of the society, and for our decline. Many of our English-educated brothers claim that it is this dharma which has ruined us.²³

He emphasized that dharma itself had such wider and deeper meanings that it impinged on a larger moral order. Therefore if any human being was following his true dharma, then that could never be the cause of mutual animosity, rather its absence would be:

²¹ Harihar Swarup Sharma, *Din Dayalu Sharma*, pp. 149-160.

²² Richard Gordon, 'The Hindu Mahasabha and the Indian National Congress, 1915-1926', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 1975, pp. 145-203.

²³ *Abhyudaya*, 23 October 1908 (translation author's).

If because of difference of faith, Hindus, Aryas, Mussalmans and Christians fight among themselves, can it be called dharma? Hindus are idol worshippers and Aryas are not. But because of this, if there is constant tension between the two, can it be dharma? Hindus and Mussalmans follow different beliefs, but because of this if some Mussalman is always against Hindus... then are they truly faithful to their own dharma? Never, if they do so, then Hindus and Aryas are straying from the path of the Vedas, Christians from the path of the Bible and Mussalmans from the path of Quran Sharif.²⁴

In *Hindu Dharmopadesah*, which Malaviya wrote to highlight the essential features of Hinduism, he discussed that Sanatanists, Aryas, Brahmos, Sikhs and Buddhists were sub-sections of Hindus and appealed to them to co-operate with other patriotic co-religionists:

All Hindus including Sanatanists, Arya Samajists, Brahma Samajists, Sikhs, Jains and Buddhists etc., while following their own beliefs, should strive to show love and respect to each other... They should also work along with those Parsis, Mussalmans, Christians and Jews who are devoted to the country's development and are patriots.²⁵

The most significant issue or the fallout which concerned Malaviya was that of proper dissemination of dharma amongst 'all our younger brothers' in such a way that they would not be influenced by the preaching of followers of other religions. He came down heavily on those leaders who, claiming to be the custodians of education, and who in spite of being in the company of those missionaries who were passionate about Christianity, were ignorant or negligent about their own religion. He asked— if missionaries could organize reliefs for orphans or drought victims, then why could not the Hindus?²⁶

Sangathan and Nation

A remarkable aspect of Malaviya's leadership of the national movement was that it went hand in hand with his untiring zeal for facilitating, achieving and strengthening the organic unity of the Hindu community and encouraging its all-round development collectively visualized and connoted as sangathan. As a leader of political and cultural bodies, the cause of sangathan lay very close to his heart. It was the most important idea which shaped his attitude in public life, enabling a fine balance between his reformist zeal and the political

²⁴*Abhyudaya*, 13 September 1907 (translation author's).

²⁵Madan Mohan Malaviya, *Hindu Dharmopadesah*, Pub- Thakur Shivadhani Singh, Hindu University, Varanasi, 1930 (18-page tract), *Harihar Swarup Sharma Papers*, NMML, Manuscript, Printed Material-21 (translation author's).

²⁶*Abhyudaya*, 23 October 1908.

goal. It also meant dissolving multiple caste identities as well as ending the practice of untouchability. He did not see any contradiction between promoting the cause of the community and providing leadership to the national movement. In fact, to him, the former seemed to strengthen the latter. It was in this context that he defined dharma in a way which connected it with love towards nation. Writing in *Abhyudaya* in 1907, at a time when the Swadeshi movement was at its peak, he made a strong appeal to strengthen nationalism, and explained how it constituted an inseparable part of dharma:

What is nationalism? Nationalism that emotion which is present in the heart of every Indian along with the desire for the country's progress, and before which all emotions are only secondary... To be attached to dharma can never be, under any circumstances, the cause of deterioration...Dharma is one which leads to compassion between human beings, generates happiness when finding each other in good condition, and extends a helping hand in times of need. This true dharma is achievable through patriotism. Dissemination of patriotism will completely take away selfishness from our hearts.²⁷

At a different level, he saw patriotism as the ultimate stage of selflessness:

Patriotism is that kind of devotion in which one would forget one's own self, see his progress in the progress of the nation, see his glory in the glory of the nation, see his life in the life of the nation and see his death in the death of the nation.²⁸

Through his leadership of the Hindu Mahasabha²⁹, Sanatan Dharma Mahasabha and several other organizations, Malaviya emphasized upon the urgency of achieving sangathan on numerous occasions. The Gaya (1922) and the Benaras (1923) sessions of the Hindu Mahasabha for the first time passed resolutions taking cognizance of the condition of 'untouchables'. Presiding at the Benaras session, Malaviya succeeded in getting through a resolution which permitted 'untouchables' to study in schools, to use wells, to enter temples and to sit on the carpet at public meetings.³⁰ The Belgaum special session of the Mahasabha in 1924 emphasized the need for educational upliftment of depressed sections, and also made an appeal for providing them access to public wells.³¹ During his speech at this session,

²⁷ *Abhyudaya*, 13 September 1907 (translation author's).

²⁸ *Abhyudaya*, 20 September 1907 (translation author's).

²⁹ Founded in 1915, the All-India Hindu Sabha (rechristened Mahasabha in 1921), contained elements from both the Arya Samaj and the Sanatan dharma organizations.

³⁰ Gordon, 'The Hindu Mahasabha and the Indian National Congress'.

³¹ 28 December 1924, *Indian Quarterly Register*, 1924, Vol. II, p. 489.

Malaviya urged Brahmins and non-Brahmins to remove mutual understandings and to become united as part of the Hindu community and common inheritors of a great culture.³²

Malaviya succeeded in convincing the pundits of the Oriental Faculty in BHU on the question of *shuddhi*³³ and *prayashchitt* (or penance) for Harijans by taking a bath in the Ganges. These pundits were not ready initially, but Malaviya persuaded them and at last they could see the political fallout of not reclaiming Harijans. Thereafter, *shuddhi* was started on the Dashashwamedh Ghat considered one of the holiest ghats (wharfs) on the Ganges at Benaras. On 9 January 1927, on the occasion of the Shraddhanand Day, Gandhi and Malaviya walked in procession to this Ghat and also offered prayers at the Vishwanath temple. Outside the temple, Gandhi delivered a brief speech emphasizing the significance of Shraddhanand's martyrdom—purification of self and of religion, and ceaselessly practising self-control.³⁴ Malaviya gave *mantra-deeksha* to around four hundred Harijans at Lohaghat in Calcutta on 30 December 1928 in the midst of stiff opposition and personal accusations thrown at him. He in fact challenged his opponents to engage in discussion on the propriety of the procedure on the basis of Hindu shastras. Discussion ensued between a pundit and Malaviya and after a few hours the opposition weakened. The ritual was repeated on 6 January 1929. There were only a few individuals opposing him this time. The same was repeated several times at Kashi and Prayag. *Mantra-deeksha* was held at Nasik on 12 March 1936 where around 150 Harijans were initiated. There was a big ceremony in Benaras on Mahashivaratri in 1936-- a grand procession of Vedas and other scriptures passed through the streets followed by pundits and Harijans concluding at Dashashwamedh Ghat where Malaviya addressed a large meeting. This was followed by *mantra-deeksha* the next morning.³⁵

Hindu-Muslim unity

While giving a call for Hindu sangathan, Malaviya felt that achieving Hindu-Muslim brotherhood should be the duty of every Indian. There were a couple of logic attached to such a vision—first, organic unity among Hindus would facilitate greater camaraderie among communities, and second, focussing on the Sanatan dharma by Hindus, and on the essence of

³² See M.R. Jayakar, *The Story of My Life, Vol. II, 1922-1925*, Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1959, p. 518.

³³ *Shuddhi* (or purification) meant re-conversion of those Hindus who or whose ancestors had converted to other religious systems, but still observed many Hindu customs, and also included re-claiming the so-called 'untouchables'.

³⁴ Tendulkar, *Mahatma*, Vol. II, 1951, pp. 351-352.

³⁵ Sitaram Chaturvedi, *Madan Mohan Malaviya*, Publications Division, New Delhi, 1972, p. 46.

Islam by the Muslim community, would bring greater peace and bonhomie. It was the lack of religiosity (in the sense of dharma) rather than the excess of it, he argued, that had brought miseries to the countrymen. At another level, he intrinsically linked all these ideas to an unwavering sense of patriotism. Speaking at Lahore on 26 September 1922, Malaviya lamented the deterioration of the Hindu-Muslim unity during and after the communal riots at Multan. Characterizing India as a pious land, Malaviya defined the duties of every patriot:

Bharatvarsh is our land of birth, we are all Hindustanis. Every corner of this land is sacred. It is our duty to welcome every Hindustani and help him in distress. Every Hindustani is our brother. If this kind of love for the country is felt in our heart then there will be no incident similar to what we have seen in Lahore or Multan.³⁶

His love for sangathan was intrinsically linked to his desire for spreading oneness amongst all:

Hindus, please understand. Mussalmans, you also (must) understand! Khuda, Paramatma and Akal Purush are one and the same. No Maulavi, Pundit or Gyani-Granthi has ever shown them as separate. The God of the Mussalmans is the same as that of the Hindus. We all are the creation of that one God... Our third relation is that of belonging to the same country. The countries of the Mussalmans outside India is Arabia, Persia, Turkistan, Iran or Turkey, but the country of India's Mussalmans is India only... My submission is that the people out to weaken unity are actually those who are not concerned about religion.³⁷

Speaking at Lahore on 28 June 1933, Malaviya asked for communal unity which, he argued, was the first step towards freedom: 'It is no less shameful for all of us to look upon the foreigners to vouchsafe our safety and interests. I have great faith in the religion that I follow but my head bows down whenever I pass by a church or a mosque, my head bows down with reverence to them unknown to me.'³⁸ Days before his death, when the news of the tragedy in east Bengal filtered in, he advised the Hindus in provinces where they were in a majority to provide protection to their Muslim brethren, and strengthen themselves in minority provinces.³⁹ Gyanchand, professor of Economics at BHU and later Nehru's economic advisor

³⁶ 'Summary of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviyaji's lectures on Hindu Sangathan delivered from 26 September 1922 to 27 September 1924 on different occasions', Hindu Mahasabha Office, Benaras, 1925, *Harihar Swarup Sharma Papers*, NMML, Manuscript, Subject Files No.5 (translation author's).

³⁷ 'Summary of Malaviyaji's lectures on Hindu Sangathan' *Harihar Swarup Sharma Papers* (translation author's).

³⁸ Chaturvedi, *Madan Mohan Malaviya*, p. 42.

³⁹ 'Malaviya's Life: A Dedication to India's Service', *Hindustan Times*, 13 November 1946.

in independent India, recalled that though there was 'a vague feeling in favour of Hinduism and Hindu civilization' communalism never became 'an important factor in the life of the Hindu University'.⁴⁰ Kripalani felt that Malaviya was 'orthodox in his ways' but never 'communal in his approach':

Certainly he did not want that injustice be done to the Muslims. He followed his own religion but I don't think that he was communal in the sense that he would want the whole of India to be Hindu India in which the Muslims should have no place. He did accord an appropriate place to the Muslims in India...he wanted to have cooperation with the Muslims. He never wanted any injustice to be done to them.⁴¹

Malaviya was clear that India is dear to Muslims in the same way that it is to Hindus:

Both the communities live in this country, and shall always remain so. The more the two communities stay united, the greater will be our strength in developing the nation. And greater the animosity, weaker shall we become. The country will march forward only when these two strive to attain development while staying united.⁴²

Conservative or Liberal!

Malaviya was deeply rooted to India's traditions, but also open, at the same time, to everything that was scientific and modern—the barometer being the suitability of that idea or system to the progress of India as a nation and its usefulness in achieving organic unity of the Hindus. In a useful collection of Malaviya's speeches and writings compiled in 1919, G.A. Natesan aptly remarked:

Many think and class him as a conservative but they are mistaken if they believe he is crude, narrow, or obstructive on that account. He is liberal, broad-minded, open, refined gentleman, but believing in the religion and spiritual wisdom of his forefathers. Not only in appearance but in his daily life and practice he is simple and unassuming, courteous and exceedingly fair-minded even to those who differ from him.⁴³

While he promoted 'Hindu renaissance' in all its dimensions, he was careful not to imbue it with irrationality or superstition. He was committed to the development of science and

⁴⁰ *Oral Transcript of Professor Gyanchand*, NMML, Manuscript, p. 10.

⁴¹ *Oral Transcript of Kripalani*, pp. 52-53.

⁴² Padma Kant Malaviya, ed, *Malaviyaji ke Lekh*, National Publishing House, Delhi, 1962, pp. 24-25 (translation author's).

⁴³ 'Sketch of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya', p. 32.

technology and was also a votary of scientific temper. N.C. Kelkar, a Congress-Swarajist-Hindu Sabha leader, pointed precisely to this significant symbiosis:

He looks at Hindu renaissance in all aspects and in all its details without being averse to assimilate the light and spirit of the new scientific age. He has done all that was in his power either to rehabilitate or to consolidate the fragments of Hindu culture that were not yet lost. He has an all-pervading blessing to bestow upon every institution and individual that makes for the assertion of Hindu life and culture in its pristine purity.⁴⁴

Hriday Nath Kunzru, a prominent leader of the Congress and the Liberal Party and later a member of India's Constituent Assembly, made a fair analysis of Malaviya's ideas on religion and how they could be made more useful for human welfare:

In religious matters, his thoughts were a mix of shastric authenticity and liberalism. His interpretation of the essential principles of Sanatan dharma was definitely very flexible. Feeling for humanity, universal love, and selfless dedication to human development—these he considered as essential principles of Sanatan dharma.⁴⁵

The prospectus of the Hindu University in 1905 described its aim as promotion of scientific, technical and artistic education combined with religious instruction and classical culture. In his address to a public meeting at Meerut on 17 October 1911, held in connection with the Hindu University, the *maharaja* of Darbhanga, while appreciating Malaviya's 'energy and unrivalled power of organisation', clarified that the proposed university would not identify itself with any sect or creed but would 'impart religious teaching to boys in accordance with the religious forms professed by their fathers or their guardians.'⁴⁶In 1915, during the introduction of the Hindu University bill in the Imperial Legislative Council, Malaviya clarified that the university would be a denominational institution, and not a sectarian one. Defending the provision for compulsory religious education, he felt its influence to be ever-ennobling- 'I believe that where the true religious spirit is inculcated there must be elevating feeling of humility. And where there is love of God there will be greater love and less hatred of man':⁴⁷'It will not promote narrow sectarianism but a broad liberation of mind and

⁴⁴ *Malaviya Commemoration Volume*, pp. 1032-1033.

⁴⁵ Hriday Nath Kunzru, Foreword to Mukut Bihari Lal, *Mahamana Madan Mohan Malaviya: Jeevan aur Netritva*, Malaviya Adhyayan Sansthan, BHU, Varanasi, 1978, p. iii (translation author's).

⁴⁶ *Harcourt Butler Papers*, NMML, Microfilm, Roll No. 14.

⁴⁷ Jagannath Prasad Misra, *Madan Mohan Malaviya and the Indian Freedom Movement*, OUP, New Delhi, 2016, p.72.

religious spirit which will promote brotherly feeling between man and man...'.⁴⁸ At the foundation laying ceremony of the Hindu University, Malaviya asserted the requirement for preserving and nursing the finer precepts of our age-old civilization:

We cannot divest ourselves of the consciousness that we have inherited a culture and civilization of our own, which reaches further back in time than that of any other people, and which possesses, as we believe in a special degree, the elements of social stability as well as the fundamental principles of physical, intellectual and spiritual progress and welfare. Amidst all the vicissitudes through which Hindu Society has passed, it has, in all essential, clung to that civilization and has ever been governed by it.⁴⁹

Though religious instruction was compulsory for Hindus, it wasn't for non-Hindus and later even Hindu students could opt out. Subjects like oriental learning, theology and Ayurveda were offered along with such modern disciplines like medicine, surgery, mining, metallurgy and industrial chemistry. Apart from these, the university allowed free discussion on varied subjects.⁵⁰ In a letter to Gandhi, Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, who joined the Hindu University as its Vice-Chancellor in 1939, after strong and skilful persuasion by Malaviya, emphasized that the university had students from all parts of India and from all communities— Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, Sikhs, Muslims, Christians and Parsis, who were being inspired with 'the noble ideas of patriotism and loyalty to the great ideals of Indian culture' since 'India is neither a race nor a religion, but a culture which embraces all races and religions.'⁵¹

It was amoral and the liberal streak of India's traditions that kept on illuminating the outer world of Malaviya and impacting his worldview. A close associate, B.R. Rao recalled that orthodoxy in Malaviyaji was nothing more than 'righteous self-discipline prescribed by ancient texts': 'There was not the slightest trace of bigotry, fanaticism and intolerance in him.'⁵² Similarly, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur felt that though Malaviya remained orthodox till the end, in all matters of social reform he was most progressive. She was specially drawn to him

⁴⁸ 'Sketch of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya', p. 29.

⁴⁹ N.N. Godbole, 'Some of my reminiscences of the Late Pt. Mahamana Malaviyaji', in Nand Lal Singh, ed, *Mahamana Malaviyaji Birth Centenary Commemoration Volume*, All-India Malaviya Centenary Celebration Committee, BHU, Varanasi, 1961, pp. 80-84.

⁵⁰ In her study on BHU, Leah Renold underlines that the University campus fostered a 'dynamic liberal atmosphere'. Hindi KaviSammelans were popular and so were the Urdu Mushairas. Students' favourite pastime was intellectual discussion and debate. Malaviya allowed and encouraged diversity of political opinions in the campus. See Leah Renold, *A Hindu Education: Early Years of the Banaras Hindu University*, OUP, New Delhi, 2005, pp. 196-200, 213.

⁵¹ Radhakrishnan to Gandhi, 18 July 1941, *M.K. Gandhi (Pyarelal) Collection*, 15th Instalment, NMML, Manuscript, Correspondence.

⁵² B.R. Rao, 'Mahamana Malaviyaji: His Contribution to Posterity' in Nand Lal Singh, ed, *Malaviya Centenary Volume*, pp. 32-37.

by his indignation at the many disabilities from which Indian women suffered.⁵³ Malaviya considered superstitious beliefs as antithetical to the vitality of the community. He pleaded that attempts to move forward would be successful only when we take women along. For regeneration of the community, he clarified, it was essential to fearlessly and enthusiastically undertake education of women.⁵⁴ M. Visvesvarayya highlighted Malaviya's flexibility in the context of people's welfare and strengthening of India's nationhood. This flexibility, he felt, enabled Malaviya to move out of the restrictions imposed by his traditionalist background:

A man of deep culture, broad sympathies, an intrepid and selfless worker, he is popular with all classes of his country-men...His European opponents know that he is a clean fighter and respect him on that account. The Indian Princes regard him as their friend; and, while he is the idol of his orthodox countrymen, he is not unpopular with the reformers. He is no bigot; his attitude of late years towards the untouchables and depressed classes has undergone a remarkable change in their favour; and, when duty to his country demanded it, he readily crossed the seas to visit Europe. His chief claim to the confidence and gratitude of his countrymen is his intense concern for their welfare, the enthusiasm he has roused among them for national objects and the impetus he has given to nation-building. A noble and lovable personality, a staunch Hindu and a great Indian, all he thinks of, all he works for, are the interests of his community and country; to these interests he is giving every moment of his waking time.⁵⁵

Politics and Legislature

In the political arrangements and engagements of the time, it was difficult to ignore Malaviya's presence. He was bold, articulate and pragmatic, never feeling shy of espousing the cause that lay close to his heart. His public activity through the Madhya Hindu Samaj found its parallel in his involvement in founding an exclusive body for the upliftment of Hindi, i.e. Hindi Uddharini Sabha (or the Society for the Emancipation of Hindi) in 1884. Bharatendu Harishchandra founded the Nagari Pracharini Sabha in Benaras in 1893. Malaviya was active in this Sabha and argued for establishing suitable channels between the advocates and promoters of Hindi and the government officials.⁵⁶ His commitment to propagation of Hindi brought him to the mission of seeking parity for the language in the

⁵³ Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, 'Fine Monument', in Nand Lal Singh, ed., *Malaviya Centenary Volume*, pp. 26-27.

⁵⁴ Padma Kant Malaviya, *Malaviyaji ke Lekh*, p. 146.

⁵⁵ *Malaviya Commemoration Volume*, pp. 990-991.

⁵⁶ Misra, *Madan Mohan Malaviya*, p. 11.

courts in the province. He submitted a well-researched and meticulously prepared document 'Court Character and Primary Education in N.W. Provinces and Oudh' to the lieutenant governor in 1899. Convinced with the arguments in Malaviya's memorandum, the government allowed the use of Nagari script in addition to Urdu in court documents. Recalling his contribution to the growth of Hindi, K.M. Munshi underlined that he (Malaviya) was the father of the movement for a national language for India who brought the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan and the great linguistic and literary movement which is associated with Hindi, into existence.⁵⁷

As a member of the UP legislature, Malaviya distinguished himself through a 'display of combined moderation and ability, spirit of independence and as well as a sense of responsibility'. These abilities were on full display when he made speeches on the Bundelkhand Land Alienation bill, the Excise bill, and the annual financial statements.⁵⁸ Through his critique of the government's administrative and financial policies, he invited its attention to the miseries that befell the common people. In his maiden speech on the Bundelkhand Land Alienation bill, he suggested that the remedy for checking land alienation lay not in enacting that law but in reducing the land revenue demand and to rationalize the system of collection. Through his budget speeches, he demanded an increase in expenditure on education, public health and industrialization and reduction in provision for police. With his experience of working as vice-chairman of the Allahabad Municipality, he also urged the building of model *bustees* and for the opening up of congested areas in the larger cities. As a member of the Council, he also gave valuable evidence before the Royal Commission for Decentralization especially those dealing with the constitution of provincial governments and financial decentralization.⁵⁹ His note on the matter submitted to the Commission on 13 February 1908 contested the sole authority of the Government of India to revise the financial settlement with provinces at any time without giving the latter any voice in the matter. And equally significant, while the central government used its huge financial resources too liberally for imperial purposes, it shied away from devoting an adequate share of these resources 'to promote the moral and material progress of the people':

⁵⁷ K.M. Munshi, 'Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya' in Nand Lal Singh, ed, *Malaviya Centenary Volume*, pp. 28-29.

⁵⁸ *Leader*, 23 December 1909.

⁵⁹ *Leader*, 23 December 1909. Also see Parmanand, *Mahamana Madan Mohan Malaviya*, Vol. I, Malaviya Adhyayan Sansthan, BHU, 1985, p.152.

The result has been that the condition of the people as a whole contrasts very unfavourably with the splendour of the Empire. The injustice of the existing arrangement is patent from the fact that while for many years the Government of India has been reviling surpluses some of the Provinces which have contributed largely to those surpluses, have been living on subsistence allowances.

The remedy, he emphasized, lay in converting the unitary form of government into a federal system, enabling the provincial governments to become 'semi-independent' instead of 'mere delegates' of the supreme government.⁶⁰

It was this wide ambit of his public and political activities through the Congress party and the UP legislature that encouraged the party to elect him as president of its Lahore session in December 1909. His unequivocal stand on issues that confronted the country was taken note of by the *Madras Standard* on this occasion:

On every important issue now before the country he (Malaviya) has expressed himself clearly and unambiguously, so that the public need not be in doubt as to what his view will be on the several questions that will come before the Lahore Session of the Congress. He has been a strict constitutionalist who understands the practical difficulties which a public man in India has to face. He has been a practical politician in the best sense of the term.⁶¹

Inside the central legislature, in which he served as a member since 1910, he commanded a lot of influence. Here he emerged as a great proponent of self-government, opposed ordinances and vehemently criticized the press bill, seditious assembly bill, Rowlatt bill and public safety bill. Ultimately, he was a great advocate of ensuring individual liberty in all its dimensions. One of his first interventions in the central legislature was on the bill moved by Herbert Risley to 'provide for the better control of the Indian Press' on 4 April 1910 when he warned that there was a real danger that the provisions of the bill would affect the 'legitimate liberty of the Press'.⁶² Malaviya looked at the lack of education as the biggest underlying cause for ignorance driving people to animosities. This was reflected in his detailed arguments in support of Gokhale's bill in 1912 which sought to make elementary education compulsory. Malaviya wished to secure for 'all our people what is at present enjoyed by only a few of them' and showed his annoyance with the official objection on the ground that there were numerous castes and creeds in this country. He wondered how the existence of castes

⁶⁰ *Speeches and Writings of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya*, pp.12-15.

⁶¹ Quoted in *Leader*, 22 December 1909.

⁶² *Speeches and Writings of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya*, p. 302.

and creeds proved to be an obstacle in the way of extending education among the masses.⁶³ He also criticized the argument that universalization was fine but compulsion was not. If a measure was clearly for the benefit of the people at large then the principle of compulsion must be introduced.⁶⁴ Malaviya wished to minimize army expenditure and sought Indianisation of armed and civil services. He voted time and again against the finance bills. He was an avowed critic of policies on foreign tariff which favoured expansion of British interests in India, and therefore opposed imposition of duties on silk cloth and protection provided to British-made cloth.⁶⁵

Fighting for abolition of Indentured Labour

Malaviya also took up the cause of indentured labour and those of the Indian immigrants, both inside the legislatures and also as the president of the Congress. He also supported Gandhi's efforts in this direction. He conveyed his concern about atrocities on Indians in Transvaal and appreciated the way the immigrant Indians were protesting against the Asiatic Registration Act. He also remarked: 'We should not restrict ourselves to mere opposition, but should try hard to achieve such heights so that foreigners start showing respect to us as they do to any independent people', and then went on to suggest that achieving excellence in areas like education, and acquiring strength, showing self-respect, inculcating love for nation, achieving internal unity, attaining artistic achievement would earn us respect from foreigners.⁶⁶ He made a remarkable intervention on the issue of indentured labour in the Imperial Legislative Council. In March 1916, moving a resolution for the abolition of the system, he described it as an 'unmitigated evil' that had worked enough moral havoc during the preceding eight decades. And it was only with 'intense pain and humiliation' that they could think 'of the blasted lives of its victims, of the anguish of soul' to which they had been subjected by the system.⁶⁷ In accepting the motion of Malaviya, Lord Hardinge announced that he had 'obtained from His Majesty's Government the promise of the abolition of the system in due course'. Gandhi felt that a vague assurance against such a long-standing

⁶³ *Speeches and Writings of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya*, pp. 322a-322c.

⁶⁴ *Speeches and Writings of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya*, p. 322e.

⁶⁵ See Kunzru, Foreword to Mukut Behari Lal, *Mahamana Madan Mohan Malaviya: Jeevan aur Netritva*, p. ii.

⁶⁶ *Abhyudaya*, 17 January 1908, 23 October 1908.

⁶⁷ *Speeches and Writings of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya*, pp. 323-327, 346-347; Also see B. R. Rao, 'Mahamana Malaviyaji: His Contribution to Posterity', in Nand Lal Singh, ed, *Malaviya Centenary Volume*, pp. 32-37.

grievance was highly unsatisfactory. In the meantime the viceroy had explained that 'essential abolition' meant abolition 'within such reasonable time as will allow alternative arrangement being introduced'.⁶⁸

Malaviya was convinced that it was the official majority in the council that was the real stumbling block. 'If the representatives of the people had real and effective voice' in the country's administration, he believed, the 'abominable system of indentured labour would have been put an end to many-many years ago.'⁶⁹ Lord Chelmsford, who succeeded Hardinge, was not allowing even a vague assurance. Therefore in February 1917, when Malaviya asked for leave to introduce the bill, he refused it. Gandhi thought it was time to tour the country to organize an all-India agitation.⁷⁰ Gandhi highly appreciated Malaviya's intervention in getting the system abolished. Speaking on Fiji affairs in Bombay on 13 July 1920, he advised those who wished to study the indenture question to go through the speeches of Gokhale and Malaviya in the Imperial Council.⁷¹

'Moderate' in the Congress

Malaviya represented the 'Moderate' face of the Congress, but unlike most Moderates, he faced little difficulty in adjusting to the Gandhian phase of the movement, while retaining his conviction on some significant political moves. He combined constitutionalism with mass movement, retaining the solidity of nation's cause supreme. He developed a keen understanding of the representative institutions of governance and knowledge of the British history and progress of democracy in that part of the world. In the initial years of the Congress, when the primary demand veered around seeking better Indian representation in the viceroy's council and introduction of elective principles, Malaviya preferred to speak on the issue with a nuanced approach, suitably hyphenating his speeches with the real meanings of democracy that had evolved in England.

In his maiden speech at the Calcutta session in 1886, speaking in support of Surendranath Banerjea's resolution relating to reforms in the governor general's and provincial legislative councils, Malaviya, appealed to the virtues of liberty and right:

⁶⁸ Tendulkar, *Mahatma*, Vol. I, 1951, pp. 243-244.

⁶⁹ Lecture by Malaviya on 'India's Demand', organized by the Provincial Congress Committee, Madras, 31 January 1917, *Leader*, 11 February 1917.

⁷⁰ Tendulkar, *Mahatma*, Vol. I, pp.305-307.

⁷¹ *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Vol. 18, p.40.

I will only add may the cause of the people of India, the cause of liberty and right, engage the attention, heart and soul, of every honest Englishman in India and in England, and may each true Briton, who values the rights, the privileges, the freedom which have made him and his country what they are, aid us, like true Britons, to the fruition of our aspirations for equal rights, equal privileges and equal freedom.⁷²

At the next session in Madras in December 1887, he complained that neither the Indian affairs were being managed properly and nor were Indians being allowed to manage themselves:

They will not do their duty to the country themselves and they will not allow us to do it. Can anything be more cruel, or more unjust, of the English nation which professes to love freedom and justice and boasts itself the founder of constitutional and free Government? Gentlemen, after this, I think nothing need be said by England about justice and freedom if this concession is not granted to us.⁷³

Malaviya was an ardent advocate of protecting village industries and safeguarding Indian products. As early as 1898, he proposed that the government ought to foster native industries and native arts: 'Where are the weavers, where are those men who lived by different industries and manufacturers, and where are the manufactures which were sent to England and other European countries in very large quantities year after year?'⁷⁴ As a member of the Indian Industrial Commission appointed in 1916 which submitted its report in 1918, Malaviya presented a long and well-researched note on each point he disagreed with. He also suggested numerous ways in which India could develop its industries on in its own. During the internal conflict of the Congress in 1905-1907, he sided with the advocates of self-government within the British dominion. Therefore, though like most Moderates he supported the campaign for swadeshi and swaraj, he disliked the idea of boycott. He was not a supporter of violent methods adopted by revolutionaries. Presiding over the Lahore session of the Congress in 1909, he deplored the murder of Curzon Wylie, Jackson and others.

⁷²'Report of the Second Indian National Congress', pp. 107-108 in Mushirul Hasan, ed, *Proceedings of the Indian National Congress, Vol.1: 1885-1889*, Niyogi Books, Delhi, 2012. The *Indian Mirror* in its report noted that the earnest and impressive way in which Malaviya, along with Shyam Narain, Bhagwan Das and Kanhaiya Lal spoke 'formed a correct index to the truly patriotic spirit which animated them', Appendix- V: Comments of the Press, 'Report of the Second Indian National Congress' p. 163.

⁷³'Report of the Proceedings of the Third Session of Indian National Congress, 1887', pp. 96-98 in Mushirul Hasan, ed, *Proceedings of the Indian National Congress, Vol.1: 1885-1889*.

⁷⁴Quoted in Sitaramayya, *History of the Indian National Congress*, Vol. I, pp. 41-42.

Malaviya had long been a critic of any political appeasement of the Muslim community by the British authorities in India. Expressing his displeasure at the separate electorate being conceded through the Morley-Minto Reforms, he wrote to Gokhale on 4 March 1909:

Now that the Mohammedans have successfully pressed their claim for separate electorates their representatives will owe no responsibility to non-Muslim voters. We should protest against their being given a number of seats in excess to what they would be entitled to by reason of their proportion to total population.⁷⁵

He analysed the result of these reforms on the United Provinces—in addition to the four seats already reserved for Muslim, they had won two more seats, these with the nominations made by the government had given them eight seats out of a total of 26 non-official seats in the province where they formed only one-sixth of the population.⁷⁶ He supported the Lucknow Pact, though he was opposed to the idea of separate electorate, as the uppermost objective in his mind at that time was the realization of self-government.

Malaviya had stayed away from the Home Rule movement on the premise that there was no need for any organization other than the Congress to steer the movement for constitutional changes, yet he led a delegation to the viceroy in March 1917 to protest against the official effort to stifle this (Home Rule) movement. In June 1917, he wrote to the editor of the *Leader* that though he had had some sharp differences with Besant in the past, he felt grateful for the splendid manner in which she made sacrifice in the cause of India's progress and reform. And, therefore, if she was 'exposed to suffering in that cause', he stressed: 'thousands of Indians who have not been able to see eye to eye with her in all things, will think it their duty to stand by her and to follow her.'⁷⁷ On 16 June 1917, the governor of Madras ordered Besant's internment. Both Gandhi and Malaviya, along with other leaders, vehemently criticized the move. Gandhi visited Allahabad to discuss the matter with Malaviya. On 10 July 1917, in a public meeting in Bombay, Malaviya asked for resolute action and advised that the message of swaraj should be carried to every village, house and cottage.⁷⁸ He also tabled a resolution in the Imperial Legislative Council asking for Besant's early release.

Though a 'Moderate', Malaviya was also ready to chart an independent course. In 1918, as the Montford Reforms were announced, Moderates were quick to support the scheme, and

⁷⁵ Misra, *Madan Mohan Malaviya*, p.24.

⁷⁶ Misra, *Madan Mohan Malaviya*, p.25.

⁷⁷ *Leader*, 18 June 1917.

⁷⁸ Misra, *Madan Mohan Malaviya*, pp.88-89.

Chintamani, Sapru and Hriday Nath Kunzru (all Allahabad-based) tried to convince Malaviya to announce his support too. But, instead of obliging them, Malaviya wrote a 43-page long critique of the report, which was published in the *Leader* between 4 and 7 August 1918, and was also brought out in the form of a pamphlet.⁷⁹ He pointed to 'grave deficiencies which must be made up before the reforms could become adequate to the requirements of the country'.⁸⁰ He demanded clear cut statutory provision that would confer on India full self-government within twenty years and that there should be no reserved subjects and no grand committees.⁸¹ A few months later, in his presidential speech at the Delhi session of the Congress in 1918, Malaviya sought self-government.

Rowlatt bills, Jallianwala Bagh and Indemnity bill

Malaviya made an impassioned speech against the Rowlatt bills in the Imperial Legislative Council in February 1919 as he sought removal of people's grievances and abhorred any repressive action. Calling the Rowlatt legislation as 'retrograde and repressive' and also 'subversive of so many ideas of justice for the protection of the liberty of individuals, he pleaded with the government to reconsider its position and not lead people to feel that the great sacrifice which they made during the war has already begun to be forgotten.⁸² Referring to the tremendous opposition which the bills had attracted, he warned the government during his speech in the Council on 12 March 1919 not to ignore the resistance led by Gandhi.⁸³ On 6 April 1919, in protest against the attitude of the government in securing the forced passage of the bill, Malaviya resigned his seat.⁸⁴ On the same day, chairing a mass meeting of citizens at Allahabad to mark the anti-Rowlatt Satyagraha, Malaviya said that good came out of evil and through the Rowlatt bills, he emphasized, the Indians had achieved a wonderful unity.⁸⁵

As president of the Congress, Malaviya played a crucial role in mobilizing people and leaders after the gruesome Jallianwala tragedy, followed by the inhuman martial law regime in the Punjab. The AICC meeting on 8 June 1919 appointed a sub-committee to inquire into the

⁷⁹ Misra, *Madan Mohan Malaviya*, pp. 93-94.

⁸⁰ Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, *A Criticism of the Montagu-Chelmsford Proposals of Constitutional Reform*, Leader Press, Allahabad, 1918, p.1.

⁸¹ Misra, *Madan Mohan Malaviya*, p. 94.

⁸² *Leader*, 23 February 1919.

⁸³ *Leader*, 14 March 1919.

⁸⁴ *Times of India*, 7 April 1919.

⁸⁵ *Leader*, 9 April 1919. Other prominent leaders present at this meeting were Motilal Nehru, Syed Raza Ali, Ishwar Saran, K.N. Katju, P.D. Tandon, Jawaharlal Nehru and Sunder Lal.

incidents in the Punjab, take legal initiatives and collect funds for the purpose. A nine member committee under Malaviya with Motilal, Jayakar, Gandhi (co-opted later in October) and others was set up. Malaviya was among the first, along with Motilal Nehru and Shradhanand to reach Amritsar in June-end to ascertain facts. People were terror-stricken. They stayed on for several weeks. The deputy commissioner of Amritsar reported that Malaviya's inquiry was on 'a monstrously ex-parte nature' complaining that he made no attempt to obtain an opinion from 'citizens of influence and weight.'⁸⁶ Malaviya also sent Kapil Deva Malaviya to Amritsar to help in investigation from where he would send regular dispatches that helped in reconstructing the brutal incidents and atrocities.⁸⁷

Back in the Council on 3 September 1919, Malaviya asked a large number of probing questions (around sixty to be precise) on the Punjab affairs through an advance notice. They included most minute details about the number of people arrested, detained and convicted, along with their complete details; cases decided by different courts; number of persons killed or wounded on different dates and occasions; reasons for deportation of Satyapal and Kitchlew. Legal background and nationalist emotions combined, he sought every possible detail about the Jallianwala tragedy starting from the proclamation, if any, for prohibition of meetings to the number of persons assembled.⁸⁸ On 10 September 1919, the viceroy announced in the Legislative Council the appointment of a committee chaired by Hunter to enquire into the Punjab disturbances (the final composition and appointment were made on 18 October), but very soon, on 18 September, followed it with the Indemnity Bill. Malaviya sought the bill's postponement in a four and half hours long speech. He fiercely contested the government's opinion that he and Motilal Nehru were a self-constituted commission of inquiry into the Punjab affair, saying that the government's views carried little weight when men coming from the heart of the disturbed areas approved of the measures taken by the AICC.⁸⁹ His speech made a spirited argument for not moving ahead with the bill and wait instead for the report of the Committee of Inquiry:

I make this appeal in the name of those who have lost their lives, in the name of those who lost their limbs in these recent disturbances, in the name of those who have suffered indescribable indignities, in the name of those who are undergoing imprisonment at this

⁸⁶ 30 June 1919, Misra, *Madan Mohan Malaviya*, p.103.

⁸⁷ See the *Oral Transcript of K.D. Malaviya* (or Keshavadeva Malaviya, younger brother of Kapil Deva Malaviya), NMML, Manuscript, p.7.

⁸⁸ *Leader*, 3-4 September 1919.

⁸⁹ *Tribune*, 1 October 1919.

moment unjustly in His Majesty's jails, in the name of those women who are in mourning by the loss of their husbands, their relations, or sons, in the name of all those, my Lord, I appeal to your Excellency's Government to stay the hand of Government and to wait for the Committee of Inquiry and then to decide what should be done.⁹⁰

Speaking at Nasik a year later, Gandhi credited Malaviya and Motilal for saving 'the lives of thousands of innocent Hindus and Muslims in the Punjab.'⁹¹

Differences with Gandhi over Non-cooperation

Malaviya sympathized with the Khilafat issue, had joined the deputation that waited on Chelmsford in January 1920, and had attended the Khilafat conferences. But, he was not in favour of launching a mass movement for it under the circumstances as existed then. He was especially unhappy about the boycott of educational institutions: 'I do not agree with Mahatmaji on the subject, but I do not wish to say amongst ourselves.'⁹² He was not convinced by the logic of boycotting or closing of all educational institutions controlled or financed by the government. Neither was he convinced by Gandhi's argument that if non-cooperators stuck to Gandhi's programme then swaraj could be achieved within a year. Malaviya, Lajpat Rai and C.R. Das were among the prominent leaders who opposed Gandhi's resolution on non-cooperation in the subjects committee of the Calcutta Congress in September 1920.

Gandhi visited Benaras in November 1920 on Malaviya's invitation and stayed with him. In his address on 26 November outside the university campus, he referred to an excerpt '...give thought to everything and do so as your conscience bids you', from a speech of Malaviya published in the *Leader*:

I want to tell you the same thing. And if you have any doubt about what your conscience tells you, if you are not able to come to a decision in your mind, do not accept what I or anyone else may say but accept only what Panditji whom you all revere says. I have come across no holier man than he; I see no living Indian who has served India more than he has done.⁹³

⁹⁰ *Proceedings of the Imperial Legislative Council*, Delhi and Simla, 1919, p. 264.

⁹¹ 4 November 1920, *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Vol. 18, p. 435.

⁹² Godbole, 'Some of my reminiscences of the Late Pt. Mahamana Malaviyaji'.

⁹³ *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Vol. 19, p. 25.

Next day, on Malaviya's insistence, accompanied by Kasturba Gandhi, Maulana Azad and others Gandhi addressed students in the University Hall inside the campus. He told students that in case of any dilemma, they should accept Malaviya's counsel:

I do nothing with which he (Malaviya) is not associated. Ever since I returned to India I have been wishing that I may spend all my life with him. ... I want to tell you that there is a sharp difference of opinion between me and my revered brother, and yet this has not diminished even in the least the reverence I have for him... If you are particularly careful of dharma, seek and obtain Malaviyaji's blessings before you leave the University. If you must take counsel from someone, if your heart cannot decide for you, you should accept Malaviyaji's advice. You should give precedence to his views.⁹⁴

Malaviya made it clear that though he did not support boycott of educational institutions, he did not believe 'in keeping birds in a cage', and those students who had resolved to leave should surely do so.⁹⁵ After the Non-cooperation movement progressed fairly well and a large number of nationalist leaders were put in jail, he tried to bring about a rapprochement, twice calling for a round table conference— in December 1921 and then again in January 1922. Around 300 delegates attended the conference in Bombay on 14 January 1922 in which Gandhi was also present. In this meeting, Malaviya criticized the repressive policy of the government during the period of non-co-operation.⁹⁶

Council-entry (1923) to the Round Table Conference (1931)

Inside the legislatures his huge public standing commanded respect. This allowed him to intervene in political developments all on his own and also control its course to a great extent. Though supporting the plan of council-entry as advocated by the Swarajists, he contested the election to the Central Legislative Assembly in 1923 as an Independent since he did not support the Swarajist logic of entering the council and then wrecking it. He advocated supporting good candidates during the elections. In the Central Assembly, he formed an independent group or party consisting of non-party candidates, and together with the Swaraj Party, this group formed a group called the Nationalist Party inside the legislature. Malaviya's effort in bringing together diverse individuals and groups and then aligning with

⁹⁴ *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Vol. 19, pp.35-37; also see Parmanand, *Malaviya*, Vol. II, p.564; Malaviya was presiding over this meeting.

⁹⁵ Parmanand, *Malaviya*, Vol. II, p.564.

⁹⁶ *Indian Annual Register*, 1921-22, Volume I, pp. 353-356.

the Swarajists was with the sole motive of unitedly opposing the government on crucial matters affecting the country.

At the Kanpur Congress in December 1925, Malaviya stood his ground on the question of future political programme, mainly inside the legislatures. Supported by Jayakar, he moved an amendment to Motilal Nehru's resolution, recommending both co-operation and also obstruction according to the demand of the situation. The schism within the Swarajist ranks was already out in the open. It was led chiefly by the big four of Marathi politics— B.S. Moonje, M.R. Jayakar, N.C. Kelkar and M.S. Aney who formed the Responsivist Co-operation Party in February 1926. However, Malaviya carried on with his efforts to induce strategic shifts in the Congress policy inside the legislature. When these efforts failed, he launched the Indian National Party in a conference in Bombay in April 1926. The new party rejected the Congress policy of mass civil disobedience and favoured a policy of 'responsive co-operation' inside the legislature while aiming to accelerate the establishment of swaraj.⁹⁷ Within a few months, Malaviya realized that the nomenclature 'responsive co-operation' had failed to appeal to many in the absence of any response from the government. He therefore advised Jayakar that it would be pragmatic to adopt the name Independent Congress Party.⁹⁸ At the same time, he continued his efforts at rapprochement with Motilal. But when these attempts at electoral compromises with the Swarajists failed, he announced the formation of the Independent Congress Party in Delhi on 12 September 1926 with Lajpat Rai as president and himself as general secretary.⁹⁹

In late 1927 Malaviya played a crucial role in mobilizing the Hindu Mahasabha in supporting the Congress resolution for the boycott of the Simon Commission. Along with Moonje, Jayakar and Lajpat Rai, Malaviya prevailed upon the Mahasabha to fall in line with the boycott of the Simon Commission and a resolution to this effect was passed during the Madras special session of the Mahasabha on 29 December 1927.¹⁰⁰ Addressing the Muslim League session in Calcutta on 1 January 1928, Malaviya called Simon commission a 'God-given opportunity' to rouse them to a sense of duty and appealed to the countrymen to be united with only one desire— 'to be just to each other and to have confidence in each other,

⁹⁷3-4 April 1926, *Indian Quarterly Register*, Vol. I, pp. 55-56.

⁹⁸Malaviya to Jayakar, 2 September 1926 (telegram), Jayakar Papers, National Archives of India, File No. 499. He also wrote that Lajpat Rai was of a similar opinion.

⁹⁹*Indian Quarterly Register*, 1926, Vol. II, pp. 62-64.

¹⁰⁰ The resolution moved by C. Vijayaraghavachariar said: 'The Hindu Mahasabha...in association with the Indian National Congress and other bodies calls upon the people to boycott the Commission at every stage and in every manner.' *Indian Quarterly Register*, 1927, Vol. II, pp. 333-334.

always remembering that they were Indians first and Hindus and Mussalmans afterwards.¹⁰¹ He also played an important role in securing the Mahasabha's support in favour of the report of the Motilal Nehru Committee submitted in 1928.

Prominent leaders of the Mahasabha, in opposition to the Congress decision at Lahore in December 1929, supported the Round Table Conference. However, once the euphoria created by Gandhi's Dandi Satyagraha set in, some of these leaders like Malaviya, Aney and Kelkar declared their intention to lead the civil disobedience movement.¹⁰² On 7 March 1930, Sardar Patel was arrested. Malaviya immediately moved an adjournment motion in the Central Assembly to draw attention to the arbitrary manner of this arrest. On 2 April 1930, Malaviya resigned from the House protesting against the passage of the Cotton Textile Tariff Bill which gave unreasonably heavy preference to British industry at the cost of Indian industries: 'It will be my earnest and prayerful endeavour to devote all my time and effort to see that this system is replaced as early as possible by a system worthy of the name of Government.'¹⁰³ Thereafter, he wholeheartedly threw himself in the work of boycott of foreign cloth. He was arrested in Bombay on 1 August 1930, along with Sardar Patel, Mani Ben and Kamala Nehru for participating in a banned procession on Tilak's death anniversary. On 27 August 1930, he was arrested in Delhi for participating in the meeting of the Congress working committee and put in Naini jail from which he was released four months later on 23 December.¹⁰⁴

At the second Round Table Conference in 1931, Malaviya accompanied Gandhi to England. Speaking immediately after Gandhi in the plenary session, he referred to the noble methods adopted by the Mahatma, and appealed to the prime minister to grant freedom on an early date:

Mr. Gandhi exercises a most tremendous influence on the people of India, but I regret to say that even his influence will not be sufficient to satisfy the cravings of the people for freedom... I have mentioned the case of Ireland. It may be said that in that case there was a war, and that an agreement was arrived at the end of a war. I hope, Mr. Prime Minister, you at least will not say so, because I am certain the method of war cannot compare with the method of non-violent civil disobedience or passive resistance which Mr. Gandhi has inculcated on the people to suffer wrong, to suffer injustice, to suffer pain and to suffer loss. But that method

¹⁰¹ *Indian Quarterly Register*, 1927, Vol. II, pp. 451-452.

¹⁰² Note by R.S. Bajpai (publicity secretary to the viceroy Irwin), Irwin to Wedgwood Benn, 14 May 1930, *Halifax Papers*, NMML, Microfilm, Roll No. 3. Aney and Kelkar stated that their confidence in the results of the Round Table Conference was already shaken.

¹⁰³ Parmanand, *Malaviya*, Vol. II, p. 752.

¹⁰⁴ Parmanand, *Malaviya*, Vol. II, pp. 770, 774.

does not involve less heavy sacrifice than the method of violence and war, and I submit we should begin a new era in the history of mankind...¹⁰⁵

Poona Pact and after

Malaviya played a significant role during the crisis triggered by Gandhi's decision to undertake an indefinite fast against provision of separate electorates for depressed classes. No sooner had Gandhi announced his decision on 13 September 1932, that Malaviya issued a statement calling a conference of Hindu leaders on 17 September in Delhi. The meeting was actually held in Bombay on 19 September. Sapru, Jayakar, Rajaji, Rajendra Prasad, Kaka Kalelkar, Ambedkar, Srinivasan and MC Rajah were present. A manifesto was drafted on 20 September at the instance of M. C. Rajah, to be signed by all present, pledging to fight untouchability till it was completely eradicated. The conference then moved to Poona to help it get the viewpoint of Gandhi, who was imprisoned at Yerawada jail, more clearly, and finally an agreement was reached. Malaviya was a signatory to this agreement or pact, also known as the Poona Pact. After this pact had been accepted by the government, and Gandhi had broken his fast, leaders met again in Bombay on 25 September 1932 and passed a resolution which pledged the Hindu community to work towards removal of untouchability. Chaired by Malaviya, the unanimous resolution became the harbinger of the founding of the Harijan Sevak Sangh and was adopted as the motto of the *Harijan*:

The Conference resolves that, henceforth, amongst Hindus no one shall be regarded as an untouchable by reason of his birth and that those who have been so regarded hitherto will have the same right as other Hindus in regard to the use of the public wells, public schools, public roads and all other public institutions. This right shall have statutory recognition at the first opportunity and shall be one of the earliest Acts of the Swaraj Parliament, if it shall not have received such recognition before that time. It is further agreed that it shall be the duty of all Hindu leaders to secure, by every legitimate and peaceful means, an early removal of all social disabilities now imposed by custom upon the so-called untouchable classes, including the bar in respect of admission to temples.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵ *Indian Round Table Conference (second session): Proceedings of the Plenary Sessions*, Central Publication Branch, Government of India, Calcutta, 1932, pp. 275-287.

¹⁰⁶ Sitaramayya, *History of the Indian National Congress*, Vol. I, p. 536.

It was around this time, realising the potential of the divides which the Communal Award could create, he organized an all-parties unity conference at Allahabad trying his bid to carve unity by taking along the Nationalist Muslim groups with him. Soon after the Award was announced, Maulana Azad met him in Calcutta and they discussed a possible solution. After the Poona Pact, Azad and Syed Mahmud met him in Bombay. Malaviya also met Shaukat Ali in October 1932 in order to find a way out, while also receiving support from Ansari and Khaliqzaman.¹⁰⁷ An all-parties Muslim conference met at Lucknow on 16 October, and agreed to the suggestion of Malaviya to appoint a committee to negotiate with representatives of Hindus and Sikhs on the question of communal problems. The all-parties unity conference opened at Allahabad on 3 November 1932 and was attended by 63 Hindus, 39 Muslims, 11 Sikhs and 8 Indian Christians leaders. The meeting continued for three weeks resolving major issues which were creating a constitutional deadlock.¹⁰⁸ It was finally adjourned while agreeing on—joint electorates;¹⁰⁹ 32 per cent reservation for Muslims in the central legislature; ensuring a Muslim majority in the Punjab and Bengal; and separation of Sind with certain conditions. The meeting was adjourned for another round in Calcutta to negotiate the terms with the European community on the weightage conceded to them in the Bengal legislature. However, as Malaviya accompanied by the Muslim leaders, were on their way to Calcutta, came the news of Samuel Hoare, the secretary of state, announcing 33percent seats for Muslims in the central legislature under separate electorate, and also separation of Sind without any condition. With certain sections of the Muslim leadership in the Punjab and Bengal already opposed to the negotiations at the unity conference, the imperial announcement took the sheen away from this broad consensus.¹¹⁰

The last round of the meeting began at Allahabad from 23 December, and except for the issue of Europeans' representation in the Bengal council, consensus emerged on most issues. Tagore felt that Malaviya's efforts had a 'wholesome effect on other communities',

¹⁰⁷ Misra, *Madan Mohan Malaviya*, p. 242.

¹⁰⁸ Malaviya's youngest son, Govind Malaviya was the secretary of the conference. For the details of the arrangement for the conference, see the small collection of Govind Malaviya Papers, NMML, Manuscript (Acc. No.823).

¹⁰⁹ A novel innovation under this acceptance of joint electorate was not to declare a candidate in the reserved constituency elected if he failed to secure a minimum of 30 percent of votes of the community. In such a scenario, the candidate with the highest votes from the community would be declared elected. See Rajendra Prasad, *India Divided*, third edition, Bombay, 1947, p. 140.

¹¹⁰ For details, see Misra, *Madan Mohan Malaviya*, pp. 242-243, and Parmanand, *Malaviya*, Vol. II, pp. 889-894.

and appreciated his leadership during the country's crisis.¹¹¹ Rajendra Prasad wrote that 'both parties had yielded on some points while they had gained on others', however, 'the fruits of the labour of the Unity Conference which had sat for weeks and after great efforts had succeeded in reaching an agreement on all points as between Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians and other Indian communities were cruelly dashed to pieces by the very timely announcement of Sir Samuel Hoare.'¹¹² In January-February 1935, Rajendra Prasad, as the Congress president, had several meetings with Jinnah in Delhi to resolve the communal deadlock. In between, he also met Malaviya who insisted on the agreement arrived at the Allahabad unity conference of 1932.¹¹³

It was during 1933-34 that Malaviya questioned the Congress position on the Communal Award. As the turn of events showed, the Congress's ambivalent attitude of not opposing the Communal Award, neither accepting nor rejecting, continued. Consequently, along with M.S. Aney, Malaviya resigned from the Congress parliamentary board and formed the Congress Nationalist Party to 'organise a campaign throughout the country against the Communal Award as well as the White Paper'.¹¹⁴ He made it clear that the only difference of the new party with the old party was that it opposed the Communal Award while the Congress did not do so. To a query on the prospects in the elections of 1934, Willingdon pointed out that it was 'extraordinarily difficult to reply to this question satisfactorily'.¹¹⁵ He identified three political blocks in these elections— the "Malaviya lot" with both anti-White Paper and anti-Communal Award as the main plank; the "Gandhi lot" whose main plank was anti-White Paper alone; and the "solid block of Muslims" who would generally support

¹¹¹ *Hindustan Times*, 30 December 1932.

¹¹² Prasad, *India Divided*, pp. 140-141.

¹¹³ On 30 January 1935, Rajendra Prasad met Malaviya. Sardar Patel and Bhulabhai Desai also participated. The following points emerged: if joint electorates was accepted then (i) weightage to Muslims and Hindus in provinces other than the Punjab and Bengal to the extent provided in the Award (ii) 51 percent seats to Muslims in these two provinces (iii) In Bengal, Hindus and Muslims should jointly press for reduction of European seats, which should then be distributed among the two communities (iv) Malaviya insisted that since Muslims were likely to get few seats at the centre under special constituencies like Commerce, Landlord etc. therefore they should insist on 33.1/3 percent seats including these special constituencies. *Rajendra Prasad Papers*, NMML, Microfilm, Reel No. 2, File no. XI/35.

¹¹⁴ Coming after the Third Round Table Conference, the White Paper refers to the declaration by the British authorities in March 1933 providing a blueprint of the future Constitution. It talked of a federation of the British India and the States but not without the consent of the latter. While talking of autonomy in the provinces and a responsible government at the federal centre, it gave special powers to the Governor in the provinces and the Governor General at the centre. The scheme fell short of even moderate nationalist expectations on self-government. For an analysis on the Indian response to the White Paper, see Tej Bahadur Sapru and Zafrulla Khan, 'Indian Public Opinion on the White Paper', *International Affairs*, Vol. 12, No. 5, September 1933, pp. 611-628.

¹¹⁵ Willingdon to Hoare, 3 September 1934, *Templewood Papers*, NMML, Microfilm, Roll No. 3.

White Paper, particularly the Communal Award.¹¹⁶ The Congress Nationalist Party won seven seats over all: as many as four in Bengal, and one each in Berar, the Punjab and Sind.¹¹⁷

The Poona session of the Hindu Mahasabha in 1935, presided over by Malaviya, condemned the Communal Award as grossly unjust to the Hindus and the Sikhs, and which made the growth of responsible government in India impossible.¹¹⁸ However, his relationship with the Hindu Mahasabha had already taken a big hit with serious differences cropping up with Bhai Parmanand and his group. Parmanand had all along maintained a strong anti-Gandhi and anti-Congress posture. Malaviya and Parmanand would often pull in different directions when it came to taking positions at crucial junctures such as the boycott of Simon commission or participation in the civil disobedience movement or contesting elections. Parmanand's elevation as president in the Ajmer session of the Mahasabha in 1933 indicated that leaders such as Malaviya had taken a back seat in so far as the party's political agenda was concerned. On the eve of the provincial elections of 1937, Malaviya wanted the Mahasabha to entrust the work of electioneering to the Congress Nationalist party, while Parmanand wanted local Hindu sabhas to contest elections directly under the overall supervision of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha. The matter came to a head when during the Lahore session of the Mahasabha in October 1936, the organizers refused entry to the members of the U.P. Hindu Sabha, including Radha Kant Malaviya, as delegates.¹¹⁹ Malaviya was conspicuous by his absence at this session. Parmanand traced the genesis of his difference with Malaviya to the issue of contesting elections, because he (Parmanand) had insisted throughout that as long as separate electorate continued, the Mahasabha must canvass for the Hindu seats.¹²⁰

At the golden jubilee of the Congress in 1935, as the oldest living veteran Malaviya laid the memorial stone in the Gokuldas Tejpal Sanskrit College at Bombay.¹²¹ His last speech from the Congress platform was at the Faizpur session in December 1936. He took active part in

¹¹⁶ Willingdon to Hoare, 3 September 1934, *Templewood Papers*, NMML, Microfilm, Roll No. 3.

¹¹⁷ Bengal: Sarat Chandra Bose (unopposed), P.N. Banerjee, Akhil Chandra Dutt, Lakshmikanta Moitra; Berar: M.S. Aney; Punjab: Faqir Chand; Sind: Lalchand Navalrai.

¹¹⁸ 29 December 1935, *Indian Annual Register*, 1935, Vol. II, pp. 305-307.

¹¹⁹ *Indian Annual Register*, 1935, Vol. II, pp. 259, 261. They were allowed entry as visitors which they refused. The UP Hindu Sabha was recognized by the Malaviya faction as the local Hindu Sabha within the province. Ganpat Rai had anticipated firefighting at Lahore as the rival Hindu Sabha, not recognized by Malaviya, had filed an appeal before the Hindu Mahasabha. Ganpat Rai to Moonje, 24 September 1936, *Ganpat Rai Papers*, NMML, Correspondence.

¹²⁰ *Indian Annual Register*, 1935, Vol. II, p. 261.

¹²¹ Chaturvedi, *Madan Mohan Malaviya*, p. 89.

the election campaign of 1936-37, but his health started deteriorating. However, he continued to express his views on issues concerning the country that were valued highly in the nationalist circles. A day before the launch of the Quit India movement, Malaviya wired Gandhi appreciating his 'noble endeavour to serve motherland and mankind.'¹²² The movement witnessed the most intense involvement of the students of Benares Hindu University. After the movement had started, Malaviya fiercely opposed the entry of police into the university campus. When Gandhi was arrested, Malaviya asked the British authorities to either furnish a reply to the explanations given by Gandhi to the charge-sheet or release him immediately. During the war years, he asked for the release of all national leaders and convened an all-parties conference for resolving the political deadlock. On his death, *Hindustan Times* wrote: 'Great Sanskrit scholar, staunch supporter of Hindu religion, first-rate politician, and top-rank educationist rolled into one, he had no equal in the country.'¹²³ Moving a condolence resolution in the Central Assembly on 13 November 1946, Jawaharlal Nehru referred to Malaviya as 'a giant among men' and as 'one of those who laid the foundation of modern Indian nationalism and year by year built brick by brick and stone by stone the noble edifice of Indian freedom.'¹²⁴

Concluding Remarks

Malaviya intervened in crucial political events at important junctures of the country and provided leadership on his own terms. Though organizing and guiding the Hindu Mahasabha in its formative years, he was not in favour of the party contesting elections to the legislatures on its own. On the other hand, when he was disenchanted with the attitude of the Congress, for example in 1926 on the issue of strategy within the legislatures, or in 1934 on the issue of ambivalence on the Communal Award, he formed his own parties like the Indian National Party, Independent Congress Party and the Congress Nationalist Party. Instead of deriding him for creating right wing pressures within the Congress, it may be more plausible to argue that leaders like Malaviya restrained the Hindu Mahasabha from adopting a virulent anti-Congress posture during the 1920s and early 30s.

¹²² Malaviya to Gandhi, 7 August 1942, *M.K. Gandhi (Pyarelal) Collection*, 15th Instalment, NMML, Manuscript, Correspondence.

¹²³ 'Malaviya's Life: A Dedication to India's Service', *Hindustan Times*, 13 November 1946.

¹²⁴ *Hindustan Times*, 14 November 1946.

Looking at the significant role and assessing his contributions in the historical context in which he operated, Malaviya's position in modern Indian history requires definite renegotiation. That he was able to maintain a remarkable balance between his advocacy of the cause of the Hindu sangathan and leadership of the national movement is a pointer to the concern that a strong nation could only be built by achieving organic unity of the community. His popularity in one domain did not obstruct, rather helped him establish his leadership in the other. His Sanatanist outlook, urge to unify Hindus, achieve Hindu-Muslim unity, abolish untouchability, and work for educational upliftment of the community on modern lines, enabled by a call to everything that is good in traditions, put his leadership on a different pedestal. It may only be futile to judge Malaviya's leadership or his role or his interventions through a binary of communal versus secular, tradition versus modernity, conservative versus liberal, orthodox versus progressive or through similar typologies or conventional archetypes.