Twitter Thread by Surya Kanegaonkar



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@PriyamvadaGopal @ChathamHouse @AdomGetachew Hindu nationalism should not have a negative connotation. It's not exclusivist because Hinduism isn't a religion - rather, it's a way of life, and the term "Hindu" refer broadly to the people around and east of the Sindhu. This transcends the modern construct of religions.

@Kate_SdE @PriyamvadaGopal @ChathamHouse @AdomGetachew For "Hindus" - a broad-brush stroke for a people whose culture is underpinned by a knowledge system that provides logical structure for adopters of a plethora of philosophies, "Hindu nationalism" by definition, is inclusive and pluralistic. It gives space to everyone.

@Kate_SdE @PriyamvadaGopal @ChathamHouse @AdomGetachew If Nyaya, Vaisheshika, Samkhya, Yoga, Purva-Mimamsa, Buddhist and Jain philosophies are studied in comparison with Abrahamic faiths, India's unique Carl Popper Paradox comes to light. The imposition of a western matrix of secularism on a pluralistic culture has done much harm.

@Kate_SdE @PriyamvadaGopal @ChathamHouse @AdomGetachew Because the traditions are rooted in universalist philosophies, India gladly hosts followers of non-proselytizing faiths. Supremacist theocratic ideologies find little resonance with the people of the land. To understand "Hindu nationalism," one has to study Indic philosophy.

@Kate_SdE @PriyamvadaGopal @ChathamHouse @AdomGetachew Equally, it is important to view history objectively, know the excesses of supremacist invaders/colonizers, and importantly, understand the asymmetries created by the "secular" state which structurally disadvantage the vastly heterogeneous so-called "Hindu" majority.

@Kate_SdE @PriyamvadaGopal @ChathamHouse @AdomGetachew Purging neocolonialism doesn't sit will with those who would like to see Indian democracy and electoral outcomes follow Western "liberal" orthodoxies. Due to its culture, India has and always will be liberal, and Hindu nationalism is a tool to iron out disempowering asymmetries.

@Kate_SdE @PriyamvadaGopal @ChathamHouse @AdomGetachew Note "Hindu majoritarianism" - a term that feeds the "Hindu nationalist" narrative Western research/media, is an oxymoron. Assumptions based on the homogenization of cultures, philosophies and traditions of the people from around and east of the Sindhu, leads to flawed analysis.

@Kate_SdE @PriyamvadaGopal @ChathamHouse @AdomGetachew When a state of 1.4 billion is realigning itself with pluralism from selective secularism, extrapolating cherry picked incidents into broad narratives is not a robust form of

analysis. Digging deeper into doctrines, history and statistics is better when modeling 1.4 billion.

@Kate_SdE @PriyamvadaGopal @ChathamHouse @AdomGetachew Moreover, India is a civilizational state which has adopted democracy, so an assessment of it must be more rigorous and nuanced than it would be for a small, relatively new nation. The complexities are often overlooked for headlines, creating a structural dissonance.