



Challenges before Nationalist Academic Activists

Dr. Rakesh Kumar Pandey
Associate Professor
Kirori Mal College
University of Delhi, Delhi

History is witness to the fact that the expansion and spread of Islam happened in a very short period¹. This rapid expansion was achieved primarily by conquering nations in wars. Once conquered, the citizens used to follow mass conversion. Not only countries after countries were converted completely during this expansion, majority of the Western Asia were culturally converted and were made to get disconnected from their own pasts. Greece, Egypt and Rome lost their culture, originality and identity in this process. To the disappointment of these expansionists however, India did not yield similar results for them. During the initial attempts of invasions during 7-1000 AD, Islamic invaders found it very difficult to defeat the Kings ruling in this part of the world. Hermann Kulke and Dietmarv Rothermund² note that "rulers of India proved a match for the Islamic conquerors. Chalukyas and Rashtrakutas stopped their progress in western India and finally the Gurjara Pratiharas prevented their conquest of northern India." But even later when they were able to post some wins after 1000 AD³, they poorly failed to display the success in the matter of conversion that they exhibited in other countries⁴.

This happened primarily because India was not familiar with the idea of following King's religious practices and choices by its citizens. We were used to a tradition in which Kings were not supposed to enforce personal worshipping choices. The religious and ruling practices of Indian Kings were completely disconnected. While in other countries the conversion resulted as the population were used to following the religion of their rulers, India was not familiar with such

a tradition. Indians were used to practicing freedom of choosing religious practices under all pre-Islamic rulers. We were not tuned to follow the religious choices of rulers. It was exactly due to this that no amount of discriminatory 'Jazia tax' could result in automatic conversions. The Islamic invaders were just perplexed at this behavior. Later they tried to win over us by showcasing their good practices, then they twisted and refined their religious understanding to adjust and even adopt the concept of religious freedom, but could not impress the mass in general because they failed to match their actions with these ideas.

After the era of barbaric Islamic invasions ended⁵ with the rise of Marathas that ruled this nation for more than half a century, the British arrived. They tried several clever techniques to destroy the religious freedom that was there in practice in India even after the adverse period of Islamic rulers. They realized finally that unless the freedom of religious practices that existed at that time are established instead as conservative, anti-scientific, regressive and outdated, it would be difficult to encourage conversion. They had no other option left but to somehow manipulate and create a background to justify conversion. To achieve this goal, they invented a strategy. They systematically started picking up bad practices that were present in our society at that time, many of those that had actually sprung up as a consequence of the torturous regime of Islamic rulers, and used them to show that our earlier practices were all worth getting disowned and discarded. A society that was so modern to have conceptualized a very well researched text like Kamasutra, a God like Kamadev, several female Devis and many Khajuraho like temples with adult carvings on its walls, suddenly was blamed for following an 'ancient tradition' of Sati and Ghunghat⁶. A society wherein a Sutputra Maharshi Ved Vyas was accepted as an intellectual to have written an incredible text like Mahabharat, wherein a Balmiki Rishi wrote a celebrated and pious text like Ramayana, was made to believe that education was traditionally restricted to a few 'upper castes' only. Quite astonishingly these 'mythical texts' still rule the psyche of Indians. A society having a tradition of educated and wise women rishikas like Gargi, Maitreyi, Aditi, Indrani, Yami, Lopmudraetcs, was left to explain that why didn't we allow girls to study! Instead, we were forced to believe that Savitribai Phule was the first educated lady of India!

To achieve this inexplicable scenario, the British entrusted Leftists and communists of India with the task of establishing that Indians were never prosperous; were traditionally conservative; were blatantly patriarchal, ruthlessly discriminatory and mindlessly superstitious. Since then, this paid lobby was allowed to manipulate history to make it a demoralizing narrative for the entire mass. As this lobby was supported and paid by the respective rulers that continued to encourage them even after our independence⁷, it has posed a huge challenge before the nationalists to undo the damage. It is not that easy also because in order to create and construct a fake demoralizing history, they strategized to glorify the Islamic and British invaders, their practices and traditions. This lobby ganged up and took help of even the most conservative, regressive and fundamental elements of Islamic fold. This unison of mindless religious Islamic fundamentalists and the nation-immune leftists has now become so formidable that this has posed a formidable challenge before us to claim our space in the academic and intellectual field. We need a huge force of academic activists who can work day and night to create a sea of correct version of historical facts and narrations so that the false history constructed by the propagandist-historians who are working under a conspiratorial agenda gets automatically diffused and dumped finally.

References

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