



FACTS *against* MYTHS

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Dark Era or Foundations of Syncretism Myths of Medieval History – Part II

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COMMENT

The very argument that certain events which took place in the past need to be avenged today is itself based on a perverse understanding of society. Politics of past has to be kept confined to past itself, irrespective of its interpretation. The present in no way can redress the mistakes of the past. The communal political forces resort to past antagonisms to consolidate their social base. Be it the spreading of myths about Muslim kings destroying Hindu temples or Rana Pratap and Shivaji battling against the might of Muslim rulers or be it the Taj Mahal being a original Temple of God Shiva usurped by a Muslim king to convert it into a tomb for his beloved queen. The very root of this historiography is based on the false assumption that Indian society is constituted by number of religious communities and the interests of one religious community are uniform and in hostility to the other communities. In this view politics is nothing but an interaction of different religious communities.

This communal view of history has serious flaws as it takes the religion of the ruler as the sole determining factor of the politics of the time. It has a static view of religion as if it does not change because of the interaction with the people. However, it sees communities as uniform ones ignoring the serious differences in the socio-economic status of people within the same religious community. Instead what we should study in the history is "the stage of development of society from one point to another, the change in the society's system of production and the resultant social organization, etc" (Mukhia, 1993)

Another aspect in the distortion of history of medieval times is the project of British historians who used selected sources to show only the conflict part of the times. In continuation with Mill and Macaulay, Elliot and Dawson continued in the same vein and Elliot was forthright to proclaim that the purpose of their 8-volume project, 'History of India as Told by Her Own Historians', was to divide the people on communal lines (Chausalkar, 1995). They could succeed in their project because historical accounts written by court historians were normally written in an archaic style, eulogizing the ruler and generally attributing his deeds to some holy cause rather than to outright greed.

The illogic behind this myth, under question, refers to the RSS goal of a Hindu Rashtra. In its agenda it asserts that India can be united only under a Hindu identity. It then puts forward the spurious claim that all religions which arose in the subcontinent emerged as mere sects of Hinduism, and are thus not full fledged religions. Be it Buddhism or Sikhism, the RSS is prompt to label them as mere sects of Hinduism. Its version of Hinduism is, however, an elite Brahminical version while these other religions arose mainly as a reaction against the Brahminical values.

At this point, it is imperative to challenge this communal claim by asking; does it mean that we Indians can be united into a single nation only as Hindus, according to the RSS.? Our response is: On the contrary! Indians ARE united by the overarching Indian National identity! The attempts, on the other hand, by the RSS to invent Hindu identity and make it as the primary identity is fraught with dangers not only for the minorities and weaker sections of society but even for those with Sikh or Buddhist identity!

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MYTH: *The medieval period is the darkest period of Indian history.*

FACT: The coming of the British severely affected the already declining central authority of the Mughal empire and they consolidated their empire by defeating the local nawabs and kings.

A large part of Indian subcontinent was predominantly under Mughal rule though never in the rest of South Asia. The British for their convenience viewed South Asian history in terms of religious categories. They had also to nurture the loyalties of their subjects away from the old kingdoms to their own rule. It is towards this end that they propagated the notion that British rule is the divine dispensation for the Indian people that would freed them from the tyrannies of Mughal rule.

However, the Mughal empire cannot be equated with the Mughal period as though the emperors were Muslims and the administrative structure was unchanged under the Mughals. The old relationship of landlord, kings and vassals remained undisturbed. The top functionaries of state were not only Muslims but also Hindus. The rajas, rulers and zamindars were Hindus who enjoyed considerable amount of social and political power. In the court of these emperors, which were the highest authority next to the kings, the number of Hindu functionaries and allies was very high. In fact the maximum number of such Hindu Rajas were in the court of Aurangzeb, who is supposed to be most bigoted of emperors. Furthermore, not all Muslims were not part of the ruling dynasty as most of them belonged to poor, low caste shudras and who shared their plight with the poor sections of Hindus. Thus, at the top rung of the administration were Hindus and Muslims and at the bottom of society there were Hindus and Muslims. This is a totally incorrect method of periodising history which began by J.S. Mill in his book on Indian history, which was meant to be the primer for the British administrative trainees preparing for their tenure as administrators in India.

MYTH: *Shivaji was a great Hindu crusader in the cause of Hinduism and who restored the supremacy of Hindu rule.*

FACT: Shivaji is one of the most fascinating personalities of Indian history. His manifold achievements have made him a great folk hero. It is extremely tragic, however, the name of this great king — recognised as a symbol of national integration — is being exploited to spread hostility against a community.

As an outstanding administrator, Shivaji adopted a humane policy in administrative affairs which did not base itself on religion. In the recruitment of his soldiers and officers for his army and navy, religion was no criterion and more than one third of his army consisted of Muslims. The supreme command of his navy was with Siddi Sambal, and Muslim Siddis were recruited

in his navy in large numbers. Interestingly Mirza Raja Jaisingh on behalf of King Aurangzeb fought his major battles with the Rajput army leader. When he was detained at Agra fort, of the two men on whom he relied for his eventual escape one was a Muslim called Madari Mehtar. His confidential secretary was Maulana Haider Ali and the chief of his cannon division was Ibrahim Gardi.

He had respected other religions. He respected the holy seers like 'Hazarat Baba Yaqut bahut Thorwale', whom he gave the life pension and also Father Ambrose, whose church was under attack in Gujarat. At his capital Raigad he erected a special mosque for Muslim devotees in front of his palace in the same way that he built the Jagadishwar temple for his own daily worship.

Writing in the evening, Mid-Day, (June 4, 2000, Mumbai) columnist, R. Zakaria, observes that during his military campaigns Shivaji had issued strict instructions to his men and officers that Muslim women and children should not be subjected to maltreatment. Mosques and Dargah's were given due protection. He also ordered that whenever a copy of the Koran came into the hands of his men, they should show it proper respect and hand it over to Muslim". The story of his bowing to the daughter-in-law of Bassein's Nawab is well known. When she was brought as a part of the booty and offered to her he respectfully begged her pardon and asked his soldiers to escort her back from the place from where she was forcibly brought in. Sardesai in his book "New History of Marathas" (Vol.1) writes "... in defending the Hindu religion, Shivaji was in no way actuated by any hatred towards Muslims as a sect or towards their religion... He revered Muslim saints like Baba Yakut of Kelsi to whose shrine he made a grant..." All this goes on to show the values of communal harmony which Shivaji pursued, and that his primary goal was to establish his own kingdom with maximum possible area.

Corroborating the above, V.B. Kulkarni writes in his book: "Shivaji: The Portrait of Patriot": "Men of all classes and creeds took part in the great enterprise of building a new order in the country. The Pathan from the wilds of the N.W Frontier fought shoulder to shoulder with his Hindu comrade-in-arms... The sea-faring Muslim from the Konkan was received with open arms in the Maratha navy and given positions of trust and responsibility without the slightest suspicion or fear that the ties of religion would triumph over his sense of loyalty and obligation..."

In conclusion, these facts beg the question; Why, then, Shivaji portrayed as a Hindu King? We do not have any reference upto 1895. It was in 1895 that Lokmanya Tilak had decided of mobilising public opinion in favour of nationalism. Thereafter, the *Kesari* became a public forum of all kinds of ideas. For invoking the historical memories Tilak discussed, *inter-alia*, proposals

Brief Note on Sikh History

In the 17th century Guru Nanak's preaching's came in the wake of brahminical domination on one hand and the spread of teachings of Sufi and Bhakti saints on the other. Nanak rejected Brahminical values and caste domination and concluded that teachings of Bhakti and Sufi differed in form, not in content. It was from the teachings of Muslim Sufis (notably Sheikh Farid) and Sant Kabir that Guru Nanak drew his inspiration. He preached monotheism and quiet devotion to God. His hymns were drawn from different sources. Out of Nanak's teachings came an enduring religious community with a distinctive history and evolution separate from Hindu and Muslim religions but drawing deeply the egalitarian principles from both. Nanak denounced the orthodoxy and practitioners of Islam as well as Hinduism and emphasised the vibrant inter-community relationships that was based on the subaltern versions of Islam and Hinduism. His teachings at one level are a synthesis of the values of both religions like the doctrines of reincarnation and Karma from Hinduism and the oneness of God and congregation in worship from Islam.

Nine more Gurus followed Nanak. With the fifth Guru, Arjan, Sikhism was established as a separate religious system. He put together the writings of his predecessors, his own and those of Hindu and Muslim saints in the *Adi Granth*, which is the guiding spirit of Sikh religion. Meanwhile due to the efforts of the Gurus Amritsar emerged as the religious and trade centre. It is important to remember that the Sufi saint Miyan Mir was requested to lay the foundation stone of Golden Temple. This was the time when organisation of Sikh community as a political process was also in progress, and their relationship with the Mughal sultanate was becoming quite complex. Guru Arjan had become an important religious and political leader. He was socially very close to Miyan Mir, while his chief opponent was a Hindu, the finance minister to Muslim governor of Lahore. During the 17th century this community underwent a transformation into a military community. The gurus went into Mughal politics and soon found themselves in opposition to the factions, which won in the battles for succession. Initially Guru Arjan entered in to a liaison with Khusarau. In 1606 when Prince Khusarau rebelled against his father Jahangir, it was suspected that Guru Arjan had supported Khusarau and was arrested.

Another Guru Hari Rai entered into relations with rebellious son of Shahjahan, Dara Shikoh. With Dara Shikoh's defeat at the hands of his brother Aurangzeb this Guru again found himself on the wrong side of the power equations of the ruling Mughal family. He therefore had to send his son to Delhi to negotiate a pardon. The cycle of conflict with Mughal rulers continued and took extreme form with the 10th Guru, Guru Govind Singh. Guru Govind wanted to establish his own kingdom while Aurangzeb was brutally suppressing the rebellions against the Mughal Sultanate. Guru Govind's immediate tussle was with the Raja of Bilaspur, whom he refused to pay any tribute. This led to the battle in which the Raja of Bilaspur was defeated. This also led to hostilities among the Rajas of hill states towards Guru Govind Singh. He also had allies in the plains the most notable of whom was the *pir* of *Sadhura*. Aurangzeb in conjunction with Hindu Rajas of plains drove Guru Govind away from Anandpur and in the battle his children were caught and tortured. Later, an attempt to an rapprochement was made by Aurangzeb's and he invited Guru Govind to meet him in the Deccan. As Guru Govind was on his way to meet him, Aurangzeb died, but the process of reconciliation with Mughal sultanate continued and in due course Guru struck an alliance with Aurangzeb's son Bahadurshah Jafar.

regarding *Kirtan* and festivals at every fort. Further, for fund collection regarding memorial issue a suggestion was put forth that if every Maharashtrian Hindu contributed just a paise, 5 lakh rupees could be collected. In *Bhajans* and *Kirtan* the secular character of Shivaji was underplayed and what was fed to popular conception was his heroic struggle against Mughals who were portrayed as outsiders and Muslims.

MYTH: *Rana Pratap was an anti-Muslim King and is a symbol of Indian nationalism.*

FACT: Rana Pratap was a Rajput king of great valour and pride. He did not want to subordinate himself to Mughal Empire unlike other Rajput kings. He refused the messages of compromise leading to wars with King Akbar. On behalf of Akbar Raja Mansing, another Rajput King took on Rana Pratap in the battle of Haldi Ghati. Mansingh had Rajput soldiers on his side, while Rana Pratap's army was a mixed one with his army being led by Hakim Khan Sur's Afghan contingent. Hakim Khan Sur's manorial still stands at Haldi Ghati and there is an annual festival to commemorate his anniversary, celebrated by Rajputs in general. After his defeat in this battle Rana resorted to guerrilla warfare, while most of the Rajput Kings did agree to join the Mughal administration. After the death of Rana, his son Amar Singh allied with the Mughal king Jahangir, who accorded full and befitting honours on him. While words will fall short to admire the bravery of Maharana Pratap or Shivaji Maharaj for that matter they cannot be accused of being anti-Muslim or anti-Islam. Neither can they be called as symbols of Indian Nationalism as they were fighting for their own Kingdoms and NOT for Indian nationalism. Indian Nationalism is a modern concept, a concept of the times of industrial society. The Kingdoms are around Jamindars, Nobility and Jagirdars who are the building blocks of the Mughal administration.

MYTH: *Sikhism is not a separate religion but a mere sect of Hinduism created to protect the Hindu faith from Muslim invaders and aggression.*

FACT: It is not necessary to separate Hinduism from Sikhism because it is already quite distinct as Guru Nanak himself declared, 'Na hum Hindu na Musalman, Allah Ram Ke Pind Pran'. And thus, Sikhs are not Hindus but Guru; Nanak hated no religion. Moreover, Hindus took Guru Nanak as an incarnation of God, a Guru, and Muslims took and respected him as their peer. There is a common saying:

**"Nanak Shah Faquir
Hindu ka Guru Muslim ka Pir"**

But the myth under question is typical RSS propaganda, one more example of the misuse of history for communal designs. Moreover, this version of Hinduism is an elite Brahmanical version. Other religions, on the other hand, had emerged in reaction to Brahmanical values.

In this sea-saw battle between Sikhs and Mughal Kings, the lines of alliances were regularly blurred. Mughals having liaison with Hindu Rajas, Gurus having alliances with Muslim kings and pirs etc. This was a political fight in which religious elements got mixed up. The same Guru Govind Singh who had a rough patch with Aurangzeb allied with his son Bahadur Shah Jafar.

MYTH: *The Taj Mahal was originally a Shiv temple or a Hindu king's palace which was procured by Shah Jahan who converted it into a tomb for his wife Mumtaz Mahal.*

FACT: This claim is based on the interpretation of the *Badashahnama*, the biography of Shah Jahan, which according to Oak (who claims Taj Mahal to be a Hindu monument) was procured from Mirza Raja Jai Singh, grandson of Man Singh. Oak also maintains that the words Taj Mahal is a distortion of the Sanskrit, Tejo Mahalaya, meaning a Shiv temple. There are other grounds also that the carbon dating of the door of the mausoleum shows that it belonged to a period three centuries before the reign of Shah Jahan.

Shah Jahan, 'The Emperor of Oppulence', lost his most favourite wife Mumtaz Mahal while she was giving birth to their child. He was totally heart-broken and on the promise given to her he gave orders for this magnificent structure to be built. Abdul Hamid Lahauri the court historian records in *Badshah Nama* the complete details of the construction and the expenses involved and the mechanism of supervision of the whole process. He given by him are corroborated by the accounts of foreign travelers like Peter Mundy, Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, Nicholai Manucci and Francis Bernier, who visited Agra at that time.

The Taj Mahal was a mammoth project replete with the structure, gardens and all the paraphernalia of the mausoleum. Mirza Raja Jaising gave the land in lieu of compensation and this is confirmed by two of the *firmans* (court orders) of Shah Jahan. This is what is misinterpreted as that the structure itself was procured. The details of construction process leave no doubt as to who built it. The details of regular expenses from the king's treasury on regular basis are also available. As soon as the construction began it was noticed by European travellers who visited Agra and left a record of the monument Peter Mundy (1631-32) writes "The king is now building a Sepulchre for his late deceased Queen Taje Mahal (Taj Mahal) whom he dearly affected....He intends it shall excel all others..the building is big and goes on with excessive labor....." (From 'The Taj: A Mausoleum', R. Nath, Seminar 364-Dec 1989). Tavernier, a French jeweler first came to Agra in 1640-41, when the Taj was still under construction. He confirmed that Emperor Shah Jahan was building a grand mausoleum for his beloved queen. Carbon dating of the wood of the doors cannot be basis of dating of the structure as doors are replaceable and the life of wood may be different than the date of construction of the building. Tejo

Mahalaya cannot be the name of Shiv and, above all, the Man Singh clan was a Vaishnavite not a Shaiv. The very architecture of Taj Mahal goes against the temple theory as temples have a particular architecture, which does not conform to what we see in the Taj. This ridiculous claim is in line with many such claims, which try to prove that it was Hindu civilization which has given culture and knowledge not only to India but to the whole world.

MYTH: Aurangzeb was a rabid anti-Hindu emperor who wanted to convert Hindus to Islam and create a truly Islamic state (Dar-ul Islam) in India.

FACT: Similar but opposite myths are spread by Muslim communal historians, who proclaim that Aurangzeb was the greatest Mughal king in India as he wanted to spread Islam in India. But objective reality is in between. Much has been made of Aurangzeb's intolerance of Hinduism but to see him as the representative Muslim emperor of India would be idiotic history. Indeed, none of the other Mughals showed anything like the intolerance of Aurangzeb.

The fact is that Aurangzeb was the king who ruled India for a long stretch of 50 years and during this long span of time he kept changing his policies depending on the needs of the situation with the primary goal of expanding his empire all the time. The fact that during the latter part of his rule number of Hindus in his service was larger than ever before speaks volumes against this myth. It rose from 24% during Shah Jahan's reign to 33% during his reign. For instance, the number of high-ranking Hindu Mansabdars in the Mughal Dynasty was at its peak towards the last two decades of his reign. So, should not the blame for these wrong deeds also be shared by the Hindu nobles and kings?!

However, it is true that according to his understanding of Islam Aurangzeb had stopped the construction of new temples but the repair and maintenance of old temples was freely permitted. He also generously donated *Jahagirs* to many temples to win the loyalties of people. There are number of firmans which have been compiled by noted historian Dr. B.N. Pande (*Firmans of King Aurangzeb*). These firmans include the one's from the temples of *Mahakaleshwar* (Ujjain), *Balaji* temple (Chitrkut), *Umanand* temple (Guwahati) and *Jain* temples of *Shatrunjaya*. There are also firmans supporting other temples and Gurudwaras in north India. In the famous pilgrimage of Chitrakoot, he not only built the Balaji temple but also gave revenue of eight villages for its maintenance.

Jizia was also imposed for a brief period during his reign, that too exempting the Brahmins, old and invalids from such a payment. To presume that by imposing this tax he could spread Islam is baseless. He did suspend this tax during the famine in the Deccan. We cannot forget that *Jakaati* is a regular tax levied on all believers of Islam. And this at best can be seen as a parallel source of revenue for the sultanate. "Ibn Batuta a fourteenth century traveler and scholar reports that in South India *jazia* was collected by a Hindu King (Zamorin) from his Jewish

subjects...even if one is to concede that *jazia* is a purely religious tax, did the Hindus really consider their religion so cheap as to exchange it for exemption (which is not an exemption as Muslims they have to pay *zakaat*)" (Mukhia)

MYTH: Tipu Sultan was an anti Hindu king who converted Hindus to Islam by force.

FACT: Tipu was one of the brave kings who resisted the British imperialism onslaught with bravery and courage. The British faced one of the most serious resistances to their reign at the hands of Haider Ali and his son Tipu. He is also one of the few Indian Kings who died on the battlefield while battling the British. Encouraged by British the Nizam and Marathas, both saw themselves as the heir of the Mughal empire and Tipu's clashes with the armies. British in their frustration wanted to drive the wedge between Hindus and Muslims and propagated the lie that Tipu not only massacred thousands of Hindus and Christians but also destroyed scores of Hindu temples.

There are many a temples in south, which were gifted as *Jagirs* by Tipu for their upkeep. Once in a war between Marathas and himself, the Marathas laid siege to his capital city, Shrirangapatnam. As they faced defeat the Maratha troops before their retreat ransacked not only the populated suburbs but also looted and destroyed the famous temple of Ranga in the vicinity of the city on the banks of river Kaveri. Tipu not only repaired the temple but also restored its wealth. He is reported to have also made grants to several other temples. According to the journal, *Young India*, (edited by Mahatma Gandhi), Tipu made lavish gifts to land and other items to Hindu temples, and temples dedicated to Shri Venkatarāmana, Shrinivas and Shrianganath and situated in the vicinity of Tipu's palaces still bear testimony to his broad-minded toleration. His major battles had been against British and Marathas and also with the Nizam of Haidrabad and Nawab of Arcot. were purely for territorial gain though some of the court historians give it a religious colour.

Tipu Sultan sought the blessings of Shankracharya of Sringeri Math before embarking on his expeditions. He also donated money to construct the image of goddess Sharda in Sringeri temple as well as in several other temples, including regular gifts. The famous temple of Sri Ranga Nath was situated barely hundred yards from his palace.

The conversions, which occurred, were due to change in the land holding patterns and abolition of slavery. Conversions to Islam on Malabar coast took place not during the invasion by Tipu but during the 1843-1850 period. Because of this, large number of low castes formerly bonded slaves of upper caste Hindus moved over to Islam, in the hope of getting social equality. There are many a conversions in last couple of centuries where passage of emancipator laws has coincided with the conversion to Islam or Christianity.

History's Message Against Communalism

Q. When Rana Sanga clashed with Babar in the battle of Khanwa, which ally helped him the most?

A. Hasan Khan Mewati was the ally who tried his best to help Rana in this crucial battle.

Q. What is the last message that Babar left for his son Humayun?

A. Babar told him to respect the religion of the country to which they have come (Hinduism) and respect their temples and cows. Cf. : Part I, Page 7.

Q. Babar had a special word of praise for some monuments in his Memoirs, which ones?

A. He expressed his admiration for the temples of Gwalior and nearby areas.

Q. In view of the above questions, does it appear likely that Babar would have approved the demolition of a very important temple in Ayodhya?

A. This is most unlikely.

Q. Is it true that a large number of qualified and eminent historians hold the firm view that there is no basis for rumours of Babar demolishing a temple in Ayodhya?

A. Yes! These historians have repeatedly expressed this view in writing and public speeches.

Q. Then who brought this issue to the limelight first?

A. Colonial historians brought it forward during the days of the British rule.

Q. Is it true that the colonial historians were fond of raking up imaginary issues that would cause hostility between Hindus and Muslims?

A. Yes actually they had specific plans to do so. Secretary of state Wood wrote to Lord Elgin in 1857 that "we've kept our power in India by making one force fight the other and we should continue to do so".

Q. During Moghal rule did Hindu forces generally fight Muslim forces, or were there mixed battles.

A. Moghul kings and other kings had Hindu generals and soldiers and vice-versa. Aurangzeb is considered to be the most fanatic Muslim king but even many of his battles were fought by Hindu generals. Shivaji is regarded as a Hindu folk hero but his army had many Muslims in crucial posts.

Q. When the (Hindu) king of Bikaner was defeated by the king of Marwar, with whom did his family members find shelter?

A. With Sher Shah Suri.

Q. When Humayun was defeated by Sher Shah Suri where did he find shelter?

A. With the (Hindu) Raja of Amarkot where Akbar was born.

Q. One general died fighting very bravely on the side of Rana Pratap. The warrior is still remembered very fondly in Rajasthan. Name him?

A. The name of this general was Hakim Khan Sur. He fought bravely on the side of Rana Pratap with his Afghan soldiers against Akbar's forces.

Q. Name two kings who built special religious places of other communities just near their palaces.

A. Shivaji built a Mosque near his palace while Tipu Sultan built a Temple near his palace.

Q. What was the attitude of the Nawabs of Oudh towards temples?

A. *They supported several temples and gave land grants. Names of Nawab Safdarjung and Dewan Asafuddaullah maybe mentioned in this context.*

Q. A senior confidante of Nawab Safdarjung died fighting for him. Who was he?

A. *A Hindu named Nawal Rai..*

Q. Nawab Sirajudaullah was betrayed by several people in the battle of Plassey. But one confidante fought most bravely for him. Name him.

A. *A Hindu named Mohan Lal*

Q. When some Kashmiri Pandits fled in terror, did a (Muslim) Kashmiri ruler take the initiative to bring them back?

A. *Yes, Zian-UI-Abedin made this noble effort.*

Q. Did Muslim freedom fighters of 1857 show a special gesture towards Hindus?

A. *Yes, they prohibited cow slaughter in some areas captured by them from the British.*

Q. Name the friends of Jhansi Ki Rani who fought with her till the end.

A. *Juhi and Moti Bai.*

Q. From whom did the Rani get maximum help from, in defending the fort at Jhansi?

A. *The courageous gunner Kunwar Ghulam Ghaus Khan who died fighting to defend Jhansi.*

(Source: A poster on Communal Harmony by Bharat Dogra)

Communalism : Historical Legacy

Recent historical references refer to fierce conflicts between the Sannyasi orders and the Vairagis in the latter part of the Mughal period. In each case they are competitive sects and religious concerns are not the only reason for the conflict. These tend to be sects, which are highly organised and often literate. The competition is frequently for state patronage or for control over commercial rights. In the case of the Sannyasis and the Vairagis for example, they were also traders on a large scale, pilgrimage centres, where the taking in the way of offerings from pilgrims was lucrative, and religious belief was bent to support commercialisation, became centres of economic competition present in religious conflict, even if the conflict is sought to be presented as a matter of religious belief.

The same is true of the many conflicts between what have been called the Hindus and the Muslims. Such conflicts first of all should not be taken as conflicts involving two monolithic communities. They were not so in the earlier period either, where sectarian identity was more crucial than a monolithic religious identity. It was not the Hindus who attacked the Buddhists and Jains, but particular sects of Saivas.

– Romila Thapar

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Medieval Coinage

Tanka: a little more than a rupee.

Jital: A copper coin; equal to 1/2 of a silver tanka of 175 grains and corresponding in value of 1 farthing (quarter of a penny).

Adali: Revived by Plohmmed Taghuq. It was equivalent in weight to 140 grains of silver.

Shushghani: A six-jital piece.

Coinage in the Vijayanagar kingdom was both in gold and copper. There was one specimen of a silver coin. Coins bore emblems of gods and animals.

Pulsiyah: the copper money (in the Martha kingdom).

- i) In Akbar's time, the silver rupee of about 175 grains was equal to 2s, 3d. sterling.
- ii) jalali: a square rupee issued by Akbar.
- iii) dam: also called paisa or fulus; weighed 323.5 grains. It was the chief copper coin in Sher Shah's currency. In Akbar's time it was divided into twenty-five parts, known as jitals.
- iv) One rupee was equal to forty dams up to A.D. 1616, and thirty dams, or a little more or less

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