

Chapter: # 16 of Wendy Doniger's "The Hindus, an Alternative History"

Chapter Title: "Fusion and Rivalry under the Delhi Sultanate 650 – 1500 CE"

General Comments on the Chapter

This is one of the worst written chapters in the book. She credits her students Manan Ahmed and Rajiv Kinra for their help with this chapter (p. 691), and clearly, they have failed her. Her reliance on non-primary secondary and tertiary sources has led her to reproduce and even amplify the errors already present in the works that she has consulted. The further one of is removed from primary historical sources, the greater is the possibility of misinterpretation of historical data, and this clearly shows in this chapter (and several others) of the book. In fact, Doniger has not even digested the data from her secondary and tertiary sources, and has produced a chapter that is full of major errors, some of which are critiqued below.

It is difficult to understand why she calls the entire period from 650 – 1500 as the 'Delhi Sultanate' when more than half of it (650 – 1192 CE) comprised of Rajput and other Hindu kingdoms in practically the whole of India. The Sultanate extended over peninsular India more than a century later during the reign of Ala-ud-Din Khalji in the 14th century. To lump 550 years from 650 – 1200 CE in "Delhi Sultanate" is somewhat reminiscent of Islamist Pakistani textbooks which start their accounts of history from 712 CE, when the Arabs invaded Sindh and established the first Muslim kingdom in the Indian subcontinent proper.

Even more ridiculous is the position of this chapter in the book. Chronologically, the Delhi Sultanate immediately precedes the establishment of the Mughal Empire in India starting 1526 CE. But in Doniger's book, this chapter is followed by two other intervening chapters:

1. Chapter 17: Avatar and Accidental Grace in the Later Puranas 800 – 1500 CE
2. Chapter 18: Philosophical Feuds in South India and Kashmir 800 – 1300 CE

So, in her book, the author discusses Avatars in the Puranas in chapter 17 and the orthodox schools of Hindu philosophy (originating even before Christ) in the chapter 18, i.e., AFTER the chapter on Delhi Sultanate that we will review here. When we look at preceding chapters 14-15, we find similar confusion – Tughlaqs are mentioned in chapter 15 too! Maybe, Doniger just loves to read everything from right to left, and hates those who write from left to right in India.

And finally, just as the neo-Nazis deny the Jewish Holocaust or obfuscate it with apologias, Doniger likes to white-wash the scale and extent of atrocities on Hindus by Islamic invaders. In doing so, she has not only copied erroneous statements and generalizations from her defective sources (notably John Keay's book and Marxist historian Romila Thapar's agenda driven writings on Somanatha temple etc.) but has indulged in wholesale fraudulent interpretations of historical data. It is no one's case that *all* Muslim Sultans persecuted Hindus or that those who did had no other task but to indulge in

persecution of Hindus day and night. But to overlook the general impact of the Muslim Sultanate over the Hindu population of India and dwell on the few, exceptional bright spots, or even fudge data to invent these bright spots is simply unacceptable, both morally as well as academically.

No sensible person can argue that Islamic culture had no impact on Hindu culture or vice versa, because the Islamic rulers ruled over large parts of Hindu dominated India for almost 800 years. However, to term the mutual impact as a 'fusion' is glossing over the conflicts (or rather, persecution of Hindus) that often occurred during this period. Doniger tends to exaggerate the benign influence of Islam over Hindu culture. Conversely, she typically blames Hindus for influencing Muslims in all wrong ways. So, on one hand she paints a distorted (even derogatory) picture of Hindu culture, and on the other she projects invasions as having some kind of a benign influence on Hindus.

Some examples of errors and biases in this chapter are listed below with comments –

#	Page #	Paragraph # on the page	Erroneous statement in the book	Comments
1	445	1	"c. 650 Arabs reach the Indus."	Misleading statement. Arab traders had traded at the Indian coast much earlier, and Arab armies were still in Khurasan in 650 C.E. They reached the Indus as invaders only in 712 CE. Arab navy attacked the port of Debal in Sindh around 634 CE but without success. Therefore, it is unclear what Doniger means by saying that 'Arabs reached the Indus around 650 CE.'
2	445	1	"711 – 715 Arabs invade Northwest India"	Another misleading statement. It is unclear what Doniger exactly means by 'Northwest India'. She should have rather said – "Arabs invade Sindh". Before 680, the Arabs had already invaded Baluchistan (in NW India) six times but without success, finally capturing the coast of Makran in 680. Even before that, their navy had attacked (unsuccessfully) the port of Debal in Sindh during the reign of Caliph Umar (d. 644 CE). But this invasion was repulsed and the Arab leader Mughairah was defeated and killed. ¹ The Muslims occupied eastern Afghanistan, NWFP and Punjab in North West India more than 2 centuries after they captured Sindh.

¹ Ram Gopal Misra (1983), *Indian Resistance to Early Muslim Invaders up to 1203 AD*, Anu Books (Meerut, India), p. 11

3	445	1	“1398-1448 Kabir lives”	Wrong date. Kabir is traditionally held to have died around 1518 CE, and therefore modern scholarship holds that he was born around 1450 CE. Tradition says that he lived for 120 years, which would still make his life span 1398-1518 CE. ² In fact, the story of Kabir’s persecution by Sikandar Lodi (reigned 1489-1517) is so well known that this error by Doniger is easily caught by anyone with even a cursory knowledge of medieval Indian history. Doniger’s dates make it appear that Kabir died even before Sultan Sikandar Lodi was born! In other chapters too, Doniger has given wrong dates for several Bhakta saints.
4	445	1	“1469 – 1539 Guru Nanak founds Sikhism in the Punjab”	<u>Comment:</u> The correct statement should have been – “Guru Nanak lives” to be consistent.
5	446	1	“...Gandhi...was killed, apparently with those [Ram Rahim] on his lips*....” “* The words are inscribed on a plaque near the place in Delhi where he was shot. There is much dispute as to whether he said “Ram Ram” or “Ram Rahim” when he died.”	<u>Comment:</u> The general belief is that he died with the words ‘Hey Ram’ and these are displayed on his Samadhi at Raj Ghat. Some scholars say that he said ‘Ram Ram’ instead. Doniger leaves out the ‘Hey Ram’ (the most commonly accepted last words of Mahatma Gandhi) and instead inserts ‘Ram Rahim’ – an entirely manufactured controversy created by a miniscule minority of agenda driven individuals.
6	447	1	“...though some Turkish or Arab rulers destroyed Hindu temples, breeding lasting resentment, the ordinary Muslims who worshipped in mosques and Sufi shrines were seldom a problem for Hindus, who had high regard for most Arab and Turkish traders, particularly horse traders.”	It is quite an understatement to say that only ‘some’ Arab or Turkish rulers destroyed Hindu temples. Practically every Arab and Turkish ruler committed some or the other act of religious fanaticism directed against Hindus. The Hindus did respect Arabs and Turkish traders, but how often was the reverse true? Doniger does not address this question.
7	447	2	“There is irony in the fact that the stereotype of the Turk who destroys	<u>Comment:</u> There is no irony, and perhaps there was a more than a grain of historical truth in that stereotype. Doniger makes this remark to

² David Lorenzen (1991), *Kabir Legends and Ananta Das’s Kabir Parachai*, SUNY (New York), p. 18

			<p>temples and idols, appropriates the temple lands of Brahmins, and eats beef became so clichéd, so generalized to the Terrible Other, that the Kashmir chronicle, in 1148 CE, describing a <i>Hindu</i> king who plundered temples and had excrement and wine poured over the statues of gods called him a Turk (Turuska).”</p>	<p>suggest that not only the Turkish rulers, but also some Indian rulers destroyed Hindu temples.</p> <p>As to how Harsha was perceived by Indians, the following remarks by an Indologist may be reproduced –</p> <p><i>“Harsha or Harshadeva of Kashmir (r.1089-1111) has been called the “Nero of Kashmir”, and this “because of his cruelty” (S.B. Bhattacharjee: Encyclopedia of Indian Events and Dates, Sterling Publ., Delhi 1995, p.A-20). He is described by Kalhana as having looted and desecrated most Hindu and Buddhist temples in Kashmir, partly through an office which he had created, viz. the “officer for despoiling god-temples”. The general data on 11th-century Kashmir already militate against treating him as a typical Hindu king who did on purely Hindu grounds what Muslim kings also did, viz. to destroy the places of worship of rival religions. For, Kashmir had already been occupied by Masud Ghaznavi, son of Mahmud, in 1034, and Turkish troops were a permanent presence as mercenaries to the king.</i></p> <p><i>Harsha was a fellow-traveler: not yet a full convert to Islam (he still ate pork, as per Rajatarangini 7:1149), but quite adapted to the Islamic ways, for “he ever fostered with money the Turks, who were his centurions” (7:1149). There was nothing Hindu about his iconoclasm, which targeted Hindu temples, as if a Muslim king were to demolish mosques rather than temples. All temples in his kingdom except four (enumerated in 7:1096-1098, two of them Buddhist) were damaged. This behavior was so un-Hindu and so characteristically Islamic that Kalhana reports: “In the village, the town or in Srinagara there was not one temple which was not despoiled by the Turk king Harsha.” (7:1095)”³</i></p> <p>Another historian remarks – <i>“In Harsha’s case, statues of gods were defiled by ‘naked mendicants whose noses, feet and hands had rotted away’, and these were dragged along the streets ‘with ropes around their ankles, with spittings instead of flowers’ [Rajatarangini VII.1092-95].</i></p>
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³ See <http://koenraadelst.voiceofdharma.com/articles/ayodhya/harshakashmir.html>

				<p><i>There was hardly a temple in Kashmir whose images were not despoiled by this king, and reconverted into treasure. But in all likelihood, Harsha – who employed Turkish officers in his army – had followed the Muslim example, as the epithet applied to him, Harsharajaturushka, seems to indicate.”⁴</i></p> <p>It has been also claimed that Harsha defiled Hindu and Buddhist shrines under the influence of the Ajivika (a heretical atheist sect in India) ascetics but Doniger seems unaware of this interpretation.⁵</p> <p>Andre Wink sharply contrasts solitary instances like the one emphasized by Doniger, from the systematic Islamist iconoclasm directed against the Hindus – <i>“Of course, just as in Christian Europe, and in Byzantium and the Islamic world, in India people can be seen to have engaged in acts of destruction, of buildings and statues, for purely utilitarian reasons, especially in times of economic hardship, or to enable themselves to erect new buildings, or when conquering the dominions of rivals, or in attempts to obliterate the architectural heritage of a previous dynasty (thus Hindus destroying mosques)But these remained incidental confiscations or random acts which were not back up by any iconoclastic motivation as such. The same can be said about the incidental confiscations of temple treasure or lands by Hindu kings, or the periodic ‘purifications’ of the Buddhist sangha, which primarily served financial or political purposes and should be distinguished from iconoclasm.”⁶</i></p> <p>In summary, one cannot use this instance to ‘balance’ Islamic iconoclasm directed at Indian temples with ‘Hindu iconoclasm’. Doniger’s emphasis on the Hindu origins of Harsha is therefore inappropriate.</p>
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⁴ Andre Wink (1997), *Al-Hind*, Vol. II, Brill (London), p. 310-311

⁵ See A L Basham, *“History and Doctrine of the Ajivikas”*, Motilal Banarsidass Pvt Ltd., New Delhi, 2002 [1951, London], pp. 205-210

⁶ Andre Wink (1997), *Al-Hind*, Vol. II, Brill (London), p. 308

8	447	3	<p>“Some Hindus assimilated the Turks by creating ingenious, and positive, Sanskrit glosses for Arabic words and names: Thus the Ghorids became ‘Gauri-kula (“family of fair people” or “family of the golden goddess [Parvati]”), sultans became Sura-tranas (“protectors of the gods”), and Muhammad (or Mahmud) became Maha-muda (“great joy”).”</p>	<p>Doniger’s fanciful translations of Gauri-kula are not only somewhat ungrammatical, but also simply ridiculous. She refers to the Marxist historian B Chattopadhyaya’s book⁷ as her source, but he too does not give such silly interpretations, and instead clarifies that ‘Gauri’ was the Indianized version of the name of the district ‘Ghaur’ or ‘Ghur’ from where Mahmud hailed.</p> <p>Maybe Doniger does not mention that Muhammad became ‘Mahamada’ (‘great arrogance’) in the Bhavishya Purana (Pratisarga Khanda). The point is that Doniger’s book quotes data piece-meal to drive an agenda.</p> <p>Just it would be foolish to suggest that Americans have assimilated Afghan or Taliban culture because the people of United States pronounce names from Afghanistan with an American accent, it is foolish to argue that Hindus assimilated Turks just because they represented them with Indianized versions of their names.</p>
9	447	3	<p>“An inscription, in Sanskrit and Arabic, from 1264 CE about the construction of a mosque, at Somnath (a place of great historical controversy, as well see), describes the mosque in Hindu terms, as a site of dharma (<i>dharmasthana</i>), where people did <i>puja</i> in order to gain merit (<i>punya karma</i>). Most significantly, the inscription begins by using the same word to denote both Shiva and Allah, invoking (“Om! Namah!”) Shri Vishvanatha (“Lord of the Universe”), meaning both the Hindu god Shiva as Somanatha and “the divinity to whom those whose prophet (<i>bodhaka</i>) was Muhammad were attached (<i>pratibaddha</i>).”</p>	<p>Doniger takes this description of the inscription at Prabhas Patan from the Marxist historian Romila Thapar’s <i>Somanatha: The Many Voices of History</i> (OUP, 2004, Delhi). However, Thapar only cites the Sanskrit portion of this two part inscription, and completely ignores the Arabic part because it would have proven so damaging to her thesis.</p> <p>The first 7 lines of the inscription as translated by Z A Desai read –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> “1. Allāh the Exalted may assign this (reward) to one who builds a house in the path of Allāh... [This auspicious mosque was built]. 2. on the twenty-seventh of the month of RamaDān, year [sixty-two]. 3. and six hundred from migration of the Prophet (23rd July AD 1264), in the reign of the just Sultān and [die generous king]. 4. Abu’l-Fakhr (lit., father of pride), Ruknu’d-Dunyā wa’d-Dîn (lit., pillar of State and Religion), Mu’izzu’l-Islām wa’l-Muslimîn (lit. source of glory for Islām and the Muslims), shadow of Allāh in [the lands], 5. one who is victorious against the enemies, (divinely) supported prince, Abi’n-Nusrat (lit., father of victory), Mahmûd, son of Ahmad, may Allāh

⁷ Brajdu Lal Chattopadhyaya (1998), *Representing the Other – Sanskrit Sources and the Muslims*, Manohar (New Delhi)

			<p><i>perpetuate his...</i></p> <p><i>6. and may his affair and prestige be high, in the city of Somnāt (i.e. Somnath), may God make it one of the cities of Islām and [banish?].</i></p> <p><i>7. infidelity and idols..."⁸</i></p> <p>Sita Ram Goel comments – <i>"The mosque was erected at Prabhas Patan which was situated in the kingdom of Gujarat and not at a place in the kingdom of Hormuz. But the builder went much farther as, after extolling the king of Hormuz as "the source of glory for Islām and the Muslims," he prayed fervently that "may his affair and prestige be high in the city of Somnāt, may Allāh make it one of the cities of Islām, and [banish?] infidelity and idols" from it. In other words, he was praying for and looking forward to another Islamic invasion of Gujarat.</i></p> <p><i>Comparing the Sanskrit and Arabic versions of this inscription, the conclusion is unavoidable that the Muslim merchant from Hormuz had eschewed carefully from the Sanskrit version what he had included confidently in the Arabic text. He must have been sure in his mind that no Hindu from Prabhas Patan or elsewhere was likely to compare the two texts and that even if a Hindu noticed the difference between the two he was not likely to understand its meaning and purport. At the same time, he was sharing with his co-religionists in Gujarat a pious aspiration enjoined on all believers by the tenets of Islam."⁹</i></p> <p>So this is an example of the deceptive historiography that Doniger has reproduced from her agenda driven sources. Many other examples like the above bilingual inscription may be given showing that the hospitality and tolerance of Hindus was not always repaid in kind by the immigrants.¹⁰</p>
10	447-	-	<p>"On the other hand, the Arabs and Turks</p> <p><u>Comment:</u> Baseless remarks not backed by any significant historical</p>

⁸ *Epigraphia Indica - Arabic and Persian Supplement*, 1961, pp. 11-12

⁹ Sita Ram Goel (1998), *Hindu Temples – What Happened to Them*, Vol II, Voice of India (New Delhi), chapter III. The book is available online at <http://www.bharatvani.org/books/htemples2/index.htm>

¹⁰ See online <http://www.bharatvani.org/books/htemples2/ch3.htm>

	448		usually did not think of the Hindus as Hindus; they thought of them as Vaishnavas, or Bengalis, or brilliant artists or airheads as the case might be.”	evidence. Inhabitants of India were lumped into one category ‘Hindus’ and Muslim chronicles typically referred to all Hindu adversaries in pejorative terms such as ‘crow faced’ ¹¹ without regard to whether they were Bengalis or non-Bengalis etc.
11	448	2	“...Al-biruni (973 – 1048), who came to India, learned Sanskrit, translated Hindu texts, and wrote about the religion (<i>sic</i> : he regard it as unified) of India.”	<u>Comment</u> : Al-Beruni left one of the most insightful, sober and extensive accounts of the Hindu religion in North West India in the early 11 th century. It is not appropriate to simply dismiss his perception that Indian faith was unified. He certainly lived in India and studied Hinduism under knowledgeable Hindus for a much longer time than most Indologists from west do. It is interesting to note that she hardly quotes Al-Biruni when he describes the iconoclasm and fanaticism of his contemporary Mahmud Ghaznavi.
12	448	3	“Before 650, Arabs had made desultory raids by sea on the lower Sind, to protect the trade route carrying Arabian horses to India and Indian spices to Arabia.”	<u>Comment</u> : That is again quite a distortion of historical evidence. The raids were also made as far as Thane (Maharashtra) and Bharuch (Gujarat) and their aggressive Jihadi nature is quite self-evident from Islamic chronicles (like Chachnama) themselves. These raids were not conducted to protect their trade routes as Doniger makes it appear.
13	448	3	“By 650, Arabs had also reached the Indus River, and though they rarely crossed it, their ideas swam across.”	See comments above. Doniger gives the reference of Keay’s book (p. 180) that the Arabs reached the Indus by 650. But Keay makes no such claim. Doniger also fails to enlighten the reader on which “ideas swam across.” Doniger often sacrifices historical accuracy for the sake of phrasal cutisms.
14	448	3	“Then, in around 663, Arab forces crossed the Bolan pass (near Quetta in Pakistan) from Afghanistan into Sind. <u>Peacefully</u> , they traded horses for spices. Only later did the martial	Doniger states all these (wrong) facts to buttress her thesis that Islam entered the Indian subcontinent in a peaceful manner. Unfortunately, her statements, copied incorrectly from Keay’s book, are all gross distortions, contradicted by historical records. Prophet Muhammad died in 632 AD,

¹¹ Peter Jackson (1999), *The Delhi Sultanate*, Cambridge University Press (Cambridge), p. 289

		<p>invasions come, first by Arabs and then by Turks (from many parts of Central Asia) and Mongols.” [Emphasis added – reviewer].</p>	<p>and within 31 years of his death, the Arab armies crossed the Bolan Pass, thousands of miles from Hijaz (the home of Islam’s prophet). Does this sound very peaceful? Doniger makes it appear that Arabs merely traded peacefully with India from 663-711 CE, but this is not true.</p> <p>The summary of attempted invasions of Arabs is as follows: The Arab invasion of Sindh started soon after their first two naval expeditions against Thana on the coast of Maharashtra and Broach on the coast of Gujarat, had been repulsed in the reign of Caliph Umar (AD 634-644). The expedition against Debal in Sindh met the same fate “The leader of the Arab army, Mughairah, was defeated and killed. Umar decided to send another army by land against Makran which was at that time a part of the kingdom of Sindh. But he was advised by the governor of Iraq that “he should think no more of Hind”. The next Caliph, Usman (AD 646-656), followed the same advice and refrained from sending any expedition against Sindh, either by land or by sea. The fourth Caliph, Ali (AD 656-661), sent an expedition by land in AD 660. But the leader of this expedition and “those who were with him, saving a few, were slain in the land of Kikan in the year AH 42 (AD 662)”. Muawiyah, the succeeding Caliph (AD 661-680), sent as many as six expeditions by land. All of them were repulsed with great slaughter except the last one which succeeded in occupying Makran in AD 680. For the next 28 years, the Arabs did not dare send another army against Sindh. The next expedition was despatched to take Debal in AD 708. Its two successive commanders, Ubaidullah and Budail, were killed and the Arab army was routed. When Hajjaj, the governor of Iraq, asked the Caliph for permission to send another expedition, the Caliph wrote back: “This affair will be a source of great anxiety and so we must put it off, for every time an army goes, [vast] numbers of Mussalmans are killed. So think no more of such a design.” Hajjaj spent the next four years in equipping an army more formidable than any which had so far been sent against Sindh. It is this</p>
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				<p>army that invaded Sindh in 711-712 CE.¹²</p> <p>To conclude, there was nothing peaceful about the arrival of Arabs in N W India or in Sindh, pace Doniger and other negationists.</p>
15	448-449	4	“In 713, Muhammad ibn Qasim invaded Sind...”	The correct name is Muhammad bin Qasim and he invaded Sindh at least a year earlier. Doniger gets both the name and the year wrong, copying the wrong name from Keay’s book. Muhammad Ibn Qasim was an Alawite Saint.
16	448-449	-	“In 713, Muhammad ibn Qasim invaded Sind, offering terms of surrender that included a promise to guarantee the safety of Hindu and Buddhist establishments and to allow Brahmin and Buddhist monks to collect alms and temples to receive donations. Hindus and Buddhists were allowed to govern themselves in matters of religion and law; Ibn Qasim did not regard non-Muslims as heathens who had to be subdued.”	<p>This is again a great distortion and seeks to convey the impression that the invasion of Sindh was a very benign affair. Here is a summary of the atrocities during and after that invasion¹³:</p> <p>In Debal, when the Hindus opened the gates of their fortress and offered surrender, Qasim quipped that he had no orders from his master al-Hajjaj to spare them. For three days, the residents of the city were slaughtered. Brahmins and other Hindus were asked to convert to Islam and upon their refusal, all Hindu males above the age of 17 were killed whereas their wives and children were enslaved. About 700 ladies were dispatched to Iraq for sexual and other forms of slavery. The religious shrine at Debal was destroyed and replaced with a mosque.</p> <p>In Aror, the capital of Sindh, Qasim massacred 6,000 fighting men who were found in the fort, and their followers and dependents, as well as</p>

¹² These summaries are available even online (<http://dikgaj.wordpress.com/2008/08/31/how-islam-came-to-india-and-why-now-it-needs-to-go-from-india-11-economic-decline-under-islam-the-strange-case-of-the-horse/>), from which we have taken this account. But identical accounts are available in published scholar works. For example, Ram Gopal Misra (1983), *Indian Resistance to Early Muslim Invaders up to 1206 AD*, Anu Books (Meerut), pp. 11-15 or any other standard work on the history of this period and region. The Chachnama and chronicles of Baladhuri may also be consulted.

¹³ K L Shrivastava (1980), *The Position of Hindus under the Delhi Sultanate: 1206-1526*, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt Ltd (New Delhi), pp. 1-3

			<p>their women and children were taken prisoners. Sixty thousand slaves, including 30 young ladies of royal blood, were sent to al-Hajjaj, along with the head of Dahar [the Hindu ruler]. The Chachnama notes that the ladies committed Jauhar (committed suicide by burning themselves) en mass. T</p> <p>At Multan, Qasim desecrated the Sun Temple by hanging a piece of beef around the icon, and looted its treasures. According to chronicler Al-Baladhuri, the children of killed Hindu soldiers and Brahmins numbering 6000 were enslaved. In Sika on the banks of river Ravi, several thousand children and wives and the local priests of the temple were enslaved. Temples were demolished also at the capital Aror and in Narun. The son (named Jai Singh) of the vanquished Hindu ruler was allowed to rule Brahmanabad after he converted to Islam. However, Jai Singh later apostatized and was then killed by Hakam.</p> <p>After 1724 (when bin Qasim was dead), Hakam worked vigorously for propagation of Islam. Hindus were subjected to unprecedented heavy rates and many new taxes were also imposed on the Hindu peasantry. Hindus had to entertain every Muslim traveler free for 3 days and nights. Around 871 CE, the Arab dominion split into two Muslim kingdoms centered around Multan and Mansurah respectively. The Arab settlers became possessors of vast tracts of agricultural land and employed Hindus as serfs for labor.</p> <p>Historians opine that Muhammad bin Qasim employed local Hindus not out of his liberal views but because, <i>“without the co-operation of the Hindus it was difficult for the Islamic state to carry on the administration. So, out of sheer necessity, he had to appoint the Brahmanas as tax collectors.”</i>¹⁴</p>
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¹⁴ Ibid, p. 134

17	449	1	<p>“He [Muhammad bin Qasim] kept his promises though he did impose the jaziya, a tax on male adults who would have been liable to military service if they had been Muslims; non-Muslims were excused this duty but were required instead to pay for their military protection.”</p>	<p>Military protection of non-Muslims from whom? From non-Muslims? What if the non-Muslims did not want the Muslim rulers to protect them from non-Muslims?</p> <p>It appears that an apologist for Islamism has written these sentences in Doniger’s book. Jaziya was a poll tax (like the ‘protection money’ extracted by mafia gangs from a helpless society in return of freedom from molestation by the same gang) demanded from non-Muslims because they are infidels living under a ‘Muslim state’. Sanctioned by the Koran, the tax (often as much as a month’s income every year) was meant to demonstrate that the infidels were inferior to Muslims. It was an instrument to humiliate them and disarm them, exclude them from administration and sometimes induce them to convert to Islam.¹⁵</p> <p>Doniger does not ask if the Hindus had the option of wielding arms for the Arab state of Sindh and therefore exempt themselves from Jaziya. Doniger’s apologia also falsely assumes that each and every adult Muslim male in India was a member of the Arab army in Sindh.</p> <p>Throughout the Muslim rule in India, large sections of the Hindu society were forced to disarm themselves (so that they are not a threat to the Muslim rulers) and suffered economic hardships and pressures to convert to Islam as a result.</p> <p>Even as we write, the Taliban are forcing Hindus and Sikhs in parts of Pakistan to pay astronomical amounts of money as Jaziya failing which they are either expelled or killed. Therefore, it is ethically and socially irresponsible of Doniger to peddle these kinds of apologies for this hated poll-tax meant to humiliate the ‘infidels’.</p>
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¹⁵ See Harsh Narain (1990), *Jizyah and the Spread of Islam*, Voice of India (New Delhi). Available online at <http://www.voiceofdharma.org/books/jtsi/index.htm>

				<p>Finally, the Chachnama gives this speech of the Brahmins to other Hindus when the latter were sent out to collect the Jaziya – “.....<i>If we do not obey the Arabs we shall neither have property nor the means of living....At present we are not driven from our homes; but if you cannot endure the tribute which is fixed on you, nor submit to the heavy burden, then let us retire at a suitable opportunity to some other place of Hind or Sind, with all your families and children, where you may find your lives secure. Life is the greatest of all blessings. But if we can escape from this dreadful whirlpool, and can save our lives from the power of this army, our property and children will be safe.</i>”¹⁶</p> <p>This speech, even if dismissed as apocryphal by agenda driven historians, nevertheless shows how terrified Sindh’s Hindus were of the Arabs, that the payment Jaziya was an act of submission by them, and that it was a large amount. It was not a mere act of ‘exemption from military duties’ as Doniger makes it out to be.</p>
18	449	1	<p>“At the same time, in the wealthy Gujarati port of Bhadreshwar, the local Jaina rulers, eager to trade with the Arabs, had allowed the resident Ismaili merchants to build mosques in that area.”</p>	<p><u>Comment:</u> Doniger mentions this fact to argue that the relations between Hindus and Muslims were very cordial when Arabs invaded Sind. Unfortunately, not all Muslim traders paid back the hospitality accorded to them in kind. The same Ismailis, upon occupying Multan in the late 10th cent. CE immediately demolished the Sun Temple at Multan, slaughtering all the priests, and erecting a mosque at its site.¹⁷</p>
19	449	2	<p>“....in 1018 he [Mahmud of Ghazni] sacked Mathura....and then Kanauj...Turkish communities were also established in the region of Varanasi</p>	<p>Doniger paints a totally fake, benign picture of how the ‘immigrants’ from Central Asia and Persia settled down in India. She also conceals the fact that the invaders also sacked Varanasi and many other pilgrimage centers</p>

¹⁶ H M Elliot et al, *History of India as Told by its Own Historians*, Vol I, p. 184

¹⁷ Andre Wink (1997), *Al-Hind*, vol. II, Brill (London). P. 320

			<p>and elsewhere. It was a boom time for immigration from Persia and Central Asia, and this greatly added to the cosmopolitanism of the subcontinent, since culture under what became the Ghaznavid Empire in India...was a “blend of Greek philosophy, Roman architecture, Hindu mathematics, and the Persian concept of the empire.”</p>	<p>of Hindus, smashing and burning temples (breaking the idols to pieces and burying them under the stairs of mosques so that Muslims walked above them while going for their prayers), butchering cows, raping and enslaving Hindus and so on.</p> <p>For instance, right after Mahmud Ghaznavi, Ahmad Nayaltagin raided Varanasi in 1033 and plundered it. Muhammad Ghauri invaded Varanasi later and is said to have destroyed 1000 temples. Numerous similar accounts of Islamic rulers invading Varanasi for humiliating Hindus and desecrating their shrines in the 11th century and in the later times exist as well.¹⁸</p> <p>Some historians such as H M Elliot have argued that these immigrant communities provided the intelligence of India’s land and her people later needed by Turkish rulers for invading India.</p>
20	450	1	<p>“In 1350, a century after Raziya’s death, the historian Isami objected to her blatant interracial liaison, remarking that a woman’s place was at her spinning wheel....The sexism they already had in India, thank you...”</p>	<p>The historian Abdul Malik Isami belonged to a family of Arab nobles who had migrated to India a century earlier. His work ‘Futuh-us-Salatin’ is in Persian and it can hardly represent the prevalent attitudes of Indians (who were more than 90% Hindus) in those days. To ridicule the sexism of 14th century Indians on the basis of his statements is unfair to Indians.</p> <p>For that matter, Isami hated Hindus and even chided Muhammad bin Tughlaq (the then Sultan of Delhi) for being soft on Hindus¹⁹ even though Tughlaq had occasionally indulged in bouts of temple destruction and slaughter of Brahmins. Will Doniger then say – “The hatred for Hindus they already had in India, thank you...”</p>

¹⁸ H A Phadke (2005), *Essays on Indian Historiography*, Rawat Publications (Jaipur), p. 66

¹⁹ K L Srivastava (1980), *The Position of Hindus under the Delhi Sultanate 1206-1526*, Munshiram Manoharlal, Delhi, p. 236

				The point is that Doniger takes every opportunity to berate Hindus and India in her book.
21	450	2	“Holy wars (jihads) flared up from time to time, more often politically motivated than religiously inspired....Ala-ud-din sacked and plundered Devagiri but then made peace, married a Maharashtra woman, prohibited the sale and consumption of alcohol, and left the kingdom and its religions otherwise intact.”	<p>Again, an example of negationist history writing. First, according to the Khalji ruler’s contemporary Amir Khusro, Ala-Ud-Din did destroy temples and raise pulpits and arches for mosques in Devagiri.²⁰</p> <p>Second, Doniger omits to mention historical facts and weaves her own fictitious account of the ruler. Whom Doniger just refers to as a ‘Maharashtra woman’ was actually the princess of Devagiri that the Khalji ruler got as a part of the ‘peace agreement’ with the ruler of Devagiri.²¹ It was a common practice for victorious Muslim rulers to demand or receive infidel women for their harem as a condition of peace. It was conversely rare for Muslim rulers to give their daughters in marriage to Hindu rulers for obvious reasons. Surrendering a daughter to the victorious Muslim invader was a symbol of humiliation for the Hindu chief, and of accepting the superiority of the Muslim ruler to the Hindu ruler. Even medieval Rajput ballads claim that Pirorja, the daughter of the Khalji ruler, fell in love with a Hindu chief but the Sultan refused the alliance on grounds that a ‘Hindu and Turuk cannot marry.’²²</p> <p>Ala-ud-din is similarly said to have invaded other Hindu kingdoms to get their infidel princesses or queens for addition to his kingdom. There are several medieval kavyas on the Khalji ruler kidnapping or demanding queens or princesses of Hindu kingdoms with or without success. According to the later Rajput romance Chitai-Varta, the princess of Devagiri was already married and was kidnapped by Ala-ud-Din while she</p>

²⁰ H M Elliot, *History of India as Told by its own Historians*, Vol III, p. 548

²¹ Kishori Saran Lal (1990), *History of the Khaljis*, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd. (New Delhi), p. 46

²² Ramya Sreenivasan, “Alauddin Khalji Remembered, Conquest, Gender and Community in Medieval Rajput Narratives,” pp. 275-296 in *Studies in History*, vol. 18, no. 2 (2002)

			<p>was worshipping at a Hindu temple. However, she refused to submit to the Sultan, and eventually was rescued by her husband.²³</p> <p>The Khalji ruler was the first Muslim king to invade Deccan and destroyed numerous temples and sacred trees during his campaigns (e.g., in Warangal), as did his general Malik Kafur in Dwarasamudra, Chidambaram and other places.²⁴</p> <p>Ala-ud-Din Khilji broke several other temples and massacred Hindus for apparently no political gain. According to the chronicler Badauni, he invaded Vidisha (in the present state of Madhya Pradesh in India) in 1292 and brought the icon worshipped by Hindus there, to be cast in front of the Badaun gate to be trampled upon by the Muslim worshippers there. In 1298 AD, he invaded Gujarat and destroyed the temple of Somnath that had been rebuilt by the Hindus. Hindus were slaughtered en masse and the Queen Kampala Devi was captured and forcibly added to the Khalji ruler's harem.</p> <p>Historian Barani also notes that the Khalji ruler regularly enslaved those (largely Hindu farmers) who defaulted on their revenue payments.²⁵</p>
22	450-451	-	<p>"...Firoz Shah Tughluq (1351 – 1388), desecrated the shrine of Jagannath at Puri, was said to have massacred infidels, and extended the jaziya to Brahmins....</p> <p>It is quite an understatement that he 'was said to have massacred infidels.' In his campaign against Orissa itself, after he had desecrated the Jagannath Temple, his armies marched towards an island in the Lake Chilika region, where (according to the contemporary chronicle Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi) about 100,000 terrified Hindus had taken refuge after escaping from Jaj Nagar. Then, "...the auspicious stirrups [of horses in</p>

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ K L Shrivastava (1980), The Position of Hindus under the Delhi Sultanate, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt Ltd. (New Delhi), p. 104-107

²⁵ Scott Levi, "Hindus Beyond the Hindu Kush, Indians in the Central Asian Slave Trade", pp. 277-288 in *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Series 3, Vol. 12, No. 3 (2002)

				<p><i>Tughlaq's army] were turned in that direction, and troops were so distributed on all sides that they might converge at a point and convert the island into a basin of blood by the massacred of the unbelievers with the sharp sword...". "Captive and married, women bearing only female ones, women with a few and many children, widows, bashful women, chaste ladies, women endowed with natural beauty were pressed as slaves, slave-maiden, maid servants, female singers, nurses and midwives, into service in the house of every soldier. The rest of the women were taken captives along with the elephants; women with babies and pregnant women were haltered, manacled, fettered and enchained and no vestige of the infidels was left except their blood." – so goes this chronicle.²⁶</i></p> <p>The temple at Puri was not the only one that he desecrated by. Medieval historian Ferishta records that the Sultan broke the Hindu icons at the famous temple of Jwalamukhi, mixed their fragments with the flesh of cows and hung them in nose bags around the necks of Brahmins. He sent the main idol as a trophy to the Muslim holy city of Medina. In addition, he confiscated 1500 Hindu manuscripts from the temples in that region and sent them to Delhi – some of them were translated into Persian. He also destroyed temples at Mulh, Salikpur and Kohana.²⁷ In one instance, a Brahmin, accused of inducing some Muslim women to convert to Hinduism, was burnt alive at the gate of his palace when he refused to convert to Islam.²⁸</p> <p>Concerning his extension of the Jaziya to Brahmins, the latter threatened to immolate themselves en masse, and the Sultan advised them to</p>
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²⁶ Harekrushna Mahtab, "Invasion of Orissa in 1360 A.D." in *Orissa Historical Research Journal*. Vol 1, no. 1 (1952), pp. 31-35

²⁷ K L Shrivastava (1980), *The Position of Hindus under the Delhi Sultanate*, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt Ltd (New Delhi), p. 84

²⁸ Ibid

				<p>proceed with the threat. The crisis was averted when prominent Hindus of Delhi stepped forward to pay the poll-tax on the behalf of the Brahmins. In his autobiography, Firoz Shah mentions with glee that he induced countless Hindus to convert to Islam – the converts being no longer required to pay the Jaziya.²⁹</p>
23	451	1	<p>“On the other hand, Firoz Shah redeemed a number of Hindu slaves as well as an African eunuch slaves....”</p>	<p>Doniger makes this remark to ‘balance’ his bigotry against Hindus by his supposed compassion for Hindu slaves. But did Firoz Tughlaq really ‘redeem a number of Hindu slaves? She has amplified the misleading remark in Keay’s book who says that Feroz Tughlaq rescued several slaves from penury by employing them in royal factories called <i>Karkhanas</i>.³⁰ The fact however is that these Karkhanas were more like modern sweat shops and the workers were still slaves, not free men.³¹ These slaves were forced to manufacture articles for consumption by the largely Muslim elite after being trained to do their jobs.</p> <p>In fact, chroniclers of his reign note with glee that under this Sultan the number of slaves actually rose very high, ‘which was beyond description.’³² The ruler owned 180,000 slaves of whom a mere 12,000 were these skilled artisans working in these <i>karkhanas</i>.³³ So much for Firoz Shah’s manumission of Hindu slaves!</p>
24	451	2	<p>“In general, the sultanate rulers did not attempt a mass conversion of Hindus, but many Hindus did convert to Islam during this period....”</p>	<p>Again, a misleading statement designed to understate the coercion that Hindus faced during the Islamic rule of Sultans. A historian, after reviewing different sources and often conflicting opinions remarks – “In</p>

²⁹ Peter Jackson (1999), *The Delhi Sultanate – a Political and Military History*, Cambridge University Press (Cambridge), p. 286

³⁰ John Keay (2000), *India a History*, Atlantic Monthly Press (New York), p. 272

³¹ K S Lal, *Muslim Slave System in Medieval India*, Aditya Prakashan (New Delhi), p. 96. The book is available online at <http://www.voiceofdharma.org/books/mssmi/>

³² K L Shrivastava (1980), *The Position of Hindus under the Delhi Sultanate*, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt Ltd (New Delhi), p. 123

³³ Scott Levi, “Hindus Beyond the Hindu Kush, Indians in the Central Asian Slave Trade”, pp. 277-288 in *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Series 3, Vol. 12, No. 3 (2002)

				<p><i>the zeal for converting the whole of India into Dar-ul-Islam, the Muslim rulers resorted to the forcible conversions of Hindus to Islam. The subjects of a vanquished territory and prisoners of war in the hands of Muslim conquerors were mostly converted to Islam. On their refusal to change their faith, they were coerced with the result that they found deliverance only in accepting Islam. The Muslim rulers also adopted economic measures, viz., the imposition of the Jizya and allurements to the Hindus by assigning them higher posts in the state administration, which won many converts to Islam. The converted Muslims were accorded honor as is evident from the respectable position enjoyed by Malik Kafur, Khusrau Khan, Khan-i-Jahan Maqbul, Harihara, Bukka and others.”³⁴</i></p>
25	451	3	<p>The Delhi Sultans levied the <i>jizya</i>, graduated according to income, with exemptions for people at both ends of the social spectrum, the poorest andthe purest, the Brahmins. There is also evidence of the existence of a “Turkish” (Turuska) tax, which may have been a poll tax on Muslims in India, a Hindu equivalent of the Muslim <i>jizya</i>.”</p>	<p>Doniger indulges in negationist scholarship again, downplaying the tyranny of imposition jaziya and falsely equating it to Turushka Danda and giving only one of the interpretations of this term by scholars. The other interpretation given by scholars is that it was an extra war levy on Hindu residents collected by Hindu rulers for raising money for battles against Turks.³⁵ Another interpretation is that it was a tribute that the Hindu rulers of Kannauj paid to the Muslim Turks. In any case, this tax is mentioned may be a couple of times, whereas the Jaziya was extracted from Hindus by dozens of rulers over several centuries.</p> <p>The Jaziya was not a light tax and estimates range from 10 – 25% of a middle class family’s income.</p>
26	451	3	<p>“Taxes under the Delhi Sultanate seem to have been motivated much more by the need for revenue than by religious sentiments.”</p>	<p>If it was just a tax to augment revenues, then why did the Muslims also not pay the Jaziya? All the rulers need revenue but why is it that the Delhi Sultanate reduced the predominantly Hindu peasantry to a state of</p>

³⁴ K L Shrivastava (1980), *The Position of Hindus under the Delhi Sultanate*, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt Ltd (New Delhi), p. 229

³⁵ Vincent Smith (1904), *Early History of India*, Clarendon Press (London), p. 400, n. 1; see also Phadke, op. cit, p. 63

				penury, unlike most of the Hindu states before them?
27	451	3	<p>“Some Hindus also responded to the presence of Islam by a series of measures designed to strengthen their own religion, such as enormous land grants to Brahmins, which meant more taxes to generate revenues that could be converted into those grants (exacerbating social oppression and caste discrimination), as well as endowing temples and providing social services on the local level (which mitigated that same oppression and discrimination).”</p>	<p>Again, a distortion of historical data. First, grants by Hindus to temples were largely made in areas outside of Muslim control (or only under nominal Muslim control). Second, it is quite perverse for Doniger to suggest that Temples bred caste oppression. It appears that she just equates Hinduism to the stereotype of cow-curry-caste.</p> <p>Finally, she tries to balance the baneful impact of Islam on Hindu institutions by highlighting caste-oppressions, apparently to suggest that destruction of temples was somewhat a good thing because it destroyed temples that fostered caste oppression in the first place.</p> <p>A correct generalization about the Delhi Sultanate period in this matter would be this–</p> <p><i>“Hindu educational institutions suffered at the hands of Muslim rulers. The Hindus were not allowed to establish institutions for higher learning....wherever possible, Hindu institutions functioned because of the interest taken by individual Hindu nobles or rich persons. There were no public schools where the Hindus could receive proper training in literature, art and sciences.”³⁶</i></p> <p><i>“The Muslim onslaughts on the Hindu ruling dynasties and the destruction of Hindu temples and seats of learning had almost extinguished the Hindu culture by destroying the sources which fed and nourished it. It is to be noted that the Hindu states of Mithila in the north and the Vijayanagara kingdom in the south preserved Hindu religion and culture....The opinion of some scholars that the Islamic state had no means to subjugate the Hindus completely is quite untenable in view of the large scale slaughter</i></p>

³⁶ K L Shrivastava (1980), *“The Position of Hindus under the Delhi Sultanate”*, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd (New Delhi),, p. 232

				<i>of Hindus by Balban and Alauddin Khalji in the course of their military operations. In the period in which cultural life thrived on court patronage, such wars and destructive activities could hardly create conditions conducive to the cultural life of the Hindus.”³⁷</i>
28	451	4	“The Brahmins were in a bind: They wanted to keep the barbarians out, but they also had to assimilate and legitimize the foreign rulers in order to keep temporal support for themselves....an inscription from 1369 traces the descent of a sultan from the lineage of the Pandavas in the <i>Mahabharata</i> .”	<p>Again, a distortion of history. The Sultanate rulers did not particularly patronize the Brahmins. There are isolated examples, but these are just a few exceptions.</p> <p>The inscription mentioned by Doniger belongs to Kashmir³⁸ from a period when the Muslim rule was barely 3 decades old. The then ruler of Kashmir, Shihab-ud-Din, was relatively tolerant of Hindus (although later Persian chronicles claim that he was a fanatical Muslim ruler) and Kashmir was still a predominantly Hindu region, culturally as well as demographically (with Sanskrit still the official language in most cases), explaining why the inscription was in the Sharada script and in Sanskrit. It was later during the 15th century when Hindus started experiencing extensive persecutions under the reign of Sikandar.</p> <p>In other words, this one inscription from Kashmir cannot really be used to generalize the situation outside of Kashmir in the Delhi Sultanate (as Doniger seems to imply), which was under the oppressive reign of bigot ruler Firoz Shah Tughlaq in 1369.</p>
29	454-455	-	“Nowadays the story of Hinduism as told by Hindu nationalists always includes a chapter on the Horrid Things Those Bad Muslims Did. Hindu nationalism has given prominence and	<u>Comment:</u> Doniger unfairly characterizes anyone who would differ from her fairy tale accounts of medieval India as a ‘Hindu Nationalist’. However, a casual reader would note that by her yardstick, the numerous scholars we have cited to contradict her fabrications would also become

³⁷ Ibid, pp. 233-234

³⁸ B. K. Kaul Deambi (1982), *Corpus of Sarada Inscriptions of Kashmir* (Delhi), pp. 113-118

			importance to stories of victims and victimizers that otherwise would have been just drops in the ocean of vicious battles that have plagued the subcontinent, indeed the planet, for millennia....”	<p>Hindu nationalists! By Doniger’s yardstick, all the authors that I have cited, to contradict her hateful and fraudulent historiography blaming and reviling the Hindus in every possible way, would become Hindu Nationalists!</p> <p>In fact, it is apologists of Islam, Indian Marxists, Leftists and non-specialists who often distort the historical record the way Doniger has done in her book.</p>
30	455	2	“Some Muslim rulers, like some Hindu rulers before them, destroyed Hindu temples. Desecration was not necessarily prompted by bigotry, though some rulers might well have been motivated (or have claimed to be motivated) by religious fanaticism, a hatred of idolatry or polytheism or any religion but Islam. Some, lured by the legendary wealth of temples, did it to get the plunder, and others went for the temples because as we saw in South India, the temples were the centers of political and economic power.”	<p>Doniger’s attempts to equate Islamic iconoclasm with ‘Hindu iconoclasm’ are derived from the writings of apologists of Islam (e.g., Richard Eaton) and Indian Marxists. A historian, criticizing these views, puts the historical record in its correct perspective – <i>“Apologists for Islam, as well as some Marxist scholars in India, have sometimes attempted to reduce Islamic iconoclasm in India to a gratuitous ‘lust for plunder’ on the part of the Muslims, unrelated in any direct way to the religion itself, while depicting Hindu temples as centers of political resistance which had to be suppressed. Concomitantly, instances have been described in the popular press of Hindu destruction of Buddhist and Jain places of worship, and the idea was promoted that archaeological evidence shows this to have happened on a large scale, and hence that Hindu kings could be placed on a par with the Muslim invaders. The fact is that evidence for such ‘Hindu iconoclasm’ is incidental, relating to mere destruction, and too vague to be convincing.”</i>³⁹</p> <p>It needs to be pointed out again that Sultanate rulers typically did not destroy mosques of their Muslim rivals. For e.g., when Mahmud Ghauri vanquished the heretical Ismaili rulers of Multan, he left their mosque standing to decay but did not destroy it. [Contrast this with the Mughal</p>

³⁹ Andre Wink (1997), *Al-Hind*, vol. II, Brill (London). pp. 309-310

				ruler Aurangzeb destroying mosques in Golconda because he was a Sunni and these mosques belonged to the Shia community]. Perhaps, Ghauri recalled that the site represented the defeat of Hinduism because the Ismaili mosque was constructed after destroying a pre-existing Surya Temple in Multan.
31	455	2	“Piety and greed, so often paired, operated here too: Images of gods were made of solid gold, and the temples were also filled with treasures that Hindu rulers had already stolen from other Hindu temples and from Buddhist stupas.”	<p>Once again, Doniger distorts historical data to equate Islamic iconoclasm to supposed ‘Hindu iconoclasm’, although instances of the latter were several orders of magnitude fewer than those of former, and the motivations and net effects were different for the two cases.</p> <p>It is perhaps pertinent to quote a scholar to put things in their proper perspective – <i>“The appropriations of sculpted images by medieval Indian [i.e., non Muslim] rulers can be seen as political acts. These rulers often proudly and repeatedly proclaimed their expropriation of objects from other kings. Such ‘looting’ was a normal and public aspect of war, directed towards symbolic objects, a matter of ‘victory’, but theft....Commodities such as gold and silver and all regalia and images were reserved for the king, the center of a redistributive network involving expropriated objects. Here too, ‘the appropriation of Indian images recasts their significance without altering what they are and fundamentally represent. Intentional defilement or public mutilation of divine images is rarely mentioned in Hindu texts as a politically meaningful act.”</i>⁴⁰</p>
32	455	2	“They [temples] could also be hostages. In parts of Sind in the tenth century, Arab families that ruled what was still a largely non-Muslim population would threaten to vandalize the city’s	The Arabs arrived and settled in Sindh in 712 AD (and soon thereafter in Multan by 713 CE) and to still think of them as ‘marauding nomads’ even in the 10 th century (i.e., 200 years later) is quite fanciful.

⁴⁰ Ibid, p. 309, citing R H Davis, “Indian Art Objects as Loot”, *Journal of Asian Studies*, vol. 52, No. 1 (1993), pp. 22-48

			[Multan's] most revered temple [dedicated to Surya] whenever "trouble stirred or invasion threatened." Think "marauding nomads" rather than "fanatical Muslims."	Once again, this is fraudulent historiography because the author omits to mention how the Muslim rulers of Multan frequently humiliated the Hindus – "Muhammad-al-Qasim is reported to have hung a piece of cow's flesh on the neck of the great budd statue at the Sun-temple of Multan, while he confiscated its wealth and made captives of its custodians. Later Muslim governors always threatened to break the idol or mutilate it when they were confronting the hostility of neighboring Hindu powers; until in the late tenth century the Ismailis finally did break it and killed its priests, erecting a mosque on its site." ⁴¹
33	455	3	"In 1026, he (Mahmud Ghaznavi] attacked the temple of Somanatha (Somnath), which held a famous Shiva linga; this much, at least, seems to be historical fact. Then comes the mythmaking..."	Following the lead of Communist historian Romila Thapar's 'Somanatha, the Many Voices of History' ⁴² , Doniger too becomes a negationist and somehow tries to mitigate the religious bigotry and cruelty of this historical episode. Mythmaking or no mythmaking, it is clear that the Somanatha temple was destroyed repeatedly by Muslim rulers who considered it an act of Islamic piety. Ghaznavi's near contemporary notes that the idol was smashed to pieces and several pieces were buried in the mosque at Ghazni so that the faithful would tread over them when they answered to the call of their prayers. ⁴³
34	456	2	"...exquisite Jaina temples...between 950 and 1305 CE in Gujarat, most famously at Mount Abu..."	Mount Abu is in Rajasthan, not in Gujarat. Doniger also gives wrong dates for the construction of these temples, confusing the dates of a dynasty of rulers with the period during which these temples were constructed.
35	457	1	"It was the order of the day to destroy other people's religious monuments and	Doniger tries to absolve Islamic rulers of religious motives in their

⁴¹ Andre Wink (1997), *Al-Hind*, vol. II, Brill (London). P. 320

⁴² For a review by historian Meenakshi Jain of this book by Thapar, see <http://www.bharatvani.org/indology/somnath.html>

⁴³ Edward Sachau, transl.: *Alberuni's India*, London 1910, vol.1, p.117, and vol.2, p.103

			steal their treasures; the Muslims had no monopoly on that. The whole basis of Hindu kingship, beginning with the cattle raids of the Rig Veda, was the desire for land and plunder. In the sultanate period, an invading army was expected to loot the local temple,....”	<p>iconoclastic raids in a rather very fraudulent manner, and in effect, calls Hindus as fanatical and intolerant of other rulers’ faiths just as Islamic invaders were. Other historians however differ, and argue that Hinduism lacked the ideology of Iconoclasm, in contrast to the Abrahamic faiths.⁴⁴</p> <p>Doniger does not explain why the invading army was expected to loot the local temple but not the local mosque, and why numerous Muslim rulers (e.g., Aurangzeb) ordered looting and destruction of temples within their own dominions for no apparent reason other than religious piety. Or why the invading army not merely looted the temple, it desecrated the spot (through butchering cows), broke the idols and sent pieces of the same to be trodden by the feet of Muslims, burned Hindu sacred manuscripts, indulged in forcible conversions etc.</p> <p>Her reference to Gavishthi, which she takes to mean the basis for Rigvedic kingship (p. 112 of her book) fails to take into account the current scholarship on this word.⁴⁵</p> <p>In other words, her comparison is quite jejune and it is revisionist of her to suggest that Hindus were not liberal and tolerant in accepting religious diversity.</p>
36	457	1	“....and when people told stories about invasions, they always mentioned such looting, whether the looting had happened or not. Certainly there was exaggeration.....Not surprisingly, these acts provoked some resistance, and the tall stories provoked both taller deeds	These remarks, meant to mitigate the record of Islamic iconoclasm, are clearly misleading. Doniger does not mention which Hindu chronicle glorifies slaughter of Muslims coupled with destruction of their mosques, destruction of Koranic manuscripts, rape of Muslim women and enslavement of Muslims. In contrast, there is no dearth of Islamic chronicles which describe the horrors that Hindus were subjected to with

⁴⁴ Andre Wink, *Al-Hind*, Vol II, Brill (London), pp. 313-317

⁴⁵ Sadashiv Ambadas Dange, 1967, ‘Go-Ishti and Mehana from the Rgveda’, in *Nagpur University Journal*, pp. 78-108

			<p>and taller stories, such as the claim, made by contemporary Muslim sources, that a Hindu named Bartuh killed 120,000 Muslims in Awadh in Uttar Pradesh in around 1220.”</p>	<p>much glee. Clearly, this indicates that in the medieval Islamic cultural milieu, these acts were considered pious and meritorious. The fact that these chronicles exaggerated these persecutions of Hindus further strengthens this argument.</p> <p>The instance of Bartuh shows that Hindus resisted the invasions of Delhi Sultans in the Ganga-Yamuna Doab and in the trans-Ganga region with all their might and therefore it is apparent that a large number of Muslims who tried to attack these regions were killed by the forces led by Bartuh. Other similar instances are not wanting – for instance, when Taimur resolved to defile the Ganga at Haridwar by slaughtering cows, his path was blocked (according to contemporary chronicles) by practically unarmed 200,000 Hindu peasants not worried for their lives and lead by a handful of Rajputs, desperate in their attempt to prevent Timur from defiling their sacred river.</p>
37	457	`1	<p>“The difference is not merely that some Muslims may have had the additional invective of iconoclasm but that for the most part during this period the Turks had more power to destroy than Hindus to destroy Turks. But the will, including, in many quarters, goodwill, was there on both sides.”</p>	<p>This statement, meant to balance the large scale Islamic iconoclasm with the clearly much fewer instances of Hindu retaliation, is not supported by historical facts. Throughout the book, Doniger castigates and berates Hindus for imagined reasons, and apologizes for the persecutors of Hindus. Doniger’s words are as absurd as say, “The difference is not merely that some Nazis may have had the additional invective of anti-Semitism but that for most part during WWII the Nazis had more power to destroy than Jews to destroy Nazis.”</p> <p>It is not true that the Hindus everywhere had less power to destroy Muslims at all times. What needs to be pointed out is that even when Hindus ruled parts of India (as in the Vijayanagara empire, Rajput kingdoms, Orissa, Assam, the Maratha Empire etc.) for several centuries after the establishment of Muslim rule over other parts of India, they (Hindu rulers) refrained from any large scale destruction of mosques,</p>

			<p>forcible conversions of Muslims, massacres of Muslims, imposition of additional taxes on Muslims, defilement of holy books of Islam, disarmament of Muslims, rapes of Muslim women etc. in their domains, due to the tolerant and inclusive nature of Hinduism – a positive characteristic of Hinduism that Doniger will perhaps not permit.</p> <p>There is contrary evidence to counter the claim that goodwill prevailed at all times between Hindus and Muslims. For instance the often quoted statement of Al Biruni – <i>“The repugnance of the Hindus against foreigners increased more and more when the Muslims began to make their inroads into their country...Mahmud utterly ruined the prosperity of the country...Their scattered remains cherish, of course, the inveterate aversion towards all Muslims. This is the reason too, why Hindu sciences have retired far away from those parts of the country – conquered by us, and have fled to places which our hands cannot reach yet.”</i>⁴⁶</p>
38	458	2	<p>“In the culture at large, Hindus adopted a number of Muslim social customs. When the royal women of the Turks and the Rajputs first met, the Muslim women did not keep particularly rigidly to purdah; they joined in the drinking parties and literary salons.....It was after they had lived in India for a while and encountered the Rajput codes of modesty and honor that the women were more strictly concealed by the curtain of purdah and the zenana (harem) and at the same time also adopted some aspects of the Hindu caste system. Hindu women, in turn,</p> <p>The examples given by Doniger to show that Hindus and Muslims borrowed the worst from each other does not seem to bear logic because her statements actually seem to suggest (falsely) that Hindus did not borrow anything bad from Muslims, whereas the Muslims borrowed caste as well as purdah from the Hindus!</p> <p>In fact, her generalization only shows her prejudices against Hindus because historians who have looked at the historical data available have reached different conclusions. For instance, it is pointed out that we do not get any reference to purdah in the history of Rajputs prior to the Islamic conquests and there are several instances in history where Rajput women fought in battles as late as the 14th cent., and also participated with their men-folk in outdoor games. Moreover, there was no purdah</p>

⁴⁶ Edward Sachau, Transl. of Albiruni’s ‘Kitabl-ul-Hind’, Vol. I, pp. 21-22

			<p>adopted a modified version of the Muslim purdah. What a pity that each side took the worst of both the worlds; why not ditch both purdah and caste?"</p>	<p>among Hindu women in South India – the area least affected by Islamic rule.⁴⁷</p> <p>Even if the Turkish invaders did not have caste, they had their own systems of social stratifications and differentiations along the lines of ethnic origins. And whereas the Hindu rulers did not accord a second class status to Muslims within their dominions, the Muslim rulers in general accorded a lower status to Hindus than Muslims in their rule. The Turkish looked down upon native Indian converts to Islam, and chroniclers like Barani did not mince words in considering these converts as wretches, and inferior to the true blooded Muslims from Central Asia and Arabia. Surely, this religious discrimination and racism was not due to Hindu influence!</p> <p>As for Turkish royalty adopting Hindu customs, it is perhaps apt to quote: <i>“As early as Ilutmish’s reign, the sultans are soon found adapting practices that were distinctively India, for example riding elephants on ceremonial occasions, consulting astrologers and taking horoscopes in advance of important occasions such as enthronement, and so on. Cultural borrowings of this kind by Muslim rulers cannot be taken, of course, as sign of accommodation with the infidel; they represent merely an adaptation to Indian conditions...”</i>⁴⁸</p>
39	458	3	<p>“Women circulated like money (as is generally the case); many Muslims took Hindu wives. And when you add in the gardens and melons and fountains that the Mughals gave to India, not to mention the art and architecture, the</p>	<p>To say that Muslims taking Hindu women as wives represents some sort of cultural exchange is a distortion of historical testimony. Hardly any Muslims married their daughters to Hindu men (although exceptions are noted here and there). Victorious Muslim rulers during the Sultanate period often demanded the daughters of defeated Hindu kings as ‘wives’</p>

⁴⁷ K L Shrivastava (1980), *“The Position of Hindus under the Delhi Sultanate”*, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd (New Delhi), pp. 191-192

⁴⁸ Peter Jackson (1999), *The Delhi Sultanate – A Political and Military History*, Cambridge University Press (Cambridge), p. 281

			<p>picture of cultural exchange brightens considerably.”</p>	<p>for addition to their harem. Sometimes, even the widows of slain Hindu kings were added to the harem. The Sultans are even known to have distributed captured daughters of Hindus to their Muslim nobles as a part of the Id festival celebrations.⁴⁹</p> <p>Ironically, it was the sons of Muslim kings and their Hindu mothers who were most often the most bigoted Muslim rulers of their respective dynasties – e.g., Firoz Tughlaq (of the Tughlaq dynasty), Sikandar Lodi (of the Lodi dynasty) and Aurangzeb (of the Mughal dynasty) were all born of Hindu mothers. Perhaps, they became over-zealous due to their desire to prove to other Muslims that they were also true Muslims despite having Hindu mothers. The ‘cultural exchange’ did not seem to work in their cases!</p> <p>To say that gardens and melons and fountains were sufficient to counteract the unprecedented crippling taxes that the Delhi Sultanate levied on the predominantly Hindu peasantry is quite perverse and reflects Doniger’s elitist mindset. Many of these gardens were royal property and it is uncertain if the masses (“the crow faced Hindus”) could ever enjoy them. For example, Feroz Shah Tughlaq laid 1200 gardens near Delhi to yield additional revenues for the state through the sale of fruit.⁵⁰</p>
40	459	2	<p>“In dramatic contrast with Buddhism, which was driven out of India by a combination of lack of support, persecution, and the destruction of religious monuments and monasteries (by Hindus as well as Muslims), Hinduism rallied and came back</p>	<p>The claim that under the Delhi Sultanate, Hinduism came back stronger than ever, is simply false and a vain boast. Doniger gives just a few examples like a Sultan patronizing a particular temple. But the fact remains that these examples are what they are – exceptions.</p> <p>Throughout the book, Doniger (despite her pretenses that hers is an</p>

⁴⁹ K S Lal (1994), *“Muslim Slave System in Medieval India”*, Aditya Prakashan (New Delhi), pp. 155-164

⁵⁰ K L Shrivastava (1980), *The Position of Hindus under the Delhi Sultanate*, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt Ltd (New Delhi), pp. 162-163

			<p>stronger than ever.”</p>	<p>alternative history narrating the voices of ‘women, low castes, dogs and horses’) presents Hindu as an elitist, exploitative, misogynist and violent tradition, implying that other traditions like Buddhism, were better. It is no surprise therefore, why she does not ponder at the cause of disappearance of Buddhism with the invasions of Muslims. A scholar says – <i>“The Turkish invasions proved fatal to the existence of Buddhism as an organized region in the country of its origin...The Buddhist religion disappeared from North India because it had been almost exclusively concentrated in a few major monastic centers and these centers were destroyed by the Muslims. In so far as Buddhism survived the thirteenth century, outside the orbit of Islamic conquest, in Sri Lanka, Tibet, and in mainland Southeast Asia, it was as a religion with roots in the peasant societies of these areas.”</i>⁵¹</p> <p>It is not out of place to mention that Hindus permanently lost to Islam the countries now called Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan where the populations were converted to Islam and Hindus cleansed ethnically.</p> <p>The sadistic nature of Doniger’s remark can be understood with this fictitious example – <i>“Aditya, the local mafia lord, attacked a neighborhood and wrecked the mansion of Husain, a local rich merchant. Hussain lost everything, and his mansion was damaged beyond repair. He collected whatever he could, and moved out to another neighborhood that was free from Aditya’s depredations. There, Husain built a more modest home for his wife and children with whatever little resources he could salvage. We can therefore say that Husain rallied back and came back stronger than ever. In fact, Aditya’s destruction of the mansion was, in a perverse way, responsible for the creation of something new- Husain’s home in the adopted new neighborhood.”</i></p>
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⁵¹ Andre Wink (1997), *Al-Hind*, vol II, Brill (London), p. 333

41	459	2	<p>“Though most Sultanate rulers condemned idolatry, they did not prevent Hindus from practicing Hinduism. A Hindu inscription of c. 1280 praises the security and bounty enjoyed under the rule of Sultan Balban.”</p>	<p><u>Comment:</u> Balban is known to have been particularly ruthless towards Hindus,⁵² a fact confirmed from numerous chronicles, and smashed temple to ruins. Therefore a solitary and exceptional inscription (called the Palam Baoli inscription, dt. 1276 CE) cannot be used to overturn this generalization. The inscription is by a Pandit Yogisvara who worked for a local Hindu patron living in the reign of Balban. The inscription is full of hyperbole and claims that Balban ruled from Ghazni to Bengal and from the Himalayas to Rameshvaram (Setubandha)! – an impossibility because the Delhi Sultanate did not extend beyond the Narmada at that time. Clearly then, the inscription merely reproduces formulaic phrases from earlier period and cannot be taken as proof of Balban’s benevolence towards the Hindu masses or of prosperity during his reign. Quite on the contrary, very close to Palam village, Balban is known to have killed and forcibly converted thousands of revolting Hindus hiding in the forests of the Mewat region. Some attribute the large Muslim Meo community in the Gurgaon region (in Haryana) to this episode of conversions.</p> <p>This and a few other inscriptions are what they are – exceptional. In contrast, there are literally hundreds of inscriptions over mosques (built over demolished temples or with materials from these temples) and other sites standing as a testimony to Islamist fanaticism during the Sultanate period.</p> <p>Doniger’s generalizations about freedom of religion for Hindus during the Sultanate period should be tempered with statements made historians –</p>
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⁵² Ibid, p. 91

			<p><i>“There is little information in general about the attitude of the sultans towards Hindu religious observance in general...”⁵³</i></p> <p><i>“The Delhi Sultan was able to promote Hindu servitors as he did, or patronize Hindu religious establishments when it suited him, precisely because India contained no rival imperium like Byzantium or the states of Catholic Europe.”⁵⁴</i></p> <p>In general, the Delhi Sultanate was a Muslim State, and Muslims were its Staatsvolk.⁵⁵</p>
42	459	2	<p>“Another Delhi Sultan, ruling in Kashmir from 1355 to 1373, rebuked his Brahmin minister for having suggested that they melt down Hindu and Buddhist images in his kingdom to get cash.”</p> <p>The Islamic kingdom of Kashmir did not come under Delhi’s rule before Akbar’s times 2 centuries later. So which ‘Delhi Sultan’ of Kashmir is Doniger referring to?</p> <p>Doniger gives the reference of a paper by Richard Eaton,⁵⁶ who makes it clear that the Kashmiri Sultan Shihab-ud-Din is being referred to here. However, Eaton too has not considered all the sources while reproducing the translation of Jonaraja’s Rajatarangini verses 434-436 from an old edition, which refer to an evil minister named Udayashri of Shihab-ud-Din as the source of this suggestion. A recent edition of this text⁵⁷ states that all Persian histories describe this Udayashri as a Muslim. In fact, Muslim chronicles such as Baharistan Shahi (1586-1614 A. D.) Haidar Malik's Tariki Kashmir (1618 A. D.), Peer Hassan's Tarikhi Kashmir (1885 A. D. actually describe this ruler as an iconoclast. Therefore, nothing much can</p>

⁵³ Peter Jackson (1999), *The Delhi Sultanate – a Political and Military History*, Cambridge University Press (Cambridge), p. 287

⁵⁴ Ibid, p. 294

⁵⁵ Ibid, p. 278

⁵⁶ Richard Eaton, “Temple Desecration and Indo-Muslim States”, pp, 283-319 in *Journal of Islamic Studies* 11:3 (2000)

⁵⁷ Raghunath Singh (1972), *Jonarajakrta Rajatarangini*, Chaukhamba Sanskrit Series (Varanasi), p. 265 (fn)

				<p>be read in Jonaraja's account which is contradicted by many others. In other accounts, Udayashri was the brother of the Kashmir king's Hindu wife Lakshmi and therefore both may indeed have converted to Islam.</p> <p>In any case, this is an exceptional case and cannot balance the hundreds of Muslim Ulemas and Sufis exhorting Muslim rulers to smash Hindu temples, collect the Jizya, kidnap Hindu women, convert Hindus and humiliate them in other ways.</p>
43	459	3	<p>"In Bengal in 1418, a Hindu actually became Sultan, Raja Ganesh. His son, converting to Islam, ruled under his father's direction until 1431."</p>	<p>Doniger makes this remark to emphasize that all was well with Hinduism during the 14-15th centuries.</p> <p>A correct way to look at this exceptional situation in Bengali is this – <i>"...during the long period of six hundred years of Muslim rule only one Hindu king – Ganesa – ascended the throne of Gauda and Muslims of Bengal invited the Muslim Sultan of Jaunpur to dethrone this Kafir. Ganesa was dethroned and his son could retain the throne only on being converted to Islam. The very possibility of a Hindu ascending the throne perturbed the Muslim Sultans. The nearly contemporary book, Chaitanya-mangala by Jayananda, describes the inhuman brutalities perpetrated in Navadwip under the orders of the Sultan on the circulation of a prophecy that a Brahmin will be the king of Navadwip."</i>⁵⁸</p> <p>Rules have exceptions, but these exceptions must not be treated as pervasive rules. Incidentally, the person who invited the Sultan of Jaunpur was a Sufi of Bengal!⁵⁹</p>
44	459	3	<p>"He was succeeded by an Arab Muslim,</p>	<p>A blatant distortion. Hussain did not patronize Chaitanya although he</p>

⁵⁸ R. C. Majumdar, *History of Mediaeval Bengal*, G. Bharadwaj and Co. 1973, p. 247

⁵⁹ *Ibid*, pp. 247-248

		<p>Ala-ud-din Husain (r. 1493 – 1519), who revered the Vaishnava saint Chaitanya, in return for which the Hindus regarded the sultan as an incarnation of Lord Krishna. On the other hand, during a war, the same Ala-ud-din Husain destroyed a number of temples, particularly in Orissa.”</p>	<p>appointed several Brahmins to official posts. According to a contemporary source, the ‘Chaitanya Charitamrita’, when he asked Sanatana (a disciple of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu) to accompany him on the Orissa expedition, the latter refused saying “you are going to desecrate Hindu temples and break images of Hindu gods; I cannot accompany you”. The furious king thereupon imprisoned Sanatana who however managed to escape by bribing the prison guards. Both brothers (Sanatana and Rupa Goswami) thereafter renounced the world and went to Vrindaban, where they wrote treatises on Gaudiya Vaishnavism.⁶⁰</p> <p>According to the same source, when Chaitanya visited a locality near the residence of the Sultan, his followers (including eminent Hindu officials of Sultan Husain) begged him to depart as soon as possible and not trust the entreaties of the Sultan to visit him because he was a sworn enemy of Hindus. As a result, the Vaishnava saint slipped out without visiting the Sultan, and spent barely 1 year of his last 20 years of life in Bengal, living instead in the Hindu kingdom of Orissa.⁶¹ Several contemporary Vaishnava sources give examples of violence against Hindus during his reign, whereas a Portuguese source narrates that numerous Hindus converted to Islam to gain favor with the Sultan⁶² – a far cry from what Doniger says.</p> <p>Similar interpretations sugar-coating Husain’s fanatical acts have been made by other scholars but they have scarcely addressed all the arguments of historian R C Majumdar.⁶³ Their own data in fact supports Majumdar’s conclusions with regard to this Sultan. The Sultan of Bengal</p>
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⁶⁰ R. C. Majumdar, *History of Mediaeval Bengal*, G. Bharadwaj and Co. 1973, p. 53

⁶¹ Ibid, p. 56, 251; Also Sambidananda Das (2007), *The History and Literature of the Gaudiya Vaishnavas*, Sree Gaudiya Math (Chennai), pp. 329-331

⁶² Ibid, p. 56

⁶³ Jagadish Narayan Sarkar and Sir Jadunath Sarkar (1985), *Hindu-Muslim Relations in Bengal (Medieval Period)*, Idarah-I Adabiyat-i-Delhi (New Delhi), pp. 27-31.

				<p>therefore never provided patronage to Chaitanya.</p> <p>There was a solitary poet (Parameswara, patronized by Husain Shah or his courtiers) in whose verse Husain was likened as an incarnation of Krishna, but it cannot taken to be representative of what all Hindus thought of him.⁶⁴ Methodologically, it is inconsistent of Doniger to regard Brahmins as non-representatives of Hinduism, but take a servitor Brahmin’s hyperbolic inscription as representing what Hindus thought of the Sultan.</p>
45	459	4	<p>“The Tibetan Buddhist historian Taranath, writing in the thirteenth century, was critical of the Nath yogis for following Shiva rather than Buddha and for saying “They were not even opposed to the Turuskas [Turks].”</p>	<p><u>Comment:</u> Doniger does not consider the possibility that criticism of Islam in the Delhi Sultanate invited death punishment, which is why the Nath Yogis held their breath. Or, the tolerance of Nath Yogis for Turuskas may be seen as representing their universalistic and tolerant attitude. It does not imply that the Turuskas were tolerant and liberal towards the Hindus.</p>
46	460	2	<p>“Khwaja Muin-ud-din (or Moin-al-din) Chishti is said to have brought to India the Chishti Sufi order; he came to Delhi late in the twelfth century and settled in Pushkar in Ajmer, a place of Hindu pilgrimage.”</p>	<p>Doniger makes it appear that the settling of the Sufi represented some sort of a fusion between Hinduism and Islam because he chose to settle in a place of Hindu pilgrimage. Even though many Hindus today visit his shrine in Ajmer today, historical details give clear evidence of his bigotry against the Hindus. Doniger of course omits all these details of his life.</p> <p>This Sufi demonstrated a deep-seated hatred toward Hindu religion and its practices. On his arrival near the Anasagar Lake at Ajmer, he saw many Hindu temples and promised to raze them to the ground with the help of Allah and His Prophet. After settling down there, Khwaja’s followers used to bring every day a cow (sacred to Hindus) near a famous temple, where the king and Hindus prayed, slaughter it and cook kebab from its meat-</p>

⁶⁴ R. C Majumdar, op. cit. p. 251

				<p>clearly to show his contempt toward Hinduism. In order to 'prove the majesty of Islam', he is said to have dried the two holy lakes of Anasagar and Pansela (holy to Hindus) by the heat of his spiritual power.' Chisti also came to India with his disciples to fight Jihad against the infidels and participated in the treacherous holy war of Sultan Muhammad Ghauri in which the kind and chivalrous Hindu King Prithviraj Chauhan was defeated in Ajmer. In his Jihadi zeal, Chisti ascribed the credit for the victory to himself, saying, "We have seized Pithaura (Prithviraj) alive and handed him over to the army of Islam."⁶⁵</p> <p>It is also stated that his tomb occupies the site of the temple of Shadi Dev usurped by the followers of the Sufi and that Khwaja Chishti himself had at least one Hindu woman captured to marry her forcibly.⁶⁶ So much for the tolerance of Khwaja Chishti!</p>
47	460	3	<p>"Early Indian Sufism proclaimed that Muslims, Christians, Jews, Zoroastrians, and Hindus all were striving toward the same goal and that the outward observances that kept them apart were false. This idea was then incorporated into Hinduism as a major strand of the bhakti movement, which was growing in both power and complexity in this period."</p>	<p>First, it is a pious myth that early Sufism proclaimed the unity of all religions, so where does the question of it being incorporated into the Bhakti tradition come?</p> <p>For example the greatest Indian Sufi, Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya promised hell-fire to Hindus and said – "<i>The unbelievers at the time of death will experience punishment. At that moment, they will profess belief (Islam) but it will not be reckoned to them as belief because it will not be faith in the Unseen... the faith of (an) unbeliever at death remains unacceptable.</i>" He declared that '<i>On the day of Resurrection when unbelievers will face punishment and affliction, they will embrace faith but faith will not</i></p>

⁶⁵ S A A Rizvi (1978), A History of Sufism in India, Vol I, Munshiram Manoharlal (New Delhi), pp. 116-117

⁶⁶ P.M. Currie, *The Shrine and Cult of Muin al-Din Chishti of Ajmer*, OUP, 1989, *in passim*

				<p><i>benefit them... They will also go to Hell, despite the fact that they will go there as believers.</i>⁶⁷ He also participated in holy wars against Hindus and considered it a religious duty to do so.⁶⁸</p> <p>On the other hand (pace Doniger), the idea that all religions lead to the same Truth is present in the Hindu tradition right from the time of Rigveda I.164.46 – “Truth is One but the Poets describe it in many ways.”</p>
48	461	2	<p>“The use of Hindu temple techniques [for construction of mosques commissioned by Delhi Sultans] not only gave employment to Hindu artisans but was also much easier on Hindus than the use of the actual stones from Hindu temples to build the mosques.”</p>	<p>Doniger makes it appear that the Sultans did a favor on Hindu artisans by employing them but fails to mention one minor detail – that these Hindu artisans had been doubtless enslaved by the Delhi Sultans⁶⁹ and were therefore forced to work on these official mosques, forts, madrasas etc.⁷⁰</p> <p>Several successive Sultans enslaved Hindu artisans and exported them to Central Asia for profitable sale. To absolve the Sultans because they employed enslaved Hindu artisans (and were benevolent towards a few Hindu architects) is like condoning Hitler for the Jewish Holocaust just because the Nazi Army employed about 100,000 mischlinge (soldiers with ¼ to ½ Jewish ancestry).⁷¹</p> <p>It is also perhaps pertinent to quote this generalization of employment of Hindus by Delhi Sultans – “<i>The Hindus were generally not trusted by the Muslim rulers and therefore, they were not appointed to responsible posts in the state. They held only junior and insignificant offices where their services were needed most. They were mainly recruited as clerks and tax-collectors in the revenue department as they were familiar with the local</i></p>

⁶⁷ Fawait al-Faud, Translated by Bruce B. Lawrence, Paulist Press (New York), pp. 161-167

⁶⁸ K A Nizami (1991) *The Life and Times of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya*, New Delhi, p. 232

⁶⁹ Peter Jackson (1999), *The Delhi Sultanate – a Political and Military History*, Cambridge University Press (Cambridge), p. 279

⁷⁰ K S Lal (1994), “*Muslim Slave System in Medieval India*”, Aditya Prakashan (New Delhi), pp. 83-89

⁷¹ Bryan Mark Rigg (2002), *Hitler’s Jewish Soldiers*, University Press of Kansas (Lawrence, Kansas)

			<p>condition and population. It was in the interest of the Islamic state to utilize their services in the smooth running of the revenue departments. It may be pointed out that Hindus occupied only minor posts in the military department, for instance, as ordinary soldiers, porters and for performing other menial works in the army. According to Islamic tradition and usage, a Zimmi was not to be relied upon. Upon the circumstances, it was rare cases that any Hindu could be appointed as commander, general or superintendent in the army. While making such appointments, the Sultans were guided solely by personal and political considerations, which hardly influenced their general policy of the recruitment of the Hindus.”⁷²</p> <p>Exceptions such as the employment of Medini Rao exist, but these are isolated exceptions.</p>
49	462	3	<p>“Scholars believe that Kabir probably married and indeed had a son named Kamal, but the Sadhus of the Kabir Panth insist that Kabir was celibate, just as they are.”</p>
50	466	2	<p>“Inscriptions, historical narratives, and architectural remains suggest that the concept of Rama as the ideal king, and Ayodhya as the site of the Ramayana legend, came alive in central and North India in the twelfth to fourteenth centuries, but only during the</p>

Inaccurate statement. Kabir is believed to have two children – a son named Kamal and a daughter named Kamali. Not all, but most Sadhus believe that he was celibate,⁷³ or that his children were born through unnatural means.⁷⁴

These claims are based on the research of Sheldon Pollock and have been contested correctly by the Marxist historian B Chattopadhyaya who argues that, the state Deity of Vijayanagara was Virupaksha.⁷⁵

Second, the concept of Rama as an idea king and Ayodhya as the site of the Ramayana is attested in Sanskrit literature much before the 12-14th

⁷² K L Shrivastava (1980), *“The Position of Hindus under the Delhi Sultanate”*, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd (New Delhi), p.229

⁷³ David Lorenzen (1991), *Kabir Legends and Ananta Das’s Kabir Parachai*, SUNY (New York), p.18

⁷⁴ F.E.Keay (1996), *Kabir and his Followers*, Sri Satguru Publications (New Delhi), p. 35

⁷⁵ Brajdulal Chattopadhyaya (1998), *“Representing the Other? Sanskrit Sources and the Muslims”*, Manohar (Delhi), pp. 103 sqq. It must be admitted however that following his Marxist political agendas, Chattopadhyaya overstates his case.

			Vijayanagar Empire did the cult of Rama become significant at the level of an imperial order.”	centuries. For example, Adi Shankaracharya makes a remark in his Shariraka Bhashya to explain a subtle point of Vedanta – ‘Just as the Lord of the Universe is referred to as the ruler of Ayodhya....’ showing the association of Ayodhya with Rama.
51	466	2	“...but the figure of Rama was not the object of veneration, the actual installed icon, until the sudden emergence of a number of temples at this time. Now Rama and Hanuman became the focus of important sects in northern India....”	<p>The Gupta Kings were also worshippers of Rama as were some Gahadavala rulers after them. Some of these rulers may have even moved their capital to Ayodhya, in part because of its associations with the rule of Rama.</p> <p>Finally, temples of Rama as a Deity are found in India from centuries predating the establishment of the Vijayanagara empire. The fact that Hanuman temples were constructed in the environs of Hampi had obviously to do with the fact that the capital Hampi is said to be the site of the Ramanya kingdom of Kishkindha where Hanuman hailed from.</p> <p>Doniger makes it appear that Rama worship somehow spread in N India due to the Muslim rule. But this correlation does not imply causation. The S Indian saint Ramananda is credited with popularizing the same (so nothing to do with Vijayanagara) and its widespread adoption in North Indian Hindu sects also has a lot to do with the composition of the Ramcharitmanas by Tulsidas.</p>
52	467	2	“In 1565, at the battle of Talikota, a confederation of Muslim sultans routed the forces of Vijayanagar and the Nayakas. The usual sacking and slaughter, treasure hunting and pillage of building materials ensued, but without bigotry; the temples were the least damaged of the buildings and were often left intact.”	Doniger makes this statement to suggest that Bahmani Sultans were tolerant to Hindus and did not therefore desecrate the Hindu shrines of Vijayanagara. But this again contradicted by credible historical references (and anyone can visit the site of Hampi to witness the wanton destruction of Hindu religious structures). For example, in his classical account, Sewell says – <i>“The third day saw the beginning of the end. The victorious Mussulmans had halted on the field of battle for rest and refreshment, but now they had reached the capital, and from that time forward for</i>

				<p><i>a space of five months Vijayanagar knew no rest. The enemy had come to destroy, and they carried out their object relentlessly. They slaughtered the people without mercy, broke down the temples and palaces; and wreaked such savage vengeance on the abode of the kings, that, with the exception of a few great stone-built temples and walls, nothing now remains but a heap of ruins to mark the spot where once the stately buildings stood. They demolished the statues, and even succeeded in breaking the limbs of the huge Narasimha monolith. Nothing seemed to escape them. They broke up the pavilions standing on the huge platform from which the kings used to watch the festivals, and overthrew all the carved work. They lit huge fires in the magnificently decorated buildings forming the temple of Vitthalasvami near the river, and smashed its exquisite stone sculptures. With fire and sword, with crowbars and axes, they carried on day after day their work of destruction.”⁷⁶</i></p> <p><i>Another good history text says – “The arrival of the main Mussalman army on the sixth day sealed the fate of Vijayanagar and its citizens.....Day after day the slaughter of civilians went unchecked till blood ran into rivers. Then the victors turned to despoil the palaces and desecrate the pagodas. With hammer and hatchet, they went from place to place, knocking, breaking and smashing all works of art and all objects of worship. The house of victory, the pillars of Vitthala temple, the limbs of Ugra Narasimha and the belly of the elephant god Ganesh – all suffered from their pitiless hands. Carvings and sculptures over which workmen had spent decades and kings their wealth were reduced to bits...”⁷⁷</i></p>
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⁷⁶ Robert Sewell (1900), *A Forgotten Empire: Vijayanagar - A Contribution to the History of India*, S Sonnenschein & Co. Ltd (London), pp. 333-334

⁷⁷ M H Rama Sharma (1978), *The History of the Vijayanagar Empire*, Popular Prakashan (Bombay), p. 222

53	467	3	<p>“Sent out to pacify the Cholas, the Nayaks double crossed the Vijayanagar king, just as the founding Vijanagarans had double-crossed the Delhi sultans. What goes around comes around.”</p>	<p>This is quite a travesty of truth. To explain the context, let us see what Doniger says earlier – “The story goes that the brothers [Harihara I and Bukka] had been captured by the army of the Delhi Sultan and hauled up to Delhi, where they converted to Islam and accepted the Sultan as their overlord. The Delhi Sultan then sent them back to pacify the region. Upon their return south, they promptly shed their allegiance to the sultans, blocked Muslim southward expansion, and were reinstated as Hindus...(p. 465)”</p> <p>Is this double crossing? Consider a situation in which an American Jew is captured by the Taliban, is forcibly made to renounce Judaism and convert to Islam. After a while, he becomes a trusted member of the Taliban and is sent out to bomb New York. But upon reaching New York, he promptly renounces Islam, converts to Judaism again and helps the FBI fight Taliban. Would this be considered an instance of ‘double-crossing’, or of the triumph of patriotism and justice over terrorism and religious bigotry?</p> <p>An American author Daveed Gartenstein-Ross has recently written a memoir called ‘<i>My Year inside Radical Islam: A Memoir</i>’ (2007) where he narrates his journey from Judaism into radical Islam, and back to Christianity-Judaism, ending as a helper of US intelligence agencies. In fact, whereas the Harihara-Bukka brothers converted to Islam under duress, Daveed did so on his own accrrd before realizing his errors and abandoning radical Islam. Would it be appropriate to call this author a ‘double-crosser’?</p> <p>When Muhammad bin Tughlaq invaded south India, he smashed several</p>
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54	467	4	“The Vijayanagar kings used their plunder and tribute for elaborate royal rituals, academic patronage, and trophy	It is quite perverse to suggest a totally false symmetry between the religious policies of Vijayanagara kings on one hand who were generally

⁷⁸ See for example, Krishna Kumari Myeni, “Attacks on Hindu Temples – Some Historical Insights,” pp. 217-129 in *Rethinking Indian Culture – Challenges and Responses*, ed. by H C Das and Abhiram Biswal, Institute of Oriental and Orissan Studies, Cuttack (Orissa), 2001

⁷⁹ M H Rama Sharma (1978), *The History of the Vijayanagar Empire*, Popular Prakashan (Bombay), p. 24, n. 4

⁸⁰ Robert Sewell (1900), *A Forgotten Empire: Vijayanagar - A Contribution to the History of India*, S Sonnenschein & Co. Ltd (London), pp 29-30

			<p>temples. The plunder of Hindu temples made possible the building not merely of superb mosques but, indirectly, of superb Hindu temples. Just as Hindu temples had vied, in competitive funding, with Buddhist stupas in South India, so under the sultanate, Muslim and Hindu kings competed in architectural monumentalism, the Muslims inclining toward forts and cities (as well as mosques), the Hindus toward temples, temple complexes and temple cities (as well as palaces). However different the styles may have been, the two sets of rulers shared the grandiosity; they egged each other on....”</p>	<p>tolerant towards their Muslim subjects and even constructed mosques for them. Emperor Krishna Deva Raya, the greatest king of Vijayanagara, also had a copy of the Koran placed next to his throne so that his Muslim visitors did not hesitate to bow in his presence.</p> <p>To suggest that the destruction of Hindu temples was somehow instrumental in the construction of newer temples is quite perverse. It is like suggesting that the rape of a woman is somehow beneficial because it leads to the birth of a baby.</p> <p>There is no evidence that Hindu kings indulged in competitive architectural feats with Muslim rulers. Except in areas outside Muslim rule (or under nominal Muslim rule) where temple construction was a continuation of earlier activities, large temples virtually ceased to get constructed of a major portion of the Indian subcontinent after Muslim rulers became masters. In any case, Doniger has provided no quantitative data to support her perverse and absurd claims. The Hindu rulers were merely expressing their religiosity (and that of their predominantly Hindu populations by constructing Hindu and Jain temples, whereas the Muslim rulers often constructed their mosques in territories with a more than</p> <p>Doniger forgets to mention that the Sultanate rulers also spent millions on their tombs and mausoleums, an entirely wasteful activity.</p>
55	468	2	<p>“There was a break in the building of Hindu temples during each new Muslim invasion, with few new commissions and the loss of some temples that the Muslims destroyed, but then were there followed an even greater expansion of art in all fields....”</p>	<p>The Hindus lost just ‘some’ temples? Doniger fraudulently makes it appear that Islamic iconoclasm caused a flowering of Hindu art and architecture.</p> <p>A more accurate picture is given by a historian in these words – <i>“The seventh to eighteenth centuries have also generated an enormous mass of literary evidence of Islamic iconoclasm in the area from Transoxania</i></p>

				<p><i>and Afghanistan to Tamil Nadu and Islam, the whole of which is littered with ruins of temples and monasteries...What happened in historical times in areas like Sinkiang, Transoxiana, Sistan, and Afghanistan – which converted almost entirely to Islam and eradicated all vestiges of Hinduism and Buddhism -, happened still recently in Pakistan and Bangla Desh, where many temples were destroyed by Muslims as recently as 1989, and still continuing, in Kashmir.”⁸¹</i></p> <p>Doniger does not present any quantitative data to prove that the expansion of art in all fields post Muslim invasions was greater than the expansion of art pre-Invasion. The fact is that most art and architecture from pre Islamic period in the India subcontinent north of the Narmada is lost as a result of Islamic iconoclasm and we have no basis to accept Doniger’s generalization. There are a few inscriptions attesting to construction or repairs of Hindu temples during the Sultanate, but these are vastly outnumbered by the numbers of temples destroyed during the rule of Delhi Sultans. The fact is that except for a few isolated clusters (e.g., Khajuraho temples, Kangra valley, Salt Range), hardly any notable temples preceding the rule of Delhi Sultans survive in the entire Plains of Indus and Ganges.</p> <p>In fact, Islamic invasions definitely hindered the construction of new temples and the following generalization seems accurate – <i>“In the thirteenth century and afterwards, large temples continued to be built, but not with the same frequency. In the temples that were built after 1200 AD, as for example at Ranakpur, the emphasis shifted from carving to the articulation of grand spaces. In North India this resulted, after 1200, in a significant dearth of well-carved sculptures. The temples that survived the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries are now abandoned and</i></p>
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⁸¹ Andre Wink (1997), *Al-Hind*, vol. II, Brill (London). P. 323

			<p><i>stand as hollow shells in secluded spots, but some of the greatest temple complexes of the North India obviously survived the Muslim invasions intact. This was the case with about twenty-five of the approximately eighty temples at Khajuraho, built by the Candellas. These, however, appear to have occupied a site which had already been abandoned before the Muslims penetrated the area.</i></p> <p><i>After the thirteenth century, then, the building of monumental temples became more and more a feature of the South of India, the area which for many centuries longer remained beyond the frontier of Islamic expansion....”⁸²</i></p> <p><i>“It was only in South India that the building of large temple complexes remained embedded in a Hindu polity and continued to be organically linked to the other institutions of kingship and social organization in a variety of complex ways. Hindu temples in South India show a relatively unbroken, linear development, from the earliest rock-cut temples of the Pallavas in the seventh century to the great Cola structures of the eleventh century, and then to the sprawling urban temple ensembles, with their gopurams or ‘gates’, of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Vijayanagara and Nayaka dynasties. This tradition did not decline before the seventeenth century, under the impact of Muslims and Europeans. In North India, by contrast, the Muslim invasions, apart from destroying many temples, interrupted the evolution of Hindu temple architecture. If temples continued to be built in the Northern style (as developed by the Candellas or the Solankis), it was on a much reduced scale....Ranakpur in Rajasthan, built around 1439, were equipped with holes in the ground leading to cellars where the images could be hidden from the Muslim iconoclasts. We know of underground Jain temples which were built for the protection of images in Mughal times, and it is likely that these existed in our period as well, or that underground portions were</i></p>
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⁸² Ibid, pp. 323-324

				<p><i>beginning to be added to temples, with narrow passages as their entrance.”⁸³</i></p> <p><i>“Nowhere in the North did the Hindu temple building tradition perpetuate itself without hindrance. Even in the East, in Orissa, the climax of the Hindu architectural tradition was clearly reached with the thirteenth-century Surya temple at Konarka, after which stylistic decline set in, imitative of earlier forms, but less flamboyant and without the same quality of surface decoration as for instance can be seen in the Jagannath temple at Puri.”⁸⁴</i></p> <p><i>“The Muslims razed many of the Jain temples to the ground, destroyed Jain libraries, and allegedly killed unknown numbers of followers. Later Jain temples of the area are copies of the earlier ones of Abu and Sanganer, but of inferior quality, and showing influence of Muslim architecture.”⁸⁵</i></p>
56	468	2	<p>“Indeed, the leveling of the sacred monuments at Mathura and Kanauj coincided precisely with the construction of other great dynastic temple complexes. It is a rather backhanded compliment to the Muslims to say that because they tore down so many temples, they paved the way for the Hindus to invent their greatest architecture, but it is also true.....the pillage made possible the patronage.”</p>	<p>This is a blatant distortion of historical facts to suit political agendas. With a few exceptions, large temples were constructed only in areas outside of Muslim control or only nominally under Muslim control. This explains why hardly any large Hindu temple was constructed from Peshawar to Calcutta from 1200-1700 CE to replace the hundreds that were destroyed.</p> <p>A historian summarizes this situation aptly – <i>“But, without the independent Hindu king, the intimate connection of kingship, temple building and Hindu religious worship was lost in the areas which were conquered. If the temples were not destroyed, patronage dried up, and few great temples were built in North India after the thirteenth</i></p>

⁸³ Ibid, pp. 324-325

⁸⁴ Ibid, pp. 326-327

⁸⁵ Ibid, p. 354

				<p>century.....Most importantly perhaps, Islamic iconoclasm – a religious phenomenon of the frontier – undermined the potential power of the icons as communal symbols, as expressions of the communal power of the peasantry. For the veneration of icons and relics was a collective experience of a mass of believers, exciting powerful emotions, while the power exhibited by icons, through miracles, like that of relics, was overwhelmingly public.”⁸⁶</p> <p>Doniger seems to imply that Islamic invasions somehow acted as a catalyst in the construction of new Hindu temples. But in fact, construction of monumental temples was the already the norm all over India <i>before</i> these invasions – “By the time the Turks arrived, the building of monumental temples in stone for congregational worship and theistic cults had become a characteristic feature of kingdoms throughout <i>al-Hind</i>.”⁸⁷ The invasions in fact caused a total stoppage in the construction of large temples in the areas under the Sultanate rule.</p> <p>Doniger also seems to imply that somehow the royally patronized temples did not cater to the need of Hindu masses and throughout, her refrain is that the money needed for construction of these temples led to the exploitation of Hindus. This is a gross distortion.</p> <p>Finally, Doniger also forgets that it is believed that not only Hindu royalty, but wealthy people from throughout India contributed to the construction of these temples. Records to this effect still survive for the Konarka temple.⁸⁸</p>
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⁸⁶ Andre Wink (1997), *Al-Hind*, Vol II, Brill (London), p. 403

⁸⁷ *Ibid*, p. 295

⁸⁸ *Ibid*, p. 298

57	468	2	<p>“In a similarly perverse way, the withdrawal of royal patronage from the temples and Brahmin colleges may have encouraged the spread of new, more popular forms of Hinduism such as Bhakti. The dynamic and regenerative quality of Hinduism was never more evident than in these first centuries of the Muslim presence.”</p>	<p>Again, a blatant distortion of the historical record. The Bhakti movement in medieval India was a continuation of the trends initiated in pre-Islamic south India (Alwars, Nayanars, Jnaneshwara, Jayadeva etc).</p> <p>If Doniger’s speculation is true, that the growth of Bhakti movement in different parts of India should coincide with the advance of the Islamic political frontier in India. In other words, we should see a profusion of Bhaktas in Muslim ruled areas, and a relative absence of Bhaktas in Hindu ruled areas. But, nothing can be further from the truth.</p> <p>First, numerous Bhaktas actually originated or lived outside of Muslim controlled areas (or areas only under nominal Muslim control) – Mirabai, Jnaneshwara, Kshetryaya, Shankara Deva, Jana Bai, Jayadeva etc.</p> <p>Second, numerous Bhaktas were also actively persecuted by Muslims. E.g., Purandara Dasa, Kabir, Nanak, Namadeva, Sanatana and Rupa Goswami.</p> <p>Third, many Bhakta saints were scholars of Sanskritic traditions (that per Doniger’s paradigm, were supported by Hindu royalty) and wrote in Sanskrit (e.g., Vallabhacharya) and even the works of several Bhaktas (e.g. Tulsidasa) in vernacular Indian languages are interspersed by Sanskrit verses.</p> <p>Fourth, many of the Saints were associated with temples that were constructed under patronage of Hindu kings (and other wealthy Hindus) in Pre-Islamic times – e.g., the Shri Vaishnava saints and the Shrirangam temple, The Vithoba temple of Pandharpur and the Maharashtrian Saints. Therefore, it is wrong to dissociate Bhakta Saints from monumental temples.</p>
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58	468-469	-	<p>“Mosques also provided a valuable contrast with temples within the landscape of India....The mosque, whose serene calligraphic and geometric contrasts with the perpetual motion of the figures depicted on the temple, makes a stand against the chaos of India, creating enforced vacuums that India cannot rush into with all its monkeys and peoples and colors and the smells of the bazaar and, at the same time, providing a flattering frame to offset that very chaos.”</p>	<p>Doniger’s comment is quite racist and orientalist. It is simply unbelievable that even in this age, a scholar can essentialize the Hindu Main St. of Sultanate India as “monkeys and peoples, colors and smells, and chaos” – just a variant of the cow, caste and curry stereotype of India and Hindus.</p> <p>Doniger makes it appear that the large scale displacement of temples by mosques was some kind of an architectural blessing on India. It is pertinent to ask if she has similar views on ongoing destruction of Hindu temples by Islamists in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh and in Kashmir (India).</p>
59	470	3	<p>“Muslim social customs, unrestricted by caste, influenced him deeply, and the Virashaivas’ rejection of the Brahmin imaginary may be beholden to the influence of Muslim missionaries who</p>	<p>It appears that according to Doniger, Hindus cannot reform themselves internally and must wait from an impulse from non-Hindus! No credible scholar of Hinduism attributes Virashaiva egalitarianism to Islam.⁸⁹ It is perhaps better to trace it to the teachings of pre-existing Tamil Shaiva</p>

⁸⁹ For a summary of different views on the origin of Virashaivas, see Julia Leslie, “Understanding Basava – History, Hagiography and a Modern Kannada Drama”, pp. 228-261 in *BSOAS* vol. 61, No. 2 (1998). Parts of this paper are marred by a reliance on Leftist-Marxist authors such as Romila Thapar and the playwright Girish Karnad.

			<p>were active on India’s west coast just when the Virashaiva doctrine developed there.”</p>	<p>saints (or even to the Naths or Kalamukhas- especially the latter who were active in that region before Basava) closer home if at all one wants to argue that Basavanna could not have developed it on his own.</p> <p>Doniger forgets that Basavanna is associated with Basavakalyan town (then called ‘Kalyana’) in Bidar - the most interior (away from the coast-line) district of Karnataka! To suggest that Muslim missionaries on the west coast would have been the inspirational source of Virashaiva doctrines is simply inadmissible and unscholarly. During his time (1106-1167 CE), there was no significant presence of Muslims in that region, and Islamic rule had not even penetrated much beyond modern Pakistan into India. There was simply no Muslim society in Bidar to influence Basavanna (1106-1147 CE), which was ruled by the Hindu dynasty called Western Chalukyas. Even apologists of Islam do not claim that Muslims had a presence in Bidar or that they influenced Basava.⁹⁰</p>
60	470	4	<p>“Where does this violence come from? We may trace it back to the Tamil saints of the Periya Purana, or to the wild followers of Shiva as Virabhadra in Andhra....”</p>	<p>Doniger credits Islam with the egalitarianism of the Virashaiva movement, but when it comes to their violent overtones, she blames Hinduism! This shows her prejudice against Hindus.</p> <p>Marxist historians these days try to attribute the good characteristics of Virashaivas to Muslim influence. Then why not also attribute violence to Islamic influence? It seems quite inconsistent to blame Hinduism only for all the negative influences and credit only Islam for all the positives in the Virashaiva tradition.</p>

⁹⁰ See for instance the following work which surveys the advent of Islam to South India but makes no claim similar to Doniger’s: Richard M Eaton (1978), *The Sufis of Bijapur*, Princeton University Press (New Jersey).

Concluding Remarks: In this chapter, which is rampant with factual errors, Doniger (and her students who helped her?) has indulged in large scale fabrications, cherry picking of data, fraudulent interpretations and agenda driven white-washing. The dominant trend in the chapter appears to be to promote hatred against Hindus, and to label her critics as Hindu Nationalists to stymie all debate and criticism of her fictitious historiography. It also appears that Doniger wants to ingratiate herself with the powerful lobby of Marxist-Communist historians in India by peddling their distortions of medieval Indian history by excessively referring to their agenda driven publications.

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