

Punjab plains and even penetrated as far as Delhi. They also exercised their control over the Qarluqs, who had carved out their own kingdom that extended across both sides of the Indus. In view of these developments, the Delhi Sultanate was constrained to divert its resources to defend the north-western frontier against the Mongol onslaught. What is more significant, the widespread Mongol depredations in different parts of Asia forced a large number of Muslim refugees to migrate and settle in the towns of north-western India. This migration, largely slow and silent, contributed to the cultural fusion that marked the history of the Delhi Sultanate. The present volume promises to provide insights into the nature of Mongol intervention in north-western India.

While concluding this review, we may look at some distinctive features of the book. In a detailed appendix, the author analyses the major primary sources on which the book is based. This portion encompasses the writings of Minhaj-i-Siraj Juzjani, Alauddin Ata Malik Juwaini, Rashiduddin Fazlullah, Hamdullah Mustaufi, Abdullah bin Fazlullah, Ibnul Asir and Ibn Khaldun. It also includes a discussion on the merits of a significant Sino-Mongol chronicle entitled *The Secret History of the Mongol Dynasty*. However, it does not include a critique on the observations of travellers - Plano Carpini, Marco Polo, Ibn Battuta and Meng Hung - who have provided valuable evidence on our subject. The book contains seven historical maps, which complement the text in several meaningful ways. Last but not least, the publisher (Primus Books) has done a tremendous job in producing a beautiful volume, which is sure to benefit the students of medieval history.

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Meera Nanda, *The God Market: How globalization is making India more Hindu*, Noida: Random House, 2009, pp.241, Rs 395

In recent years there has been resurgence of different kinds of literature about globalization and its impact on Indian society. Globalization as a multifaceted phenomenon creates a world of uneven development on the one hand and constructs certain kinds of ideological commitments to sharpen the tendencies of religious and fundamentalist beliefs on the other. It also creates the political religiosity, coupled with Hindu majoritarianism. In this connection, Meera Nanda, a well known researcher in the domains of secularism, philosophy of science and social and political history of contemporary practices of religious institutions in India, has contributed more than

six monographs in the intensely debated and contested areas of inter-disciplinary research. Her latest book on *The God Market: How globalization is making India more Hindu* is a welcome addition to the research on secularism and generates a debate on globalization and its internal ideological connections with religiosity and its overall impact on the very fabric of Indian society. She has critical capacity to articulate her perspective and arguments lucidly. The theoretical issues and philosophical debates, she is trying to engage with in this book under review, is one of the most contentious terrains within contemporary scholarship, where she is trying to critically examine the ideology of globalization and its political and social consequences for Indian public institutions, and how, over the years these institutions of collective democratic responsibility have witnessed radical changes and become more globalised in terms of Hindutva ideology. However, these rationalist and secularist concerns over globalization and its linkages with fundamentalism and political religiosity have been the subject matter of curious debate between modernist and post-modernist scholarship. They articulate and problematise these aspirations from different canons of rationality and efficacy of scientific temperament in the making of Indian society a more dynamic and egalitarian one. But they hardly reach out for any consensus on these issues in their quest for meanings and roots of religiosity in understanding the meaning and role of globalization in India.

In this book the author has deconstructed the narrative of 'us' and 'them' and tried to show; how India is not free from politicized religiosity which manifests itself in a growing sense of Hindu majoritarianism. Indeed, globalization is making the entire world more religious and all religions more political and though they are drawing closer economically, people all over the world are becoming more self-conscious of their religious and civilizational heritage. She reiterates that globalization has been good for gods and often, sadly for gods' warriors as well who incite conflicts and violence in the name of their faith. And India is no exception to this global trend.

In exploring the dimensions of religiosity in the times of globalization, the author intends to capture the trends and changing texture of everyday expressions of Hinduism analyzing the larger political, economic and institutional shifts, which India is experiencing as it emerges as a 'major' player in global economy and world politics. In order to substantiate her arguments, she refers to the patterns of migration from India, how people migrate with their religiosity and god to the host culture and assert their identity in a more vigorous manner simultaneously making use of new opportunities opened

up by neo-liberalization and globalization. Similar kind of argument one finds in Arjun Appadurai's book *Modernity At Large*, but the focus is on cultural identity: there is also Wittgensteinian family resemblance in both conceptual and theoretical categories dealing with cultural and religious identities.

In this book, the author has tried to underline certain assumptions about religious freedom and freedom of expression at two levels. The first relates with the role of the Indian state in dealing with questions of secularism on the one hand and its multifaceted commitments towards making of Indian polity, egalitarian and democratic one on the other. Another interesting argument Meera presents in her book is the role of 'state' as an institution of collective responsibility towards its people. She shows in her analysis that, the state is developing a very intriguing kind of connection between Hindu nationalists, and corporate complexes. To explain this, she uses a beautiful phrase and it reads as 'the State - Temple- Corporate Complex and the Banality of Hindu Nationalism' (108). The phrase itself explains how the recent spade of globalization had turned the Indian society more religious and intolerant in its outlook towards the other sections of society specifically the minority community.

According to Meera educated Indians in cities and small towns are becoming more religious than the less educated villagers. Another startling fact she highlights is the apathy of Indian state towards its education and public health, 'India has 2.5 million places of worship but only 1.5 millions schools and barely 75000 hospitals, Rajasthan government spent 260 million rupees for temple renovation and training 600 Hindu priests. several other researched documents she refers to give detailed account of globalization and its consequences for Indian polity.

The book is divided into six chapters including: 'India and the Global Economy : A Very Brief Introduction,' 'The Rush Hour of the Gods : Globalization and Middle-class Religiosity,' 'The State-Temple-Corporate Complex and the Banality of Hindu Nationalism,' 'India@superpower.com : How We See Ourselves' and 'Rethinking Secularization.' Each chapter deals with different aspects of globalization, its surface and deep grammar concerning political religiosity and its meanings for equity and political equality. Each chapter of the book offers a fresh insight and critique of globalization, how

over the years the promise of Indian constitution is taking back seat and certain political and social ideals of liberal secular humanism advocated by Nehru and Ambedkar are being derailed day in and day out.

In the process of unpacking these recurrent themes of the book the author offers descriptive as well explanatory accounts to substantiate her arguments. For instance, she emphasizes that the book opens and closes with two big ideas, namely, globalization and secularism. She provides a brief economic history of globalization and how it impinges on freedom of marginal citizens on the one hand and creates religious middle class on the other. Another set of issues, that she brings to the fore concerns shrinking of egalitarian public spaces and how the texture of public sphere is becoming more distinctively Hindu than ever before. The author looked at India's experience of secularism through the prism of social theories of secularization and de-secularisation. In this part she crafted an interesting argument to explain, why the god market has continued to boom under peculiarly Indian brand of secularism and why it is flourishing under neo-liberal economic reforms.

In contextualizing the debates on globalization and its impact on social and political aspects of human freedom, Meera emphasizes that as India is going through the process of liberalization and the economy of the country experiences a rising tide of popular Hinduism, which is leaving no social segment and public institution untouched, there is upsurge in popular religiosity in the rising conciseness of Hindu middle class. Subsequently there is a great danger to Indian secularism from these mobile middle class compradors; therefore, there is a need to rethink about the onslaught of globalization and its implications for Indian secular polity.

Needless to mention Meera is precise in her linguistic expression about social and political events and her arguments about secular polity. Her views are cogent and clear that fascinate the reader to read the book, in a more cohesive manner, without losing interest in the complexity of the argument. She presents her arguments from the rationalist and modernist perspective that at times create discomfort to those who are not in consonance with rationalist arguments.

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