

I have expressed my personal feeling about Americans in one of the mails I replied to Kalyanraman Ji, is as follows. Americans (Be it Indians settled in US) have a tendency to look down upon because they consider that it is the America that matters most to them and its monetary gains. They have no moral charters to follow but only financial gains no matter what the source of these finances are? (Petro-Dollars)

America is a nation where only Interests of America and American Institutions matter. Freedom of Speech, Human rights, Peace talk, these are just for utterances when American interests are not at stake. Are there any lessons for Indian?

Dr. Ambekar.

On 12 Dec 2011, at 04:56, navaratna rajaramnavaratna wrote:

December 12, 2011

From various accounts it is clear that 'Indologists', notably religious studies professor Diana Eck and the likes of Sugata Bose were at the forefront of cancelling courses to be taught by Dr Subramanian Swamy. This is curious, for Eck knows no economics yet seemed to feel she could invoke a higher moral authority that she alone possesses, but denied to economics department to impose her will on who teaches what.

This goes beyond academic freedom to moral policing. This is characteristic of religious fanatics-- they know what is morally right for the rest of the world-- rules which they don't have to follow. A person who holds views or acts in a manner that they do not approve of has no rights.

She claims this moral right in the name of 'pluralism'. Let us apply a similar standard to Eck and her ilk. It is no secret that she (and her likeminded Chicago colleague Wendy Doniger) follow a lifestyle that many in India and the U.S. consider sexually perverse. Is this to be brought up in approving Eck's courses?

It can be argued, and has been argued in the past that such people should be kept away from impressionable young minds who might be corrupted by their teaching and example.

Or how about the fact that Sugata Bose, another who opposed Swamy's courses is married to a Pakistani and hence naturally hostile to Dr Swamy teaching at Harvard. His pro-Pakistani proclivities render him unfit to teach about India.

The point is: where do you draw the line on academic freedom? More seriously, can you have a moral supercop like Eck dictating terms to others?

You cannot have half-freedoms-- academic or otherwise: In the memorable words of Abraham Lincoln 150 years ago: "A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this government cannot endure, permanently half *slave* and half *free*."

This applies to academic freedom no less than to political freedom. But I doubt that Eck and her ilk have the moral and intellectual sensitivity to see it.

Political agenda

Actually there is more than meets the eye in Eck's bizarre performance. She is sending a political message to Harvard President Drew Faust no less! Here is a revealing report (emphasis mine):

"In her remarks, Eck emphasized the "destructive" nature of the positions Swamy advocated in India, and characterized the proposals as going well beyond free speech to the advocacy of abrogating human rights, curtailing civil rights, and intruding on freedom of religion. She wondered why the courses had not been "quietly dropped," rather than submitted for approval in 2012. Swamy's positions crossed the line to "incitement" and to "demonizing" Indian minorities, and were therefore sharply at odds with Harvard's pluralism, Eck said. **Given President Faust's planned trip to Mumbai and New Delhi in January, it would be important for people in that country to know where the faculty stood on the views Swamy advocated."**

In other words ALL Indians should toe the line drawn for them by this moral policewoman (who claims to speak for all of Harvard)-- and President Faust better convey this message to Indians!

In my dictionary this constitutes racist arrogance by a highly political creature to boot.

N.S. Rajaram