Before the death of Prophet Muhammad in A.D. 632 almost the whole of Arabia had been won over to the faith of Islam preached by him. A mighty nation suddenly arose, animated by a great zeal to make other nations adopt the same religion. Issuing forth from the confines of Arabia, the Muslims threw themselves upon the neighbouring nations and within a century after Muhammad's death, conquered and converted to Islam not only the Asiatic realms, the north part of Arabia, Syria, Persia, Turkistan, Afghanistan, Egypt, the whole north coast of Africa upto the Atlantic ocean but they also crossed the straits of Gibraltar and occupied the greater part of Spain.

In almost all the countries conquered by the 'Arabs, the majority of the population embraced
Peoples of the most diverse races became closely knit together by the bond of this faith.

**THE ISLAM IN INDIA**

The early occupation in India by the Arabs was confined to Sind only but it was a first step towards the conquest of this vast country by Muslims. Nearly three centuries later the first effective attempt was made by a Turkish slave of a territory called Ghazna situated between Kabul and Qandhar. It was Sabuktigin. He and his son Sultan Mahmūd who can be considered as the first great Muslim rulers to penetrate into the very heart of India.

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1. His father Jokkara Bahkam bin Qezil Arsalān who was the descendant of Yazdagird, the king of Irān (d. A.H. 387, A.D. 997); (Abū 'Umar Minhāṭ - Mawārid Dīn - Tabaqāt-i-Naṣīrī, p. 67)

2. Sabuktigin had two sons. Ismail was born of Alptigin's daughter and Mahmūd was from a woman of Zābilistan - (Mawlawī Sayyad Hāshimī - Tārikh-i-Hind, p. 159.)
The real task of conquest was undertaken by Muhammad Shihab-ud-Din Ghori, ruler of a pretty kingdom named Ghor situated between Ghazna and Hira. After making preliminary attempts he invaded India in A.H. 514 (A.D. 1191), his conquests were extended by his lieutenant, Qutb-ud-Din Aibek. He founded in India a dynasty of Sultans called the Slave Dynasty. They were so called because of the fact that most of them rose to power from the condition of a slave. After the end of the Slave Dynasty the royal sceptre passed into the hands of Afghan Khaljis who ruled up to A.H. 716 (A.D. 1320). Then there were Tughlaq Sultans and their successors, the Sayyads and Lodis (A.H. 717-A.D. 1321, A.H. 921-A.D. 1525).

1. His father's name was Bahā-ud-Dīn; he was born in A.H. 533 (A.D. 1138) in the province of Ghor—(Abū 'Umar Mīrāj-ud-Dīn - Ṭabqat-i-Naširi, p. 68)


Qutb-ud-Dīn Aibek was a Turkish slave. He was brought up by Sultan Shihāb-ud-Dīn. He was known as 'Aibek Shal' as his middle finger (shal) was broken. (Muhammad Qāsim Fīrishta - Ṭārīkh-i-Fīrishta, Pt. II, p. 182).
Bābur, king of Kabul invaded India and defeated Ibrāhīm Lodi in the historical battle on the field of Pānipat and founded the Mughal Empire in India.

The fact that these Muhammadan dynasties in India were almost entirely founded by foreign invaders is of great importance in the history of Islam. They brought with them a large number of foreign troops and attracted to their courts, military adventurers, poets and scholars as well as saints who ultimately settled in the country.

THE METHODS ADOPTED BY MUSLIM CONQUERERS TO PROPAGATE ISLĀM IN INDIA

The militant propaganda of the Muslim faith was a part of the practical policy of the Muslim

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3. "Khalj" is originally a Turkish word meaning "Sword" (Gulam Husain Salīm - Riyāż-us-Salāṭīn Tārikh-i-Bangālā, p.63;)

4. Tughlaq is a corrupt form of "Qatlīgh" ('clever', 'great' or 'elder')
conquerors during the mediaeval period. Saints and preachers received monetary help from the government and they emulated the ideas nourished by kings in the cause of their religion but in their own peaceful ways.

Throughout the history of Islam in India, missionary or itinerant preachers have been a relatively important factor. Usually these people have been individuals endowed with piety and religious zeal and frequently men of learning, who, through their own personal interest in the spread of Islam and inspired with a divine call, have been content to wander from place to place and gather disciples. Among the missionaries to whose proselytizing efforts the conversion of several tribes and communities is attributed, there were saints like Khwaja Farid-ud-Din Ganj-Shakar of Fak Fathān, Mizām-ud-Dīn Awliyā of Delhi, Sayyed Muhammad Gesūdarāz in the South, Khwāja Mūn-ud-Dīn Chishtī at Ajmer and Shāh-i-Ālam of Ahmadābād.

1. Muhammad Qāsim Firishta— Tarīkh-i-Firishta (MS.)
Their teachings appealed to people of all castes or creeds. As such there was a very big number of their followers.

Gujarat could be a very convenient centre in India for the international exchange of goods owing to its peculiar geographical location. Its salubrious climate, prosperous economy and maritime position gave a hearty welcome to foreign traders. Historians, too, have described Gujarat as the Garden of India and Emperor Aurangzeb very appropriately called it the ornament of India.

As such the commercial and cultural relations between India and Arabia grew more and more as the time passed on and Gujarat was, as if, a key for the same. Along with traders, saints and learned men from Arabia continued to come to Gujarat and thousands of Muslim pilgrims sailed for pilgrimage to Mecca and Madina every year through its ports.

1. Aurangzeb - Ruqat-i-Ālamgiri (MS).
mainly Cambay.

As such, the relations between the inhabitants of both the countries developed; and so the torch-bearers of Islam of their own accord started to emigrate to India at the outset.

**SUFISM IN INDIA**

India is one of the five great centres of Sufism, the other four being Iran (inclusive of Central Asia), Mesopotamia, Syria and North Africa. Among the earliest Sufi saints of India was Mu'in-ud-Din Chishti, who was born at Chisht in Sistan (East Iran) lived for a long time in Khurasan. He followed the army of Shihabud-Din Ghori in A.D. 1192 and settled at Ajmer. When he founded the famous Chishtiya order, other popular orders in India were Qadiriya, Suhrawardiya, and Shattariya, Naqshabandia, with their numerous branches.

Before the establishment of the Muslim rule in India, i.e. during the last quarter of the
eleventh century, innumerable saints had migrated to Gujarat and carried on propaganda. As the consequence, converted communities like Bohras, Khojas, Momins, Memons, etc. came into existence.

1. Vide; p. 471

2. It is from 'Khāja' meaning 'honourable convert.' They constitute an important part of the scattered remnants of the adherents of Nizar, the son of Al-Mustangir, the Fātimid Caliph of Egypt. The spiritual ancestor of Khojas was Hasan bin Sabbān who died in A.H. 517 (A.D. 1124) at Almout in North Persia. Their first Dāl who came to India as a missionary was Nur Satagar or Nur-ud-Dīn.

3. The Momns take their name from the word 'Munin' which means 'believer' and they were originally Hindus of Gujarat converted by the Ismāʿiliation missionaries into Islam.

4. It is from 'Maimān' (suspicious). These people originally belonged to the Iohana community of Sind. They were converted into Islam by Sayyad Yusuf-ud-Dīn, the descendant of Sayyad Abdul Qādir Gilānī, when he came to Sind—(Sayyad Amir-ud-Dīn - Abrār-ul-Ḥaqq (MS.))
The veneration in which the rulers held the Muslim saints attracted them to this soil. In the reign of the Solanki Dynasty so many Muslim traders had settled in Anhilwad Pattan in Gujarat and built mosques there for their prayers.

1. PATTAN is also known as Pirān Pattan, i.e. the city of saints (Mirzā Ali Muhammad Khān—Khātīma-i-Mirāt-i-Ahmadi, p.24).

It is said that a cowherd named Anhil showed the Solanki king of the time a beautiful spot to build a city there on the condition of naming it after him and it was accordingly called Anhilpūr. 'Pattan' in some of the Indian languages means 'chosen' and it was known as Anhilwad Pattan in the course of time. The Arabs called it Nahrawala (Ab-ul-Faẓl Ḥin-i-Akbarī, Pt.III,p.262). In the Arabic language, there is no pronunciation of (p); so Pattan is called as 'Fatan' in (Sayyad 'Abd-ul-Hai-Yād-i-Ayyām, p.10).

After the conquest of Gujarat by ʿAlāʾ-ud-Dīn Khalji in A.H. 697 (A.D. 1297), first the nizāma (governor) appointed in Gujarat by the Delhi Sultanate and later on the Sultans of Gujarat invited 'Sūfī' saints from 'Arabia to the province. They were given full encouragement to preach Islam and they could very well succeed in their mission.

Sultan Ahmadshāh (A.H. 813-845/ A.D. 1410-1442) shifted his capital from Anhilwad Pattan to a place near the residential place of Shaikh Ahmad Khattū Ganj Bakhsh, the celebrated saint of the time.

When Sayyad Burhānud-Dīn Quṭb-i-ʿAlam proposed to visit his capital, Ahmadshāh was elated and considered himself so honoured that he kept himself waiting at a stage to receive him and assigned to him a site at Asāwal (now a suburb of Ahmadābād).

1. Ḥāfiẓ Nīṣāμ-ud-Dīn Ahmad - Ṭabaqāt-i-Akbari;
2. Sikandar Manjhu - Mirāt-i-Sikandari, p.11.
Sultan Mahmūd Begdā (A.H. 663/A.H. 911 – A.D. 1458/1511) was brought up after the death of his father, Sultan Muhammad Shāh II (A.H. 845/A.H. 854 – A.D. 1442-1451) in the house of the great saint, Shāh-i-Ālam who also imparted him knowledge and education and saved him so many times from the tyranny of his brother, Sultan Quṭb-ud-Dīn.

Sultan Mahmūd Begda was successful in getting the throne of Gujarat by the blessings of the same saint. Bahadur Shah A.H. 930/A.H. 941 – A.D. 1525-1536) became the Sultan on account of the blessings of Shaikh Jīv Sayyad Jalāl, son of Mahmūd, son of Quṭb-i-Ālam.

Sultān Mahmūdshāh III (A.H. 941/A.H. 960 – A.D. 1536/A.D. 1554) was very fond of the company of saints and Fakirs. He built monasteries for them and was very careful about looking to their comforts.1

Thus Gujarat became the hospitable home for saints of sundry religious orders that have developed in the world of Islam. Some of them had considerable influence on the Muslim populace and they settled permanently in places like Ahmadabad, Anhilwad Patan, Cambay, Broach and Navsari. Those who had flourished and lie buried in Ahmadabad and Anhilwad Patan were either Chishtiya or Suhrawardiya or Shattariya or Maghribiya or Mahdaviya or Imamshahiya. Their biographies constitute the subject of the thesis.