Chapter-III

SPREAD OF ISLAM IN INDIA

The Muslims are about 12% of India’s population. But their influence on the Indian society was much stronger. The main reason was that there were many Muslims rulers in different parts of India. Most of the Muslim rulers of India were invaders from the west.

Islam was established in Saudi Arabia. But most of Islam’s spreaders in India arrived from non-Arab countries (It must be noted that Arab traders and travellers had arrived into India even before Islam was established in Arabia. These Arabs probably had their own places of worship, later on transformed into mosques). The first spreaders of Islam in India were individuals who saw in spreading Islam a holy precept. They began coming to India from the 11th century. They arrived in India from Bukhara, Turkey, Iran, Yemen and Afghanistan. The most famous preacher of Islam in India was Khwaja Chishti, who arrived from Iran.

The process of converting Indians to Islam began in the 8th century, when the Arabs began invading north India and present day Pakistan. After the Arabs other Muslims invaded India. These invasions by Muslims in India were not continuous and not all Muslim invaders were Islamic fanatics. One of the Moghul emperors, Akbar, was very liberal and he even established a new religion, Din E Elahi, which included in it, beliefs from different religions. In some of the monuments built by Akbar symbols of different religions are visible. In
contrast with Akbar his great grand son, Aurangazeb, was a fanatic Muslim and during his term the non-Muslims suffered a lot. Many worshipping sites of different religions were destroyed and transformed into mosques.

Most of the Indian Muslims converted to Islam belonged to the lower classes of the Indian society. Besides these Muslims there are also Muslims who belonged to the ruling families of the different Indian kingdoms. Some of these rulers were Hindus who actually belonged to the warrior castes of the Hindu society and adopted Islam. Others are descendants of Muslim rulers who invaded India. The different Muslim rulers of India also brought to their kingdoms Muslim mercenaries, businessmen and slaves from different parts of the world like Russia; Afghanistan; Turkey; Arab countries and Africa. These people remained in India, married local Indians and converted them to Islam. Because of the different origins as stated and because of other reasons the Muslims of India refer to themselves not only as Muslims but also with other titles.

In general, the Muslims of India like the Muslim world is divided into two main sects, Sunni and Shia. And just like in the whole Muslim world there is tension between these two sects. Each sect has many different schools. There are also Muslims who claim to be the descendants from the daughter of Prophet Muhammad and the men in this community add the title Syed before their names. Other claim to be the descendants from the first Muslims and add the title Sheik.
Along with these Muslim world divisions, the Indian Muslims also have other divisions.

Different communities who adopted Islam in different ways have different community names. In west India the Bohra and Khoja are Muslim communities who adopted Islam influenced by different Muslim preachers. The Khojas also split into different communities. The leader of the Khoja (Nizari) community is Aga Khan. The Nawait are descendants of Arab and Persian immigrants. In south India in the state of Kerala, the Mophilla community is descendants from Arab merchants. A well known Indian Muslim community is Pathan. The Pathan are Muslims who arrived from Afghanistan. They normally have their surname as Khan. The Pathan have an image of being brave, honest and righteous. Many Indians who adopted Islam adopted the surname Khan and they claim that they are Pathans, which is not always true. The original Pathans claim that they originate from the Tribes of Israel.

Contrary to popular belief, Islam came to South Asia prior to Muslim invasions of India. Islamic influence first came to be felt in the early 7th century with the advent of Arab traders. Trade relations between Arabia and the subcontinent are very ancient. Arab traders used to visit the Malabar region, which was a link between them and ports of South East Asia, to trade even before Islam had been established in Arabia. According to Historians Elliot and Dowson in their book The History of India as told by its own Historians, the first ship bearing Muslim travelers was seen on the Indian coast as early
as 630 AD. H.G. Rawlinson, in his book: Ancient and Medieval History of India claims the first Arab Muslims settled on the Indian coast in the last part of the 7th century AD. Shaykh Zainuddin Makhdum's “Tuhfat al-Mujahidin” also is a reliable work. This fact is corroborated, by J. Sturrock in his South Kanara and Madras Districts Manuals, and also by Haridas Bhattacharya in Cultural Heritage of India Vol. IV. It was with the advent of Islam that the Arabs became a prominent cultural force in the world. The Arab merchants and traders became the carriers of the new religion and they propagated it wherever they went.

Muslim neighborhood in Delhi circa 1852.

In Malabar, the Mappilas may have been the first community to convert to Islam because they were more closely connected with the Arabs than others. Intensive missionary activities were carried out along the coast and a number of natives also embraced Islam. These new converts were now added to the Mappila community. Thus, among the Mapilas, we find, both the descendants of the Arabs through local women and the converts from among the local people.

In the 8th century, the province of Sindh (Pakistan) was conquered by an Arab army led by Muhammad bin Qasim. Sindh became the easternmost province of the Umayyad Caliphate.

In the first half of the 10th century, Mahmud of Ghazni added the Punjab to the Ghaznavid Empire and conducted several raids deeper into modern day India. A more successful invasion came at the
end of the 12th century by Muhammad of Ghor. This eventually led to
the formation of the Delhi Sultanate.

In the beginning of the 20th century, some reformist Muslims
organizations evolved in India who wanted to adjust Islamic
Philosophy to the modern world. These organizations are also called
as Jam-atien in Urdu.

**Spread of Islam in India**

The teaching of Islam was spread during the age of Prophet
Mohammed (S.A.S.) himself. Not only in Arab, but also in other
countries of the world. Many were impressed by the major qualities of
Islam like, Humanity, Equality, Simplicity and Fraternity and converts
their religion.

After the death of Prophet Mohammed (S.A.S) 634 A.D., Islam
occupied the place in the heart of the people of the world in very short
period. And the Dawah (Invitation) of Islam was crossed the
boundaries of the different countries of the world. As far as, India is
concerned, Prophet Mohammed (S.A.S) himself was very much
interested to spreading of Islam and also devinely inspired by the
Sahaba-e-Karam (means the companion of Prophet (S.A.S.) himself) to
convey the Dawah (Invitation) of Islam in India.

**Sahaba-E-Karam**

No doubt, after the Nabikareem (is also called Prophet
Mohammed (S.A.S.) left the world, the preaching of Islam in India
continued through Sahaba-e-Karam from 15th Hijari onwards.¹
Mahammed (S.A.S) advised to Hazarat Ali (Fourth Khalifa) to spread Islam in India along with the Jamat (Group) of the volunteers in 30th Hijari.²

Hazarat Umar Bin Abdul Aziz was a Khalifa of a Muslim in 99 Hijari. He wrote the letters to the Indian kings and mentioned the importance and qualities of Islam, after reading those letters, many people converts their religion and become Muslims, impressed with the great qualities and Nature of Islam.

Umar bin Muslim Bahali, Governor of Sindh appointed by Hazarat Umar bin Abdul Aziz, and wrote a letter and matter of those letters were as (follows) mentioned.

You must accept Islam, if you are accepting Islam than only you will remain as the ruler of your province. You would be forgiven of your mistakes and would treated in the same manner as we treat other Muslim rulers. We will consider you as our brother.

When these letters reached to Indian kings at first Ibne-Dahir (the son of the Dahir) convert his religion as Muslim. After that other kings those who were related to Ibne-Dhir accepted the Islam and changed their name as Islamic names.³

**Sufis and Awaliyas**

Sufi means saint or sect of Pantheistic Mohammedan devotees. And Awaliya means the holy men or friend of God. In general Sufis and Awaliys mean the groups of Muslim those who took more interest in spreading and conveying the messages of Islam.
The Jamat (Group) of Sufia-E-Karam and the Awaliya Allahs took keen interest to preach the teachings of Islam. We cannot forget the duties and the services of these groups in India (Present India, Pakistan and Bangladesh). They were very much responsible to strengthen the root of Islam in India with the love, affection, peace, simplicity, equality and above all the Humanity.

The Sufi saint of India contributed much more towards the National integration. History itself witnessed that the Sufi saint made an active role through the different ages to develop the different qualities of Mankind like, the feeling of oneness, unity, national integration, love and affection, religious tolerance, peace and equality.

The Sufi Saints believed in love in place of enemity, constructive in place of destructive, peace in place of Terror.

They were positively impressed to the culture and civilization, society and language, Art and Poetry of India. They understood the feelings of poor. They supported the victims and helpless people, supplying funds for hunger, education for all the people without any discrimination, between the black and white, rich and poor, racial superiority, particular community or tribe, all the other religions like Hindu, Sikh, Christians, seeing all the above mentioned qualities many people changed their religion to Islam and became Muslim.

Today also many people of other cast bestood their heads in the Shrines or Daragah Sharifs we can give this as the best example of religious tolerance and national integration.4
The greatest preacher in India was Hazrat Khawaja Mainuddin Ajmeri (R.A) due to his devotion to Islam was spread in Rajputana.

The work of spread and preaching of Islam in different areas of the India was alone by the different followers Mureeds (disciples) of Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti (R.A).

The first and the foremost we took the name of Khawaja Bhaktiyar Kaki (R.A) in spreading Islam to surrounding areas of Delhi, Hazarat Nizammuddin Maheboob Ilahi (R.A) in Delhi. In Punjab Sayed Hazrat Ismail Bukhari (R.A) and in West Punjab Bahauddin Zikriya Multani (R.A). In the Maqadom Jahaniya (R.A) in the tribes of Punjab are very much responsible for spreading Islam. Likewise, in Sindh region Sayyed Yusufuddin (R.A), in Gujarat Hazarat Imamuddin Peeranavi (R.A) and Malik Abdul Lateef. In Bengal Shaikh Jalauddin Tabrezi (R.A). In Assam Jalaluddin Farsi (R.A). In Kashmir Bulbul Shah (R.A) was the first of all the Sayyed Ali Hamdani (R.A) with the 700 Sayyed and spread all over the Kashmir region.

"In Deccan, the preaching of Islam, was started by Peer Mahabeer Khamdayat (R.A) who came to Bijapur 700 years ago.

Shaik Hashim Gujarati (R.A) was much responsible for the spreading of Islam in Dharwad, who lived in the period of Ibrahim Adil Shah."

In Belgaum, the work of spreading Islam was basically done by the Muslim Traders, Sufis, Awaliyas and the Muslim soldiers. (Who were made their position by their characters and religion in the reign of different Hindu kings).
With the victories of Allauddin Khilji and latterly Mubarak Khilji many Muslim population settled in Belgaum. In the reign of Mohammed Bin Tugluq, a number of Muslim families were settled in Belgaum. The arrival of Irani and Arab Traders from west coast of India is also responsible. Bahamani’s Adilshahis and Mughals, occupied Belgaum at different ages, with this the Muslim community settled not only in Belgaum but also in surrounding areas like Raibagh, Hukkeri, etc., and spread the Islam religion. 

Sayyed Umar Bashiban (R.A) and Hazarat Yusuf Qattal (R.A) were also responsible for spreading Islam.

Dada Hayat Mir Qalandar (R.A) was very much responsible for spreading Islam in Chikkamagalore.

Hazarat Bandanawaz Gaisudaraz and many other saints were very much responsible for spreading Islam at Gulbarga and surrounding areas. 

When we talk about the preaching of Islam in India, we cannot forget the name of Mohammed Bin Qasim. Sri Lanka was the main centre of trade for Arabs and much populated with the Muslims at the time of attacks of Mohammad Bin Qasim by the order of Hajjaj. He was attacked on the region of Sindh and Dahir was the king of Sindh present Hyderabad in 712 Hijari. At that time, Mohammad Bin Qasim was only 17 years old, but he was very intelligent and wise. Once, when he was returning from Sindh, he was repairing his military weapon and there was a time for prayer (Namaz), he gathered all his soldiers and performed the “Namaz”, he was the Imam. Here there was no
discrimination between the status of a man. All this character was watched by a person who belonged to Chana Community. He told the story to all the men of his community. The community of Chana was so impressed that the community or converted to the religion of Islam in 25 Hijari.9

This Chana community was treated as low cast, there was no equality between this cast and Brahmans or highly cast of society. The community was discriminated in all. So with impression of the great law of Islam i.e., Equality, all the community was changed his religion as Islam.”10,11

“Mohammed Bin Qasim was very much interested in preaching and spreading of Islam along with consolidation of his rule. He made Islamic Training Centres, Mosques and Madrasa.

There was a colony of 4,000 Mulsims at Deobal in 53 Hijari and made a Mosque. All the four thousand Muslims were also the Muballigue (mean one who preached and spreading of Islam willingly).

“The impression of Mohammad Bin Qasim on the regional people was so good that the people of other religion like Hindus and Buddhist, made the statute of Mohammad Bin Qasim” and started the worship of Mohammad Bin Qasim’s statute.

“Hajja wrote a letter to Mohammad bin Qasim and advised to invite the people of India from other religion to Islam and those who were converted for them you should provide all the necessary trainings of Islam.”12
Malabar

Islam spread in India before the rule of Muslim Emperors, when Muslim soldiers were busy in military campaigns. The work of spreading Islam was done by many Ulema.

"In Malabar Islam was popular after the converting of Islam by the King Zamaron, who was also called as Chairman Perumal. He was so impressed with the teaching of Islam and the messenger of Islam (Mohammed (S.A.S).

According to the “Tahafatul Mujahedeen" this book, also speaks about the king Zamaron and the converting of his religion to Islam. 12

After converting to Islam, he made path to the spreading of Islam for Arab Traders. And Muslims constructed many Mosques in different places of South India like, Kollam, Girangaonoor, Mangalore, Kollam, Girangaonoor, Mangalore, Kollicut, Kalinjar, etc.

A group of people who lived in Madras and Malabar and surrounding areas of these two region were not the followers of vedic religion or Bahamanism. They took shelter in these areas with the force of aryans. The old community which settled in Malabar and the surrounding areas were called as ‘Nair’. This community was discriminated by the followers of vedic religion. The community considered as low caste of society. They felt the respect of self-respect in Islam and gradually converted to Islam.

In the earlier of 15th Century, the population of Muslim roze to 1/5th of total population of Malabar.14
Deccan

"Arab traders, soldiers, and the preachers are very much responsible in spreading of Islam in Deccan during the reigns of Bahamanis of Gulbarga and Adil Shahi’s of Bijapur. Many people converted their religion to Islam after the invitation or preaching and were very impressed with the behaviours of those preachers and above mentioned people."\textsuperscript{15}

The caste system was very crucial and rigid in the Western districts of Deccan. The conditions of caste system was very much worst and it was made compulsory for low caste people that they should be 74 steps away from Brahmans. They should make some noise while walking on the roads, so that the Brahmans should changed their roads. After seeing all the disrespect from above caste or highly caste, the people of low caste changed their religion as Islam and became the Muslims.

The Shunar community of Manavali (Tinavali, in some books called) were also considered as low caste of Hindu Society at that time, inspite of their richness and education. Some Shunar people went for performing Pooja at Mandir, but were shown disrespect and beaten up by the Hindus. After this incident, the people of this group converted their religion to Islam.

Islam with its great quality i.e., Equality impressed to the people of South India. Many people converted their religion as Muslim only because of the great quality or law of equality. We can give the example of another community by the name ‘Dodkala’. They were the
Cotton Cleaners and Weavers by profession. This community converted their religion Islam due to the preaching of Baba Faqaruddin (R.A).\textsuperscript{16}

Islam was preached and spread by Mohmmed (S.A.S.) himself and the companions of Prophet during his life time in Arabs and some other surrounding areas. But gradually it spread by Tabaeens and the Tabe Tabaeen and latter Islam was spread by Awaliyas started from Sayed Hazarath Ali,\textsuperscript{17} and from the generation of Imam Jaffar Sidique, so many Awaliyas spread all over the world or different parts of the world and started "Preaching of Islam not by sword but with their behaviour, characters, love and affection and the qualities of Islam like, Equality, etc., impressed many people and converted their religion.\textsuperscript{18}

In 12\textsuperscript{th} Century A.D. and later, the progress of preaching and spreading of Islam in India was carried by Sufiyas. They were very much responsible.

Apart from this, we can give the example of many Muslim dynasties, who ruled in India. And also we can give the very peculiar example of the spreading of Islam by Hindu Traders.

Tabaeen and Tabe tabaeen mean the next generation of the companions of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.S).

Now-a-days, we can give the best examples of many Jamatien (Organizations and also some of independent efforts) for the spreading of Islam.
Islam was spread by many Awaliyas and Sufias, in the different parts of the North India as well as South India.

Now I want to give some examples of spreading Islam by Muslim rulers. Hindu Traders, Independent efforts, etc.

**Hindu Traders**

We can give the example of the few Hindu Traders, who were not only responsible in spreading of Islam, but also converted themselves as Muslims after being impressed with the code of conduct of Islam.

In ancient period, many Hindu Traders had the trade links in the markets of Bahrain (Arab). Muslims were occupied the Bahrain (Arab) at the time of Prophet Mohammed (S.A.S). The traders were exporters of the precious pearls in the market of Bahrain. The traders not only converted themselves as Muslim but also they invited to the countrymen for the converting their religion as Muslim.

**Independent Efforts**

"Some people who took self interest for preaching of Islam, like "the Moulvi Buqa Husain Khan. He was spreading Islam at Ajmer, Kanpur, Bombay and also the other places of India. Moulvi Hasan Ali Khan converted 25 peoples as Muslims, among them 12 were of Poona itself, another 13 were of Hyderabad and other cities of India. Shaikh Abeedullah who was nava Muslim (newly converted Muslim) converted himself after the deep studying and researches of Islam.

"He spent a valuable time of 46 years in preaching and spreading of Islam and converted 375 families as Muslims".
Muslim Rulers

After the invasion of Mohammed Bin Qasim, Mahammed Gazanavi and Mohammed Gouri invaded India. The aim of invading India by these rulers was not basically for spreading their religion.

The first Muslim Dynasty was founded in India by Qutumbuddin Aibak. Many Muslim dynasties ruled over India like Khilji, Tuguluque, Lodhi, Moghals and In South India we can give the examples of Adil Shahis, Bahamanis, Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan.

Here, I want to clarify that, the Islam religion was not fully encouraged by any ruling dynasty nor the Muslim rulers showed any such personal interest for spreading of Islam. They do not organized any such organizations or some type of Institutions, through which the progress of preaching and spreading of Islam can be easily done.20

The Rulers of India did not give more attentions towards the spreading of Islam. They wanted to preach and spread Islam, here they were also busy in civil wars or the work of consolidation.

The rulers of India, who were belongings to Mughal's family or Tatari's, don't have the right concept of spreading of the religion, and also they lacked the excitement of spreading of Islam unlike the Arab traders. We can give the examples of such rulers who took interest in spreading of Islam along with the rule.

Here, we can give the examples of Feroz Shah Tugluque (1351-1388), he wrote in his autobiography Tarique-Firozeshahi and preached the teaching of Islam and encouraged the Non-Muslims who lived his my dynasty and also announced that who got converted to
the religion. They were free from the Jaziya (Tax). After the announcement many people converted to Islam."\(^{21}\)

Aurangzeb the Mughal Emperor wanted to spread Islam, but unfortunately he had no systematic plan for spreading of the religious – Islam, for he was too generous with the converted Muslims.\(^{22}\)

The progress of spreading Islam after the Revolt of 1857:

During the revolt of 1857 Indian Muslims suffered a lot by the religious inspiration. The work of spreading Islam increased very much for forty years. But slowly the inspiration of Muslims towards spreading of Islam decreased.

At the time of later half of the 19\(^{th}\) Century, there was no such religious organization or institutions in a systematic manner for spreading of Islam. Inspite of that, the ratio itself showed that the number of converting Muslims increases ten thousand to six lakhs per year join.

At that time the Jamat of Ulema (learned people) and many other independent volunteers of Islam spent their lives for spreading of Islam and visited many different places personally for this purpose and converted many people.

Inspite of the Ulema’s and other independent volunteers of Islam, a common businessmens, servicemens and even, the common shopkeepers, were personally interested for spreading of Islam.\(^{23}\)

Now-a-days the work of spreading Islam was mainly carried by some Jamatien and few independent efforts. We can give the example of Tabligh Jamaat for converting the Meo community of Gujarat.
Ulemas and others anybody can see the slow speed of spreading of Islam in this age. The spreading of Islam in India was mainly done by Awaliya-E-Karam specially in North Karnataka and the Arab traders were very much responsible along with the Awaliyas in South. Here, we Indians cannot forget the responsibilities of Sufiyas towards the spreading of Islam. Now, we can say the preaching and spreading of Islam was headed or carried by different groups time by time period by period. Like we can give the name of the Jamat (Group) of Sahaba-E-Karam (The companions of Prophet Mohammed (S.A.S.) and Arab Traders. Secondly Tabeen (Childrens of the companion of Prophet (S.A.S). Tabe Tabaeeen (The Generation of Hasan and Husain, Grand sons of Prophet (Mohammed (S.A.S). and also Muslim invaders, fourthly Sufiyas (Sufe Saints), Fifthly Independent efforts, Jamatien (Organizations) were very much responsible for spreading of Islam in great respect and great sprit.

"Sufi" is Persian word with two meanings:
1) Those who wear long woolen garment, who were mostly wandering Muslim Saints.
2) Those who were pure in their conduct.

Sufis stand for Muslim devotional movements, comparable to the Hindu Bhakti Movement, Sufis were Muslims, Mystics.

Sufism also played an important role. Its tradition took birth in Arabia and later on spread to India. The places occupied by Bhakti
cult in Hinduism, the same place was occupied by Sufi cult in Islam. There is no difference in their aims. There is difference between them in their preaching. The important among the Sufi Saints in India were Shaikh Ismail and Dataganj Bhaksh. They advocated that God is the embodiment of all virtues. He is radiant, omnipotent and unequal. We should love him wholeheartedly and march towards Him, intoxicated with joy and beauty. The true Sufi must be entirely devoted to God. He must curb down his greed. One should have the inner purification through constant prayers. They preached in Hindi and Urdu. Sufism gave emphasis to spiritual experience.

“There were many sects among the Sufi Saints. For example: Chishti Khadari, Suhrwardi, Naqshabandis, Khalandaris, Yazdani, etc.25

**Impact of Islam**

The doctrines of Islam viz., Universal Brotherhood, Equality, Unity of God and Non-ritualistic matters promoted the leading exponent and saintly reforms to interpret Hinduism in terms of their new ideas. Through sincere prayers and devotion to God with a pure mind alone, one can attain the Moksha. This is an easy path to understood by all.

**Expansion of trade**

Islam’s impact was the most notable in the expansion of trade. The first contact of Muslims with India, was the Arab attack on a nest of pirates near modern-day Bombay, to safeguard their trade in the Arabian Sea. Around the same time, many Arabs settled at Indian
ports, giving rise to small Muslim communities, the growth of these communities was not only due to conversion, but also the fact that many Hindu kings of south India (such as those from Cholas) hired Muslims as mercenaries.

A significant aspect of the Muslim period in world history was, the emergence of Islamic Sharia courts capable of imposing a common commercial and legal system that extended from Morocco in the West to Mongolia in the North East and Indonesia in the South East. While southern India was already in trade with Arabs/Muslims, northern India found new opportunities. As the Hindu and Buddhist kingdoms of Asia were subjugated by Islam, and as Islam spread through Africa - it became a highly centralizing force that facilitated in the creation of a common legal system that allowed letters of credit issued in Egypt or Tunisia to be honoured in India or Indonesia (The Sharia has laws on the transaction of Business with both Muslims and Non-Muslims). In order to cement their rule, Muslim rulers initially promoted a system in which there was a revolving door between the clergy, the administrative nobility and the mercantile classes. The travels of explorer Muhammad Ibn-Abdullah Ibn-Batuta were eased because of this system. He served as an Imam in Delhi, as a judicial official in the Maldives, and as an envoy and trader in the Malabar. There was never a contradiction in any of his positions because each of these roles complemented the other. Islam created a compact under which political power, law and religion became fused in a manner so as to safeguard the interests of the mercantile class. This led world trade to
expand to the maximum extent possible in the medieval world. Sher Shah Suri took initiatives in improvement of trade by abolishing all taxes which hindered progress of free trade. He built large networks of roads and constructed Grand Trunk Road (1540-1544), which connected Calcutta to Kabul, of which parts of it are still in use today.

**Spread of technology**

With the growth of international trade also came the spread of manufacturing technology and an urban culture. Local inventions and regional technologies became easily globalized. This was of profound importance to those parts of the world that had lagged in terms of technological development. On the other hand, for a nation like India which had had a rich intellectual tradition of its own, and was already a relatively advanced civilization, this may have been of lesser import. Although there is considerable debate amongst historians as to how much technology was actually brought into India by Muslims, there is one (albeit controversial) school of thought that argues that inventions like the water-wheel for irrigation were imported during the Muslim period. In some other cases, the evidence is much clearer. The use of ceramic tiles in construction was inspired by architectural traditions prevalent in Iraq, Iran, and in Central Asia. Rajasthan’s blue pottery was an adaptation of Chinese pottery which was imported in large quantities by the Mughal rulers. There is also the example of Sultan Abidin (1420-70) sending Kashmiri artisans to Samarqand to learn book-binding and paper making.
Cultural Influence

The divide and rule policies, two-nation theory, and subsequent partition of India in the wake of Independence from the British Empire has polarized the sub-continental psyche, making objective assessment hard in comparison to the other settled agricultural societies of India from the North West. Muslim rule differed from these others in the level of assimilation and syncretism that occurred. They retained their identity and introduced legal and administrative systems that superseded existing systems of social conduct and ethics. While this was a source of friction it resulted in a unique experience the legacy of which is a Muslim community strongly Islamic in character while at the same time distinctive and unique among its peers.

The impact of Islam on Indian culture has been inestimable. It permanently influenced the development of all areas of human endeavour - language, dress, cuisine, all the art forms, architecture and urban design, and social customs and values. Conversely, the languages of the Muslim invaders were modified by contact with local languages, to Urdu, which uses the Arabic script. This language was also known as Hindustani, an umbrella term used for the vernacular terminology of Urdu as well as Hindi, both major languages in the Indian subcontinent today.

Muslim rule saw a greater urbanization of India and the rise of many cities and their urban cultures. The biggest impact was upon trade resulting from a common commercial and legal system
extending from Morocco to Indonesia. This change of emphasis on mercantilism and trade from the more strongly centralized governance systems further clashed with the agricultural based traditional economy and also provided fuel for social and political tensions.

A related development to the shifting economic conditions was the establishment of Karkhanas, or small factories and the import and dissemination of technology through India and the rest of the world. Khurja and Siwan became renowned for pottery, Moradabad for brass ware, Mirzapur for carpets, Firozabad for glass wares, Farrukhabad for printing, Saharanpur and Nagina for wood-carving, Bidar and Lucknow for bidriware, Srinagar for papier-mache, Benaras for jewelry and textiles, and so on. On the flip-side encouraging such growth also resulted in higher taxes on the peasantry.

Numerous Indian scientific and mathematical advances and the Hindu numerals were spread to the rest of the world and much of the scholarly work and advances in the sciences of the age under Muslim nations across the globe were imported by the liberal patronage of Arts and Sciences by the rulers. The languages brought by Islam were modified by contact with local languages leading to the creation of several new languages, such as Urdu, which uses the modified Arabic script, but with more Persian words. The influences of these languages exist in several dialects in India today.

Islamic and Mughal architecture and art is widely noticeable in India, examples being the Taj Mahal and Jama Masjid.
The cultural practices of jauhar and sati, practiced by some Hindu communities, arose in response to periods of threat during the Muslim conquest to prevent kidnapping or capturing of Hindu women to be married to Muslim rulers, nobles or high officials, which was then considered a holy act of jihad and occurred in significant numbers.

**Administration**

India was ruled by the Muslim rulers for many years. With the exception of Ala-ud-din, Shersha and Akbar many of the Muslim rulers were only good conquerors rather than good administrators. They found it impossible to wipe out the existing system of administration. A few changes were introduced here and there, but they could not bring about new changes altogether. The Doab region was ruled by the Muslims for 700 years, but still they continued to have their local government. The new methods introduced by Ala-ud-din Khilji are noteworthy. They bear a close resemblance to modern marketing methods. The political powers of the Hindus were taken up by the Muslim kings. The Hindus merely carried out their orders. The higher positions exclusively became the monopoly of the Muslims. They enjoyed all the royal privileges. The Hindus were forced to pay the Jaziya tax. The only worthy service that they rendered to India was to put an end to the Mongol invasions effectively. Otherwise the Mongols would have become the masters of India.
Society

Both the Hindu religion and society did not remain uninfluenced by the Muslims. Its influence brought about unexpected changes in the society. The birth of a daughter came to be considered as inauspicious. It is partly due to the Turkish Sultans urged the Hindu leaders to give their daughters in marriage to them or to their followers. The Turks and the Afghans who invaded India had brought with them soldiers and not their families. Intoxicated with success in the battles, they often went after women. The Sultans came almost bare handed. They needed money to maintain soldiers. They did not want to bring money from Arabia. Naturally, they plundered the property of the citizens. They forcibly extorted money from them.

The practice of early marriage in Hindu society was mainly to avoid the Hindu girls being kidnapped by the Muslims. In course of time, the early marriage became more strict among the Hindus. It is true this rigidity and stiffness prevented the creative activity of Hindu culture, but it served as a strong fence which protected the Hindus from being submerged entirely the new Islamic culture. Therefore, the social gulf between the Hindus and Muslims was never bridged.

The position of Hindu woman began to deteriorate. The presence of Muslims and their activities made the Hindu women dependent in one way or the other on their husbands or other male relatives. Though they had equal rights in society they could not enjoy them. This dependence later led to the practice of sati. It was due partly to maintain their chastity and partly to the demise of their partners on
whom they depended and without whom they would be utterly helpless. But according to Ibn Batuta, some sort of a permit had to be obtained from the Sultan of Delhi before launching the sati or from burning of a wife on the funeral pyre of her husband. The development of slavery of both female and male is said to have resulted from the Muslims, for whom it was a pastime. As K.M. Pannikkar points out "The said result of the introduction to Islam and Muslim race in India was the division of society on a pyramidal basis. Before the thirteenth century Hindu society was divided horizontally. Neither Buddhism nor Jainism could affect this division but both were easily assimilated. On the contrary Islam split Indian society into two distinct divisions from top to bottom - Hindus and Muslims. It looks as though the seeds of the two nation theory Bhaarat. Pakistan was sown as early as the medieval period.

Slavery was a common feature in the Muslim society. The Sultan's considered it a pastime to own slaves. It is also believed owning slaves was a symbol of their status. For example Ala-ud-din had 84,000 slaves while Feroz Shah had 1,80,000. Some of them happened to be Indian men and women. Later the Hindu leaders and Sirdars also introduced slavery and consequently the problem of untouchability became acute. The slaves took to tumbling. They were addicted to liquor. The Hindus also took to these vices and imitated the manners and life of the Delhi Sultanate.
The Impact of Islam on Hindu Religion

In the field of religion also the Hindus could not remain unaffected by Islam. At its very advent, they were shocked and they struggled hard to withstand against the onslaught of Islam. Islam with its simple creed gave rude shock to Hinduism and shattered the supremacy of Brahmanas. With the establishment of Muslim kingdoms, Hinduism lost its royal patronage and had a precarious existence. Hindu temples and monuments were destroyed and in those places Muslims mosques and tombs appeared.

The great contribution of Muslim rulers of India was the introduction and propagation of Islam in India. This missionary zeal of Islam produced two types of effects on Hindu society: (1) It strengthened the conservation of the orthodox Hindus. They increased the rigidity of the caste system and elaborated the rituals, ceremonies and regulations as a defence against easy conversion. (2) The attractive Islamic principles of equality, monotheism and many ultra democratic social ideas and un-orthodoxical belief posed a great challenge to the leading Hindu intellectuals. It was at this juncture the Bhakti movement emerged as a saviour of Hindustan. (3) Another important result of the contact was the evolution of Urdu language. It was the outcome of the contact of the frequent Hindi speaking peoples of North India and Muslims who spoke Turks or Persian²⁶

Impact of Hinduism on Islam

If the Hindus were influenced by their contact with the Muslims, the latter were also influenced by the Hindus. When the
converted to Islam, they took along with them some of their customs and traditions and those became a part of them. Certain social customs of the Hindus also had their influence on the Muslims. The view of Havell is that “the traditional devotion and the tenderness of Indian motherhood helped greatly to soften ferocity of the Turki and Mughal nomad.”

Muslim morality was also influenced by Hindu thought and customs. Before coming to India, the Muslims believed in polygamy and could have at least four wives at a time if they so desired. As a result of Muslim conquest of India, most of the Muslims began to keep one wife and became monogamous.

The Muslim festivals began to be celebrated in India with the pomp and display with which the Hindus celebrated their festivals! The festival of Shab-i-Barat was celebrated like the Hindu festival of Shivaratri with night-long vigil and noise. The ceremonies of Aqiqa and Bismillah were observed by the Muslims in the same way as the Hindu ceremonies of Mundan and Vidyarambh. Some of the Hindu ceremonies followed at the time of marriage also influenced the ceremonies of the Muslim marriages, particularly the decoration of the bride. The Haft-O-Nuh is another name of Solah Shringar of the Hindu bride. The Hindu superstition of the evil eye (Nazar), the Utara and the ceremony of Arti took deep root in Muslim society. The ceremony of Nisar was performed by the Muslims by taking platefuls of gold and silver coins or precious jewels and passing them
repeatedly over the head of the sovereign and then they were scattered or distributed among the poor persons, beggars or servants.

Originally, the Muslims believed in the brotherhood of Islam but as a result of Hindu influence, there appeared a large number of classes among the Muslims. They came to be divided into various classes such as Shaikhs and Sayyids. Most of the Muslims began to marry within their own classes. Mutual contact developed new castes and new sub-castes among the Muslims. Various classes of the Muslims began to reside separately in different localities even in the same town. During the Sultanate period, a Turk, a Pathan, a Sayyid or even a Shaikh could not think of matrimonial relations with a person of a lower rank which means one outside the four Dhats or Qaums or even outside his own particular denomination.

The lower functional groups among the Muslims were organised on the model of the Hindu caste system with their Panchayats or caste councils and officers to enforce the observance of caste rules by the sanction of boycotting. Mutual jealousies among the foreign and Indian Muslim nobles and Amirs of the Sultan developed caste-like groups in the higher and aristocratic Muslim society.

The practice of untouchability also appeared among the Muslims. That was the effect of the caste system of the Hindus on the Muslims. Most of the Hindus converted to Islam were men of very small means. They were not accepted as equals by the other Muslims. They were treated like untouchables. They were given neither any snare in administration nor any place in Muslim aristocracy. They
could not enjoy power with Muslims of high castes. These newly converted Muslims were not admitted into the aristocracy of the Turks and Afghans. They were not given a share in their social and economic privileges. They constituted a separate and distinct class in the population of the Muslims. Many of them followed handicrafts and were employed as artisans by the conquerors. Many of them were weavers, washermen, barbers, carpenters, blacksmiths, tailors, woodcutters, water-carriers, etc. In course of time, they developed their own class distinctions like those among the Hindus. They retained their Hindu mode of life to a great extent and avoided the eating of beef and continued to express reverence to local gods in subdued tones.

The Muslims adopted some of the costly Indian articles of dress such as Pag (ornamental turban), Chira etc. The Sultans borrowed freely the Hindu Chhatra and other royal paraphernalia. In the matter of food, the Muslims were influenced by the Hindus. The chewing of the betel leaf became popular with the Muslims. Highly seasoned food with rich spices and chillies were adopted by all classes of Muslims. The use of ornaments such as rings, necklaces, earrings, etc. which were forbidden by Islam, began to be made by rich Muslims. “India was famous for its fine cotton and silk fabrics which now began to be widely used by the gentry among the Muslims who had been accustomed to much humbler and coarser stuffs in their original homelands.”

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Hindus had their hereditary Maths and their Gurus and Chelas. Muslims adopted these Hindu institutions for their saints and evolved the office of the Pir or Shaikh and his descendants.

Like the Hindus, the Muslims began to have faith in vows (Manatas or Minnats). They approached Hindu Yogis and Sadhus for the fulfillment of their cherished desires. Muslim rulers like Muhammad Tughlaq went with gifts to Hindu saints and sages to get their desires fulfilled. Offerings were made to some Pirs like Manik Pir, Ghora Pir, Kumbhira Pir and Madari Pir for the fulfillment of desires. Milk and fruits were offered to Manik Pir, Clay horses were offered to Ghora Pir so that the lame babies may be cured. Some eatables and meat were given to Kumbhira Pir.

Although the Muslims were opposed to idol worship, the Muslims in India began to worship the tombs of Pirs or saints. Worship of the Pir was taken from the Guru Puja of the Hindus. The Muslims performed rites at the tombs of the Pirs or saints. These were copied from the Hindus. Muslims paid visits to the tombs of the saints and tied strings or ribbons on their mausoleum for attaining their desires.

Many features in princely life and court ceremonies were borrowed by the Muslim rulers from the Hindus. The royal customs of Nyochha war (passing over of the gold and silver coins thrice over the head of the ruler and offering them to the menials and poor persons) was a Hindu court etiquette which was followed by the Muslims. The adoption of a new court etiquette led to the “growth of particular
seating arrangements in the court for different classes of orders. They were classified into Ahl-i-daulat, the ruling class proper, Ahl-i-Saadat, the intelligentsia and Ahl-i-Murad, the pleasure-seeking class. As wealth increased in the Muslim court and society, the hold of religion became weaker and superstitions and evil practices began to gain ground.

Muslim religious thought and practices were also influenced by Hinduism to some extent. Dr. Waheed Mirza writes, "The cumulative effect of the presence in large number of such saints and ascetics (as Qalandars and begging friars) was the transformation of Islam in India from a simple and puritanic religion, with emphasis on the performance of outward legal duties (Takalif-i-Shariya) to a complex devotional creed in which miracles and superstitions, combined, of course, with saint worship, played an important role. It became a common practice now to get oneself attached to a spiritual preceptor who alone according to the popular belief, could guarantee bliss and happiness in this life and the life hereafter".

In the field of administration, the Muslim rulers retained many Hindu institutions, particularly in the Departments of "revenue and finance. They followed the Hindu practice of using war elephants in the open battles.

Islamic architecture was influenced and modified by Hindu art traditions. The Muslims took to Hindu music and other fine arts. Although Persian remained the court language and the literary language, Urdu came to be used for ordinary purposes. Muslim
manners and customs were also influenced. Titus writes, "When all is said there seems to be little doubt that Hinduism has wrought a greater change in Islam than Islam has wrought in Hinduism which still continues to pursue the even tenor of its ways with a complacency and confidence that are amazing." (Indian Islam)
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8) Prof. Arnold Toyanbee in Preaching of Islam.


19) Tazkaraatul-Awaliya


21) Ibid., p. 20.

22) Ibid., p. 22.

23) Ibid., p. 22.


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