CHAPTER II

DEMOGRAPHIC AND EUGENIC ASPECT OF THE PROBLEM

Interaction was going on since the invasion of Arabs to Sindh in eighth century A.D. Muslim power took time to make real position in India, till then local usages and customs were used by Indian Muslims.¹ Among the Indian Muslims most of them were converts or descendents of converts. It is also notable that the Muhammadan’s effect regarding conversion was not seen more effective in the centre of Muhammadan power such as Delhi and Agra.²

According to the statistics available the process of increasing of Islam in India was very slow as compared to other countries of the world, but it continued throughout the Muslim regime. The conversion was enforced under Muslim rule by imposition of high taxation specially the Jazia or poll tax and pilgrim tax on non believers during the reign of Aurangzeb. Other

¹ S.M. Ikram, Muslim Civilization in India, p. 107.
causes of increase of Islam in India that their social
customs were more favourable to increase their population
by allowing four marriage of a man and easy customs
of marriage in their families like widow remarriage.

The Muslims of India according to the census
report of 1891 estimated that it was one fifth of the
total population of the Empire. There were most of
the Muslims who could be distinguished from heterogeneous
element of India. So in India there were two types
of Muslims. There was one group of foreigners who came
to India to spread their faith and the other group of
converted Muslims. They were converted by Muslim
rulers or due to various other reasons. As in the
Mughal period the Rajputs accepted matrimonial alliances
with Mughal emperors and they became Muslims. Some
foreigners settled in Sindh and the Punjab after
crossing North West Frontier. They were from foreign
races such as Shaikh, Beg, Khan and Sayyad. Some were
the descendents of upper class and armies and Muslims
of the court, who were found in upper India, but a few
reach to the deccan. Some foreigners came on the west
coast of India. They were from Arab descendents.¹

So it is estimated most of the foreign families settled in the Punjab and Sindh. This process was started from the conquest of India by Muslims, here they were strongest in population.² Arab started expedition in eighth century A.D. Some came to India only to plunder and returned after looting while others were founders of great empires and settled in India for ever.³

According to the Census Report of 1911 the Muslims numbered in India 66 millions or more than one fifth of the existing total population. In North west Frontier Province the majority of population was of Muslim. The proportion was about one in five in Bombay one in seven in United Provinces of Agra and Oudh and in Madras and Burma their number was considerably more. So the distribution of population was based on Muslim conquests in North west.⁴

1⁴. Census of India, 1891.
The population in Sindh was of orthodox Sunni Muslims, called Mamans. They were credulous, revered the living and dead saints and worshipped tree and river. 1

So was the case in the educated and uneducated Muslims of Jammu and Kashmir who occasionally visited living saints and dargahs of dead ones, as they believed that these living or dead pirs would fulfil their yearnings and relief from sufferings. Even the peasants of Karnal worshipped the village deities. 2

The Meos and Minas of Alwar and Bharatpur had Hindu names adding Khan and celebrated Hindu festivals (Diwali, Dashara, Janamashtami) worshipping Hanuman, Panch Pira (five saints), the Bhagya (platform for light) and the Chamunda (khera Deo). They did not marry in the same group (gotra) as Hindus do. 3

Muslim Rajputs of Rajasthan were well known as Adhwariyatho (half and half) and performed the marriage ceremony both according to Hindu and Muslim rites. 4 The Kolis, Bhils, Sindhis and Thakurdars of

the North of Ahmadabad near Palampur retained their tribal practices even after conversion to Islam.¹*
The Mamans of Cutch were Shiahs. They were Hindu in outlook and practices. They did not take meat, not practising circumcision, not having Ramzan fast and not even performing the daily namaz.²*

In Gujarat the first Muslims arrived were Arabs. The sailors and soldiers of Baghdad fleets plundered and conquered the Gujrat cost. First of all the Gujrat ports were friendly ports as Arabs started trade with India. But when it became a Muslim province, Islamic world started to migrate in this area. However the vast majority of the population in Gujrat was Hindu and has always remained the same.³*

Islam paved its way in West coast of India in eighth century A.D. They were from Mapplla race who were descendents from Iraq and came to India as refugees.⁴* Arab actually came to West Coast in the tenth century as business men and settled in large

numbers in the Konkan town. Here they inter married with the women of the country and adopted their own laws and religion.  

Muslim conquest began in South India from Alauddin Khilji in the beginning of the 14th century. But the rulers of Delhi could not control the South. Only the Mughal supremacy was established by Akbar and the process was continued under Shahjahan. Aurangzeb overthrew the local Muhammadan dynasties of South India by the annexation policy. So Arabs and Persians settled at the sea coast of India as they came as traders. 

In this way in South India converted Muslims were affected by missionary effort of traders.  

In North Bihar the Muslim population was more than South Bihar-Patna and Monghyr. H.H. Risely rightly said that mostly Muslims in Eastern Bengal were from the aborigines. Their manners and customs, physical appearance remained as original inhabitants.  

1*. Ibid, p. 221.  
3*. Sarkar Jagdish Narayan, Thoughts on Trends of Cultural Contacts in Medieval India, p. 41.  
Semi converted or neo-Muslim tribes of U.P. and Bihar of different sects believed in miracles and visited dead or alive saints. Even they performed a portion of marriage ceremony in the temple of Goddess Bhagwati.  

From the time of first invasion of Muslim, the work of conversion started in Bengal. Pathan Kings of Bengal popularised Islam in fourteenth century. In Bengal Muslim conquest was very slow. The first conversion was made in Bengal by only saints, Bengal was so peaceful that no Mughal Emperor had to advance personally into Bengal after 1576 for suppressing the rebellions. So Pathan Kings of Bengal and preachings of the Mulas who declared that all the men were equal in the eyes of God, made conversion possible in Eastern India. In Bengal the Muslims revered Pir, Faquir and Hindu Gods like Kali altogether.

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1*. Patna Gaz. 1911.
2*. Census of Bengal, 1901.
3*. Abdul Karim, Social History of the Muslim in Bengal, p. 17-18.
4*. Census Report of Bengal, 1901, 156 f
5*. Sarkar Narayan, Thoughts on Trends of Cultural Contacts in Medieval India. p.50.
There was slow progress of the Muslim religion in India. The largest proportion of Muslims was in the remote districts while the Muslim capital of Delhi and Agra was much low considerable.\textsuperscript{1*} Hindus were in great majority at the time of Akbar in India.\textsuperscript{2*} But soon Mughal power fell down and gave its way to rise the Maratha power in the eighteenth century. It is considerable point that Muslim Kingdoms of the South were outposts of the Faith among the majority Hindu population. As the Muslims were in minority in South they had to adopt as a rule, a policy of toleration and the rulers were considerable to their Hindu subjects.

From the end of the 13th century to the end of 17th century many Muslim soldiers, traders, refugees and slaves found happy hunting ground for them in India. They came by land, sea routes and absorbed into the general Muslim population.\textsuperscript{3*} The Muslims got full

\textsuperscript{1*} History of India-Elephinstone Mountstuart 1889 p.487.

\textsuperscript{2*} Moreland W.H, India at the Death of Akbar, 1920, p. 23.

\textsuperscript{3*} An Arabic History of Gujarat, Vol. II-XXXII. Ross Denison.
favourable circumstances in India to rearing their families even then. Now at present only eighth part of the population in India is of Muslims in which mostly are converts. The proportion is very small in accordance with other Muslim countries.¹*

Conversion could be possible in out cast group of Hindu popularly known as untouchables. Islam offered full facilities and even equal status after conversion. But the converts could not violate some rules of marriage or other festivities. Those persons who were deprived of the equal rights in the Hindu society, like smoking tobacco (Hukka) or drinking water with co-religionists had only choice to accept Islam and readily accepted it with some reservations in manners and customs.²*

So Muslims had to survive in India with some modification in their religion, as India was the country of Hindus who were in majority.

¹* History of India - Elphinstone Mounstuart, 1889, p. 488.
²* Census Report Bengal, 1901, 156 ff.