Chapter - VII

The Cultural and Social Transition during the Muslim Period
THE CULTURAL AND SOCIAL TRANSITION DURING MUSLIM PERIOD

In fact, the cultural and social transition during the Muslim period can be studied on the scientific theory as given by Newton that "Every action has equal and opposite reaction". For the same explanation Toynbee has propounded a theory that when two cultures meet, their reaction is of two kinds (i) Zealot and (ii) Herodian. Zealot means that the two civilization become stiff, rigid and orthodox and try to avoid all sort of influence of the other. Herodian means that the two civilizations become fluid, elastic and receptive. They try to meet each other and adopt their common points. It means when the Muslims came in India and had established their rule in different regions of greater India. They had settled their life and mixed up with the Indian people and its social activities. At the time of mixing up into social, political, economic and cultural fields, both the cultures were naturally influenced by each other.

But before coming to the discussion that how it become possible and what were the areas effected by these cultures. If we look into the early history of India, the Indians were ruled by the foreigners in the form of Greeks, Kushanas, Scythian, sakas and others. They came in India and settled their life as well as political missions. They had established very strong Political base and had started to interfere into the social affairs. The historians even said that they were so much involved into the society were mostly reckoned into the Kshatriya family because of his fighting spirits. They had left great impact over Indian social customs like dress, ornamentation, foods and architecture etc.
Likewise that when Muslims came in India and had established their rule started to evolve in the Indian social customs and traditions. Jawaharlal Nehru in ‘Discovery of India’ has quoted that Muslim invaders were observed in India, their royal dynasties were completely Indianized and they considered India as their motherland but on the other side Sir Jadunath Sarkar is not agree to accept the view of absorption. “Muslim always centered round the Mecca, own law code, own administrative system, own language, literatures, shrines and saints, their model was Arabia, Syria, Iran and Egypt”. Again Sarkar has expressed his view that the highest duty of a Muslim ruler is to carry on jihad by waging war against infidel lands (Darul Harb) till they become a part of Darul Islam and their populations are converted with true believers”. Dr. Tara Chand in his writing ‘The influence of Islam on Indian culture’ said that “influenced Hindu culture and mind. Every field of Hinduism were influenced by the Islam”.

No doubt most of the Indian and western scholars have accepted the influence of Islam on Indian society and vice-versa.

Hinduism and Islam lived in India together and it was natural that they should influence each other. Impact of Islam on Hindu society can be seen mostly in the sphere of social, religion and architectural aspects. The Purdah system, seclusion of women unknown in early days of Hindu rule, was introduced elaborately into the Hindu society and women generally lived in seclusion in the sphere of their homes. They now moved on outside their houses in the Palanquins covered with curtains. In the royal harems of the Hindu rulers and princes, the Puradah system was rigidly enforced as
Raja Rudra Pratap of Puri who used to visit in Chaitanya in covered Palanquins. The numerous social taboos and restrictions regarding caste, marriage, eating and drinking had become all the more stringent among the Hindus. It is true that such a social structure was incapable of any progress, its very rigidity and stiffness served as a strong cordon which protected the Hindus from being submerged entirely in the new Islamic culture. The condition of the Hindu women deteriorated considerably. Dependence of women on their husbands or other male relatives become a prominent feature of the Hindu society. Though they enjoyed a position of respect, they could not command equal rights with men and were not allowed to participate in all the social functions and ceremonies. Women were expected to observe strict fidelity in their conjugal life. Perhaps to safeguard their honour and chastity against the Muslims, the custom of Jauhar and Sati both were widely prevalent throughout the country (mostly in Rajasthan) among the Hindus. But according to Ibn Batutta (Rahela) a sort of permit had to be obtained from the Sultan of Delhi before the burning of a wife on the pyre of her husband.

Slavery was in India but in primitive form as the women were employed in the temples has also served in the capacity of slave. But with the coming of Muslims in India the tradition of slave become more and more effective in Indian society. Slavery was common in the Muslim society and to keep slaves was a recognized fashion of the time. It is also very known that there was the markets for sale and purchase of slaves as Aibak, Iltutmish and some other personalities were purchased from the markets by the Sultan and after sometime, they all become important rulers of India. It was a well-known common practice with the Delhi Sultanate, their nobles and amirs to
maintain slaves both male as well as female. The number of royal slaves were generally large. It is reported that Allauddin Khilji has 84000 slaves and this number was enhanced by Sultan Firoz Tughlaq. At this pattern, the Hindu leaders and feudal lords adopted the institution of slavery. The royal harems and palaces in Rajasthan even today practice the system of slavery, women slaves are offered in dowry even now among the Rajput royal families. It may be useful for the upper classes but it was a stamp of unprogressiveness, inhuman feature and unhealthy element in the society.

The Muslim influence on the dress, etiquette and ceremonial activities came into fashion into the Hindu society. The Hindu rulers adopted the Muslim etiquette and seating arrangement for various classes as practiced in the Delhi court.

The social influence after the introduction of Islam and Muslim rule in India as pointed out by K.M. Panikkar that the division of society was on a vertical basis. Before the 13th century, Hindu society was divided horizontally. Neither Buddhism nor Jainism could affect this division. On the contrary, Islam split Indian society into two distinct divisions from top to bottom Hindus and Muslims.

With the coming of the Muslims and his religion Islam, Hindu religion was facing great danger of the conversion. The low caste people of the Indian society found the caste system, marriage practices and the daily life difficult and by this reason they started to convert themselves into Islam religion. After sometime the Hindu religious thinker had also adopted the liberal policy and attitudes towards the religious thinking and by this way Bhakti cult
emerged in India. The great impact over religion in India was when Islam came and had given a great shock to the Hindu religion. The Islam has shattered the Brahman supremacy and destroyed the royal patronage that Hinduism had been enjoying. Islam was spread far and wide in the country. The great contribution of the Muslim royal dynasties of Delhi was the introduction and propagation of Islam in India. Islam brought into India a concept of human equality, a pride in one's religion, legal system that in many ways was an advance on the codes of other religion. The strong egalitarian outlook of Islam and the deep faith had the pride of the Mohammedans in their religion. Islam gives the message of universal brotherhood, introduces equality in society, rejects caste-system and untouchability, opposed the idol worship and teaches oneness of God. These Islamic ideas had given a great challenge to the upholder of the Hindu religion and by the effects of this challenges, numerous religious cult and the preachers came into light. These were Bhakti cult and his follower like Nanak, Kabir, Ramanuja, Chaitanya and others. It is also stated that Muslim first came on the sea coast and there he preached Islam. It means they had propagated Islam in south India from 8th to 15th century AD. Vaisnavism and Shaivism were the dominating religions and most of the religious thinker was of South India. They all had received impression from Islamic thought and they bring a new life in Hinduism. Dr. Tara Chand in his book 'Influence of Islam on Indian culture' states that the progress of religious thought in the south reveals a growing absorption of Muslim ideas into Hindu system.

The monotheistic idea of God which has been the cardinal doctrine of Islam was well-known to the Hindus long before it was preached by the
Prophet Muhammad in Arabia. It is explained distinctively in Upanishad and the Vedic philosophers of the 9th century had also expounded it. Even before the Muslim conquest of India, the Hindu reformers had proclaimed one and only one Supreme God behind the countless deities of popular worship. But the contact with the monotheistic faith of Islam gave a stimulus to such ideas and had great effect on religious preachers.

Now there is a discussion that how the Hindu society or the religion had effected the Muslims and its religion Islam. There was the tradition to appoint the great who having the excellency in his department. The Muslim rulers had appointed many Hindus in his administration. When they evolve in the work had left some Indian impression over the ruler and the subjects of the kingdom. Many Muslim conquerors married Hindu women, queens and Princess. Allauddin married the Hindu Princess Kamala Devi, wife of Karan Deva the Raja of Gujrat and the daughter of Karan Deva was also married to Khizr Khan. The effect was like this way that the new wedded Hindu women certainly had left their customs and rites in the Muslim homes. The emperor Akbar had given free hand to his wife (Hindu wife) to adopt her customs and traditions as followed earlier. The Muslim custom of Polygamy and the widow remarriage were effected by the Hindu contact. It is not mean that Muslims has fully adopted this policy and make any correction but were simply effected. The class distinction that came into the Muslim society was not allowed by the Shariat. It become possible by the appointment of noble birth person in the high offices. Balban the famous slave Sultan, never appoints the low-born people. The concept of the caste system was gradually developed among the Muslims. Mutual contact developed castes and sub-
castes. Various classes of the Muslims began to reside separately in different localities even in the same town for example Sheikhs and Sayyids. The Hindu converts were not mostly given the post in the court and were kept aloof from the original Islam believer. It may somehow create the doubt of untouchability among the later Muslim rulers. It is stated that Shab-i-Barat was a copy of Hindu festival Shivratri. Most of the scholar have accepted this fact but the festival of Shab-i-Barat was prevalent among the Muslim but its character was changed by the free Muslims and so it is looking like Shivratri. The Practice of Nazar (evil eye), the Utara and the ceremony of Arti were taken by the Muslim in his practice. The practice of Nisar was performed by which the coins were distributed among the poor people of the society. The Emperor Akbar had also adopted some Hindu traditions in his court like Jharokha Darshan, Tuladan Tikakaran etc. But it cannot be said that Akbar had forced to the Muslim to adopt this policy, it was purely personal but being an emperor it has left some effects over the unconscious or the extreme believer of Akbar. The Muslim rulers are the borrower in the matter of revenue and finance department. Most of the revenue officer were Hindus and the revenue pattern was obtained from the Hindu traditions. The war by elephant was also the Hindu pattern and has adopted by the Muslim in the battle field.

Inspite of all that the Muslims had started to interfere into the regional languages of India. Muslim were Arabic or the Persian knowing people. They were facing trouble to communicate his ideas among the Hindu masses. That’s why they started to learn the Sanskrit, Hindi, Prakriti, Bengali, Gujrati and Urdu languages to solved out his problems. They started to translate the
sacred scriptures and many valuable literatures and in this process, the Muslims had learnt most of the religious and social secrets of Hindu society. The Muslim rulers has introduced many educational centers. They established a number of Maktaba and Madrasa mostly with state aid, where generally no tuition fees were charged. Maktab was generally attached to the mosque where teaching of Quran, Hadith were given.\textsuperscript{14} It is said that the Muslim rulers has pushed back the Hindu education and were not given proper aid. Even the oldest institution like Vikramasila, Nalanda were not promoted because of inferior feeling that the educated mass will be harmful to my rule and Islamic establishment.

Inspite of all these description, a great influence are seen on the part of art and architecture of Islamic and Hindu establishment. When the Muslim has established their rule over India required defence house, houses for living, houses for religious purposes and the assembly houses for political meetings or gathering. Keeping in mind of all these, they had started construction. There are the great influence of Turko-Iranian or the Islamic style of architecture on the Indian buildings. It can be seen even todays. In the process of the building construction, the Muslim rulers and the architects has also mix the some styles of the Indian character of architecture. It is clearly seen in the buildings of the Muslim construction.

The Hindu art was decorative and gorgeous while the Islamic art was marked with puritanical simplicity. The basis of the Hindu art was \textit{trabeat} while that of the Muslim was \textit{arcuate}. It means that the Hindu used rows of Pillars and long beams laid horizontally to span spaces. The Muslims
adopted arch to bridge a spare and erected graceful domes. Rows of pillars were essential for the Hindus, while the mihrabs and the carved bow-shaped roofs for the Muslims. Solidarity and beauty were the special characteristics of the Hindu buildings, but spaciousness and simplicity of the Muslim structures. The Hindu temples had splendid lofty sikhars, the Muslim mosque and tombs had magnificent bulbous domes.\textsuperscript{15} The walls of the Hindu temples were extremely solid, stable and divided into plinth and basement and stepped by deep projections, the walls of the Muslim buildings were plain and smooth faced. The temples had ‘massive darkness’ and some passages leading to dim shrines and cells, whereas the mosque had vast courts open to light and air coming through many door way. The Hindu architecture exhibited an infinite richness and variety of sculpture. The Hindu conveyed their meaning by iconography with countless idols of divinities. The walls of their temples and buildings were pulsating with life and imagery. The variety of molding and richness of ornament was extraordinary in Hindu buildings on the other hand Muslims were found of puritan simplicity and they were iconoclast. The representation of natural forms and human figures was prohibited by Islamic traditions and practices. For ornamentation the Muslim used colour and line or flat surface carving and ingenious geometric patterns.\textsuperscript{16}

By the above explanation, it is very obvious that both the tradition of art and architecture differed fundamentally in their ideals and techniques yet they mingled together giving rise to a new type of Indian architecture. Earlier and now a hot discussion among the scholars that which culture was mostly dominated. Muslim has great impact or the Hindu ideas had the deep impact over the character of the buildings. Majority of the scholars have the opinion
that more or less both the culture had their influence over the architecture during the Muslim rule. The minute study of the Indian architecture of Muslim rule has left an impression that the art and architecture was mostly influenced by the dominance of the society. The region of Delhi outskirts has greater influence of Muslim but in Gujrat, Rajasthan, Kashmir had seen a great impact of Hindu ideals and techniques. There are also an evidence that the Muslim rulers had converted most of the Hindu places into the Mosque or for other activities. There are the some buildings which are the sign of this activities like Quatul-Islam mosque. The Muslims had added the Hindu architectural style, the special characteristics of spaciousness, massiveness, majesty and width. The ruler introduced mehrab or arch, dom, minar and tomb in the indigenous architecture. They had enriched design and beauty and adopted the use of coloured stones and glazed tiles to heighten the effect of colours. They endowed the buildings with new beauties of form and colours. A great and unique feature was used by the Muslim in their construction, the wall of the Qila was made on the pattern of the 'leaning position'. It means the wall was looking curve but the base of the wall was very wide to give the strongness to the whole structure of standing wall. The style which was used in the vicinity of Delhi in known as the Delhi style of architecture. The Qutub Minar, the Quatul-Islam mosque at Delhi and a mosque at Ajmer called Dhai Din Ka Jhonpra belonging to the time of slave kings. The material of Hindu temples and structures have been used in these buildings. These mosque were Hindu temple in real form but the Muslim rulers had demolished and the dome, arches were erected with addition of Muslim designs and ornaments. Percy Brown has really praised the construction of
Qutub Minar for it own character. It was may be the Purely Islamic structure because such tower (Minar) were unknown to the Hindus.

The regional architecture developed during the Muslim rule and were very much influenced by the regional patterns. At Jaunpur a new art of style developed. The structure has the Hindu influence that “Its massive sloping walls, square pillars, smaller galleries and cloisters”. Atala mosque built on the site of Hindu temple of Atala Devi. Havel and John Marshal both have the opinion that the Jaunpur architecture is an interesting synthesis of the creative impulse of the Hindu and Muslim. There are some buildings in the form of mosque, Qila and tomb in Rajasthan as well as Gujrat. It has the regional effects and the Hindu pattern of art was used to construct the houses.

The Muslims gradually has given very massive and sky like buildings to the Indians as was made by Akbar, Shahjahan and Jahangir. The period of Shahjahan architecturally known as the golden period. Muslim architecture is lagging behind in sculpture and paintings in respect of the Hindu sculpture. The Muslims had never used the figures and the human beings as the bases of the paintings. It was due to the prohibition of the Islamic religion and this was not prohibited in Hindu religion. Muslims had used the natural things, flora and the verses of the Quran for paintings as was permitted by Islamic shariat. Most of the Muslim buildings has no sign of human figurines painting in the houses. No terracottas are found. The paintings and the decoration interest during the slave kingdom and after wards was not so much seen. The paintings and decoration was mostly undertaken by Akbar but found very rich during the reign of Jahangir. He is also known as the Champion of
paintings. Dr. Mujeeb in his writing “Islamic influencer on Indian society in chapter Moslem influence on Indian art” has put forth the remarks that the Muslims have a religious law consisting of commands and prohibitions a doctrine of community life in which the Individual was just a fragment, and a concept of God based on the rejection of all material symbols. Image worship was condemned and representation of living things forbidden. Architecture, calligraphy and crafts were the only permitted means of satisfying the craving for beauty, but to these Muslims added the arts, sinful perhaps but not past forgiveness, of music and painting and poetry. They cultivated almost everything, in fact except sculpture, which was too obvious a challenge to the iconoclast. When the Muslims came in India, they had acquired and given a distinct form to all the arts recognized by culture, except the presentation of human form in wood or stone. With the advent of the Muslim in India, they greatly revolutionized the idea of gardening, water channels that were running throughout the houses and in the gardens. The gardens were geometrically designed and looking very fanciful and attractive.

Apart from the art and architecture, the music had received a great impact of Hinduism during the Muslim rule. As stated in the Islamic law, there is a strict prohibition of music in Islam. But with the contact to Hindus, music was accepted by the Muslims. Amir Khusrau, a great musician of the sultanate time and he also invented ‘Sitar’. It is said that he recited his poems in accordance with the Indian tunes and invented new rages like Qawwalis and the Khyal. The music was introduced among the Muslim through the Sufi saints who always performed the Qawwali and Khyal. It was a kind of propagation of his ideas among the Indian society.
Literature has always played an important role to effect any society, political ideas, the religious aspects, economic understanding and the cultural affairs of any age. Like other countries, India was strong in literary activities. They had created many great learned person in religious and literary streams. But some how Indian literature has got an impression of the other literature that are found in surrounding and also with worldly known literature. Muslim came in India with two most important language of Arabic and Persian. Persian were the court language of the Sultanate and the Mughal rulers. They had appointed many script writers, poets, translator, religious thinker and the Political advisors who always had given their attributes to the rulers for the Indian societies. The Persian language was not the social language, so that the religious preachers and the saints had adopted the local and the regional languages to convey his message frequently to the masses.\footnote{22} The Muslim rulers had translated many Indian scriptures, sacred books, the law books and the medicinal books into Persian and Arabic languages. The Sanskrit translators were even sent to Baghdad to translate some of the books that may be helpful in the remedies of diseases and the books which are related to the astronomical and astrological subjects. The language of India become world wide famous with the coming of the Muslim and the Muslim had also attracted towards the Hindi, Urdu and the some other regional languages. Amir Khusrau who is known as the great poet of his times had written and adopt Hindi as the medium. The Sufi saints had also easy access to the peoples through these Indian languages. A large number of histories, biographies and letters were written in Persian. They formed a magnificent source of history and introduced historical literature in India. The Indians had
learnt the love for calligraphy, system of illuminating manuscripts that were used in the sphere of Indian literature. A very cultural impact of Islam was the birth of the urdu language, a product of joint efforts of the two communities. It has the great impact over the literary activities of the time. The scholars have adopted this language due to its simplest form at the place of Persian as was the court language of the Muslim rulers. Urdu has always considered a shining language for parting speeches, shairi and exchange of ideas. The sufi saints as he adopted Hindi as well as Urdu for his preaching of ideas that were simple in understanding.

The impact of Islamic contact was the development in the art of war. As before to the advent of Islam, the fighting technique was very crude and inferior. The bows and arrows were mostly used. But after coming into the contact to the Muslim, they have learnt the knowledge of explosive materials, garrison ideology, the swords and the use of horse and elephant in the wars.

Thus the impact of Hindu and Muslim civilization has a far reaching consequences. The Muslims came with a definite social and religious ideas which were different from Hindu cultures. But it may said that the basic structure of Hindu society in terms of the caste system, hereditary laws, widow remarriage laws, the religious practices which were ancient in form were not any how changed or transformed. Some moral and day by day activities and habits were somehow changed. There, it was not absorption but the fusion and mingling of culture. During Muslim rule, the Sufi saints were much influenced by the streams of the Hindu thought because the saints required popularity and solid base for propagation. They required the local
supports and by this way, they had follow the most of the Hindu traditions in his ideas and thinking. The other important feature of the impact was the development of the regional literatures and the growth of the new language Urdu. The art and architecture had received a great impression of Hindu-Muslim cultures. There is no hesitation to say that there was the cultural and social transition of both the cultures on the various aspects of life of the society.
References


7. Dr. Tarachand, op.cit., p. 107.


14. Elliot; *Masalikul Absar iii*, p. 578.


17. Ibid. pp. 19-23.

18. Dr. Tarachand, op.cit., p. 243.
21. Ibid., p. 139.