



## IMPACT OF HINDUISM ON MUSLIM CULTURE OF SUB-CONTINENT: A HISTORICAL & ANALYTICAL OVERVIEW

### Abstract:

The Muslim culture of the sub-continent demands special consideration about the nature of the impact of Hinduism on Islamic culture. There are some factors that make the study of this impact analyzable. The issue is the lack of evidence for the religious movements of medieval India. There was uncertainty at those times, like the few common themes of Hindu and Islamic mystical traditions are an example of this problem. This paper begins with a brief note on first Muslim arrival to sub-continent, beginning of an interaction, providing an explanation of the phenomenon based on the historical evolution of the Muslim community as a parallel society in the sub-continent. The modification in the cultural sphere; improvement of regional languages, religious pluralism, and in the social sphere; customs from birth to death, the development of Indo-Muslim music, fine art, and architecture have been outlined in the preceding paragraphs. It looks at how the Hindu influence was sought to be accepted by the Muslims and it concludes with the remarks of universal characteristics of Muslim culture. "The social existence of Islamic sub-mainland requests exceptional thought about the idea of the effect of Hinduism on Islamic culture. There are a few factors that make the investigation of this effect complex.

**Key Words:** *Hinduism, Muslim Culture and Sub-continent*

## **Introduction:**

One is essentially the absence of proof, for the strict developments of medieval India have left not many records. At that point, there is the vulnerability on occasion, similar to a couple of regular topics of Hindu and Islamic enchanted conventions are a case of this trouble. The article starts with a short note on first Muslim appearance to sub-landmass, the start of cooperation, giving clarification of the wonder dependent on the chronicled advancement of the Muslim people group as a parallel society in the sub-mainland. The improvements in the social circle; the advancement of territorial dialects, strict pluralism, and in the social circle; customs from birth to death, the development of Indo-Muslim music, artistic work and engineering— have been laid out in the first passages. It at that point takes a gander at how the Hindu impact was looked to be acknowledged by the Muslims and it finishes up with the comments of widespread attributes of Muslim culture" To think about the period of effect in its actual point of view the fundamental thing is to remember the first wellsprings of both religions. The part of communication exists dependent on shared characteristics. Subsequent to portraying the nitty-gritty effect in different fields of life, the finishing up comments are totally different in light of the fact that the troublesome route is to call attention to the influenced territories in light of the fact that the effect occurred in two styles; syncretic and manufactured and it is hard to separate that to order the zones of effects are syncretic or engineered particularly in the domain of language and writing. Thus, libertarian conduct appears in strict and abstract domains. Despite the fact that the Muslims are influenced by the local condition, geology, and geography, yet there are some basic attributes of Islamic culture all around the globe which can be seen in the Islamic world just as in the non-Islamic states. It is all around depicted by Mr. Bruhi under the expression "Female rule." Muslim people wear the dress covering the entire body, in spite of the fact that the styles are unique. They Build minarets and tombs in strict structures, there is no understanding of statues and Haram Food.

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## **The Emergence of Muslims:**

As regards the first formation and composition of the Muslim community, the Arab traders came by sea and settled down in Kerala, West India, and north-western areas. The second Muslim beginners are associated with Muhammad bin Qasim (712CE). The first Muslim rule was on Multan and Mansurah. Three centuries later the raids of Mahmud Ghaznavi (1030CE) gave a good base to Muslims as ~~klostermaier~~ narrated.<sup>1</sup> The real conquest of India starts at the close of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. By the second quarter of the 14<sup>th</sup> century the Gaurids, the Mamluks and Khiljis succeeded in shattering Hindu power everywhere. Meanwhile, the Sufi Orders scattered far and wide throughout the country. The first Sufi was Hazrat *Ali bin Usman Hajwari* in 1077 CE. A large majority of the Muslims were in the North-western and north-eastern areas.<sup>2</sup>

### **Muslim's kindness with Hindus:**

In the beginning, both the Muslims and Hindus were co-hatred. The religious and linguistic difference was the major reason as well as invaders' occupation on native people. The Muslims came to the sub-continent as conquerors, their glorification and superiority remained unacceptable by the non-Muslims in one way or the other, although they lived together up till 700 years in sub-continent. The Muslims, instead of putting the people on persecution, they set up a broad-based and liberal system and gave important positions to the Brahmins.<sup>3</sup> But still, they were two different nations as Al-Beruni (973-1048CE) narrated in his famous book *Kitab al-Hind* that they were two nations with remarkable entities, episodes, cultures, language, literature, religion, and customs.<sup>4</sup>

It is obvious that when two different types of cultures came into contact for about 700 years and continued to exist side by side, they were bound to leave an impact on each other.<sup>5</sup> So the feeling of co-hatred did not continue so far because the Muslims thought that good governess needs *tolerance and egalitarianism* in all spheres of life. Muslim rulers initiated at a political level and the Muslim Sufis brought forth it at the missionary level, in different parts of the country like Lahore, Delhi, Ajmer, Ajodhan

(Pakpattan)...etc. inspired by such tolerant behavior a series of Hindu clerics also contributed to this stream, for example, Kabir Das, Dadu, Guru Nanak...etc. As Muslims were conquerors in this continent, their impact on Hindus was ultimately explicit but the impact of Hinduism was not ignorable too. The natural relation between the Muslims and Hindus had been altogether communal not national; means the same community with different nationalities.<sup>6</sup> Their impact can be categorized as socio-cultural; impact on the caste system, customs from childhood to death, festivals, as academic; like fine arts, music, literature, coloring, architecture and as religious; like impact on religious interpretations.

### **Social Impact (Caste system)**

A Hindu can never be considered Hindu without believing the caste system. After having a deep study of Vedic literature, what becomes clear is that caste system is not found in Vedic literature but in Vedic period for *Avesta* ( Zoroastrian's sacred book ) shows that in the Indo-Iranian society the Aryans were divided into four classes; priests, warriors, farmers, and artisans. This beginning prevailed over centuries even in today's India.<sup>7</sup> The Muslim population was of two kinds; Hindi Muslims who were the original inhabitants of the subcontinent and the immigrant Muslims belonged to the high castes of Arab, Persian and Turk elite. The first impact was on Muslims' social structure on race

<sup>6</sup>Mirza, S.H, (2009) *Hindu-Muslim Confrontation, A Case Study of Pakistan 712-1947*, Nazaria-i-Pakistan Trust: Lahore. P. 2.

<sup>7</sup>Madani, M.S, (1973) *Impact of Hindu Culture on Muslims*, M.D Publishers: Bihar, India. P. 24.

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base for the Turk immigrants considered them superior. So the first division came into being based on a religious group, government's members and laymen in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. This starting point ends with multiple divisions hierarchically. Such kind of classification is also found among Indian Muslims that can generally be noted between the so-called 'noble' castes or *Ashraf* and those labeled as inferior, or *razil* or *kamin*. The bad aspect of that caste system faced

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by Muslims was when Muslims divided into two kinds of people; lower (*merasi, kammi, bhangi, teli, saqqa, nai, jolaha...etc.*) and higher (*Khilji, ghaori, rajpot, Mughal, pathan, syyed...etc.*) Lower castes were for lower professions and higher for higher. Lower were servants to the higher. Every person was not considered eligible for every job. This hateful face of Hinduism became an essential part of Muslim society.

### **Customs (from birth to death)**

Childbirth is no doubt brings a lot of happiness for both families. They celebrate it as their customs allow. In the subcontinent, the Hindu influence on such occasions can be observed explicitly through centuries. From birth to death all the customs are Hindu customs. Some of them are adopted the same as some have previous names with new ways and some have only name difference.

Among the birth customs Satwansa (7<sup>th</sup> month of pregnancy), nomansa, (9<sup>th</sup> month of pregnancy), Ghutti, Chhoochhak (gifts from girl's mother side), Nam Rakhai, Mundan (haircutting), Dant Nikalna (teeth growing), Khatna custom in Hindi yellow dress ...etc.

Muslims adopted a lot of marriage customs too like Mayoon bithana (yellow dressing) Ubtan khelna, Mehndi, Gana bandhna, sehra bandi, singing and dancing, holding an iron stick till Nikah ceremony, women's marriage songs, Dahej, sharbat pilae, shahana jora, haldi, ghar bhara, color throwing at Rukhsati time...etc. Death customs are *Teeja* (3<sup>rd</sup> day) *satwan* (7<sup>th</sup> day), *chaliswan* (40<sup>th</sup> day) and *barsi*. The woman was supposed to wear dull clothes, to sit on the ground, to sleep on earth, to leave usage of the jewelry, colorful clothes and perfumes.

### **Mystical Impact**

It is a very interesting subject to find mystical influence or similarity in both religions but has a difficult ground to sort out any unique conclusion. We find some similarity in some Sufi terminologies and sometimes in practices like concepts of meditation (Muraqabah, Fana), Dance (Wajd, Haal), Breath controlling, similar descriptions regarding soul like incarnation (Hulul), four elements as origin of the universe

(fire, water, soil, and air) human senses (Lataif) and *Wahdat al-Wujud*; the major controvertible topic.

### **Wahdat al-Wujud:**

From where Muslims borrowed this concept? Syed Suleman and replies that this phenomenon had existence in all nations in one or other form. As long as our research tells us, it does not provide any concrete evidence about Vedanta's translation in Arabic while the concept had started in Islam with Hussein Ibn Mansur (3<sup>rd</sup> century of Hijrah) and its climax point was ibn Arabi (5<sup>th</sup> century of Hijrah). there is no doubt that after Muslims' arrival in this continent, Vedanta affected Muslim Sufis .... Ibn Arabi was affected by Neo-Platonism, not Hindu Vedanta while we are not confirmed about Ibn Mansur, from Iraq, who may get it from Indians.<sup>8</sup> According to some scholars, it is also quite possible that the Islamic mystics had been directly or indirectly influenced by Hindu thought before the conquest of India. One of the big personalities of this interact phenomenon was Kabir (1398) a Muslim Sufi who, having come under Ramananda's influence, accepted some Hindu ideas and tried to conciliate the followers of Hinduism and Islam. However, it was the Hindus, and especially those of the lower classes, to whom his message appealed.<sup>9</sup> My assessment in this regard is that *Wahdat al-Wujud* is different from Vedanta's concept qualitatively and quantitatively because Islamic concept of *Wahdat al-Wujud* does not consider any manifestation of this universe as *Devi* or *Devta*, it does not have concept of *Rabb al-Arwah* and it bases on *Takhliq* (creation of the universe) not *Tajsim* or *Tajseed* (incarnation) as is found in Vedic literature.

### **Impact on architecture and sciences**

Muslims have their own sub-continental architectural style which is different from the Al-Hamra art of Muslim Spain (Andulas), Turkish art and African art. They adopted shelter type architecture for sitting like Para Shoot style, painting leaves on walls and reddish colors in buildings. While the sciences were owned by Muslims, some of these styles could be considered as borrowed from this region.

### **Impact on fine arts (Music)**

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Fine art includes painting, calligraphy, statues, poetry, music...etc. Muslims were not interesting in making statues but only painting portraits and leaves on buildings.

Among all the branches of fine arts, the art of music always got the top rank. We will not describe the definition and kinds of Hindi music but will directly discuss the Muslim's interest and contribution to music. Muslim immigrants brought with them Persian and Arabic music then joined the Hindi and Kashmiri music. So the first example was 13<sup>th</sup> century Emperor Al-tamash who used to listen to Qawwali. After him, his son Rukn al-Din (1236CE) was very fond of Hindi music. For this reason, the number of male and female musicians gathered around them. In this row, a series of emperors like Khilji, Tughlaq, Babr, and Akbar is also standing as a great lover of Hindi music. They used to listen and play it among the people as well as in isolation, without taking care of any Islamic restriction. Muslim Sufis thought the music as a source of intuition and promoting up their spiritual level. Not only they listened but also got climax practically. Among those Sufi musicians, Amir Khusro (1253-1325CE) is a big name, who got the core of Hindi music and made a lot of inventions. He himself used to play *Daff* and *Chang*. The second great name was of Sheikh Baha al-Din Zakariya. The Chishti order still has the Qawwali tradition. Muslims authored books on music along with translating the literature from Sanskrit to Persian- the official language of Muslims here. Dr. Umar has mentioned some Muslim literature in his Ph.D. thesis; Ghuniyyat al-Ameena, 14<sup>th</sup> CE (in Ali Garh University) Lahjat e Sikandri (in Lakhnao University), Rag Darpan (1665CE).<sup>10</sup>

Examining the long history of Hindi-Muslim music, someone can easily conclude that it was Muslims who brought it to its climax. Even now Muslim musicians are walking parallel to the Hindi musicians, with the hope of progress in the future. Despite Madani, M.S, (1973) *Impact of Hindu Culture on Muslims*, M.D Publishers: Bihar, India. P. 405. the music is forbidden (Haram) in Islam, the only reason for Muslim interest was that music related to hearts or souls.

### **Impact on Urdu Literature**

At starting of Muslim settlement here, the local languages of India were Sindhi, Kashmiri, Gujrati, Bengali, Dehlawi, and Sanskrit, while the

Muslims' mother tongues were Persian, Arabic and Turkish. Ultimately the need of the hour was to have a connecting language to cross the communication gap. As a result of co-existence through centuries, a combined language was introduced by some linguists, taking some meaningful words, compounds, and phrases from different languages and converting them according to the language's need. It was first named *Hindavi* then *Rekhta* and lastly *Urdu*, a mixture one. In the beginning, Urdu was a routinely used language but gradually the poets and literary people of *Dakan* took part in its progress by creating new phrases and translating foreign literature into Urdu. The first author of Urdu poetry was *Qutab Qali*. Although Urdu poetry was the reflection of Persian literature in rhyme, couplet, matrix, imagination, contents, and composition it also adopted Hindi and Sanskrit words, romantic and poetic characters with different forms of verse. Mostly the Urdu *Masnavi* bases upon Hindu Stories. Obviously, the Hindi or Sanskrit's contribution was not in its formation but in its expansion, for the Hindi writers and poets left a considerable asset. So the Urdu language can be called a memorial of the common culture.

### **Why cultural influence was accepted?**

The changes in Muslim society are based on two facts. Firstly, the Muslims came into interact with Hindus for centuries and the process of interaction started resulting in cultural adaptation. Secondly, an important factor is involved that a large number of Hindus accepted Islam. They acknowledged the preaching of Islam but did not give up their old values, attitudes, and rituals in many respects. Consequently, their rituals and practices were incorporated into Muslim society.

### **Conclusion**

To study the phase of impact in its true perspective the essential thing is to retrace the original sources of both the religions. The aspect of interaction is existed based on commonalities. After describing the detailed impact in various fields of life, the concluding remarks are very different because the difficult way is to point out the affected areas because the impact took place in two styles; syncretic and synthetic and it is difficult to differentiate that to categorize the areas of impacts are syncretic or synthetic especially in the realm of language and literature.



As a result, egalitarian behavior is shown in religious and literary realms.

Although the Muslims are affected by the native environment, geography and topography, but there are some common characteristics of Islamic culture all around the world which can be observed in the Islamic World as well as in the non-Islamic states. It is well described by Mr. Bruhi under the term “Feminine principle.” Muslim men and women wear the dress covering the whole body, although the styles are different. They Build minarets and tombs in religious buildings, there is no concept of statues and *Haram Food*.

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