
CHAPTER-VI: CONCLUSION

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Because of the Arab traders, the Hindus came in contact with the Muslims right from 8th century A.D. The Rashtrakuta emperors maintained friendly relations with the Arab traders and gave them religious freedom. Islam was an iconoclastic religion and when Arabs invaded Sindh, the Hindus suffered a great deal. Perhaps the Hindus faced the first terrible religious opposition and converting zeal of Islam. The conversion of Hindus, it seems, to Islam took place on a large scale in Sindh though Arabs adopted some kind of tolerance later on. But Rashtrakutas extended all possible help to the Muslims in their Kingdom. Illustrious king Amoghvarsha of Rashtrakuta dynasty issued royal order and allowed the Arabs to settle peacefully and at the same time warned them not to pollute the Indian culture. The first Muslim fleet appeared at Thana (near Bombay) in 636 A.D. and a number of Arab traders reached the coastal region of India. Their social and cultural attitudes were quite adjusting as it was inevitable for them to keep their constant commercial contact with India. Such peaceful activities of the Arabs we find only for a few decades. The situation changed subsequently as the Khalifas became land hungry for wealth and the spread of religion.¹

Arab fleets also attacked Broach and other ports on

the Kathiawad coast and Muslim settlements started regularly from 8th century. Dr. P.M. Joshi and M. Husain rightly remark, small colonies of Arab traders had settled at various parts in and around the coastal regions from Thana, Bhatkal and further south from 8th century onwards. In 11th and 12th centuries Muslim merchants were found on the eastern and western coasts of India who had settled permanently on Indian port-towns, others having visited them on business often and on.² Their ships reached Indian ports of Spendapur, Mangalore, Fondraina and Cranganore to buy the Indian cane (i.e., sugarcane). Islam in western peninsular India first arrived with peaceful enclaves of Arab merchants, who had settled along the Konkan and Malabar coast. In 916-17 A.D. the Arab traveller Mas'udi described a settlement in Chaul (25 miles south of modern Bombay) of a thousand Muslims whose ancestors had come from Arabia and Iraq to engage in the pepper and spice trade. This settlement was granted a degree of political autonomy by the local raja and it was composed mainly of Arabs who were born in Chaul and had by and large intermarried with the local population.³

Trading centres of Muslims on the west coast were Broach, Sopara, Sindan, Thana and Chaul. Cambay, Dabhol, Sandabul (Goa?), Calicut and Quilon were exporting centres. Ibn Battuta who visited these ports during 14th century also gives a vivid picture of the trade that was carried on here.

Exporting articles like silken stuffs, aromatic roots, large pearls captivated the eyes of Muslims and therefore, they concentrated over Malabar which became centre of their cultural activities too. Moreover, the ruling families were tolerant and they treated the Muhammedans kindly. With the royal order of Malabar Raja Samiry, Muhamedans were granted land for either habitations or for places of worship.⁴

The establishment of Muslim settlement particularly on the west coast of India was due to the encouragement to trade given by the rulers. Of these, rulers of Balhara dynasty in the northern part of west coast and the Zamorians of the Calicut on Malabar coast in south were prominent. Sulayman (851 A.D.) and Masudi (943 and 955 A.D.) also speak that in the whole country of Hind there is none more affectionate to Arabs than the Balhara. As a result, a large number of mosques and prayer halls were constructed, religious activities of the Muslims having started peacefully. Thus Muslims settled in various centres like Sagar, Cambay, Gandhar, Sandapur (Goa?), Barcelore, Fakanar, Manjarur, Hili, Jurfattan, Budfattan, Calicut, Kawlam, Fattan, Madura, Fandarina, Saymur, Sandan, Tana, Mangnor, Jooneer, Beder, Dabul, Tafan, Mankir, Famhal, Saimur, Daulatabad etc.

During their early career the process of conversion was very slow as the Muslims' real strength was too meagre. But in course of time they gained wide experience and knew the situation

well. Accordingly, either they forced the Hindus to embrace Islam or Hindus themselves willingly converted themselves to Islam. This conversion mainly affected the upper class and lower class of the Hindus but not middle class. The names in the old established Muslim families even of today would indicate this. As a result of this peaceful penetration of the Islam along the west coast their number was multiplied. Another factor for the increase of the Muslims in number was intermarriage. Regarding the origin of the Mappillas, Mr Lewis Moore states that, 'Originally the descendants of Arab traders by women of the country, they now form a powerful community. There appears to have been a large influx of Arab settlers into Malabar in the ninth century A.D. and the numbers have been constantly increasing by proselytism. The Mappilas came prominently forward at the time of Portuguese invasion at the end of the fifteenth century A.D.⁵ Another i.e., a Tamil-speaking Musalman tribe of mixed Hindu and Musalman origin came to be formed, the people of which are usually traders. The Navayat community was generated by Arab sea-farers consorting with the local women and Konkani Muslims of the Konkani with similar Indo-Arab origins.

The conversion created a social problem. To solve the problem the Smruti of Deval Rishi provided the solution to bring the Hindus back to Hindu fold. Some Smrutis considered it proper to bring back to Hinduism those unfortunate women, pregnant as a result of rapes by Muslims, after making them undergo some

communal attonement and organised ways of doing so though they were pregnant. Several Muslims like Al Utabi, Al Biraduri have themselves quoted several such incidents of converted Muslims being accepted back into Hinduism in eighth and ninth centuries⁶ but the Muslim population increased every year.

The Sufi saints spread the Islam in South India converting some Hindus to Islam. In this process of spreading their religion, they performed some miracles and drew the attention of the people towards the philosophy of their religion. The most prominent Sufi saints were Norooddin, Jallaluddin Ganjarwan, Momin Aarif, Abdul Jabbar, Baba Sharafuddin, Hayat Kalandar, Gesu Daraz etc. Some of them had been intermarried to Hindu women. The Sufi saints converted many people to Islam. Pir Mabari Khandayat came to the Deccan as a Missionary and converted to Islam a large number of Jains whose descendants were among the cultivating classes of Bijapur district.⁷

The residences of the Sufis and their disciples were transformed into the monasteries and various spiritual services i.e., meditation and others were introduced in them. There were discussion on soul and great soul, Dwaita and Adwaita philosophy, the nature of great soul and other cosmic powers. According to Abdul Zabbar Malkapuri long before the Khalji armies reached into the Deccan sufi saints had settled in various parts of the south and their pious ways and concern for the welfare of the

people had made them welcome group in the large society of the Deccan.⁸

The efforts of the saints like Shaikh Zainuddin Dawud went a long way in checking laxity in the morals of both the people and governing class. In fact the Khanqahs acted as a counter weight in maintaining the moral equilibrium of the medieval society in the Deccan.

One of the important duties of the Muslims was to spread the religion and this became an important work of the sufis. Along with it came the aggressiveness inevitably. To capture temples and monasteries, to destroy idols, to erect mosques in the places of the temples, or to use stones and idols of the temples for the construction of the mosques were the common things practised by the sufis. While practicing these things they had taken for granted the support of the rulers. In Maharashtra, when Marathas came in power, the activities of the sufis became very limited and the cities like Hyderabad^a became their centres.

The sufis were supported by the rulers of their time. The sufis invested all their power for the establishment of the Muslim rule. The writer of Tajakare Avaliya Akaramchya says, "In Hindustan the Muslim region was of two types - the first Sultan and Amir Umrahs and second the sufi saints in monasteries. Badshahs and Sultans ruled over country, whereas the sufis impressed the minds of the people.

Taken as a whole the sufi movement, apart from providing moral strength to Bahamani kingdom and its succession states, worked for the moral and spiritual uplift of the people, checked levities and social vices and created a favourable atmosphere of cultural approachment between various culture groups in the Deccan. Daulatabad, Burhanpur, Gulbarga and Aurangabad were not merely mystic centres of eminence, but were radiating points of culture in medieval India.

The role of the Islamic states in the spread of Islam in south India compared to the sufi saint is less. A lot of conversion to Islam has been done by the sufi saints. But the Muslim emperors like Muhamad Tughlaq, Malik Naib and the Bahamani and its offshoots converted some people of high families of Hindu dynasties. But their work is so limited compared to sufi saints. Malik Naib pulled down the temples of the Hindus and built mosques in their places, he erected in obedience to the commands of the Sultan a great mosque at Devagiri and named it after him. He strove to establish Islam in land of Marhatta (Maharashtra) and under his rule Devagiri became a great Muslim centre in the Deccan.⁹

Ulugh Khan (the eldest son of Ghiyasu-d-din) captured Madura and founded Muslim rule in that area. Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq forced the Muslims of Delhi and made Deogir the second capital. Although only a tenth of the population (i.e., the Muslim population of Delhi) reached Deogir, he built mosques and prayer

halls for them. He converted Rai of Campila. Ibn-i-Battuta met Nasr Bhakhtiyar and Abu Muslim and developed a friendship with Abu Muslim, who was known as Muhrdar because it was his duty to seal the water which the Sultan used to drink.¹⁰ Azizuddin Khammar (the distiller) and Qawalmul Mulk Maqbul converted to Islam by Mahmud bin Tughlaq and allotted them State service. But we have not got information about conversion done forcibly in Bahamani kingdom. But the emperors of Bahamani built mosques and prayer halls for the Muslim population. Shi'ism flourished in Bahamani kingdom.

The founder of the Nizamshahi dynasty was a Brahmin from Patry village. Prof. H.K. Sherwani states that it was when the Bahamani centre had become palpably weak and Shi'ism was proclaimed the state religion first of Bijapur and then of Ahmadnagar, that Qutbul 'l-Muslim took steps to spread the creed in his dominions as well.¹¹ The Muslim emperors married the daughters of Hindu Kings and they showed the importance of their religion to Hindus but they did not give their daughters in marriage to Hindu emperors. In this way many Muslims, especially ruling family, right from the king to the Kazi came in contact with the Hindus in blood relation.

Hindu-Muslim influence on each other in art and architecture was very deep. In the tract of country towards the south of the peninsula known as the Deccan, corresponding

approximately to present dominions of the Nizam of Hyderabad, there was developed a style of Islamic architecture of a definitely regional character. It presents a form of the building art which began when this territory was first occupied by the Sultans of Delhi in the last years of the thirteenth century and the rulers of the Deccan produced an original and independent style of their own.¹² But at Bijapur the style created by the Adil Shahi Kings requires special attention because as casual observation it appears to bear close affinities to the Mughal architecture, and many have referred to it in connection with the Taj Mahal. It is true that they have only the bulbous dome and general appearance in common, but they fundamentally differ from the Taj. The Hindu influence on Muslim architecture is inevitable. There is Hindu influence on the construction of the Jami Masjid inside Gulbarga fort situated a few furlongs off. Turk who, in conjunction with Hindu influence, had revolutionised the Deccan architecture cast off its Tughluq influence in a very short time and developed what was later called the Deccan style.

E.H. Havell rightly says, "The Muhammadan builders, dispensing with the use of materials provided by the Hindu temples, they despoiled and began to build for themselves by way of experiment the roof and arched screens ... small domes of the usual Hindu construction supported on columns."¹³

In Bijapur Ibrahim II (1580-1626) built the Sangit Mahal and Anand Mahal (both with purely Hindu names). The Persian influence on Chand Minar at Daulatabad and Madarasa (or college) both are wholly Persian in character.

The temple of Muktagiri near Gawilgadha in Berar are like the Sonagadha temples of the domes style (copied from the Muslim art). The Islamic style appeared in civil buildings of the Hindu rulers of Vijayanagar and Chandragiri. Firoz's tomb at Gulbarga influenced the Iranian and Hindu styles.

This way the art and architecture of Hindu and Muslims had influence on each other.

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