

# **ISLAM INFLUENCING INDIA**

**Hussain Raandathani- India**

In ancient times a glorious civilization comprising of different philosophies existed in India. When the spider web covering *Vedas* and *Upanishads* are removed, it is crystal clear that Indian sages maintained a religion based on monotheism. When we go through the ancient scriptures of the country, we find similarities with the scriptures existed elsewhere in the world maintaining monotheism and equality of human beings. As per the belief of Islam, the Prophets have been deputed by God to every community and then the *avatars* and sages appeared in India might be prophets. The unity concept propounded by *Vedas* and *Upanishads* and the message of equality postulated by leaders of reformation in ancient India like Buddha, Jinan and others, resembles the teachings of the Semitic prophets.

Albiruni who visited India in the 10th century and who learnt *Vedas* and *Upanishads* recorded regarding the faith of Indians in the following words: “God is unique, is eternal, had no beginning and end. He is working on His own, is great, is benevolent, is living, is life giving, is controller of the universe, has no equals, has no resemblance with anybody and nobody resembles Him. Thus goes the belief of Hindus in God.” (*Tharikh al Hind*). The Brahmanism and caste system developed in later period was instrumental in making the Indian civilization gloomy and inhuman creating distinctions based on birth. Indian feudal class including Brahmins and Kshatriyas exploited the belief in God and made the majority people their slaves by misinterpreting the scriptures. By the medieval times the monotheism and the humanism disappeared from Brahmin thoughts and they made majority of Indians as untouchables and denying them any kind of freedom. It was in this circumstances, like Buddhism and Jainism, Islamic message of Prophet Muhammad reached India with slogans of Unity of God and equality of humanity.

Due to the social and economic inequalities and cultural degradation, the land of India became a fertile ground for the spread of Islam teachings. The lower class who were continuously harassed and insulted by the upper classes, find asylum in the new religion and the Muslim Sufi preachers lent their ears to the sufferings of common man. The legal system followed by the Brahmins was the *Manusmriti* which degraded the *Sudras* and untouchables and maintained the supremacy of the Brahmins who also interpreted *Vedas & Upanishads* according to their whims and fancies.

The caste system was deeply rooted in Malabar. The exploitation was so acute that, Swami Vivekananda, during his visit in 1890s called Malabar, a mad house and Brahmins as mad people. The lower castes and untouchables couldn't use public roads and ponds and other facilities and women were not allowed to wear anything except a piece of cloth on their waist. It was lawful here to enter in to *Sambandham*, a woman cohabiting with many men which has been a variant of prostitution. According to the Malabar marriage commission report -1881, some women maintained up to 27 'husbands'. Nair, a higher Hindu caste families considered it a divine act to present their virgin daughters to Brahmins. Economically also the Brahmins exploited the poor. As per the law of the land the land belonged to Brahmins. They imposed exorbitant taxes and levies up on the peasants who suffered hardly to meet the both ends. Those who rejected the rules framed by Brahmins, were ostracized or killed. This social scenario in

India was the main factor which facilitated the spread of Islam on the land. The lower class people resorted to mass conversion to Islam to escape the caste based repressions. When Muslim missionaries came forward to give protection to the down trodden, they naturally accepted the religion of their protectors. As observed by *Gasper Correa*, a Portuguese writer, when the down trodden people accepted Islam today they got independence to go anywhere and to eat anything. Muslims helped them by giving cloths and the like. (*Gasper Correa, Three Voyages of Vascodama Gama*, 1849, p. 155f)

A section of the upper class also accepted Islam finding a way into the life style and activities of Muslims. Islam became a status symbol; the rich and high class people either embraced Islam or adopted Muslim attire and rituals. Some upper caste people accepted Islam targeting high positions under Muslim rulers. Many Rajput families converted themselves to Islam and established relations with ruling Muslims by giving their daughters in marriage to these rulers. Some others accepted Islam to save themselves from confinement and penalty under the Muslim government. In Malabar, where most of the Muslims were converted from among the peasant class, always maintained an inimical attitude towards their colonial rulers because they always supported the atrocities of the land lords against the peasants. The lower class, even though were not converted, assisted their Muslim counterparts in the war against the land lords and the colonialists. In the war against Para Nambi, a local ruler in Malappuram, in South Malabar, Kunhelu, a gold smith and his friends rallied behind the Muslim fighters to protect the mosque. In the war of Tipu Sulthan, against Travencore Brahmin ruler, a number of low caste men supported him after adopting Islam. In Hinduism war is the duty of the Kshtriya caste and it is forbidden to the lower castes

When epidemics broke out among the lower castes and calamities struck, the Muslims came to help them, while the upper class Hindu, fearing the caste taboos kept themselves away from them. The Muslim mystics travelled across slums and gave asylum to the destitute and untouchables. These people accepted the religion of their protectors, and after their conversion to Islam, the upper castes, without any hesitation or taboos, respected them. For the Hindus, the casteless Islam was quite amazing and in a ballad (Northern Song) the common Hindus record with surprise how, the Muslims treated the high and low with an equal eye: "For Kunjali, the loved one of Kottakkal, Nair (Higher caste) and Thiyyan (Lower caste) both remain identical." Such lines extracted from the popular "*Vadakkan Pattu*" (Northern Songs) implied this attitude of Hindu people. There is the story one Kunjiccheeru Amma, later known as Kaliyattakkavilamma, who being a lower caste, was denied entry into the Thirumandam Kunnu Temple at Valluvanad in Malabar. This woman after travelling a long distance met the Muslim mystic, Mambram Sayyid Alavi Hadrami, and begged him to allot a piece of land nearby, to construct a small temple (*Kavu*) and worship there. The mystic asked his manager, a Hindu upper caste, to find for her a place where she can worship her deity. After one year the woman again approached Sayyid Alawi to fix her a day for the festival of the temple. Alawi recommended

Friday, the day for the festival and the festival still continue as fixed by the him, ie.,15 of Edavam, the Malayalm month.

As per the Brahmin rules, Muslims are regarded as outcasts, but in Malabar that law was not followed and Muslims were given a status equal to that of Nairs, a higher caste. As observed by Ibn Battuta there was no disrespect to Musalmans except that the Brahmins were forbidden taking food along with Muslims and also they were not allowed to enter the houses of upper class people. Even these rules were not strictly followed. ( H.A.R Gibb, *Travels in Asia and Africa, 1325 - 54*, p. 57). The upper caste people readily respected those lower caste men after they had converted to Islam and were also allowed to sit along with them, otherwise, in their previous positions they had to keep a long distance. Shaikh Zainuddin, William Logan, Innes and others had recorded this amazing aspect. Even during the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century the lower castes were appealing the rajas to raise their positions. C. Kesavan, a reformist wrote a letter to Maharajha of Travencore to give to the Ezhava, a lower caste, at least, the favours being given to the converted ones either to Islam or Christianity. Mahakavi Kumaranasan, an Ezhava poet pathetically described the plight of the low castes and untouchable in his poem *Duravastha* in 1920s. He ridiculed the Brahmins who allowed the poor untouchable to sit beside them once he got converted to Islam.

The friendship and support by the rulers at different parts of the country, particularly on the coast of Malabar also was instrumental for the growth of Islam in the region. Except the Arakkal dynasty on the Northern Kerala and a short interlude of Mysorean rulers, Malabar was ruled by Hindus always. "The rulers here showed reverence to Muslims. It is because of the Muslims townships developed here. The rulers gave facilities to Muslims for *Juma* worships and *Id* celebrations. They gave allowances to *Qazis* and *Muaddins*. They allowed Muslims to practice the laws of Shariath." (Zainuddin Makhdam, *Tuhfat al Mujahidin*). The conversion to Islam or Christianity paved the way for freedom of the low castes who after converting enjoyed liberty and participated in the social life with a spirited mind and equality. In this way, the conversion, greatly contributed to the social change and freedom of the untouchables and downtrodden. Also conversion was the only way to bring social change, until the appearance of reform movements from among the low castes themselves.

### **Cheraman Perumal**

There exists a tradition that Cheraman Perumal, the Kshatriya Monarch of Malabar adopted the path of Islam and went to Makkah and during his return he died on the way and before his death he deputed the Muslim missionaries to propagate the faith in Malabar. He wrote letters to his successors in Malabar directing them to give support to the missionaries to construct mosques and spread of the faith. This may also have accelerated the growth of Islam in the region. The story is repeated in the Hindu, Muslim and European chronicles, though with a varied date, and some argue that more kings of Malabar had converted to Islam. Thus one Zamorin of Calicut is

said to have converted to the faith and he died on his return to Malabar at Zafar, in Oman where his grave still exists with the name Abdu Rahman Samiri. It is also said that the king Cheraman Perumal proceeded to Makkah when he witnessed the miracle of splitting of moon by Prophet Muhammad. Still others say that he went to Makkah in response of the letter of Prophet Muhammad who in 628 AD, had written letters to all the famous rulers of the world including the Roman and Persian monarchs. Malik Dinar, who came to Malabar to propagate the faith was famous in Basara and he was the disciple of Sufi teacher Hasan basari. After constructing mosques at different places and appointing Qazis from his own family members, he returned to Basara and from there moved to Khurasan where he died in 748.

### **Preachings of Sufis**

The credit for the promulgation of Islam in India goes to Sufi preachers. The rulers always followed a policy of non interference in the religion of ordinary people. Rulers like Sultan Giyazuddin Balaban never encouraged converting the lower class people to Islam considering their low birth. Ziauddin Barani, the court historian of the Sultans asked the sultan to discourage converting the cobblers and weavers who belonged to lower birth, because, these people if converted will cause disgrace to Islam. Sufis were mostly free people who never got any support from the Muslim monarchs to their proselytizing activities, except on rare occasions. As observed by T.W Arnold, the author of *Preaching of Islam*, in India, Islam got a permanent foot and missionary success in the areas where it was politically weak. In fact Sufis were not converting anybody; instead, the people were getting converted themselves when they were attracted to their attachment with the poor, their truthfulness, benevolence and love. Sufis were present in each town and village helping the poor and rich alike sharing their frets and sorrows. There they became asylum to all sections of people despite their religious or cast differences. Performance of miracles reinforced their divinely attraction. For the lay man one prayer, one gentle stroke or one greeting from the Sufis, was enough.

Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi writes about Chishti Sufi order: “The Sufis of Chishti order started roaming around the country with their religious sermons as soon as they arrived in India. The number of people converted to Islam through Khaja Moinuddeen Chishti is very large. It is an approved fact that Islam’s popularity in India was the result of the devotion and religious inspiration of the Khaja.” (*Muslim in India*). The leadership of religious preaching at Rajputhana including Ajmir was bestowed upon Khaja Muinuddeen Chishti and his disciples. Sheikh Bhakthiyar, Baba Fareed, Hamiduddeen Nagouri, Nizamuddin Aulia, Gesu Diraz, Salim Chishti and others were popular Chishti Sufis.

The popular Sufi preachers who served at different regions of India are the following: Hazrath Ubaidulla Thangal, Masthan Vali, Qasim Waliyullahi (Lakadives), Shaikh Yosuf Shamsudheen (Maldives), Nitarsha (Trichinappally), Syed Ibrahim Badsha (Erwadi), Shaikh Sahul Hameed (Nagoor), Baba Fakrudheen (Penugonda), Mahavir Khamdayath (Bijapur), Sayyid Gesu Diraz (Gulbarga), Shaikh Abdul Qadir Sani( Belgam), Hamshipeer (Gujarath), Mohammed Sadiq

Sarmasth (Nasik), Sayyid Mohammed bin Ali (Belgaum), Sayyid Yousufuddin (Sind), Imam Sha (Kach, Gujarat), Malik Abdul Latheef (Gujarat), Shaikh Jalaluddin Tabrizi (Bengal), Haji Shareeathulla (Bengal), Shaikh Ismail Bukahri, Shaikh Hujwiri (Lahore), Shaikh Bahauddin Zakariyya (Multan), Shaikh Nizamuddin, Shaikh Hamiduddin, Shaikh Bhakthiyar (Delhi), Baba Farid (Pak Pathan), Shaikh Jalaludheen (Asam), Moulavi Kwaja Hussain (Bombay), Sayyid Safar Ali (Khandesh), Moulavi Ubaidulla (Patyala), Shaikh Yahya Maneri (Bihar), Khaja Baqi Billahi (Delhi).....this list goes on.

Shaikh Zainuddin, Shaikh Jufri and others were the Sufi preachers of Malabar. The Sufi orders like Qadiri, Ba Alawi and Rifai' and Shadili were deeply rooted here. The Ba Alawi was influential in Yemen and Hadramaut and it was brought to Malabar Hadrami migrant, Shaikh Jufri Thangal. The migration of Hadrami and Bukhari sayyid clans to Malabar revitalized Malabar Islam in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. They introduced Sufi litanies and prayers to the region. Sufi devotional songs in Arabic and vernacular languages enriched the literary activities of Malabar Muslims

### **Religious Policy**

Setting aside the exploitation of religion by the rulers and the interpretation of history by the imperialist and communal historians, the facts prove that the two powerful communities-Hindus and Muslims in India lived in a peaceful atmosphere and tolerance. They both contributed to the integration of Indian culture which is unique among the world civilizations. The western colonialists who wanted to impose their hegemony tried to break the bond of friendship between the two communities and they started an era of divide and rule and this to some extent, affected the friendship and the elites of the two communities widened the rift ending in the division of the country into India and Pakistan. However, the cultural assimilation between Hinduism and Islam remained unaffected. The struggles in the name of religion always were politically motivated. It never affected the coexistence of the common people belonging to Hindus and Muslims. Every atrocity of a ruler was justified in the name of religion. The religious scholars called *Ulama* on the other hand interpreted religion to suit the needs of the rulers or the rulers forced the *Ulama* to do so, where by justifying the cruelty and aggression of the rulers. When Asoka, the Great, the Maurya ruler conquered Kalinga after a destructive war he took refuge in Buddhism to wash off his sins, but he never gave back the conquered territories. Mahamud Ghazni, another ruler waged war against both his Muslim Hindu enemies terribly, but everything was justified in the name of religion and he was called as the savior of Islam by his court historian Utbi. This was the case of almost all the rulers. Dr.P.Saran writes: "It is difficult to find even a single instance of Muslim rulers getting engaged in war based only on clear principles of religion or based on reasons related to religion. Almost all wars that happened were fought targeting political gains and satisfaction of physical desires". The tolerance and intolerance of rulers were based on their political benefits. The religious policy attributed to the rulers was meaningless, since these rulers always exploited religion for their political ends. When there is a war against a Hindu ruler, then the war is waged for Islam. If the war is against a Muslim ruler, then it is a war against heresy.

Thus every act was interpreted in the name of religion. At the same time, there are instances Sulthans and Mughals maintaining friendship with Rajputs and others, even marrying the Hindus and forging alliance with the Hindu rulers, sometimes to defeat his Muslim enemy. Rana Sangha invited Babar to India to defeat his Rajput enemies. But, when Babar wanted to establish his own empire in India, Rana became his enemy, and by joining hands with Afghan Muslims he tried to defeat Babar. And Babar himself entered India not by defeating any Hindu ruler, but Ibrahim Lodhi, his co-religionist. Thus it is meaningless to impose any religious policy to any ruler. Even kinship was undermined for the sake of politics. However, rulers like Firoz Shah Tughluq, Akbar, Shajahan and others maintained a policy of tolerance. When Sulthan Alauddin Khalji, as a part of his fiscal policy, removed the Zamindars (land lords), the intermediaries of land and introduced direct taxation system, he was dubbed as anti Hindu because the Zamindars were always Brahmins. At the same time the policy of Sulthan benefited the lower class tenants who were also Hindus, but in ancient times the lower class were not counted in any way, as Hindus.

Generally, the Muslim rulers never interested in spreading their faith. Their aim was to maintain the rule, for which they took help of any ruler despite their religious inclinations. Mohammad bin Qasim who ruled Sind (713-715) was a tolerant Sultan. He saved the Buddhists and peasants from the cruelty of Brahmin King Dahir. He said, while giving protection to Hindu temples: "The temples in Hindustan are like Christian Churches, Jewish Synagogues and the Fire temples of Zoroastrians." ( Sulaiman Nadwi, *Arab O Hind ke T'alluqat*). He gave recognition to Brahmins for their social status and posted them in high jobs. Sultan's Chief Minister was Sisikar, who was formerly a minister to Raja Dahir. Mahamud Ghazni, who looted Somanatha temple, built another temple in his capital Ghazna, and asked Hindus and Muslims to pay offerings there. He appointed Brahmins in high posts considering their scholarship. The destructions he caused in India were far less when compared the same he inflicted upon the Muslim Kings of Khurasan and Bukhara.

When Qutbuddin Aibek established his Turkish rule in India he never altered the existing administrative system altogether. For the Turks India was an alien country with an alien culture. So they maintained the existing system of revenue administration with the help of the existing landlords and bureaucracy. The defeated kings were allowed to continue their rule, with only condition that they will accept the suzerainty of the Sultan and pay tributes. These rulers who were called as Ranas, Rajas or Rais also helped the Sultans in their wars against the enemies regardless of their religious affinity. Sultan Mohammed bin Tughluq used the service of Hindus in the administration to the extent that once he executed a *qazi* for giving a false judgment against Hindu through false arguments. Though Sultan Firoz Shah Tughluq regarded Hinduism with abhorrence, he never curtailed the religious freedom of Hindus. Ziyaruddin Barani writes: "During the period of the Sultan Firoz, at the capital and in the Muslim towns the rituals of non believers were performed openly. Idols were worshipped publicly. A small payment as *Jizya* was just enough for this freedom. Non believers were able to continue their traditions ...." (*Fatawa i Jahandari*). Sultan Sikandar Lodi was an adversary of Hinduism. Once he decided to demolish

Kuruksheethra and stop the sacred ablution performed there. But he backed up from this attempt when scholars and Sufis opposed this move under the leadership of Miyan Abdulla who declared that, the Sultan has no right to stop the customs of the people belonging to other religions.

## **Mughals**

Mughals were more tolerant when compared to the Sultans. The main enemies of Babar, who always praised the artistic architecture associated with Hindu temples, were Sultan Ibrahim Lodi and his Afghan Muslims. Akbar, the Great Mughal, was an embodiment of boundless religious tolerance. Afghan ruler Shershah, and the Mughal rulers, Jahangir and Shahjahan were emperors believed in religious broadmindedness and amity. They respected the composite Indian culture and brought rapprochement between Hinduism and Islam. Aurangzeb, the last Great Mughal ruler, who had been stamped as destroyer of temples and opponent of Hinduism were not always true. “What have we got to do with the affairs of others? Jesus may follow Jesus’ and Mosses follow Mosses’ religions”, this was the explanation of Aurangzeb regarding the religions. (Dr.Thara Chand, *Patel Memorial Lectures*). On another occasion he said: “Why is this insanity in the matter of religion? You have your religion and I have mine”. (*ibid*). The emperor had destroyed some temples including the Lord Viswanatha temple at Benares. This temple was demolished as per the request of Hindus. The temple was defiled due to one priest’s act of disgracing the modesty of a princess. When the Hindu leaders informed this to Aurangzeb, who was staying for a while at Benares on his way to Bengal, he ordered to shift the Viswanatha idol to another place and to demolish the temple. This incident had been narrated by Dr.Pattabhi Sitharamayya, Dr.P.Guptha, and Dr.B.N.Pandey in their books. It is true that Aurangzeb sometimes demolished the temples in the enemy territory, but in his own territories he provided grants to temples. There is proof for Aurangzeb disbursing grants to more than 30 temples in UP. Someswar Nath Temple (Allahabad), Janghambadi Siva Temple (Benares), Mahakaleswara Temple (Ujjain), Balaji Temple (Chitrakootam), Umanad Temple (Gauhatti) and Jaina Temple (Sathrunjai) were among them. He gave allowance to the temple priests ( Poojaris) also. The emperor set aside the income of two hundred villages for the maintenance of Jagannath temple at Ahmadabad. In one of his early acts as emperor, Aurangzeb issued an imperial order (farman) to local Mughal officials at Benares that directed them to halt any interference in the affairs of local temples. The king ordered his officials: “You must see that nobody unlawfully disturbs the Brahmins or other Hindus of that region, so that they might remain in their traditional place and pray for the continuance of the Empire. In 1691 Aurangzeb conferred eight villages and a sizable chunk of tax-free land on Mahant Balak Das Nirvani of Chitrakoot to support the Balaji Temple. In 1698 he gifted rent-free land to a Brahmin named Rang Bhatt, son of Nek Bhatt, in eastern Khandesh in central India. The list goes on and includes temples and individuals in Allahabad, Vrindavan, Bihar, and elsewhere. Aurangzeb granted land at Shatrunjaya, Girnar, and Mount Abu—all Jain pilgrimage destinations in Gujarat—to specific Jain communities in the late 1650s. He gave Lal Vijay, a Jain monk, a monastery (*poshala*), probably sometime before 1681, and granted relief for a resting house (*upashraya*) in 1679.



During Aurangzeb's long reign of fifty years, many Hindus, notably Jaswant Singh, Raja Rajrup, Kabir Singh, Arghanath Singh, Prem Dev Singh, Dilip Roy, and Rasik Lal Crory, held very high administrative positions. Two of the highest ranked generals in Aurangzeb's administration, Jaswant Singh and Jaya Singh, were Hindus. Other notable Hindu generals who commanded a garrison of two to five thousand soldiers were Raja Bhim Singh of Udaypur, Indra Singh, Achalaji and Arjuji. One wonders if Aurangzeb was hostile to Hindus, why would he position all these Hindus to high positions of authority, especially in the military, who could have mutinied against him and removed him from his throne? "During the fifty year reign of Aurangzeb, not a single Hindu was forced to embrace Islam. He did not interfere with any Hindu religious activities." (*Ithihasa Parichaya*, 138)

Once Aurangzeb ordered the demolition of a mosque when he learned that a noble had amassed a large amount of wealth and he had kept it in a pit and a mosque has been built over it. The emperor ordered to demolish the mosque and unearth the wealth. Aurangzeb was the most liberal monarch who maintained maximum Rajputs as his Mansabdars. (Athar Ali, *The Mughal nobility*). When Raja Jay Singh, the chief commander of Aurangzeb's army reached Maratha region, he was received by the Brahmins, who performed a yanjya (Kot Chandi Yanjya), for the success of Jay Singh.

### **Chatrapati Shivaji**

Chatrapati Shivaji, the Maratha leader is considered as an anti Muslim hero by the communalist historians. Nevertheless, Shivaji fought not against religion, but for his Maratha nation. He never considered his empire as a Hindu nation and that of his enemy as Islamic. Shivaji, was a man of tolerance and respected both Hindu and Muslim saints. In his empire, the Muslim affairs were in the hands of Muslim judges, who maintained the Muslim law in the state. His cavalry was commanded by Ibrahim Khan and Naval force by Doulat Khan, all of them participated in the war against Aurangzeb. He had a Muslim guard called Mehtar Khan who was his trusted servant. Shivaji sent Kazi Hyder, a Muslim as his emissary to the court of Aurangzeb. On the other hand the rivalry between Shivaji and Aurangzeb was purely political and neither Aurangzeb nor Shivaji mentioned anywhere that they fought for their respective religions. Aurangzeb sent his Hindu commander Raja Jai Singh to deal with Shivaji. There were hundreds of Rajput soldiers in the army of Aurangzeb. As mentioned above, Shivaji respected the Muslim saints and visited them, that once before starting his journey to sign a treaty with Qutub Shahi Sulthan, Shivaji visited Sufi Saint BabaYaqub and Maharshi Mouni Baba and sought their blessings.

### **Sufi attitude**

Sufis moulded their teachings in a way of assimilating the Islamic values with that of indigenous culture. They fostered tolerance with all religions saying that God has sent prophets to every people and the Hindu philosophy may be the teaching of certain prophets who were sent to India.

Sufi hospices were open to all people despite their religious differences, and the aggrieved people found asylum in the Sufi hospices. In fact, the Bhakthi, a reformation movement in Hinduism, was a by-product of Sufism, that prompted the Hindu saints to go back to their scriptures to get rid of caste system and polytheism. The Bhakti leaders, particularly Kabir Das and Guru Nanak had sought spiritual training at the feet of Sufis.

Prof.K.A.Nizami writes on the contribution of Sufism to Indian culture: At that time the Indian society was in a definite juncture. The energy of Hindus to tide over crises had been lost due to caste feelings. The practice of preventing lower caste people from touching the higher caste and disallowing them the places where the higher caste people lived, weakened the society. All the amenities of civil life were denied to the outcastes. The majority of Indian people belonged to this category. They had to go out of the town before sun set. They were not allowed to enter temples. They were not allowed to read or hear the scriptures. It is to be noted that the hospices of the Sufis were constructed near the centers of outcastes, far away from the upper class townships. The captivating methods of Sufis along with their boundless humanism and the atmosphere preventing separatism attracted the neglected people of Indian society. Here they found an entirely different social system other than what was being practiced till then. There was no place in the Sufi circles, for the indifference or insult thrust upon them by Hindu society. Everybody lived, took food and slept together. The Holy book was opened before everybody. Thus the Sufi houses called Khanqahs of Medieval period brought into practice the working principles of *Thouheed* (Unity of God) which became the central points of Muslim civilization (*Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India*, translated from Urdu ). Nizamuddin Aulia instructed his disciples the following: “Get along peacefully with all social groups. Give equal status to Hindus and Muslims in social life. Open up the doors of Qanqah (hospice) to all sections of people.”(Ibid.) Amir Khusru, a disciple of the Aulia and a literary composer, said: “Though a Hindu does not have faith like me, most often he believes what I believe”. Prominent Sufis like Nizamuddin Aulia, Sheikh Abdul Quddus, and Sheikh Gezu Diraz were adept in Hindu philosophy. Sheikh Muhammed Gaus, the famous Sufi belonging to Shattari order translated *Amritha Kunda*, a book on yogic science, from Sanskrit to Persian. He also taught yoga meditation to his disciples. Sufi poet *Muhammed Afsal Sarkhush* resided in the *Ashram* of a Hindu saint for twenty five days to learn Hinduism. Sheikh Hussain Ambar Khan wrote an interpretation for *Bhagavath Githa* in Marathi.

The Non Muslim people mostly respected the Sufi Saints that they sought their blessings leaving aside temples and Gods. There were many Hindus among the disciples of Sufi Sultan Ahmad, who was also known as Saki Sarvar. The Hindu disciples called him Lakki Dada. Hindus called Lal Sabash Qalandhar, a Suhrawardi Sufi as Raja Bharati. This Muslim saint was a relief and hope to the downtrodden. It was Sufi Inayath Shah of Sind who gave asylum to Hindus who were striving hard in the attack of the Kalhora Kings. Sheikh Baba Farid is still the most beloved of Sikhs of Punjab. In the *Adi Granth* (First Scripture) of Sikhs, there are a number of couplets belong to those of Farid. The Hindu Lord of Maratha, Malokji was concerned about not having

children. He shared his distress with Sufi Saint Shah Sherif. It is said that the Shah prayed for the cause of Malokji and two children were born to him. He named his two children taking two parts of the name of the Sufi; Shaji and Sherifji. Sivaji, the Maratha king is the son of Shaji.

Athindra Nath *Bose* wrote: The Sufis who took inspiration from the equality envisaged in Islam, came here as the carriers of an open ideology for the common people. Their inspiration was free from the shackles and the blind beliefs inhibiting the progress of India. The popular request made by them against the barrenness created by orthodox systems induced a new spiritual initiative in the people and enabled them to be worthy of the longtime dormant productivity". (*The cultural Heritage of India*, Vol. 3). In the words of Fat-hulla Mujthabi, "Sufis were able to get closer to the people through tolerance, humanism, simplicity and impoverished life. They attracted both Hindus and Muslims towards them. Thus Sufis were able to remain the internal link between the two religions while propagating Islam. Along with this they showed the Hindu community the higher values of Islam, universal equality, human fraternity and other brighter sides of Sufism". (*Hindu -Muslim Cultural Relations*.)

### **India's Greatness**

To Muslims, patriotism is a part of their faith. This was not the only reason for Muslims to love India. As per Islamic History, Adam, the first man and the prophet set his foot at Sri Lanka, in Indian Peninsula when he was banished from the heaven. In Sri Lanka, the mountain called Adams's peak is still revered by different religious people including Muslims. Muslim poet Amir Khusru, who is considered the *Flowery Cuckoo* of Medieval India, gives seven reasons to explain why he loved India. (1) India is the land of Adam. (2) The Peacock, the bird of the Paradise, was seen in India. (3) The Snake which was expelled from Eden also settled in India. (4) Prophet Adam found happiness only in India. (5) The flowers of India had more fragrance than the flowers of Persia. (6) Happiness in this world is not given to the believers, instead it had been given to non believing Hindus of India and (7) India is a paradise, because here his lord Qutubuddin Mubarak reigns. (Amir Khusrau, *Nuh Sifir* ). Amir Khusrau also believed that the climate and life style of this land was congenial than that of any other part of the world. The grass fields, the gardens, the meadows, the never drained rivers of India, the fragrance spread by flowers, banana fields, betel-leaf; all these had made India, the paradise of earth. Khusrau liked Indian languages better than Persian language. He compiled many of his collections in the Hindavi language, Indian language in Persian script, the forerunner of Urdu.

Sayyid Jalaluddin Bhukari, the famous Sufi saint praised India in the following lines:

“Chanden anvah niamath ha va alvan rangha  
Bane Adam kunus hikmath ha ka mahsoos  
Barmem hindustan darbahar va barjahan nest”

(So many gifts given by God, different types of people, bundles of knowledge; all these are the specialties of Hindustan. We cannot see a great country like this anywhere else in the land or sea.)

Who can forget the *Tarana-e-Hindustan* of Allama Iqbal:

*Sāre jahān se acchā, Hindositā hamārā*  
*Ham bulbulen hai nis kī, yih gulsitā hamārā*

*Ghurbat me ho agar ham, rahtā hai dil waṭan me*  
*Samjho wuhin hame nbhī dil ho jahā hamārā*

*Parbat wuh sab se unchā, hamsāyah āsmā nkā*  
*Wuh santarī hamārā, wuh pāsbān hamārā*

*Godī meṅ kheltī hai nis kī hazāro nadiyā n*  
*Gulṣ hān hai jin ke dam se ra shkī janā hamārā*

*Ai āb-i rūd-i Gangā! wuh din hain yād tujh ko?*  
*Utrā tire kināre jab kārwan hamārā*

*Mazhab nahī nsikhātā āpas me hāir rakhnā*  
*Hindī hain ham, wa an hai Hindositā hamārā*

*Yūnān o-Miṣr o-Rūmā, sab miṭ ga'e jahān se*  
*Ab tak magar hai bāqī, nām o-nis hā hamārā*

*Kuch bāt hai kih hastī, miṭṭī nahīn hamārī*  
*Ṣadiyon rahā hai du shān daur-i zamā hamārā*

*Iqbāl! ko'ī mahram apnā nahīn jahā nme n*  
*Ma'lūm kyā kisī ko dard-i nihān hamārā!*

(Better than the entire world, is our India,  
We are its nightingales, and it (is) our garden abode

If we are in an alien place, the heart remains in the homeland,  
Know us to be only there where our heart is.

That tallest mountain, that shade-sharer of the sky,  
It (is) our sentry, it (is) our watchman

In its lap where frolic thousands of rivers,  
Whose vitality makes our garden the envy of Paradise.

O the flowing waters of the [Ganges](#), do you remember that day  
When our caravan first disembarked on your waterfront?

Religion does not teach us to bear animosity among ourselves  
We are of [Hind](#), our homeland is Hindustan.

In a world in which ancient [Greece](#), [Egypt](#), and [Rome](#) have all vanished  
Our own attributes (name and sign) live on today.

There is something about our existence for it doesn't get wiped  
Even though, for centuries, the time-cycle of the world has been our enemy.

Iqbal! We have no confidant in this world  
What does any one know of our hidden pain?)

Iqbal had contributed many couplets on the greatness of Hindustan. Here is his *Hindustan ki Bachon Ka Qumi Geet*

*Chishti Ne Jis Zameen Mein Pegham-e-Haq Sunaya*  
*Nanak Ne Jis Chaman Mein Wahdat Ka Geet Gaya*  
*Tatariyon Ne Jis Ko Apna Watan Banaya*  
*Jis Ne Hijaziyon Se Dast-e-Arab Chhuraya*  
*Mera Watan Wohi Hai, Mera Watan Wohi Hai*

*Yunanion Ko Jis Ne Heeran Kar Diya Tha*  
*Sare Jahan Ko Jis Ne Ilm-o-Hunar Diya Tha*  
*Mitti Ko Jis Ki Haq Ne Zr Ka Asar Diya Tha*  
*Turkon Ka Jis Ne Daman Heeron Se Bhar Diya Tha*  
*Mera Watan Wohi Hai, Mera Watan Wohi Hai*

*Toote The Jo Stare Faras Ke Asman Se*  
*Phir Taab De Ke Jis Ne Chamkaye Kehkashan Se*  
*Wahdat Ki Laiy Suni Thi Dunya Ne Jis Makan Se*  
*Meer-e-Arab Ko Aayi Thandi Hawa Jahan Se*  
*Mera Watan Wohi Hai, Mera Watan Wohi Hai*

*Bande Kaleem Jis Ke, Parbat Jahan Ke Seena*  
*Nooh -e-Nabi Ka Aa Kar Thehra Jahan Safeena*  
*Riffat Hai Jis Zameen Ki Baam-e-Falak Ka Zeena*  
*Jannat Ki Zindagi Hai Jis Ki Faza Mein Jeena*  
*Mera Watan Wohi Hai, Mera Watan Wohi Hai*

(The land in which Chishti delivered the message of God  
The garden in which Nanak sang the song of Tawhid of God  
The land which the Tatars adopted as their homeland  
For which people of Hijaz abandoned the Arabian wilderness  
That same is my homeland, that same is my homeland

Yunanion Ko Jis Ne Heeran Kar Diya Tha  
Sare Jahan Ko Jis Ne Ilm-o-Hunar Diya Tha  
Whose soil had been endowed by God with the elixir's effect  
Which had filled the pocket of the Turks with diamonds  
That same is my homeland, that same is my homeland

Toote The Jo Stare Faras Ke Asman Se  
Phir Taab De Ke Jis Ne Chamkaye Kehkashan Se  
The House from which the world had heard Tawhid's tune  
From where the Holy Prophet had felt cool breeze  
Mera Watan Wohi Hai, Mera Watan Wohi Hai

Whose denizens are Kaleems, whose mountains the Sinais are  
Where the Prophet Nuh's boat and its occupants had landed  
Riffat Hai Jis Zameen Ki Baam-e-Falak Ka Zeena  
Jannat Ki Zindagi Hai Jis Ki Faza Mein Jeena  
Mera Watan Wohi Hai, Mera Watan Wohi Hai

There are numerous patriotic songs contributed by Urdu Muslim poets like Azimulla Khan, Yusuf Mehr e Ali, Abid Hasan Safrani, Bismil Azimabadi, Hazrat Mohani and others. It was Hazrat Mohani who coined the slogan Inquilab Zindabad to Indian freedom struggle. The credit for coining Jai Hind is often given to Chempaka Raman Pillai, an associate of Subash Chandra Bose, but it was Major Hasan Safrani, another associate of Chandra Bose who brought, for the first time the slogan Jai Hind and the INA popularized it. Hasan was basically an engineer, who later became the interpreter and secretary of Chandra Bose. (Narendra Luther, *Legendotes of Hyderabad*). [drhussaink@gmail.com](mailto:drhussaink@gmail.com)

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