CONVERSION OR REVERSION?
A REVIEW OF MEDIEVAL INDIA'S ISLAMIC TRANSFORMATION

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The paper aims to explore, analyze and investigate the relation between the Sufi shrines and religious transformation of medieval India as conversion or reversion. The religious conversion of South Asia particularly the Indian subcontinent has been associated with agricultural economy by Richard M. Eaton. For Eaton it was the agrarian economy which motivated or influenced the regional population of Multan and Pakpattan to transform religiously. Diego Abenante argued against Eaton's idea about Islam as the religion of plough with the facts about the Multan region revealing agricultural development much later than the religious transformation of the local population. Through studying Indian Islam as a social reflection (as per Emile Durkheim's theory) this paper tries to analyze the religious transformation of Medieval India under the theoretical model of *Al-fiṭrah* by Ibn-i-Khaldun. *Al-fiṭrah* (reversion or self- amendment) is a five step process including: (a) Umranic (social) association with community, (b) Co-operation or support of the community, (c) Communication through soft skills like language etc., (d) Competition or prevention between communities, and (e) Self amendment or Reversion. It was not the agrarian economy but the vernacularization of Islam under the Sufi shrines which made Islam less Brahmanized for the local people and allowed them to adopt it firstly according to their convenience and later on adapt according to the religion's limits. To explain the course of religious reversion of medieval India, analytical and descriptive method has been used.

Key Words: *Al-fiṭrah*, Conversion, Reversion, Sufi shrines, *Umranic*.

Introduction

South Asia has always been diverse in its religious construction which caused religious heterodoxy to bcome a common feature of Indian society. Hinduism and Islam are the two most followed religions in South Asia. The advent of Islam in South Asia was due to a diverse range of factors like through Arab traders, migration, Turko-Afghan invasions and conversions. Therefore it is not easy to trace the roots of Islamic tradition in the Indian subcontinent. Islam was introduced to India long before the Turko-Afghan invaders through Arab merchants, that is why Islam as religion in South Asia has been studied in the context of Arab culture and legitimacy to Islamic tradition has been drawn from Arab tradition. This Arab hegemony led towards 'Brahmanization'[1] of Islamic traditions in the hands of ulama conversant with Arabic. And the supremacy of ulama had been challenged by Sufis who despite condemnation and criticism presented Islam as a religion attuned to local understanding. Lamin Sanneh's argument cannot be denied that Islam has always rejected the prior culture of the place and developed its own cultural traditions.[2] And Islamic traditions have always developed their base on Qur'ān, as Qur'ān has been the main source for the development of Islamic traditions. But the vernacularization of these traditions could also be observed as far as the case of Islam in India is concerned.

South Asia in particular is imbued by the popular culture of Sufis and shrines. Islam spread here more due to the shrine cult instead of political patronage or the sword. Spencer Triminigham comments: "Indian Islam seems to have been essentially a holy-man Islam."[3] For the local population, the holy man thus represents the moral authority. As Tanvir Anjum aptly comments that the phenomenon of conversion to Islam cannot be understood without reference to the notion of vernacularization of Islam.[4] In its vernacular process they developed the concept of God for local people in easily accessible idiom, so that they could absorb the essence of Islam in their religious culture, and through syncretism Sufis also adopted the local religious cultures into Islam.[5]

Peter Hardy, under the title, "Modern European and Muslim explanations of Conversion to Islam in South Asia: A Preliminary Survey of the Literature", discusses almost every existing literature on conversion till the 1970's. In this work Peter Hardy has raised some serious questions about two assumptions about Islam, first as a missionary religion and secondly the use of temporal power to encourage acceptance of it.[6] Hardy argues that the British never observed or officially recognized

conversion before the right of separate electorates was given to Muslims in 1909. He has aptly questioned the equation built between Christian missionaries and Sufi saints by many colonial writers about Muslim conversion[7] because these Sufis never worked intentionally as preachers of Islam.[8] So the peaceful penetration of Islamic traditions in India not only caused spread of Islam in this region but also promoted co-existence with other contemporary religions.

But Richard M. Eaton's idea of "Religion of Plough" states things differently. Although he acknowledges the role of Sufis as agents of Islam in India but according to him the reason behind massive conversions was agricultural economy. He studied conversion to Islam in Bengal and Punjab and argued that in Bengal, change in the route of Ganges River from West to East caused agricultural revolution. The saints of East Bengal who had accompanied this change became the pioneers of agriculture in East Bengal.[9] In Pakpattan and Multan (cities of South Punjab, Pakistan) the migration of non-Hindu, pastoralist Jat groups from Sindh to these cities turned them into agriculturalists and Muslims simultaneously.[10] Based on these instances Eaton called Islam the "Religion of Plough." On the other hand the process of conversion was such a slow and "glacial process" that it went almost completely unnoticed by the historians of that time. Even the word conversion is also questioned by Richard M. Eaton as it reflects some conscious effort of changing one's religious identity which is not applicable in the case of South Asia.[11]

This research is an effort to address whether religious transformation in India was conversion or reversion? Here the term reversion is used in the sense that the people who were getting transformed from one religion to other were not consciously and entirely converting but it was a process through which they passed and amended themselves into something better than they were in before. It was a sort of purification for them which was motivating them to transform without realizing that it will be the change of their religion in the long run. It was a dual process of adoption and adaption. Primarily the Sufi rituals and traditions were absorbed by the local people without the purpose of religious transformation. Later on through the development of a community associated to the Sufi shrines they adapted themselves according to the religious code. History is witness to the fact that Muslim identity growth in medieval India was more based on region instead of religion.[12] Religion as a factor is over-emphasized by some scholars probably because of the census (first in 1871) conducted in British India highlighting religious

identities. So this research will try to determine whether Muslim religious transformation in medieval India was conversion or reversion.

Theoretical Framework

This research is aimed to address the above mentioned questions under the theory of *Al-fiṭrah* by Ibn-i-Khaldun. But before discussing *Al-fiṭrah* we need to understand the socio-cultural context of Indian Islam. Emile Durkheim, in his famous book *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* discusses religion as a reflection of society. For Durkheim religion is a cohesive structure of some convictions and their applications which are related to spiritual sacredness and prohibition and create a united moral community of those who believe in them, called a Church.[13] These elements (convictions and their application; spiritual sacredness and forbiddingness; and united moral community) are the base of every religion.[14] A united moral community cannot be formed without the attraction towards convictions and spiritual sacredness and forbiddingness.[15] Communal enthusiasm develops from the moments when a group of people or 'united community' performs and applies their certain convictions and beliefs making it a religious obligation. And then this communal enthusiasm is projected into an external symbol[16] which is infused with the power of community and collective force. This helps the society to get a representation or tangible idea for itself in the shape of religion.

In the Indian subcontinent the Sufis and their shrines were such external symbols. Through associating themselves with these Sufi shrines the local people were developing a bond of united moral community without formally changing their religion. For Durkheim the re-animation of societal forces central to the religiosity of the society, is very important because it provides the individuals not only the necessary knowledge of the ties that exist between them but also about the society they belong to, otherwise a religion will be forgotten.[17] This connection signifies the religious rituals for the continuity of the society; religion cannot survive on mere convictions and beliefs as it is dependent on the force behind the belief for its expression. This expression is only possible through religious rituals which reaffirm the communal beliefs and the participants express their association with the sacred objects or the society itself.

India's Islamic tradition is also based on these above mentioned three very basic fundamentals (convictions and their application; spiritual sacredness and prohibition; and united moral community) which helped

in developing Islam in Indian soil. These elements helped in the process of vernacularization of Islam in India. The Sufis in Indian subcontinent played the role of a center of attraction for the common people because these Sufis were promoting religious harmony, peace and love and were not associating themselves with a certain religious community but their doors were open for all. This spiritual attraction resulted in a sort of socio-cultural renovation of the visitors of these Sufi shrines transforming them into a certain community with certain beliefs and practices.

Ibn-i-Khaldun's Idea of *Al-fiṭrah*

Ibn-i-Khaldun derived this term *Al-fiṭrah* from the *Qur'ān* which means '*The* nature.' He discussed this idea in his famous work *Muqaddimah,* under the title *'Ilm-ul-'Umrān Al-Bashari* (Science of Human Civilization). This idea of *Al-fiṭrah,* explains how innate human nature helps, identifies and simultaneously explains the metaphysical origin of humanity under these steps; (a) *Umranic* (social) association with community, (b) Co-operation or support of the community, (c) Communication through soft skills like language etc., (d) Competition or prevention between communities, (e) Self amendment.[18] This theoretical framework will help in identifying India's religious transformation as either conversion or reversion.

These above mentioned steps better define the religious transformation of India towards Islam. The first two steps have been discussed under Durkheim's model that how a certain socio-cultural community developed in India under the influence of the Sufis. This community developed their own soft skills like language, rituals and beliefs which tied them into a communal bond and helped them in communicating with each other. In the next step this community was in a state of comparison between their older beliefs (Hinduism, Buddhism etc.) and the new pattern (the communal patterns based on their association with the Sufi shrines)[19] they were following, which resulted in a sort of self - amendment (reversion).

To this Ibn-i- Khaldun refers as *Al-fiṭrah* which means a balanced human inclination[20] that lives according to the laws of natural divine order.[21] This paper is an effort to explain India's Islamic transformation in the context of Ibn Khaldun's *Al-fiṭrah* while referring to it as reversion. Parrucci defines conversion as "re-orientation of the personality system involving a change in the constellation of religious beliefs and /or practices".[22] This definition of religious conversion refers to conscious

and complete alteration in one's religious beliefs and conduct. And contrary to this idea of conversion, reversion is something similar to Ibn Khaldun's *Al-fiṭrah*.

Medieval India's Islamic Transformation and Agrarian Economy

Although a lot of research has been produced on India's Islamic tradition but works on Muslim conversions in India are very few mainly because the religious transformation was such a day to day process that it went unnoticed by the historians of that time. India witnessed massive Muslim conversion from twelfth century onwards and the process accelerated during fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The time span is so large, and the process so slow that it is very difficult to trace the real motives behind Muslim conversions. There's no doubt that converts undergo a meaningful change but at the same time there is an important element of continuity.[23] And perhaps that is why the term conversion is also contested.

The most relevant work to this research is done by Richard M. Eaton in two of his research papers, one is "The Political and Religious Authority of the Shrine of Baba Farid", and the second is "Approaches to the Study of Conversion to Islam in India". In the first paper Eaton has developed his argument that religious transformation started during the life time of Baba Farid (b. 568 AH/1173 AD-d. 656 AH/1266 AD) through making a table of the clans claiming to be converted by Baba Farid himself. Secondly he used the naming patterns of the males of the Siyal Clan at Pakpattan as evidence to religious transformation to identify the exact time span of conversion. The table of naming patterns shows increase in Muslim names from 1415 onwards. The author argues that the shrine of Baba Farid integrated local systems of culture into a larger one; the shrine nonetheless remained a local manifestation of that larger culture. Shrine of Baba Farid made a universal culture system available to local groups, enabling such groups to transcend their local microcosms.[24]

The second work directly discusses the issue of religious transformation in India in great detail. Eaton has briefly discussed the existing theories about conversion to Islam in India with highlighting the flaws these theories carry. Then Eaton coined a new term of 'double movement' which he has formulated on the theory of Durkheim of religion as a social reflection. In double movement theory Eaton is referring to accretion and reform process during religious transformation of India. In this paper Eaton referred to Islam as a religion of the plough, and

agricultural economy the major reason of massive Muslim conversion. He has contested the term conversion while arguing that India's Islamic transformation was not a conscious process.

In another work *The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier, 1204-1760*, Eaton discusses Islam as the religion of plough theory in detail with particular focus on Bengal. Eaton maintains that till the sixteenth century the Ganges River flowed towards the Bay of Bengal down the western side of the province making the area a Hindu spiritual and agricultural heartland while leaving East Bengalis lightly exposed to 'Brahmanical Hinduism'. In sixteenth century the river changed its course and pushed its channels towards east, opening up huge areas for rice cultivation. These river shifts occurred almost simultaneously with the Mughul conquest of Bengal, which resulted in the shift of Muslim colonists towards east Bengal along with Sufi saints who were later on associated with the pioneering of agriculture. So, rice cultivation was identified with Islam.[25]

Eaton's idea of religion of plough, has been challenged by Diego Abenante in his work under the title of "Cultivation and Conversion in Multan" in which the author argues that the relation developed by Eaton between cultivation, conversion and settled life-style of the Jat tribes of Southern Punjab is not convincing in the case of Multan, because Islam spread here in largely nomadic or semi-nomadic life-style until recent years.[26] Besides being a riverine land, the region of Multan always needed artificial means of irrigation because of scarce rains. Cultivation could not make any development in the region even during the Mughul regime which is considered the pioneer of large scale cultivation in India and particularly in Punjab. Till early 18th century almost 200 years after the Mughul rule, the cultivation of lands was only limited to the *hithar* lands (riverine lands). In the mid -18th century, under the rule of the Nawabs of Multan and Bahawalpur cultivation was extended to limited areas in the bar highlands.[27]

Based on these facts Abenante aptly argues that in the Multan region the link between Islamization and agriculture cannot be justified. The regional and colonial sources acknowledge the role of Sufi shrines in the spread of Islam in the region but they also refer to the fact that interaction with the Sufis though they influenced the nomadic tribes but the latter never abandoned their traditional life-style even until recent years. Apart from being the riverine land the settled life-style was not adopted by the nomadic population of the region which comprised of around 79% Muslim population according to the official census of 1881.[28]

Abenante confirms the role of the Sufi shrines like Shah Yussuf Gardezi (b. 494 AH/1058 AD-d. 530 AH/1136 AD), Sheikh Bahawal Haq Zakariya (b. 565 AH/1170 AD-d. 660 AH/1262 AD), Shaikh Musa Pak Shahid Gilani (b. 951 AH/1545 AD-d. 1001 AH/1592 AD) and their caretakers as moderators between socio-economic and religious worlds and their role for the spread of Islam but proposes that this process of Islamization under Sufi shrines should be seen in the context where sedentarization and cultivation was proceeding with more difficulty than previously suspected. The establishment of canal colonies the Sidnai colony (1886-1888), the lower Bari Doab colony (1914-1924) and the Nili Bar colony (1926-1940), changed the whole scenario radically for the Multan district. The creation of canal colonies not only promoted cultivation in the bar highlands with motivating the local cultivators from different regions of Punjab but also transformed the socio-ecological pattern of the district by changing the traditional relationship between the nomadic tribes and the environment ultimately.

Reversion, not Conversion: Applying Ibn-i-Khaldun's *Al-fiṭrah*

The theory of Richard M. Eaton referring Islam as 'religion of plough' is not applicable holistically on the whole medieval India, as its rebuttal by Diego Abenante about Multan shows. We can't deny the relevance of the theory with Bengal but to explain Medieval India's Islamic transformation we need a broader idea which is given by Ibn-i-Khaldun under his theory of *Al-fiṭrah*. The five steps can better be applied to the process of Muslim transformation here in India. The visitors of these Sufi places transformed themselves into communities who were revolving around one center without the discrimination of caste, creed, race, religion or any other identity which lead them towards vernacularization of Islam into the Indian culture and society. They developed their own culture, language, traditions and beliefs. These new beliefs made them compare their older way of life with the later one and pushed them into a sort of self-amendment process without the consciousness that it will result in the change of religion at some later stage. So India's Islamic transformation could better be called reversion instead of conversion because majorly it was not a conscious change of religion but a process of self- amendment.

Umranic Association with Community: Sufism in India

Sufism is historically a very prominent defining feature of Indian

culture. With its rich historical legacy, its numerous shrines and its ample documentation in hagiographies, polemical texts, mystical poetry and folk memory, Sufism permeates all aspects of Indian life. The earliest Sufi migrations from central Asia were for South-western Punjab and then it spread throughout India including; Bibi Pak Daman (d. no exact date is available but probably it was the end of 7th AD), Data Ganj Bakhsh (b. 399 AH/1009 AD-d. 464 AH/1072 AD), *Shaykh* Hamiduddin Nagauri (b. 416 AH/1026 AD-d. 546 AH/1152 AH), Sultan Sakhi Sarwar (b. 513 AH/1120 AD-d. 569 AH/1174 AD), Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti (b. 537 AH/1143 AD-d. 633 AH/1236 AD), Makhdum Bahauddin Zakariya (b. 565 AH/1170 AD-d. 660 AH/1262 AD), Khwaja Qutbudin Bakhtiyar Kaki (b. 568 AH/1173 AD-d. 632 AH/1235 AD), Fariduddin Ganj Shakar (b. 568 AH/1173 AD-d. 656 AH/1266 AD), *Shaykh* Nizamuddin Auliya (b. 635 AH/1238 AD-d. 765 AH/1325 AD), Jahaniyan Jahangasht (b. 707 AH/1308 AD-d. 785 AH/1384 AD), Syed Musa Pak (b. 951 AH/1545 AD-d. 1001 AH/1592 AD), Hazrat Mian Mir (b. 956 AH/1550 AD-d. 1044 AH/1635 AD), Sultan Bahoo (b. 1039 AH/1630 AD-d. 1102 AH/1691 AD), and many more. These are some of the most famous Sufis from medieval India with well- established shrines. These shrines have remained the main source of introduction of Islam in the region. As the first step, locals were gathering around these Sufis who were not preaching any particular religion but harmony, love, peace and co-existence. So, the Sufi shrines were the initial spaces where Islam was having *umranic* association with the local community.

Unlike the 'theory of sword'[29] which means that Islam spread in the Indian Subcontinent through the Muslim invasions and with the power of sword, resulting in forceful conversions: or 'state patronage'[30] which refers towards the policies of the Muslim rulers in the medieval India to enforce Islam: or 'Sufis working as missionaries'[31] indicating that Sufis were working on the agenda of religious conversion, actually it was the *umranic* interaction of these Sufis with the local population resulting in synchronization between Islamic and local social structures eventually developing into a community.

Co-operation or Support of the Community: Synchronization between the Sufi and the Local Society

To change the tradition of studying Indian Islam in the Arab context the historians of late twentieth century focused on Islam as a process instead of looking into its roots or the shoots. There are many theories

regarding the process, Islam went through as a religion like the theory of 'cultural fusion'[32] or 'composite culture'[33] which explains how Islam was fused with the local religions as a culture. Islamic themes, ideas and terms were translated into local languages to make them more understandable for common masses but these were purely cultural or social adaptations made between Islam and local socio-cultural environment and had nothing to do with Islam's religious beliefs.

Another theory focusing on the process of the development of a Sufi -based Islamic community explains it through 'syncretism'[34] which takes Islam and the local Indian religions particularly Hinduism, consciously trying to amalgamate with each other. But Barbara D. Metcalf points out vertical and horizontal fallacies of syncretism of Islamic and Indic cultures. With vertical fallacy she refers to the problematic notion of fixed 'Hindu' and 'Muslim' categories and with horizontal fallacy she highlights the caste system of Hinduism and *ashraf* and *ajlaf* division of Muslim social structure. As high caste Hindus and *ashraf* in Muslims as pure Hindu and Muslim while low caste Hindus and *ajlaf* in Muslims as subservient and more immersed in local cultures (impure).[35]

The theory of 'syncretism' has also been criticized by Tony K. Stewart. He argues that all the four basic metaphoric models of syncretism (borrowing and influence,[36] cultural veneer or overlaying[37], alchemy[38], biological model[39]) are over-emphasizing or over-generalizing. In contrast to the model of syncretism that proposes to describe the new amalgam created by the Sufi texts, he proposes a process by which the pre-modern Sufi or other Muslim writers within the constraints of local languages translated Islamic thoughts (translation theory).[40] And this translation theory helped the Sufism based Islamic community in medieval India to develop communication through soft skill resulting in vernacularization.

Communication through Soft Skills like language etc.: Vernacularization

Although the above mentioned theories (Composite culture, Syncretism or Translation theory) differ in the pattern of the process of Islam in medieval India but one point is same that Islam spread through vernacularization. They all take vernacularization of Islam as a procedure that helped Islam in adjusting and adapting to the local culture and languages in non-Arab regions. Vernacularized Islam remained more focused on the beliefs and practices of the Muslims belonging to diverse

cultural orientation, multiple geographical connections and speaking various languages and dialects. That is why vernacular Islam explored creative adaptations of Islam in the peripheral regions of Muslim World. It also challenged the popular image of Islam as being a monolithic religion all across the globe. It is also a point to remember that although Qur'ān revealed to the Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-'alaihe wa sallam*) in Arabia but it was not revealed in a cultural vacuum.[41] Because religion can't exist in its pure thematic sense and it has to adopt and adapt into the local culture and traditions to be familiar with the masses as 'contact is never pure, always about something.'[42]

Historically Sufis have been considered as agents of vernacular Islam not only translating the Holy Qur'ān and Sufi literature into local languages but also the Islamic beliefs and practices to make them explicable for local people. That is why to understand medieval India's Islam it's important to study its "routes not roots", "networks not territories" and "things not texts".[43] But with the advent and development of British colonial rule in India an environment of competition emerged between the local population and the new Sufi based Islamic communities. The consciousness for religious identity was a phenomenon for the Indian masses which was made conscious through the British.

Competition or Prevention between Communities: Identity Consciousness

It is an interesting fact that for British officials and observers, census of 1871-1872 was a revelation that Muslims were 22.8% of the population of Madras, Bombay, Bengal, NWFP, Awadh and Punjab and they were not immigrants.[44] It raised the question that whether the non-Muslims in India were still becoming Muslims? A British officer Francis Buchanan noticed small scale conversions in Bengal. In 1903 Stanley Lane Poole in his *Medieval India under Muhammaden Rule* stated that about fifty thousand Hindus' turn Turk annually.[45] This turned many historians to research the factors behind Muslim conversion in India. They used the official histories as their primary sources and developed some popular theories about the causes of Muslim conversions like 'theory of sword' or 'state patronage' or 'Sufis working as missionaries' to preach Islam. Most these theories were nullified by the later historians who instead of only relying on official histories looked in to other historical sources as well, but this also motivated them to understand the evolution of communal identity consciousness in India.

Different factors contributed to the identity consciousness between the religious communities like colonial policies, religious revivalism[46] or the extension of new types of representative government.[47] C. A. Bayly points out many communal conflicts from pre-British era along with their historical causes but he also highlights what he calls the dubious notions of Hindu, Muslim or Sikh identity from the pre-British times. 'The notions of 'identity' or 'consciousness', so widespread in literature now, Bayly says "whether applied to religious or ethnic groups, seems most dubious on methodological and philosophical grounds, quite apart from the virtual impossibility of proving empirically that such entities ever existed.'[48]

Self -Amendment: Reversion

The identification of Sufi based Islamic community as Muslims was the result of identity consciousness. The first census of British India conducted in 1871 brought religious dimension to census enumeration by making categories for every religion e.g. Hindus, Sikhs, and Muslims etc.[49] Around 425, 175 people were categorized in the 'religion not known'[50] column, which indicates the confusion among the people about their religious identity. Therefore it is very difficult to prove any single factor whether it's the 'agrarian economy' or 'sword', 'state patronage' or 'Sufi missionaries', as an empirically proven reason of medieval India's Islamic transformation. It is only possible to understand the 'glacial-process' of Islamic transformation through a broader idea like Ibn-i-Khaldun's *Al-fiṭrah*. *Al-fiṭrah* is a theory which seeks to elaborate retrospectively the whole process of religious reversion which went on through centuries, without any conscious effort or attention, unless by the 19th century when British policies, revivalist movements and new form of government were introduced.

Conclusion

India has always been seen as a world of fantasy, rich culture and colorful social traditions by the West. Its vast and heterogeneous society has not only attracted and welcomed the outer world but also developed its influence over it. Islam could also not resist its cultural richness and got vernacularized. Indian religions, culture, traditions, and society, all were adopted in and adapted by Islam to become accessible for the locals with the help of Sufis. Sufis worked as a link between the roots of Islam from Arab lands to get harmonized and develop its shoots into

local religious society. The equation built between local and Islamic idioms were only because of the early Sufis.

This interaction between Islam and local religious society resulted in the development of a community with their certain beliefs, sacred things and traditions which were at some points different from the Arab roots of Islam and local religious norms and beliefs. This community due to their social interaction with their caste or creed, went through a comparison with their older beliefs and traditions resulting in a sort of self-amendment (reversion). This unconscious and subtle change of religion caused medieval India's Muslim transformation on such a massive level that thousands of people were observed by British officers being transformed into Muslims to which they referred as conversion to Islam. Even Muslim transformation in current scenario has been taken as social transformation instead of religious, political or economic conversion by the writers like Fabrice Clement who try to see religious conversion in the context of naturalistic explanation[51], or Tuba Boz who tried to argue the Australian Muslim transformation in Melbourne after the incident of 9/11 as reversion.[52]

Notes and References

1.   Tanvir Anjum, "Sufis and the Question of Conversion to Islam in Medieval India", *Youlin Magazine, A Cultural Journal*, Posted on 16 May 2019. Retrieved on 17 May 2019. www.youlinmagazine.com/story/sufi-and-the-question-of-conversion-to-Islam-inmedieval-india/MTQ3NQ==

2.   Lamin Sanneh, *Translating the Message: the Missionary Impact on Culture*, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis books, 1989, 29.

3.   J.S. Trlmingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam,* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971, 22.

4.   Islam reached outside Arabia, resulting in massive conversions of local population in Persia in the East, Byzantium in the North, and North Africa in the West. To these fresh converts in these diverse regions, Islam as a faith promised enough flexibility and accommodation to be adjusted in their respective socio-cultural backgrounds. Consequently, universal principles and practices of Islam notwithstanding, many of its beliefs and practices were vernacularized and contextualized in specific time and space. For more details see: Anjum, "Sufis and the Question of Conversion to Islam in Medieval India", 16 May 2019.

5.   This argument is supported by the works of many writers like; Barbara D. Metcalf, "Presidential Address: Too Little and Too Much: Reflections on Muslims in the History of India", *The Journal of Asian Studies*, *Vol. 54, No. 4* (Nov 1995), Association for Asian Studies, pp. 951-967. Stable URL: http//www.jstor.org/stable/2059955 Cynthia Talbot, "Inscribing the other, Inscribing the Self: Hindu-

Muslim Identities in Pre-colonial India", in Richard M. Eaton, (ed.) *India's Islamic Tradition 711-1750,* New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003, pp. 83-117. J. J. Roy Burman, "Hindu-Muslim Syncretism in India", *Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. 31. No. 20* (May 18 1996), Economic and Political Weekly, pp. 1211-1215. Stable URL: http//www.jstor.org/stable/4404148 Satish Saberwal, "On the Making of Muslims in India Historically", *Sociological Bulletin, Vol. 55, No. 2* (May-August 2006), Indian Sociological Society, pp. 237-266. Stable URL: http//www.jstor.org/stable/23620554. S. T. Lokhandwala, "Indian Islam, Composite Culture and Integration", Rasheeduddin Khan, (ed.) *Composite Culture of India and National Integration*, Simla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study & Allied Publishers Private Limited, 1987. pp 101-127.

6. Peter Hardy, "Modern European and Muslim explanations of Conversion to Islam in South Asia: A Preliminary Survey of the Literature", in Nehemia Levtzion, (ed.) *Conversion to Islam*, New York, London: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1979, 79.

7. *Ibid*. p. 75.

8. The Sufi-missionary equation first appeared in Thomas W. Arnold's *The Preaching of Islam*, wherein the role of Sufis was perceived through the lens of Christianity. The Sufi groups, understood as 'missionaries' of Islam, were compared to Catholic missions in Christianity. It must be borne in mind that the latter were purpose-specific groups with the mission or goal of conversion to Christianity. However, historically speaking, it would be erroneous to assume that conversion to Islam was a one point agenda of Sufis like the missionaries. Their chief goal was to create an enhanced awareness of, and connection with God among the people, transforming them to become better human beings in every respect. The same holds true for the Sufis in varied parts of the world. For details of T. W. Arnold's work see; *The Preaching of Islam: A History of the Propagation of the Muslim Faith,* Westminster: Archibald Constable & Co, 1896.

9. Richard M. Eaton, "Approaches to the Study of Conversion to Islam in India", Richard C. Martin, (ed.) *Approaches to Islam in Religious Studies,* Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1985, p. 120.

10. *Ibid.*

11. Richard M. Eaton, Introduction to (ed.) *India's Islamic Tradition*, (2003), 17.

12. The medieval definition of self in terms of region was a precursor of regional loyalties in the twentieth century. Because the core elements of medieval regional identity included collective memories of the past, as well as a common language and homeland, it can be classified as an early form of ethnicity. By focusing too exclusively on religion as a source of difference, scholars have overlooked the significance of other attributes differentiating the medieval communities. For details of this argument see, Cynthia Talbot, "Inscribing the other, Inscribing the Self: Hindu-Muslim Identities in Pre-colonial India", in Richard M. Eaton, (ed.) *India's Islamic Tradition 711-1750,* (2003), pp. 83-117.

13. Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life,* (trans.) Carol Cosman, New York: Oxford University Press, 2008, 44.

14. *Ibid*, 50.

15. Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life,* 57.

16. *Ibid,* 60.

17. *Ibid*, 73.

18. Ibn-i-Khaldun*, The Muqaddimah*: *An Introduction to History,* (trans.) Franz Rosenthal, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986, vol. 2, 314.

19. The sense of united community emerged from the collective rituals practiced at the Sufi shrines without highlighting religious identities. For instance the Hindus were also the *murids* (followers) of Nizam uddin Awliya. *Nizami Bansari* an abstract from a Persian book *Chehel Roza* of a Hindu *murid* Prince Raj Kumar Her Dev of Deccan gives the details of the Nizam uddin Awliya shrine's dealing with the non-Muslims. For details of the work see; Khwaja Hasan Nizami, *Nizami Bansari*, Delhi: Ahl e Bait Press Urdu Bazar, 1945. For more details on this religion-less Sufi shrine communities see Michel Boivin, *The Hindu Sufis of South Asia: Partition, Shrine Culture and Sindhis in India*, London: I. B. Tauris, 2019.

20. Muhammad Dhaouadi, *New Explorations In to the Making of Ibn-i- Khaldun's Umran Mind,* Kuala Lumpur: A. S. Noordeen, 1997, 108.

21. Natural divine order is the moral source from which the morality is derived. Morality is the base of every religion. No religion allows its followers to commit moral crimes.

22. Dennis J. Parrucci, "Religious Conversion: A Theory of Deviant Behavior", *Sociology of Religion,* 29/3, (1968), pp. 144-54.

23. Levtzion, Introduction to (ed.) *Conversion to Islam,* 20.

24. Eaton, "The Political and Religious Authority of the Shrine of Baba Farid", *India's Islamic Traditions*, pp. 279-80.

25. For more details of the argument see: Richard M. Eaton, *The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier, 1204-1760,* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993.

26. Diego Abenante, "Cultivation and conversion in Multan", *ISIM Newsletter*, Issue: 1, Vol: 9, (Leiden, 2002), 25.

27. *Ibid.*

28. *Ibid.*

29. For more details on the theory see; Y. Friedmann, "A Contribution to the Early History of Islam in India", *Studies in Memory of Gaston Wiet*, ed. Myrian Rosen-Ayalon, Jerusalem: Institute of Asian and African Studies, 1977.

30. For more details on the theory see: Agha Mehdi Husain, ed. & trans., *The Rehla of Ibn Batuta*, Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1953.

31. Arnold, *The Preaching of Islam,* 1896.

32 . For details of the theory see, Gopi Chand Narang, "The Indo-Islamic Cultural Fusion and the Institution of Qawwali", *Indian Literature, Vol. 58, No. 4 (282) (July/August 2014), Sahitya Akademi,* pp. 160-171, Stable URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/44753803.

33. For details; S. T. Lokhandwala, "Indian Islam, Composite Culture and Integration", *Composite Culture of India and National Integration*, (1987). pp 101-127.

34. For details; J. J. Roy Burman, "Hindu-Muslim Syncretism in India", *Economic and Political Weekly,* (May 18 1996), pp. 1211-1215.

35. Barbara D. Metcalf, "Presidential Address: Too Little and Too Much: Reflections on Muslims in the History of India", (Nov, 1995), pp. 959-60.

36. Borrowing here means taking of prefabricated ideas or rituals from one religion

to other, while influence refers towards persuasion of one religious community to other without understanding the causes.

37. Cultural veneer or overlaying syncretism is overlay of one alien religious culture on another.

38. Alchemy refers to such a religious mixture that is based on an irreversible combination which often produces absolutely new religious entities that have nothing to do with its original ingredients.

39. Biological model of syncretism indicate an unnatural amalgamation of two completely alien religious cultures and producing an offspring that is all the way different from the parent religious cultures. That offspring is never given its due status and is always taken as 'impure'.

40. Tony K. Stewart, "In Search of Equivalence: Conceiving the Muslim-Hindu Encounter through Translation Theory", *India's Islamic Tradition,* (2003), 375.

41. Tanvir Anjum, "Vernacularization of Islam and Sufism in South Asia: A study of the production of Sufi Literature in Local Languages", *Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan,* Vol. 54, No. 1, (January-June, 2017), pp. 209-10. pu.edu.pk/ images/journal/history/PDF-FILES/14-54-1-17.pdf. Retrieved on 31 May, 2019.

42. Per J. Otnes, *Otherwise: Alterity, Materiality, Mediation,* Oslo: Scandinavian University Press, 1997, p. 38.

43. Finbarr B. Flood, Intro. *Objects of Translation, Material Culture and Medieval "Hindu Muslim" Encounter,* New Delhi: Permanent Black Publishers, 2009, pp. 1-14.

44. *Census of the British India of 1871-72*, (London: George Edward Eyre & William Spottiswoode, 1875). https://ruralindiaonline.org/en/library/resource/memorandum-on-the-census-of-british-india-of-1871-72/.

45. Peter Hardy, "Modern European and Muslim Explanations of Conversion to Islam in South Asia, *Conversion to Islam*, 78.

46. Many religious revivalist movements were launched by Muslims and Hindus in the 19th century, e.g. Fraizi movement by Haji Shariatullah in 1819, Muslim Jihadi movement of Syed Ahmad Shaheed in 1826, Brahmo Samaj by Ram Mohan Roy in 1828, Arya Samaj founded by Dayananda Saraswati in 1875, etc.

47. C. A. Bayly, "The Pre-History of Communalism? Religious Conflict in India, 1700-1860", *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 2 Cambridge University Press, (1985), 201. Stable URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/312153. Accessed: 24-11-2018, 18:30 UTC.

48. *Ibid*, 202.

49. P. P. Abdul Razzak, "Census Modality and the Making of Muslim Community of Malabar", Proceedings of the *Indiana History Congress*, Vol. 69, Indian History Congress, (2008), 771. Stable URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/44147240. Accessed: 17-10-2018, 15:00 UTC.

50. *Census of the British India of 1871-72*, (1875), 16.

51. For details see, Fabrice Celement, "The Pleasure of Believing, Towards a Naturalistic Explanation of Religious Conversion" *Journal of Cognition and Culture 3.1*, Leiden: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2003. pp. 69-89.

52. For details see, Tuba Boz, "Religious Conversion: An Ethnographic Analysis", *Turkish Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 11, No. 3, Fall 2012, pp. 49-59.