

IMPACT OF ISLAM ON VARIOUS ART FORMS FROM THE MEDIEVAL TO THE POST MODERN ERA

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Abstract

A well known statement by Karl Marx which claims " Religion is an opium of the people". If we analyze India before Independence, India has always been rich in terms of religion, culture, beliefs, practices. An author while writing his literary works cannot fully detach himself from the culture and religious practices that he is born into therefore every author's literary creation has certain glimpses of his culture. For instance, Amitav Ghosh's Bengali culture is reflected in his "The Culture Chromosome", Mohsin Hamid's Islamic culture is visible in "The Reluctant Fundamentalism", "Exit West". Beginning from the medieval era to the contemporary times, Islam being one of the religion in India, it's believers has contributed in various fields of arts, music, painting, architecture, literature, education. Malala who won the noble prize for promoting education and fighting against all odds in order to accomplish her goal of education, has become a role model for everyone. The paper will conclude with the poem "Thee Alone" by the researcher herself as a contribution to the field of literature.

Keywords: *Bhakti, Sufism, Highly devotional literary work, In remembrance of the Islamic God, Speaker's attitude towards the Almighty.*

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- **Anum Khalfay**

Thee Alone We worship,
Thee Alone we ask for help.
Thee Alone is our Rahmanu, our Karimu,
Thee most beneficent, thee most merciful.
Thee Alone is capable of understanding the silence of hearts.
Thee Alone is our Samiu.
Thee Alone we get annoyed with,
Thee Alone we ask for forgiveness.
Thee Alone is our Jabbaru,
Thee Alone we turn to in order to repair our broken affairs and all sorts of brokenness.
Thee Alone we yell in our weakest moments.
Thee Alone we find peace in.
Thee Alone we confide our miseries.
Thee Alone we complain.
Thee Alone is our Lord, the Lord of the worlds, heavens and earths.
Thee Alone is most merciful,
Thee Alone is most beneficent.
Thee Alone is our Karimu,
Thee Alone is our Rahmanu.
Thee Alone we ask for help,
Thee Alone we worship.

Islam came to India in the 8th century and the first Muslims who arrived were the Arabs who landed in Kerala as traders and were warmly received by the zomorin. Undoubtedly In do Arab relations go much further back than the advent of Islam. But the new Religion brought by Prophet Muhammad emphasized monotheism with great vigor and is advocated and to a great extent practiced equally among men and women of different race, colour and social strata. This message of equality attracted a large number of converts and it soon spread to other parts of the land.

The second major contact developed in Sindh, not as traders but as conquerors for her Muhammad Bin Qasim, an Arab lad of fourteen years conquered a part of Sindh in 712 AD as a reprisal to the looting of a ship of Arab pilgrims by Raja Dahir of Sind. This contact though political had a cultural impact and it was to this that the Sindhi language and literature owe their origin. Till now Sindhi is written in a modified Arabic script and bears and bears a strong component of Arabs and Islamic influence in the tone and tenor of its poetry.

And it was here that Abdul Latif Bhitai composed his songs of mystic devotion and human love. A new era had already began the era of cosmopolitan mystic vision.

Undoubtedly mysticism is not a monopoly of Islam but in centuries that several groups of Muslim mystics so swarmed over parts of North India that mysticism began to acquire as a Muslim face. Till today, Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti who came from Iraq in the 12th century to settle down in Ajmer as a lonely immigrant is held in high esteem both by Hindus and Muslims and the composition of one of his disciples, Baba Farid form part of his holy book of the Sikhs, the Guru Granth Sahib, both of them emphasized the concept of the equality of man and sang of man's total submergence in the divine existence of God Almighty. The idea caught on and spread with speed and alacrity to practically all the dialects and languages of the land and assumed different shapes and forms.

The form of Bara Masa (twelve months) in which the damsel describes the charms of every season, month by month, and explores her beloved to take pity on her and to join her in enjoying the seasonal blessings. The first available Bara Masa was written by Addiman, who is believed to be a convert to Islam named Abdur Rahman. He belonged perhaps to the area between the North West Frontier Province (NWFP).

The famous Indian historian Dr. Tara Chand has traced the origin and development of the Bhakti movement in the south and its spreading in the north to the impact of Islam and Muslim poets and saints played a very significant role.

In Hindi for instance even before the advent of the four recognized categories of the Bhakti poetry are: Gyan Kshri, Prem Margi Sufi, Ram Bhakti.

The emergence of Amir Khusrau was noticeable. Though Amir mainly was a Persian poet, born in Patiali (UP) or according to some scholars in Delhi Khussau was a devout mystic and disciple of Sufi Saint Hazrat Nizamuddin Aulia of Delhi and his bridal songs, riddles and stray couplets mark the beginning of poetry in a mixed language with an amalgam of Khari Boli grammatical syntax and the sprinkling of Turkish, Persian and Arabic words. He signs praises of his motherland and mixes with the common man of his times so as to give unhampered expression to his feelings with exuberance and spontaneity.

Later on Kabir (whom several scholars consider a Muslim) and his followers wrote poetry of iconoclastic humanism and robust commonsense in the gyan kshri and Nirgun Bhakti which are similar in not worshipping idols and believing in the non material existence of God.

Then came the Krishna Bhaktas and these also included a number of Muslim poets. Sri Krishna has often been symbolized as the romantic embodiment of divine existence and not only in Brij Bhasha Hindi poetry of the 16th century. Poets like Maulana Hasrat Mohani took pride in proclaiming himself a Krishna Bhakt.

The development of Urdu language and literature in the north began rather late

but the imprint of Indian Muslims on it was so unmistakable that it has been wrongly identified with them though a galaxy of non Muslim Urdu writers adorn the pages of literary history. Urdu literature in the north flourished mainly in the 18th century and the 19th century in Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar where Masnavi writers like Afzal Mir 20th, Amir Asar and Mir Hasan continued to enrich and extend the tradition of allegorical romantic poetic tales and started writing Ghazals in Urdu, thus combining earthly romance with deeper metaphysical thought pattern. Of course, the Muslim poets played an important part in giving shape to this new idiom, which heralded a new cultural climate, the climate of secularism cosmopolitanism and urban Sophistication.

Iqbal by his philosophy of self aroused the Asian nations from their long slumber and gave them the message of self reliance and dignity.

The contribution Indian Muslims was by no means restricted to only Urdu literature . In Punjabi literature, mystics and saints left their own indelible marks. In the North, Kashmiri literature also boasts of its Indian Muslim authors, the greatest of them being perhaps Habba Khatoon, a plain peasant girl wedded to a ruling monarch and sharing his identity in glory and suffering.

Further East, the development of Bengali Literature, according to some literary historians, owes much of the patronage of Muslim kings of Bengal. Bengali literature can boast of other Muslim writers and composers ,among them the outstanding literary critic, Kazi Abdul Wudood, communist writer and intellectual Muzaffar Ahmed and of course the innumerable Muslim singers and minstrel poets who roam the countryside and compose as well as sing Baul poetry.

The most significant development of the medieval period in India was the birth of a new language called Urdu. It was the result of the interaction between the Hindus and the Muslims and this led to an exchange of cultures and in turn this gave rise to secularism.

Jalal ad-Din Mohummad Rumi also known as Jalal Ad-Din Mohummad Balkhi and

more popularly simply as Rumi, was a 13th century Persian, Muslim poet, jurist Islamic scholar, theologian and Sufi mystic. Rumi's influence transcends national borders and ethnic divisions: Iranians, Tajiks, Turks, Greeks, Pashtuns and other central Asian Muslims of South Asia have greatly appreciated his spiritual legacy for the past seven centuries. His poems have been widely translated into many of the world's languages and transported into various formats- Rumi has been described as the "most popular poet" and the "best selling poet" in the USA.

Rumi emphasis is the unity of being. It is undeniable that Rumi was a Muslim scholar and took Islam seriously. Nonetheless, the depth of his spiritual vision extended beyond narrow understanding of sectarian concerns.

One Rubaiyat reads:

"On the speaker's path, wise men and fools are one.

In his love, brothers and strangers are one.

Go on! Drink the wine of the Beloved!

In that faith, Muslims and pagans are one."

In the contemporary era of the 21st century, we find the impact of Islam in various art forms like Sufi music in the film Rockstar (20.) Funfayakun a qawwali that mentions the name of Nizamuddin Awliya in the initial lines of the lyrics. Historical movie such as Jodha Akbar has another beautiful Sufi Qawwali dedicated to Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti, "Khwaja Mere Khwaja" Fiza has another beautiful Sufi Qawwali shot in the Haji Ali Dargah (Mumbai) "Piya Haji Ali", And Vishal Bharadaj's adaptation of Shakespeare's Macbeth into Maqbool also has a sufi Qawwalli starring Tabu and Irfan Khan "Tu Mere Ru Ba Ru Hai".

And talking of literature, diasporic authors like Mohsin Hamid, Monica Ali, Hanif Kureishi deal with diasporic themes and also represents Islamic cultures in their novels such as "The Reluctant Fundamentalist", "Exit West", "Bricklane", The Buddha of the Suburbia" respectively. Mohsin Hamid who is very much rootedness to his culture is

clearly seen in his novel, "The Reluctant Fundamentalist" where Changez the major protagonist, gives a voice to the oppressed Muslims staying in Lahore and also the racial discrimination that takes in the west (USA) towards the citizens of the 3rd world countries like in this case Pakistan and how after 9/11, the falling of the twin towers, the attitude of the people in America changes towards Changez after this incident and keeping of "Beard" is symbolized as a means of a stereotypical image of Muslims and this leads to even more hatred towards Changez. His latest, novel of 2017 is Exit West which is another post-colonial novel which has Muslim characters named Saeed and Nadia performing their who ask each other about prayers when asked by Saeed for a cup of coffee in the cafeteria to Nadia responds by asking him, You don't have to say your evening prayers to which he replies I at times pray and Nadia also adds that she doesn't pray. This shows that how an author while he writes cannot completely detach himself from the culture that he is born into. The Brick lane by Monica Ali. Ali is another diasporic author who talks of Bengali Muslims and Islamic culture in London, a completely alien land for Nazneen And in one of the scenes in the novel. Nazneen is shown to be reading the Quran and there's a minor character named Mrs. Islam in Bricklane which shows the dominance of the religion even in the novel, although the main theme of these novels is diaspora, racial discrimination but how the dominance of the religion come into the literature produced by the authors.

When we talk of architectures one of the great architecture that was although commissioned in 1632 but even in the 21st century it still has a beautiful impact of it in films and it is one of the most famous tourist destinations in India. The Taj Mahal has an Islamic significance because it was built by a Muslim Emperor Shah Jahan, for his wife Mumtaz Mahal.

Malala Yousafzai is a Pakistani activist for female education and the youngest Nobel Prize laureate. She is known for human rights advocacy, especially the education of women and children in her native swat valley in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, northwest

Pakistan . Her father Zaiuddin Yousafzai, who is a poet and school owner and just like Malala an educational activist himself. Malala Yousafzai won a Nobel Prize and many such honorable awards for standing up for education. Her autobiographical novel titled I am Malala and Malala's magic pencil shows her contribution to literature in the genre of autobiographical fiction.

As said by Prophet Muhammad in his book "Sahih Bukhari. That "Whoever chooses a path to knowledge, Allah makes the Path to Paradise easier for Him"

Therefore Malala Yousfzai thirst for knowledge reminds us of knowledge reminds us of Prophet Muhammad's teachings and a strong dominance of Islamic teaching in the Pakistani activist Malala's life.

This research paper concludes with a poem by the researcher herself.

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