Origin of Islam and influence of Muslim peer fakirs into Punjab region

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ABSTRACT

This Research Paper emphasizes on the process through which Islamism had been evolved in India. Initially, this study defines the term Religion with reference to mythological studies and than its explanation with in sociology. Furthermore, this research encompasses the information related to the evolutionary development of Muslim saints peer fakirs and their influence on the people of Punjab. So this study has mentioned the historical development of Muslim religion in India, and then the impact of peer Fakirs on the population of Punjab region. This study is based on secondary source information.

Keywords:
Folk Religion, Peer Fakir

Introduction:

Folk Religion is the effective guide of human behavior and the most influential forces of social control. Thus there are numerous definitions of religion given by thinkers according to their own conceptions. Some maintain that religion includes a belief in supernatural or mysterious powers and that it expresses itself in overt activities to design to deal with those powers.

In sociology the word folk religion is used in wider sense than that used in religious books. Recent sociological work defines religion as those institutionalized system of beliefs,
symbols, values and practices that provide groups of men with solutions to found among all religion.

As such religion comprises first, system of attitudes beliefs, symbols that are based on the assumptions that certain kind of social relations are sacred or morally imperative and second a structure of activities governed or influence by these systems. Religion is a prevalent phenomenon in every society that has been going on for a long time. The conditions and the changes made by the primitive people feel that the existence of religion are important because the thinking power of man of that time was not yet developed enough to understand the natural conditions logically. According to them, there were invisible forces behind the coming of rain, wind, earthquakes, storms, floods, etc., which, from time to time, produced good or bad effects in human life. When the human being began to experience nature, he realized primarily two types of powers. One of the powers is related to the destructive forces of the hurricanes, tornadoes, storms, earthquakes, etc. those who were worshipped by human beings because of fear.

There were other kinds of forces that played a very important and positive role in keeping human life alive. As a result, the primitive man started worshiping in this regard by capturing the spiritual forces behind the sun, earth, trees, water, etc. This is why a large part of the Punjabi folk religion appears to be related to the worship of these natural forces. With Aryans people entering India, the main religion of Hinduism is seen in which they worship the various deities - Indra, Varun, Prithvi, Usha, Vishnu, Mahesh etc. To appease these fears, it also forms the practice of giving a cheat, havan, to the psyche of the people .In a change of time, the Buddhist, Jain, Shiva, Vaishnava sects were also emerging.

**Historical explanation of genesis of Muslims in India:**

Influence of different religions’ brings Revolution into India. That was the time (North Vedic period) when the Indian society was under the influence of different religions, which created disturbing environment. During this time, there was a historic event in the Arab country that unified the whole society into a new religion. Hazrat Muhammad played the leading role as the leader of this revolution, who played a significant role in the spreading of the religion of
Islam. Hazrat Muhammad was born Mecca. After the death of his parents in childhood, He started worshiping God while living a life of helplessness. Hazrat Muhammad was married at the age of 25 to a wealthy widow, khdiija. She was a businesswoman, so after marriage, Hazrat Mohammed was relieved of his financial responsibilities. During this time he spent most of their time in worship of the Almighty Allah, in a mountainous area close to Mecca. It is also believed that one day while practicing Allah-Allah .He heard a voice from God “Read In the name of the God who created it”¹. This means that God (Allah) may be pleased with Hazrat Muhammad’s meditation and gain the status of (Allah ka Banda).

On 611AD Muhammad announces his love towards god and tells the people around him that there are 5 voices from Allah in their ears to “stand up and awaken the people”². At the outset, none other than his wife, Khdiija, Cousin Ali and a relative Abu Bakar accepted the Prophet Muhammad’s propaganda. Instead, the ruling and resourceful people of the tribe became obstacles in their path. But despite this, Hazrat Muhammad continued his propaganda and gradually many people started to believe in this new religion, the majority of those who initially accepted Islam were slaves and the poor, so on the one hand, the number of Islamic religions increased. Also the followers of Islam had to suffer opposition of the Kurashi tribe in Mecca. For one of the main reasons, Hazrat Mohammed started his journey towards Madina, saying goodbye to the forehead, on August 24, 624 A.D. This incident in Islam is also known as Hazrat. There he started to establish his own Muslim community.

Many people were showed their faith in Hazrat Muhammad's teachings and contributed significantly to the expansion of the Muslim religion. During these days, once Hazrat Muhammad and his followers stopped a group of people who were moving toward Mecca and invited them to enter into the Muslim faith, but after being refused by them, there was a contest between the two parties in which 300 Muslims of Hazrat Muhammad conquered the other party (non Muslims) christans. Although it was not a great war from the military point of view, the event established the foundations of Prophet Muhammad's power. It is considered the first military victory in the religion of Islam. After this, Hazrat
Muhammad completely abolished (and completely disassociated with) the Christians and issued orders for his Muslim community to grow in the Muslim religion in any way possible. In the meantime, Hazrat Muhammad, along with about 1400 Muslims, marched on the spot (Macca), during which they made “Hudebiya” treaty with the inhabitants, giving them equal rights to the Muslim community and treated the residents of the city with gentleness and equality. As a result, many other people living in Macca joined Islam. Thus, on 630 AD, Hazrat Mohammed fully exercised his authority on the occasion. After staying here for some time, Hazrat Muhammad returned to Medina where he died on 8 June 632 AD. So, it can be said that Hazrat Muhammad founded a nation in the Arabian nation during the sixth - seventh century, which laid the foundation of Islam in the face of Judaism and Christianity all over the world. Throughout his life, Hazrat Muhammad introduced a large number of people to his religion and played an important role in the propagation of Islam.

At present, the number of believers in the Islam religion is much larger than the rest of the world. In addition, those affiliated with the religion of Islam are very sincere and devoutly follow Hazrat Muhammad and their guidance. Mohammad Habib in (Book sultan Mahmud Ghaznavi) said that (“Although conversion to time has led to the adoption of Islam as a tradition and a source of power in the psyche, devotees associated with Islamic culture instill a great deal of faith in their religion. Islam became the object of customs and traditions and became a means of personal power”). After the death of Hazrat Mohammed, many Arabs began to prove themselves as good soldiers and generals. Their enthusiasm for promoting a new religion had completely eliminated their fear of dying. As the rule of Muslim rulers began to prevail in Indian society at that time, the ruling spread to the Arab country as well as to other countries. While these people started spreading their religion all over the world, Muhammad -bin-Qasim, a young Muslim invader from the Arab country who conquered India in a very short time.
With the invasion and conquest of Sindh by Muhammad Bin-Qasim in 712 AD, Muslim rule in India is established. With the advent of Muhammad-bin-Qasim in India, where Hindu traditions dating back to ancient times seem to collapse, many people who were fed up with the Brahminical persecution also started to convert to Muslim religion. The majority of these convert were people who were marginalized according to Brahminical rules. On the contrary, in the Muslim society, every person, irrespective of any caste, had equal status, so the oppressed in Indian society started to believe in the existence of Muslim religion as compared to other religions. Thus, with the advent of Muslim culture in India following the invasion of Mohammed bin Qasim, various values of propagation of Islam in Indian society have also entered the country.

These values play an important role in the spread of Muslim religion in India. But the propaganda started by these Maulvees (Religious leaders) did not last very long. After the death of Muhammad bin Qasim, the political climate of Punjab remained in the hands of the small Rajput princely states and became an atmosphere of anarchy in Punjab. Thus, after looking at the conditions of Indian Punjabi society from Aryans' entry into India to the medieval period, it is clear that Punjabi culture has been changing from the beginning. From time to time, the entry of various nations, castes, religions etc. into the Punjabi society has influenced the Indian Punjabi population in every way, religious, social, economic and political. As a result, Punjabi society - ordinary people living in the culture - do not believe in a particular religious institution, people are believed to believe in every goddess, goddess, Fakir. That is why Punjabi culture is also known as mixed culture. Punjab is the main gateway to India, as much as it was in the medieval period or before. Muslim invaders have passed here, the different religions and cultures that have come with them have also become part of Punjabi society and culture, and Thus Muslim attacks had led to the origin of Islam in India especially in Punjab.
INFLUENCE OF MUSLIM SAINTS IN PUNJAB REGION:
The invasion of bin-Qasim takes place, but with the combination of Mahmud Ghaznavi beginning in 1001 AD, the Islam religion becomes firmly established in India (at the time of the pre-medieval period). Non-Muslims were converting to the Muslim faith forcefully and the people of the Muslim community were being treated gently. People were being forcibly converted to Islam by the rulers, and as a result, the values of the Brahminical traditions that had been going on since the Vedic period were badly mutilated, even though the rules of the Muslim religion at the beginning.” The entry of Islam was not a radical change in the basic situation of Indian life. It made a difference in caste and its status but Unable to remove the roots of caste system. In fact, Islam too became dominated by caste discrimination and the message of the Quran was forgotten”4.

Thus the Muslim religion, which began in the Arab country, had entered India in the medieval period as well as taking into account its social, economic and political conditions, as well as the religious influence of the Muslim rulers. As a result, there was a spread of other religions into the Punjabi society, as well as the worship of Muslim peers; they were reflected as an important part of Punjabi folk religion. For the worship of these fakirs, it was not necessary for a human being to be associated with a particular religion / class / institution. So the devotees who believe in Muslim peer- fakirs equally give weightage to other religions also. That is why the worship of Muslim peers in the Punjabi folk religion is equally important as the other religions in the Punjabi society. The arrival of these Pir-Fakirs in India, however, occurs in the medieval period, but in the Muslim religion, the Pir-Fakir begins to exist from the time of Hazrat Muhammad. In Islam, they were known as Muslim religious men whose immense faith in the miraculous powers of their devotees is believed. This makes it clear that with the advent of Islam, some of the Gurus and Peer fakirs in the Muslim culture dominate. The shrines associated with them appear to be worshiped in this regard.

These peer –Fakirs rise above all kinds of religious institutions / sects, and give their affiliated worshipers the status of equality without any discrimination. That is why the Muslim Peer-Fakir worshiping in Punjabi society from time to time. Almost every village, town, city is found with numerous shrines related to Muslim peoples, many of whom live in
Punjab. The political power and the influence of Sufi saints were the main instruments for the spread of Islam. Although its appeal remained limited, its presence posed many fundamental questions for the contemporary religions. As the result of this process many new religious movements emerged. The famous Muslim emperor Akbar himself tried to synthesizes the Hindu and Muslim traditions in his new religion Din-e-illahi. The Bhakti movement, through having roots in an earlier Hindu tradition and Sikh movements, was also a product of this period of religious and political turmoil.

Islam greatly influenced the local religions and itself went through a process of transformation. Islamic scholars, especially suffi saints were impressed by the indigenous religious traditions. They were also striving for perfection and were reanouncers in their own style. So they instantly developed affinities with the local traditions of renouncers like those of sidhas and yogis. Gradually, such term as sidh, yogi and peer-fakir become almost synonymous in this area despite their contrary religious back-grounds. For folk mind they were spiritually powerful beings, karniwale and shaktiwale. There are numerous legends regarding the power of these Sidhas, yogis and Peers. Even today at many places, Muslim peers are worshipped for various purposes. Devotees who believe in these pir-fakirs celebrate their annual fairs. Thus these rituals that have been practiced since ancient times have also made an impact on people’s psyche even today.

CONCLUSION:
This research has gathered information related to the evolutionary development of Muslim religion in India. Furthermore, this study depicts the impact of Muslim saints (Peer-Fakirs) on people of India. Nation had a strong influence of Caste system at that time, and individuals especially who belonged to the lower stratum faced excessive harassment. At that time emergence of Muslim religion and influence of Muslim saints was prevalent to escape from the discrimination occurred in Indian caste system.
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