JOURNAL OF ISLAMIC HISTORICAL REVIEW 1, NO. 1 (2026): 53-67
https://doi.org/10.15642/jihr.2026.1.1.53-67

OPEN ACCESS

The conquest of Muḥammad b. Qāsim and its cultural and religious impact on early Islamic Sindh, 711-760

Saira Mustafa and Mohsin Ali

Universitas Islam Internasional Indonesia, Depok, Indonesia
Corresponding author: Saira Mustafa; E-mail: saira.mustafa@uiii.ac.id

Abstract
The paper is the analysis of the conquest of Sindh by Muḥammad b. Qāsim in 711 and its cultural and religious influences between 711 and 760. The Umayyad campaign was the first official introduction of Islam to the Indian subcontinent and it was the start of an era of social and religious change as well as military expansion. Based on primary documents like the *Chachnama* and *Futūḥ al-Buldān* as well as classical and modern literature, the paper evaluates the connection of early Arab administration policies like religious accommodation, inclusion of local elites and modification of extant bureaucratic frameworks. It emphasizes how non-Muslim communities were treated and how Indo-Islamic identity was formed at an early stage. Even though the recall of Qāsim terminated his immediate power, the institutions that were formed during his reign provided the basis of long term Islamization and cultural synthesis in South Asia.

Keywords: Muḥammad b. Qāsim; Umayyad Caliphate; Islamization; Sindh.

Article history: Recheived 10-11-2025; Revised 06-02-2026; Accepted 04-06-2026; Published online 05-06-2026

Introduction

The conquest of Sindh by Muḥammad b. Qāsim in 711 is one of the most crucial episodes in the earliest phase of the expansion of Islamic civilization into the Indian subcontinent. Muḥammad b. Qāsim was only seventeen when as a general of the Umayyad Caliphate he launched a successful military expedition against Raja Dahir of the Brahmin dynasty.[1] This event not only began to establish a large portion of South Asia under Islamic rule for the first time but initiated a period of momentous changes in the cultural, religious and political space of the Indian subcontinent. Featured prominently in the history of Islam in South Asia

[1] Aḥmad b. Yaḥyā al-Balādhurī, *History of the Arab Invasions: The Conquest of the Lands: A New Translation of al-Baladhuri's Futuh al-Buldan*, ed. and trans. Hugh Kennedy (London: I.B. Tauris, 2022).

the conquest of Sindh initiated centuries of Muslim settlement and influence in the Indian subcontinent with Sindh noted as the eastern frontier of the Umayyad empire.[2]

This article examines the cultural and religious impact of Muḥammad b. Qāsim's conquest on early Islamic Sindh from 711 to 760. It is an attempt to grapple with a central historical question, what were the form and extent of the cultural and religious changes introduced through this early Islamic movement into South Asia? On the one hand academic assessments of the historical significance of the conquest have often performed without regard to local religious life and cultural practices, administrative systems and changes in social organization that were initiated in the decades after the conquest.

There are several historical texts that describe early Islamic rule in Sindh. Offerings such as the *Chachnama* a Persian history based on Arabic descriptions and *Futūḥ al-Buldān* by al-Balādhurī offer invaluable resources for understanding early Islamic governance and policies in Sindh.[3] Together with other historians from later periods (e.g. Ibn al-Athīr) as well as contemporary scholars (Yohanan Friedmann, Andre Wink and Richard Eaton to name some) we have a range of perspectives on how the Arab conquerors interacted with indigenous peoples and religious practices and traditions. While the *Chachnama* documents were written at a much later time (during the Delhi Sultanate) it represents a combination of Islamic historical memory and regional storytelling and provides competing narratives of early Muslim rule in South Asia.

The current work assumes a qualitative historical research approach which can be characterized using a textual analysis of primary and secondary sources. The first are the early Islamic annals including the *Chachnama* and *Futūḥ al-Buldān* by al-Balādahurī that give an account of the Arab conquest of Sindh as well as of the policies that were applied to the latter by the early Umayyad administration. The works are analysed in a critical manner to evaluate their historical background, structure of the narration and political interpretation. Secondary sources are the contemporary historical research on the early Islamic expansion, the Islamization of South Asia and the discussion of the nature of Arab rule in Sindh. These works are employed to contextualize the study to the current scholarship and assess rival interpretations.

The paper follows a paradigm of cultural-religious contact and accommodation and refers to the theories of Islamization as a sequential and negotiated process instead of a forceful change. This framework enables the analysis to be concerned with the trends in administrative adjustment, religious accommodation and assimilation of local elites. This framework is operationalized throughout the

[2] John Jehangir Bede, "The Arabs in Sind, 712-1026 A.D" (PhD diss., University of Utah, 1973).

[3] André Wink, *Al-Hind: The Making of the Indo-Islamic World*, vol. 2, *The Slave Kings and the Islamic Conquest, 11th-13th Centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 1997).

discussion through the analysis of how the policies toward non-Muslim communities, bureaucratic continuity and local forms of government are operationalized in terms of processes of negotiation and cultural synthesis instead of a lapse.

The historical context of Sindh before 711

Before Muḥammad b. Qāsim arrived in 711 the territory of Sindh was ruled by the Brahmin dynasty under Raja Dahir. This dynasty replaced the Buddhists we adore and were losing influence for Daoism in the Rai dynasty and was based in Alor (modern-day Rohri near Sukkur, Pakistan). Raja Dahir was a local king and this local kingship was embedded within a broader multi-regional pattern of South Asia where kingship was intertwined with the religious authority (as would have Dharma) the social order and caste-based control. The state had a decisively stratified social order with the Brahmins as the priestly caste at the top dominating the religious intellectual life of the society while the Kshatriyas held all political and military control.[4]

The religious context of Sindh was pluralistic in nature but there were two primary traditions. Specifically Hinduism and Buddhism were the two major traditions. Hinduism by the Brahmin elite mostly was very present in Sindh especially in cities where it was associated even with the ruling classes because of the urban centers so were interchangeable up until Islam began to spread. Buddhism continued to be influential in parts of Sindh where it was built upon the previous Rai dynasty which connected to the Mauryan Empire specifically in monastic orders and parts of rural Sindh. While this interrelationship among both religions promoted something of a syncretic religious environment there were retained caste divisions and ritual hierarchies that effectively excluded most of the population especially lower castes and indigenous groups from the potential of political and economic power.[5]

The society of pre-Islamic Sindh was deeply hierarchical with caste determining one's the pre- Islamic society of Sindh was extremely stratified and hierarchically organized with caste deeply influencing one's profession, mobility and religious prerogensics. Brahmins held intellectual and spiritual authority while the lower castes were confined to servitude with minimal access to education and few opportunities to take on spiritual leadership. Regardless of these stark separations though Sindh offered significant cultural wealth and variety that included literary traditions in Sanskrit and Prakrit, temple architecture across a variety of styles and trade networks connecting Sindh to the broader Indian Ocean world.[6]

[4] Romila Thapar, *Early India: From the Origins to AD 1300* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004)

[5] Finbarr Barry Flood, *Objects of Translation: Material Culture and Medieval "Hindu-Muslim" Encounter* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009).

[6] Sheldon Pollock, *The Language of the Gods in the World of Men: Sanskrit, Culture, and Power in Premodern India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).

Sindh was of interest to outside powers due to its geographic position and economic potential. Positionally it was the easternmost border of the Sasanian Empire of Persia and later the Arab-Islamic world making it a frontier-state located at the interface of South Asia, Central Asia and the Persian Gulf. Economically Sindh developed as part of primary trade routes connecting the Indian subcontinent to the Arabian Peninsula and East Africa through maritime trade. Ports like Debal were important corridors for goods crossing through Sindh spices, textiles and precious stones through trade and land routes extended beyond Sindh's borders. Sindh offered riches any empire would want to exploit in the name of economic expansion.[7]

The movement toward Umayyad involvement in Sindh was principally the piracy issue. According to Arab sources a ship carrying women and children of Islamic origin was attacked and robbed by pirates near the coast of Sindh as it sailed from Ceylon (Sri Lanka) to the Umayyad province of Iraq. Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf the Umayyad governor demanded compensation for the loss incurred when Raja Dahir ignored Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf demands for compensation. This incident furnished a pretext and a justification for Umayyad retaliation. The intervention went beyond the immediate cause and was probably a planned move toward enhancing the Umayyads prompting of influence in South Asia to establish trade routes that were becoming increasingly tenuous to local resistance and piracy.[8]

The synthesis of internal unrest from Raja's contested and illegitimate position relative to some aspects of the population made Sindh vulnerable to outside invasion and occupation. The Brahman dynasty's legacies were often perceived as oppressive towards the lower castes and non-Hindu people including Buddhists and some native groups who subsequently provided support or neutrality for the Arab campaign. The internal dissent in Sindh likely aided Muḥammad b. Qāsim's relatively fast victories in some significant battles.[9]

Before 711 the political and religious environment in Sindh was composed of substantial Brahminical dominance, extensive multi-religious backgrounds and profound social disparities. Sindh was economically wealthy, physically bounded by seas and was politically vulnerable it would be the target of Umayyad ambitions. This context is important to rationalize not only the military successes of Muḥammad b. Qāsim but also the greater sociocultural and religious upheaval that followed his arrival.[10]

---

[7] Kirti N. Chaudhuri, *Trade and Civilisation in the Indian Ocean: An Economic History from the Rise of Islam to 1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

[8] Khalid Yahya Blankinship, *The End of the Jihâd State: The Reign of Hishām Ibn ʿAbd al-Malik and the Collapse of the Umayyads* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994).

[9] Manan Ahmed Asif, *A Book of Conquest: The Chachnama and Muslim Origins in South Asia* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016).

[10] Richard M. Eaton, *The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier, 1204–1760* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

The conquest of Sindh: military and political dynamics

The expedition of Muḥammad b. Qāsim in Sindh was not simply a traditional military measure it was merely a facet of Umayyad expansion by conquest to establish and legitimize Islamic leadership at the frontiers the Umayyad Caliphate's policies of punitive, economic and ideological concerns presented a series of motivations for intervention in South Asia. Under the governorship of Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf in Iraq the eastern frontier was becoming increasingly important as it contributed to both securing trade routes as well as demonstrating Umayyad state power. Thus to highlight this point further the conquest of Sindh was not just an exercise of Umayyad imperial ambition or ideological spreading of Islam (or both) it was also politically based and economically calculated.[11]

A punitive motive was one of the primary immediate motives of the campaign. An Arab source (*Futūḥ al-Buldān* by al-Balādhurū) narrates the following account. A group of Arab Muslim traders had been returning from Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and had been raided by pirates in the Sindh. Pirates stole their goods and kidnapped Muslim women and children. Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf sent diplomatic messages asking for their release but Raja Dahir refused and did little to intervene against the pirates perhaps because he had poor control of the coastal areas. Raja Dahir's refusal provided Hajjaj with the rationale he needed to launch an expedition. The punitive motive was embedded within a greater economic motive that included Sindh's ports, fertile lands and Indian Ocean trade. The ideological element jihad to spread Islam also conditioned the frame of the conquest story within religion. Even if there were ideological motivations for the conquest realities took precedence in determining how the campaign was conducted.[12]

Hajjaj named his 17-year-old nephew Muḥammad b. Qāsim the commander of the expedition. Although only 17 years old Qāsim was a brilliant military strategist and capable administrator. He oversaw a disciplined army of Syrian and Iraqi Arab troops along with cavalry, infantry and camel-mounted troops. The expedition began in 711 when Muḥammad b. Qāsim landed near Debal a port city. The *manjanīq*s (catapults) allowed the Arabs to breach the defences. After strong resistance Debal surrendered and a mosque was built to symbolize Islamic authority.[13]

Muḥammad b. Qāsim had travelled to Debal and from there moved north seizing many of the major cities across the region Nerun, Sehwan and finally Rawar where at Rawar his forces had mounted an invasion force to defeat Raja Dahir. Raja Dahir had battle elephants and what was presumably thousands of infantries

[11] André Wink, *Al-Hind, Volume 1: Early Medieval India and the Expansion of Islam, 7th-11th Centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 2021).

[12] Hugh Kennedy, *The Great Arab Conquests: How the Spread of Islam Changed the World We Live In* (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 2007).

[13] Anna Candida Felici et al., "Archaeological Excavations at Banbhore, Sindh: Preliminary Report of the Pakistani-Italian 2014 and 2015 Field Seasons," *Parthica* 18 (2016): 125-173.

but the Arab forces had better tactics to evade the Raja's forces. The death of Raja Dahir may as well as have symbolically cut-off Hindu Brahmin rule in Sindh and allowed for the consolidation of the region.[14]

The significance of Muḥammad b. Qāsim's campaign was not simply military victory but his political foresight and administrative realism. With every victory he built a new form of local governance that incorporated the existing elite which diminished resistance and led to a more seamless transition to governance. Rather than imposing a completely new bureaucratic apparatus he made use of existing administrative structures allowing Hindu and Buddhist officials to continue their roles within the new regime. The *Chachnama* was written later but gives elaborate examples of Muḥammad b. Qāsim's policies including his orders for fair treatment of locals, commitment to religious freedoms and safeguarding of non-Muslim worship sites.[15]

An extremely notable administrative policy of Muḥammad b. Qāsim's was his attitude toward dhimmis non-Muslims living under Muslim rule. He removed the non-Muslim status of those (Hindus and Buddhists) who paid *jizya* and allowed them to practice their religion freely. The temples were not typically destroyed and priests were often allowed to perform their duties within the temples. The policy of tolerating defeat (so long as one paid *jizya*) was both ideologically consistent with Islamic jurisprudence code and practically advantageous. It helped to eliminated chances of revolt and cultivated the loyalty of local communities of practice especially Buddhists and lower caste Hindus who had not been accepted during Brahmin rule[16]

Aside from maintaining the existing standards of religious tolerance Muḥammad b. Qāsim also introduced a taxation system that was considerably lighter than the previous regime's. The land revenue system remained generally the same but reforms were implemented to prevent exploitation. This meant that the economic stability of the area could be secured without excluding it from the associated Umayyad economy. The Arabs minted coins in the area sometimes mixing Sanskrit with Arabic script indicative of the syncretic cultural milieu that began to form.[17]

Muḥammad b. Qāsim also used diplomacy and military might. In many instances he negotiated with local chieftains and other rulers offering terms of surrender that would allow them to keep their place as chieftain or some derivative

[14] Fayaz Ahmad Parray, "Socio-Political Thought of Iqbal with Special Reference to Zarb-i-Kaleem" (M.Phil. diss., Iqbal Institute of Culture and Philosophy, University of Kashmir, Srinagar, 2013).

[15] Yohanan Friedmann, *Tolerance and Coercion in Islam: Interfaith Relations in the Muslim Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

[16] Blankinship, *The End of the Jihād State.*

[17] C. E. Bosworth "The Administrative and Economic History of the Early Islamic World," in *The Cambridge History of Islam*, Vol. 1A: *The Central Islamic Lands from Pre-Islamic Times to the First World War*, eds. P. M. Holt, Ann K. S. Lambton, and Bernard Lewis, 487-524. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970.

in exchange for loyalty and tribute and similar benefits to the local population. These diplomacy efforts helped expand Umayyad control without tending to warfare on the same breadth and depth. Working with local elites to maintain order in newly conquered territory was vital to in capturing the identity of just and inclusive Islamic state.[18]

It is important to note that although Muḥammad b. Qāsim's policy was relatively inclusive it was also motivated by political need. His somewhat laissez faire policies allowed the Arabs to administer a diverse and religiously plural society with minimal disruption. He established a pragmatic style of administration that gave birth to an Indo-Islamic political culture that would impact future Muslim dynasties in South Asia.

Muḥammad b. Qāsim's conquest of Sindh was primarily driven by a combination of strategic, economic and religious factors. While his military operation was quick and tactically outstanding it was his inclusive governance and flexible policies that led to the institutionalization of Islam in Sindh. The military skill, administrative realism and religious tolerance of Muḥammad b. Qāsim allowed him to create an early Islamic model which combined commitment to Islam as an ideology and political rationale. This conquest contributed not only to the expansion of the Umayyad Caliphate but it also signalled the beginning of a process of civilizational exchange between the Islamic world and the subcontinent.[19]

Religious and cultural transformations, 711-760

During Muḥammad b. Qāsim's conquest of Sindh the making of an Islamic society began in the context of plurality 711-760 C.E. The period right after the conquest itself presented many changes but these changes were not disconnected from the history of the region. New Islamic practices Muslim forms of social life and cultural activities could not be mandated overnight. The changes initiated took time through local actions and engagements developing and morphing from local styles of life. The many forms of adaptation through multiple actors with religious toleration intermingling produced an Islamic polity in Sindh. Although Islam did not become the dominant faith during this period the religious and cultural changes that originated in this period were consequential for South Asia in the long term.[20]

[18] Derryl N. MacLean, "Religious Tensions in the Sind at the Time of the Arab Conquest" (M.A. thesis, McGill University, 1975).

[19] Peter Jackson, *The Delhi Sultanate: A Political and Military History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

[20] Francis Robinson, *Islam and Muslim History in South Asia* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000).

Religious developments and policies of coexistence

From the start Muḥammad b. Qāsim adopted a religious policy based on *dhimma* (the Islamic legal regime for non-Muslims subject to Muslim rule). Hindus and Buddhists were recognized as dhimmis or protected groups so long as they acknowledged Muslim sovereignty and paid the *jizya* (poll tax). The *Chachnama* provides several accounts of Muḥammad b. Qāsim's orders to spare temples and religious leaders. For example he supposedly told his officers not to destroy local temples and to not disturb the non-Muslims religious ceremonies after coming to conquest of Multan (Multan is a historic city in southern Punjab now in Pakistan known for its temples and spiritual heritage). He did so based on treating both forms of Hindus and Buddhists like other people of the book (*ahl al-kitāb*) to which they also had scripture and activities about religion and thus were entitled to certain protections.[21]

This commonly tolerant governance allowed Hindus and Buddhists to freely practice their rituals, maintain their temples and function their schools. Local Brahmins and Buddhist monks kept their religious authority but diminished political power. This policy of accommodation- maintained rebellions at bay and allowed the Arab administration to preside over a culturally diverse society with little to no resistance. Rather than focusing on mass conversion of its subjects the Umayyads were more interested in exercising political control and collecting taxes so working towards religious coexistence was a practical necessity.[22]

Conversions within this early era of Islam were limited in scope and largely voluntary. It was not until the third and final phase of Ottoman control of Jerusalem (around 1550) that conversions to Islam became actively and aggressively pursued through state-sponsored initiatives. Up to that point the local Arab administration had neither actively compelled or forced the local population to convert to Islam nor did they vigorously sway them to convert to Islam through mixed social and economic inducements. It is true that converts might have been exempted from paying *jizya* which might have encouraged some individuals from the lower castes or marginalized groups to embrace Islam but there was yet no pattern of coalescence emerging that would either deeply assail or wholly replace other idiosyncratic religions operating in this context. Initially and for a long time Islam forcefully entered a complex ecology where peoples religious identities for very good reason existed side by side and even at times overlapped one another. Early converts to Islam continued to practice aspects of their erstwhile religion in a manner of speaking this allowed for a cultural outcome that may have simply portrayed a syncretic Islamic practice in that geographic region.[23]

---

[21] M. Mujeeb, *The Indian Muslims* (Montreal: McGill University Press, 1967).

[22] Sherman A. Jackson, *Islam and the Blackamerican: Looking Toward the Third Resurrection* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

[23] Ira M. Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

Although there would be no real Sufi traced influence until a later time this early period would sow the seeds for spiritual exchange. Arab Muslims settling in Sindh included soldiers as well as scholars traders and pious people who all had a more spiritual perspective. When settlers first arrived in Sindh many lived alongside locals and developed forms of intercultural dialogue. Later Sufi saints built upon the foundations developed during this early period and expanded the notions of Islam through peaceful preaching and mystical thought that intertwined with Hindu and Buddhist spiritual traditions. The prevailing atmosphere of religious tolerance that existed early helped prepare the ground for later Sufi-led Islamization of Sindh.[24]

Cultural effects and Arab Sindhi integration

The cultural aspect of the conquest was that it facilitated a pathway for Sindh to take a part in the larger Muslim universe while also enabling the local traditions to be retained and transformed. Among the most significant aspects of this process was the emergence of a bilingual administrative and cultural context. The development of Arabic as the official language of administration, law and religious scholarship was one of the major steps while Sindhi continued to be spoken by most people including a form of bilingualism among some educated groups who engaged with both Arabic and Sindhi speakers. The vernacular entered Arabic into the Sindh lexicon on a regular type of basis namely in legal, fiscal and religious contexts.[25]

The Arab administrations made several changes to governance and bureaucratic practices to incorporate Islamic values within the lexicon of existing regional customs. The *dīwān* (correspondingly, bureaucratic register) system was put in place for land revenue and tax obligations and local administrators usually Hindu or Buddhist elite were maintained in their postings since they were used to the practice of recording claims and had office skills from previously established systems. The situation provided with local level continuity of social structures blended with Islamic legal frameworks allowed for a mixed form of administration that was pragmatic and culturally adaptive.[26]

Coinage is another area in which cultural blending was evident. The early Umayyad rulers did have coins issued in Sindh that were inscribed with Arabic text along with indigenous imagery and in some cases wrote the Sanskrit text. The coins were used for economic purposes obviously but they also were used to

[24] Michel Boivin, "Sufism, Pilgrimage and Saint Worship in South Asia," in *New Pathways in Pilgrimage Studies: Global Perspectives*, ed. Dionigi Albera and John Eade (New York: Routledge, 2016).

[25] David Gilmartin, "Partition, Pakistan, and South Asian History: In Search of a Narrative," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 57, no. 4 (November 1998): 1068-1095.

[26] Hilal Ahmad Tantray and Zahid Iqbal Sheikh, "Methods of Revenue Assessment During Mughal India," *Shodhak: A Journal of Historical Research* 13, no. 8 (2023): 137-144.

display the new Islamic authority adapting to the local circumstances. Such syncretic coinage showed the dual identity of the early Islamic Sindh the area was part of the Umayyad Caliphate while having its own cultural identity and character.[27]

In early Islamic Sindh architecture and education began to change. Muḥammad b. Qāsim is said to have constructed the first mosques in Debal and Multan. These mosques (which were simple designs) emerged as a place of community and religious significance affected by the local architectural style, and over time evolved into buildings representing a mix of Islamic and South Asian architecture. Education also underwent a change with the establishment of madrasas and mosque-based learning environments. The traditional Hindu and Buddhist educational traditions persisted but the introduction of Islamic studies of Arabic, the Qur'an and law sparked new ideas and inquiries introducing further diversity to the intellectual climate.[28]

There was mutual cultural exchange the Arab settlers took on the local customs, intermarried and assimilated traditions all at the same time. This resulted in a distinct Indo-Islamic identity that has its roots in Sindh. It is important to note that Islam permeated Sindhi culture through bridged cultural interactions as well as through cultural accommodation and not through forced conversion. The pre-Islamic past left in the past was not erased but reshaped. It constructed the foundation for a long-term Islamic influence that shaped the identity and memories of Sindhi culture.[29]

Post-Qāsim developments and the struggle for consolidation

The departure of Muḥammad b. Qāsim from Sindh brought an end to an impressive early Islamic presence in the Indian subcontinent. Although his military victories and administrative arrangements laid the foundations for sustainable rule the political context shifted dramatically when he was abruptly recalled by the Umayyad Caliphate. The execution of Muḥammad b. Qāsim combined with mismatch of leadership and political volatility by subsequent governors highlighted the weakness of the early Islamic administration in Sindh. Nevertheless while Islamic rule was fluctuating and contested Islamic culture and religion remained strong and continued to grow and establish a firm rooting throughout the region.[30]

---

[27] Stephen Album and Tony Goodwin, *Sylloge of Islamic Coins in the Ashmolean*, vol. 1, *The Pre-Reform Coinage of the Early Islamic Period* (Oxford: Ashmolean Museum, 1999).

[28] Umme Salma and Raashid Nehal, "Development of Madrasa Education in India: A Historical Overview," *International Journal for Multidisciplinary Research* 6, no. 2 (2024).

[29] Akbar S. Ahmed, *Discovering Islam: Making Sense of Muslim History and Society*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2002).

[30] Ahmad Hasan Dani, *History of Pakistan: Pakistan through Ages* (Lahore: Sang-e Meel Publications, 2007).

Muḥammad b. Qāsim was ordered back around 715 shortly after the death of Caliph al-Wālid I and the succession of Sulaymān b. ʿAbd al-Mālik. Several Arab chroniclers including al-Balādhurī claimed that Muḥammad b. Qāsim's recall was the product of personal and political elitism at the Umayyad court. Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf Qāsim's powerful patron and governor of Iraq had passed away leaving Qāsim politically vulnerable and Sulaymān reportedly hostile to Hajjaj's underlings given the chance to order Qāsim's arrest and ultimate death. He may have made this choice based on the fear that new generals such as Qāsim were a significant threat toward the power of the central caliphate. Critical issues were absent from Sulaymān's remand orders as Qāsim's military operations had been highly successful but rather in terms of court politics and power dynamics within the multiple levels of authority within the Umayyad administration.[31]

Qāsim's death created a leadership gap in Sindh. Other governors who followed him who were sent from Damascus or Iraq were neither as strategically astute nor as aware of local complexities. Many governors were mainly interested in short-term governance and revenue collection rather than permanent incorporation into the Islamic empire of Sindh. While some of the governors attempted to use direct Arab rule through force anything beyond relatively limited force was largely ineffective typically because governors lacked the Muhammadan qualities and mutual alliances that made Qāsim's leadership a dominant force to be turned to as an ally rather than as an enemy. Following Muḥammad b. Qāsim's recall Sindh entered a phase of political disintegration. The rivalries among Arab tribal factions chiefly between the Yemeni and Qaysi authorities deepened entrenching their rivalries and allowing local Hindu and Buddhist elite to re-establish their control as in some localities Arab rule was unravelling.[32]

Revolts developed especially in localities where Qāsim had not extended Islam's authority. The Umayyad Caliphate were now facing competing political challenges had difficulty sustaining authority and control overtaxed lands in Sindh. Tensions notwithstanding, Islam's cultural and religious existed and grew steadily. Arab-Muslim settlers continued to inhabit key cities like Debal and Multan, intermarrying, trading and building mosques that became community- centres and places of learning. Though political backing was weak Islamic practices slowly absorbed into Sindh. Despite being weakened Muḥammad b. Qāsim's inclusive and adaptive administrative model remained influential in the governance of future officials. Some revived aspects of his system to maintain stability through cooperation not conquest. Ultimately even amid political upheaval

[31] Monique Kervran, review of *Al-Hind: The Making of the Indo-Islamic World*, vol. 1, *Early Medieval India and the Expansion of Islam, 7th–11th Centuries*, by André Wink, *Bulletin critique des Annales islamologiques* 8 (1992).

[32] Wolseley Haig (ed.), *The Cambridge History of India*, vol. 3, *Turks and Afghans* (New York: Macmillan, 1928), 1929.

Qāsim's legacy persisted and he established an inclusive foundation for the deep culture of Islam within the identity of Sindh.[33]

Conclusion

Muḥammad b. Qāsim's conquest of Sindh in 711 marked a pivotal moment in the histories of South Asia and the Islamic world. While often seen as a military expansion by the Umayyad Caliphate its deeper significance lies in the cultural, administrative and religious changes it initiated between 711 and 760. Qāsim's military victories at Debal, Rawar and Multan were paired with pragmatic governance retaining local elites, tolerating non-Muslim communities and implementing Islamic yet adaptable administrative structures. The dhimma system, *jizya* tax and protection of religious sites reflected early Islamic pluralism.

Though mass conversions did not occur immediately, Islam gradually spread through settlement, intermarriage and religious engagement. Arabic language, Islamic coinage blending Arab and Indian motifs, mosque construction and new legal practices contributed to a slow but meaningful cultural transformation. This process did not erase local traditions but rather fostered a unique hybrid identity. Despite the political instability following Qāsim's recall marked by tribal tensions and local revolts the early Islamic influence proved durable. Muslim communities established roots in key cities and Islam became both a governing and spiritual presence in Sindh. This shows that while military conquests may be short-lived cultural and religious legacies are often long-lasting and complex.

Future research especially archaeological work at sites like Debal, Banbhore and Multan could reveal more about the material culture and urban development of early Islamic Sindh. Interdisciplinary studies could further explore how Islam was localized and reinterpreted in the South Asian context. The conquest of Sindh was not just a military event but the beginning of a sustained and evolving encounter between Islamic and South Asian civilizations shaping the pluralistic identity of the region for centuries to come.

Bibliography

Ahmed, Akbar S. *Discovering Islam: Making Sense of Muslim History and Society*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2002. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203406304.

Album, Stephen, and Tony Goodwin. *Sylloge of Islamic Coins in the Ashmolean*. Vol. 1, *The Pre-Reform Coinage of the Early Islamic Period*. Oxford: Ashmolean Museum, 2002.

[33] Muhammad Shakeel, Asma Nosheen, and Nadia Farhad, "An Analytical Study of Public Welfare Programs during the Umayyad Dynasty: A Historical Review," *Tanazur* 5, no. 3 (2024).

Asif, Manan Ahmed. *A Book of Conquest: The Chachnama and Muslim Origins in South Asia*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016. https://doi.org/10.4159/9780674972414.

Balādhurī (al), Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyā. *History of the Arab Invasions: The Conquest of the Lands: A New Translation of al-Baladhuri's Futuh al-Buldan*. Edited and translated by Hugh Kennedy. London: I.B. Tauris, 2022. https://doi.org/10.5040/9780755637430.

Bede, John Jehangir. "The Arabs in Sind, 712-1026 A.D." PhD diss., University of Utah, 1973.

Blankinship, Khalid Yahya. *The End of the Jihād State: The Reign of Hishām ibn ʿAbd al-Malik and the Collapse of the Umayyads*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994.

Boivin, Michel. "Sufism, Pilgrimage and Saint Worship in South Asia." In *New Pathways in Pilgrimage Studies: Global Perspectives*, edited by Dionigi Albera and John Eade, 65-79. New York: Routledge, 2016. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315637310-9.

Cahen, Claude. "Economy, Society, Institutions." In *The Cambridge History of Islam*. Vol. 2B, *Islamic Society and Civilisation*, edited by P. M. Holt, Ann K. S. Lambton, and Bernard Lewis, 511-538. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977. https://doi.org/10.1017/CHOL9780521219495.005.

Chaudhuri, K. N. *Trade and Civilisation in the Indian Ocean: An Economic History from the Rise of Islam to 1750*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107049918.

Dani, Ahmad Hasan. *History of Pakistan: Pakistan through Ages*. Lahore: Sang-e Meel Publications, 2007.

Eaton, Richard M. *The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier, 1204-1760*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993. https://doi.org/10.1525/9780520917774.

Felici, Anna Candida, Agnese Fusaro, Asma Ibrahim, Khaleemullah Lashari, Niccolò Manassero, Mario Piacentini, Valeria Piacentini Fiorani, and Alessandro Tilia. "Archaeological Excavations at Banbhore, Sindh: Preliminary Report of the Pakistani-Italian 2014 and 2015 Field Seasons." *Parthica* 18 (2016): 125–173. https://doi.org/10.19272/201603501008.

Flood, Finbarr Barry. *Objects of Translation: Material Culture and Medieval "Hindu-Muslim" Encounter*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009.

Friedmann, Yohanan. *Tolerance and Coercion in Islam: Interfaith Relations in the Muslim Tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511497568.

Gilmartin, David. "Partition, Pakistan, and South Asian History: In Search of a Narrative." *The Journal of Asian Studies* 57, no. 4 (November 1998): 1068–1095. https://doi.org/10.2307/2659304.

Haig, Wolseley, ed. *The Cambridge History of India*. Vol. 3, *Turks and Afghans*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1928.

Jackson, Peter. *The Delhi Sultanate: A Political and Military History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Jackson, Sherman A. *Islam and the Blackamerican: Looking Toward the Third Resurrection*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195180817.001.0001.

Kennedy, Hugh. *The Great Arab Conquests: How the Spread of Islam Changed the World We Live In*. Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 2007.

Kervran, Monique. Review of *Al-Hind: The Making of the Indo-Islamic World*, vol. 1, *Early Medieval India and the Expansion of Islam, 7th-11th Centuries*, by André Wink. *Bulletin critique des Annales islamologiques* 8 (1992): 100-102.

Lapidus, Ira M. *A History of Islamic Societies*. 3rd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139048828.

MacLean, Derryl N. "Religious Tensions in the Sind at the Time of the Arab Conquest." M.A. thesis, McGill University, 1975.

Mujeeb, M. *The Indian Muslims*. Montreal: McGill University Press, 1967. Reprint, Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2023. https://doi.org/10.1515/9780773593503.

Parray, Fayaz Ahmad. "Socio-Political Thought of Iqbal with Special Reference to Zarb-i-Kaleem." M.Phil. diss., Iqbal Institute of Culture and Philosophy, University of Kashmir, Srinagar, 2013.

Pollock, Sheldon. *The Language of the Gods in the World of Men: Sanskrit, Culture, and Power in Premodern India*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006. https://doi.org/10.1525/9780520932029.

Robinson, Francis. *Islam and Muslim History in South Asia*. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Salma, Umme, and Raashid Nehal. "Development of Madrasa Education in India: A Historical Overview." *International Journal for Multidisciplinary Research* 6, no. 2 (2024): 1-9. https://doi.org/10.36948/ijfmr.2024.v06i02.14827.

Shakeel, Muhammad, Asma Nosheen, and Nadia Farhad. "An Analytical Study of Public Welfare Programs during the Umayyad Dynasty: A Historical Review." *Tanazur* 5, no. 3 (2024): 50-62.

Tantray, Hilal Ahmad, and Zahid Iqbal Sheikh. "Methods of Revenue Assessment during Mughal India." *Shodhak: A Journal of Historical Research* 13, no. 8 (2023): 137-144.

Thapar, Romila. *Early India: From the Origins to AD 1300*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004.

Wink, André. *Al-Hind: The Making of the Indo-Islamic World*. Vol. 1, *Early Medieval India and the Expansion of Islam, 7th-11th Centuries*. Leiden: Brill, 2021. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004483002.

Wink, André. *Al-Hind: The Making of the Indo-Islamic World*. Vol. 2, *The Slave Kings and the Islamic Conquest, 11th-13th Centuries*. Leiden: Brill, 1997. Online ed., 2002. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004483019.