

Influence of Shaikh Ahmed Sirhindi reform movement in the history of Muslim India

Introduction.

Shaikh Ahmed Sirhindi ~~reformed~~ ^{revived} the original standards of Islamic practices ^{and} led the Muslims of India back to the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and the teachings of the Holy Quran in its true sense.

His reformation movement was specifically for those Muslims in India, who have departed themselves from the Deen and were completely unaware of its importance. They were indulged in many un-Islamic practices such as immorality, lawlessness, making no difference between Halal and Haram, and unnecessary innovations in the Deen. Leaving Islamic teachings behind, they adapted to the prevalent culture which was ^{an amalgamation} a mix-up of various cultures ~~found~~ in India.

Ahmed Sirhindi put ~~forward~~ ⁱⁿ his efforts to ~~re~~make them realize the true meaning of Islam. He sent letters to the nobles of the courts to clarify the misconceptions, ^{to} wrote several books, continued his ^{to} spread Islamic awareness about ~~the~~ Islam.

preaching across India to protect the separate identity of Muslims, and to clarify them as different nation ~~than~~ from the rest.

~~Therefore~~, ~~also~~ For this reason, he is rightly called Mujaddid Alf Sani (the reviver of Islam after the second ~~millenium~~ ^{millennium}).

The conditions of Muslims during the reign of Akbar.

Ahmed Sirhindi was born during the rule of Jalal-ud-din Akbar, the third Mughal Emperor who was ^{more of} a statesman than a Muslim ruler. His overly concern for his state made him disregard the Islamic values

§i) Deen-e-Ilahi as a new religion ^{imposed} by Akbar

As Akbar was more of a statesman than a Muslim ruler, he was advised to consolidate his Empire by introducing a new structure of a religion where all the common features of all religions will ^{be} amalgamated/shared. Impressed by this advice, he announced a new religion "Deen-e-Ilahi" which distorted the image of Islam for the upcoming generation. Being the ~~king~~ ruler, he started imposing this new religion upon Muslims, considering Tauheed as Taqlid (to follow the principles blindly).

ii) Ban on all Islamic practices

Soon the ~~ban~~ Islamic practices and preaching were banned. The names Mohammad and Ahmed were forbidden to be named ^{in the} ^{to any child} future Islamic Shariah was constrained; Mosques were closed; Temples were patronized, cow-slaughter was banned and pork was permitted; intermarriage between Muslims and non-Muslims was decreed, ulemas were devalued and ridiculed, etc.. The reason to ban Islamic practices was to force Muslims to accept Deen-e-Ilahi.

iii) Wahdat-ul-wujood boosted Deen-e-Ilahi

Wahdat-ul-wujood was the core part of Sufism, which was ^{un-}understandable to common man. Basically, ~~the~~ wahdat is oneness or unity and wujood is existence or presence; the oneness of the existence or being. ^{It is} the extreme level of worship ~~when~~ which a sufi reaches and that is completely beyond a common person's understanding. The ^{so-called} modern Ulema of Akbar's time misguided people through Wahdat-ul-wujood ~~as~~ ^{that} everything reflects God, ~~at~~ the whole universe; ~~no~~ matter who ever it is, worshipping God's creation is equivalent to worshipping God himself. It further boosted Akbar's Deen-e-Ilahi concept when he considered that all people ~~of~~ from different religions worship differently but, in fact, Allah is worshipped.
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iv) Preference was given to Hindus and Hinduism. Akbar appointed many Hindus and Rajputs to higher positions in the court such as Senapati, etc. Hindu ladies were made Malika by Akbar after marrying them. Hinduism was favored against Islam, for instance, Muslims were ~~restricted~~ ^{observed} to eat or drink when Hindus fasted, on the contrary, Hindus were allowed to enjoy ^{their} meal during Ramadhan.

Steps taken by Ahmed Sirhindi to reform Muslim society

(i) ~~Ahmed Sirhindi~~ ~~declared a war against Deen-e-Ilahi~~

This situation of the Muslim community where the ruler himself was indulged in undervaluing Islam, made Ahmed Sirhindi to debut his work

(ii) A war declared against Deen-e-Ilahi

To Shaikh Ahmed Sirhindi, Islam is a rigid religion. It does not allow innovation and flexibility. When polytheism is forbidden it means it is forbidden; when Islam made pork, alcohol, ~~or~~ ^{etc.} usury, ~~is~~ forbidden, they are forbidden. No flexibility can be made to amend the commandments. He opposed Deen-

e-Ilahi ~~as~~ and put several efforts to spread Islamic awareness in all directions of India. ~~Through~~
↳ by sending his disciples

his sermons, he addressed thousands of Muslims about the importance and need of Islam in our everyday ~~if~~ lives. convincing them to adopt simplicity and offer Salah and observe fast. He wrote several books and cited many verses, regarding doing ^{any} experiment~~ing~~ within Islam. ~~and~~ and hadith

"He who invented something wrong which has no linkage with the religion of Islam is forbidden" (Hadith)

when. Allah says. Today, I have completed ~~my~~ your religion for you. It means ^{It is completed.}

ii) Counter~~ed~~ Wahdat-ul-Wujood with Wahdat-ul-Shuhood

Wahdat-ul-Wujood advocated the concept that God's creation represents God Himself. ~~To counter~~ ^{So,} there is no difference between God and His creation. Ahmed Sirhindi condemned the concept of equality between God and His universe. He explained logically that God and His creation have a big difference. That is, God never sleeps nor gets tired. He never dies; He ~~will~~ ^{live} is eternal even when all the universe will end. He is Almighty. No creation possesses such powers. There ~~is~~ ^{exists} no equality ~~in~~ between them. However,

The attribution of God can be reflected in His creation that is called wahdat-ul-Shuhud. His new school of thought inspired Muslims to ~~reform~~ ^{reform} their beliefs about God. For this contribution, he is called "the original ~~thinker~~ ^{thinker} of in India, before Shah Waliullah and Iqbal"
- Shaikh Mohammad Ikram

iii) Maktubat-e-Imam Rabani to Jahangir
~~Ahmed~~ Ahmed Sirhindi sent letters to many Islamic scholars regarding the issues faced by all Muslims of that time. He was also anxious about the future of Islam. Apart from this, he also sent letter to Jahangir and questioned his reign. His letter is divided into three parts. First, he informed Jahangir about his mismanaged political administration as corrupted. After that, he explained him how an administrative should be structured; that is, the central authority should be pious and fearful of ~~God~~ ^{Allah} alone. The other point he added was about constitution; that a constitution should be according to the teachings of Holy Quran and Sunnah. When the central authority and constitution will be free from flaws, the standard of people's life will consequently improve. Further, he instructed Jahangir through

his letter that the treasure ~~did~~ not belong to the king but the public. Quoting several examples from the caliphate's reign of Hazrat Umar Farooq and Hazrat Ali's administration, he educated him that the king can only have his property; the rest is for public. Finally, he asked the ruler to change his community and remove non-Muslims from the noble positions that belonged to Muslims, as the ruling religion is Islam.

iv) Impact on Jahangir

Ahmed Sirhindi was summoned by Jahangir to the court. Unlike his father, Jahangir was more Orthodox, but still insisted on the concept of Akbar to prostrate the Mughal Emperor out of respect. When Sirhindi was commanded to prostrate before Jahangir, he ~~of~~ abruptly defied to prostrate a human. Infuriated Emperor imprisoned Ahmed Sirhindi for 2 years until he realized his mistake. Not only was he released, but Jahangir recalled him to Agra to be his religious advisor.

v) Impact of Ahmed Sirhindi's teachings on the Mughal court

Shaikh Ahmed Sirhindi kept his efforts continued. He asked the Emperor to convene people where he placed his demands

before him. First, the prostration before the Emperor will be abolished. Secondly, Cow-slaughter should be ~~permitted~~ and haram be forbidden. ~~Religion~~ Thirdly, religious innovations should be completely banned. ~~Finally~~ ^{Finally} The Clari's office and Ihtisab's department should be restored along with repairing the mosques that needed to be renovated and rebuilding the demolished mosques. ~~The~~ The Emperor granted his demands and issued a royal decree accordingly. This was the time when Muslims breathed ~~the~~ a sign of relief.

vi) Two-Nation Theory

"Ahmed Sirhindi is the guardian of the estate of millah in India.

whom Allah awakened at the right time"
- Allama Iqbal.

The main contribution of Ahmed Sirhindi was to protect the separate identity of Muslims in India. The concept which was ^{later} adopted by Muslim leaders during the 20th century. He clarified all the Muslims, be it a common man or an important religious personality of that period that ^{Muslims} we can never be like non-Muslims; Islam is different from all the religions. ~~the Muslims~~ ^{It} has ~~been~~ different festivals, beliefs and customs from other religions.

Therefore, Muslims have a

separate identity that makes them unique. ~~and~~ A Muslim ~~is~~ is recognized from his identity across the globe. Ahmed Sirhindi's efforts for advocating the idea of Two-Nation Theory is remarkable.

Conclusion

Ahmed Sirhindi, the original thinker in India, saved the Muslim's identity ~~at~~ ~~the~~ ~~time~~ and revive the true spirit of Islam with his ~~unforgettable~~ unforgettable efforts. He was the first in the sub-continent to make Muslims realize about their uniqueness as ~~being~~ a separate ~~entity~~ ^{nation} from the rest. To Ahmed Sirhindi, Islam is declared a complete and perfect religion, therefore, any innovation in the deen is unacceptable. ~~Through~~ Through his courage of standing against the ruler, Islamic practices were brought back to life. Thus, ~~he~~ ~~is~~ ^{Atiama Iqbal rightly called him.} "the guardian of the estate of Millah in India."