

Q2 How the reform movement of Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi influenced the history of Muslim India?

### Introduction

Sheikh Ahmed Sirhind also known as Mujadid Alf-e-Sani (reformer of second millenium) was a sufi saint who seeked the revival of Islamic values. He belonged to a Naqshbandi order and was a disciple of Khawaja Baqi Billah. He realized the worsening socio-political circumstances of Muslims in India and started a reformation movement to restore the identity of Muslims. The objective of this movement was to protect Muslims from superficial beliefs and teach them the methods of Shariah. He rejected the idea of amalgamation of different religions with Islam as it was the threat to Muslims separate identity.

## Situation of Muslims at the time of Movement

The power of Muslims in the continent was declining due to the policies of Akbar such as Din-e-Ilahi. Muslims were ignoring Shariah as superficial and the religious syncretism was on rise. The Mughal Empire was fragmented politically which was a direct threat to Muslims of India.

## Reform Movement

### 1) Rejection of Din-e-Ilahi

Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi started campaign against Din-e-Ilahi founded by Akbar as Emperor. He wrote to the people and rejected the idea which was a significant threat to the identity of Muslims.

2) Preached through his disciples

Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi started sending his disciples to the far away areas of continent who spread the message of Islam through Friday's congregational prayers in the form of Khutba. They also taught the examples of Holy Prophet PBUH.

3) Send letters to rulers and governors

He stressed great emphasis on the teachings of Islam through his teachings by sending letters to the rulers and governors. He wrote 564 letters and compiled it as "Khutbat-e Ahmadiya". He wrote letters to rulers emphasizing "The monarch is the heart of any nation".

4) Imposition of Jizya Tax

Jizya tax is a historic

tax on Non-Muslims to save their socio-economic interest and giving them exemption from military services. However, the rulers of that time revoked this tax. Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi campaigned in the favour of this tax.

### 5) Reformation through philosophy

Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi emphasized ~~note~~ Asbab-e-Nabuwat and Khatm-e-Nabuwat importance in the life of Muslims. He emphasised the concept of Wahdat-ul-Shuhud (unity of manifestation) and renounced excessive mysticism and pantheistic belief in the form of Wahdat-ul-Wujud.

### Influence of Reformation on Muslim of India

#### 1) Propagation of Islam

The teachings of reformation

movement of Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi resulted in the propagation of Islam. The result of this propagation emerged in the reign of Emperor Akbar Aurangzeb who followed the teachings of Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi and exalted Din-e-Ilahi.

## 2) Influence on upcoming Reformation

Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi wants Muslims of continent to know their worsening situation by ignoring Islamic teachings. This movement heavily influenced the upcoming movements of Shah Waliullah and Sir Syed Ahmed Khan.

## 3) Separation of Muslim religion and ritual practices

Muslims started realising about the teachings of Islam and dis-aligned themselves from the rituals of Hindu culture. Intermarriages between Muslim

and Hindu were ~~common~~ allowed during the time of Akbar which was later averted.

Use specific and self explanatory headings

#### 4) Separate Identity

Muslims of subcontinent got separate identity by implementing teachings of Islam in daily lives. This separate identity later enforced the belief that Hindu and Muslims are different nations as their religion, norms and rituals do not match.

Add more arguments

#### Conclusion

The reform movement led by Sheikh Ahmad Raza Khan after realising the slow decline of Muslim identity in the continent changed the history of Muslim India. By emphasizing the importance of shariah and rejecting the idea

of amalgamating with other religions for social cohesion, he bore the fruits of Muslim separate identity. He reached the message of teachings of Quran and Holy Prophet PBUH by his work "Exegesis of Quran" and sending letters to the rulers and governors of Muslim states. This movement resulted in the propagation of Islam as separate religion of Muslims by rejecting the idea of Din-e-Ilahi.

A 20 marks answer should have around 12-15 arguments