

PAKISTAN AFFAIRS:

2024

PRE - PARTITION:

REFORMER: SHEIKH AHMED
SIRHINDI

QUESTION:

Keeping in view the socio political circumstances of sub-continent, discuss the role of Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi (Mujaddid Alf Sani) who revived Islamic ideology, and revived Muslim identity in sub-continent.

ANSWER:

INTRODUCTION:

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Sheikh Ahmed was an individual from Sirhind, rich in knowledge and vigorous in action. I was associated with him for a few times and found truly marvellous things in his spiritual character. He will turn into a light which will illuminate the world? Baqi Billah Scholar.

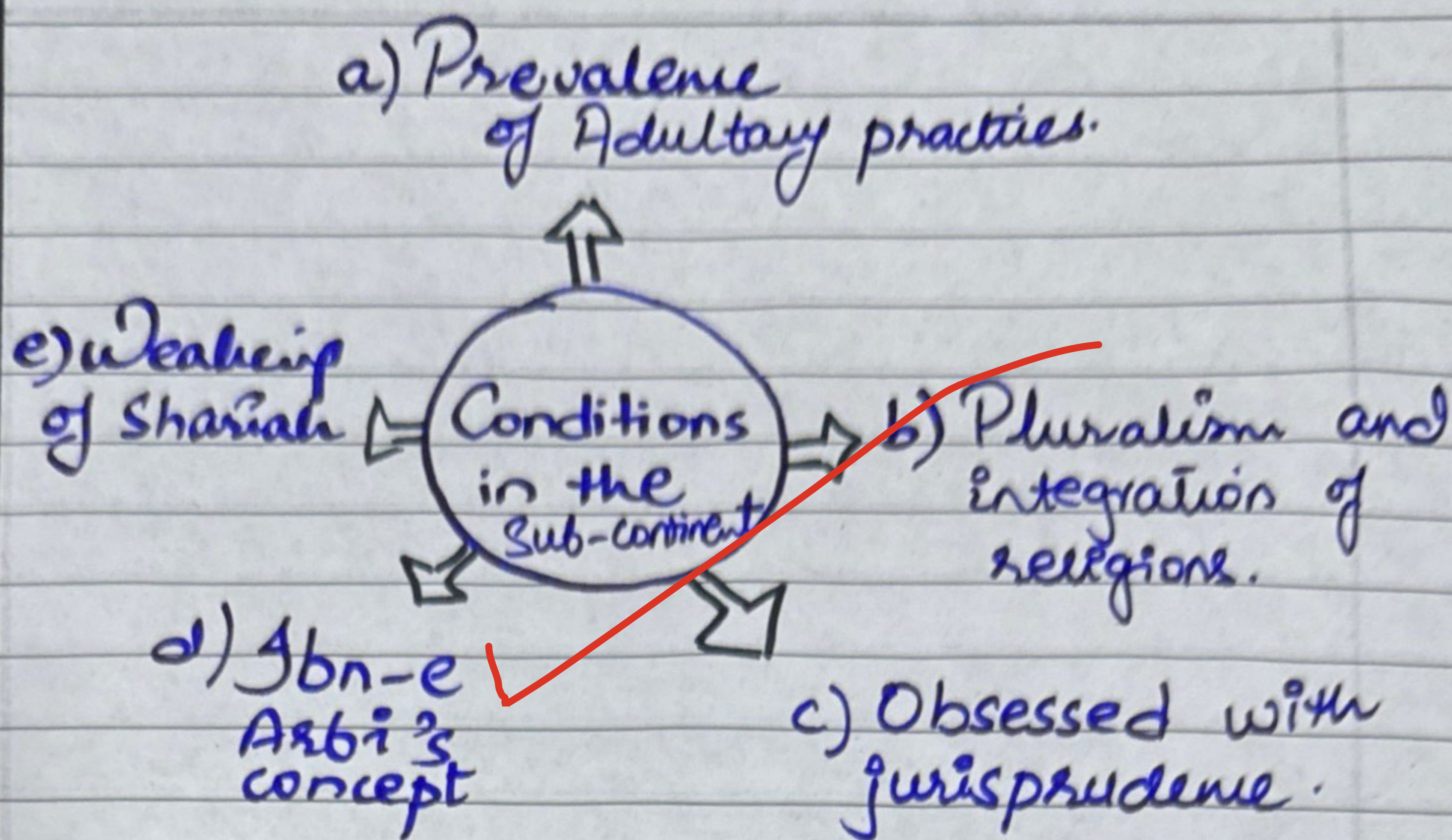
Mujadid Al Sani aka Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi was born in Sirhind on 26th January 1526. He was from the lineage of Caliph Umar and was taught Quran, Sunnah and Shariah under his father and scholars of his time. He was born in the era of emperor Akbar and when Islam was dispoint and influenced by other religions. However, he was discontented to see the dire condition of Islam in the sub-continent and took the charge of purifying Islam in its true form.

3) Conditions Prevailing In the Sub-continent in the time of Sheikh Ahmeds:-

Islam was under threat from un-islamic practices and it was the rule of emperor Akbar.

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a) PREVALENCE OF Adulteration in Islamic (Sufi) Practices:

UnIslamic practices were being part of Islam. The Sufis and mystics were using the religion to gain followers. Innocent believers were indulged in 'Biddat' and 'Karamat'. The concepts of biddat that is the practices that were not part of authentic religion were being followed and added in the name of religion by Sufis. The Karamat was to believe in mystical miracles by Sufis.

b) Obsession with jurisprudence:

People were obsessed with the law and jurisprudence forgetting the shariah and true

Islamic values. The muslims were blindly following the rulers and the emperors rather than Quran and Sunnah.

c) Pluralism and Integration of religions:

Several steps were taken by emperor Akbar and other ~~muslim~~ hindus and anti-muslims to integrate religions. Thus, amalgamation of religions was being widely practiced through

i) Bhagti movement:

Bhagti² means love for people. This was the movement which began in 14th century. The hindu activists saw a downfall in the hinduism so this movement began to promote every religion is same. They began to raise voices against caste and class systems and started to promote elements of hinduism which were similar in Islam i.e. equality and justice; for them there was no difference between Ram and Rahim, Quran and Panu, Kaabah and Kesh. There were 12 disciples the most prominent one was Nand Gash.

ii) Akbar's non-islamic practices:

The introduction of a place to discuss all religions in the Mughal court. The introduction of Din-Il-illahi. Subah-e-Kul* forbidding Azan and prohibition of cow slaughter. Marrying the princesses of sultans setting new trend of inter-religion marriages. This troubled the Islam as a religion.

d) Ibn-e-Arabi's Concept of Wahdat-ul-Wajood:

The Concept of Wahdat-ul-Wajood Oneness of being. There is no difference between the Creator and the creation. Everything is One. Thus, bowing or worshipping creation is equivalent to worshipping Creator.

4) SHEIKH Ahmed Sirhindi's Reforms:-

Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi took on the challenge to purify Islam in the sub-continent in its true form.

The reforms were further divided into three main categories.

REFORMS : SHEIKH AHMED SIRHINDI

- 1) Social
- 2) Political
- 3) Religious.

i. Social Reforms:

a. Exadication of Un-islamic practices.

Campaigned and sent disciples to spread knowledge and denounce the unislamic practices. Such as inter-faith marriages.

b. Abolition of Sajda-e-Tameezi.

There was a ruler in empire to prostrate down to the emperor. Mujaddid Alf-e-Sani openly refused to bow down to emperor Jahangir and was imprisoned for two years and continued preach.

c. Restoration of Muslim Identity:

The muslims were preached openly that they were different than the hindus and other religions. The muslims were separate identity with their own set of belief system. Though do not mix up with non-muslims.

b) Political Reforms:

i) Influence on the court:

The people and at high posts were influenced by the Mujaddid - Alf - Sani's preaching to denounce the *din-e-illahi*.

ii) Letters to the Royals:

minimum description under headings should be 5 lines

The letters known as *Ibtada-e-Nah Maktoobat-e-Sani* were written in the language to shake the soul of people and make them realize our religion.

iii) Foundation for Two-nation theory:

The clearly stated Muslims were different identity and there was no similarity between the two faiths.

iv) Jehangir's restoration of true Islamic practices.

Jehangir was repentant and offered position to Sheikh Ahmed in the court. He restored *Jizya* tax and abolished *Din-e-Ilahi*. Became the pathway for Aurangzeb's orthodox rule.

c) Religious Reforms:

i) Rejection of Din-e-Ilahi:

Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi openly rejected *Din-e-Ilahi*. The religion introduced by Akbar.

Rejected ~~prostito~~ bow down and involve any entity with Allah (S.W.T). Prevented Shirk.

ii) Theory of Wahadat-e-Shahood:

"The introduction of Ibadat-e-Nabowiat was to replace the Ibn-e-Arabi's work to just study and meditation" - Malaysian scholar.

Wahadat-e-Shahood was the answer to Wahadat-e-Wayood. The Oneness of Appearance.

iii) It was the worshipping of a being is not same as worshipping the Creator as they both are different and comes under shirk if merged.

iii) Importance of Namaz and Quran:

Sheikh Ahmed sent his disciples to people to teach them the importance of Namaz and Quran and focus on the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (P.R.O.H). Thus, this called for revival of Namaz in Muslims life.

iv) Restoration of Shariah.

The importance of Shariah and major works like Iktabat-e-Nabowiat to focus on Hadith and Quran. This paved way for the revival of Shariah system then following Jurisprudence and law. Practicing Islam in daily life.

Conclusion:

Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi was the first reformer of the second millenial. He was

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Involved in the learning and preaching of Islam from a young age. His practices to revive Islam against Akbar's rule proved to be fruitful for the Muslims and became the foundation for two-nation theory.

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