

Q Keeping in view the socio-political circumstances of sub-continent, discuss the role of Sheikh Ahmad Sarhindi who revived Islamic ideology and established muslim identity in sub-continent. (CSS-2024)

Introduction:-

In the 16th century during the reign of Akbar, Islam faced significant amount of treats. Deen-e-Elahi was launched by Akbar, which recognized no God or Prophet. Even following revelations was considered following blind authority. In this

dark period. Sheikh Ahmad emerged as a light of hope for the revival and reformation of Islamic principles, defending orthodox Islam, and reshaping muslim identity, and preserving Islamic thought.

"Sheikh Ahmad is such a light which will illuminate the whole world."

- Hazrat Bagi Billeh

2) Situation At The Time Of Mujadid:

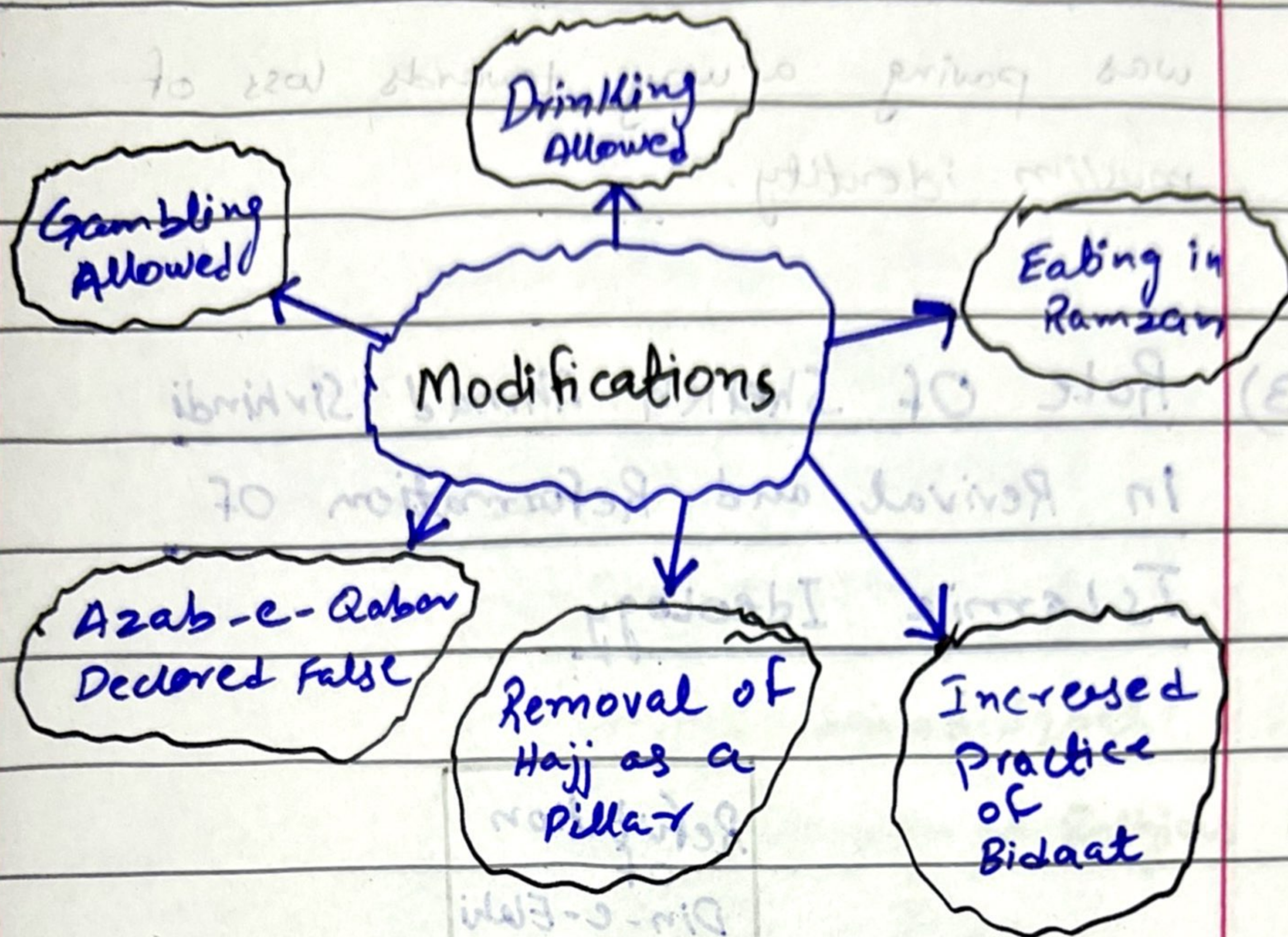
2.1 Religious Confusion At Its Peak

The Mughal court under Akbar started promoting Deen-e-Elahi, a form of religious pluralism, consisting of Islam, Hinduism, and Jainism, weakening Islamic orthodoxy.

2.2 Sidelining of Islamic Norms

The time was labelled as age of Islamic poverty by Sheikh Ahmad.

Sirhindi. Basic Islamic ideals were modified.



2.3 Decline in Ulemas Opinion

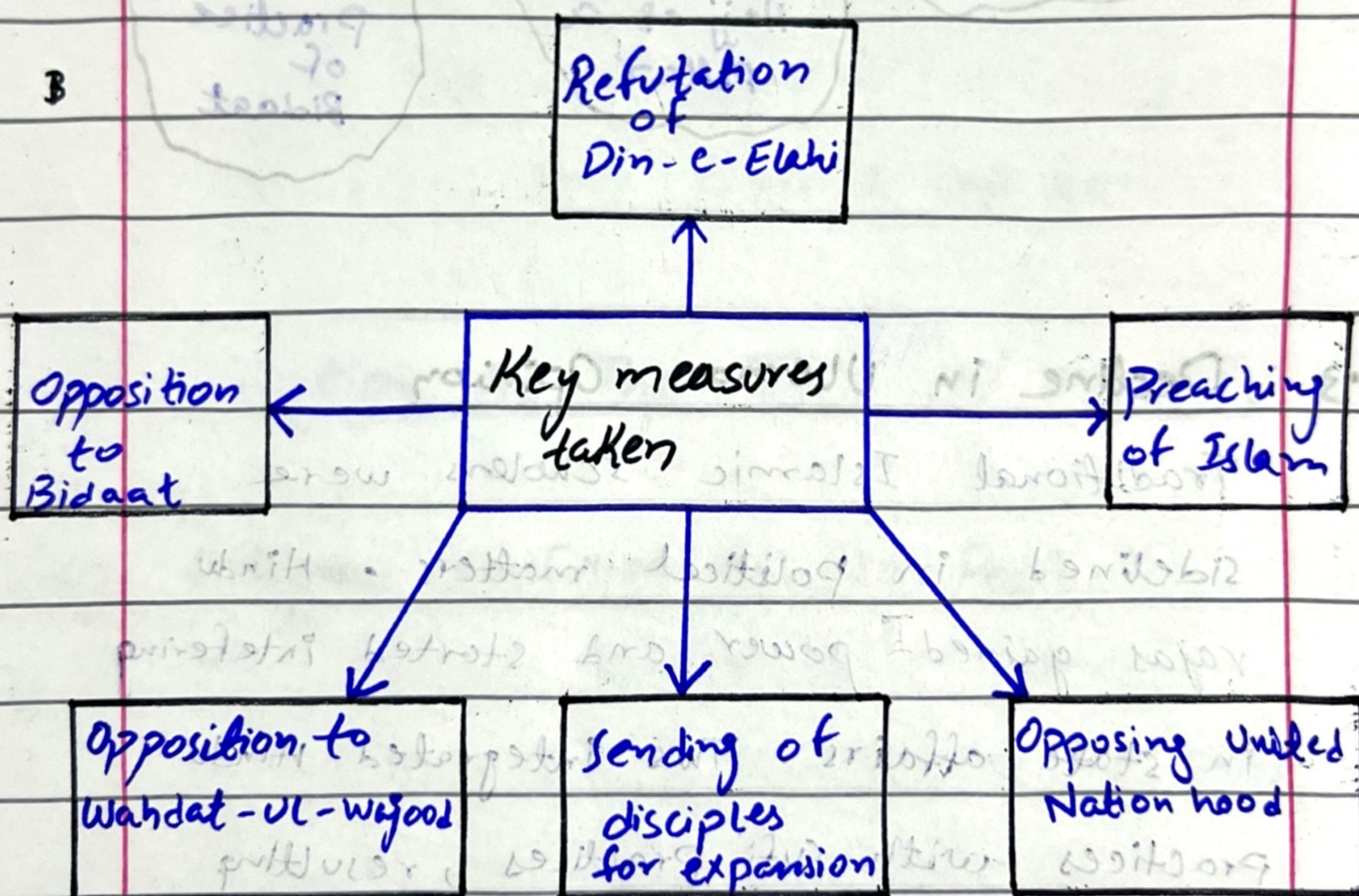
Traditional Islamic scholars were sidelined in political matters. Hindu rajas gained power and started interfering in state affairs. This integrated Hindu practices with Sufi practices, resulting in a corrupted version of tasawwuf.

2.4 Loss of Muslim Identity

AKbars policies revolved around the agenda of cultural assimilation with Hindus, undermining Islamic values.

such as tawheed, shariah and the concept of Ummah. This eventually was paving a way towards loss of muslim identity.

3) Role Of Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi In Revival and Reformation Of Islamic Ideology



3.1 Refutation of Din-e-Elahi : Restoring Islamic Orthodoxy

He openly criticized Akbars syncretic ideology, calling it a divergence from

true Islam. He emphasized Islamic supremacy and the necessity of strict adherence of shariah.

"Din-e-Elahi was a threat to Islamic ideology. Sirhindii writings against this innovation were a powerful rebuttal"

Dr. Muhammad Iqbal

The construction of Religious thought in Islam

3.2 Preaching of Islam : Reconstructing the Broken Bridge

Refusing to bend down in front of Jahangir lead to his imprisonment. This still did not stop him from preaching Islam in the fort of Gawaliar.

Due to ~~him~~^{his} never ending resolve and hardwork, Jahangir got influenced from his writing and released him from

Prision, and giving the title Khilat-e-Fakhira

"Every Century, a person will come to revive my Ummah"

- Hadith

His clear dedication towards Islamic teachings and spread of Islam, categorises him as that reviver.

3.3 Sending of Disciples - for a Holistic Expansion

His aim was not only to revive Islam within a specific area. He trained disciples and send them to all muslim countries as well. This was a great strategy to inculcate Islamic spirit in the people resulting in a holistic expansion of Islam.

"Socialization has the power to make every impossible Possible."

- Book: Down to earth approach

His strategy was also forged around the principle of socialization, to correct the existing problems of that time.

3.4 Opposing the Innovative Practices of Bidaat

Bidaat was a common practice at that time. Ulama categorised them in two domains, good innovation and bad innovation.

"Every innovation is misguidance, and every misguidance is in the hell fire"

- Prophet (PBUH)

Shaikh Ahmed, considered opposed both types of innovation, considering them misleading.

3-5 Opposition to mystical doctrine of Wahdat-ul-Wajood

One of the most significant contribution of Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi was his opposition to the mystical doctrine of Wahdat-ul-Wajood (Unity of Being).

This concept signified blurred the distinction between creator and creation, which Sheikh Ahmad rejected.

"To consider Ram and Rahman as one is stupidity because creator cannot be one with its creation"

- Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi

In opposition to it, he introduced the doctrine of Wahdat-ul-Shahood (Unity of witness), which had a clear distinction between God and his creation

3.6 Opposition to the concept of United Nationhood

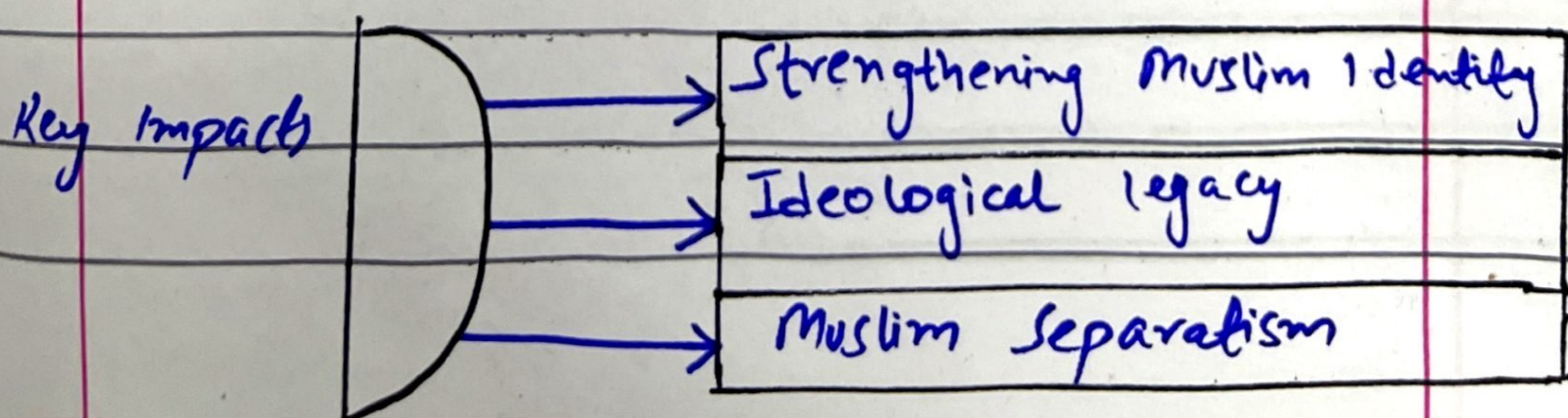
He rejected the notion of united nationhood, which aimed to blur religious distinctions and unify the empire under pluralism, which were a ~~the~~ threat to muslim identity.

"Muslims must remain ideologically distinct, lest the essence of Islam be lost"

- Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi

This quote clearly shows his concern for preservation of Islam, in which he succeeded, and inspired the Two-Nation theory as well.

4) Impact on History and Identity of Muslims



5) Conclusion:

Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi's efforts were a turning point in the history of muslim India. His opposition to religious innovation, educational teachings and emphasis on muslim distinctiveness helped in preserving the Islamic identity ^{and teachings} during time of religious turmoil.

"Imam Rabbani did not merely revive religion; he revived a civilization"

- Allama Iqbal