

Question:

Q. Keeping in view the socio-political circumstances of Sub-continent, discuss the role of Sheikh Ahmed Sirhandi and Shah wali Ullah in the history of Subcontinent.

Outline

- 1 - Introduction
- 2 - The role of Sheikh Ahmed Sirhandi in the history of Subcontinent
 - i - Concept of Sheikh Ahmed Sirhandi reformist movements
 - ii - Life sketch of Sheikh Ahmed Sirhandi
 - iii - Situation of Society
 - iv - Efforts and steps
- 3 - The role of Shah Waliullah in the history of Subcontinent
 - i - Concept of reformist movements
 - ii - Life sketch
 - iii - Situation of Society
 - iv - Efforts and steps
- 4 - Critical analysis
- 5 - Conclusion

Introduction

During the 16th and 18th century, socio-political situation of the subcontinent was declining. There were conflicts between different sects, a decline in moral values, a lack of understanding of the Holy Quran, and a general ignorance about Islam. This raised a concern that religious disintegration could accompany political collapse. Moreover, Mughal Empire was falling apart. Muslims were divided among themselves. All these situations led to the need of strong reformist movements.

to integrate the society. Various personalities played a great role in promoting Islamic values among muslim in order to revive their socio-political condition. Sheikh Ahmed Sirhandi and Shauwalliullah were the major personalities whose contributions and efforts played a crucial role in reviving the religious, political and social conditions of the muslims of subcontinent.

2 Role of Sheikh Ahmed Sirhandi

i Concept of Movement:

This was a kind of social movement that aims to restore the Islamic views about life and to bring change in society. It makes gradual change, in certain aspects of society, rather than rapid or fundamental change.

"The real task is to revive the shariah and purify the religion from un-Islamic elements; this alone is the path of to salvation."

- 'sheikh Ahmed Sirhandi

Life sketch

Sheikh Ahmad Sirhandi was born in 1564. He was given the title "Mujaddid Alf Sani", the reviver of the second millennium. His era aligned with the era of Akbar. He countered Akbar's Deen-e-ilahi concept. His family belongs to caliphate descent. He was died in 1624.

Situation of the Society during his time

During his era, moral decadence of muslim rulers was at the peak, which was a threat to muslim society. Due to Akbar's Deen-e-ilahi concept, Islam has already suffered significant damage. Moreover, hindu reformist movements aimed to abolish Islamic teachings. Hindus demolished mosques and openly ridiculed Islam. Furthermore, aloofness of muslims from sharia was also the reason for their moral decadence. Social evils had been spread in the society such as Riba, gambling, alcohol consumption, and bribery. Taking into account the situation of society, Sheikh Ahmed Sirhandi started his reformist movement to revive muslim society.

Efforts and steps by Sheikh Ahmed Sirhandi

• Writings:

i- Maktoobat: These Maktoobat were the compilation of Ijtihad carried out by Sheikh Sirhandi. Ijtihad means independent reasoning of qualified scholars of Islam regarding any particular issue.

ii- Marf-e-dunya

A book on spirituality written by Sheikh Ahmed Sirhandi

iii- other literary contributions

- Isbat ul Nabuwat
- Risala-e Nabuwat
- Toheed e shahadi
- Islamic philosophy

• Services to Islam

i- True morality,

He worked for the betterment of true morality of Islam. Through his teachings and writings he tried to end the social evil which had spread in society. He also worked to revive the moral values.

ii- Voice against unfaithfulness of rulers

He raised a forceful voice against unfaithfulness of muslim rulers of subcontinent. He did great efforts against Deen-e-ilahi concept and Bakhti movement to counter the threat.

Role of Shah waliullah in the history of Subcontinent

Concept of movement

During his era, Islam in the Subcontinent faced various challenges. Apathy from the religion was leading the muslims towards decline. moreover, social and political condition was also at stake. Hindu culture was dominating and there was deviance from the divine law. His reformist movements aimed the revival of religious, social, and political integration.

Life sketch:

Shah waliullah, also known as Qutb ul-Din Ahmad, was born in 1703. He belongs to caliphate descent. His era aligns with downfall of muslims. He got his education from Madarsa Rahsema. He died in 1762.

Situation of Society

Situation of Society during his era was similar to that of Sheikh Ahmed Sirhandi. His era aligns with the downfall of muslim rulers. Moreover, there was also a threat of christian missionaries in the sub-continent. Their mandate was to promote christianity and to suppress other religions. Muslims were also facing threat of Marhattas. They used to attack sub-continent and trying to capture subcontinent.

Steps and Efforts by Shah Waliullah:

Educational services:

Notable publications include

- Al Fauz al Kabir
- Hajjat ul balagha
- shahrah al Mustafa
- Tafhemat Ilahi
- shahrah al Musaww

He also translated Holy Quran into persian to respond to the questions raised by christian missionaries.

Letters to important figures and factions

- To Mughal Rulers:

To give up corrupt and inefficient practices.

- To the Soldiers:

To inculcate within them the spirit of Jihad.

- To the workers:

To remind them of the fact that economic prosperity is dependent on them.

- To the masses:

To make them conscious of their duties and to not accumulate wealth.

- To Ahmed Shah Abdali:

To invite him to India.

Propagating Economic principles:

He gave four economic principles to propagate the economy

- 1 - people living in specific geographic area have the right over the resources of that area.
- 2 - Everybody should have the right to ownership, as per their capabilities.

- 3 - Any practice that leads to the accumulation of wealth shall not be tolerated.
- 4 - Balance should be maintained in the society so that it develops uniformity.

Formation of Guardian Council for Madaris

There were two purposes for the formation of Guardian Council for Madaris.

- i - Reformation of syllabi for the Madaris
- ii - Resolution of disputes among School of thoughts.

Critical Analysis:

When the Sub-continent was facing challenges and there were the uprising of false practices in society. Intellectual minds stood against those practices to counter the social evils. Similarly, In the present time muslim world is facing more or less similar challenges and practices. There is strong need to counter today's social evils in order to revive social, cultural, religious, and political situation.

Conclusion:

In order to counter the socio-political situations which were going on in the subcontinent, Sheikh Ahmed Sirhandi and Shah Waliullah put their major efforts to revive the condition of society. Those efforts were in the form of writings and teaching which brought a major change and gradually led towards the movements and endeavors for separate home land for the muslims of sub-continent.