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Batch = Online Test

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series #1

Q-2

Influence of religious reformers in shaping Muslim identity and role of Aligarh movement

Introduction :

Muslims ruled over sub-continent for more than a thousand years and this time period is divided into sultanate time period and Mughals era. Muslim dynasties starting from slave dynasty and ending at lodhi dynasty ruled over the land of subcontinent before Mughals. Different conquerors had different reasons to rule this land. Some of them promoted Islam while others only plundered. Then came the Mughals who are considered the architects of beautiful buildings we see today. They brought many reforms - religious, social and economics. During the Mughal time period several religious reformers came to subcontinent from different parts to promote Islam and to

reform the poor religious and social conditions of people. These religious reformers unlike previous conquerers had only one agenda and that was religious reformation in society.

Notable reformers and their impact:

The most famous religious reformers are Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi and Shah Waliullah.

Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi:

He was born in Sirhind and learned Quran at very early age. After Quran he learned Fiqh, Shariyah and Ma'qul. Later, he went to Delhi and got education and training of mysticism from a famous teacher Baki Billah.

Shaikh Ahmed Sirhindi came ~~was~~ started preparing disciples after completing his training in mysticism. These disciples were directed to go to different parts of the country to teach people true teachings of Islam.

Arrest by Jahangir:

Shaikh Ahmed Sirhindi was arrested and imprisoned by Jahangir on complain of Jahangir's military general that Shaikh was exciting army against the King.

Influence after joining the Cabinet of Jahangir:

Shaikh Ahmed Sirhindi pointed out the wrong practices of Akbar and explained the evils of Din-e-ilahi. Later, Jahangir released him and offerered him to join the Cabinet. Shaikh joined the Cabinet of King and exercised a broader influence by sending letters to the people at power positions. He understood that members of the King's parliament needed the reformation as well and in this way his message and teachings will be tolerated.

To sum up, Shaikh Ahmed Sirhindi spent his whole life creating awareness among masses regarding faulty religious practices that were rampant at that time. His contributions shaped a strong Muslim identity in

masses.

**Shah Waliullah:**

Shah Waliullah was born in 1703 in Delhi. He was only 7 when he learned Quran. Later on, he learned Fiqh, Shariyah, Tib, Maths and science as well. He served as a teacher for 10 years at his father's school Mudrassah-e-Rahimiya. Later he went to Middle East to learn more about Islam. He died in 1762.

**Influence and Contributions:**

Shah Waliullah played a very important role in transforming religious ideologies of Muslims of subcontinent.

- Influence through literature.

Shah Waliullah wrote more than 50 books to enlighten minds of Muslims of subcontinent.

- Introduced practice of Ijtihad:

He introduced practice of ijtihad as a mode to resolve conflicts on religious matters as he thought modern problems can be better

resolved through Ijtihad. Also defined the criteria for mujtahid.

- Shia - Sunni Disputes:

Shah Waliullah played a vital role in resolving Shia-Sunni disputes as well.

- Criticism on Governance policies:

Shah Waliullah criticized the governing policies of the King as he imposed a lot of taxes on poor farmers and there was excessive corruption in the avenues of government.

- Letters to Ahmed Shah Abdali:

Shah Waliullah wrote letters to Ahmad Shah Abdali to convince him to help Muslims of subcontinent.

To conclude, Shah Waliullah also known as Majaddid Alif Thani helped Muslims of subcontinent to understand the true teachings of Islam through his disciples and his books and invoked in them the true spirit of Muslim identity.

## Aligarh Movement and its impact

Muslims were grappling with multiple issues including political, religious, social and economic as the aftermath of war of 1857. British considered Muslims as sole instigator of the war of independence and took revenge on them by depriving them of all fundamental rights. Seeing the sorry state of Muslims in the sub-continent, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan came to the rescue and considered education as ultimate panacea of all the problems of Muslims.

### Aligarh Movement:

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan understood the importance of education to reform the poor condition of Muslims and took initiatives. He was born in 1817 and was a civil servant by profession. The war of independence was a pivotal moment in his life and it shaped the way he looked at the probable solutions for the survival.

Muslims. Following are the contributions of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan:

- Farsi Madrassah Muradabad - 1859
- Victoria School Ghaziabad - 1863
- Scientific Society - 1864
- Tehzib-ul-Ikhlav - 1876
- M.A.O School and College
- Essays on the causes of revolt

Impact:

Aligarh movement proved to be the actual panacea to the problems of Muslims of the subcontinent. The institutes created by Sir Syed transformed the thinking of Muslims and were home to many notable personalities which later joined the struggle for Pakistan. The new educated generation of Muslims knew when to take part in politics and when to stay out of it.

Political ideals:

Aligarh movement indeed shaped the political ideals of the Muslims of subcontinent. Initially, Sir Syed asked Muslims to stay away from politics and worked

on the basics and roots of political development that is a clear thought. Students associated with Sir Syed's institutions learned modern education and understood the underlying problems with the Muslims of subcontinent. Later on, these similar students became part of struggle for Pakistan because they knew Hindus and Muslims were separate nations. Their ideologies were strong and their determination was invincible.

- Other contemporary movements:

Aligarh movement was different from other movements in a way that its scope was not restricted to religious education only. It helped Muslims learn modern education and embrace the advancements in the political thought.

Q-3

## Ideological foundations of Pakistan

### Introduction:

Pakistan is an ideological state. It came into being on the basis of a shared Muslim ideology whose pillars are Islam, two nations theory, separate territory, rule of Islamic law and language (Urdu). The struggle for Pakistan was based on these pillars and the founders of Pakistan envisioned it as a nation-state based on democratic principles and Islamic rule of law.

### Characteristics of Ideology of Pakistan:

#### Islam:

The basic for the demand of Pakistan was not ethnicity or culture rather it was common religion. Muslims of the subcontinent considered themselves as a separate nation primarily on the basis of Islam.

Quaid-e-Azam said:

"Pakistan came into being the day first Indian national entered the circle of Islam".

• Two-Nation Theory:

Muslims and Hindus were two different nations on the basis of religion, culture and literature. There was no way that the Hindu majority of United India had let Muslim minority live their lives and practice their religion peacefully in the United India. Therefore, Muslims of subcontinent demanded a separate homeland for themselves. Muslims had also seen the behavior of Hindus with Muslims whenever Hindus got power. ~~in the~~ ~~see~~

Quaid-e-Azam said:

"Muslims and Hindus are two separate nations on the basis of religion, culture and literature. They neither intermarry nor interline."

On another occasion Quaid-e-Azam said:

"Muslims are not a minority, they are a separate nation by every definition."

### • Separate Territory:

The demand for separate territory was an important part of Ideology of Pakistan as a separate nation has every right to acquire a separate territory to rule according to their own customs and laws.

Quaid-e-Azam said:

"Only raising the slogans will do nothing. We are a separate nation and nations don't live in air. We need a separate territory where we can rule according to our own laws and practice our religion freely."

### • Freedom of practice of religion.

After the 1937 ministeries of Hindus, Muslims understood that they had no freedom of practice of religion in the United India so they strived

for the separate homeland in order to attain freedom to practice their religion.

Quaid Azam said:

"We demand Pakistan not just for a piece of land but in order to make it a laboratory where we can experiment Islam."

• Urdu:

1867 Urdu-Hindi controversy played a role in shaping ideology of Muslims as they felt no component of their life was free from oppression of Hindus.

Manifestation of ideologies:

The newly formed state of Pakistan faced myriad of problems be it political, social or economic. The burden of governance, refugees, lack of skilled labor, economic challenges and lack of basic resources was enhanced by the death of Quaid-e-Azam.

The newly formed state was

orphaned before it could proceed to further development.

Moreover, as time progressed there were new challenges including constitutional question and war for territories.

The ideology of Pakistan that the forefathers envisioned was far from becoming the reality before the country got caught up in the grave problems. The political and multi-ethnic unrest continues till date.

Muslims indeed got a separate homeland but couldn't really make it either <sup>fully</sup> liberal or religious laboratory.