

Question No #01

The Aligarh movement had its political Objective; with its educational nature, evaluate critically. What impacts the movement had on Muslim Nationalism in Sub-Continent. Discuss.

Introduction:

The Aligarh movement emerged to save Indian-Muslims from Post-1857 humiliation, backwardness and Political extinction.

After the war of Independence 1857, the British held Muslims responsible for the revolt and subjected them to systematic humiliation. Muslim families lost their jobs, properties were confiscated and educational institutions collapsed. British writer W.W. Hunter remarked that an honest portrayal of the condition of even a single Muslim household in Bengal would

be enough to jolt the British Parliament, a statement that vividly reveals the extreme misery, deprivation, and a collective suffering endured by Muslims under colonial rule. In this bleak atmosphere, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan (1817-1898) launched the Aligarh movement as a comprehensive reform initiative aimed at rescuing Muslims from complete marginalization through modern education, social reconstruction, and political awakening. At the same time, the movement sought to promote national integration by advocating inter-communal harmony, constitutional politics, and co-operation between Indians and the British, while protecting Muslim identity and interests.

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan: The Founder of the Aligarh Movement

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan originates from a noble Mughal family in 1817 at Delhi. He had good command in Islamic studies, mathematics and medicine. He prefers the combination of traditional and modern mode of learning. His service in British judicial system provides him a deep sense of colonialism. He studied from Oxford-Cambridge education system that made him realize that modern education is necessary for rise of Muslims. Unlike the Deoband movement, Sir Syed adopted a pragmatic and modernist approach and generated a link between education and politics.

Education as a Primary element of politics

Sri Syed believed that political win is impossible without education.

His slogan "Education, and only Education" was not anti-political but a strategic choice. He

emphasised that Muslims first try to regain their confidence & and political positions. For this

purpose, he advocates the loyalty to British government as a temporary necessity. His book

"The Causes of Indian revolt" (1857)

explained Muslims hardships and criticized British politics and

their inclined towards Hindus. This

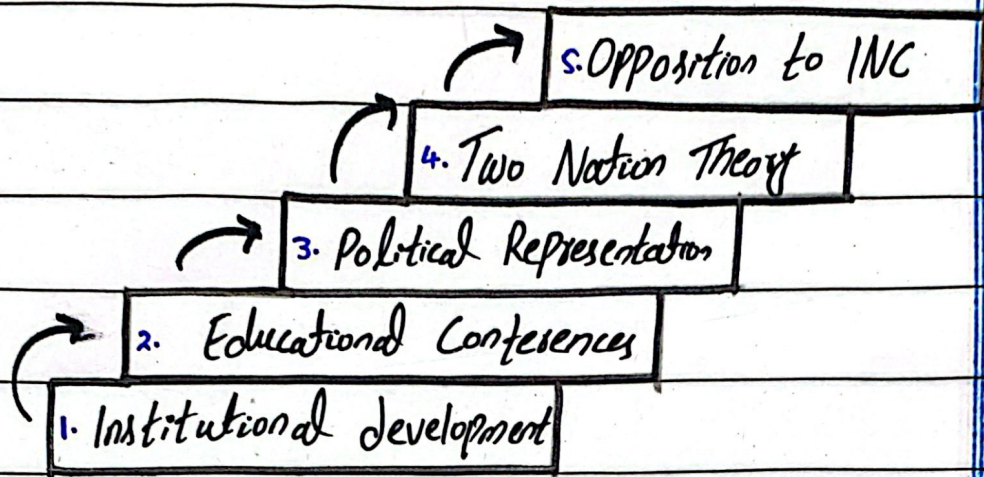
Book was an effort to bridge

the Gap between Muslim

and British. This book became

the foundation of Aligarh

movement later.



Measures taken to
boost Political Nationalism
among Muslims

Institutional Development:

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan created a solid framework that formed the movement's structural foundation:

1

• Scientific Society 1864:

This society translated European works on science, history and political economy into Urdu while serving as a platform for Muslim-British dialogue.

2

• Aligarh Institute Gazette (1866):

A weekly newspaper that articulated Muslim perspective while introducing Western ideas, described by **Mulana Hale** as bridging "the gap between Muslims and the British".

3

• Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College (1875/1877):

It was ~~desing~~ designed on Oxford-Cambridge University. It combined modern curriculum with

Islamic ethics; Creating "Ali-gairh Man";
a new muslim elite. respected
by Indians.

Educational Conferences:

It was founded in 1886. It
was the first national platform
for Muslims. Its annual sessions
held across India - Aligarh,
Lahore, Delhi, Calcutta, Bombay,
Madras, and Rangoon - created
political unity among Muslims.
Abul Kalam Azad describe
it as a training ground for
Muslim leadership.

The conference later provided
the formation of the All-India
Muslim League in 1906.

Political Representation of Muslims

Political Organization

Muhammadan Civil Services Fund Association (1883)	Indian Patriotic Association (1888)	MAO Defence Association (1893)
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Muhammadan Civil Services Fund Association (1883) helped Muslims to enter government services, while India Patriotic Association (1888) opposed the Muslim Participation in India National Congress. MAO Defence Association (1893) protected Muslim political and legal rights.

Two Nation Theory:

Urdu-Hindi Controversy 1867

Realization of cultural conflict

Sir Syed Warning Letter to Mohsin-ul-Madani

Replacement of Urdu leads to Permanent Communalism

Declaration of two separate Nations

Different language, religion, culture

Rejection of Majoritarian democracy

Muslim reduced to Permanent minority

Dice Game Theory

Hindu majority: 04 dice, Muslim: 02 dice

Theoretical Justification



John Stuart Mill; democracy requires cultural homogeneity

• Opposition of ~~After~~ Indian National Congress:

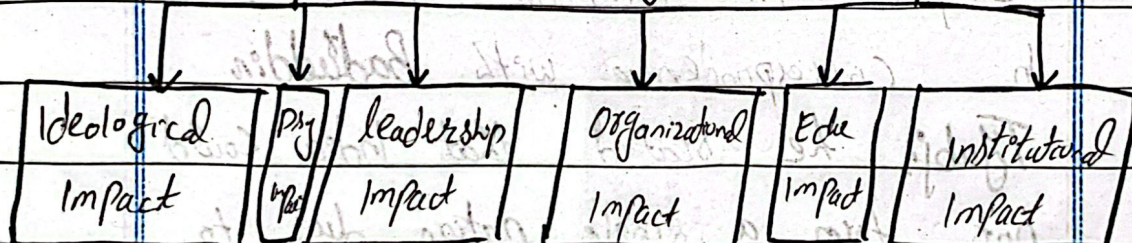
Sir Syed Ahmed Khan believed that Muslims are educationally backward and unprepared to compete in political sphere.

In correspondence with Badruddin Tyabji, he stated that India could not form a single nation due to deep social and religious divisions.

Impacts of the Aligarh Movement on the growth of Muslim Nationalism in Sub Continent

The Aligarh movement had a deep, systematic and lasting impacts on Muslim nationalism in the Sub-continent. It created the complete framework that eventually turned into Pakistan movement.

Impacts of Aligarh movement



Institutional Impact Provides Political Infrastructure:

The Aligarh movement provides first durable institution base for Muslim political life. The

MAO College emerged as the national center for the Muslim identity.

Historian Tufail Ahmed Manglovi described Aligarh as the place from where Muslim national feelings spread across India.

The AIML Conference 1886 played the role of Unofficial Parliament of India Muslims.

Leadership Impact leads to creation of Modern Muslim Leadership

The movement produced a new Muslim leadership, the Aligarh trained elite dominated Muslim politics in the early 20th century. Prominent figures,

Leagat Ali Khan, Maulana Muhammad Ali, Maulana Shaukat Ali, Sir Zafarullah Khan, and

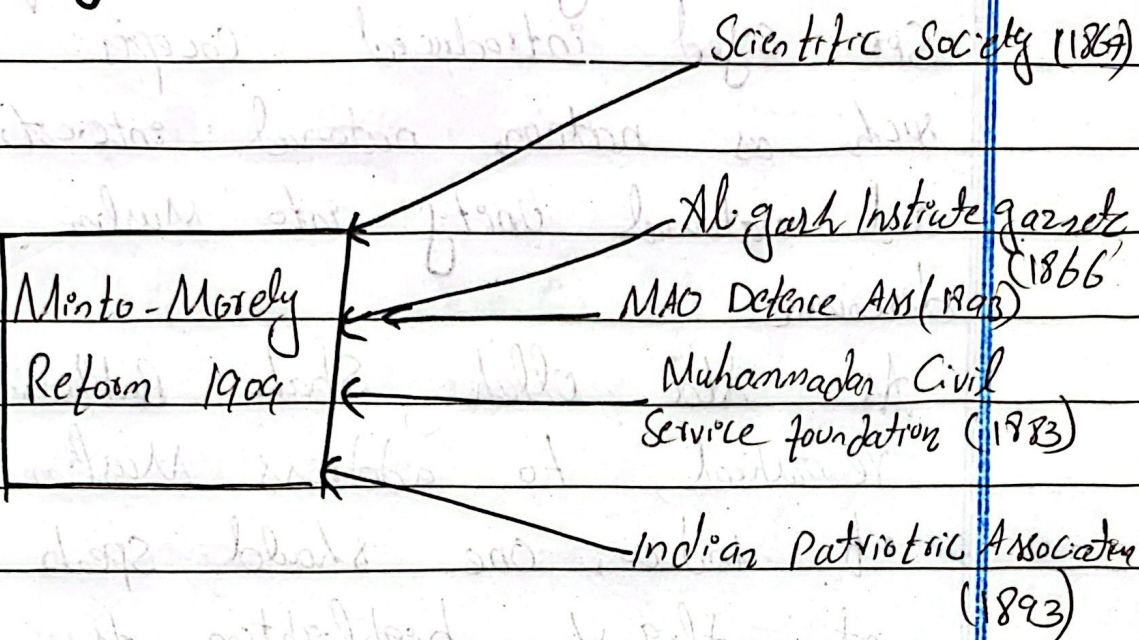
Chaudary Khaliquzzaman emerged from this system.

Ideological Impact Provides the foundation of the Two-Nation Theory

The origin of two-nation theory was Urdu-Hindi controversy.

When Hindu leader Babu Shiv. Prasad demanded the replacement of Urdu with Hindi, Sir Syed recognized this demand as a political assertion of Hindu majority culture. In his letter to Mohsen-ul Mulk, he warned that replacing Urdu with Hindi will permanently divide Hindus and Muslims. He supported his argument by Western political theory which supports the idea of liberalism.

Foundations of Muslim political Organization.



All above institutions introduced organized sustained political action. Their success was reflected in the achievement of separate electorate under the Minto-Morley Reforms 1909.

Psychological Impact turned the mentality from defeat to nation hood.

- The Aligarh movement transformed the mindset by instilling

self-confidence and national awareness. Through *Tahzeeb-ul-Khlaq*, Sir Syed introduced concepts such as nation, national interests and national unity into Muslim discourse.

As *Ata Ullah Shah Bukhari* remarked, to address Muslim of India, one should speak at Aligarh - highlighting its symbolic status as a heart of Muslim India.

**Educational Impact ~~rise~~ leads
rise to Muslim middle class**

The movement created a *markon* Muslim Middle Class, which became the backbone of Muslim Nationalism. Graduates of Aligarh entered Civil Services, law, journalism, and

education, forming a politically
conscious political class.

Critical Analysis :-

The Aligarh movement left solid impacts on Muslim nationalism and it saved Muslim by becoming the marginalized and distressed community of the society. Its reforms in educational institutions was a blend of western political school and ethics which ultimately prepare Muslims to compete on political grounds and make themselves strong in economic, cultural and political spheres. Eventually this movement become the foundation of Pakistan Movement.

However, it was misinterpreted by many religious scholars and they highly criticised the western blend. Nadwa-ul-ulma was established by religious scholars which was focused on religious orthodoxy. It benefited many elite muslims and over-emphasised on british loyalty. However, it provides a pragmatic and modern approach to grasp the freedom.

Conclusion:

The Aligarh movement laid the complete foundation of Muslim nationalism by providing ideology, institutions, leadership, organizations and political strategy. As Maulana Muhammad Ali acknowledged, no alternative

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Path could have ensured
Muslim political survival. Sir
Syed Ahmed Khan stands as
the intellectual architect of
Muslim nationalism and the
Pakistan movement.