

A Critical Survey of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, the Aligarh Movement, its Consequences and Objectives

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Abstract

In the history of Indian freedom struggle and educational reform, The Aligarh Movement of mid nineteenth century played a crucial role. It changed and shaped significantly the track of India's socio-cultural and socio-political system and movement. Its founder was Sir Syed Sir Ahmed Khan. He was one of India's most influential Muslim reformers. In the light of modern rationalism and science, he interpreted the Quran. His greatest accomplishment in 1875 was the establishment at Aligarh of the Mohammedan Anglo Oriental College. With the help of some Hindu and Muslim leaders, he formed the Indian Patriotic Association in opposition to the Congress and he tried to disincentive the Muslims from joining the convention. He stressed the harmony between Muslims and Hindus. One of India's biggest Muslim reformers was Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. He went on to combat fancy, illogical opinions, orthodoxies, racism, narrow mindedness and bigotry and concentrated on freedom of thought. Syed Ahmad Khan has been adapted and prioritized to the imperatives of his time. His approach to the education of women was close to that of the Indian Education Commission in 1882. The latter's long-standing effects have been maintained by knowledge on schooling, labor engagement and social mobility, considering the phenomenal changes since then. Neither the college nor its founder lived alone with other events in colonial India. Syed Ahmad reacted to his goals, and his pulses were then sought answers by contemporary revolutionaries of British India. His philosophies and ideas would be read meaningfully and ardently by later generations irrespective of caste and religion to shape socio-political opinion, this excellent intellectual man has been read even today with great interest and relevance. In this work, library tools including primary and secondary sources have been used in large sections. This essay will objectively address Syed Ahmad Khan's copacetic contributions, the implications and goals of the Aligarh Movement.

Keywords: Syed Ahmad Khan, elite, Muslims, Mughal, East India Company, orthodox.

Content:

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and his Contributions

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan launched the most important movement in spreading modern education and social reform among Muslims (1817-1898). He came from the Mughal court's family of nobles. He was a judicial officer and loyal to the East India Company during the 1857 uprising, while Britain's rulings found the Muslims to be their "true enemies and most dangerous rivals," pursuing a policy of prejudice against them. Syed Ahmad Khan was profoundly anxious about the depressing status of Muslims, and his life-long passion and intent was to lift them from backwardness. He worked hard to suppress the anti-Muslim animosity of the British leaders. He called on the Muslims to re-enter the original Islamic pure and simple concepts. He promoted the regeneration of Muslims in India in English. He especially offended orthodox Muslims with his focus on science. The orthodox groups of Muslims faced him with resistance. Yet he overcame these challenges with bravery and experience. In 1864 he established the Society for Translation, which was subsequently, renamed the Science Association. His focus was in Aligarh. He wrote Urdu books on science and other subjects and a journal for the dissemination of liberal ideas on social reforms in the English-Urdu

language. He argued for the removal of many social prejudices which reversed the group. His greatest accomplishment in 1875 was the establishment at Aligarh of the Mohammedan Anglo Oriental College (M.A.O). Over the years, the college became Indian Muslims' most important educational institution. It offered education in the fields of science and humanities through English and many of its workers came from England. The college was funded by major Muslims in India and the British expressed a great deal of interest in its growth, both officially as well as otherwise.

The M.A.O or Mohammedan Anglo Oriental College, which subsequently became Aligarh Muslim University (A.M.U), fostered modern perspectives among students of generations studying there. Aligarh movement is recognized as the Movement of Muslim community affiliated with Syed Ahmad Khan and Mohammedan Anglo Oriental College. He criticized the Indian Congress' activities and policies. He claimed that the Indians were still unable to govern themselves, and that it was in their interest to remain loyal to the British rule, as were many other leaders. With the help of some Hindu and Muslim leaders, he formed the Indian Patriotic Association in opposition to the Congress and he tried to disincentive the Muslims from joining the convention. He stressed for the harmony between Muslims and Hindus. One of India's biggest Muslim reformers was Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. In the light of modern rationalism and science, he interpreted the Holy Quran. He went on to combat fancy, racism, narrow mind and bigotry and concentrated on freedom of thought. Higher-education institutions around the world express gratitude to the founders and benefactors, both inextricably tied to their heritage and culture. Often this appreciation is expressed in texts, writings directed at, and refined by, alumni, but some of them are more important. Syed Ahmad Khan's Cambridge Companion, written by Yasmin Saikia and M. Raisur Rahman, is in the second tier. This is due to the reality of modern history, the dissemination of modern education and its influence on the Muslim communities of the Indian sub-continent.

In gratitude to the work of Syed Ahmad Khan, India and generations of alumni testify today. Today the Aligarh Muslim University or AMU fraternity is genuinely worldwide; its affinity ties are confirmed annually. However, many people are not aware of Syed Ahmad Khan's personality and contributions and life, which is less known, but also fascinating. In the later paragraphs in this research paper, readers can see these in his thoughts about religion and science and the monuments of Delhi; many people will find them useful. The year of the First War of Indian Independence is engraved on our memory 1857. This valiant battle failed, and British supremacy was formalized over the subcontinent. In 1857, fewer people joined in with a British governor general decision to formally implement English education in the areas under his supervision on a suggestion by Sir Charles Wood, made some years earlier. It was professedly altruistic and relentlessly egoistic: "to increase morality in the mind of an Indian and therefore to provide the company with civil servants who can be trusted." The decision of January 1857 led to the development of universities in Calcutta, Bombay and Madras following the model of the University of London. Some years later, Punjab in 1892 and Allahabad in 1887 were followed by others. Alongside and with the growth of an Indian class which has gained modern education and has benefited from profitable jobs, modern education colleges have been developed as an adjunct to social reform movement in different communities. The Muslims were behind in this process, with all its implications.

Syed Ahmad Khan based his knowledge of the backwardness of education following the tough treatment that the British administration had offered to the Muslims after the events of 1857. In 1866, the foundation of a scientific association was a first step towards making translations of many modern science texts accessible to their readers and audiences. He began a publication, Tahzibul Akhlaq after a visit to England in 1869, to convince Muslims to come out of the mediaeval groove and receive new education. He went on to emphasize the crucial importance of higher education and asserted that "as long as we are not producing such individuals in our community, we will be low and we will remain below others and not will we be producing such people, so we will remain below others, and we will be free to do this." The Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) was founded in 1920 by MAO College. It is listed as 'institutions of national significance' in the Union list of the 7th Schedule of the Constitution. Many of its studies have achieved excellence, and many of its

distinguished academics and faculties have achieved excellence. The record of extracurricular activities is reliable and copacetic. Non-conformists too have sometimes graced the campus; frowned on, but not in hostels in the university.

As a research scholar I have done a decent job of including many perspectives on various aspects of Syed Ahmad Khan's socio-economic and intellectual challenges. There was no pause in his mission and vision. He acutely felt that his society was politically and economically out of line with the times (in relation to the new governors in the country) lacking requisite qualifications for the job market. Both were based on an approach to tradition and religious dogma and, from his point of view, the need to distinguish the important from the nonessential, so that the society could establish a positive approach to modernity. He said neither could be disregarded. He nevertheless completely disagreed with the religious points of view and, consequently, the difference between tradition and modernity in his own culture. Therefore, it was appropriate to take a back seat to job-oriented training and 'pay due respect for the obtained piety' according to David Lelyveld's terms. The college he founded refrained from teaching and publishing his views and, from a century later, evoked the harsh judgement of the historian Mohammad Mujeeb that "supreme values were dismissed from the lower" and exchanged for "infinite spaces of religious and moral obligations" Had he done otherwise in his time's theological-political turmoil? It doesn't seem to indicate the record of later Muslim reformers in India and elsewhere. Syed Ahmad Khan has been adapted and prioritized to the imperatives of his time. In its early stages the college in Aligarh (and the university following it) intentionally established its scope and acquired an elite mentality. The group was the upper class, known as the Ashrafs. His approach to the education of women was close to that of the Indian Education Commission in 1882. Despite drastic changes since then, the latter's enduring effect continues to be borne out by knowledge on schooling, engagement of workers, and social mobility. Although this movement was multidimensional, it was more oriented toward the educational aspects with regard to the social, political, economic and cultural problems of the Muslim community. It is education that could reduce the suffering of Indians particularly Muslims to a minimum, opined Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was still secular as well as liberal but well aware that after the defeat in the Revolt of 1857 his culture had suffered most. Thousands of Ulama (Islamic students) have been hanged in Delhi alone and thousands of people who have a glorious history have been abandoned during the Mughal period. The British demolished many of the Muslim education institutions as a result of the rebellion led by last Mughal emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar. This research paper aims to recognize Syed Ahmad Khan's ideological influences, which widen his vision and start the task of improving his society in the changed situation from backwardness. Syed's interpretation of the uprisings in 1857 contradicted the prevalent view of events by the British as "a big mutineer." He argued that the rebellion had five major causes: people's misunderstandings of the government of the British East India Company; the enactment of rules, legislation, and practices not in compliance with Indian mores and their past socio-political structures.

The Aligarh Movement

During the later years of the 19th century, the Aligarh Movement was an impetus to create a modern educational system for the Muslim people of British India. The name of the movement comes from the fact that its center and roots lie in Aligarh, Northern India, UP particularly when the Anglo-Oriental College of Montefield Muhammadan was established in 1875. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was the founder of the Oriental College and its other educating institutions. The larger Aligarh Movement became the leading light. In the darkest hour of his life Sir Syed Ahmed Khan has become the great leader of the Muslim community in India. Sir Syed took Muslims very seriously in India and has struggled hard to establish and restore Indian Muslims' economic, social, political, legal and educational level. He was a great scholar and reformer of Muslims. He had struggled to get Muslims out of the obscurity of British government's analphabetism and risky policies. Sir Syed has witnessed Hindus' prejudice to Muslims and poor intentions to disrupt Islamic community. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was born in Dehli on 17 October 1817 into a devout aristocrat Muslim family. He received his early education at the Moghal Court for eight years from his grandfather Khawaja Farid-ud-din. Sir Syed

received education on medical sciences, mathematics and history from Quran, Arabic, and Persian literature. The Islamic culture and the restriction of its relations with the Hindu culture have always been demanded by the traditional and modern leadership in India. The Hindu community has always been assimilating, but Islam faced the challenges of maintaining its unique identity in the Indian cultural climate, which would deteriorate more cultural ties with Hindu society. It was not easy to strike a balance between the two processes (i.e. cultural identity versus cultural synthesis) and the issue remained unresolved for Indian Muslims despite the establishment of Pakistan in 1947. Syed rejected Muhammad as fabrications of zealous Moslems the conventional miracles of the Prophet who tried to balance the miracles of Muhammad with Moses and Christ. He acknowledged Charles Darwin's evolutionary theory as a scientific and rational reason for man's descent, but refused to acknowledge the supposed supremacy of science over Qur'an. He believed that scientists critically challenged nature to generate such information. This precise scientific knowledge served only to determine God's presence and his logical faith, Islam. In this perspective, people will hardly expect this degree of understanding to go beyond. Sir Syed was therefore at the service of Islam in the theory of evolution. Syed saw the strengthening of Islamic belief by Western science and technology as Islam was not dialectically contrary to reason. He hoped that modern education would actually be an ally of Islam, with a rationalist basis. In order to eradicate unfounded accretions introduced by Muslim theologians, however, Islam had to be re-interpreted and revised. Consequently, the modernist interpretations of Syed can therefore be split into three broad categories: The Qur'an and the Apostolic Traditions; the demythologization of Islam; and finally, the advent for Islam of a modern orientation. Because of his dad's death he entered the state in 1838. His father's and grandfather's spontaneous death brought his family financial crisis. He was appointed clerk at first but was later elevated to the Munsif (sub-judicial officer) in 1841 due to his education and intellect. He was promoted to chief judge after many years of service and wrote *Asar-us-Sanadid* during his stay in Dehli (about famous building within and around Dehli). In 1855, he wrote another book, *Ain-i-Akbari*, after he was transferred to Bijnaur, where he compiled Muslim rule history in India. The 1857 war, The Sepoy Mutiny which caused the English people difficulties, broke out during his service in Bijnaur. In order to secure many British and also to urge rebels that places should remain unchanged, Sir Syed sacrificed his own life. Sir Syed was offered a property that he nevertheless declined to accept in opposition to such loyalty and unconditional assistance.

Objectives

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan's Aligarh movement has two main goals or objectives: restoration of Muslims with high-quality education and civilization with the British government. However, this was not his dissuade from his mission because of his foresight he faced abundant criticisms from Orthodox Muslims. He believed the only way Muslims could counteract Hindus' damaging behavior, because Hindus had only grown in the educational and political sectors due to modern education, was by obtaining modern English education and learning. Sir Syed clarified that the acquisition of modern education and the learning of English is not in conflict with Islamic values. In 1859 he established a school in Muradabad, UP in which he taught Persian and English. There was a new school in Ghazipur, UP in 1863. Shortly afterwards in 1864, he set up a Ghazipur Scientific Association which would translate modern studies into Persian, Urdu and Muslim languages. In 1966, this Scientific Society published a newspaper entitled "Aligarh Institute Gazette," which was written in both Urdu and English only to show the British Government good will for better Muslim/British relations. In 1869, Sir Syed's son, Syed Mahmud, received a British government baccalaureate in England to obtain education. He went to England with his son, where he studied England's education system extensively. There he agreed to create a university in India with Oxford and Cambridge University standards and education. Thus he set up an "Anjuman-e-Taraqi-e-Musalman-e-Hind" Institute for the same reason, after he had been back in 1870. In 1874 the M.A.O High School was finally built at Aligarh after many years' struggle, which was Sir Syed's monumental achievement in relation to educational reforms in India for Muslims. This school was later enhanced by Lord Lytton as a "M.A.O College" based on the laborious struggle of Sir Syed in 1977. Sir

Syed always wanted this college to be a university, but that could not happen in his life, but it was "Aligarh Muslim University" after his death in 1920. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan's predictability led to the growth of Muslims' policies. Sir Syed told Muslims of India, since at that time they had no modern and political education, to temporarily stay away from their political activities. The Hindus had developed a "Congress" with very sharp political skills that could be very useful in crushing the Muslims. He forbade Muslims from entering Congress, recognizing that Hindus would never have the same desires as Muslims. Before entering politics, he stressed the need to obtain modern and political education.

The relations between Muslims and the British government were fatally tarnished after the War of Independence. Sir Syed knew that only the friendship and trust between British Government and Muslims could be preserved. He wrote "Rasala-e-Asbab-e-Baghawat-e-Hind" magazine in this regard. He clarified that it was not only Muslims who were responsible for the War of Independence, but Hindus and other countries involved, and that the government policies were poorly calculated. In 1986 he set up the Aligarh British Indian Association, which had the purpose of presenting complaints to the British Government by the Indian Muslims. In this lesson, he has written a comprehensive article on the services offered by loyal Muslims to the British Government, called "Loyal Muhammadans of India." During this time, Muslims faced prejudice and could not follow their Islamic values openly. The Christian missionaries have meanwhile striven so hard to demolish the history and civilization of Islam. In this course "William Muir" wrote a book "Life of Muhammad," where he attempted to injure Prophet Muhammad's personality (PBUH). When Sir Syed was in England, however, he had trouble collecting contents to address Muir for his bad words. There he met "John Davenport," who wrote a book "Muhammad and Muhammad's Apology." Sir Syed was able to translate and publish this book on his own behalf in an answer to Muir. He thought that was inadequate so he wrote the essay "Khutbat-e-Ahmadiya" on Prophet (PBUH) life. He has also written a Bible commentary to explain parallels that have been tremendously criticized between Muslims and Christians. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan still did not admire conservative Muslims, because he knew that modern socialization can only cope with the social crises of Muslims. For that reason he wrote a magazine called Tehzeeb-e-Ikhlaq condemning the traditional way of life, and encouraging Indian Muslims to take advantage of modern tendencies and culture. He also set up orphaned houses for Muslim orphans because Sir Syed did not want them in Christian missionaries to have sheltered Muslim children and the necessary needs. Sir Syed also failed to revive the dominant language of Muslims, the Urdu language. He set up "Anjuman-e-Taraki-e-Urdu" in this sense. He wrote a "Ahkam-e-Tam-e-Ahle-Kitab" magazine in which he explored the values of Islamic beverage and restaurant labels. He also clarified that in Islam it is acceptable to have meals on the same table as Christians. Initially, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was a nationalist and treated Hindus as a single nation as well as Muslims. But Hindus's prejudicial actions obliged him to think again. In 1867, the conflict between Urdu and Hindi changed his mind when Hindus started lobbying to replace the Urdu by Hindi in the official language. Sir Syed then realized that Hindus and Muslims never live as a single community, that they have separate cultures, values, history, literature and society. They have distinct interest. In 1868 he therefore announced that there were two nations in Hindus and Muslims, and this became the basis of Pakistan's revolution. While all other nations including Hindus were also responsible for the battle, the Muslims were considered solely responsible of the War of Independence (1857). But the British government took hostile steps against the Muslim community, withdrew its employment and imposed a permanent ban on government posts for potential appointment, confiscated the properties of Muslims and the economic and social values. The Muslims who once ruled India became a less respected group. English has been replaced by English by the British government in the official language, leading Muslims to decrease further because they believe English is counter to Islamic values. Sir Syed was very involved in this Muslim decline scenario and he wished to lift Indian Muslims' economic and social levels. For this reason, the Aligarh Movement has taken a range of practical initiatives. In this sense, the Muslim community was continuously relegated to the second fiddle, which had previously almost monopolized its influence over culture, economy and state politics. Furthermore, due to British policies viewed as subordinate to their colonial interests but counterproductive, the views of Muslims and the British

towards each other were found to be expanding day after day. Syed Ahmad tried his level best get rid of the mutual mistrust situation and the communicative impact this distrust would have on the day. The Muslim group lives in particular today and also provides relief. The Aligarh movement was initiated in the latter half of the 19th century by Sir Syed, colonial suffering of the Indian people in general. With this behind-the-scenes, this study aims to explore and find out, in a modest way, whether the Aligarh Movement will make some progress. to address the Muslims' problems that have arisen following the 1857 War of Independence. The paper also explores the issue of the significance or relevance of the Aligarh Movement in India's politics and society today.

Consequences

The study attempts, in the sense of India's contemporary society and policy, to reassess the ideology of Sir Syed and his Aligarh Movement. The Movement of Aligarh brought Muslims to life and helped them recover their lost value and social standing. This Movement inspired Muslims to fight to promote Muslim Islamic civilization for its economic and political rights. It largely led to the revival of its social, economic, political, cultural, and religious importance in the subcontinent. Education reforms also opened up new possibilities for Muslims to advance economically and politically. On 27 March 1898, Sir Syed died, and his Aligarh Movement had led the foundation of the Movement of Pakistan which led to the separation of Muslim homelands in 1947. It is education that could reduce the suffering of Indians particularly Muslims to a minimum, said Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. Sir Syed was still secular but well aware that after the defeat in the Revolt of 1857 his culture had suffered most. Muslims were viewed with distrust and kept out of government because they all were considered as suspected rebels by the British. In the public service in 1871 Hunter had also pointed out the position of the Muslims: out of 2,111, 1338 were hired by the citizens of Europe, 681 were non-Muslim, and only 92 were Muslims (Hunter, 1871).

The Muslims were interested in their future during the tumultuous period and Sir Syed wanted to instill courage and trust into it. That was the primary goal of education policy converted into the movement of Aligarh. He has followed a strategy of providing Western education through the English medium to eliminate the numerous vulnerabilities of Muslims in the new environment. The fundamental aim of providing Muslims with modern education was to make them eligible for employment in government jobs to better their lives. (The Nuremberg Naik, 1945). In 1864 he laid the foundations in Ghazipur for the Scientific Society. The key purpose of the company's foundation was:

1. Translating the literary, scientific, farming and engineering books into English in Urdu.
2. Develop logical and scientific conduct amongst Muslims.

The business was later moved with Sir Syed to Aligarh. A journal called the Aligarh Institute Gazette, published in 1866 by the Scientific Society, consisting of both Urdu and English (Muhammad, 1978). It sought to eradicate a misunderstanding between the Muslims and the British government in order to work together in order to increase Muslims' education. The printing of religious books was also discouraged. Sir Syed was aware of the need for more logical methods of teaching and learning in the educational institutions in the contemporary experimental period (Muhammad, 1972). Sir Syed Ahmad Khan accepted the perception of the new scenario by Hindus in Bengal and monopolized English knowledge and was consumed by administration. He established the M.A.O. College in Aligarh (Mohammedan Anglo Oriental College) almost ten years later. This college The Aligarh Muslim University in later years. His progressive efforts in this regard led to a new generation of Muslim intellectuals working and promoting contemporary education. They tried to remove the confusion between Muslims and the British Government to work together in order to increase Muslims' education. The printing of religious books was also discouraged. Sir Syed was aware of the need for more logical methods of teaching and learning in the educational institutions in the contemporary experimental period (Muhammad, 1972). Sir Syed Ahmad Khan accepted the perception of the new scenario by Hindus in Bengal and monopolized English knowledge and was consumed by administration. In fact, most of the scholars studying Sir Syed and the Aligarh Movement appear to contribute with a biased lense and hence,

ideologically prejudiced. Thus most of the studies are found to be devoid of objective evaluation of the Movement as also an assessment of the relevance of the Movement and the ideas of its founder to the present day politics and society. Thus, the present study makes an attempt to identify the gap in the chair of knowledge on the Movement and hence, seeks to fulfill that research gap by contributing and enriching the existing body of knowledge on the impact and relevance of the Aligarh Movement. In fact, the present study seeks to provide a fresh insight through an objective assessment of the Aligarh Movement in general and Sir Syed in particular.

Conclusion

The study shows that Sir Syed had early realized that Indian Muslims lacked modern education in British rule as a result of their paths and deplorable conditions. His mission and vision of education and philosophy were to link the traditional with the new system of education. He wanted Muslims, while upholding religious beliefs, to discard their orthodox biases towards the British and to study modern education, to join the mainstream education. He strongly believed that if Muslims are to be working in the administration of the country under the British rule, the British should be able to provide modern education. Shah Waliullah also helped him rebuild the educational system through his thinking of Ijtihad. His mission for the advancement of his society was courageously taken into concrete steps. His proposals for education took shape as M.A.O. College (now Aligarh Muslim University). The Educational Movement of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan had been unbelievable in advancing Muslim education not only in Indian subcontinent but also across the world and had encouraged future generations of Indians in general and Muslims in particular to set up schools and colleges and educational institutions.

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