

Vision of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and Aligarh Movement in India

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Medieval History

There were mainly two superpowers in the 15th century A.D. which were involved in the expansion of their influence in the world. During that period, the Muslims were at the helm of Asia and the parts of Africa and Europe whereas the Christians were ruling the Europe and exploring Africa. Since time immemorial, God has bestowed India with the riches of the land. It is called the golden bird due to the vast varieties of resources it consists. The Europeans longed for spreading their influence in the east but could not dare to go through the land as the Muslims were already dominant in those regions. Thus the realisation to subjugate Asia became achievable for the Europeans when Vasco da Gama set sail from Portuguese and discovered the sea route to India through the south of African continent in 1497. With the discovery of this alternative route, the onset of Europeans began to India from the beginning of the 16th century.

On the other hand, the first Mughal ruler Babar, who was the descendent of Genghis Khan, was also vying for the control of India. He came from central Asia and defeated Lodhi dynasty in the battle of Panipat in 1526 thereby becoming the ruler of India. The reason why Babar came first in establishing his empire here is because he entered India from the north with the intention to dominate with 20,000 strong army equipped with modern warfare whereas Da Gama reached Calicut which is in the south with less than 200 men via sea with the intention to explore and trade. Then slowly and steadily the Europeans began to develop and grow their area of influence in the disguise of trade with India. Gradually, after seeing the resources they started growing their presence in the region. The infighting began amongst the European nations such as the Portuguese, Dutch, French, Spanish and British for establishing their supremacy over the land and business. Although the British entered the scene fairly late in contrast with their neighbouring nations,

after the long power struggle the British came out victorious in grabbing the major portion of India and pushing other nations to the sidelines. Then step-by-step they de-established the Mughal Empire from India. By the time the British gained complete dominance in the mid-19th century, the Mughal dynasty had already fulfilled their quota of ruling India for more than 300 years. After the death of the sixth ruler Aurangzeb in 1707, the dynasty kept crumbling for the next 150 years. Now the time had arrived for India to be ruled by more effective government as the Mughal dynasty was rendered spineless for many decades. By 1850s, it became so weak that British were able to dethrone them by crushing the small uprising.

The year 1857 was a turnaround period for the dormant Indian society. This period is marked by the transfer of authority from Mughals to the British. The last Mughal king, Bahadur Shah Zafar, grew so powerless that he used to get monthly pension from the British to run his palace. Suspecting his role in the uprising, the British had sent him to the isolated island where he breathed his last in exile. Although the British had started ruling the Indian territories in bits and pieces from a lot earlier, the entire India went into the control of the Queen Victoria of England, also known as the Empress of India, in 1857. This period is remembered for the first attempt for independence against the growing British Empire which was initiated by the revolting Indian battalion consisting of Muslims and Hindus of the British army. The uprising was later on joined by the thousands of civilians who were also suffering at the hands of the British for a long time.

Causes of Revolt

There was no congruency between the British and the Indians: their blood, religion, customs and traditions were widely separated. Also, signs of love and alliance were barely visible. As a result, people did not expect favourable manners from the British. Around the mid-17th century, Aurangzeb had given the permit to the Europeans to establish their entity in India. So the British established their company by the name of British East India Company for the purpose of executing business. Initially their purview of business revolved around buying silk, spices and other produce. But in a steady manner, they started to involve themselves in the politics of the ruling government by raising their own army. The British applied the following method for entering the realm of governance which eventually became the cause of the revolt:

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- a) They started by trading in precious resources like cotton, silk, indigo, salt, tea, opium, spices and other produce. It thus helped them to become economically sound.
- b) After establishing their foot in the business, they started to put their nose between the geo-politics of the region where they started collecting land revenues.
- c) With the money they earned they began to recruit Indians in their army to fight wars and thus making their position strong against the existing dynasties.
- d) They established the factories for manufacturing arms and ammunition to further strengthen their position.
- e) With the growing might they started to impose their own laws such as Doctrine of Lapse where a childless king cannot adopt an heir to the throne. Hence leaving the empire vulnerable for annexation by them.
- f) They started to apply the strategy of Divide and Rule where they put the Hindus against the Muslims and thus facilitating in growing the hatred among each other and causing disunity. Hence rendering the masses weak internally.
- g) They funded Christian priests and missionaries to propagate their religion to the Indians for getting them converted.

The Indian rebellion occurred as a result of the accumulation of factors overtime rather than any single event. It was fed by resentment born of bitter policies, including invasive British-style social reforms, harsh land taxes, onerous treatment of some rich landowners and princes.

The issue which triggered the final clashes was the controversially made greased cartridges administered to the Indian sepoys employed under the British army. The rumour has it that the grease in the cartridges was being made from the fat of pork and cow which conflicted with both the religions—Islam and Hinduism. Above all, the sepoys had to first bite off the cartridge from their mouth before loading up it in the rifle. This caused the massive dissent in the army as the Indians suspected that it was the strategy of British to make Indians impure and thus ripping them off their religion.

Aftermath of Revolt

In the world it is usually seen that when one nation becomes a puppet of another powerful nation, then every aspect of the former nation becomes enslaved. The freedom to live according to their will is snatched away. They are constantly put under the lens of their prying eyes wherein for doing something they need to take permission first.

After the revolt, the socio-political situation deteriorated drastically. British started taking revenge with a vengeance against Indians, Muslims in particular, because they thought that since they have dethroned the Muslim emperor, so they must be solely responsible for the mutiny. Upon this analogy, the British started taking brutal measures against them. Thousands of villagers were slaughtered with the bayonets. They sent the noblemen to the gallows. The women of the noble families were being molested by the British army. Looting and plundering of properties became rampant. There was no law and order to which the people could adhere. Many villages and localities were destroyed. Millions of people had no water, food and money to survive. The British had put the martial law at place for several months. The Muslims were debarred from the city and only those were allowed inside who were issued the permit by the officers. The Delhi, which was famous for its hustle and bustle, had turned into a ghost town. The environment felt like a wilderness surrounded by the anarchy all over the place. The level of horror was that the mouths of dead Hindus were stuffed with beef and the bodies of Muslims were wrapped with skin of swine. Thousands of women threw themselves in wells from fear.

All this was being witnessed by forty-year-old Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, who was working as the subordinate judge under the British government. Since he was in his prime of life, he could not sit idle and decided to massively revamp the society. As a government servant, he did his utmost to carry out relief works for the countrymen. He cleared the cases of the innocent people who were wrongly sentenced to imprisonment for participating in the revolt. He solved the legal disputes among the people for various issues. He organised the famine relief centre to feed the poor. Many shelter homes were opened to provide for rest and security to the vulnerable. Several doctors to look after the sick and injured people were arranged by him. Also, he was instrumental in saving the lives of twenty European residents from the attacks of mutineers by putting his life at stakes. He served the people from other

community as well with same kindness and never differentiates between their caste and creed.

Vision of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan

Sir Syed had a dream of bringing back the past glory of Muslims. He was born and raised at the time when the golden age of the Muslims was at its death bed. Since it is well known that change is constant, that means, the circumstances of the world are changing at every passing hour, but the Muslims fell prey to the static thoughts and learning passed on by their ancestors since the advent of Islam. They relied heavily on the ancient learnings and customs. With these customs their thinking became rigid and superstitious. They used to get on loggerheads with each other on trivial issues pertaining to baseless acts of worship, thereby creating enmity and discord even among the smallest segments of the society. On the other hand, Europe was coming out of the shackles of the teachings of Christianity by pondering over the subject of universe. Their people became curious about the findings of the working of universe. They discovered new laws on which they started inventing machines, drugs, infrastructure and other luxuries to make the life easy for the mankind. They got so ahead in their endeavours to study new subjects that they started to serve and govern the rest of the mankind with the knowledge they gained out of it. This was the reason through which Europe went ahead in the areas of innovations. Maximum scientists are found in this continent who changed the course of history in their favour by applying those scientific inventions. The invented electricity, railways, cure for terminal disease, modern warfare, radio communications and several other utilities to make the world a global village.

Hence, Sir Syed had a vision of seeing his community to achieve the excellence in both the genres—religion and science. He believed that the condition of his community can be improved by inducing them to get education in both theology and science according to the requirements of age. He claimed that the teachings of Islam through Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and the Book i.e., Quran is perfectly ideal for the age. It is believed so because the Quran gave many scientific hints around 1400 years back about what the scientists are discovering now. For instance, revolving earth around the sun, barriers between the seas, human embryo in a form of leech who sucks blood inside the womb, discovery of the body of pharaoh, existence of two sexes of living beings whether it be plant or animal, formation of

the universe with a big bang and many more such clues exist in the holy book.

Sir Syed had a dream in which his people possess in their right hand the knowledge of religion and in their left hand the knowledge of science. Islam was at its peak in the field of scientific discovery from 8th to 12th century. Although the Christian considered that period as the dark ages due to the oppressive authoritarian rule of their popes and priests who used to put constrain on the intellectual minds for discovering anything new, it proved to be the Islamic golden period. It is because the intellectuals of that period could co-relate the discoveries with the truth revealed in the Quran. The history bears testimony to the fact that the great Muslim intellectuals became the pioneers of the various fields such as science, mathematics, philosophy, medicine, geography, history, jurisprudence, engineering, etc. Some of them are Avicenna (Medicine), Averroes (Philosophy), Ibn-Battuta (Explorer), Al-Khwarizmi (Mathematics), Al-Farabi, Al-Ghazali, Al-Kindi, Al-Biruni, Ibn-Khaldun and many more.

Sir Syed acted as a catalyst that transitioned the Indian subcontinent from the medieval age to the modern era. The occurrences in that period led the Indians from the ancient superstitious education to the modern scientific learning.

Aligarh Movement

Sir Syed used to remain in gloomy thoughts after experiencing around him so many losses and destruction of his vulnerable community. He used to spend all his time in mulling over how to uplift his degraded community and how to improve its relations with the British. Initially, he kept himself busy in providing a sort of first-aid to the community which is given immediately after the tragic mishap. However, this immediate relief could not remove the vices which were deeply ingrained in the roots of the society. Therefore, he started to ponder over the diagnoses of the disease which was proving to be terminal for the community. In order to treat the condition, he came to the conclusion that the prescription which must be administered for permanent removal of disease from the root is to dispense education which is adequate according to the requirements of age. He went in search for the solution of how to get and deliver such education where the masses become self-sufficient and hence it leads to the advancement of the country as a whole. He looked towards the race who was currently ruling the India i.e., the British. They were so intellectually, physically and culturally advanced that their meagre population was able to govern

not only India but the 50% of the population of the world. For that he made up his mind to travel to England to study their ways and means to prosperity. For this country, it was famous that the sun never goes down in their vast empire located from the west to the east on the globe. There are many factors such as education, military, justice etc. which established the supremacy of British.

In 1869, Sir Syed took a leave from the office and mentioned in the application his intention and purpose of travelling to foreign country which was published in the Gazette of the Scientific Society, dated 15th Feb. 1869. It says "I firmly believe that in order to make India a prosperous and flourishing country and to strengthen the efforts of the British Government (and I take pride in serving it) there is no way except to improve and develop interaction between the Europeans and the Indians." He encouraged Indians to travel to Europe to seek inspiration with regards to the wealth, strength and wisdom. He believed that the British system should be considered by Indians as a model in the trade, agriculture, medical and education fields. He had a desire to share with his countrymen what all he perceived and learnt in England.

Once he set foot in England, he met many nobles and renowned persons. He used to apprise about the conditions existed back home to the lords and dukes. He met several engineers and architects who were involved in the construction of engineering marvels such as railways, bridges over big rivers, canals and tunnels in the mountains through which trains pass. He visited Cambridge and Oxford universities to study their method of imparting modern education, its infrastructure, style of buildings, its research and development programme in the areas of science etc. As written in his biography, he observed closely the virtues of the British, their manners, infrastructure, and their educational setup while being in their environment. He admired the way the British followed their religion without being disrespectful about others faith and practices. It was their plus points that fascinated Sir Syed while their follies were disregarded by him. He observed these noble attributes while holding in mind the plight of his motherland. His desire was to adopt these virtues precisely as it was being followed in England. (p.g 90)

He had prepared the blueprint for how he is going to implement the game plan for the progress of Muslims. He was 53 years old when he came back from a successful England visit. Nobody knew how long he was going to live, so he immediately started to act on his vision as he wanted to provide a change in his lifetime. There was no one present at the time in the community who could

undertake massive trouble so he instantly applied the following measures to fulfil his mission:

- a) He started issuing a weekly journal by the name of Tahzeeb-ul-Akhlaq (Refinement of Etiquettes) because the people were indulged in lot of vices. It is supposed that these ill habits are the by-products of a declining community. So he undertook the task to remove those bad vices as well as awaken the community about the benefits of acquiring the western modern education.
- b) Next he formed the committee for the progress of education among Muslims. Its goal was to find out the reason why the Muslims keeping away from acquiring education. The survey was conducted where they came to know that Muslims believe that learning English is against their religion as they feared that it would turn them into Christianity. They also believed that the government schools do not give proper religious education. So they didn't let their children to go to any school.
- c) He established the Scientific Society where its role was to translate the western books of literature and science in the vernacular language, so that the people shall come to know the enlightening works of western authors.
- d) Then he set up another committee for the purpose of collecting funds for erecting a college to provide appropriate modern education along with authentic religious learning. Its aim was to prepare the students according to the requirement of age with decent etiquettes.

It was the head start of Aligarh Movement with the beginning of the above mentioned projects undertaken by him along with his companions. They embarked on the journey to fulfil the burning desire to rescue the drowning ship of their community in the ocean. Generally, the Muslim were unconcerned about their own welfare. They falsely believed that the life they were going through was perfectly fine and nothing can be done about it. Although they had fallen deeper to the lowest strata of the society but they felt comfortable in it and no one was willing to go to the edge of their comfort zone or to do sacrifice in the name of the Almighty to save their brothers from drowning in the whirlpool. So, the founding of college was perceived to be acting as a saving lifeboat to bail out as much people as it could.

Sir Syed shouldered many responsibilities in order to establish his Mohammadan Anglo Oriental College. Among various works, the most difficult

task was to collect funds from his own community as there was no concept of collecting funds on a large scale for the social benefit of the community. Another problem was that Muslims despised education and were reluctant to allow their children to attend schools. From the very beginning they were opposing the idea of any college, so it was a very difficult job for Sir Syed to collect funds. He undertook upon himself to perform this uphill task to encourage his own community to shell out some currency. He applied various methods such as printing and selling books, art and artefacts. He organised penny reading session in various functions where he read books and sang songs. On his journeys, he requested the host to donate money in lieu of giving hospitality to him. He appealed his dear friends, acquaintance, relatives to contribute. With all these efforts it was believed that he was able to generate more than 5 million rupees in his lifetime.

Next with that money, he started the construction of buildings at a grand scale which were similar on the line of Cambridge and Oxford. Although there was a severe shortage of funds when he started the construction but he was determined to splurge on to make monumental buildings. Many people opposed his plan of spending around 6-7 lakhs of rupees as there was no funds for managing other functions such as administration and education. But he did not budge from his idea because he used to say that the buildings will enthuse the coming generations by conveying them that if such humongous task can be done by their ancestors then they can also accomplish anything in their life on this outstanding level.

Once witnessing this, British also started taking interest in educating the students and feel honoured inside those lavish buildings. As the British were appointed as teachers, Sir Syed was able to realise many of his goals like closing the gap between the British and the Muslims, imparting of progressive education as well as refinement of etiquettes.

Hindi-Urdu Row

Another defining feature that contributed to the pavement of Aligarh Muslim University and strengthened Khan's vision was the Hindi-Urdu controversy. The conflict between the two languages had existed for several decades. In sixteenth century, the Christians and Muslims were at loggerheads with each other. The British, in particular, wanted to rout the Ottoman empire and their allies namely Mughals from the Asian continent. In those times, India was mostly ruled by

Mughals. In order to rule India, they had to fight Muslims in majority of the region with the rulers such as Bahadur Shah Zafar in north, Siraj-ud-Daula in east and Tipu sultan in south. At a global level, they were already fighting the Ottomans who were dominating the large part of this world. So for British, Muslims encompassed as their biggest enemy. So in order to weaken the Muslim unity, they adopted the policy of divide and rule wherein they created division amongst the regional people belonging of different caste and creed.

In India they created enmity between Hindus and Muslims. For sowing the seeds of division, they first launched the convent schools in the country for propagating their own version of perception. The Hindus were the first to get enrolled in those schools for getting employment in the government services. Hence, Hindus come to be several decades ahead than the Muslims in accepting English education as the Muslims used to fear that by getting English education they would wash their hands off from their own religion. The Muslims used to fear that by learning western education, they would form their own sect just like Protestant has arose in Christianity or they would become atheist as most of the western scientist had become. Muslims were also apprehensive of some cultural habits of Christians such as eating of pork, drinking of wine, etc. which was prohibited in their religion. So they never wanted to emulate Christians by joining their schools. In the convent schools the British propagated their own religion to the non-Christians and also provided books with the distorted version on the history of Muslim rulers such as Aurangzeb, Tipu Sultan, etc in order to spread animosity. They falsely accused Muslim rulers of destroying Hindu temples, Killing of Brahmins, forced conversion to Islam etc. These issues slowly grew hatred among the Hindus.

In the late 1860s the controversy arose over the Urdu usage in the court or in any other official institution. Hindus wanted to introduce Hindi in the law court. On the other hand, Sir Syed claimed that Urdu is the only lingua franca i.e., it was born out of the concoction of Arabic, Persian, Hindi and Sanskrit. At that time, Only the Urdu could be claimed as the language spoken and understood in the entire country. Urdu was the outcome of numerous civilizations living together in one place for several eras. But Hindus were obstinate on eliminating it as an official language for the reason that, first, its script was Persian and secondly, it was developed during Muslim rule. That is why Hindus wanted to eradicate everything which reminded them of Muslims. One could imagine the amount of hatred which was seeded in the minds of Hindus by the British. Likewise, British also favoured

the stand of Hindus as they wanted to weaken the nation from inside-out and hence able to rule India easily.

Sir Syed was of the view that Islam is not such a fragile religion that by gaining any worldly wisdom one could not continue in his religion. He said that the teachings of Islam provide the basic platform for the inventions of scientific philosophy. In fact, he said that the more the person discerns, the more he would come closer towards his religion as one would wonder and ponder over the miracles of the world and the universe. This was the reason why the early origination of scientists were from the Muslim community who took head from the Quran and discovered scientific laws.

After experiencing the row over the language, Sir Syed had become heart broken. Earlier his approach was secularistic but afterward he turned towards the goal of uplifting his own community as he watched that Hindus were way ahead in all round prosperity under the leadership of Raja Ram Mohan Roy and several others whereas Muslim leaders were nowhere near the vicinity. So he took upon himself to steer away the ship filled with impoverished Muslims from the deadly storm.

The Foundation of Aligarh Muslim University

Aligarh Movement became the ultimate consequence to salvage whatever was left of the downtrodden Muslim community after the annihilation of Mughal empire. One of the initial steps he took was the establishment of scientific society for the purpose of translating praiseworthy literary and scientific books of English into Urdu. The objective behind this society was to spread awareness among the Muslims about the advancement made by the Europeans in the fields of various subjects such as astronomy, law, maths, medicine, philosophy, engineering etc. So that it would act as an ignition in lighting the fire of triumph in the community. Eventually, it does become successful in awakening the curiosity in the minds of the Indians.

Sir Syed wanted that the relations between the British and the Muslims become cordial. So he thought that if the Muslims become educated and civilised, it will increase the respect and dignity in the eyes of the British and thus both the communities will come closer. Sir Syed was in awe of Europeans because he could not help but observe the massive advancements done by them in every possible

fields. By viewing this, his next move was to launch an educational institution where the students can get the relevant skills required in that age and time. Initially, his idea of translating the work of western modern intellectuals into the vernacular language proved to be a success in turning the wheel for rousing the youth towards the benefits of western education but later on he realised that this process was proving to be very costly and time-consuming. So he encouraged the youth to learn English so that it would become way easier for them to acquire knowledge of relevant fields in short span of time. His idea was not to set up a vernacular college where Urdu would be its medium of instructions but to found an institution where they get to develop their command over English and its subjects. According to him, acquiring education in English was essential because this language was entirely developed for finding lots of material and research work on relevant subjects.

By keeping all the above scenario in mind he developed the game plan of establishing a college with a boarding house. So that he could provide overall teaching to the students from morning to evening which aimed on an inclusive growth of the pupil. His intention was to develop the students on intellectual, cultural and physical level.

In 1876, he resigned from the government service and came to Aligarh to put his entire effort in the direction of the college formation. After his arrival, the speed of the work accelerated in several areas such as construction of buildings, collection of funds, getting approval from government officials etc. Hence the work for the national movement shot up.

Sir Syed wanted to make his institute prestigious just like Cambridge and Oxford. So he involved himself with a lot of zeal in every aspect of development. He used to bear extreme summer heat and hot winds in overlooking the work of brick layers, stone cutters, masons, plumbers, carpenters, architects etc. He would devise various plans in collecting funds and never felt shy of his image in asking for money either from rich or poor. Once he even organised the lottery where he earned around Rs. 20,000/- despite objections from the Islamic scholars as it is considered sinful in Islamic beliefs. His argument on this issue was that even though the people do a lot of unlawful deeds, if one unlawful deed is done for the benefit of the society, it would not be considered that bad. He was of the view that helping the community is in fact helping our own self. In order to achieve this goal, he eventually inaugurated the institution as Mohammadan Anglo-Oriental College through the hands of Viceroy Lord Lytton in 1877 with great pomp and show.

Muslim Education: Then and Now

After the revolt of 1857, percentage of Muslims in government jobs registered a steep fall. The most striking decline was, in the state judicial services, in which the percentage of Muslims fell from 45.9% in 1887 to 24.8% in 1913. Just after the partition in 1947, according to a survey there were 100 colleges and about 1000 higher secondary schools under Muslim management as against 1500 colleges and 8000 higher secondary schools in the country. This is alarming and the community has to accentuate its resources for the establishment of educational institutions at all level all over the country.

In the year 1893, the increase in the number of Muslim graduates in comparison with Hindu graduates in the North-West Province and Oudh were impressive. We learnt from the lecture delivered by Syed Mahmud (son of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan) in 1893 in the Educational Conference at Aligarh that except for North-West Province and Oudh, in every other province of India, till that year the number of Muslim graduates was so low in comparison to the Hindu graduates that it could not be counted more than zero. In Bengal, where according to the Census, the Muslim graduates should have been 49.5%, it was only 3.4%; in Madras (present day Chennai) it was 0.9% in place of 6.8%; in Bombay (present day Mumbai) it was 1.2% instead 21.5% and in the Punjab it was 1.9% instead of 25%. In contrast to all this, in the districts of North-West Provinces and Oudh, it should have been 11.2% but that year (1893) it was 17.6%. It makes it clear that in a short time, the Mohammadan College made an enormous contribution towards the education of Muslims.

Since 1920 when the Mohammadan Anglo-Oriental College got the status of the University, the Aligarh Movement has seen massive development in its programme. The total number of students in 1921 was 969 which shoot up to 6061 just before the Partition. Today, there are more than 30,000 students on rolls of the Aligarh Muslim University with different new faculties springing up and this shows the overall progress of the movement. But despite that the role and participation of Muslims in the mainstream employment sectors of the country is bare minimum.

There have been a few studies commissioned by the Government of India which throw the light on the plight of Indian Muslims at the beginning of 21st century. One is the study conducted by Justice Ranganath Mishra Commission on 'Religious and Linguistics Minorities in India' in 2004, which says that '65% of

Muslim students who enters primary school level only 3% come out as a Graduate'. The Commission puts the onus on poverty as one of the factors for the huge drop-out rate among the Muslim minorities (Misra, 2004). Another study conducted by Sachar Committee in 2005 highlighted the 'backwardness of Indian Muslims'. An issue presented was that while Muslims constitute 14% of the Indian population, they only comprise 2.5% of Indian bureaucracy. This committee concluded that the conditions facing Indian Muslims was below than that of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes of the country. (Sachar, 2006)

Past studies did not sufficiently identify the key stimuli that impact Indian Muslims. In order to fully understand the community, it is important to conduct a study for pinpointing the factors of their downfall and suggesting the corrective measures to be taken to improve their conditions.

Conclusion

In conclusion, although the initiation of Aligarh Movement and the establishment of Aligarh Muslim University took place in the nineteenth century, the grounds for them were being shaped since several centuries ago. The disharmony among various nations, religions, languages, and the rise and fall of Muslims in particular propelled Sir Syed's vision towards the establishment of an educational institution that not only educated them but also strengthened the nation as a whole.

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インドにおけるシド・アフマド・カーン卿の 視点とアリガル運動

タニア・ホサイン、アドナン・アリフ・カーン

1947年、インドは英国からの独立を果たし、パキスタンはインドから分離した。独立戦争後、ヒンズー教徒よりもムスリムに厳しかった英国人のために、インドのムスリムの状態は大変惨めなものであった。1857年以降、ムスリムは識字率も低く、社会のあらゆる場面において絶望的な状況にあった。基本的な人権は剥奪された上、暮らしのあらゆる面で軽視されており、経済的、政治的、社会的、とりわけ宗教的に、厳しい懲罰の対象とされていた。このような状況にあって、シド・アフマド・カーン卿が立ち上がり、ムスリムのこうした悲惨な状況からの脱却への助力を試みた。彼は、ムスリムを正しい道筋へと導き、こうした絶望的な状況からの脱出を試みたのである。彼は、この運動を、以前ムスリムが社会的に獲得していた尊厳ある立場を取り戻すべく立ち上げ、この運動はアリガル運動として知られた。アリガル運動の主たる焦点は以下の通りである：a. 英国政府への忠誠、b. ヒンズー教徒と対峙するための、ムスリムへの近代的西洋教育、c. ムスリムの政治からの引き離し。

シド卿は、ムスリムのこうした悲惨な状況は、近代的教育の不足が原因であると考えており、ムスリムの全ての問題の解決策は近代教育であると信じていた。そのため、彼は、過去の栄光を喪失した、収奪され望みを奪われたムスリムの地位向上を図るために教育プログラムを開始した。

結果として、アリガル運動の開始とアリガル・ムスリム大学の設立は19世紀となったものの、それらの基盤は数世紀前から形作られていた。多様な国民や宗教、言語間の不協和音、そして特にムスリムの栄枯盛衰が、シド卿の視点を、教育を供給するだけでなく一つの国民として強化する教育機関の設立へと導いていったのである。