

## P R E F A C E

After the revolt of 1857, the whole structure of the Muslim society changed. In fact, the fall of Mughals and the consolidation of the British rule in India were a landmark in the modern history of India. The British brought modern education with new ideas and values which the non-Muslims gladly accepted while the Muslims because of their conservative nature were less ready to avail opportunities offered by them. The Muslims had confined themselves to their conservative shells and ignorance had closed the doors of enlightenment on them. The materialistic approach and the development of science and technology in the west had given birth to a new concept of religion as it was now tested on the touchstone of reason.

Muslim became the main target of the British after the revolt of 1857 because they thought that they were their real enemies and rivals and the British held them responsible for the revolt. To this reaction, the whole of the Muslim community was uprooted and they were reduced to the lowest ebb of degradation. They followed the policy of crushing them and deliberately adopted policies which would bring about the ruins of their society. In response to this Sir Syed launched the Aligarh Movement also known as the educational movement in the later half of the 19th century because he was aware of the fact that rigid adherence to outdated customs, usages and practices was bound to degenerate a community. He also had firm faith that Muslims would not get their due place in the altered

situation unless they learnt to adjust themselves to the new situation.

Given this background, the present study has tried to explore and find out how the Aligarh Movement has solved the problems arising out after 1857. The study has also analysed and explored its impact on and relevance to, the present day society and polity.

The thesis has been divided into eight broad chapters, covering the specific dimensions of the study. Chapter-i introduces the study with a statement of the problems that has been probed, the specific objectives, a theoretical framework, the research questions and an overview of surveyed literature on the subject of research. Chapter-ii analyses the socio-economic and political background of the 19th century to know the condition of the society. Chapter-iii deals with the impact of the First War of Independence 1857 on the Muslims that had left a deep impact in the mind of Sir Syed. Chapter-iv discusses a brief biographical sketch of Sir Syed. In Chapter-v, a detailed discussion of the Aligarh Movement has been made in its historical perspectives covering the period of Sir Syed only. Chapter-vi deals with the emergence of the Indian National Congress and Sir Syed's rationale for opposing it. Chapter-vii discusses the relations between Sir Syed, the Aligarh Movement and the non-Muslims eliciting the insight as to how far the movement was secular and stood for the Hindu-Muslim unity and finally Chapter-viii analyses and evaluates the overall impact of the Aligarh Movement and its relevance to the present day society and polity.

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