

Socio-Religious Reform Movements among the Muslim in Jammu & Kashmir during Dogra Period

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ABSTRACT

Reform Movements has great importance in the history of Jammu and Kashmir with the starting of Dogra rule in AJ&K state. The Muslim society was suffered by different anti Muslim rules and traditions. In this regard the Muslim Community started social work to get rid of Dogra brutality and injustice. These reformative works have great importance in the history of Kashmir. This study tries to identify and analysis the various socio-religious reform movements among the Muslims of Kashmir. This study will also be an attempt to document all the record and contribution of the pioneers of those religious reform movements who were responsible for change/revolution in the society of the Jammu and Kashmir.

KEYWORDS: Dogra, Muslim Religious community, Anjuman-e- Islamia Jammu, Anjuman-e- Nusrat-ul- Islam, anjuman-e- Taraqqi Talim-wa-Ittihad, Anjuman-i-Hanfia etc

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INTRODUCTION

It is believed that the strong Hindu traditions have been significant and impactful on little traditions of Jammu and Kashmir. As a result various types of reform movements have emerged among the Muslims at different stages of post Islamic era in order to educate the common masses. The motive behind these Movements was to convert them into Islam and later remove the Hinduistic qualities from the social framework of Kashmir. Social change is generally taken to change the social structure of the Kashmiri society. Various institutions were confined to change the attitude of the structure prevailing in society. These changes were referred to the life style of the people. To achieve this, for bring together the Muslim society of Jammu and Kashmir and to achieve the religious and educational objectives, many institutions were established in Jammu and Kashmir. The people of Jammu and Kashmir were keenly concerned in these movements to protect their human rights and to get awareness. The people of Jammu and Kashmir were keenly concerned in these movements to protect their human rights and to get awareness.

The last decade of the 19th century in the Jammu & Kashmir state witnessed the birth of socio-religious reforms and political awakening, which ultimately brought about a revolution in ideological thought and change in society. The socio- religious reform movements were a necessary prelude to the political awakening in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. Towards the 19th century, the Muslim subjects of the Jammu and Kashmir state were exposed to the importance of education and the changes in the social and

political atmosphere of the state. The big issue over which the Socio-religious movement among the Muslims grew round were, spread of education, removal of social evils and the liberation from disabilities.¹

There were some prominent reform movements which brought Kashmir on the anvil of modern age more especially exposed the Muslim community to modern education. The beginning of the twentieth century brought the Muslim subjects of the Jammu and Kashmir state into the arena of social-religious and political activities. These socio-religious movements are as given below:

Anjuman-i- Islamia - Jammu: When the condition of the Muslims reached on apices then some young educated people who wanted to decipher their problem and try to give them spirit played vital role to change the condition of people of state. To achieve the said goals many institutions and social religious organizations were established.

The Anjuman-i-Islamia, Jammu was the earliest of all associations in Jammu. It was founded in 1888² by Raja Farman Ali Khan, Major General Samandar Khan, Syed Assad Ullah Shah, Ch. Ghulam Abbas and Mistri Yaqub Ali. Its dealing centre was established at Ambala. To achieve its objective public meetings were organized from time to time. The main objectives of this organization are as under.³

- A. Its objectives were to preach and expand western education and also create an atmosphere for the political aspirations.

- B. Its task was to protect the rights of the Muslims subjects.
- C. Its purpose is to free them from social evils. The major aim of Anjuman-i-Islamia was to improve the educational, economic and social conditions of the Muslims and to protect their rights.⁴

In 1915, the Anjuman proposed that a committee of ladies should be set up to run the girls' schools in Srinagar. But there were no educational institution Hindu or Muslim ladies to achieve the task. In the meeting, representative men like Khan Sahib and Sheikh Imam-Din then the President of Anjuman-i-Islamia said that the question of female education is most slight and necessary to be handled with extreme care and caution, in face of the wonderful injustice that existed amongst the un-educated public to form the majority of the community.⁵

Sheikh Imam-Din encouraged the Muslims both men and women to get education otherwise they would remain backward in all the spheres of life.⁶ Moreover its mission was to protect the rights of the Muslim subjects and to work for their educational advancement, which will help to free them from social evils.

Anjuman-i-Nusrat-ul-Islam: The Anjuman was founded by the late Mirwaiz Kashmir, Moulvi Rasool Shah in 1905. The Anjuman-i-Nusrat-ul-Islam Srinagar was the first reply of Kashmiri Muslims. The leaders of the Anjuman realized that social reforms were essential in order to get improvements in the life condition of the Muslims in Kashmir.⁷ The leaders of the Anjuman thought that social reform and economic progress could go collectively. Various social evils had crept into Kashmiri Muslims which had to be eliminated. The earliest and most important name who realized the need for social reform was Mirza Ghulam Mustafa, was a Kashmiri dignified and took leading this task as early as 1911⁸. For the sake of its familiarity and success the permanent membership system was introduced and the basic membership fee of Anjuman was four annas.⁹

The great reform works were introduced under the banner of this organization, keeping in view the prevailing customs and tradition among the Muslim community. The Anjuman-Nusrat-ul-Islam planned its objectives to purify the Muslim community from un-Islamic traditions. To achieve the set goals various meetings were held at different places. It was also decided to assign various duties to reformists who were members of Anjuman.¹⁰ The Anjuman decided to spread education to bring change and especially religious education. A network of the schools was also establish to achieve its goal. The role of Anjuman was not confined to religious activities only; it extended to the inculcation in the Muslim of good manners and a sense of mutual co-operation and unity.¹¹

The recommended objectives of the Anjuman are as under.

- A. The faith ceremony (memorial service for dead) held on Friday's be abolished.
- B. Only two dishes of meat and two dishes of vegetables served to guests on weddings.
- C. The parents of the bride and the bridegroom should give a dower worth 50 to 400 rupees only.
- D. Only the relatives of the concerned should be invited to a feast on the occasion of the circumcision ceremony.

- E. Evil customs concerned with marriage such as sending Khabars (paying a courtesy call to the bride and taking gift in cash or kind) to the in-laws of a daughter is stopped.¹²

In this way, Anjuman tried to prevent Kashmiri Muslims from incurring extravagant expenditure on marriage and death ceremonies. People at that time were largely involved in extravagant spending and thus poor had to borrow money on interest to meet to eradicate such type of un-Islamic traditions. A series of pamphlet entitled Datur-ul-Amal was published by Anjuman for this purpose. This content of magazine was clearly published against the un-Islamic traditions. The Anjuman was a long time got success in achieving its goal, but after some time the Kashmiri society once gain fell in the same evils, against which Anjuman has raised its voice.¹³

Anjuman-i-Taraqqi Talim-wa-Ittihad: In 1918 a new group of educated youth formed / organized against the conservative thinking of Anjuman. These new educated class decided to create a new organization named as Anjuman-i-Taraqqi Talim-wa-Ittihad.¹⁴ This organization set its goals to bring change in the society through education. For this purpose this organization started its work for the advancement of education through cooperation. Keeping in view the restrictions on organization from government, a delegation was placed to get the Anjuman registered to Government, but it could not registered because of internal rivalries among the Muslim community. As Mir Wais Yousaf Shah declared the impossibility of two Anjuman merging into one.¹⁵ The Anjuman consisting of all non-government Muslim workers began to purpose individually. It concentrating its efforts on the problem of conceding out of its own funds scholarships to Muslim students who were reading in various schools and colleges in the city.

Anjuman-i-Hamdard Islam (Srinagar): Anjuman-i-Hamdard Islam Srinagar was one of the most important socio-religious organizations in Kashmir. It was established by one Babu Mohammad Ibrahim and some Punjabi Muslims in 1914 just after the World War I.¹⁶

The aims and objective of the Anjuman was as follows:

- A. To convince the Muslims of Kashmir to take education.
- B. Develop the habit of self-help among the Muslims and spread education the Muslims.
- C. Stress the learning of technical and commercial education.
- D. Bear all the expenses for burial of the Muslims villagers and thrown into the mortuary after the declared by the doctor in the government hospital.
- E. Grant scholarships worth four rupees per month to those Muslim students who had passed the middle standard but could not continue further studies owing to poverty.
- F. Help parentless Muslim children in their education and vocation by admitting them to the orphanage established and maintained by the Anjuman.

The main object of the body was a sense of unity and co-operation to introduce in the Muslims of Kashmir.¹⁷ The Anjuman was established to improve the conduction of the Muslim of Kashmir whose state of continuation was extremely pitiable. In the beginning the aims of this

organization was to bring change in thinking, to educate the people and also create a sense of unity among them.

Anjuman-i-Tahafuzz-i-Namaz-wa-Satar-i-Masturat: In 1923, Anjuman-i-Tahafuzz-i-Namaz-i-wa-Satar-i-Masturant was started by the people like, Azad Quraishi, Hakim Mohammad Quraishi and Ghulam Mohammad Alvi. This Anjuman was purely religious without having any interest with politics.¹⁸

The aims and objective of this Anuman are follows:

- A. Muslims should observe prayers and the Muslim women should wear the clothes properly.
- B. The Muslim should get religious and secular education.
- C. Marriage contracts should be duly registered in a court of law and traffic in women should be stopped.
- D. Kashmir Muslims should remain loyal to the Maharaja.¹⁹

The main objective of the Anjuman was to give religious teaching and basic information/ knowledge of Islam. The Muslims of Kashmir were distress from many social evils, particularly the women who fall victim to such evils. The Anjuman was to explain the Muslims in general and those living in villages in particular with the creed of Islam.

Anjuman-i-Hanfia: In 1924, the Anjuman-i-Hanfia was established in Anantnag. This organization was started for the spread of education. A school known as Islamia Hanfia Middle school had been came into existence in 1922. This Anjuman had been founded with the object of imparting religious and secular education to the children.²⁰

The aims and objective of this Anjuman were:

- A. Manage the school and devise ways and means to create literary taste among the people.
- B. Promote the teaching of old culture and impart religious education.
- C. To be faithful and obedient to the Maharaja and British government.²¹

The Anjuman-i-Hanfia was established many institutions for imparting religious and secular education in different towns in Kashmir for the children to get their education.

Anjuman-i-Islat-ul-Muslimin: Anjuman-i-Islatiul-Muslimin generally known as the Muslim social strengthens organization. It was set up in Srinagar under the president ship of Nurdin. In the beginning it was concern with the social reform among the Muslims, but later it turned into a political organization.²² In 1930, Muslims students of Sri Pratap College Srinagar submitted an application for recognition of this association to the government. The association limited to religious and social reform of the Muslim community.²³ The aim and objects of the organization are as under.

- A. A spirit of loyalty to the Maharaj.
- B. Carry on propaganda for the spread of both male and female education.
- C. Try to introduce effective reforms in matters of marriage, circumcision and other social ceremonies.
- D. Carry on extensive propaganda for the maintenance of cleanliness and the observance of hygienic principles about houses, dress, and diet.

- E. To carry on extensive propaganda to discourage begging and to persuade beggar to lead a true citizen's life and not to be a burden on society.
- F. Preach to improve the standard of living.
- G. Help to create better feelings and close relation among the different sections of society.
- H. To introduce reforms with respect to the cloths of men and women.²⁴

The young men planned that they should allow forming an organization for strengthen of Muslim. This organization started to look after the welfare of the Muslims and to make them better citizens. The organization restricted itself to religious and social reforms among the Muslims.

Jamilat-e-ahl-i-hadith: The next reformative movement among the Kashmiri Muslims was Jamilat-e-ahl-i-hadith movement in Kashmir, which raised its strong voices against tomb-worship, grave worship and over admiration and worship of Sufi's and Saints.²⁵ The Ahl-i-Hadith attacked the un-Islamic practices connected with the visiting of shrines in Kashmir, yet their movement brought to the surface certain essential issues of critical importance.²⁶ However, this fundamentalist movement, and its direct attack towards shrines and Sufis touched the emotions of common masses of Kashmiri society, who had strong faith over them, so could not attract more masses, Secondly the Ahl-i-Hadith's started constructing separate Mosques, which reserved them away from common masses. The result was that it could not work on the large extent. The Ahl-i-Hadith movement of late 19th century, differs on the legitimacy of four classic juristic methods unlike Deoa band. They prefer a direct access to the Quran and the prophetic tradition.²⁷ The great majority of the people in the valley though Muslims by faith, needed to be converted a fresh, In view of the dichotomy offered between the descriptive Islam and Islam as practiced by Kashmir. The Ahl-i-Hadith, however, failed to understand that almost all standards of thought.

Anjuman-i-Tabligh-ul-Islam: The Anjuman-i-Tabligh-ul-Islam may be nominated as the traditionalist movement is a non- political organization in the state of Jammu & Kashmir. It is dedicated to the spreading of Islamic theology, Hanfia jurisprudence and Sufi way of life.²⁸ The Anjuman was established with a view to counter the doctrinal fundamentalism of Ahl-i-Hadith. The Anjuman has been fighting its more than 70 years old struggle for spread the Islamic ideology.²⁹ It is a general consciousness of masses that Anjuman has been used by ruling political parties which controlled most of the Shrines through Muslim.

Youngmen's Muslim Association: The Youngmen's Muslim Association was founded in Jammu in 1920 by Mr. Hamidullah, an advocate, in association with Allah Rakha Sagar and others. It was important organization from political and social reform points of view. The Association was formed basically with a view to:

- A. Control on bed customs.
- B. Advice and recitation.
- C. Call for Namaz and fast.
- D. Develop the interest in education among Muslims.
- E. Progress and advisement for Urdu.
- F. Construct Janaza-Gah and Sabil-Gah.
- G. Help the poor students in their education career.

Its political character became evident in 1931, when it took an active and leading part in the struggle for freedom. After that it became more of a political forum than a social reform organization. It also provided the movement with bright and promising leadership.³⁰ This organization conducted some massive demonstrations against the Dogra rule and its activities won admiration among the Muslim masses. This organization was established to spread education among the Muslims and to define Islam against attacks by men professing other religious.

Ahmadiya Movement: The emergence of a new Kashmiri Muslim leadership has to be further contextualized with the rise and impact of the Ahmadiya movement in the Kashmir Valley. The Ahmadiya movement founded by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in Qadian, began as a rural, small-town middle-class religious resurgence in the late nineteenth century. Mirza claimed that Jesus was brought down alive from the cross and travelled East looking for the lost tribes of Israel, until he settled in Kashmir. By 1920s, however, the Ahmadiya presence in the Kashmir Valley had begun to assert itself beyond Jesus Tomb in Srinagar. The petitions to the government on behalf of Ahmadiyas of the Kashmir Valley testify to the growth of the sect during the decade. Moreover, they illuminate the growing involvement of the Punjabi center of the Ahmadiya movement in Muslim political affairs, despite the movement's assertions to the contrary. There were several internal and external reasons for the increasing Ahmadiyas influence on the affairs of Kashmiri Muslims from the third decade of the century.³¹ The educated, middle-class Kashmiri Muslims, mostly doctors, lawyers, publishers and teachers, played a significant role to spreading the movement in the valley. Socio-religious reform movements particularly helped a lot in raising voice against the Dogra rule. These reform movements were also helped people in getting out from poverty along with other difficulties of the life. Poor and needy students were given opportunities and certain scholarships were also raised for their education.

Conclusion

Reform movements in Jammu & Kashmir which have faced many challenges in achieving their objectives that they have set, yet their contribution remained comparatively greater. The socio religious reform movements in the state grew out of the socio religious movements in the rest of the country and formed an inseparable part of others movements. These movements in state represented the emerging support to change the prevailing social and religious frame in the preparation for a political change. The role of these movements is taken in positive sense as it led to the awareness of common people. The impact of the education on the mind of the people of the state was deep and widespread. The social reform movements led by various community organization. These reform Movements formed the basis of the struggle for freedom in the state. All these Movements lunched by the people of Jammu and Kashmir State, initially to find redress of their grumble, led to the inevitable goal.

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