

Shah Wali-Allah and His Socio-political Role in Indian Sub-continent

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Introduction

Death of Aurangzeb Alamgir (1707) marks the beginning of the downfall and disintegration of Muslim power in sub-continent. Pernicious forces so far contained by the audacious endeavour's of Alamgir, thrived after his death. None of his successors were neither able to consolidate and retain previous glory nor to control vicious forces which bend to weaken and divide India. The lack of proper leadership left the Muslims confused and ineffective. They had no sense of purpose or direction left. Now for the first time since the establishment of Muslim rule in sub-continent, the Muslim community was facing threats on the external as well as internal front. Not only the disintegration of its political rule, challenged by external forces; such as Marathas, Jhats and Sikh uprising, but also internal decay [spiritual and moral] and disunity among conflicting factions: Sunni and Shia, Hadith and legal scholars, ulama and Sufis, precipitated crisis. Amid this confusing and pathetic situation of Muslims in sub-continent Shah Wali-Allah of Delhi started his reformative endeavor and provided the foundation for revivalism in sub-continent. His remarkable contribution to Islamic thought catered at a crucial conjuncture, when medieval period was closing and the modern era was dawning, he served as a permanent link between medieval and modern Islamic thought.

Shah Wali-Allah

Shah Wali-Allah (1703 - 1763) was born four years before the death of Aurangzeb Alamgir at Phulat in modern district of Muzaffarnagar in Uttar Pradesh, not very far from Delhi. Qutb al-din Ahmad his original name, the title Wali-Allah, was given to him by his father, Shah Abd-ur-Rahim. Shah Waliullah got his early Sufi training and education from his father, who was a great scholar and accomplished Sufi; Founder of a college, the *Madrash-i-Rahimiyyah*, and was its principle. Shah Wali-Allah being a precocious child at a very early age of fifteen years completed his formal education. He

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mastered the different branches of learning Tafsir, Hadith, Fiqh and logic, and so great was his command over them that at the age of seventeen, he obtained his father's formal permission to teach at *Madrash-i-Rahimiyyah*. He carried on this work quietly after the death of his father for about twelve years. As he later reveals, "for twelve years, I could give my deep thought to every branch of learning. I used to get inspiration [*tawajjih* from the soul of my father] at his grave, and it was during these days that the nature and meaning of *tawhid* and significance of concentration and inclination towards Sufi path (*suluk*) were revealed to me; the inspirational truths ('*ulum- i- wijdaniyah*) dawned upon me in profusion (*fawj fawj nazil shudand*').¹ Shah Wali-Allah later in the year 1143 AH / 1730 AD decided to proceed to Hijaz for further studies and pilgrimage. Where he studied Hadith under the guidance of a distinguished scholar, Shaykh Abu Tahir Muhammad Ibrahim al-Kurdi al-Madani and then returned to the subcontinent in mid-1732 AD. After arrival Shah Waliullah resumed principal ship of *Madrasah-i-Rahimiyyah*, which he had attained after his father's death before leaving for Hijaz.

Like many scholars and Sufis, Shah Wali-Allah did not remain in isolation free from sense of responsibilities. He was quick to realize the seriousness of crisis in Muslim thought and life. With his deep erudition and rare insight into the religious science combined with the vigor and dynamism of his thought, which could analyze complex social, political and economic issues in the light of religious principles, Shah Wali-Allah endeavored to rescue the Muslims of sub-continent from debacle. For him as with other revivalists and reformist of Islam, the evolution of Islamic society and stabilization of its foundation was within the framework of *Shariah* which encompassed all areas of life. He sought that nearly all sectors of Muslim society needed reform because of the yawning gap between the pattern of life as enunciated in the Quran and the Sunnah and the one generally Muslim were practicing. The gap between the social and political institutions, the frame work of which had been supplied by Islam and the institutions the Muslim had developed and set up for themselves in the course of history, ought to be reduced.² His multi-dimensional approach to the reformation and restoration of Muslim society in sub-continent did not permit him to ignore the political developments taking shape in the sub-continent. He called for the restoration and strengthening of Mughal authority. The keystone, which had to be saved and strengthened at all, costs.³ He wrote letters to Najib-ud-dawlah⁴ and Ahmad Shah Abdali (Durrani)⁵ (1160-87 AH/1747-73 AD) an Afghan Chief and persuaded them to head off Jhat and Maratha rising power from gaining ascendancy over the depleted Mughal empire and thereby dominating the sub-continent completely. It will be difficult to assess to what extent these letters

instigated Ahmad Shah Abdali or he had a plan of his own, to launch campaign of (1174/1761) against Maratha.⁶ However Marathas were defeated but this victory of Ahmad Shah Abdali failed to produce desired results of rebuilding and reinvigorating Muslim state in the subcontinent.

Reform and Revivalist Thought

Shah Wali-Allah's immortality is because of his scholarship, originality of thought and reformative endeavor, on the whole his contribution to Islamic thought. The Holy Quran and Sunnah formed the firm foundation on which he raised the edifice of his thought system. For him purification and renewal of Islam were contingent on return to pristine Shari'ah [Qur'an and Sunnah]. In order to disseminate the knowledge of the Holy Quran, among those who did not know Arabic, the overwhelming majority even in the educated classes, Shah Waliullah despite opposition, translated Qur'an into Persian bearing the title, *Fath- 'ur-Rahman fi tarjumat-il-Qur'an*. The Persian was the language of culture, education and administration, thus it became possible even for the common man to learn the Qur'an and understand its meaning with the help of good translation. He also wrote *Al-fawz-ul-Kabir fi usul-i-Tafsir* book relating to the broad principles to be observed in the interpretation of Qur'an, emphasizing the universality of the application of the injunctions of the Quran and which are to be taken as absolute, applicable in all conditions and situations, limited only by their own sense or the context of other injunctions.⁷

Shah Waliullah endeavored to popularize the study of Hadith by reviving its teachings and prepared commentaries on the subject. For him as with other revivalists the Sunnah of the Prophet (SAAS) preserved in numerous collections of *Ahadith* has always been the fountain of genuine Islamic thoughts as well as the passionate desire to reform and renovate the Muslim society. It has also been the inspirational force behind their fervid enthusiasm to invite the people back to the true faith and to fight every unsound norm and usage. Shah waliullah opens his magnum opus *Hujjat Allah al-Balighah* with the words:

The crown of all infallible knowledge and the source and foundation of religious branches of learning is the science of hadith which gives us an account of the sayings and doings of the noble Prophet (SAW) as well as tells us of his tacit approval of the things done in his presence. The *Ahadith* are like luminous torches in the surrounding darkness, the mile-stone of guidance or like the brilliant moon shedding light in a gloomy night. One who follows them finds guidance and is blessed with merit and those who disregarded them are misguided and ruined. For the life of the Holy Prophet (on whom be

peace) is the infinite source of divine commandments and prohibitions admonitions and glad tidings and instructions and God's remembrance, the *Ahadith* abound in all these matters like the Qur'an or even to a greater extent.⁸

This fascination with science of Hadith and witnessing less importance among the intellectual circles and educational institutions of the subcontinent towards its study, compelled Shah Waliullah after his return from Arab to engage whole heartedly himself to the teaching, exposition and promotion of the study of hadith in the country.⁹ Before him Shaikh Abdul Haq Muhaddith Dehlavi had strived laborious in diffusing the knowledge of Hadith in the subcontinent and to give it rightful place in the curricula of educational institution, but could not spark off the popular interest in Hadith for long. As observed by Sayyid Abdul Hasan Ali Nadwi "unfortunately, however, those who were shaping the new educational system had little intellectual contact with Makkah and Madina or those places which are known for the study, teaching and preaching of hadith. They were chiefly influenced, as the evolution of *Dars-i-Nizami* and the literary and biographical works of its precursors show, by the intellectual sciences. Among the Islamic branches of learning their chief interest lay in jurisprudence".¹⁰ Shah Waliullah's main contribution was the establishment of a school for the study of Hadith.¹¹ He wrote *Al-Musawwah min Ahadith al-Muwatta* (Arabic) and *Musaffa* (Persian). They are commentaries on the *Muwatta* of Imam Malik. He gave precedence to the *Muwatta* of Imam Malik among the authentic collections of Hadith, insisted¹² upon its study and took steps to popularize its study. He also categorized other books of Hadith in accordance with their authenticity and made it easier for students to utilize them with confidence.¹³ Shah Waliullah's endeavor's revived the study of Hadith in subcontinent and made it recognize and essential part of curriculum of the religious schools.

Shah Waliullah's on the basis of the Qur'an and Ahadith sought to re-structure religious thought and juristic analysis, in consonance with the spirit of Islam and in the light of the exigencies of the situation. He earnestly strove to reconcile the areas of tension and conflict in the contemporary Muslim thought. In fact, the method of reconciliation was his genius and was essential for the evolution of a consolidated coherent and compact religious thought, which could express itself in the shape of a healthy moral order of society. He endeavor to remove misunderstanding and conflicts by means of a synthesis (*tatbiq*) of the different points of view which he calls *Jama baina mukhtalifat* (combining of opposites). From the tenth century, two opposing trends have developed among the scholars (ulama) of sub-continent. One emphasized strict and exclusive adherence to a particular school of law, and the other

negating this method and instead stressed the rigorous following of the clear meaning of the Sunnah of the Prophet as found in the accepted compendia of *Hadith*. Shah Waliullah attempted to establish the rapport between the *Hadith* and fiqh. In *Hujjat-Allah Al-Baligha*, He writes:

The basis for juristic deduction, on the one hand, and following the hadith literally, on the other, are both grounded in true religion and scholars have at all times acted in accordance with both these principles. It is only the some have attached a bit more importance to the deduction approach than to the literal adherence of the hadith while others have taken a contrary course. It is not at all proper to ignore either of these principles to which commonality of the both groups is accustomed. The right course in this matter lies in bringing about reconciliation between the two so that what is wanting in one is made up by the other.¹⁴

And at other place he writes “the right procedure is to harmonize them and both these methods should be employed for raising the superstructure of Islamic jurisprudence. The edifice of the Shari’ah so erected would be sound and well consolidated.”¹⁵

Similarly, Shah waliullah adopted the moderate and balanced approach in regard to *ijtihad* and *taqlid*. He emphasized the need of *ijtihad* as *sine qua non* for the health and vigor of the religious community (the Ummah)¹⁶, and essential for every age in order to meet the changing social needs of the time. He was of the view that Ijtihad is duty “fard-bil-kifayah”¹⁷ of Muslim scholars and ulama of every age¹⁸ enunciate that right of new interpretation could not be taken away and therefore, in principle *Ijtihad* could never be restricted not could it come to an end.¹⁹ This explains Shah Waliullahs’ rather emphatic stand on the question of importance of *ijtihad* in every age. He criticized the partisanship of jurists, which had hardened into a belief that their [aimas’] interpretation or rulings were infallible and result in a rigid doctrine of blind imitation “*taqlid*”. He believes that the *ijtihad* of the old jurists, however high and exalted their status, is open to correction in the light of the Qur’an and the Sunnah. However, in his *Iqd al-jid fi Ahkam al-ijtihad wal-Taqlid*, he considered adherence to one of the four schools of Fiqh at times prudent. As he says, “remember that there is great security in following the four juristic schools while a great risk is involved in rejecting them. There are several reasons for it”,²⁰ and then discusses the reasons. Shah waliullah distinguishes between blind imitation, which was prohibited (*haram*), and more flexible *taqlid*, for those incapable of *ijtihad* and who do not possess the necessary qualifications. The best courses were *taqlid*. He approved of *taqlid* on the

conditions that intention was seemly and proper and one was clear in his mind about emulating the Prophet and following the injunction of the Qur'an and the Sunnah.²¹ Being aware of dangers inherent in the unrestricted *ijtihad*, which led into the rise of heretic sects in the past due to, what one could call, free license in religious thinking. Shah Waliullah held the view that everyone was not qualified to undertake it, because it needed learning, wisdom and expertise.²² Thus adopted the course of moderation between *ijtihad* and *talqid*, which concurred, with the objectives of the shari'ah, human psychology and the realities of life.

Shah Waliullah's emphases on the *ijtihad* was also aimed to avoid the rigid particularistic following of one school of *Fiqh*, clear of all extremes and without showing inclination or disfavor for other school. He tried to bridge the gulfs that yawned between them by combining all the points of agreement in all the schools of *fiqh* and in matters of variance adhered to what is proved by the genuine Hadith.²³ According to him, all the prevalent systems of *fiqh* drew their inspiration from one single source, so that there could be no fundamental difference in them; differences there had been and there would be, but these were differences in interpretation only, not in principle.²⁴ He argued that small differences in interpretation are not of such tremendous importance as to cause serious dispute or divide Muslim society into hostile factions.²⁵ Mutual difference between various sections and groups had played malignant role in tearing to pieces the solidarity of Muslim society and as well as destruction of its political power. Shah Waliullah thought it necessary to remove all the inhibiting factor of disunity and strife for revival of Muslim society and power; by first instilling into it a desire for self-preservation through the revival of unity of thought and action. Sunni-Shi'ah division resulted in as an impediment to the progress of Muslim thought and society all over, had also its pernicious effect on and played ruinous role in the destruction of Muslim solidarity and political power in the sub-continent.²⁶ Shah Waliullah was anxious to reduce the Sunni-Shi'ah difference to a minimum and made efforts to bring them closer together. Knowing that difference based in religious convictions could not be wiped off by simple appeals for unity, he made great efforts to reduce the difference to the level of academic and doctrinal disagreement and enlighten the people regarding the nature of these differences.²⁷

Shah Waliullah, also resolved the contradictions between the Sufi doctrines ontological monism of Ibn al-Arabi's "unity of being" *wahdat al-wajud* and Sirhindis "unity of experience" *wahdat al-shuhud*. He tried to show that they were not doctrines in conflict with each other, but were different ways of speaking about the same underlying reality. They were stages on the

road to spiritual knowledge, *wahdah al-wujud* being an earlier and *wahdah al-shudud* a later and more advanced stage. He held the view that there was not any substantial difference between the two; instead, the problem had been one of semantics²⁸ Shah Waliullah himself a Sufi, in fact a practicing Sufi, which is clear from his references to their ideas and practices in his works; he has written several treatises in which he has discussed various aspects of tasawwuf.²⁹ Like Sirhindi, he sought to reform Sufism, which had degenerated and deviated, particularly because of those ignorant Sufis whose ideas and actions were not in conformity with the precepts and injunctions of Shari'ah. He wrote a short treatise *al-Balagh al-Mubin* in which he restated the aims and objectives of the spiritual movements and urged to shake off all its un-Islamic trappings. Shah Waliullah not only restored balance between *shariat* and *tariqat* but established that any idea of conflict between the two was basically wrong, as *tariqat* was not the negation but elaboration of *shariah*. Through his works on tasawwuf and allied problems, Shah Waliullah tried to bridge the gulf between the Ulama and the Sufis, therefore, to create an atmosphere so that they could work in harmony.

Shah Waliullah reformative endeavor was not confined to the exposition of the doctrinal or religious matters and to remove the cause of mutual differences between various sections and groups only. But certainly more important objective of his efforts was to reform the moral life of the people by making them realize their responsibilities as individuals and also as members of the community in the light of the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah of the prophet. His magnum opus *Hujjat Allah al-Balighah* and *al-Badur al-Bazighah* in addition to various religious themes, deals at length with social political and economic aspects of life and were aimed at, to bring about a reorientation of and rescuing the Muslim society; which had lost its bearings to an extent that they were plunged into a moral crisis of grave dimensions. He analyzed with his characteristic insight the sociological and economic bases of society and has also spot lighted those factors that create fissures in human society and set one class against another.³⁰ Shah Waliullah has raised the structure of a social philosophy on the bases of a moral system and deals with some of the basic aspects of a social system as a dynamic process. In *Hujjat Allah al-Balighah*, he discusses the problem of human relations social as well as spiritual and divides human society into grades according to the stages of civilization under the headings of *Irtifaqat*.³¹ Including primitive societies of man; organized society of men living in towns and cities and developed stages of society under which he discusses in some detail problems connected with family life; livelihood, professions, trade general affairs and dealings of individuals and lastly government and administration.³² In dealing

with each of these “social institution” *Irtifaqat*, he looks at problems from all angles - psychological, spiritual, moral, social and economic. His genesis of society takes into account all its stages of growth. As society grows larger human needs multiply and man seeks the formation of larger groups, villages, towns, cities and ultimately reaches the international community.³³ He calls human individual *Insan-i-sageer* (small man) and humanity as a whole *Insan-i-kabeer* (big man) and works out his ideas of the unity and oneness of mankind which he considered to be the sole objective of religion. Islam therefore, seldom deals with the individual as an individual; it always envisages him as a member of a family or a community. He says “Allah wants that world should have a system of administration, marked by peace, goodwill and cooperation. Humanity should be like a body, in which various parts and joints are combined together to create an organism.”³⁴

In order to maintain equilibrium (*tawazun*) in the interest of the health of the society, Shah waliullah laid great stress on *adalat*³⁵ (lit. being equitable) which is sine qua non for creating a just and balanced social organisation (*al nizam al-adil*). *Adalat* and *tawazun* therefore are needed at every step and in all ventures, which alone can sustain any social or political fabric. It is intrinsic for stability and reformation and its manifestation may be numerous. When it expresses itself in social behavior, dress, manners and mores it is called *adab* (etiquette). In matters relating to income and expenditure, it is called economy (*kifayat*) and in the affairs for the government and administration of state, it is named politics.³⁶

Shah Waliullah consider morality (personal as well as social) an essential factor for dispensing ‘*adl* (justice, equitability). It is for this reason that he considered moral reformation necessary for curing the ills of diseased society and maintained that no morality is higher and efficacious in rejuvenating Muslim society than the morality of Islam, which together with spiritual fervour could change set of beliefs and moral code into a pleasure and a joy.³⁷

Shah waliullah explained all these concepts and other topics pertaining to social behavior and human conduct in private as well as collective life in rationalistic style but within the frame work of the fundamentals of Islam, which infact is his main objective. This kind of work had been accomplished by Imam Ghazali also but Shah Waliullah has clearly far surpassed him, the comprehensive and logical approach made by Shah Waliullah in presenting Islam as a great system of life is unique and unparalleled in the whole history of Islam. Intrinsically, he was a thinker and his contribution to Islamic thought and sociology is remarkable and of a lasting nature. He was a man of encyclopaedic learning, a versatile genius and his originality of thought

encompassed almost every branch of Muslim sciences. He has not confined his expositions to basic concepts only, but has also discussed even minor problems and questions of Shari'ah law in the context of daily routine of life. Equally surprising is the fact that he has not deviated from the path of genuine tradition of Islam.

Although, Shah waliullah did not succeed on all fronts, but he did succeed remarkably in providing the foundation for the reconstruction of Muslim religious thought, revival of Muslim religious sciences and the social and moral edification of Muslim society. His successors Shah Abdul Aziz, Shah Abdul Qadir, Shah Rafiuddin, Sayyid Ahmad Barelewi, Shah Ismail Shahid and others worked zealously on the guide lines delineated by their master to bring about an intellectual renaissance of the Muslims of sub-continent. He was undoubtedly the greatest Muslim thinker of sub-continent, a formative influence on modern Muslim thought; his philosophy provides a connecting link between medieval Islamic thought and trends of modern interpretation of the fundamental teachings of Islam. His impact was felt in the religious, social and political spheres. Most of the institutions of religious learning in sub-continent owe its existence, directly or indirectly to Shah Waliullah. He is as much a source of inspiration and guidance for the 'Ulama' and *mashaikh* as for modern Muslim thinkers like Sayyid Ahmad Khan, Shibli and Muhammad Iqbal to neorevivalists like Mawlana Abdul Ala Mawdudi and Sayyid Abdul Hassan Ali Nadwi and many others.

After the death of Shah Waliullah, mission was carried on by a band of pupils and disciples, which he had left behind, including his own sons, who were fully charged with the spirit of his movement. Shah Abd al-Aziz [1746-1824/1159-1239]. The eldest of Shah Waliullah's four sons was able to succeed his father at a very young age of seventeen as the head of their ancestral college [*Madrassa Rahimiyah*]. Like his father he was not only an eminent scholar, engaged in teaching, writing and training his pupils but was also anxious to reform his people. His younger brother Shah Rafial Din (d-1817) Shah 'Abd al-Qadir (d.1814) and Abd al Ghani, co-operated with him in resuscitating and strengthening the cause of Islam. Shah Waliullah's successors did not content themselves with the placid mission of popularizing religious knowledge among the masses and imparting mystic insight to a chosen few. Nevertheless, they did their best to keep alive the idea that the system of *Shariah* law was and should be the main foundation of Muslim society. They turned to the study of Qur'an, popularization of religious knowledge, the creation of a new aspiration to study, understand and live according to the doctrines of the *Shari'ah*. In order to disseminate and popularize the teachings of Qur'an among the less educated sectors of Muslim

society, like Shah Waliullah, who translated Qur'an in to Persian and his son's Rafi al-Din and Shah 'Abd al-Qadir translated the same into Urdu.³⁸

Shah Abdul Aziz vigorously followed the traditions of his father. However, the circumstances in which Shah Waliullah had carried on his movement had changed considerably. The evils against which his efforts were directed became more firmly rooted in the succeeding generations. The rapid political disintegration and social degeneration of the Mughal empire, taking the advantage of weakness of the central authority and disunity among the ranks of Muslim chiefs, Marathas, Jats, Rajputs and Sikhs in the northern western regions carved out independent potentates and dominated the scene. Besides a new threat to Muslim society was posed by the expanding power of the East India Company. No doubt emperor Shah 'Alam who had come under the influences of the company authorities had now freed himself from their "custody" and returned to Delhi early in 1772; but in the last quarter of the eighteenth century they were able to strengthen and consolidate their hold on the extensive territories of Bengal and Bihar in the north and parts of the Deccan in the south. Under Wellesley (1798-1805), British imperialism became a vital force in the political life of sub-continent.

Haidar 'Ali of Mysore and after him Tipu Sultan, symbol of resistance against British imperialism and zealous fighter in the cause of freedom, was defeated and killed in 1799. Then in the first decade of the nineteenth century, the successive victories of the British over the Sindhia enabled them to establish their influence at the imperial court in Delhi. In 1803 General Lake who commanded the British Army defeated Sindhia and offered to undertake the responsibility of protecting the emperor who was at that time under his influence, (Marathas who had previously exercised control over the emperor) and thus managed to enter the Mughal capital. It was soon realised by the emperor that he had been tricked, but it was now too late. After that almost every day witnessed a diminution of his power and dignity. In lieu of the crown lands, which were taken over by the Company, he received an annual stipend or pension³⁹ (*Pishkash*). In the course of time Shah 'Alam and his successors were so completely demoralised that the Mughal court was soon reduced to a mere shadow of its former glory.

This cataclysmic loss of Mughal power enervated the Muslims of sub-continent. Early efforts by Shah Waliullah to instigate Muslim rulers of the sub-continent as well as neighboring rulers to make concerted attempt to regain the control failed to produce desired results. Now the establishment of British authority was sure to kill the chances of the restoration of Muslim ascendancy which Shah Waliullah had been trying to make effective through an extensive programme of political and socio-religious reform. The

emasculate throne of Delhi had been reduced to a mere legal myth but 'still considered the fountain of honor by Hindus and Muslims, and a patent of nobility under the imperial seal was as highly prized in the remotest provinces of Deccan as it had been in the days of Aurangzeb'.⁴⁰ Notwithstanding, Shah 'Alam and his successors Akbar Shah II (1806-37) and Bahadur Shah II (1837-57), completely demoralized, and in state of penury and helplessness, where inept unable to lead and give direction. Realizing the lack of political authority. Muslim populace was confused about the legal position. Shah Abdul Aziz with his penetrating judgement and keen sense of observation, removed the ambivalence about legal myth of Mughal sovereignty by issuing fatwa that the subcontinent was no longer *dar-ul-Islam*, a land where the Islam enjoyed sovereign authority and political power. He declared that they were now in a land of warfare, *dar al-harb*. Owing to the fact, that the emperor [Imam al Muslimin] at Delhi wields no authority and is utterly helpless and the real power was in the hands of the British. If certain areas had been left in native hands for administration, it was only because the British found it politic to do so. There are, indeed, certain Islamic rituals, e.g. Friday and 'Id prayers, *adhan* and cow-slaughter, with which they do not interfere. But that is of no account. They did not interfere with the observance of Muslim rites and practices because they did not want to, but they had the power to do so, if they desired.⁴¹ By declaring sub-continent *dar-ul harb* a land where Islam was not free.⁴² Shah Abdul Aziz cleared the perplexity, gave a clear direction for future action by bringing it to the notice of the Muslim population that they have been subjugated by Britishers. Implying that it was the duty of every Muslim to make all effort to restore former status of *dar-ul-Islam*. In no case should Muslim cooperate with the British in propagating false beliefs and un-Islamic practices and it was a mortal sin to help them to destroy Muslim lives or further subvert Muslim authority.⁴³

This Fatwa declaring the entire territory held by the British to be a *dar al-harb* was significant proclamation in the history of Islam in the sub-continent. For the first time Muslims were facing such situation, a complete paradigm shift. After being for centuries, the only full citizens of the state, Muslims discovered that they were now an unpopular and vulnerable minority. This *Fatwa* by Shah Abdul Aziz was in a way clear development in the Islamic thought itself. It removed the perplexity and gave a clear direction to the Muslims of sub-continent for future action which according to Shah Abdul Aziz, is Islamically appropriate response, what is to be understood from the Hadiths, and in accordance with the principle of following the lives and actions of the venerable companions and great Khalifahs.⁴⁴ This *Fatwa*

against the British imperialism transpired into Jihad movement led by his pupil and disciple Sayyid Ahmad Shahid and nephew Ismail Shahid.

References and Notes

- ¹Shah Wali Allah *Anfas al--Arifin* (Delhi 1917) P.203 et seq. In this and *Al-Juz-ul-Latif fi Tarjumati abd--id--Daif* (Delhi 18907). He gives the main events of his early life and education. Shah Waliullah, *Al-Qawl-ul-Jamil fi Bayani Sawa--i'sabil* (Lahore, 1950) PP.111-120 gives a full description of the silsilah into which he was initiated by his father.
- ² Abdul Hamid Siddiqi – “Renaissance in Indo-Pakistan, Shah Waliullah Dihlwi” in *History of Muslim Philosophy* Vol. 2, ed.MM.Sharif (Atlantic Pub and Distributors 1989) P 1559.
- ³ Khaliq Ahmad Nizami, *Shah Wali-u-llah Ke Seyasi Maktubat*, (Aligarh, 1950). PP.80, 81, 84.
- ⁴A collection of Shah Waliullah’s letters is extant in manuscript, out of which Khaliq Ahmad Nizami has published letters of political importance. Several of these are addressed to Najib-ud Dawlah which show how Shah Wali-ullah encouraged him to fight against the Jats and the Marathas. Najibal-Dawlah succeeded in suppressing the Jat incursions. Ibid-PP, 24-25.
- ⁵Shah Wali-ullah has written a long letter addressed to ‘a monarch’ its context clearly suggests that the addressee is Ahmad Shah Abdali. Ibid. pp -51-53. Ahmad Shah Abdali defeated and crushed Marathas on 14th January 1761 in a fierce battle at Panipat. It took Marathas at least ten years to reappear before Delhi.
- ⁶ A.A.Razivi, “the Breakdown of traditional society” in the *Cambridge History of Islam* vol.2 op.cit. p.72.
- ⁷*Al-Fawz-al-Kabir fi Usul-i-Tafsir*, translation by Muhammad Salim ‘Abd-ullah (Karachi, 1960) PP.192-193.
- ⁸Introduction to *Hujjat Allah -al-Balighah* - cited by A.H.Nadvi *Saviours* vol 4 op. cit. P.132.
- ⁹ Ibid.P.135.
- ¹⁰ Ibid.P 131.
- ¹¹ Gulam Husain Jalbani, *Shah Wali-u-llah Ke Talim*, (Hyderabad Pakistan, 1963) P.46
- ¹² Shah Waliullah - *Wasiyat Namah*, P.11 cited by Ibid. P.23.
- ¹³Shah waliullah, *Hujjat-u'llah-i'l-Balighah*, Urdu trans. by ‘Abd-ur-Rahim (Lahore, 1953) V.I PP.308-316.
- ¹⁴ *Hujjal Allah al-Baligha*, op. cit. vol, P.156.
- ¹⁵Shah Waliullah, *al-Insaf fi Bayan--I Sabab al-Ikhtilaf*, urdu translation by Sadr al-Din Ishlahi, Lahore, n.d. PP.29-80. Cited by M.M.Sharif - *Philosophy op.cit. P.1575*.
- ¹⁶ . Shah Waliullah has dealt with the question of ijthad in *Iqd-al-jid fi ahkam-il- Ijtihad wat-Taqlid* (Delhi 1310 AH) also in *Al-insaf fi bayani Sababi Ikhtilaf*, [Urdu, trn. By Sadr-uddin Islahi as *Ikhtilafi Masail Men i'tidal ki Rah* (Lahore n.d)] et seq.
- ¹⁷ A command which is imperative upon all Muslims, but if a sufficient number perform it the same will be supposed to be sufficient or equivalent to all having performed it.
- ¹⁸Shah Waliullah Introduction to *Al-Musaffa*, (Matba Faruqi Delhi n.d) P.11
- ¹⁹Shah Waliullah, *Hujjat- ullah-il-Balighah*, op cit, V.I, P.365.
- ²⁰ Shah Waliullah *Iqd al-Jid* PP.36-38 cited by A.H.Ali Nadwi - *Saviors* vol.4, op. cit. PP.149-51.
- ²¹ Nadwi - *Saviours* Vol. 4 – op. cit. P.150-51.
- ²² Shah Waliullah - *Fuyud-ul-Haramain*, (Bombay n.d) vision. 46.
- ²³ Khaliq Ahmad Nizami - *State and Culture in Medieval India* (Adam Pub & Distributors New Delhi - 1985). P.281.

- ²⁴ M.M.Sharif - *A History of Muslim Philosophy* Vol. 2 (Atlantic Pub. & Dist. New Delhi 1989) P-1578.
- ²⁵ Shah Waliullah in his *Al-Insaf fi Bayan Sabab il-Ikhtilaf* he has discussed the history and nature of differences among various schools of jurisprudence.
- ²⁶ I.H.Qureshi - *Ulama* opcit. P.115.
- ²⁷ For his views on Sunni-Shiah please see. Shah Waliullah *Izalat-ul-Khifa 'an khilafat-I'l-Khulafa*, Urdu translation by 'Abd -u'sh-shakur and Insha-allah, (Karachi n.d) V.II, PP 487, FF. Shah wali-ullah, *Fuyud-ul-Haramain* op cit., vision 6,33 and also Shah Waliullah - *Al-aqidat-ul- Hasanan* (Agra, 1304 A.H) P.9.
- ²⁸ Shah Waliullah - *Faisalat al Wahdat -al-Ujud wa Wahdat al-Shuhud* [Delhi 1304 A.H) P.6.
- ²⁹ For instance, *Fuyd al-Haramyan, Qawl al-Jamil, Asfas al-Arifin, Altaf al-Quds and Tafhimat*, etc.
- ³⁰ *Hujjat ullah il-Baligah* [Lahore, 1323 A.H] urdu trn. By Maulvi Khalil Ahmad Matba-i-Islam Lahore, Vol. I. PP.79-80. Vol II 375-408a, *Budur-ul-Bazigah* XI.
- ³¹ Irtifaq is form root rafaq which means being benevolent, tender, gracious kind for easy. Ratfaq means use, utility, serviceability. Whatever man needs in the world is present but these forces are to be tamed and tutored to be brought under control and used. K.A.Nizmi, *State and Culture in Medieval India*. Op. cit. P.289. Waliullah use of it is somewhat in the sense of making the things soft and gentle to solve the growing needs of an individual vis-a-vis his environment. Irtifaq term used by Shah Waliullah has been also translated as 'stages and forces in the progress of civilization' 'social device' or social institution.
- ³² *Hujjat Allah il-Baligah*. (Bareilly, 1286 A.H) PP.38.48.
- ³³ Ibid - V.I PP.82-100.
- ³⁴ Ibid P.260.
- ³⁵ *Hujjat-ullah-il-Balighah* (Urdu trn.) opcit PP.82-83.
- ³⁶ *Hujjah-Allah al-Baligah* (Barielly. 1286 A.H) P.261.
- ³⁷ I.H.Qureshi - *Ulama* - opcit – p.125.
- ³⁸ In Shah Waliullah's times Persian was widely understood, and this was why he had translated the Quran into this language and also used it for some of his works. A generation later, Urdu seems to have become more popular; Shah Rafi al-Din and Shah 'Abd al-Qadir, both preferred to render it into Urdu. Shah Rafi al-Din's translation is literal while that of Shah 'Abd al Qadir is in idiomatic Urdu and is accompanied by a short commentary in the form of marginal glosses, called *Modish al-Quran*. The latter is still considered to be one of the best and most authentic translation in Urdu. Shah Abdul Aziz's son-in-law produced a handy dictionary of the vocabulary of the Quran, which helped beginners to understand the Book more easily
- ³⁹ Marsh John Clark, *A bridgement of the History of India*, (Sarampore, 1873) PP 267-268.
- ⁴⁰ . Ibid. P. 268
- ⁴¹ Shah 'Abdul Aziz, *Fatawa-i-Azizi*, Mataba-e-Mujtabai, Delhi. 1311 A.H.Vol. 1. P. 16-17.
- ⁴² Idem.
- ⁴³ Ibid. P. 186.
- ⁴⁴ Ibid P.17.