CHAPTER-4

Social Contributions of Shah Waliullah

Besides criticizing particular classes of Muslim Society, Shah Waliullah also condemned the sinful innovation and polytheistic practices borrowed by the Muslims from their non-Muslim neighbours; the indifference of the scholars and the Muslim rulers to promote the knowledge of Hadith and Sunnah and their failure to oppose the superstitious beliefs and practices of the masses. The religious scholars of his time who were normally preoccupied with logic and philosophy ignored these un-Islamic practices either because they regarded them as of no consequence or did not want to antagonize the community. Shah Waliullah gave attention to the need of reforming the Muslim society after Shaikh Ahmad Mujaddid Alf Thani, who had denounced, in his several letters, the heterodox beliefs and practices that had crept into the Muslim Society. Endeavours designed to reform the Muslim society for restoration of its moral health, initiated by Shah Waliullah were brought to completion by his sons and their disciples, particularly Syed Ahmad Shahid and Shah Isma’il Shahid. The former was a disciple of Shah Waliullah’s son Shah ‘Abdul ‘Aziz, while the latter was Shah’s grandson.

Here, we have given a few examples from the Tafhimat-i-Ilahiya and Wasiyat Nama by Shah Waliullah.

“One of the vicious customs prevalent among the Hindus is that when the husband of any woman dies, they do not allow her to re-marry. The Arabs were never given to any such practice, either before or after the advent of the messenger of God, (pbuh). May Allah bestow his grace on the man who may succeed in eradicating this evil practice followed by the community. If one is not able to abolish its usage among the people at large, one should at least try to restore the practice followed by the Arabs, in his own family and clan, and if this is also not possible, one ought to regard it as a wicked practice and hate from heart. This is the lowest stage of repudiating anything not approved by the Shari’ah.

“Another unseemly practice followed by us is to have an unusually large amount of dowry. The Prophet of God, on whom be peace and blessings, (and by following whose practice, we can succeed in this world and the next), used to fix a dowry
amounting to twelve and half awquiyah which was equivalent to five hundred dirhams for the members of his household. Yet another improper practice adapted by us is to be extravagant at joyous occasions and traditional celebrations. The Apostle of God, on whom be peace and blessings, is reported to have approved of a repast on the occasions of marriage ‘aqiqah. We ought to follow his example and desist from all other festivities and should not be lavish in our celebrations.

“We also have the queer habit of squandering money on occasions of bereavement by way of observing sayyum, Chahallum, shashahi and Salana fatiha although none of these were prevalent among the earliest Muslims in Arabia. It would be better if we do not observe these ceremonies and offer condolence to the bereaved family during the next three days and provide victuals to the family members of the deceased for a day and the night that follows. After three days the women of the clan should apply it to the clothes of dead man’s female relatives and if the widow is alive, all mourning should be terminated after the expiry of the period of ‘iddat.

Syed Abul Ala Maududi has rightly observed in one of his articles on the significance of Shah Waliullah’s reformative endeavour that:

“These passages show how deeply Shah Waliullah had pondered over the social conditions of the Muslims of his day, compared these with the past usages, and pointed out the evils most extensively. Such a critique necessarily creates an anxiety for reform in those who are well-meaning as well as able to draw a distinction between the wholesome and harmful customs and usages. The more, the people are enlightened by Islamic consciousness, the more they come to hate the un-Islamic influences in the society and develop an intense impulse to reform the society of all its abuses of ignorance. The next stage for this urge to reform and regenerate is to chart out a well-defined programme for the reconstruction of the society for giving it a correct direction. This is what we find Shah Waliullah doing with complete precision according to a comprehensive plan presented in his critique of the Muslim society”.

The social thought of Shah Waliullah, apart from being an excellent account of the great thinker’s intellectual contribution, reflects his holistic vision of life. Shah Waliullah regards life as a manifestation of divine unity which pervades all its facets. His thought synthesizes revelation, reasoning and empirical knowledge to construct a
universal paradigm that seeks to integrate man’s existential concerns with the moral and spiritual purposes of life, blending these seemingly disparate elements into a meaningful whole suffused with divine grace and beneficence. To allow the great sage to speak for himself, the book contains an English rendering of significant passages, pertaining to social matters, from his magnum opus, *Hujjatullah al-Balighah*.¹⁰

In order to understand Shah Waliullah’s conception of the society fully, one has to go through his science of society, which is much wider in scope and application than the sociology expounded by the so-called fathers of this science in the west; persons like Herbert Spencer and Conite, who flourished more than a century after him and have gained a position amongst the leaders of thought in modern philosophy.¹¹

Human nature bends towards mutual living and interdependence, which in fact, is the biological association with others for development, preservation and survival. It has been truly remarked that man is a gregarious animal. Just as ethical and moral conduct is possible only in social life, so is the survival of the species which is possible only selectively and is, therefore, closely connected with the problems of the individual, his psychological nature and his ethical conduct in the society and its administration. It follows that no philosophical or scientific system is possibly complete without the due consideration of society, its formation, development and administration. Shah Waliullah’s system is basically a society-oriented system.¹²

His concept of society is organic. Society in his view is not an aggregate unit, but a living organism, with its various parts being interlinked, interdependent and their movement, interactive. It is subject to health and soundness, progress and advancement, weakness and regression and decay and death. Just as the coordination and integration of the various faculties of the human being form a better personality and an effective and a strong mind. Coordination and integration are also the qualities that make up a healthy and a sound social unit.

“What is habit to an individual becomes the custom of a society. The individual’s memory of customs (and sites) gives rise to the traditions of the society. As the individual evolves, so does the society or community.”¹³
Taking a holistic view of life, Shah Waliullah tries to identify the essential unity pervading human life. His philosophy represents an attempt to establish a close link between the social, cultural, economic, and political aspects of human existence. With a basically theocentric view of the individual, who is the primary actor in a social organization, it is natural that a transcendental moral law should provide the organization’s mainstay. This law ought to be comprehensive and immutable and should serve as the final touchstone for determining good and evil, virtue and vice, love and hate.\textsuperscript{14}

The most outstanding and distinctive virtue of human society, in Shah Waliullah’s view, is justice, which is both an individual and a collective trait. He contends that being guided by the principle of justice is an essential moral distinction of human beings. This individual moral consciousness is further augmented at a collective level, where its preservation is even more necessary. For him, justice includes all human endeavors: in dress, manners, and modes, it is the etiquette; in income and expenditure, it is the economy; and in state affairs, it is politics.\textsuperscript{15}

Like many other social philosophers and theorists from Plato to Comte, Shah Waliullah’s ultimate aim was the establishment of an ideal moral, altruistic, and perfectly civilized society. This however, cannot be achieved, without attaining a high level of God-consciousness and spiritual purification. In contrast, Comte thought that a “perfect society would come about by the proper application of a new moral science, the study of society.” He envisioned a “scientifically designed common wealth, wherein social control would be entrusted to the ‘Religion of Humanity’ with sociologists as its priests”. Comte insisted that a strictly rational, as opposed to religious course should be followed to alleviate the ills of postindustrial European society. He posted that one application of this “rational strategy” could be the incorporation of physical and natural sciences methodology in the service of social relationships.\textsuperscript{16}

In a sense, Shah Waliullah can be considered as a great macrosociologist who made a lasting contribution to the progress of human thought, for he was “a grand theorist concerned with historical trends and human destiny, who worked out a social philosophy that explained a broad range of phenomena and constructed a model of a future good society. Exponents of modern sociology do not generally acknowledge anyone other than Comte and Marx as “Social Philosophers.” As Shah Waliullah’s
original and innovative social thought fulfills Biesman’s criteria, he should be recognized as a social philosopher.

The difference between the approaches of western social philosophers and that of Shah Waliullah can be better appreciated by noticing that the former take specific western experience for granted. The west’s historical experience as regards to the social, economic, religious, and political variables, has provided western sociologists with a rich and varied material with which they could construct a constellation of social ideas. Shah Waliullah, however, proceeds with a totally different view; the construction of an entire system, thought, including the social aspects, on the foundations of the historical concretization of Islam under the Prophet and his four immediate political successors. This organic nature is not peculiar to any particular society; it is common to all human societies, in fact to humanity as a whole.

Just as there are four stages of individual life; childhood, adolescence, manhood and maturity, Shah Waliullah divides the society into four stages for studying the process of development. He names these stages Irtifaqat. This division is neither final nor factual, since an organic whole cannot be divided into parts as such. In fact, it is a division for the purpose of study. All the stages are interlinked and overlap in their functions. The meaning of Irtifaq as understood by its application and use by Shah Waliullah is collective or cooperative effort. It is derived from “Irfaq”, which means gentleness or the use of gentleness. It means that though the beneficial things abound in the world, they do not come to man for his use by their own accord, rather he has to approach them with gentleness.

Human society evolves and develops during its life on this planet. Its evolution and development is more or less analogous to that of the individual. As an individual passes through various stages of his life, he has to pass through the stage of childhood and then through the stage of adolescence and then through the stage of youth, then through the stage of maturity and so on. So does humanity pass through similar stages of evolution in the course of its life on earth; according to Shah Waliullah. These stages are discussed by him in detail under the caption of al-Irtifaqat Modes patterns of satisfying needs.

At the same time Shah Waliullah was studying the structure, and formulating a theory for the preservation of Muslim society in general and the Muslim community
in particular. He divided the history of the growth of human society into four stages. The first of these stages is that of a primitive society that has a minimal code of social behaviour; the second stage is marked by the growth of urban society that is first led as a good state by its philosophers, but later degenerates into factions and needs centralized control; this necessitates the third stage, that of monarchy to establish order in the place of chaos; and the final stage is that of the universal state which requires a Khalifa with effective authority to hold down various rulers in the decadent civil society. These traits, as briefly mentioned earlier, are:

**The first stage- Primitive Society**

In the beginning man’s needs are few and confined to only food, clothing and shelter, etc. Nature requires the fulfillment of these three essential needs for the survival and preservation of life. In order to fulfil them man discovers and evolves means of producing and acquiring the needful, such as the cultivation of land, digging of wells, etc. Eventually, he tames certain animals and prepares some sort of clothes for covering his body, either from animal skins or tree trunks etc. For protection from danger, he builds a shelter from straw or any other available material. Man keeps women with him legally or illegally and protects them carefully. An example of this first stage is the life of Adam. The evolution and development of society and his own nature is natural to man, because he has been created with a specific purpose by Allah “God’s intention in creating Adam was that he should become his vicegerent on earth and attain the height of his genus perfection. As regards to him being prohibited from eating from the tree of Paradise, the prompting by Satan of evil, though, his being reprimanded and finally his expulsion from paradise all this was a form of the cause, according to the coming out gradually from the world of similitude’s to that of mortals.”

The Irtifaqat are natural and in accordance with man’s destiny. As he is created for the purpose of achieving a perfect state of his genus. He gradually evolves from an the animalistic level as his intellect develops, his needs become more complex and multiply. With additional needs, additional effort is required for their fulfillment and satisfaction, so nature pushes man towards the next stage of development. In case of external or internal impediments, God sends Messengers from within the human society, which is confronted with the obstacles debarring its
progress. These obstacles can be internal, as in the case of the majority lacking sound disposition or external in the form of bad customs, etc. These Messengers are men who are by nature capable of a higher kind of perfection, and act as the agents of God in bringing order and perfection in the society and curing of its evils and removing obstacles. Their approach and the divine law imparted to them for the establishment of order in society is different due to the difference in the circumstances. As mentioned earlier, the advent of the Prophet Adam was the time when humanity was at its earliest stage, with few and simple needs. So the Sharia of Adam was also simple and basic.

I. The consideration of the General Interests

Mans need’s are not confined to what is merely natural, for he feels within himself the necessity for far noble and superior things. Mere satisfaction of the natural wants like hunger, thirst and sexual urge, etc., does not prepare him for action, but there are some intellectual wants with in him as well, which encourage him to search for certain gains and avoid certain loss as his reasoning suggest. Accordingly, he has always intended to perform actions which not only benefit him, but the welfare of the people in general. At times, he desires to establish a beneficial social order in a town, and wishes that his character and his self be refined. While looking at the future and distant gain, he, at times, willingly tolerates the present and immediate loss, and sometimes, taking into consideration the future and distant loss, sacrifices his near and immediate gain. All his endeavours are directed towards the achievement of honor and glory.  

II. His love for Beauty and Elegance

The nature of man, unlike that of an animal is not merely composed of his needs and their satisfaction, but he, in all his actions, seeks elegance and beauty. As an example, an animal needs food only for the satisfying its hunger and for the maintenance of its life, but man, even in his food seeks taste and delicacy. He wishes to have fancy dresses, a elegant house and a beautiful wife.

III. The Capability of Invention and Imitation

Just as the nature of man’s needs is different from that of an animal, similarly, the nature of inspiration which he receives from God is also different. Unlike the
animal, man according to his capabilities receives different kinds of inspirations for different kinds of needs at different times. Taking advantage of those inspirations, he invents useful ways and means for his benefit and welfare. The thought of certain needs does not even occur to certain minds, and to some it does occur, but they do not know the right way of their fulfillment. Someone else receives an inspiration and he discovers a certain useful method which all the others learn from him.

In this first stage, in addition to other things, it is also necessary for men to follow someone whom they find more wise and powerful, make him their leader, so that he may help them develop their primary social order, and on certain occasions repulse their enemy from them. It is but natural for them to select someone from among themselves as their guide and then go with his guidance. In the development and growth of a society, imitation plays a very important role. Had it not been an inborn quality of man, the society would have taken a very long time to develop fully. Man is prepared for imitation, because in respect of reason, there is enough difference among people. Besides, in the quest for beauty and elegance, invention of useful schemes, obedience to rules and regulations, and the freedom to think and meditate, every one is different. This, however, becomes the job of a few select persons, possessing vision and understanding, and who are generous, brave, just and virtuous. They live a life of prosperity and decency and are prepared to work for the development of the civilization. The rest of the people are to follow them. This kind of human stage is considered to be the foundation stone of man’s social life, because no group of persons, however small it be, and removed far away from the villages and the towns, or living in deserts or on the mountain-tops can be found free from this initial stage of social organization. In other words, this stage is of such a nature that it is absolutely necessary for people to go through it without and so doing, it is not only difficult but impossible for them to lead a social life.

The second Stage – Urban Society

When man progresses from the first stage of his life and his basic needs are secure, that is, he has acquired means for their fulfillment, his intellect evolves, his love of beauty and elegance, which is inherent in his aesthetic characteristic, develops and he looks at his surroundings not only from the point of view of his physical needs, but also from an aesthetic point of view. He develops taste in food and drink, he desires
beautiful and elegant dress and beautiful women not only for satisfying his sexual needs, but a woman of his choice, and a house with some sort of comfort and proportion etc. The second stage of life is more complex as compared to the first one in which there is an ethical code, and some basic social institutions. This division corresponds to his division of ethical units, namely, personal life, domestic life, vocational life, business contracts and relations, and exchange of goods with others, the department of cooperation. This is attained by people living in urban areas and civilized cities within the virtuous realms. These realms are “virtuous” because their social environment acts as a constant incentive for the development of human beings with excellent morals and wisdom. As human social organization expands and engenders increasing needs and requirements, people have diverse experiences that, in turn, give rise to varying social practices. Over time, these practices become permanent social customs and form part of their collective social behavior. Its culmination is reflected in the practices of kings and rulers, who acquire and possess higher standards in the amenities of life. In addition, they are visited by gifted individuals from all over the world. This allows them to acquire moral practices, which are then seen in the living patterns of their subjects. These societies may then be classified as virtuous realms.

To examine and test the problems of the first stage on the touchstone of right experiences is the primary principle of the second stage. In the light of experience gathered, every form of such a stage is chosen and adopted in a manner so as to bring maximum possible gain and minimum possible loss. If any custom or system is found clashing with that principle, it is to be discarded. Here the ethical values are to be examined afresh. In case they are fair and fine, well and good, otherwise suitable changes are to be brought in them in accordance with the general principle. Every aspect of these ethical values should conform to the consideration of the general interest, under which general welfare is given preference over individual welfare.

Man by nature is inclined to know his future, and this tendency, to a certain extent, is found among all the people of the world. For that, one should avail the interpretation of dreams, geomancy and astronomy. It is also necessary that he should try to make his speech eloquent and render his talk in a clear and understandable fashion. Further the household administration should be well- maintained by considering the following things.
I. The Rights and Rules for Husband and Wife

When a man has to perpetuate his progeny, he has to marry and give birth to children, and for that it is necessary that both the husband and the wife should remain in peace and amity. In the breeding of children, the wife’s share is by nature more obedient and submissive. The qualities of man are quite different. He excels women, in reason, understanding and in the knowledge of vocations. He is well versed in doing the hard jobs, has the courage to face difficulties, and is by nature inclined to rule. However, both of them despite their individual traits are dependent on one another for the smooth running of the house. As man, by nature is jealous and possesses all the passions of manhood, it is necessary that he should have a lawful wife, otherwise there would be fights and feuds among men. Their marriage ceremony should be performed in public so that anyone else who had an intention of marrying her should give it up for ever. After marriage, it is the duty of both husband and wife to cooperate with each other in making their life prosperous and happy and should equally share the weal and woes. At times, some unpleasant incidents take place which makes their living together impossible. In that case it is better to separate from each other through divorce, so as to spend their remaining lives without worry and fear.28

II. Upbringing of Children

They should give good upbringing and proper education to their children and take special care of their progress and development. Unusual attention should be paid to their health, and suitable atmosphere be created for the improvement of their character. In return, it is the duty of the children, when they become mature, to take into account those troubles and hardships which their parents had endured for their sake. They must respect and honour them, obey their orders, speak to them gently.29

III. Mutual Dealings and the Relations with the Near and Dear Ones

It is a fact that there are persons in the society who are unable to fulfil their needs due to poverty and lack of means. Besides, certain diseases do disable some persons preventing from working them. In such adverse conditions, it is the duty of the rich and the well-to-do to help them as far as possible. That is the reason why the wise and
prudent persons of the world have considered the extension of sympathy and help to the distressed and the afflicted as a necessary requirement of the society. In short, the action towards the needy and dependent should be so fast and quick that each one of them should take the loss or gain of the other as his own. Such relationship is naturally found among close relatives, and it is due to this reason that at the time of death of one, the other becomes the heir of his property. This mutual help of the relatives at the time of need is known in the shari'ah as *Sila-i-rahim*, and is the most important duty.\textsuperscript{30}

The first *Irtifaq* is an initial stage in the ladder of man’s progress, when the human species had not developed properly. People were living in the jungles and small villages and following their headmen. As time passed, the human race, which was small in number increased by leaps and bounds. This gave rise to a variety in the activities of their lives and substantial increase in their mutual transactions. Their small villages took the shape of big towns and cities and a good social order came into being, under which they began to spend their lives. This civil life is another name for the second *Irtifaq* and example of it is found in the life of the Prophet Idris. \textsuperscript{31}

All the four stages of human society to follow one another in a chronological order. It never happens that the second stage may come before the first. Society sets its foot on every other rung of the ladder after it has placed it on the first one. However, it is not necessary that every second rung of the ladder may not be set foot on until the first one had become complete and perfect from every point of view. What Shah Waliullah says is that there are certain factors in every stage of society. Some of them happen to be the pillars of that stage without which the next stage of society cannot come into existence; and some factors are such, which, if they are wanting, do not affect the existence of that stage of the society, except that it would be empty of elegance and fineness. It is, however, possible for the society to reach the next stage only if the pillars of the preceding one are present there, namely, freedom from natural wants, like food and water, clothing and shelter. The factors which are to be rendered elegant and fine in the first stage can be produced even after setting foot on the second rung of the ladder. Sometimes, man after having reached the highest stage becomes more capable of bringing perfection, refinement and elegance to the lower stage.\textsuperscript{32}
This indicates that division of labor and an interdependent economic system, that is a rudimentary and basic organization, comes into being. The society evolves into an organism. The city states of the ancient civilizations and the Middle Ages are an example of this stage in human development. While the tribal societies prior to the city states are the first stage of development.

1. The Third Stage (Nationalism)

This stage is a natural development of the preceding two stages. As the institutions evolved in the second stage develop further, they become complex, needs multiply, rights and duties change and increase. Organization of the institutions evolved, becomes an issue to be tackled as the intellect advances further. Now that the basic physical needs are taken care of, a certain degree of taste is developed in the process as also the acquisition of ways and means of fulfillment and intellect fit in for further progress towards the goal of perfection. The third stage is the stage of nationalism, which is concerned with the administration of the social units the i.e. The cities and the towns. The tribe is replaced by the city in the second stage, an in the third stage large the communities, composed of a number of cities and towns, form a nation. This social unit, namely the nation has a large number of individuals in its composition, but as a result of development and progress of the intellect, it works as a living organism. “Accordingly, if an individual feels some pain, some where the wider nation feels it, as the whole body feels when a part of it is injured. At this stage the needs of man go beyond computation, and he wants to excel in all spheres of life. As it is not possible for him to fulfil all the needs in a better and reformed manner single-handedely, he has to live and cooperate with others in social life. At this stage, though each one has separate occupation, mutual cooperation and help is, however, necessary which eventually results in the formation of political order among men. This is badly needed at this stage. For the maintenance of mutual transactions and dealings, human beings first need the same kind of an exchange system, which leads to the introduction of coinage (i.e. gold and silver coins). Eventually, on account of the multiplicity and diversity of occupations, everyone gets busy in trying to improve his art and profession and it is here that the society becomes fully developed in the proper sense of the word.
In the *Hujjatullah al-Baligha*, Shah Waliullah has given an account of the formation of this stage: “Indeed when men carry on these transactions with each other and different men specialize in different vocations, produce and supply for each other’s needs etc., co-operation etc. comes into being it necessarily signifies that there exists a kind of a link, a unity between various groups of people like farmers, merchants, weavers etc.\(^{35}\)

It is these groups of people that by reason of that unifying link form the body of the state in actuality. The real state is not the same as the city walls, fortresses and trading centres. If there are many towns in the vicinity of each other, they are called a state. From the point of view of a unifying link a state is just like a person or an organism, while every group of people and every member is like a link or a part of the body of that person. Unity is essential in a state, and it must be first of all be preserved, improved and developed to yield its full benefits. The system of the government through which this objective is attained is the real leader (*imam*) or governor of the state, who according to Shah Waliullah, is not at all in the form of an individual, except, of course, in case of a capable person of a strong and powerful personality, who is absolutely suitable for this task and undertakes it theirby leveling him as the head of the state, though only in outward and appearance.\(^{36}\)

A standard government and at advanced level of struggle for perfection is that which has efficient and effective means for fulfilling the requirements of a good judiciary, executive, defense and public welfare. There are several divergent and conflicting views about the structure and functioning the government; the best form of government in Shah Waliullah’s opinion is that which fully accords with the situation, the time and the requirements of the people concerned. An effective from suggested by him is that in which the responsibilities are divided as considered necessary, since the capabilities of individuals are limited. Nevertheless, these should be sufficiently centralized to prevent internal chaos and strife. Each department should have an executive head with sufficient powers and rights to run that particular department. The head of the government of course should be the final authority and centre of all the departments, so that the coordination and co-operation of the departments as well as an efficient and disciplined administration is secured. The example of the second and third *Irtifaq* is provided during the life of the Prophet Soloman.\(^{37}\)
I. Qualifications of a Ruler

In case of an increased population, it is not, however, possible that all the people should always obey the just and fair order and not go against it. It is, therefore, necessary that there should be a ruler for them, elected by their wise heads, who, however, should be so able and powerful, as to compel them to follow the prescribed law and, thus, check the spread of insecurity and dis-order. Such a ruler is expected to possess the following qualifications: He should be a man of good character, brave and strong hearted, otherwise people will dislike him, and the enemies and the mischief makers not fear him. Besides, he should be tolerant and forbearing and have the ability to run the country’s administration properly. He should be respectable and noble, always anxious for the good and welfare of his subjects. He should know how to win the hearts of the people, and make himself acceptable among them by his sincerity and the performance of his duty. In other words, as the hunter, in order to hunt his prey, avails of all his guiles and arts, similarly, he should spare no pains in winning the love of his subjects. It is proper for the ruler to give generous treatment to his subjects, but he should show no remissness punishing the offenders. However, no hasty steps should be taken until the offence of the offender is clearly proved. Those who work in the government selflessly and honestly ought to be given every kind of encouragement. In short, the ruler should be of an enlightened nature, and so experienced and possessed of insightful, as to understand the inner self of a man at his very first sight, and so far sighted as to know the result of the state affairs before their actual happening.38

When the ruler is unable to manage the administration singl-handedly, he surely needs a team of efficient and selfless persons in the various departments of the government who should be very much conscious of their responsibilities and the discharge of their duty. At the time of appointment, care should be taken to avoid assigning any post to a person who, later on may be difficult to remove or who may be found unfit. The best plan for him at that time is to distribute the work, and powers if he is sharing with other people according to work exigencies. There are also people, who some how enter the government for their selfish motives. They should be brought around some how to behave properly and be loyal to the government, otherwise they should be compelled to retire. The ruler should not forget that he cannot
expect from the servants of his government anything beyond their individual in born capacity, as that is impossible.  

The heavy work of the government requires large sums of money, for which a treasury is established, the income of which comes from various kinds of taxes. It is the duty of the rich and the wealthy not to avoid the payment of proper taxes, because whatever is collected in the treasury is spent for the good of the common people, and the purpose of the government is to establish the welfare of the public and nothing else. But while levying taxes, justice should be don, and no extraordinary burden be imposed on the income of the subjects. Taxes should be recovered only from the wealthy, or from those who own such property which’s found increas every day and who are traders and owners of industries. But even that taxes may be levied on them only when their income were to exceed beyond the level at which they can drive satisfaction from the necessities of life. In the third stage, the government has to consider all the points mentioned above and, in order to keep the society sound and healthy, it has to do take the following five steps:

1. Greed, niggardliness and malevolence often give rise to differences among individuals in a society. If they are not suppressed, they will result in fights, murders, loot and plunder. It is therefore, the duty of the government to arrange for the just settlement of their disputes, and to be so strong and powerful in itself as to be able to remove their differences and enforce its own decisions.

2. Some people develop bad habits, carry bitter rivalries and give into their basic desires. They should be threatened to desist from their evil designs, otherwise the existence of the society would be at stake.

3. There are also individuals who are always busy in disrupting the social order. They intened to lay hands on the properties of others or to seize political power to fulfil their selfish ends. Such mischief-makers and disruptionists also associate with them many persons trained in fighting and war fare. It is, therefore, the duty of the government or the party in power, to be always ready to wage war against such miscreants for the preservation and safeguard of the human society and nation.
(4) Thinkers and wise men always have a noble aim and objective before their eyes for the maintenance of the human society in the best possible form, and their intention is that the society should work for the achievement of that goal. It is, therefore, necessary for the government to endeavour and work hard towards the attainment of the same.

(5) Men, on account of their attachment with the worldly affairs generally forget their moral and religious commitments and become negligent. It is therefore, the duty of the government to make them give up their negligence and make them feel responsible towards morality and religion, through advice and admonition. The example of this Irtifaq and of the second one is provided in the life of the Prophets Sulaiman (Solomon) and Moses.41

4. The fourth stage (Internationalism)

The fourth stage of social evolution comes at a later stage when these national governments evolve into a full fledged entity. Thereafter, out of necessity, they organize themselves into an International organization for the sake of their survival and safety from external dangers.42

As Shah Waliullah believed in the essential and the organic unity of humanity, the al-Insan al- Kabir, his system of socio-political evolution, has its logical end in internationalism or a league of nations, which is the fourth stage of society, though desirable, but not yet realized. With due increase in human population, just as at the national level, there are smaller units of administration with their own administrations, substations subservient to the central executive authority, in the same way a higher level of human progress and development of relations between several nations is inevitable. Just as on the personal level the individual is in need of domestication and the families are in need of city or town establishments, which ultimately evolve into states and nations; the final goal of human perfection is an international organization. A stage comes when needs become very complex and numerous in that the inter-dependence of nations become necessary. Shah Waliullah’s transcendental aim and the evolutionary dynamic nature of his system of society necessitates the concept of internationalism. For real peace and tranquility an international communal organization is a must. Shah Waliullah was conscious of the
non-existence of such a state in the past and at the present, but nevertheless believed striving for it is natural, desirable and inevitable.\textsuperscript{43}

His social Philosophy is neither dogmatic nor stringent. The mixture of the sufistic with the orthodox. He favoured revolution. In fact, he thought that when a society gets corrupted to extent that progress and development are debarred and reformation by evolution is not possible, it becomes necessary to bring about a revolution.

“A social institution in which a people are deprived of their primary needs of life, is like an abscess in the body which, the sooner it is removed the better it would be. The people who know wherein lies the general welfare feel it as their bounden duty to bring about a revolution. But it should be kept in mind that the bringing of a revolution is a very distressing and a hard job, like the sacrifice of life and property, where one at times is required to part with his beloved country. Such sacrifices can be made by those who are very sensitive, self-confident and have the ability and courage to face the situations, no matter how serious, with patience and endurance. For the success of such a revolution, sometimes one has to struggle through protests, at times through raising slogans, etc., and on certain occasions one has to put up an actual fight. Whatever sacrifice is made in this direction is reckoned as the best of actions.”\textsuperscript{44}

Divine purpose is the ultimate end of all happenings, whether ordinary or extraordinary. The Prophets are divine messengers for purposes of guiding those whose reformation is intended. Every Prophet is given a system of law to establish order among the people concerned, in accordance with the universal purpose. Islam is the best and the most perfect of all religions, whose ultimate purpose is to establish the fourth stage of human development.

“To become the greatest international power in the world, which could stand the challenges of time. It is, the sacred duty of all the Muslims throughout the world to work hard and spare no pains for the establishment of the Islamic international organization which could successfully face the combined opposition of evil forces. The completion of favour takes practical shape only when such a great force is created.”\textsuperscript{45}
This is a stage in which mutual relations between various nations take place. When the frontiers of a country are extended far and wide and human population exceeds beyond bounds, the country is divided into various provinces, administered by governors. Every province has its own means of income and its own army to defend it. As all the people are not of the same temperament, and they also differ in their abilities, there always take place fights and feuds among them leading them to follow the wrong course. They begin to harbour malice and jealousy which incite them to usurp the property of others. When conditions turn ugly, people feel the necessity of a very powerful ruler fine it who can safeguard their interests. If he is available and is himself law abiding, others, less powerful, will, willingly or unwillingly, surrender and obey his order, thus enabling people to live their social life in peace, safety and prosperity.46

I. Duties of a Powerful Ruler:

Such a powerful ruler at times finds it unavoidable to take up arms and fight. In every community there are people bent upon creating mischief and disorder. They blindly follow their low desires and become the source of disruption in the society. They must be compelled to obey the law by the use of force; and those who later on would prove to be a cancer in the body of the community should be ruthlessly persecuted and wiped out. Even after the government is firmly established, events do take place which make it necessary for the ruler to take up the sword in his hand, because the people of beastial nature take to luting and plundering as their profession, and thus, spread insecurity and disorder everywhere in the country.47

As it is known, wars cannot be carried on without necessary provisions. It is, therefore, necessary that the ruler’s (government) treasure should always remain full, and he should have adequate force at his disposal to put down mischief, and avail of it at times of emergency. For such a ruler, it is necessary to be well informed of the occasions of war and peace. He should so weaken and reduce the force of his enemies as to eliminate the possibility of their future opposition, and should establish an espionage system in the country to keep himself acquainted with the activities of the enemy and then take due precautionary measures in time. The enemy must be so suppressed and subdued as to give the proof of its submissiveness both in words and
actions. Its verbal statements will not be sufficient until and unless they are supported by clear evidences of its sincerity in practice.\(^{48}\)

**Agreement of people on Irtifaqat**

All nations, despite their territorial and religious differences, agree upon these *Irtifaqat* in principle. They acknowledge their soundness and consider it necessary to follow them. All this is the result of the natural requirement of man’s specific form.\(^{49}\)

Let us take it for granted that a man is born in some barren land and, as such, is deprived of formal education, but, in spite of that, he needs to satisfy his hunger, thirst and sexual urge; besides, he will need some shelter to save himself from heat, cold and rain. Sexual urge, however will compel him to keep some legal or illegal matrimonial connection with any woman, which will bring in its wake the birth of children, whose number will multiply by the passage of time. From family and tribe, it will take the shape of a large community and the nation. This increase in population will surely give rise to various kinds of connections and then their maintenance and this is how a society comes into being and is gradually develope.\(^{50}\)

In short, the four stages in the life of man are as follows:

1. The jungle life, when the society was too small characterised by living in huts and hamlets.
2. The life of towns and cities when the society appreciably developed.
3. When the society assumed the form of a nation with a very large population.
4. And when the society, having made all round developments, took the shape of an international organization.\(^{51}\)

**Causes of Corruption**

The above institutions, which came to be established for the fulfillment of the needs of man, tend to become corrupt and obsolete with the passage of time. Many kinds of evils creep in, rendering them useless and harmful. The main reason for their corruption is that the leadership of people goes into the hands of those who ignore the absolute good and the consideration of general interests which are required for the welfare of the masses, and take to the satisfaction of their low desires. Majority of them happen to follow them with the result that the foundation of civilization and culture becomes badly shaken. To save the society from extinction, nature on such
occasions brings into existence certain persons who root out that corruption and reform the society afresh. Shah Waliullah has, however, made this matter very clear at many places, that the moral and ethical side of man’s life is largely dependent upon his economic conditions, as he says: “The social virtues of men are completely destroyed at a time when they are forced to live under hard and difficult financial stringencies; and it is only for the sake of bread that they are made to work like beasts of burden. When mankind is faced with such a calamity, God paves the way to save it. Accordingly, he inspires one of his chosen ones to rise and do the needful. The destruction of the Pharaoh, Caesar and Chosroes was the result of that inspiration.”

Shah Waliullah, as has already been mentioned, did not fear or hesitate in telling the truth, and exposed the misdeeds of the government of his times. Referring to their luxurious living and the absence of moral values, he says: “When the Persian and Roman Empires continued for long, the rulers and the high ups lost themselves in the ease and comfort of life, and completely forgot the hereafter. There luxurious living went to such an extent that if any chief did not have a crown worth lakhs of dinars to wear on his head, people used to find fault with him. You see the prevailing conditions of your country which are in no way better than theirs.”

It is clear that these provisions of comfort and luxury cannot be available without spending large sums of money. In consequence, heavy and intolerable taxes were being levied upon the labour class, the peasantry, the business community and the craftsmen, for the payment of which they worked like animals day and night, and as such, the helpless and the poor had no time to remember God and the hereafter.

Apart from the luxurious living of the highest, and the imposition of heavy and burdensome taxes, the other cause of the break-up of society is that some persons like repays and the ‘Ulama’ who consider themselves entitled to government stipends do not work at all, and thus, become an unpleasant burden upon the state exchequer. Giving of gifts and grants to the ascetics and the poets has also become a habit of the rulers now-a-days. Society’s well being lies in the lightening of the taxes and the employment of civil and military staff according to requirement.
Proper distribution of labour

Besides, some people follow the professions they are not fit for, and this in turn cuts at the very root of social development. There is a man who is very hungry but unfortunately he takes a profession which does not satisfy his hunger. Naturally, he perforce will be inclined to beggary and other low and hateful practices. Again, there are people who, in spite of being robust and strong, do not work hard and rush in to indecent occupations.56

The other strong reason for the decomposition of society is that, if there is a population of ten thousand, the majority does not busy itself in the increase of production, with the result that the population starves. As such, there is a need for the proper distribution of labour. Similarly, if the majority indulges in luxurious living, it will become a burden on the nation and a contagion which will go on infecting slowly and gradually the whole population, eventually reducing it to a state of being bitten by a rabid dog.57

Economic Conditions Influence Man’s Character

However, Shah Waliullah cites one more fact in particular, that the society corrupts and disintegrates when some people take to exploitation and monopolization. They attempt to seize the properties of others, and thus, closing all the avenues of their income and livelihood. Social economy has a greater impact upon the character of man. It is, therefore, necessary that for the maintenance of character and moral values, a just economic order be established in the human society. Until and unless this kind of order is established, the beauty of social character will never appear. One aspect of life invariably affects the other, as all of them are closely connected. And it is indeed these economic conditions which determine a man’s character.58

According to Shah Waliullah, human society can never become completely perfect, but it can come near to perfection. Individuals are like the limbs of a body and as zaid, for example, can never be perfect in his health from every point of view, for there will certainly be some imbalance and need for equilibrium somewhere in his body, similarly is the case of a human society which can never be in a state of balanced health.59
He was, however, of the opinion that the knowledge of man natural requirements of men can give a correct lead in the fixation of aims and objects of a society. It should then be its sole purpose to fulfil them and make provision to meet man’s primary needs, such as the need for food, clothing and shelters. Bearing all these facts in mind, Shah Waliullah has laid much emphasis upon the improvement of the economic conditions of man and for that he advised that everybody should do something with his own hands to earn, so that he may not be a burden on the government and the people. His appeal to people in general: “O children of Adam! whosoever from you has bread to eat, water to drink, shelter to dwell in, clothes to cover the body and in addition to these all has a wife also then he is given everything in the world. It now behaves him to remain content, and follow the course of moderation in his living.” These are the basic needs of man; if these are fulfilled, he gets almost all the things of the world. In support of this he gives a quotation from the Tradition of the Holy Prophet: “Man has no right save of three things: a house to dwell in, clothes to cover his body, and bread and water for his belly.”

Shah Waliullah takes the meaning of the word ‘Afw in the Holy Quran to be that which exceeds the necessary needs of life. By restricting needs to “necessary” he has indeed suggested a very useful solution to the economic problems. Divine wisdom requires, he says, that human society should not lag behind the second and third stages of social development. This is the reason why no Prophet has never asked his people to abandon society and go to stay in jungles and on mountain-tops, as it is against the very interests of man himself.

Apart from that, the character of man does not come to light and is not known but only when there is a clash with the people. Without contact and without any association with different kinds of people and varying social orders, the beauty of man’s character does not become clear. At times, some persons leaving the primary things of the first stage half-done begin to give more attention to those of the second one with the result that society does not become stable. Man’s good lies in this that when the fourth stages were to go out of his hands, he should hold steded fast to the third one. Similarly, if he were to lose the third one, he should stick to the second one and so on. But because people have no adequate knowledge of the different stages of social development, so they stick to the stage they are acquainted with, with the result that society degenerates, and the whole social structure starts cracking. It is the
responsibility of the people living in populated cities to remain in animity and friendship with each other. Every phase as a whole must see that the property of everything in them is raised on friendship and affection.67

**Islam must Prevail**

It, however, cannot be denied that under the conditions prevailing today the formation of an international organization seems to be difficult, but the Muslims must always have that aim in view and avail of every opportunity and situation to transform that idea of pan-Islamism as conceived by Shah Waliullah into dead reality. This objective can certainly be achieved if the Muslim countries come closer to each other, dissolve their differences and as far as possible work together as a single unit on an international basis. Until the international government of the Muslims comes into being, it is necessary for them to work zealously and enthusiastically for the stability and fortification of their national governments. Every nation, should make itself strong enough a form of religious, moral and political point of view. It should always remain vigilant, and well prepared for fight, keep itselfs adequately informed of the latest developments in the modern methods of warfare, and infuse the spirit of Jihad into the hearts of its people.68

Unfortunately, no proper attention now a days, is being paid to the teachings of the Holy Quran with regard to the making of this worldly life strong and successful by taking advantage of all the possible means. Self-defence and necessary preparations against a possible attack of an enemy and making life prosperous and strong is one of the duties Islam has enjoined on the Muslims. For example, there come these words in the Holy Quran: “Against them make ready your strength to the utmost of your power, including steeds of war, to strike terror into the enemies of God and your enemies.”69 At another place God says: “If they had intended to come out, they would certainly have made some preparation therefore. 70 Again, there is a verse: “The unbelievers wish you were negligent of your arms and your baggage, to assault you in a single rush.”71

According to a tradition, the defence of Muslims is better and more rewarding than the obligatory prayer and fasts; and one day’s patrolling of the frontiers is better than one month’s prayers and fasting. At present, the world is not devoid of the third
stage of social development, and if it is ever deprived of it, that would be a catastrophe.\textsuperscript{72}

The fact to which Shah Waliullah draws our attention is that since the religion of Islam has come for the establishment of the greatest international power and when its domination is to continue forever, it can be rightly ensured only when the Muslim nations make themselves strong both morally and materially, draw closer and work together as far as possible. It is high time the Muslims realise the importance and necessity of unity, forget their past jealousies and work for the solidarity of Islam and lose no time and effort to make themselves the greatest power in the world.\textsuperscript{73}
Endnotes and References


2. In this connection the Sirat-i-Mustaqim, the discourses of Syed Ahmad Shahid compiled by Shah Ismail Shahid and other works like Saiyid Ahmad Shahid. His life and Mission by Mohi-Uddin Ahmad can be seen.

3. Ceremony performed on the third day of a dead relative.

4. Ceremony performed on the fortieth day after death.

5. Ceremony performed after six months of death.

6. Annual ceremony to remember the dead person and supplicate for normally all these ceremonies are accompanied by a feast of the relatives and distribution of food to the poor.

7. A gathering for the recital of the Quran to supplicate for the dead person.

8. A probationary period of four months and ten days during which a widow is not allowed to re-marries.


15. Ibid.,
16. Ibid., pp.15-16.

17. Ibid., p.16.


23. Ibid.,

24. Ibid.,


29. Ibid.,

30. Ibid.,

31. Ibid.,

32. Ibid.,

33. Saeeda Khatoon, op. cit., p.60.

34. Ibid.,

35. Ibid.,

36. Ibid.,

37. Ibid.,

39. Ibid.,
40. Ibid.,
41. Ibid.,
44. Ibid.,
45. Ibid.,
47. Ibid.,
48. Ibid.
49. Ibid
50. Ibid
51. Ibid
52. Ibid
53. Ibid
54. Ibid.,
55. Ibid.,
56. Ibid., p. 51.
57. Ibid., p. 53.
60. Tafhimat, p.218.
61. Ibid., p.218.


70. *Surah Taubah*, verse 46.

