CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION TO THE TOPIC
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(Praise belongs to Allah the lord of the worlds and blessings and peace be on the foremost among the Messengers and the last of the prophets Muhammad (PBUH) and his progeny and companions all and those who followed them sincerely and summoned (the people) to his Message to the day of judgment)

Introduction of the topic:

1.1: Introduction

Qutubuddin Ahmad, son of Sheikh ‘Abdur Rahim, is popularly known as Shah Waliyullah Muhaddith Dehlawi (Rah.). India, where Shah Waliyullah was born, enjoyed the peaceful and prosperous rule of the Mughals for more than 200 years; but during the period of Shah Waliyullah, India had disintegrated in to a number of mutually hostile principalities which tended to claim independence of the central authority of Delhi one after the other. India lost Power and glory due to their weakness, follies, malice hostility of their cunning foes and the rising influence of the militant Maratha, Sikh and Hindu communities. the dreadful fall of the Muslim empire in Spain in 1492 was utter despond and despondency for
Muslims. In this time the birth of Shah Waliyullah was the providential favour to humanity and reformers emerge.³

All the Muslims are in Considerable dept to Shah Waliyullah in many ways; because many educational, intellectual and spiritual currents of thought which arose in India in the late 18th century and made notable contributions in many branches of Islamic scholarship proudly sketch their origins to the school of Shah Waliyullah. The most outstanding institutions of Muslim education that thrived in the Sub-continent during the 19th century were: Deoband, Farangi Mahal, Nadwatu-al-‘Ulama’, ‘Aligarh and others-have all claimed the intellectual and spiritual influence of Shah Waliyullah, provided the educational programmers, spiritual training and moral reform of the society at large, produced specialists in the religious disciplines and other branches of knowledge, responded to the needs of Muslim scholars in various basic Islamic Sciences, such as Tafsir, Hadith, Fiqah, ‘Usulu-al-Fiqah, Kalam, Philosophy, logic, language, Syntax, Morphology and Rhetoric, those which were made almost exclusively by those scholars whose academic genealogy is traceable, directly or indirectly, to Shah Waliyullah Muhaddith Dehlawi (Rah.).⁴

The multipurpose contributions of Shah Waliyullah (Rah.) are not limited to purely academic and theoretical matters only; but also Its profound effects are found in the Jihad movements of the sub-continent under the inspiring leadership
of Saiyyed Ahmad Shahid (d. 1246 A.H/1831 A.D) in a heroic strive against the anti-Islamic forces in India; which brought about a total change in the body religious as well as body politic of the Indian Muslim society.\(^5\)

The present study attempts to show the effects of the works of Shah Waliyullah as the bulb to remove the maladies of Muslim community such as the weaknesses and follies of the Muslims and the malice and hostility of their cunning foes. Thanks to remedial wisdom and sagacity of Shah Sahib which was able to diagnose, the malaise of the Country. In his view, it consisted in (I) Lack of strong faith. (II) Disunity in the Muslim ranks and (III) acute moral degeneration.\(^6\)

The works of Shah Waliyullah (Rah.) are not confined to this diagnosis only; but also provided the ways of cure. Shah Sahib strongly tried to redress the lack of faith by presenting a rational interpretation of Islam. We find rational arguments proceed side by side with Traditional distinctly speaks in religious doctrines and full harmony between reason Tradition and intuition in his religious point of view.\(^7\)

Shah Waliyullah (Rah.) was specially gifted with an exceptional ability to conceive a via media or poles between divergent points of views. He addressed the issues of disunity by bring about reunion between the diverse Schools of law and theology and solved the controversies of disunity.\(^8\)
The malaise of moral degeneration of the Muslim society was removed by Shah Waliyullah (Rah.) through *Tasawwuf*, a direct approach to the heart. He learnt from the Generous Qur’an and the *Sunnah* that unless purification of heart, it was impossible to overcome the moral degeneration which permitted the individual and united life of the Muslim community.\(^9\)

Shah Waliyullah (Rah.) undertook the onerous task of reforming the minds and morals of his brethren in faith; when they in gulfed and corrupted with all its strata in varying degrees, He choose various measures for rebuilding the culture, polity and ideological orientation of the Muslims.\(^10\)

In the view of Shah Waliyullah (Rah.), men are the main and actual vehicle to focus, in extension, their hopes, aspirations and ideas, on the universal scale. According to Shah Sahib all the necessary faculties, instinctive, aesthetic, rational and intuitionial, are to be provided to actualize the peaceful, humane and Theocentric civilization in the World.\(^11\)

Shah Waliyullah introduced a new methodology in the understanding and application of the Generous Qur’an, which, in the guidance and way of life, is a remarkable contribution. *Al- Fawzu-al-Kabir*, in his skilled work, the fundamentals of Qur’anic exegesis, is a new dimension in the Science of Tafsir.\(^12\) He converted the Divine text into easy Persian prose for the posterity. By performing this service
Shah Waliyullah started a new era of understanding the Holy Qur’an and the comprehension of its meanings from then onward became easy accessible to the common man.\(^\text{13}\)

Translation of the Holy Qur’an was an unresolved issue to Shah Waliyullah (Rah.). He removed the notion that the Merciful Qur’an may not be translated to Qur’anic scholarships and translated the Generous Qur’an into Persian. This had a wholesome effect on the Muslims, became, increasingly, possible for ordinary people to understand the Holy Qur’an. The general public was also helped by the new growing number of scholars who concentrated their efforts on the Merciful Qur’an. This was a vigorous development, especially in the non Arabic speaking lands.

According to the jurists the Holy Qur’an is the primary source of legal doctrines; yet the jurists of the later confined. Even men like Abu Hamid al Ghazzali (d. 505 A.H/1111 A.D) did not consider that necessary\(^\text{14}\) further, the classical exegesis narrows down the scope of Qur’anic verses. Shah Waliyullah (Rah.) rejects this tendency.\(^\text{15}\)

Shah Waliyullah (Rah.), once again, emphasizes its application to human thought and experience. He, after comprehensive survey the main themes of the Generous Qur’an, classifies those under five subjects: (I) *Ahkam* (Injunction); (II)
Mukhasamah (Dialectics); (III) Tadhkiru bi ‘Ala Allah (Reminding man of the
divine favours); (IV) Tadhkiru bi Ayyamullah (reminding man of God’s
intervention in History; and (V) Tadhkiru bi-al-Mawut wama ba’da-al-Mawut.

This classification, removed misunderstandings of the students of the
Generous Qur’an and a number of problems their inter-relationship and thematic
coherence, were solved. This insight constitutes a great achievement of Shah
Waliyullah in the field of Tafsir.

The second Dialectics is particular notice. Many ‘Ulama neglect this theme
and become unable to appreciate the discourse of the Revelation addressed to all
mankind they must belong to either of the following classes: (I) the faithful, (II) the
people of the Book, (III) the Polytheists or Atheists (IV) the Hypocrites.\(^{16}\)

In short, the contributions he made to understanding, application knowledge
of the Merciful Qur’an by students other than those specialized in the Holy Qur’an
was indeed great and singular. As a result ordinary Muslims began to approach the
Generous Qur’an with confidence and enthusiasm. They treated it as Universal
message addressed to all mankind containing commandments and prohibitions.\(^{17}\)

According to Shah Waliyullah (Rah.), Ilm-i-Hadith is not an independent
faculty; but it is a stupendous detail extensive reasonable explanation of the Holy
Qur’an. In his view the Sunnah is indispensably a comment of the Generous
Qur’an, it is an intensive and profound energetic analysis of the Traditions of the Prophet (Sm.), and there is an organic relationship between the Merciful Qur’an and the Sunnah. 18; further, he brought out the rationalization from the instructions of the Prophet (Sm.). 19 He also solved the criticism made against Ahl-i-Sunnah by the rationalists. He proved the Traditional point of view of the former and supported it with able rational arguments. 20

Shah Waliyullah (Rah.), in reference of interpretation the Traditions of the Prophet (Sm.), has shown evolutionary progresses in the lives of all Prophets (Sm.) from Ibrahim (‘Am.) up to Muhammad (Sm.) and shown its effects as the source for human civilization. He took the teachings of all Prophets (Sm.) as a continuous process of revealed Guidance. 21 Moreover, Shah Waliyullah (Rah.) did not assign to Ijma’ (Consensus) 22 as an independent source of law. He has a restricted conception of Ijma’. He recognizes the character of the rulings of the early caliphs, especially Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq (Rad.), Hazrat ‘Umar Faruq (Rad.) and Hazrat ’Uthman Ghani (Rad.), the three immediate successors of Prophet (Sm.) on any interpretation of the Generous Qur’an or the Sunnah. He admits this status of companions associated and proximate with the Prophet (Sm.). Any other Consensus, in his opinion, does not bind Muslims of any other era or area to any particular view. 23
According to Shah Waliyullah (Rah.), *Ijma*-is an explanatory source whose understanding is more correct than of others.\(^{24}\) The fourth source of law is *Qiyas* (Analogy); which is not acknowledged by Shah Waliyullah as an independent source because it is integral for understanding the Generous Qur’an and its interpretations that are either embodied in the *Sunnah* or can be derived from the collective understanding of the companions in the best era (*Khairu-al-Qurun*).\(^{25}\)

The remarkable genius of Shah Waliyullah (Rah.) is his ability to reconcile the differing views of the Muslims expounding them with reference to the basic principles that may be drawn from the Generous Qur’an and are also plausible on rational grounds. He feels this as a great divine favour to him.\(^{26}\) He also took this Synthetic exercise as the distinctive mark of his works on theology and Mysticism as well. This is evident from his synthesized version of the doctrines of Wahdatu-al-Wujud (Unity of existence) and Wahdatu-al-Shuhud (Unity of manifestation).\(^{27}\)

Notes and References:


8. Pl. See e.g. some of his juridical discussions representing this trend in his “Hujjatu Allah-al-Balighah” (Lahore: n.d.), Pp. 124-127; again Pl. See Sindhi, Falsafah, Pp. 185-206.


11. For a better understanding of this aspect of Shah Waliyullah’s Philosophy please see his discussion on the essence, nature and scope of bliss (Sa’adah) and the means for its attainment, etc. in Hujjatu Allah-al-Balighah, Pp. 50-56.


13. Shah Waliyullah, Fathu-al-Rahman fi Tarjumat-i-al-Qur’an (Karachi: Taj Kampani, n.d.). It is a simple and lucid rendering of the Qur’an into Persian with brief explanatory notes here and there. The latest edition of this translation was
printed in 1993 at the Da‘wah academy, International Islamic University, Islamabad.


17. Sindhi, Falsafah, P. 108

18. An approach of Shah Waliyullah to Sunnah as essentially a commentary on the Qur’an appears to be an influence of Imam Al-Shafi‘ee whose jurisprudence is considered to be premised on this principle. This approach of Shah Waliyullah is most conspicuously reflected in the treatment of juridical issues in the Hujjah. See Hujjatu Allah-al- Balighah, Pp. 128-129, 136-138, Sindhi, Falsafah. P.109


20. Ibid, Pp. 147-152


22. Ijma‘ has been regarded as an independent source of law by a large number of jurists. Ibnu-al-Hamam defines it as follows: “It is the Consensus of the Mujtahids of a particular age in the religious community of the Prophet Muhammad (Sm.)” See Kamalu-al-Din Muhammad Ibnu-al-Hamam, Al-Tahriru fi Usul-i-al-Fiqah, (Cairo: 1351, A. H.), P. 399
23. Sindhi, Imam Waliyullah Ki Hikmat ka Ijmali Ta‘aruf”, in Al-Furkan (special number), Pp. 277-278


25. Qiyas, according to Shah Waliyullah, is the extension of the verdict of a principal injunction on the basis of a common factor of causality Pl. See Hujjatu Allah-al-Balighah, Pp. 129-131; For Further details see Mazhar Baqa, Usul-i-Fiqah. Pp. 425-455

26. Shah Waliyullah, Maktub-i-Madani, P. 2. Please see also Al-Furqan (Special Number), Pp.320-321 and Falsafah, Pp. 194-199