CONCLUSION

In the foregoing chapters, religious thought of Shah Wali-u Allah (b. 1114/1702) vis-a-vis its trends has been studied. Ordinarily, religious thought is defined as the human reflection and the interpretation of scriptural and Revealed knowledge that found its evolution right from the period of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and his Companions. Down the ages, the scholars and the elites of the Community developed it considerably under the diverse situations and conditions. Shah Wali-u Allah's religious thought, as studied in the context of the chequered development of Islamic thought, is characteristic of some specific trends and modes in it which can be described as theological and sufi trends, synthesis (tatbiq) of the fiqh disagreements and the exploration of ijtihad and taqlid.

In forming his religious thought, Shah Wali-u Allah is found using the mode and method of the theologians but his is the changed version of the paradigm and does not conform to the early theological schools (the Mu'tazilah and the Ash'ariah) strictly. He does not reject the dialectics and rationalism and takes them as the means to present his observations and formulations effectively yet he never believes in their superiority to the naqli (reported) principles and axioms of knowledge. In his religious thought such traits of his theological system are analysed by focusing on the conception of God, His attributes and the position of man. Wali-u Allah maintains that the idea or knowledge about God is innate in the human being and it is interrelated with his knowledge about the universals to live a civilized life. Wali-u Allah's system indicates the three sources of epistemology – the innate
consciousness about God, the pragmatic reason (*aqīli mīʿāshī*) and the revelatory or intuitive knowledge. The first makes man to realize the existence of God as well as the understanding about the universals and basic needs of life. The second is the particularisation of knowledge that directs the formation of a good and progressive society. The third source is intuitively acquired and as such called *anwāyait-i Rehmāni* (the kindness of God) where deeper relation between man and God is experienced through the special devotion and constant observance of Islamic prescriptions. The distinguished trait of Wali-u Allah’s theology is that there is hardly any impact of the Greek dialectics and disputation on it nor he seems to be swayed by the positions of the Mu'tazilah or the Asha'riah paradigms. It is inspired directly by the Qur'an and the Sunnah and amplified by his wide erudition and experience. In this system of theology he seems, sometimes, more efficacious and consistent than those of the classical scholars of Islamic history like Al-Ash'ari (260-324/872-935), Razi (d.602/1209) and Ghazali (d.505/1111).

Sufism forms an important trend in Shah Wali-u Allah’s thought and most of his writings are devoted to this subject. As seeking the basis of tasawwuf in *ahsān* and *tazakiyyah*, the Shah, on the one hand, approves this mode for understanding and experiencing Islamic way of life and, on the other hand, contributes distinguishedly to the development of sufi thought. Here his philosophy of tasawwuf, the review of its historical development and the reconciliation of the *wajūdi* and *shahīdi* concepts of tasawwuf are treated; and this concern of the Shah that has brought criticism on him from some of the modern scholars like Sayyid Abul 'A'la Mawdudi (d.1400/1979) and Maulana Wahid ud-Din Khan. Although the criticism of these two modern scholars has its own context yet the sufi
thought of Shah Wali-u Allah is not altogether insignificant. Living in a society dominated by the mystic philosophies of different religions and cults (Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Vedantism, Brahanamism and the Bakhti) the serious mind like that of the Shah could never ignore this reality of the time and comes out with his own philosophy of sufism representing Tawhid, devotion to ibadat and adherence to the Shari'ah as its basic principles. Since the contemporary philosophies and practices were more or less syncretic and the corrupted groups have emerged among the Muslims, Shah Wali-u Allah makes attempts to reform it and ensure its purity. His criticism of the astrayed groups of taswwuf, expounding its nature and states (maqamāt), revering the four orders of tasawwuf – Chistiyah, Naqshbandiyah, Qadriyah and Suhrawardiyyah – including the one (Naqashbandiyah) that he followed and his reconciliation of wajūdi and the shahūdi concepts of tasawwuf of Ibn-i Arabi (d.638/1240) and Shiekh Ahmad Sirhindi (1034/1625) is a landmark development in the sufi thought of Islam.

Fiqh disagreements and the place of ijtihad and taqlid which have emerged as the vital issues of Islamic thought, receive a serious response from Shah Wali-u Allah. It depicts his wide understanding of fiqh sciences (ulūm) both in the historical and technical perspectives. Wali-u Allah’s review of fiqh disagreements that took place among the Shahbah, the Tabi’un, the Taba Tabi’un and the popular madhāhib of fiqh brings out emphatically the fact that these disagreements are superficial and in the subsidiary rulings of the Shari’ah and whose emergence have been caused due to the different conditions of the times and the diverse mental set-ups and aptitudes of the scholars in the field. While examining the nature of the fiqh differences in its proper historical perspective, Wali-u Allah
explains the rationale and ethics of the fiqh methods, its groups and the schools. Here lies the Shah's synthesis (tablīq) of fiqh disagreements which he attempts at very seriously. Apart from its devising the theoretical frame-work of fiqh methodology the Shah's attempts at the synthesis of the fiqh differences leads to the obviation of the extremism and fanaticism among the Muslims in fara'ī (subsidiary) religious matters and conversely, inculcates in them positive tolerance and broader understanding. The attempt is, thus of far-reaching consequences for its devising an all-embracing and accommodative science of fiqh to cater the growing needs of the society.

Ijtihad and taqlīd, as explored by Shah Wali-u Allah in his writings considerably. An examination of his views on ijtihad shows that he follows largely the line of Imam-i Shafi'i in the classification of mujtahids of fiqh. His categorisation of the mujtahids into four kinds - mujtahid-i mutlaq (independent mujtahid), mujtahid-i muntasib (affiliated mujtahid), mujtahid fil madhab (mujtahid within a school of law) and mujtahid fil fatawa (mujtahid in pronouncements) is significant for elaborating the fiqh formulations. He does this by evaluating the methods and paradigms of the classical fuqaha of the popular madhāhib (the Hanfī, the Shafi'ī, the Malikī and the Hanbali). This attempt of the Shah highlights the productivity and adaptability of the Shari'ah in the changing situations and marks a tremendous development in the revivalistic thought of Islam after Ibn Taymiyyah (d.728/1327) and its extensive treatment is seen in a number modern scholars of the Muslim world. Among them include Muhammad Abduh (1266-1323/1849-1905), Muhammad Rashid Rada (1282-1354/1865-1935), Yusuf al-Qarzawi, Sayyid Abul A'la Mawdudi (d.1400/1979) and Maulana Taqi Amini (d.1412/1991).
Wali-u Allah's approach to taqlid, the contentious issue of Muslim history, is treated analytically. While examining it in the context of the various scholars' views on the subject, it is brought out that the two groups have found their emergence in the history – one of them favours the practice of taqlid and the other disallows it. Wali-u Allah is found among the group that justifies taqlid and allows it under certain conditions. The arguments put forth by him in favour of taqlid are based on the Qur'an and the Sunnah and also touch upon its (taqlid) general acceptance (concensus) by the Ummah. Like his classification of ijthād, he makes also categorisation of taqlid into taqlid-i mahz, taqlid of the muhtabir-i madhab and taqlid of mujtahid fil madhab that marks his broader understanding and moderate approach to the subject and justifies its practice under exigencies and circumstances of the times. Wali-u Allah's conforming to taqlid is under confinements and pre-requisites so that the process of ijthād would not be affected which is the real substance for intellectual as well as social advancement of the society.

The various trends in Shah Wali-u Allah's religious thought, modeled on his profundity of vision and intellectual versatility are remarkable for propounding rationale and efficacy of religious axioms, principles and practices vis-a-vis its sciences (ulūm). By responding to the medieval developments of Islamic history and anticipating the challenges of the new age, Wali-u Allah's thought serves as a bridge between 'medieval' and the 'modern' developments. This charisma of his thought has become a source of inspiration in various ways to the later Muslim thinkers of the Indian subcontinent like Sir Syed Ahmad Khan (1232-1316/1817-1898), Dr. Muhammad Iqbal (1293-1357/1876-1938), Mawlawna Ubiad Ullah Sindhi (b.1289/1872) and Sayyid Abul A'la Mawdudui (d.1400/1979) and the
reform movements like the Deoband Movement, the Ahl-e Hadith Movement and the Tablig Movement. Although the Shah has not shown a direct response to the intellectual and philosophical developments of the European renaissance that took place during his time, his status of thought is hardly affected by disregarding this phenomenon because it has good bearings on the intellectual modernism of Islam which is discernible in the writings of his followers and interpreters.