CHAPTER V
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Conclusion

The beginning of the eighteenth century A.D., the period in which Shah Waliullah lived, was a period of upheaval and convulsion. Bloodshed, Violence, breakdown of may healthy Traditions were the signs of the degradation of the society. The morals of the people had reached their lowest ebb. The imported beautiful salve girls beguiled the idle hours of the rich and the nobles. People were addicted to drinking, gambling and music. The rich who lived in extreme luxury presented a terrible contrast to the miseries of the poor masses. Shah Waliullah has given the true picture of the society in his letters and addresses to various groups of the society drawing their attention to the evils of their day to day life. On the political scene the Marathas were coming up as a powerful military force and they were active to fish in the troubled water. Nadir Shah of Persia ruthlessly massacred the peace loving population of Delhi in the year 1739 A. D., so soon after the death of Aurangzeh, the great. A series of disasters had befallen the nation, which culminated in the invasion of Ahmed Shah Abdali in the year 1761 A.D. who completely destroyed the rising Maratha power.

Shah Waliullah was a witness to all the events. There was a political chaos and intellectual stagnation all over, with the result that people had
ceased to think about the problems of the society. They felt secure in the illusion that the conditions will improve and the values which had lost their utility in practice will remain valid for all time to come. There were a number of sects and schools of thought who claimed to be the only legitimate exponent of Islam. One was simply baffled by the diversely of the religious conceptions prevailing among the Fughas of the period. The view, as to what Islam is, was not the same with the Sunni Ulama, Ithna Ashbna. Shias, Sufis, not to mention so many other lessor schools of thought. In short the Shariat in its original form was removed from the day to day endeavours of the people; yet they claimed to be the torch bearers of Islam which was hypocritical on their part.

These were the conditions when Shah Waliullah appeared on the scene. He came with a resolve to plan a revolution by shattering the whole into pieces as he says: (1)

Shah Waliullah made a new start in terms of Islamic programme of giving a fresh form of positive thinking by freeing the society from its position of passive camp followers of the past. He gave a call to give up reliance on merely inherited conventions and to return to the realities of the Quran and the Sunnah. He stressed the need to restore the Shariah to the purity of its origin, Socially, politically and ethically as if he realized that the world was moving towards the days of reason and Islam had to play the key role in shaping the destiny of the world. He knew too well that the edifice of Islam built on the foundation of conventions of traditional values would not stand the test of time. He therefore, stressed the point that the nation of good and evil must from the Quran the Sunnah.

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Shah Waliullah was basically a philosopher, an original thinker destined to reform the corrupt society and to give this world a new order. He did not belong to the category of philosophers like Dr. Iqbal, who practiced contemplation in order to preach action. Nor was he like Tagore and others who preached contemplation while practicing action, not necessary in conformity with their own preaching. Shah Waliullah was preaching and practicing both -, action and contemplation. He was a profound philosopher who applied his philosophy of education to the system that he introduced in institution, Madrasah Rahimia of Delhi, which was the centre of all his activities, political, social and educational. Like Socrates he brought philosophy down from the clouds to dwell among man, and like Plato he has married philosophy and education. He regarded philosophy as primarily practical and not contemplative.

He was an active motivated thinker, a profound scholar, deeply involved in the pursuit of knowledge, a man of monumental strength, yet he was captivatingly human. Both by his original thinking and untiring constructive efforts, he has won for himself an abiding recognition as a thinker and a scholar of unfailing grace.

During the days of Shah Waliullah the condition of education was not different from the prevailing political and social condition as the corrupt society had influenced the outlook of the people on life, which in turn influenced the educational thought of the society, for the philosophy of education is essentially a philosophy of life.

Before discussing in some detail Shah Waliullah’s contribution to the Islamic education movement in India, let us glance back over the centuries to its root and its development. To begin with the first phase of
the Muslim education in India takes its roots in the 7th century Hijri which extends to the 9th the century Hijri. The pattern in the same or akin to Darse Nizamia, which was generally prevalent in the Muslim world.

The following courses of study were prescribed:

1. Fiqh
2. Usul-e-Fiqh
3. Iatsir
4. Tasawwuf
5. Hadith
6. Adab
7. Logic
8. Kalam

The second phase begins from the end of 9th century Hijri in which Shaikh Abdullah and Sahikh Azizullah played a prominent role in promoting the cause of education by establishing renowned centres of learning in Delhi and Samba respectively. It was on account of their ceaseless efforts that the standard of education was raised. They gave new dimension to the system under the patronage of Sikander Lodhi who would himself attend their lectures quietly. It was under them that a new pattern was involved. Yet the study of Hadith remained neglected.

The period under review covers the period prior to Shah Waliullah’s times, when religious tings gave reverence and dignity to both teaching and learning. Every one who cared for learning did not go without it. Students flocked to the centres of learning from distant places. The practice of
journey from one country to another in quest of knowledge was not without its social, culture and political benefits.

It may be noted that the system in those days did not provide for the construction of school buildings, nor did the community as such come forward to manage the affairs of the educational institution. No doubt there are exceptions to this rule and the school building of Madrasai Rahimia is a testimony to this, as the building was donated by the Royal Court. Generally mosques and houses of the nobles served the purpose. Even in this corrupt society a sort of compulsory school education system prevailed. Everybody recognized the need and efficiency of education. Students had a great veneration for their teachers and likewise, teachers had great affection for their students.

Boys were obliged to join schools at an early age of five or six and girls were not absent in the primary classes. In the absence of data at our disposal it is difficult to give accurate percentage of literacy in those days, but we can say with confidence that an overwhelming majority of the Muslim population was literate and even a small village with Muslim population was not without a Madrasa.

As regards the courses of study during the early Mughal period, Logic, Philosophy and other secular sciences were the chief subjects. The system was more or less on the lines of Darse Nizamia.

The syllabus in different subjects was as follows:

**LOGIC:**

1. Sughra
2. Kubra
| 3.       | Aesaghoji          | 4.       | Qala Agul          |
| 7.       | Mirqat             | 8.       | Tahdhil            |
| 9.       | Sharhi Tahdhib     | 10.      | Qutbi              |
| 11.      | Mir Qutbi          | 12.      | Sullam             |
| 15.      | Qazi Mubarak       | 16.      | Sharhe Sullam      |
| 17.      | Sharhi Matalse Khalis |

**PHILOSOPHY:**

1. Hadae Saidiya
2. Maidhi
3. Sadra
4. Shams – e – Bazighah
5. Sharh e Hidak Al Hikmah by Khairabadi
6. Sharh e – Isharat
7. Shifa

**ASTRONOMY:**

1. Qaushj iyah
2. Tasrih
3. Bharh – e – Chaghmini
4. Tadhkirah by Pusi
5. Bist Bab

**ARITHMETIC:**

1. Uqlida
2. Madadi Al Hisab
PRINCIPES OF FIOAH:
1. Usul - e - Shashi
2. Husami
3. Nuru Al - Anwaar
4. Tawdih Ma Talwih
5. Musallam

DOGMATIC THEOLOGY:
1. Sharhe - Aqaed - at Nasafi
2. Sharhe Aqaed - al - Jalali
3. Sharhe Tajreed Qawshji
4. Hawashi Shar - e - Tajrid

In addition to the list above Maulana Sayyed Manazer Ahsan Gilani, has given a list of books which were included in the courses of study during the period, which is included in his book "Himdustan Main Musalmanun Ka Nizami Talim Wa Tarbiyal (Vol. 1 P. 182)

The time had come when education had reached the frontiers, which confined it in centuries old traditions. Shah Waliullah started with the task of giving new dimensions to education. He wrote exhaustively on the subject and as his worthily son Shah Rafiuddin (D 1249 A.H.) claims in his book Kitabul Aghan (كتاب الاحسان ) 'Nobody ever wrote so extensively on the subject as his father did.'

Shah Waliullah develops his philosophy of education with a well thought out philosophy of life. He considers ideal society and a just
economic order interdependent and seeks to procure for every individual such economic conditions under which he gets a fair chance of developing what is best in him, thereby making his characteristic contribution to the advancement of an ideal society.

The Real aim of Education

In the book, "Modern education its aims and methods" T. Raymont says: "All the way through the history of the civilized man the quest of a comprehensive definition of the real aim of education had proved alluring and not less puzzling than alluring." Pestalozzi considers education a process of development or unfolding from within. By others it is variously conceived – as discipline, as formation from without, as reconstruction of experience, as development of personality, as culture and so on. According to Shah Waliullah education is a 'training eternal bliss.' He quotes Sadi Shirazi (D. 691 A.H.) in this context who says:

"The knowledge which does not lead to eternal truth is but ignorance in the garb of knowledge."

Again Shah Waliullah says:

\[\text{ولیَّ الْعَلَمِ اِمْرَأَ اَنْسٍ وَتَفْقِيِّ وَكَلِّمَةَ عَنْدَاللهِ اَزْيَلَ بْنِيَثً}\]

\[\text{مِنَ ماَ الْفُصُّ الْغُفُورُ الْلَّبِّرَ} \]

1. Shah Waliullah Anfasal – Arifin
"Knowledge is not something that may fade away or that may come to thought. It is eternal and therefore ever lasting. Whosoever achieves this, it is for him a great achievement.

He quotes Rumi (606 672 A.H.) to elucidate his point further who says: (1)

ٌ علم رآ برقل زنی ما رئی لورد

"Knowledge which is acquired for material gain is a poisonous snake, while knowledge acquired for the enlightenment of innerself is the true friend of man."

Shah Waliullah’s educational thought has its roots in the Quran and Hadith and therefore his Philosophy of education is closely linked with the thoughts of his predecessors like Iman Ghazali and Ibn Khaladun. Yet his treatment of the subject has its own novelty.

Taking the clue from the Quran and the saying of the Holy prophet (peace be on him) he proceeded with the idea of creating an ideal society. He is not in favour of delegating the task of producing a perfect individual to schools and colleges while leaving the society to go its own way. We learn from his Hujjatullah – Balighah the notion of essential harmony between the constitution of society and an individual soul, which is the central thought of his momentous work. Some educationalist assert that
neither the individual nor the society can be the true criterion of the educative process.

Shah Waliullah being a mystic thinker draws his inspiration from the Quran and the Hadith and believes in the ontological faith. (1)

\[ \text{الله و إنا إليه راجعون} \]

"We came from Allah and to Him we will return."

This is an answer to the enquiry as to the ultimate end of man.

No doubt man’s ultimate end is Allah and the perfection of an individual and his societies are only means to that end.

It is interesting to note that Shah Waliullah gave psychological bias to education long before Rousseau and Pestalozzi. He opens with the saying of the prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) (2)

\[ \text{كان مولوداً على الفطرة فأولئك بشروا أنه أو بشروا أنه أو نعيمته} \]

"Every child is born in the state of conformity to the natural constitution with which he is created in his mother’s womb and if his parents are Jews they make him a Jew, if they are Christians they make him a Christian and if they are Magians they make him a Magian.

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1. Al-Quran, 2:156
2. Shah Waliullah - "Hujjatullah - al-Balighah" Vol 1
It is evident from the Hadith that every child is born in original purity. It is his parents who make him what they like. The term parents can logically be extended to the general environment – family life, school, society etc. by which the early development of a child is determined.

In fact Shah Waliullah applied the theory of essential goodness of a child to the educational psychology at a time when his contemporaries in Europe were groping in the dark along the original sin lines.

Another novel contribution to the educational psychology is his theory of individual differences based on the relative strength of the two urges in an individual namely the angelic urge (الغُرْرَةُ العُلْمِيّةُ) and the animal urge (الغُرْرَةُ الْبَيْسَىُ). Shah Waliullah envelops his philosophy of education with a well thought out philosophy of life. He considers an ideal society and a just economic order as interdependent and he seeks to secure for every individual such economic conditions under which every individual gets a fair chance of developing what is best in him, thereby making him capable of contributing to the advancement of an ideal society.

In short Shah Waliullah gave education a system, a philosophy and a psychological bias. Consequently in his institution he made drastic change in the courses of study giving each subject its required due share of course, laying emphasis on the study of Hadith. But for his efforts in the study of Hadith literature would not have regained the position it had lost so long.

As regard the teaching method suggested by him Shah Waliullah laid down
separate methods for teaching of lower and higher standard, recommending
lecture method only to higher classes. He prescribed the school etiquette
and rules governing the relation between the teacher and the taught also the
details of which are given in his book Anfasul Arifeen (انفاس العريفین)
Al Tathimat Al- Ilahiyyah (المتممات الهوية)
and Risalai Fani Danishmandi (رسائل الفنی دانشمندی)

Shah Waliullah was the first to depart from the old method firstly by
reversing the order of the prescribed books in favour of books on Islamic
studies, which he considered more useful. Moreover, he suggested reforms
with regard to the method of teaching.

He was not in favour of too much stress being laid on grammar,
Rhetorics and philology while teaching the Holy Quran. Again he discarded
the practice of absorbing the energy of the student in reading a series of
commentaries of the Holy Quran, at the cost of the necessary attention to be
paid to the study of the original text, independent of these commentaries. In
his opinion this practice deprived the student of his independent thinki:
which is the prime concern of every system of education. In fact Shah
Waliullah laid more stress on the study of the original text without the help
of the commentaries. He translated the Holy Quran into Persian, which,
according to Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi, is the first Persian translation of
the Holy Book.

Shah Waliullah’s suggestions in respect of the teaching are found in his
works as mentioned above. The following are his main suggestions in this
regard:

1. Reading of the lesson with proper articulation;
2. "Meaning of the difficult words;
3. Pointing out and solving grammatical difficulties if any;
4. The passage is to be translated into the mother tongue of the student.
5. The questions and answers should be pointed.
6. The teacher should guard himself against teaching anything which is beyond the comprehension of the student.
7. The teacher should guard his tongue against reproachful language.
8. In lectures lucidity, clarity and precision should be the guiding principles.
9. References of the books are to be given.
10. The teacher should be very clear while asking questions and eliciting answer from the students.
11. He should guard himself against using such words, sentences and illustrations that is confusing.
12. The student should be encouraged to discuss the subjects with his teacher and should have the right to differ from him (courteously).

It is surprising to note that Shah Waliullah’s Philosophy of life, which comprises his philosophy of education, did not bring about the intended revolution in all spheres of life, nor could it at least change the face of the traditional Islamic education. The reason is that, firstly the community lost the political power completely after enjoying it for centuries. Their struggle for emancipation failed at every stage. One of the results was their intellectual stagnation. Secondly the experience is that innovation concepts always face difficulties as they run into resistance conscious or unconscious from the traditionalists, it is therefore no wonder that his thoughts on education inspired only his immediate successors and
after the complete distraction of Muslim rule in India the community sunk into intellectual lethargy. A subdued cry for a change in the traditional system of Islamic education is sometimes heard. But that is not enough to implement the educational programme worked out by Shah Waliullah.