LIFE OF
SHAH WALIYULLAH

By
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PREFACE

Ahmad b 'Abd-ur-Rahim, popularly known as Waliyullah, was born in A.D. 1702 in a small village named Pulih in the Muzaffarnagar district, United Provinces (India), and died in Delhi in A.D. 1763. A research on his teachings under the title *Teachings of Shih Waliyullah* by the present author has already been published in the Sindhi, Urdu and English languages.

The late Dr S.M. Ikram who had founded the Shah Waliyullah Academy had once earnestly requested the present writer in one of the Academy's meetings for the preparation of a book on the life of Shah Waliyullah. Shaikh Muhammad Ashraf, the present publisher, had also made repeated requests to this author for the same work when the research mentioned above was in his press for publication. The author, however, had politely declined to undertake that work at that time. Now when he has become free from translating some important works of Shah Waliyullah into the Sindhi and English languages, he himself felt the necessity of writing on the life of Shah Waliyullah.

The present work is also a research in which the information given about his life is mainly gathered from his writings. What chiefly characterises it is the collection of data in relation to the dates of some of his compositions. This research was first prepared in the Sindhi language and published by the Shah Waliyullah Academy, Hyderabad, in 1973. It is hoped its English version with a few additions will largely meet the requirements of the readers in this direction.

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Chapter I

His Birth, Growth, Lineage and Education

Quṭb-ud-Din Ahmad b. ‘Abd-ur-Rahım, generally known as Wali‘yullāh, was born at the break of dawn on Wednesday, 4 Shawwāl 1114/1702 in the vicinity of Delhi. Some astrologers, through calculations based on their observation of the conjunction of the stars, had drawn the conclusion that the year of his birth was auspicious and his horoscope was at the height of its perfection.

Shāh Wālī‘yullāh himself was of opinion that the stars do influence the life of man on earth to some extent, but he at the same time states that the real power behind it is the Almighty God. The fact cannot, however, be denied that changes in the atmosphere caused by the movement of the heavenly bodies affect some aspects of the life of the earthly creatures. God has placed certain properties in them which are to appear and leave their effect anyhow. For example, the sun is hot and the effect of its heat in the earth is visible. It has come in the Tradition that when the Pleiades appear, the impending calamity is averted.

Besides, some of his friends worked out, by the Abjad method, the name ‘Alim-ud-Din as the date of his birth. His parents as well as many other pious persons had dreamt, before and after his birth, some signs indicative of his appearance and rise to eminence.

Shāh Wālī‘yullāh narrates that one day his father told him that while he was yet unborn, a poor woman came to him and begged for a loaf of bread. He gave her a half of it. Thereupon

2. Ḥṣayatul-Allāh Al-Balīghah, I, 100; Al-Tashī‘ul-Tabī‘iyah, I, 30; II, 147.
3. Al-Jus‘ul-Latif. By the Abjad method of calculation, the year of his birth comes to 1115 which is very near to the original one.
he (Shāh Waliyullāh) said to him that it was not fair that one who had asked for it in the name of God should be given only a halaf of it. Hearing this from him, he passed on to her the remaining half as well.4

Narrating further he says that one night when his parents had finished their Tahajjud prayer (prayer repeated during the night), raised their hands for invocation (Du’ā), to their surprise, they saw two more hands raised between them for invocation. When he was seven years old, he also one night joined his parents in that prayer. After the prayer was over, he raised his hands. Seeing this his father exclaimed that these were the very hands which he had once seen raised for invocation before when his son was yet to be born.5

Shāh Muḥammad Ṭabī‘āṭī ᴾshaqīq made a collection of the merits (Manāẓīb) of Shāh Waliyullāh and of the true dreams his friends had seen in connection with his birth, and named that collection al-Qaul al-Jamīl Fi Manāẓīb-i-Wali. This collection is not traceable and seems to have been lost.6

He was very anxious to collect the data about his spiritual guide from wherever it was available. In this respect, he wrote to Sayyid Abū Sa‘īd requesting him to pass on all the letters of his master which he had addressed to him.7

He has mentioned in that collection a statement of Shāh Waliyullāh to the effect that, all the sons he had been blessed with would live a virtuous life. Two more sons would be born who would be linked with him through their mother’s side.

5. Anfās-ul-‘Arifin, p. 64.
7. See article by Maulāna Naṣīm Fa‘īl Amrohawi in the July 1965 issue of Al-Raḥim, a monthly journal published by Shāh Waliyullāh Academy, Hyderabad. Here below is given a relevant passage of the letter of Shāh Muḥammad Ṭabī‘āṭī ᴾshaqīq which he wrote to Abū Sa‘īd al-Ḥasan al-Baṣarī: 8

They, however, would migrate to the Holy Cities and stay there serving Islam and the community. Nawāb Ṣiddiq Ḥasan Khān, in reference to that statement, says that by those two sons were meant the two sons of the daughter of Shāh Ṭabī‘ul-‘Āzīz. They were Maulāna Muḥammad Ṭabī‘ul-‘Āzīz and Maulāna Muḥammad Ya‘qūb who had left for the Ḥaramain where they spent their life in the study and teaching of the Tradition.8

Shāh Waliyullāh’s maternal grandfather states that when his daughter’s son (Shāh Waliyullāh) was born he once took him in his lap. In consequence, he felt that his relation to God had increased considerably. He found himself dyed with the dye of that relation and started progressing steadily in that state of his relation to God.9

The name Waliyullāh was given to him by his father most probably because of his having perceived in him the manifest signs of his friendship with God. At one place, Shāh Waliyullāh states that by his name Waliyullāh is meant a person for whose outward and inward God had become responsible. He further states that his having been given such a name had the approval of even heavenly causes. Thus, he was the effect of those causes.10

His other name is Quṭb-ud-Dīn Aḥmad. The cause of giving this name to him was that when once his father paid a visit to the shrine of Quṭb-ud-Dīn Aḥmad Bakhṭīyār Kākī, his spirit appeared to him and, while giving him the good news of the birth of a son, advised him to name him after him. When he was born, this advice escaped the memory of his father. After some days when he remembered the words of Bakhṭīyār Kākī, he gave him that name as well. This is the reason why in the beginning of his books he always mentions his name as Aḥmad b. Ṭabī‘ul-‘Āzīz. 

9. Tājhimāt, II, 179. Shāh Muḥammad of Pulth was his maternal grandfather.
10. Ibid., II, 148, 154.
Rahim known as Wafiyullah.\textsuperscript{11}

It may be remembered that it was in the sixtieth year of his life that it was revealed to Shaykh 'Abd-ur-Rahim that a son would be born to him who was destined to reach a high rank and achieve true renown. As time passed the thought of a second marriage occurred to his mind. When Shaykh Muhammad came to know of that, he eagerly wished that it could be his daughter to be blessed with such a child. As soon as the news of his second marriage at this advanced age spread, the people of the town began to criticise him in contempt. When Shaykh 'Abd-ur-Rahim heard of their talking ill of him, he made it clear to them that he would live for some years to come and some male children would be born to him. This is what actually happened. He was blessed with two sons from his second wife, one was named Wafiyullah and the other Ahiullah. He survived for seventeen years after that marriage. His son Salah-ud-Din was, however, born to him from his first wife.\textsuperscript{12}

Shah Wafiyullah's lineage is traced to Hadrat Umar by father's side and to Hadrat Ali by mother's side. This is the reason why he in the beginning of some of his works mentions his name as Ahmad b. 'Abd-ur-Rahim al-Umar.\textsuperscript{13}

Shaykh Shams-ud-Din Muffli was the first person from his forefathers who came to India and stayed in Ruhtak. Those were the times of the beginning of the Islamic government in the sub-continent. The town Ruhtak, situated between Harxi and Delhi.

\textsuperscript{11} Anfas-ul-‘Arifin, pp. 45-46; Tafhimat, II, 154.

\textsuperscript{12} Anfas-ul-‘Arifin, pp. 63-64. [Shaykh Muhammad b. Muhammad Abul-Faḍl Pulthi was a mystic and a man of learning. He studied under the scholars of Naurūz, such as, Shahīk Abū Riḍa Muḥammad, and then under his brother Shaykh 'Abd-ur-Rahim. He died on 8 Jumād-ul-Ukhra 1125. Aḥlūlī was a great divine and a learned person. Some of his works are: Tafsir-ul-Qur’an ‘alā Sahih-ul-Imām; Muḥtaṣar fil-Aḥd wa-Sulh al-Tib; Muḥtaṣar fil-Fiqh; Muḥtaṣar Hidayat-ul-Fiqh. Shah Wafiyullah has mentioned the name of his brother in one of his letters addressed to Mirza Mahār Jān Jānān, See Nuzul-ul-Khadīṣīn, Vol. VI: Kalimāt-i Ta’īyibāt, p. 159.]

\textsuperscript{13} Anfas-ul-‘Arifin, p. 38; al-‘Imād Fi Ma‘thīr-il-Ajād.

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was in those days very populous and prosperous, but with the passage of time it lost its glory, and, at present, is no more heard of. It was in existence during the lifetime of Shaykh 'Abd-ur-Rahim who once visited it, of which a reference is found in Anfas-ul-‘Arifin, where the life account of his elder brother, Shaykh Aḥbū Riḍá Muḥammad, is given. Its surrounding habitations were destroyed by Durg Das in those days.\textsuperscript{14} He descended from the noble Qurashi family. Islam began to spread in the country slowly and gradually through his efforts.\textsuperscript{15}

Shah Wafiyullah was born, as has been mentioned before, in a small village named Pulthi. This village had remained a centre of learning and a rendezvous of the scholars for many years. While giving an account of the life of his maternal grandfather Shaykh Muḥammad Pulthi, he has made a mention of this village in particular. There he writes that once robbers attacked their village and spread terror among the inhabitants. Their attacks were frequent and every time they returned laden with loot and plunder. Seeing this he turned to God with prayer and his prayer was accepted. This was how the danger was averted.\textsuperscript{16}

Shah Wafiyullah was still a child when the signs of his brilliant future became visible in him. He was fair of face and had good features. His habits were good and pleasing. He disliked show and artificiality. By nature and behaviour he looked different from common children. His father paid proper attention to his training and education. When he was five years old, he was admitted in the primary school of his village. At the age of seven years, he was prepared for offering prayer five times a day and made ready to keep the fasts of the month of Ramdān. His circumcission also took place in that very year. Giving his own

\textsuperscript{14} Anfas-ul-‘Arifin, pp. 48, 92, 150:

\textsuperscript{15} Al-‘Imād Fi Ma‘thīr-il-Ajād.

\textsuperscript{16} Tafhimat, II, 152; Anfas-ul-‘Arifin, p. 176.
account, he further states that, so far as he remembers, he had finished the reading of the Holy Qur’ān by that time; and bad, besides, started reading some books and treatises on religion written in Persian.\textsuperscript{17} 

He relates that one day he went with his friends to a garden for entertainment. On return, his father asked him as to what work he had done that day which might have profited him here and in the Hereafter. He also advised him to be careful to see that no day passed but that he had done some act of virtue and goodness therein. He was so much impressed by these words of his father, he says, that he made up his mind to do one or the other good work every day which might benefit him in both the worlds.\textsuperscript{18}

Writing further he says that when he became ten years old he finished Shari‘ah Mulla Jama‘. At the age of fifteen, he was married to the daughter of his maternal uncle, Shaikh ‘Ubaidullah b. Muhammad Pulthil. When the parents of the daughter desired to postpone the marriage because of the lack of means to meet the marriage expenses, his father wrote to them that the hurry carried a deep secret behind. Thus, it should take place without any delay. That secret became disclosed after some time. Soon after the marriage, the mother of the girl passed away. Soon after her death, her maternal grandmother also died. Her death was immediately followed by the death of Shaikh Fakhr-ul-‘Alam, the son of his paternal uncle, Shaikh Abū Riḍā Muhammad. After this the mother of his elder brother, Shaikh Shalâb-ud-Din, also expired. Hardly some time passed after the death of these relatives that his father fell ill and died. Seeing all these happenings it became known to all that if this marriage had not taken place at that time, then there was hardly any possibility of its taking place in the near future.\textsuperscript{19}

In his autobiography Shāh Waliyullāh writes that when he reached the age of fifteen he swore an oath of allegiance (Bai‘ah) at the hands of his father. He then engaged himself actively in observing the Sufi practices as were prescribed by the Naqshbandi Order in particular. In a very short time, he acquired the qualifications required for following the path of Sufis. The terms and conditions needed for enlisting one for receiving and wearing the Sufi rug (khīrāgah) were duly fulfilled by him both in theory and practice. In short, he completed the course of all the sciences then current. It appears from this that he by that time had shifted to Delhi where he used to attend regularly the lectures delivered by his father on the exegesis of the Qur’ān in his Madrassah.\textsuperscript{20}

Within fifteen years Shāh Waliyullāh acquired enough knowledge from his father who was very kind and affectionate to him. He had taught him many wonderful sciences (Ma‘ārif). One day, a little before his death, he told him that he eagerly wished to pour into his heart all the knowledge he possessed at once. This is the reason why Shāh Waliyullāh had taken pains and suffered hardships for the acquisition of knowledge. His anxiety all the time had been to gain proficiency in religious sciences. In this respect, he states that when he was born his maternal grandfather turned towards him with particular attention, with the result that he came to know of the real position he was to achieve one day.\textsuperscript{21}

Shāh Waliyullāh had only one son named Muḥammad from his first wife. It is for this reason that he was also called Abū Muḥammad. There are varying reports about his life, but, it seems, he died at a young age and left no issue behind. Probably in reference to him, he has mentioned somewhere that once one of his children fell ill and he on that account was very much worried. One day while offering the midday prayer he saw death descend-

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{17} \textit{Al-Juz‘-ul-Lahif; al-Khawār al-Kāthir}, p. 71. 
\textsuperscript{18} \textit{Anṣār-ul-‘Arisfīn}, p. 64. 
\textsuperscript{19} \textit{Al-Juz‘-ul-Lahif}. 
\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., Naqshband, Muḥammad b. Muḥammad Bahā’-ud-Din al-Bukhārī (717-791/1317-1389), was the founder of the Naqshbandī Order. His name, which signifies “Painter” is interpreted as “drawing incomparable pictures of the Divine Science” or, more mystically, as “holding the form of real perfection in the heart.”. 
\textsuperscript{21} \textit{Anṣār-ul-‘Arisfīn}, pp. 52-53; \textit{Tafhimāt}, II, 82.
\end{footnotesize}
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before all his three elder brothers, was a man of learning and piety. Shah Ismail Shahid was his son who fell a martyr at Bālkot in 1246/1831 in his fight against the Sikhs.

Shah Waliullah received the education of all the sciences in vogue from his father. He had finished the study of Mishkat during that period of fifteen years. Only a part of it relating to “Kitab-ul-Bait” up to “Kitab-ul-Adab” remained unfinished. When this much from the course was done, he was permitted to teach Mishkat.

His father engaged him in the study of Tasir Baidawi. When he finished a part of it, he was so much pleased that he arranged a grand feast to which all were invited, common as well as special.

It was indeed a great honour for him (Shah Waliullah) to receive permission from his father to teach Tasir Baidawi to others. In this way, the formal ceremony of his Dasturbandi became complete.

Under the guidance of his father he finished Sahih Bukhari from beginning up to “Kitab-ut-Taharat”. Similarly, he read and studied Shama'il-ul-Nabi completely with him in the presence of his students. In exegesis he studied a part of Baidawi and a portion of Tasir Madarak.


25. Al-Juz-ul-Latif, Dasturbandi is a ceremony in which the teacher puts a turban on the head of his student who has finished the prescribed course of study.

26. ‘Abdullah b. ‘Umar al-Baidawi was a celebrated commentator of the Holy Qur’an. He died in 685/1282. His chief work ‘Asrar-ul-Tanbih wa Asrar-ul-Tawil’ was based on Ruhshāf of Zamakhshari but considerably amplified from other sources. It is used as a text-book in the Islamic schools and, therefore, many scholars have written super-commentaries on it for the benefit of their pupils.

Shama’il-ul-Nabi is written by Imam Abū ‘Isā Muhammad Tirmidhi. He is the author of one of the canonical collections of Traditions. His Shama’il is the collection of Traditions concerning the person and the character of the Holy Prophet. He died in 279/892.

The writer of Madarak-ul-Tanbih wa Haqiqat-ul-Tawil is Haider-ul-Din ‘Abdullah b. Ahmad b. Mahmud, Abu-Barakat Nasafi. He was an important Nasafi legist and theologian. He died in 710/1310. His tasvir is known as Tasir-i-Nasafi.

... and from among his students, it is said, “Abd Allah b. Muhammad b. Nazr-ul-Gnāv, who was a man of learning and piety, and his students were also such. He was the author of Shama’il-ul-Nabi, the collection of Traditions concerning the person and the character of the Holy Prophet. He died in 279/892.

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22. Husayn ilah, 1, 66:

23. Refer to article published in the May 1966 issue of Al-Rahim. Here extracts are given from the book Faqih-ul-Istiliykh written by ‘Abdur-Rahim Dīlā’ī.

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He was blessed with four sons and one daughter named Amatul-Qazwini, from his second wife whom he married after the death of his first wife. Her name was Bi-Irādah and she was the daughter of Sayyid Thānūlālā of the village Sonipat which is at a distance of some forty miles to the west of Delhi. His daughter was given in marriage to Maulawi Muhammad Fāiq son of Maulawi Muhammad ‘Ashiq, son of Shāh ‘Abdulī, son of Shaikh Muhammad of Pūl. His four sons were Shāh ‘Abd-ul-Qādir, after whom came Shāh ‘Abd-ul-Ghani.

23. Shāh ‘Abd-ul-Qādir was born in 1159/1746 and died at the age of seventy-nine in 1238/1823. He faithfully carried the mission of his father and rendered invaluable service in promoting the cause of Islam. His works are of great importance. One of them is his commentary on the first and one-fourth of the second and last two pārsāhs of the Qur’ān. Ujjvalah-i-Nāqah, Tuhfah-i-Ilnā, ‘Asbāriyāth and Busrān-ul-Muhammadīn are some to be cited from the list of his books. A small treatise entitled Asur-ul-Maḥbubat written by Shāh Rafter-Din is very important in the sense that only Fārābī and Ibn Sīnā had written on this subject. He in that treatise has shown that it is love which pervades and rules all the existing things. He was born in 1163/1749 and died in 1233/1818 at the age of seventy. His other notable works are the literal translation of the Qur’ān into Urdu and Damghah-ul-Bātil. Shāh ‘Abd-ul-Qādir was born in 1167/1754 and died in 1230/1815 when he was sixty-three years old. His celebrated work is the Urdu translation of the Holy Qur’ān with very useful brief commentary notes here and there known as Mīdīth-ul-Qur’ān. Shāh ‘Abd-ul-Ghani, who died at an early age...
The great favour he was blessed with was, he says, his going regularly to the Madrasah established by his father for the teaching of the Holy Qur'an. There he used to receive useful instructions from him which greatly helped him towards understanding the meanings of the Holy Qur'an, the occasion of the revelation of its verses and the way of referring the different commentaries. Then, in privacy, he was seriously thinking over them, and by so doing, he achieved a great success. 27

In jurisprudence (Fiqh), he nearly finished the study of Sharh i-Wiqāyah and Hidāyah. 28

In the principles of jurisprudence, he read Husām, Tawḍīḥ and Talwīḥ. 29

In logic, he studied the whole of Sharḥ-i-Shansiyāh and a portion from Sharḥ-i-Mujtali'. 30

In scholasticism he finished Sharḥ-i-'Aqā'id completely and some portion from Khayāli and Sharḥ-i-Mawāqīf. 31

30. The original name of this book is Tāhir-ul-Qanawāt-Il-Manjīyāh Fī Sharḥ-i-Riṣālat-Il-Shamsiyāh and is known by the name of ar-Riṣālat-ul-Qаbīyāh. The author of ar-Riṣālat-ul-Shamsiyāh Bil-Gaḍar-ul-Manjīyāh is Najm-ud-Dīn al-Kātibī. He died in 682/1276.

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In Sulāk (Mysticism) he read a part of 'Awārif-ul-Ma'ārif, some treatises on the Naqshbandi Order and a portion from some books relating to it. 32

Regarding the science of realities ('Ilm-ul-Ḥaqqīq), Sharḥ-i-Rubūṭiyād, Lāvâ'ī, Muqaddimah-i-Sharḥ-i-Lama'āt and the Muqaddimah-i-Naqd-un-Nuṣṣāq remained under his study. 33

In connection with the properties of the Names (Attributes) of God and the verses, he went through the collection made by his father in relation to this science.

So far as the science of medicine is concerned, he read Mīṣr-ul-Qānūn. 34

In philosophy ('Ilm-ul-Ḥikmah), he studied Sharḥ-i-Hidāyat-ul-Ḥikmah and some literature relating to that science. 35

Concerning grammar he read Kāfīyah and the commentary of Mallā Ṣāmī on it. 36

In the science of the theory of literary style, he read a major part of Mutanawwul and that portion of Mukhtāsarr-ul-Ma'ānī which contained marginal notes by Mallāzāh. 37

In geometry and arithmetic, he went through some relevant small books.

32. 'Awārif-ul-Ma'ārif is the work of Shihāb-ud-Dīn Suhrāwardī. He died in 631/1234.
33. The author of Rubūṭiyād and Lāvâ'ī is Mālibān Nūr-ud-Dīn ʿAbdur-rahmān Jāmī. He died in 917/1514. The author of Lāvâ'ī is Fakhr-ud-Dīn Ṣaqrī. The author of Nāqīd-un-Nuṣṣāq is Ibn-ul-ʿArabī. It is a summary of his Fussūq-ul-Ḥikmah, Muqaddimah-i-Naqd-un-Nuṣṣāq is the work of Mālibān Jāmī.
34. Mīṣr-ul-Qānūn is the work of Ibn Ṣinā's well-known Qānūn. The author of this book is Ḥāfiz-ud-Dīn B. Nafi. He died in 685/1283.
35. The author of Ḥāfiz-ud-Dīn-Ḥikmah is Aḥzābī. He died in 679/1275.
36. Al-Kāfī-Ṣaḥāb is the work of Ibn Ṣaqrī. He died in 646/1248.
37. Mutanawwul and Mukhtāsarr-ul-Ma'ānī are an abridgment of Tashkīl-ul-Ma'ānī. The author of this book is 'Alāmah Qazwīnī. Mutanawwul is the detailed commentary while Mukhtāsarr is the summarised commentary. The author of both these commentaries is Sa'd-ud-Dīn Taftazānī. He died in 793/1391. [It may be remembered that 'Ilm-ul-Ma'ānī is the science whereby is known the manner of adapting language to the requirement of the cases.]
Shāh Waliyullāh relates that when he finished the study of these books and went deeper in them, his outlook turned broader and then with little effort and attention he found this field of sciences wide enough. 38

At the age of fifteen, his father fell ill and died. During his illness he had given permission to Shāh Waliyullāh for accepting the oath of allegiance from the aspiring disciples and had said these words repeatedly: “His [Waliyullāh’s] hand is like my hand.” His father was very kind and thoroughly satisfied with him and this he considered as a symbol of Divine favour on him.

The attention which he used to pay to him was unusually greater. He had never seen, he says, any father or any teacher and guide as affectionate to his children and students as his father was to him. 39

It is narrated that one day after the midday prayer Shaikh ‘Abd-ur-Rahim turned towards him and asked him for paper and pen. He then advised him to be mindful of this couplet, as God had inspired him with it all of a sudden, and it was the sign of His great favour on them. That couplet is: 40

“O, my son, if you want to work on the path of Truth,
Then beware of injuring the feelings of man;
In the path of Tarīqat, mercy is the main principle;
This is the saying of the best of mankind.”

Citing another instance Shāh Waliyullāh writes that when he heard from some of his friends that his father’s name in the

38. Al-Jus’-ut-Latif.
39. Ibid. [Shaikh ‘Abd-ur-Rahim was born in 1054/1644. He received education at the hands of his father Shaikh Wajh-ud-Din and his elder brother Shaikh Abū Rida’ Muhammad. He read books on principles and scholasticism under his kind teacher Mr Zāhid Hirawī By nature, he was a mystic through and through. He believed in the doctrine of the Unity of Being and remembered the Traditions with their authorities by heart. He died in 1131/1719.]
40. Anfās-ul-Arifīn, p 83:

کتن را حک یخواهی ای پسر
در طریقت رکن عظوم رحمت است

41. Ibid.
42. Ibid., pp. 41-42.
43. Al-Jus’-ut-Latif.
Sháh Wáliyulláh completed the study of both the traditional and the rational sciences, as pointed out before, under the eye of his father. He learnt from him the science of Practical Wisdom (Hikmat al-'ilm) as well, and of the manner of mutual dealing (Adab al-Mu'in). His father was a firm believer in the doctrine of the Unity of Being, and, as such, had encouraged him to read the relevant literature on that subject.  

When his father died he took over the charge of the Madrasah and started his teaching and research activities with added zeal and passion. For full twelve years he remained busy in studying and teaching the current sciences till he acquired proficiency in them. In consequence, he found himself in a position to solve difficult problems and answer questions correctly both from the point of view of tradition and reason.  

As he had made his name, students from distant places came to him for receiving education. When, after finishing their course of study, they returned to their respective regions, they used to teach religious literature to the people and apprised them of the importance and necessity for its propagation. In this way the teachings of religion were disseminated. Sháh Wáliyulláh, by nature, was free from prejudice and his visors holding different religious views generally returned satisfied or at least contented.

As has been told earlier, Shaikh 'Abd-ur-Rahim was very keen and interested about the education of his son. He taught him all the knowledge he possessed, exoteric as well as esoteric. Similar was the case of Sháh Wáliyulláh in relation to the education of his children. He died when his elder son Sháh 'Abd-ul-'Azíz was about seventeen years old. Thus, the education of his children remained incomplete during his life. Maulá Sháh 'Abd-ul-Qayýum relates that on good authority that Sháh Wáliyulláh, even after his death, was found busy for forty years in the education of his children, at the intermediary World (Alam-i-Barakah). When Mirzá Maqhar Aslán, who was present at the time of his death, saw him for the whole of mankind. This is the reason why he always (Shah Wáliyulláh) inclined after his death towards this world, he repented and felt sorry. When Sháh 'Abd-ul-'Azíz came to know of the state of his father from him he told him that his inclination was meant for their education.

The retentive power of Sháh Wáliyulláh, says his elder son, was very strong. His talk was free from ambiguity and exaggeration. He never felt disgusted with any in conversation. Whenever someone put him a question, he gave him a simple and convincing reply coupled with firmness and confidence. This is one of the reasons why the number of his disciples and students went on increas-
There was another mystic and scholar named Muhammad Sharīf b. Khairullāh b. 'Abd-ul-Ghani who had gone to Delhi to qualify himself in mysticism under the guidance of Shāh Waliyullāh. He had obtained permission from him for directing the disciples in the mystical path.

It is an honour and pride for Sind that Shāh Waliyullāh read the Holy Qur’ān from beginning to end before Muhammad Fādil of Sind in the year 1154/1741. Sind in those days was a cradle for the men of learning and a fertile soil for the birth and growth of mystics.

Let it be known that the time of Shāh Waliyullāh’s education through his father and then through the latter’s teacher Mir Zāhid Hirawī goes back to the learned scholar Jalāl-ud-Dīn Dawwānī (629-907/1426-1501). He (Dawwānī) had written a book entitled Risālatun Fi Ithbāt-ul-Wājib which contains problems relating to almost every science.

Shāh Waliyullāh had set certain principles for the course of study. He says that, in the beginning, it behooves the teacher to teach his students some small books on grammar. This process may be followed by teaching them books on history and practical wisdom written in Arabic. When the students are found fairly strong in the Arabic language, they should be taught Muwaffa’ by Imām Mālik as narrated by Yahyā Maṣmūdi. After that the students should be instructed to study the Holy Qur’ān without

50. Mutafa'i-i-'Arifiyat: Tajhimal, II, 182:

51. Risālah-i-Dānishmandi: [Qāfi Muhammad Zāhid b. Qāfi Muhammad Aslam Ḥasanī was a great scholar, and in the knowledge of logic and philosophy he had no equal in the country. Some of his works are: Shurk Maudūf; Shurk-ul-Lakhdib; Shurk-ul-Tajrid; Shurk-ul-Musārih. He died in Kabul in 1/10/1690.]

52. Tajhimal, II, 103.

53. Makhdoom-i-Madani.
the help of any commentary. In this respect, they may be taught Taṣfīr Jalālīnī. When they finish this much course, they should be made to study some portion of Šāhīh Bukhārī and Šāhīh Muslim. When they complete that course they should study jurisprudence (Fiqh), books on the fundamental articles of faith (‘Aqāīd), mysticism and some treatises on the science of the study of books (Dīnīshmandī) and some portion from Mishkāt.58

His advice is that people should study the Holy Qur’ān and the Tradition on proper lines and act upon them in right earnest. The problems arising out of the byelaws in jurisprudence (Furū’ū) may be considered in the light of the two original sources. If they agree with them, they may be accepted, but if they run counter to them, they should be rejected outright. No attention should be paid to such problems as the ancients have avoided to discuss. The opinions of the rationalists should be simply ignored as they unnecessarily create doubt and confusion.59

Šāh Waliyullah’s line of the study of the Holy Qur’ān, continuing through Ḥadīt ‘Uthmān, Ḥadīt ‘Ali, Ubayy b. Ka‘b, Zaid b. Thābit, ‘Abdullāh b. Mas‘ūd is linked with the Holy Prophet. He had learnt, as referred to above, the science of the Holy Qur’ān from his father who was an acknowledged master in this art. He, however, carried on independent study of it, with the result that he turned out a commentator par excellence. It is worthy to note that in India, Shaikh ‘Abd-ur-Rahim was the first person who had started teaching of the Holy Qur’ān without the use of any commentary. This method of his teaching was faithfully followed after him by his worthy son. It generally happens that by consulting the commentaries, the attention of the student is diverted from the Word of God to the comments made by other persons of the same stock to which he belonged. The result is that the whole of his time is taken away in solving the difficulties of the commentators themselves. He, thus, gets no time to devote himself to understand the Holy Qur’ān independently. If the Holy Qur’ān is read with some attention, many wonderful ideas, hitherto unknown, are suggested. This is the reason why Šāh Waliyullah used to teach the Holy Qur’ān before the Tradition. Through this introduction of this new method, his students gained more from his lessons on the Holy Qur’ān than from his teachings of the Tradition.60

While speaking on the Holy Qur’ān, he used to stick to its outward meaning and avoided interpretations as far as possible. It was, indeed, the need of the time. He always instructed and helped his students to think over the Word of God independently as it was the only book which could stand the test of all times to come.61

Though he learnt Tradition from his father and made considerable progress in it during his teaching period, he was not satisfied with the knowledge he had gained. For this purpose he had gone to Maulānā Muhammad Afḍal of Sialkot who in those days was considered as an authority on the Traditional literature, but he also could not quench his thirst.62 He, therefore, decided to visit the Holy Land, as he knew well that scholars and divines of Mecca and Medina were real authorities on the Tradition. What could be gained from them in this connection could not be gained from anyone anywhere. After assessing all the facts he realised that until and unless the Traditional literature is gone through as a whole critically, the knowledge of religion will remain incomplete. It is so because the Tradition is next to the Holy Qur’ān and is its reliable commentary.63

58. Waṣiṣṭāt Nīmāh, [Yahyā b Yahyā Maqāmī learnt jurisprudence from Imām Mā’in and then returned to his native land Spain where he worked for the spread of the school of Mā’in. He died in 234/399. Taṣfīr Jalālīnī is the work of Jalāl-ud-Dīn Mahālī (109-143/1088-1439) and Jalāl-ud-Dīn Sūyūṭī (849-911/1445-1505). The former made a beginning in writing the commentary from Shāh Bagerah up to the end of Sūrah Baqara‘ī and the latter completed it.]

59. Waṣiṣṭāt Nīmāh.
Shāh Waliyullāh

Shaikh ‘Abd-ur-Raḥīm was by nature a mystic. He did not write any book. There are, however, his sayings and directions (Istbālāt) which have been collected and printed in two separate volumes. Particularly, on the occasion of saying goodbye to the friends, he used to recite this verse often, by way of an advice:

“Happiness of both the worlds lies in these two words,
Kindness to friends and politeness to enemies.”

Outwardly, Shāh Waliyullāh had acquired Bal'ah and the Ṣūfī rag from his father and, through him, had established his link with other Ṣūfīs, both dead and alive, and their Orders. Inwardly he had the oath of allegiance, association, the Ṣūfī rag and blessings from the Holy Prophet.

Though he belonged to the Naqshbandī Order, he used to mention the names of all the four Orders while taking an oath of allegiance from others. This he probably did with the purpose that the disciples might have an equal regard for all and that everyone might choose the Order to his liking. In Tadhkīrat-ash-Shurārī, Rashīd AhmadGangohi writes that when their spiritual guides took an oath of allegiance from the disciples, they mentioned the names of the founders of the four Orders, so that they might have respect for all, and that they might derive benefit from them. To mention the names of all the four spiritual guides (Khān-Wādāh) on such occasions was the practice initiated by Shāh Waliyullāh.

From the four Ṣūfī Orders originated a number of other Orders which are in one way or the other attributed to some celebrated Ṣūfīs. Among the Ṣūfī Orders which have originated from the Naqshbandī system, there is one which is attributed to Shāh Waliyullāh. This Order is known as the ‘Waliyullāhī Order’.

64. Anfās-ul-‘Arifin, p. 84:


In praise of that Order, he says, that in bringing the devotee near to God, it is the nearest one.

Mīrzā Jān Jānān al-‘Alavī observes that in explaining the subtle points in mysticism, setting them one from the other and placing every point at its proper place Shāh Waliyullāh was a genius par excellence. No mystic before him had followed this path. He tried to harmonise the outward with the inward and vice versa, with the result that one finds no difficulty in understanding any reality.

67. His full name was Shams-ud-Dīn Ḥabībullah. He was a contemporary of Shāh Waliyullāh and had brotherly connections with him. He has written many useful books. His lineage goes back to Ḥaḍrat ‘All. He died as a martyr on Saturday, 10 Muharram 1195/1781 in Delhi.
Chapter 2

JOURNEY TO HARAMAIN

When Shâh Waliyullah was born, the conditions of the country were extremely bad. Disorder and insecurity were widespread. The Muslim community was without unity and discipline. The ruling clique was divided. No sooner Bahâdur Shâh, the son of Aurangzeb 'Alamgir, died, than war broke out between Mu'izz-ud-Din Jahândâr Shâh and Furrukh Sair. The Sâdât Bârah fully and strongly supported the latter, with the result that he came out victorious. Those Sâdât were a force and their pressure upon State administration was perceptible. They conspired against him and murdered him cruelly. That painful incident took place immediately after the death of Shaikh 'Abd-ur-Rahim in the year 1131/1717. Then followed riots and bloodshed throughout the country. Shâh Waliyullah, who was seventeen at that time, was deeply affected by these tragic events.  

At the age of nearly thirty he was invisibly urged to go for Pilgrimage. He was of Arab origin and felt proud of it and of his Arabic language and his return to a land from which his forefathers had come may have looked pleasant to him. Thus, when the time became ripe, he could not control himself from going for Hajj and considered that journey as a great Divine favour on him. Accordingly, he left Delhi in 1143/1730. The real purpose of his going to the holy land, besides the performance of Hajj, was to make there an exhaustive and critical study of Tradition and Jurisprudence, the reason being that he could not adequately cover the complete ground of these sciences in his country.  

When the news of his preparation for Hajj journey reached some of his relatives, they tried to prevent him from such an undertaking. Soon after his departure from Delhi they wrote him letters advising him to return. In reply he told them that God had ordered him for this journey. Any attempt at preventing him from that will never succeed and will be a simple disappointment. When they thus failed they pursued him on horse-back, but could not catch up with him.  

In this journey Shâh Waliyullah was accompanied by his maternal uncle Ubaidullah al-Bârahawî, by his son Muhammad 'Ashiq and by some others who kept his company throughout the journey.  

His friend and pupil Maulawi Nurullah, who was with him from Delhi right up to Surat, did something wrong on the way which displeased God. Shâh Waliyullah was Divinely inspired to ask him to repent and to pray for forgiveness. He immediately repented for the wrong he had done. God accepted his repentance and he was forgiven. Maulawi Nûrûlîh who had accompanied him up to Surat later returned. Another friend in the party had fallen ill in the way, but he recovered as a result of Shâh Waliyullah's prayer to God. 

1. Anfâs-ul-'Adîfân, pp. 86-87. [By Sâdât Bârah probably means their twelve families which had taken their settlements in the twelve different Bârah is the name of a village in district Munsâfar Nagar (U.P.). The Sayyids who had played a prominent role in politics in the nineteenth century were the residents of this village. Khaliq Ahmad Nişâmi, Shâh Waliyullah Kay Siyāsî Maktûbât, p. 176.  

2. Wasiyyat Nâmâh; Ta'kimât, II, 153.  
3. Nuskhat-ul-Khawâjir, Vol, VI. Shaikh Ubaidullah b. Muhammad b. Muhammad 'Abil-Fadl received education from his father. He performed Hajj with his son Muhammad 'Ashiq and the son of his sister, Shâh Waliyullah, and gathered religious knowledge from the scholars of Mecca and Medina. Shaikh Muhammad 'Ashiq was a great scholar and a traditionalist. He was very close and dear to Shâh Waliyullah. Many works of Shâh Waliyullah remained well preserved chiefly by his efforts. He died in 1187/1773. He was one of those who had understood properly Shâh Waliyullah's philosophy and thought. Others were Khwâjah Muhammed Anvil Khasimî, Nûrûlîh Budhânwâlî and Shâh Ubâb Sa'id Barelvi. Ta'kimât, II, 153-54.  
4. Ta'kimât, II, 153-54. [Maulawi Nrûlîh b. Mu'min-ud-Din Pulbhî was a traditionalist and a man of learning. He was very close to Shâh Waliy-
When he arrived at the port of Surat he found himself faced with a number of difficulties which caused him worry and loss of time. As is known, there were no suitable means of conveyance and transport. The journey was dangerous and one had to undertake it at the risk of one’s life. The exact date on which Shāh Waliyullāh left Delhi is not known. It can, however, be fairly guessed that he left Delhi round about the month of Rajab 1143/1730 so as to reach Mecca in time for Ḥajj. His journey from Delhi to Surat and from there to the seaport of Jeddah was a long and tedious one, and it must have taken enough time in his arriving at the destination.

He performed Ḥajj in the same year and stayed in the Holy Cities for over a year. In Mecca he remained in close contact with scholars and divines and derived immense benefit from them, in particular in the science of Tradition and Jurisprudence. Shākh Muhammad Wafullāh was one of the Meccan scholars. After his return from Medina, he read before him the Muwatṭa’ of Imām Mālik completely as was related by Yahiyyā Maṣmūdī. At the end Shāh Waliyullāh obtained from him the certificate for teaching Tradition.

The other learned scholar he benefited from was Shākh Tāj-ud-Dīn Qala’ī. From him he got the permission for relating Muwatṭa’ and also received the certificate to teach Tradition. He received from both of them the Sufi rag as well. The other celebrated scholars of the city were ‘Īsā Ju’fari Maḥrībī and Shākh Ibrahīm Kurdī. It is through these scholars, that he

ullāh, and was the teacher of Shāh ‘Abd-ul-‘Azīz in the Ḥanafī Fiqh and was his father-in-law. Mauṣūr ibn Ṭabullāh was his son, whose son was Mauṣūr ‘Abdul Hayy. He was the student of Shāh ‘Abd-ul-‘Azīz. He died in about 1187/1772.

5. Ibid., II, 121.

6. Inšān-ul-His. Shākh Muhammad Wafullāh was a leading Muṣṭakīd of his time. In the knowledge of Traditional literature, he had no equal. He was well versed in exegesis, jurisprudence, literature and poetry.

7. Ibid. Shākh Tāj-ud-Dīn Qala’ī was the Muwatt of Mecca and a learned divine.

is attached to the line of Sufi rag-robing and gained the certificate for teaching Tradition.

So long as Shāh Waliyullāh, was in Mecca, he spent most of his time by the side of the Ka’bah. As a result of that many Divine favours were showered on him. The composition of Ḥujjatulullāh-ul-Bāliqāh was also the result of those favours. He states that one day after the afternoon prayer, when he was absorbed in the remembrance of God, the Spirit of the Holy Prophet appeared to him. He was as if inspired to rise and undertake the task of presenting the true picture of Islam. He was plainly told that the assignment of that work to him had been already decided in the Unseen world, and he will have to do it. He further narrates that after that incident he found his breast considerably expanded and his mind easily disposed to the doing of that work. It may be noted that, with the exception of two small books, as will be shown in the following chapter, he had written all the books after his return from the holy land. That incident, namely, of the appearance of the Spirit of the Holy Prophet, took place in 1144/1731.

One day, Shāh Waliyullāh relates, he participated in the birthday celebrations of the Holy Prophet. People gathered there in large numbers, and were inviting blessings and beadniks of God upon him. They were recounting his extraordinary works and were mentioning miracles witnessed before and after his birth. All of a sudden, he saw beams of light appearing. He soon came to know that these were radiating from the angels who generally attend such auspicious gatherings. There he found that those beams of light were mingled up with beams of mercy.

8. Shākh ‘Īsā Ju’fari was the teacher of Ḥarāmānī. He belonged to the Shādhil Order of the mystics and died in 1080/1669. Shākh Ibrahīm Kurdī was a master mind, well grounded in Traditions and Arabic language and possessed sufficient command over the Shādhil jurisprudence. He knew Persian and Turkish and always gave preference to the Sūfis over the philosophers. He died in 1072/1660.


Shāh Waliyullāh

After his stay for some time in Mecca he left for Medina. There also he made it a point to remain close to the tomb of the Holy Prophet. As a result of his constant concentration at the tomb of the Holy Prophet he received many blessings and many of the secrets of the Invisible World were unravelled to him. In moments of meditation God acquainted him with the realities of things. Whenever he desired, he says, the solutions of certain problems were explained to him, at times, through his ecstatic contemplation of God, and, at times, by means of a dream.

It has come in the Tradition that whosoever salutes the Holy Prophet, God at once returns the Prophet’s soul to him and he then salutes him in reply. Shāh Waliyullāh had actually with his eyes seen the truth of this Tradition for a number of times in the year 1144/1731.11

Medina, the resting place of the Holy Prophet, was a centre of learning in those times. Among the scholars, Shaikh Abū Tahir occupied a high position. In addition to his moral perfection, no one was his equal in the possession of religious knowledge. He was an encyclopedia of sciences relating to religion. His sagacity and perceptive faculty in particular were very sharp and penetrating. Shāh Waliyullāh states that he met many scholars there, but he did not find any to match him. This is the reason why he has made a pointed reference to this fact in some of his writings.12

He narrates that when one day Shaikh Abū Tahir was teaching, a question was asked about the causes of difference between the Traditions and Jurisprudence at certain places. The Shaikh in his reply told the listeners that the Holy Prophet possessed a comprehensive nature and there is thus room for the contraries.13

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Shaikh Abū Tahir related that once a student of Shaikh Ahmad Idrīs led the prayer in the mosque of the Holy Prophet in which he recited the Chapter “Tattabat Yādī . . . ”. His teacher blamed him for his reciting a chapter wherein the name of the uncle of the Holy Prophet is mentioned with contempt. Shāh Waliyullāh told the Shaikh that in such matters the criterion should be the practice of the Companions and the Followers. Why may not one take that chapter as expressive of the merits and excellence of the Holy Prophet?14 Here also he maintained his individuality.

Shāh Waliyullāh completed the study of the six authentic books of Tradition before the Shaikh. In the end he got from him the certificate for teaching. He left a very good impression upon the Shaikh of his efficiency and scholarship. The Shaikh spoke highly of him and would often say that he took from Shāh Waliyullāh the authority of the meanings of the words of Tradition, while he (Shāh Waliyullāh) took from him the authority of the words of Tradition.15

So long as he was in Medina, he spent his time in study under the nīcha of ʿUthmān, in front of the tomb of the Holy Prophet.16

As is known, Shāh Waliyullāh’s father and his maternal uncle were the followers of the ʿHanāfī school. Similarly, Shaikh Abū Tahir and his father followed the school of ʿImām Shāhīd. Shāh Waliyullāh derived benefit from both of them. After serious consideration he came to know that there was no difference between their schools so far as the basic principles were concerned. This is the reason why he avoided preferring one to the other. No doubt, in practice, he was a ʿHanāfī, but, while teaching his students, he would present the viewpoint of both the ʿImāms. He found it necessary to study the Shāhīd school side by side with the school of Abū ʿHanīfah. The result was that the students became broad-

11. Ḥujjatullāh, II, 77.
12. Insān-al-ʿAim. Shaikh Abū Tahir Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm Kūrī was a great scholar and divine of Medina. He died in 1145/1732.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
15. Al-Yānī-al-Jannī : يُسْتَناد عَلَى الْفِلَاقَ وَكَانَ أَلْحَمِيمَ الْأَمِينَ
16. Nashat-ul-Khawājāt, VoI, VI.
Shāh Waliyullāh

minded and began to have the same opinion about them both. Shāh Waliyullāh was an independent thinker; thus, at times he went by the Shāfi’ī school. For example, he would raise his hands in prayer, the reason being that he found the number of Traditions in support of raising of hands during prayer larger compared to those against the practice; besides, they were more strong and authentic. Where there was a difference, he always followed the Tradition which was more sound and strong from the point of view of evidence ( Dalīl) and transmission (Isnād), no matter to which school it belonged.17

Shāh Waliyullāh attached more weight to the practice of the people of the Holy Cities. In the case of (the number of) Tawkīrāt (magnifying Go:) by saying ‘Allāh Akbar’ of the ’Īd prayers he gave preference to their practice to the practice of the people of Kūfah. If there happened to be a conflict in the Traditions themselves about a certain matter, and the Traditions of both sides in relation to that matter were found equally sound and authentic, he exercised scrupulousness (Iḥtiyāt). For example, in the matter of Zakāt on ornaments, he observed that the Traditions on both the sides were equally strong. He, therefore, thought that it was more proper to pay the tax (but in so doing one need not take undue trouble).18

Shāikh Abū Tāhir was not only a distinguished scholar but a Sūfī of a very high rank as well. He possessed comprehensive knowledge of all the Orders (Sīstālahs) of the Sūfīs. His rāg, as such, combined the qualities of all the rags. He robed Shāh Waliyullāh with his own rāg and in this way the latter’s attribution to the different Orders of the Sūfīs was established. The Shāikh and other divines had also authorised him to teach Traditions and robe the deserving disciples with the Sūfī rāg.19

In Sūfism, as a matter of fact, Shāh Waliyullāh was practically in need of no one’s guide. He finished all the teachings of Sūfism under his father and translated them in practice faithfully. The

rags which he obtained from the top-ranking Sūfīs of Mecca and Medina were mainly for the sake of blessing (Tabarruk). However, whatever deficiency was left it was made up there. He got the permission of reciting Dalā’ī-ul-Khairāt and Qaṣīdah Burdah from his teacher Shāikh Abū Tāhir. As for the certificate of Ta’ābī (using a resary for the praise of God) he received it from Sayyid Umār who had permanently settled in Mecca. The permission of Du‘ā’i Salīt was given to him by Shāikh Muhammad Sa‘īd of Lahore.20

He received certificates of Ḥizb-ul-Baḥr and Qaṭ-’ul-Qulāb also from the Shāikh. As regards the certificates of the Orders of other Sūfīs he got them from his teacher besides one from his father.21

Shāh Waliyullāh and the Shāikh were so much impressed by each other that when the former intended to return home and went to the latter to bid him farewell, he recited this verse impromptu:

“I forgot all the paths I knew
Save one which led me to your quarter.”

The Shāikh was deeply moved by it. He could not control himself and tears welled up in his eyes.22

He stayed for a good time in Medina and returned to Mecca in 1144/1731, a little before the start of the Hajj season. Of course, he spent the whole month of Ramaḍān there and its last ten days in seclusion (f’tikāf) in the Sacred Mosque. During those hours of seclusion many secret truths were made clear to him and he was duly apprised of the solution of some difficult problems. Once he sat in a dream that he was the maintainer of the world (Qa‘īm-ul-Zamān). The term Qa‘īm-ul-Zamān, he explains, means that when God desired to establish the best order in the world, He selected him for the fulfilment of that desire. He further states that in that dream he saw an unbelieving ruler who had forcibly taken possess-

20. Shāikh Muhammad Sa‘īd Shaṭṭārī, Naqshbandī, Qādirī, visited the holy land and performed Hajj twice. Shāh Waliyullāh had met him at Lahore. He died in 1166/1753, when he was over 120 years.
22. Insān-ul-‘Aīm:

لا شيء كلام لا شيء الا ما كتب أتعرض لشتكم
sion of the cities of the Muslims and had indulged in loot and plunder there. In Ajmer, he found the signs of Islam erased out, but after some time he saw that a fighting had taken place between the Muslims and the unbelievers in which the Muslims came out victorious. The ruler of the unbelievers was captured and put to death. He dreamt that dream on 21 Dhul‘-Qa‘d 1144/1731. This dream of his, however, materialised after thirty years in the shape of the battle of Panipat. 23

Before returning home he performed the Pilgrimage for the second time. God Almighty was so much pleased with him that, throughout his stay in the Holy Cities, he remained under repeated flow of His favours, with the result that he returned fully enriched in both the exoteric and esoteric sciences. Fuyā‘ul-Ḥaramain, a part of Taḥfīm, and probably ad-Durr-ul-Thamin, were the outcome of those favours. When he found the purpose for which he had left his home fully served, he made for India and reached Delhi safely on Friday, 14 Rajab 1145/1732. 24

It seems that Shāh Waliyullāh spent about two years in this journey, from and back to Delhi. His elder son Shāh ‘Abd-ul-‘Azīz states that his father stayed for fourteen months in the Holy land. Thus, there remain ten months in excess, which might have been spent in the onward and backward journey. This seems credible, the means of conveyance in those days being very slow.

It is reported that while he was still in the holy land, some of his friends in India wrote to him to stay over there as conditions in the country were unfavourable. Shāh Waliyullāh was, by nature, brave and fearless. Nothing could deter him from pursuing the object he had in mind. He was inspired to the effect that a portion of the community will unite and become disciplined through him. And this purpose could be served at home and not abroad. He, therefore, decided to return home. 25

It is surprising to note that when Shāh Waliyullāh returned home he looked considerably changed. The tenor and the tone

of his speech differed from what they were before. His students and disciples in particular took notice of it. His speech was always attractive and well grounded. The audience were moved by it. He made an overall change in the method of teaching. From then on he began to prepare his students for specialisation in particular branches of science they were found fit for. When a student gained mastery in some subject to the required standard, he entrusted other students interested in that subject to him and kept himself busy in writing books, in giving lessons on the tradition and in explaining the subtleties of the gnosis. We find that specialisation now-a-days has become a pressing need of the modern age. He was thus far ahead of his times. 26

Shāh Waliyullāh generally kept sound health and fell ill rarely. When he was weaned from sucking, his speech even in his infancy, contrary to the ordinary course, was clear. After Ḥṣrāq (sunrise) prayer, he would busy himself in his studies and for all the time right up to midday he would never move his body, would not scratch it despite itching trouble, nor would he spit. The truths, revealed to him during his hours of solitude, he put into writing. He brought the Traditional literature, says his elder son, from Mecca and Medina and found it enough to guide him in the various walks of his life. 27

23 Fuyā‘ul-Ḥaramain, Mashhad: 44.
24 Aṣ-ṣur-ul-Latīf.
27. Ibid,
DATES OF SHAH WALIYULLAH'S WORKS

Shah Waliyullah began most of his writing work after his return from the Pilgrimage. He breathed his last in 1176/1762 when he was a little over sixty-one. Thus, he spent about thirty years in writing books. The total number of his extant works known so far is about fifty and they all have been printed. The preparation of such a large number of books in this short period is indeed a great achievement, particularly when we notice that his study and teaching work also continued uninterruptedly.

Before he went to perform the Hajj, he had already written some poems and small books and of course letters to friends in India and abroad. His treatise al-Qaid-ul-Jami is an earlier work prepared by him before his departure for the Haramain. He has referred to it in his Fuyud-ul-Haramain, which he wrote after his return from the holy land. Similarly, Qasidat-ul-Lamiyah was composed by him before 1143/1730 to which also he makes a reference in the Fuyud. It is an important poem, and he has drawn the attention of the readers towards it in some of his other works also. His Qasidat Tairiyah also is said to have been a composition of about that time.

He had issued certificates and given written permission to some of his students and disciples for teaching religious knowledge and for introducing the seekers to Sufism and for taking an oath of allegiance from them. The number of his letters is large as the circle of his associates was considerably wide. Many of his letters contain his replies to different questions sent to him for solution by his learned friends. Some letters were written before he had set out for Hajj.2


After the death of his father when he took over the charge of his Madrassah, answering letters from near and far had become a part of his routine work. Shaikh 'Abd-ur-Rahman son of Shaikh Muhammad Ashiq Puthri had made a collection of two hundred and eighty of his letters. When he died, his father found seventy-seven more of his letters. This collection of three hundred and fifty-eight letters was found extant in the possession of Maulawi Nasim Ahmad Faridi Amrohawi.3 Some letters of his collection have appeared in al-Furgan of Lucknow, a monthly journal, and were later reproduced in Al-Rahim of Hyderabad in 1965.4

Let it be borne in mind that Shah Waliyullah had started translating the Holy Qur'an into the Persian language before his departure for the holy land. Persian was then the official language spoken and understood everywhere. The translation of the Holy Qur'an into that language was considered absolutely necessary. For example, the translation of and commentary on the Zahrawain, namely, the chapters al-Baqarah and Al-i-'Imran, had been completed by him before he left for Pilgrimage. He continued the work of translation and commentary after his return from Arabia. A rough draft of it became ready by 1150/1737. He took a year to make it fair. It was through the earnest efforts of his dear colleague Khwajah Muhammad Amin that the Holy Qur'an with Persian translation and short commentary and notes, entitled Fath-ur-Rahman, went into circulation six years later, in 1156/1743.5

It can be safely guessed that he may have compiled Fuyud-ul-Haramain and ad-Durr-uth-Thamin after his return from Hajj, fearing that if the realities seen in a dream or in a state when one's visible senses cease functioning are not immediately put into writing, they may either escape one's memory or lose their real form.


4. See May, June, July and August 1965 issues of the monthly journal Al-Rahim, published by Shah Waliyullah Academy, Hyderabad, Pakistan.
5. Fath-ur-Rahman, "Hujjaddimah".
The treatise *Hama'ât*, in which the history of mysticism is traced, seems to have been composed by him in the year 1148/1735, as is mentioned at its end. According to one manuscript copy of the treatise, the year of its completion is 1162/1750. Both the dates are probable, though, generally, his books on mysticism and philosophy are from his later works.⁶

There is some ground to believe that *al-Muqaddimah-us-Saniyyah* was written by Shāh Waliyullāh during his preparation of *Fathi-ul-Rahmān* in between 1150/1737 and 1156/1743. Similarly, *Fathi-ul-Khabir* may also be the work of that period. Both these treatises are in some way very close to *Fathi-ul-Rahmān*. In *Fathi-ul-Khabir*, he has traced rarities of the Holy Qur'ān and explained them. Whatever was left incomplete in this respect by Ibn 'Abbās and Imām Suyūṭi was completed by him.⁷

It is, however, not possible to give the dates of all his works, as, with the exception of a few, he himself has not mentioned the dates of their composition. As we have stated before, Shāh Waliyullāh acquired proficiency in the science of Tradition and jurisprudence during his stay in the Hāramain. He returned as an authority on these sciences. Thus it can be conjectured that it was after his return from Hajj that he may have prepared *'Iqd-ul-Jid fi Aḥkām-il-Iṯthād wa-Taqād* and *al-Inṣāf fi Bayān Sobab-il-Ikhtilāf* along with *Fathi-ul-Rahmān*. In the former he has shown that all the four schools are correct and reliable. They are agreed on principles, and differ only in the bye-laws. This difference in no way justifies segregation in any form among the followers. In the latter, he has traced the causes of difference found among the Companions and their immediate followers. There also he shows that the courses they followed were equally correct.

Similarly, the treatise *al-Irshād Ilā Muhimmāt 'Ilm-il-Iṣnād*⁶

6. *Hama'ât* (Bait-ul-Ḥikmah, Lahore, 1944) :

وكان ختامه في جاذب الله grammatical errors, it seems 
وعلى حالي، ودون علمه، في الصغر المفطر عنه، المثين ومن غير
الف من هجرة رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم.

7. *Al-Muqaddimah-us-Saniyyah*.

may be taken to be the work of those days, the reason being that every scholar of Ḥaramain he had met with had written a book on this subject. He, therefore, liked to apprise people of the importance of this science, and wrote it for their benefit. The other works such as *an-Nawādir Min Aḥādīth Sayyid-il-Awā'il Walh-Awākhir, Insān-ul-Ain fi Masha'ikh-il-Ḥaramain* and *al-Taqād-ul-Mubin fil-Musalsal Min Aḥādīth-in-Nabiyyil-Amin* may also have been the works of approximately the same times. The contents of these books are more or less the result of his stay in the holy cities.

In his collection of poems named *Aṭyab-un-Nāghm, Qaṣidah Bā'iyah* and *Qaṣidah Hamziyyah* with comments had been composed, as is mentioned by him, in 1156-57/1743-44. He, in *Qaṣidah Bā'iyah*, has imitated *Qaṣidah Bā'iyah* of Sāwād b. Qārīb, a Companion. The poem of Sāwād is, however, more eloquent, and though Shāh Waliyullāh has not been able to bring in that grace, his poem is meaningful.⁸

*Al-Khāir al-Kathīr*, a unique composition of Shāh Waliyullāh, on Ḥikmah (philosophy), seems to have been prepared by him between 1152/1739 and 1160/1747. He in that work has shown that philosophy proper is enshrined in the *Sharī'ah* only. Its composition is prior to the composition of *Tafhimat* as he has made a reference of it in the latter at two places.⁹ This book has two Urdu translations. One is made by Maulānā 'Abd-ul-Rahīm, Professor of Arabic, Islamic College, Peshawar, and published by Maulvi Surjī, Jamīl Mohallāh, Bombay. The other one dictated by late Māulānā 'Ubaidullāh Sindhi is in manuscript form and is lying with Maulvi Ghulām Muṣṭafā Qāsimi, the Director of Shāh Waliyullāh Academy, Hyderabad. Its English translation has been made by the present author and it has been recently published.¹⁰

*Tawīl-ul-Aḥādīth* is indeed a wonderful work of Shāh Waliyullāh and meets the requirement of the modern age. He has

8. *Aṭyab-un-Nāghm*.


traced in it the history of the Prophets (from Adam to Muhammad) whose names have come in the Holy Qur’an and has shown that the ground is always prepared before the advent of the Prophets and that there were natural causes behind the important events which had taken place during their days. Brevity and employment of particular terminology are the chief characteristics of its style. It has been translated and published in the Urdu language twice. The present author has translated it in Sindhi and English. Both the translations have been published. It was composed before al-Fauz-ul-Kabir as its reference has come in the latter.

The books on mysticism in particular, such as Lama’i (not traceable anywhere), Lama’at, Sata’i, Hawami and Allaj-ul-Quds, might have been written by Shâh Waliyullah between 1150/1737 and 1160/1747. Among these may also be included al-Budur-ul-Baziqah, al-Khair-ul-Kathir with which he made the beginning, and Ta’wil-ul-Ahkâth. Besides, Wasiyat Nâmah and Risalih-ul-Dinismad, and some other booklets and pieces of poetry can safely be added to them. The collection of his works in relation to such topics made by his dear student Muhammad ‘Âshiq contained nearly twenty books. Shâh Waliyullah recognizes him as the main cause of the preparation and preservation of his works.

Al-Fauz-ul-Kabir, written in the Persian language, has its Arabic and Urdu translations as well. Its English translation has been done by the present author and is waiting for publication. This unique work of his was done by him after completing al-Khair-ul-Kathir, to which fact he has made a reference in it. For the study of the Holy Qur’an, a prior reading of this book is strongly recommended, as it is of immense help towards the understanding of the Qur’an’s meanings.

The important book al-Musawwâ’, an Arabic commentary of al-Muwatta’, was prepared by him before he took up Ta’limat, according to a reference made in it. For the learned scholars engaged in research activities it is absolutely necessary to consult Musawwâ’,

The small treatise, al-Juz-ul-Latif, in which he has given his biographical account, may be taken as the work of those times, the reason being that he has made a reference to Lama’at and Sata’i which are shown as the preparations of sometime before 1160/1747.

It can be believed that after the preparation of these works he may have taken up the writing of Anfas-ul-‘Arifin. He in that book has given the life account of his father and uncle with a mention of many useful points, mystical as well as philosophical. It is indeed a lost thing of a Sufi. Shâh Waliyullah’s father died in 1131/1718 and this work was prepared by him thirty years after his death. What is surprising is that Shâh Waliyullah recorded every item of information great and small, which his father had desired to be put into writing. Such retentive and strong was his memory.

The book al-Inshâh-fi-Salâsil Auliyâ’ Allah had been produced by him before his other famous work, Ta’limat. He has made such a reference there. He, in that book, has traced the lives of well-known Sufis with whom he was in some way connected outwardly and inwardly.

We have mentioned in the last chapter that when he was in Mecca and staying by the side of the Ka’bah, he was one night inspired to take up the work of presenting Islam in its true per-

13. Ta’limat, I, 127. Muqaddimah Farsiyyah li al-Khair-ul-Kathir,
15. Al-Khair-ul-Kathir, p. 87:
16. Tafsirat I, 236.
17. al-Juz-ul-Latif.
18. Anfas-ul-‘Arifin, p. 65:
19. Ta’limat, I, 236.
they would have been sufficient to keep his memory green and fresh for ever. The late Maulana 'Ubaiidullah Sindhi realized the importance and usefulness of the former after his visit to Europe. In his opinion this brief commentary is far superior to all other commentaries in explaining the desired meanings implied in the Qur'anic text.  

Al-Tashhimat-ul-Ilahiyyah, as the name itself signifies, comprises the Divine inspiration to him from time to time. The book is both instructive and informative. There appears to be some contradiction in it, but this can be removed when the matter is considered from all points of view. This book was written after Ḥujjatullah according to a reference, in the former. It was his dear colleague Khwaja Muhammad Amīn who made a collection of the contents of that book and set them in order.  

A small but useful treatise, entitled  As-Sirr-ul-Maktam Fi-Asbāb Tadwin-il-Ulam was composed by Shāh Waliyullah after the composition of this monumental work, Ḥujjatullah, as stated, by him in the former. Thus, it can be safely said to have been written after 1166/1753.

Similarly, it can be surmised that Ḥum-ul-'Aqīdah and 'Imdād Fi Ma'āthir-il-Ajdād were written by him during the same time, viz. after 1166/1753. Shāh Waliyullah left behind a great treasure of religious literature wherein various subjects have been discussed. He, therefore, might have thought it advisable to declare, at the end, his religious tenets in unequivocal terms, so...  

22. Ḥujjatullah, p. 72:

23. Tashkimāt, I. 236:

24. As-Sirr-ul-Maktam:

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as to eliminate the possibility of any adverse criticism against
him. In like manner, he found it worthwhile to put his chain of
lineage into writing for the sake of reference. Such items of
life are generally attended to at an advanced age.

Qurrat-ul-'Ainain fi Tafā'il-ish-Shaikhaīn seems to have been
prepared by him round about 1170/1756. Though by nature Shāh
Waliyullāh was inclined to the superiority of Ḥadrāt 'Āli, yet in
practice he was restrained by the Unseen Power from following
that view.25 He wrote that book at the request of his dear colleague
Khwājah Muḥammad Amin as it had become the subject of dis-
cussion and dispute in the country those days. Shāh Waliyullāh’s
approach to this delicate subject has been extremely just and
fair. He has, therefore, warned the readers against passing any
hasty judgment until it is thoroughly gone through with the
spirit of tolerance and the eye of impartiality.26

This work of his was followed in quick succession by his
other voluminous work entitled, ‘Izāla-ul-Khafā ‘an Khilāfat-
il-Khulafa’. In this book he has proved the right of Caliphate
for the Orthodox Caliphs and has shown through authentic Trad-
itions that the entertaining of belief in their Caliphate is one of
the principles of religion. What chiefly characterises it is the total
absence in it of any prejudice. The author has satisfied both the
sides, the Sunnīs as well as the Shi’āhs. Even otherwise, Shāh
Waliyullāh disliked preferring one to the other. His anxiety all
the time had been to see the Muslims very close, united and
disciplined. The work, therefore, may be taken to have been
finished by him a little after 1170/1756.27

The last work of Shāh Waliyullāh was al-Muṣaffā, a rather
fuller commentary on Muwaffā written in Persian. On account
of his occupations, he could not compile the important work during
his lifetime. Some six months after his death, a pious man one
night saw him in a dream and found him very anxious about the
publication of that book. When this news reached his dear student
Shaikh Muḥammad ‘Āshīq, he lost no time in arranging its scattered
pages. After having done that he informed Khwājah Muḥammad
Amin about it, who, keeping al-Muṣaffā before him, pre-
pared a fair copy of them. The work of arrangement and revision
of the manuscript came to completion on 18 Shawwal 1179/1765.28

The books he wrote and which are known so far are about
fifty. He finished all this work in a period of thirty years. What is
surprising to note is that the regular course of study, research and
teaching continued without a break. His purpose behind all this
was to serve Islam and the community. This is the reason why
his writings impress the readers so deeply.29

The books Tafṣīl-ul-Muwahhīdīn and al-Balāgh-ul-Mubīn
have also been seen included in the list of his books. The present
author has gone through them both. The former bears some
resemblance to his style, but it seems to be a clear case of attri-
bution. The latter is a work of a mediocre and is far below Shāh
Waliyullāh’s standard. It is, therefore, that the late Maulānā
‘Ubaḍullāh Sindhi used to say that it is not the work of Shāh
Waliyullāh, and wherever it be found, it should be torn into pieces
and thrown off. The possibility of the ascription of certain sayings
in some of his works cannot be completely ruled out.30

Some months before his death, during his last illness, he was in
Budhana, a village at a distance of about thirty miles from Meerut.

25. Fugād-ul-Haramain, Mashhad: 33;
26. Tafṣīl-ul-Dinain, p. 3,
27. Izāla-ul-Khafā ‘an Khilāfat-il-Khulafa’.-- وکثری اذ ترکنا وانسهما فضلنا علیا کرم الله وجه
رقعی اذ ترکنا وانسهما فضلنا علیا کرم الله وجه
29. Tafṣīl, II, 53.
30. Ibid., II, p. 45:
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The books Tuhfat-ul-Muwaḥḥidin and al-Balāgh-ul-Muhīn have also been seen included in the list of his books. The present author has gone through them both. The former bears some resemblance to his style, but it seems to be a clear case of attribution. The latter is a work of a mediocre and is far below Shāh Waliyullāh’s standard. It is, therefore, that the late Maulānā ‘Ubaidullāh Sindhi used to say that it is not the work of Shāh Waliyullāh, and wherever it be found, it should be torn into pieces and thrown off. The possibility of the ascription of certain sayings in some of his works cannot be completely ruled out.

Some months before his death, during his last illness, he was in Budhana, a village at a distance of about thirty miles from Meerut.

25. Fuyūd-ul-Hasamain, Mashhad: 33


27. Taṣliṣ-ul-Khafija:


30. Ibid., II, p. 45.

كل من ذهب إلى بلدة اجعيم أو إلى كرمال مسعود

Anfās-ul-‘Arifin, Urdu Translation, p. 28.

Here the expression is vulgar and cannot be taken as Shāh Waliyullāh’s utterance.
Chapter 4

TIMES AND CONDITIONS

The conditions of the country when Shāh Waliyullāh was born were extremely bad. There was political instability and the state of insecurity. The people had no peace of mind and no safety of life. Loot and plunder, feuds and fighting had spread everywhere. Disintegration had set in the Mughal Empire and the Muslims were split among themselves. Consequently, they suffered much at the hands of the Sikhs, Jats and Marathas.

When Aurangzeb 'Alamgir died, Shāh Waliyullāh was only four years old. No less than ten rulers ascended the throne one after the other during his lifetime. When Muhammad Shāh Ranīla sat on the throne he was seventeen years old. This happened in 1132/1719. A little before that, when Farrukhsair had taken the reins of rulership in his hands in 1125/1713, the conditions of the state had taken an ugly turn, as a result of which he lost his life.1

The rule of Muhammad Shāh was comparatively longer. He reigned from 1132/1719 to 1161/1768. He was pleasure-seeker and a great drunkard. On that account he was given the title of Rangīla. In spite of that, he had a taste for learning and held the learned in high regard. In Delhi alone, there were no less than twenty-two scholars of great repute. The Madrassah in which Shāh Waliyullāh used to teach was not large enough to accommodate the ever-increasing number of students. Muhammad Shāh, therefore, handed over the whole Muḥallāh of Shāh Jahān to the Madrassah for that purpose. The building of the Madrassah, neglected for long, could not, however, withstand the passage of time and in 1857 War of Independence was reduced to ruins; now no trace of it is visible.2

In 1152/1739 Delhi was attacked by Nādir Shāh. So much blood was shed and cruelties perpetrated that respectable families of the city, in order to save their honour, made up their minds to set themselves on fire (jawhar kardan). Shāh Waliyullāh restrained them from doing that and reminded them of the behaviour of Imām Ḥusain and his family. Nādir Shāh was, however, interested in loot and plunder, and for that he and his army did what they did. The result of that plunder was that the Muslims suffered the most, the infidels gained added strength, the ruler’s army weakened and Delhi reduced to children’s play. This can be testified from the letters Shāh Waliyullāh wrote to Ahmad Shāh Abdālī persuading him to invade India.3

After Muḥammad Shāh and before ‘Alam Shāh, two rulers, namely, Ahmad Shāh and ‘Alamgīr the Second, ascended the throne and ruled for six and five years, respectively. During the reign of Ahmad Shāh, Delhi was attacked by the Jats who took away what they could lay their hands on. Shāh Waliyullāh and his neighbours were, however, saved from the devastation. This shows how weak and helpless the government had become. Shāh Waliyullāh has made a mention of this tragic state of affairs in one of his letters which he wrote to Ḥāfic Jārullāh Punjabi when the latter was in Ḥijāz for Pilgrimage.4

Once when the conditions worsened and life became too bitter to live Shāh Waliyullāh’s dear student Shaikh Muḥammad ‘Ashiq sought his advice in connection with the observance of seclusion in the mosque (ṭūkāf) in the village Pulhā, his birth-place. Shāh Waliyullāh in his answer wrote to him that to leave home (Delhi) in those circumstances was repugnant to the beneficial contingency (Maṣliḥah). This was a clear proof of his courage to face the situation however grave it be.5

In another letter he has given an account of his meeting with Ahmad Shāh. It also shows that he was an extraordinary personality respected by the rulers and well versed in state politics.6

When Shāh ‘Alam ascended the throne the conditions deteriorated further and went beyond control. The main cause of all that disorder and confusion was disunity and mutual rivalries among the ruling clique. Besides, there were other evils of all kinds rampant everywhere.7

Shāh Waliyullāh, therefore, came into contact with persons in authority. He would send them his suggestions which generally made them firm and steadfast against possible threats. They also consulted him and sought his advice on many occasions, and often pleaded him to pray for their safety and victory. Among them all, Najīb-ud-Dawlah wielded great influence. He was an able administrator and a brave general. Gallantry, political ability, foresight, and state administration were his chief qualities. Shāh Waliyullāh’s establishing connections with him was a sign of his awareness of the prevalent political situation.8

Once when Ṣāfīd Jang conspired with the Jats against the government, Najīb-ud-Dawlah, who had a very great regard for Shāh Waliyullāh, wrote him a letter and apprised him of the situation created. He, in his reply, gave him consolation and informed him that the defeat of the Jats had been already decided in the higher world, and, therefore, there was no cause to worry. He further told him that if some Muslims had joined hands with them, there was no reason to feel afraid.9

Shāh Waliyullāh had pinned his hopes on Najīb-ud-Dawlah as he was the only top official who had the ability and tact to run the administration smoothly in the face of enemies within and

3. Ibid.; Khāliq Ahmad Niẓāmī, Shāh Waliyullāh Kay Siyāsī Makhārāt, p. 52.
5. Ibid., p. 77.
6. Ibid., p. 33.
7. Ḥufufi’llah-ul-Bālighah, I, 103; Niẓāmī, op. cit., p. 3.
without. Najib-ud-Dawlab, who actually felt the need of consulting Shah Waliyullah in times of trial and tribulation, used to help the latter financially when asked for. This is testified by the letter once Shah Waliyullah wrote to Sayyid Abu Sa'id.10

Jats, Marathas and Sikhs had wrought havoc and were a constant danger to the life and property of the Muslims. They were a standing threat to the state itself. It is, therefore, not surprising that addressing Najib-ud-Dawlab as the Rahib-ul-Mujahidin and Amir-ul-Ghuzzat he pointedly drew his attention to the fact that until and unless these three warring people were completely suppressed and wiped out, no ruler could sit on the throne with peace and security. He further told him to remember that in the fight with the enemies, sometimes one wins and sometimes loses, and on that account one need not feel discouraged and disappointed.11

Najib-ud-Dawlab (1119-1185/1707-1771) hailed from Peshawar where he was born, but finding no prospects there, he came to the Indian capital, joined military service and steadily rose from rank to rank. He played such an important role in politics that he became directly attached to the rulers and very soon became their chief consultant in state affairs.12

The guerrilla activities of the Marathas and other insidels increased considerably. Both the Muslims and the state could not withstand their repeated attacks any longer. On one occasion Shah Waliyullah was forced to flee from Meerut to Pulh to save himself from the attack of the Marathas. He has referred to this incident in his letter addressed to Sayyid Abu Sa'id.13

Finding no other way to get out of this critical situation, he wrote a letter to Ahmad Shah Abdali, through Najib-ud-Dawlab, to attack India. He in his letter encouraged him and pleaded him to launch upon that military campaign, as it was the only course to save the Muslim community and the crippling state from complete ruin. It was his shrewdness that he chose Najib-ud-Dawlab as an agency through whom he corresponded with Ahmad Shah Abdali, as the former was the real authority to act on behalf of the government. Besides, his invitation to Abdali, who was a tried and able politician, for that expedition was a clear proof of his knowledge of the political situation of the country. He very clearly furnished him with a detailed account of the geographical situation of India, the economic condition of the people and of the showy military strength of the rival parties by way of persuasion and encouragement. All this shows that he was not only a religious scholar, but a great statesman and a seasoned politician as well.14

In his lengthy letter, had informed Abdali of the mutual enemy between the Amir's and Viziers and the lack of coordination among them. This he purposefully did to help him prepare his plan in the light of this information. That useful information certainly emboldened and inspired Abdali with hopes of success in his mission. The general accordingly decided to set out to India to teach a lesson to the insidels.

At last Ahmad Shah Abdali made an all-out attack on India in 1764-75/1760-1761. The battle took place in the plains of Kulah. The Marathas, despite their great military might, suffered a crushing defeat. Their losses were terrible and their power was completely broken. They could not rise for some time to come. This was a golden opportunity for the Muslims to avail of, against all expectations they remained where they were. Numerous independent petty kingdoms were established in the

10. See May 1965 issue of Al-Ra'is, for an article by Maulana Nasir Ahmad Faqhi Amrohi in reference to Shah Waliyullah's letter to Sayyid Abu Sa'id:


12. Ibid., pp. 199-203.

13. See Maulana Nasir Ahmad's article, op. cit.

country and the centre remained as weak as before.  

In the fight at Panipat and the victory of the Muslims there was the materialisation of the dream Shāh Waliyullāh had seen in 1144/1731 in Mecca. In the ordinary course the extreme limit fixed for a dream's materialisation is said to be twenty years. The reason behind such limit is that when the Prophet Joseph saw in a dream the eleven stars, the sun and the moon prostrating before him he was seven years old, but his dream came out to be true when he was twenty-seven. On that basis, the dream-interpreters have fixed twenty years as the maximum limit for the materialisation of a dream. But Shāh Waliyullāh's dream took practical shape after thirty years, and this, curiously enough, ran counter to the regular course.

Let it be remembered that Ahmad Shāh Abdālī attacked India many a time. The battle of Panipat was his sixth campaign against India, followed by three more. He was in the company of Nādir Shāh when the latter attacked Delhi. At that time he held a high position. Nādir Shāh had full confidence in him, and on his death Ahmad Shāh became the ruler. Thus, he was largely acquainted with conditions obtaining then in India. Whether he possessed the qualities of a just and God-fearing ruler is a different thing, but it is a fact that he was the only person to save the Muslims and the empire from falling into the hands of the infidels. Shāh Waliyullāh's sole anxiety at that time was to achieve deliverance from the prevalent trials and troubles for some time, and he in that respect met with success.

Shāh Waliyullāh's political activities through his letters addressed to rulers, responsible officers, Nawābs and his friends have been collected by Professor Khāliq Ahmad Niẓāmī in his book: Shāh Waliyullāh Kay Silāsī Maktabāt, a study of which is recommended to readers interested in the subject.

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15. Ibid., p. 19.
16. Fawā'id-ul-Horā'main, Mashhad, 44.

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Times and Conditions

It appears from what has been mentioned above that Shāh Waliyullāh did not confine his activities to preaching and writing of books only. He remained vigilant and watchful all the time towards the changes in the political situation of the country. Islam could maintain its pristine purity and flourish only when there is a strong political power behind it. He had seen that the fate of the Mughal Empire was sealed and the creation of a powerful centre was out of question, but he thought that immediate suppression of the Marathas and other trouble-makers was the need of the time. This purpose was adequately served by the battle of Panipat.

Economic Conditions. The economic conditions of the country in the days of Shāh Waliyullāh were deplorable. They invariably affected the morality of people. There were, however, many causes for the deterioration of the economic conditions. Some of these are given below.

1. Exploitation. The rich continued to exploit the poor and the weak with the result that wealth remained confined in the hands of a few persons.
2. Life of Luxury. The influential and the high-ups lived a life of extreme ease and comfort. This brought in its wake utmost and misery for the lower class, the downtrodden.
3. Imposition of Taxes. Heavy taxes were levied upon traders, artisans and labourers.
4. Jāğirdārī. Jāğirdārī system sucked the blood of the workers just to add to the luxuries of the owners of Jāğirs.
5. Khāliṣah Territory. Reduction in the area of Khāliṣah territory badly affected the state exchequer.
6. Distribution of Labour. Improper distribution of labour badly upset the economic order.

In addition to these, there were other evils which had shaken the economic system completely. For an improved and reformed economy, Shāh Waliyullāh thought it necessary that the basic necessities of life be provided to the people. That state would be considered a welfare state where this is done. And the establishment of such a state can be visualised only when every man
works with his own hands to earn his living, and not be a burden on others and the state. 18

A corrupt government which neglects satisfying the basic needs of life, says Shāh Waliyullāh, should and must be overthrown, by every hook and crook. If it is allowed to continue, its corruption will spread like a cancer first in some members of the administration, which, if it is not cut out from its very root, will go on spreading till the whole body will disintegrate. 19

Religious Conditions. Like the economic conditions, the social and the religious conditions of that time were far from satisfying. The life the Muslims led was radically opposed to the spirit of Islam and its teachings. Total absence of unity and lack of discipline kept them poles apart and at daggers drawn. No research and investigation was made even by the learned in the affairs of religion as to solve the problems emerging from time to time. They stuck to blind imitation with the result that they failed to face the hard realities. Hindu Vedantism, the Shi‘ite tendencies and the vile innovations had prevailed upon them. The speeches of the preachers were always blended with unsuitable hints of mysticism which led them astray from the right path. The Holy Qur‘ān was recited simply for blessing and was kept covered with precious cloth. The opinion of the ‘Imām was preferred to the Traditions when the former was found in clash with the latter. Serious thinking and independent approach to the law were recklessly ignored, with the result that they fell an easy prey to superstition and innovation. 20

Sūfis were hollow, had no knowledge of the Holy Qur‘ān and the Traditions. Despite that, their views were preferred to the plain words of the law. In the gatherings of the elite and the educated, Sūfism, Sūfistic poetry and the hints of the Sūfis were the pet topics. Consequently they became inactive and lethargic.

Rationalism and philosophy had considerably influenced the people with the result that doubts were created in their minds about the truth of religion. Thus, they began to test everything at the touchstone of reason. Shāh Waliyullāh presented true philosophy before them, brought it near to their understanding and showed to them that philosophy proper is one which is enshrined in the teachings of the Prophets. 21

Similarly, the controversies between the Shi‘ahs and Sunnis had placed them in opposite camps, and had, besides, sown in them the seeds of hatred and prejudice. In order to end such controversies he prepared Isālat-ul-Khulafā‘ An Khilafat-ul-Khulafā‘ which, when read dispassionately, appeals and satisfies both the sides. Shāh Waliyullāh’s writings are above bias and free from the colour of emotionalism.

18. Al-Budar-al Bāzīghah:

- - - انما الا خلق بالاحوال لا بالعلم -
   Ḥujjatullah, I, 25:
   - - - ومن اعظم الاسباب لفاساد المدارس ان يتضب واحد على الآخر به
   معيته.

   Taḥḥimāt, I, 218:
   - - - وأتخباو فيه ما يكتفوه ولاتكونوا كلا على الناس و على الخلافاء
   Khāliṣah means a reserve the income of which directly goes to the
   state treasury.

19. Ḥujjatullah, II, 170-71:

- - - المدن الفاسدة يلبب عليها نفس سمعة و يكون لهم نفع شديد الها
   هو منزلة الاكلة فين الناس لا يمح الناسها إلا ينفع

21. Ibid., II, 82, 83, 208; al-Khair-ul-Kathir, p. 130:
It was the birth-place of Maulvi 'Abd-ul-Hayy. When his condition became serious he came to Delhi on 9 Dhul-Hajj 1175/176 for medical treatment. He stayed in the house of Bhai Faizullah. Shāh Waliyullah was very kind to his friends and disciples and always remembered them. He remembered his dear disciple Shāh Abū Sa'id Ḥasanī even in this critical moment and wished he may arrive soon. He, however, could not recover from that illness and died in Delhi on Saturday at noon, 20th of Muharram 1176/1762 when he was sixty-one years and four months old. At the time of his death, his two elder sons and his disciples and close friends, such as Muhammad 'Āshīq an-Nawawī and Muhammad Amin, were present.

Chapter 4
TIMES AND CONDITIONS

The conditions of the country when Shāh Waliyullah was born were extremely bad. There was political instability and the state of insecurity. The people had no peace of mind and no safety of life. Loot and plunder, sedition and fighting had spread everywhere. Disintegration had set in the Mughal Empire and the Muslims were split among themselves. Consequently, they suffered much at the hands of the Sikhs, Jats and Marathas.

When Aurangzeb 'Ālamgīr died, Shāh Waliyullah was only four years old. No less than ten rulers ascended the throne one after the other during his lifetime. When Muḥammad Shāh Rangīla sat on the throne he was seventeen years old. This happened in 1132/1719. A little before that, when Farrukhsair had taken the reins of rulership in his hands in 1125/1713 the conditions of the state had taken an ugly turn, as a result of which he lost his life.

The rule of Muḥammad Shāh was comparatively longer. He reigned from 1132/1719 to 1161/1768. He was pleasure-seeker and a great drunkard. On that account he was given the title of Rangīla. In spite of that, he had a taste for learning and held the learned in high regard. In Delhi alone, there were no less than twenty-two scholars of great repute. The Madrassah in which Shāh Waliyullah used to teach was not large enough to accommodate the ever-increasing number of students. Muḥammad Shāh, therefore, handed over the whole Muḥallā of Shāh Jahān to the Madrassah for that purpose. The building of the Madrassah, neglected for long, could not, however, stand the passage of time and in 1857 War of Independence was reduced to ruins; now no trace of it is visible.

31. See the letter of Sayyid Muḥammad 'Umar Ḥasanī written to Shāh Abū Sa'id Ḥasanī, in the August issue of the monthly magazīn Al-Rašīd, Hyderabad, Pakistan.

1. Anfās-ul-'Irjīn, p. 87.
2. Miftāḥul-'Aṣārīyāh
In 1152/1739 Delhi was attacked by Nādir Shāh. So much blood was shed and cruelties perpetrated that respectable families of the city, in order to save their honour, made up their minds to set themselves to fire (jāhwār kārdān). Shāh Waliyullāh restrained them from doing that and reminded them of the behaviour of Imām Husain and his family. Nādir Shāh was, however, interested in loot and plunder, and for that he and his army did what they did. The result of that plunder was that the Muslims suffered the most, the infidels gained added strength, the ruler’s army weakened and Delhi reduced to children’s play. This can be testified from the letters Shāh Waliyullāh wrote to ‘Alam Shāh, Shāh Abdālī persuading him to invade India.

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16. Payyay al-Haramain, Mashhad, 44.

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19. Tafhīmāt, I, 218:

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21. Ibid., II, 82, 83, 208; al-Khawāṣṣ-ul-Khākīr, p. 130:

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