

UNIVERSITY OF KARACHI



PAKISTAN STUDIES

BSCS-313

Name of Student: MUHAMMAD AMAS WASEEM

Class Roll No: 35

Semester No: 1st

Batch: 2021-2022

DEPARTMENT OF COMPUTER SCIENCE

UNIVERSITY OF KARACHI

Role of Ulema in Organizing the Muslim Society in Sub-Continent:

The Muslim scholars played a vital role in organizing the Muslim society in India. When the Muslim Society was established, scholars from the Muslim states of Central Asia entered India in a large number. These scholars of Islam played a decisive role in making Lahore and Multan in Punjab, Deebal and Mansoor in Sindh and Ajmer and Delhi in Northern India the centers of Islamic culture and civilization in India. Qazi Abu Mohammad Mansoori, Abu Mashir Sindhi and Rija Sindhi, rendering the Islamic services, became very famous in this regard.

Sheikh Ismail, initiating preaching of Islam first time in Punjab, played a crucial part in stabilizing Muslim society in India. Abu Hassan Lahori stressed upon the teaching of Hadiths but the history-maker was Ali Hajveri Data Ganj Buksh who was born in 1009 and died in 1070. Raziuddin Hassan Sifani was the expert of knowledge of Hadiths and his famous work *Mashariqul-Anwar* remained as an authority on knowledge of Hadiths for a long time. He appointed Qazi Minhajuddin Siraj as the court justice who showed absolute realism and established everlasting examples of the Islamic mode of justice. His book *Tabaqat-e-Nasiri* is also a source of fame for Minhajuddin.

The greatest literary personality of the Ghayasuddin Balban period was Maulana Burhanuddin Alki who wrote *Mashariqul Anwar* and *Fiqah-e-Hidaya* which became an important base for Islamic instructions in India.

Maulana Mugheesuddin Bayanvi was not only the court man of King Alauddin Khilji but was also the court justice. He defended Hindus by saying that receiving Jazia (tribute) from Hindus is not just.

The academic works were performed by Sheikh Ali Mahaimi; a follower of the Philosophy of *Wahdat-ul-Wajood* (i.e., God is one) include *Tafseer-ur-Rehman* (i.e., the interpretation of Holy Quran in Arabic) and the interpretations of famous books by Shahabuddin and Sheikh Ibn-e-Arabi. These books were included in the syllabus of religious institutions.

Role of Sufis in Organizing the Muslim Society in Sub-Continent:

In the preservations of Islam, its beliefs and tenets, firstly the ulema and secondly the Sufis played a dominant role. The Sufis worked most diligently in the most obscure places among the masses, generation after generation, not only to preserve the inner spirit of Islam among the Muslims but also to win thousands of converts from the downtrodden Hindu masses to whom even elementary human rights had been denied by their co-religionists.

The spread of Islam in the Sub-Continent is the story of the untiring efforts of numerous saints and Sufis who dedicated their lives to the cause of service to humanity. By the time the Muslim empire was established in Delhi, Sufi fraternities had come into being and the Sufi influence was more powerful than it was in earlier days under the Arabs in Sindh.

Sufism-Its Birth and Development:

The Islamic mysticism, known as Tasawwuf or Sufism, was as old as Islam itself, it was no doubt born in the bosom of Islam and had no creed or dogma other than that of Islam. It is said that during the very life-time of Mohammad (PBUH) there were some men of virtue and of retiring nature who embraced Islam with pleasure and made efforts to seek personal communion with God through self-surrender, meditation and total dedication to the service of mankind. Such liberal minded men of God drew their inspiration from the Quran and the life of the Prophet (PBUH) but instead of parading about their religious orthodoxy, they laid greater stress on the purification of one's inner-self in order to attain lasting spiritual bliss. These Companions (Sahaba) of Prophet (PBUH) were commonly called Ashab al Suff-or 'People of the Bench'.

Various attempts have been made to define the term Sufi which came to be employed sometime in the ninth century for those of the men of piety and mystics among the Muslims who, unmindful of the formalism and social restrictions of the materialistic world 'adored God above all things and who were so much absorbed in their meditation to God that even 'a moment's diversion

from the thought of the Absolute was unbearable to them. According to some, the term Sufi was derived from Safa (pure) because of the purity of their hearts, purity of their thoughts and the nobility of their actions. Others derive the term from saf (line, queue) and hold that the Sufis were so called because they were in the forefront of the line or queue before God through the elevation of their desires towards Him and the turning of their hearts into Him'. According to a third definition, the term Sufi has been derived from the word Suffa (a bench) as the honorable character and qualities of these saints were similar to those of Ashab al Suff who were attached to the Prophet and lived strictly puritan lives. The term Sufi also bears resemblance with the word suf or coarse wool, suggesting thereby that the Sufis might have been so called because of their habit of wearing a woolen blanket or a loose all-purpose sheet of cloth.

Sufis in India:

The advent of Sufis in India dates back to the Arab conquest of Sindh. It is believed that some of the Sufi saints might have penetrated into different parts of the country during this very period. After the establishment of the Muslim rule in Northern India, the Sufis, from the Muslim countries of Central Asia, began to migrate to this country in large numbers as the peaceful missionaries of Islam. They dedicated their lives to the service of mankind and the spread of the Islamic faith. The propagation of Islam was regarded by them to be the greatest and most valuable service to be rendered to the people; to lead them from darkness to light and to convert the dar-ul-harb (the home of atheism) into dar-ul-Islam (the home of Islam) was the highest mission of their lives.

The Sufis set up their abode in the residential quarters or colonies of the low castes on the boundary of the Hindu towns. Their first object was to win their love and confidence and reconcile them to the Muslim rule. Secondly, they persuaded them to embrace Islam on merit. The Sultanate of Delhi was confined to only a part of India for most of the time but the Sufis spread themselves throughout the country and carried on peaceful propagation of Islam.

Major Sufi orders (Silsila's):

The Sufis organized themselves in orders (Silsila's) and established khanqahs (hospices) after the fall of Baghdad, when the Muslim political power was at its longest ebb the Sufis look upon themselves the great task of revitalizing Muslim society thought an organized spiritual discipline. among the Sufi Silsila's mention may be made of the Qadiriya, founded by Sheikh Abdul Qadir Gillani (1077-1166) which did not make much headway in the subcontinent during the Sultanate period. The Naqsh-bandiya called after Khwaja Banauddin Naqshband (d. 1388) was also late in reaching the Indo-Pakistan Sub-continent. The other two great fraternities that established themselves very early in Muslim India were the Suhrawardiya and the Chishtiya. They were chiefly responsible for the propagation of Islam among the masses. These two Silsila's came almost simultaneously with the foundation of the Sultanate of Delhi. Within a short period, they established their Khanqahs from Multan to Lakh Nauti.

Shah Waliullah (1703-62)

In the 18th century, Islam in the Sub-continent was faced with menacing problems. Sectarian conflict, the low moral tone of the society, poor understanding of the Holy Quran, and general ignorance of Islam were just some of the issues which gave rise to fear that political collapse would be accompanied by religious disintegration. This did not happen; rather an era of religious regeneration was inaugurated, which was due more than anything else to the activities of one man, Shah Waliullah.

Early ages of Shah Waliullah:

Shah Waliullah was born on the 21st of February. 1703 CE, in the town of Phulat in Muzaffarnagar, Uttar Pradesh, India. His father, Shah Abdur Rahman was a great scholar and a mystic. He named his boy Qutub Uddin Ahmad. The name Shah Waliullah is given to him by people because Waliullah means "close to God". So, his complete name was Shah Waliullah Qutub Uddin Ahmad.

Education & Training:

His father took special pain in the education and the training of his son. Shah Waliullah was introduced to Islamic education at the age of five and completed the recitation of the Qur'an by the age of seven. At the special age of 15 Hazrat Shah Waliullah had completed his education and then became a disciple (mureed) of his father who gave him spiritual training. When he was 17, his father died, for 12 years he taught in the fashion of his father.

Pilgrimage to Makkah:

In 1143 H.E the 23-year-old Shah Waliullah decided to perform the pilgrimage to Makkah. Despite the perils (Dangerous Journey) that lay on the journey; he reached Mecca on 14 Dhul Qada 1143 H.E. and performed the Hajj and then proceeded to Medina. There, he attended the discourses on Sahih Al Bukhari from Sheikh Abu Tahir Muhammad Bin Ibrahim Kurdi Madani. The Sheikh directed him in the study of the six Sahihs (Bukhari, Muslim, Tirmidhi, Abu Dawood, Nasa'i, Ibn Ma'ajah), He returned to Makkah, performed the hajj again and learned the Muwatta Imam Maalik from Sheikh Wafadullah Maliki Makki, attended the discourses on Sahih Al Bukhari from Sheikh Tajuddin Hanafi Qalaei Makki for a few days and learned the six Sahihs from him. He was granted permission to teach all the books of hadith by Sheikh Tajuddin.

After 14 months of stay in Arabia, two hajj pilgrimages and learning the books of hadith from the scholars of the holy cities, Shah Waliullah finally returned to India in early 1145 H.E the journey home lasted six months and he reached Delhi on Friday 14 Rajab 1145 H.E On reaching home, he started teaching again and writing until his death three decades later.

Weaknesses of Muslims of subcontinent (realized by Shah Waliullah):

- I. Muslims were not following Islam according to its true teaching because they didn't understand it properly.
- II. Muslims were divided among themselves on the basis of different sects.
- III. Muslims were indulging themselves in the luxuries of life.
- IV. Muslims were losing status and their rule in Sub continent because of loss of political power.

Religious Services of Waliullah

Quran Translation into The Persian Language:

The most monumental task Shah Waliullah performed was to translate the Quran from Arabic to Persian which was the language spoken by the Muslims at that time in India. His aim was that educated Muslims may have access to the Quran without depending on the scholars who had opposed his reformatory measures. The short-sighted ulema gathered and wanted to kill him for his sin of translating the Quran from Arabic to Persian but he continued with his task till he completed it. This task was appreciated by Allah so much so that the Quran is translated to many languages.

Arrangement of Hadith:

Shah Waliullah termed the hadith collection by Imam Muttah as the most authentic and wrote its commentary in Arabic and Persian. Shah Waliullah also arranged the Hadith in respect of their topics. In addition, he worked for the renaissance of Islam. He propagated that Islam was a universal power and thus the Muslims should be the dominant force in the Sub-continent and elsewhere.

Ijtihad:

Shah Waliullah trained students in different branches of Islamic knowledge and entrusted them with the teaching of students. He recommended the application of Ijtihad against blind Taqlid in his famous work “Aqad-al-Jaiyad-fi-Ahkam-al-Ijtihad wa-al-Taqlid”.

Fiqah:

He studied the writings of each school-of-thought to understand their point of view, and then wrote comprehensive volumes about what is fair and just in light of the teachings of Islam. He adopted an analytical and balanced approach towards four major school-of-thought of Mysticism (Fiqah). He worked out a system of thought, beliefs and values, on which all but the extremists could agree. He thus provided a spiritual basis for national cohesion.

Integration of Islamic Culture:

Shah Waliullah was strongly opposed to integration of Islamic culture in the cultural cauldron of the sub-continent and wanted the Muslims to ensure their distance from it. Istiaq Hussain Qureshi writes in The Muslim Community of Indo-Pakistan subcontinent;

“Waliullah did not want the Muslims to become part of the general milieu of the subcontinent. He wanted them to keep alive their relation with rest of the Muslim world so that the spring of their inspiration and ideals might ever remain located in Islam and tradition of world community developed by it”

In his opinion the health of Muslim society demanded that doctrines and values included by Islam should be maintained in their pristine purity unsullied by extraneous influences.

Shias And Sunnis Enmity:

In his time Shias and Sunnis were aggressively hostile to each other and their rivalry was damaging the Muslim unity. Shah sahib wrote books in order to remove misunderstanding between Shias and Sunnis. He refused to denounce Shias as heretics.

Books:

Shah Waliullah wrote many books throughout his life on religion. The main purpose behind all the books was to make the teachings of Islam understandable to most of the Muslims. His two most famous works are "Hujjat-ul-il-Baligha" and "Izlatul Kahfa".

1) Hujjat-ullah-il-Balighah:

Apart from the Holy Quran, Shah Waliullah also wrote authentic books on Hadith, the principles of Hadith, Tafseer and on mystical subjects. But the most popular book is "Hujjat-ullah-il-Balighah". This book explains how Islam was found suitable for all races, cultures and people of the world and how successfully it solves social, moral, economic, and political problems of human beings.

2)Izalat-ul-AKhafa:

In 'Izalat-ul-AKhafa' and Khilafat-al-Khulafa, Shah Waliullah attempts to demonstrate the fundamental importance of this early model of Khilafah, as one of the cardinal principles of religion.

Al Fauzul Kabeer Fee Usool:

Al Fauzul Kabeer Fee Usool at Tafseer, a booklet in Persian that follows his Persian translation of the Qur'an. It contains the nucleus of the Qur'an, the rules for interpretation, and interpretations of the Qur'an by other famous scholars.

Political Services of Waliullah

Although he was a religious scholar, he didn't stop there. He wanted to remove Marathas from the throne of Delhi. To overpower Marathas, he requested Ahmed Shah Abdali of Persia to invade India, defeat Marathas and restore Muslim rule India. He wrote to Ahmad Shah Abdali;

“All control of power is with the Hindus because they are the only people who are industrious and adaptable. Riches and prosper are theirs, while Muslims have nothing but poverty and misery. At this juncture you are the only person, who has the initiative, the foresight, the power and capability to defeat the enemy and free the Muslims from the clutches in the infidels. God forbid if their domination continues, Muslims will even forget Islam and become undistinguishable from the non-Muslims...”

Ahmed Shah Abdali came in 1761 and defeated Marathas the famous battlefield of "Panipat" near Delhi. This battle is known as the third battle of Panipat. Ahmed Shah Abdali although removed Marathas but did not stay in India so once again Delhi went under the weak administration of Mughals.

Two Nation Theory:

After Mujaddid Alf Sani, Shah Waliullah worked for the unity of Muslims and to develop separate National identity. He created separate National identity among Muslims and convinced them to fight for their rights. Shah Sahib rejected combine unity and ensured Religion as only identification of Muslims. The religio-political ideology of Shah Waliullah made a permanent crack in Hindu-Muslim relation in this sub-continent, which undermined the self-pride and dignity of integrated Indian society.

Analyzing his political thought, Iqbal states:

"The Prophetic method of teaching, according to Shah Waliullah is that generally speaking, the law revealed by a prophet takes especial notice of the habits, ways and peculiarities of the people to whom he is specifically sent. The Prophet who aims at all-embracing principles, however, can neither reveal different peoples nor leave them to work out their own rules of conduct. His method is to train one particular people and to use it as a nucleus for the build-up of a universal 'Shariah'. In doing so, he accentuates the principles underlying the social life of all mankind and applies them to concrete cases in the light of the specific habits of the people immediately before him."

("Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam")

Social Services of Waliullah

Reorienting the Muslim Society:

Shah Waliullah directed his teachings towards reorienting the Muslim society with the concepts of basic social justice, removing social inequalities, and balancing the iniquitous distribution of wealth. He established several branches of his school at Delhi for effective dissemination of his ideas. In his book "Hujjat-ullah-il-Balighah". These were;

- I. Pressure on public treasury, the emoluments given to various people who render no service to the state.
- II. Heavy taxation on peasants, merchants and workers, with the result the tax evasion was rampant. According to Shah Waliullah, a state can prosper only if there were light and reasonable taxes.

Letters By Shah Waliullah:

He wrote open letters to:

- Mughal rulers, to give up their corrupt and inefficient practices.
- Soldiers, for forgetting to inculcate within themselves the spirit of Jihad.
- Artisans, workers and peasants, reminded them that on their labors the economic prosperity of the state depends.
- The Emperor, to teach a lesson to the Jats threatening the Mughal Empire and also wrote to him not to give jagirs to mansabdars, who were not loyal to the state.
- Masses, to be conscious of their duties and not to indulge in the accumulation of wealth.

Message of Shah Waliullah:

The first message Shah Waliullah spread amongst the Muslims was regarding unity. He said that one of the major causes behind the decline of Muslims in the subcontinent is the disintegration and disunity amongst them. He Further stated that Shias are not "Kafirs" and are Muslims. He said this division between them has weakened Muslims. That is why other nations like Marathas are becoming stronger and overtaking Muslims.

Death:

After a lifetime devoted to teaching and writing about Islam. He died in Delhi in the year 1176 AH/ 1762 AD, at Zuhri prayer in old Delhi behind the central jail. The Muslim leader and reformer were 59 years old. He was buried in "Munhadiyan," a famous graveyard in India, next to his father. There is a vast ground and a graveyard known popularly as "Mehindin Kakhitta" which contains in it the grave of Shah Waliullah and his progeny.

Shah Waliullah's Final Will:

“The final will of this humble servant of Allah is that always hold tightly to the Quran and Sunnah in your beliefs and acts. Regularly evaluate yourself against them. Read them regularly and if you can't, then find someone who can listen to at least a couple of pages every day”

Conclusion:

Shah Waliullah was one of the most important religious reformers of the Subcontinent. There are other reformers as well however Shah Waliullah is the most prominent amongst them. Due to the sincere and dedicated efforts of Shah Waliullah and his family, the illustrious banner of Islam kept flying over the Indian subcontinent despite the decline and fall of the Mughal empire. He not only tried to bring Muslims closer to their religion but he had a complete chalked-out plan for the restoration of Muslim power in India. Another distinction he has is that he propagated such ideals which were long-lasting and applicable at any time. For example, unity of Muslims and proper understanding of Islam by them.

Shah Waliullah was a great Muslim reformist of the 18th century in India. He was a brilliant thinker and scholar with critical insight into the political scenario of that time. He worked for the betterment and true education of Muslims on the right Islamic norms. At that time in the Muslims after ruling India magnificently were going to lose power. The decline of Muslim rule in India had already begun and Muslims were being exploited at every face of life. To bring Muslims of India on the right path and help them Shah Waliullah worked hard.

REFERENCES:

Most of the material is extract out from internet and book including the Wikipedia. Following are some references and links where the given topics have been studied.

- “Pakistan Studies” By Dr Muhammad Azam Chaudhary.
- “Pakistan Studies” By Gul Shahzad Serwar.
- “The Muslim Community of Indo-Pakistan Subcontinent” by Istiaq Hussain Qureshi.
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shah_Waliullah_Dehlawi
- http://www.uop.edu.pk/ocontents/Pakistan_Affairs_Studies_Notes_Book_for.pdf
- <http://www.cssforum.com.pk/css-optional-subjects/group-iv/history-pakistan-india/15368-shah-wali-ullah.html>
- <http://pak-studies4bcomi.blogspot.com/2012/06/role-of-ulema-in-organizing-muslim.html?m=1>