



# SHAH WALIYULLAH MUHADDITH DEHLAWI (Rah.) IN THE FIELD OF HADITH LITERATURE

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## Abstract

*Ahmad bin 'Abd al-Rahim knows as shah Waliyullah (1703-1762 A.D.) was a great Islamic scholar and reformer of Muslim society of the eighteenth century India. He worked for the revival of Muslim rule and intellectual learning in South Asia, during a time of waning Muslim power. Shah waliyullah Dehlawi states in his greatest work Hujjah Allah al-Balighah that "the crown of all infallible knowledge and the source and foundation of religious branches of learning is the science of hadith which gives us an account of the sayings and doings of the noble Prophet as well as tells us of his tacit approval of the things done in his presence. The hadith are like luminous torches in the surrounding darkness, the milestones of guidance or like the brilliant moon shedding light in a gloomy night. One who follows them finds guidance and is blessed with merit and those who disregard them are misguided and ruined. For the life of the holy Prophet (S.A.S.) is the infinite source of divine commandments and prohibitions, admonitions and glad tidings and instructions and God's remembrance, the hadith abound in all these matter like the Qur'an or even to a greater extent. During the period of Shah waliyullah, India had disintegrated in to a number of mutually hostile principalities which tended to claim independence of the central authority of Delhi one after the other. India lost power and glory, due to their weakness, follies, malice, hostility of their cunning foes and the rising influence of the militant Maratha, Sikh and Hindu communities. The dreadful fall of the Muslim empire in Spain in 1492 was utter despond and despondency for Muslims. In this time the birth of Shah waliyullah was the providential favour to humanity and reformers emerge. The most outstanding institutions of Muslim education that thrived in the Sub-continent during the 19<sup>th</sup> century were: Deoband, Farangi Mahal, Nadwatu-al 'Ulama', 'Aligarh and others-have all claimed the intellectual and spiritual influence of Shah waliyullah, provided the educational programmers, spiritual training and moral reform of the society at large, produced specialists in the religious disciplines and other branches of knowledge, responded to the needs of Muslim scholars in various basic Islamic sciences, such as Tafsir, Hadith, Fiqah, Usulu-al-Fiqah, Kalam, Philosophy, logic, language, Syntax, Morphology and Rhetoric, those which were*

made almost exclusively by those scholars whose academic genealogy is traceable, directly or indirectly, to Shah waliyullah Dehlawi (R.A.).

**Key Words:** *Hadith, Luminous, Gloomy, Ruined, Prohibition, Tafsir, Fiqah, Rhetoric.*

**Introduction:** The period of 12<sup>th</sup> century was a big fall of intoxication and flourishing state when, the crown of knowledge & excellence, authority of science & field of knowledge for research workers were great, one of the elite Scholars of the Tradition, Jurist of Islam, Shah waliyullah (Rah) with his device strategy and full blandishment of wisdom remembered the forgetting lessons of Muslims. He presented before people the real picture of Islam after clearing the dusts of innovations & Polytheism laid down on Monotheism and Sunnah. He gave birth the real taste of revealed books and Sunnah among people, Suffering from hundreds sorts of innovations and superstitions. He laid the correct foundation of Islamic law tradition, investigation of Juristic issues of four Schools of thought. He presented the secrets of Traditions and expedience of reinforcements so nicely that as if it was the part all due to him. He delivered scholarly speech in civility, Mysticism and Dogma and immaculate this arts from the innovations and nonsense of modern writers.

Who was he? Which position of nobility, greatness and sublimity rank had he hold? According to Nawab Siddiqe Hasan Khan as relevant of it is enough:

*Agar Wajud Aw Darsadar Dar Zamana Madi Mi Bud-I*

*Imamul Aimmah Wa Tajul Muhaddithin Shamurah Mi Shud-ii*

**Meaning:** It would be legal justice; that the mighty existence of this sacred & holy soul would be in past time then he would must, not only, be confessed as the guide and leader of all the jurists; rather he would be made the crown of them and would be get the precious and weighty title as the leader of the leaders and top authority.

In addition of Siddiqe Hasan Khan he was attributed by many Scholars as the real of Traditionists and conferred him as the Jurist of era & leader of arts accomplishing the entitled with the title of the leader of exegetical writers. It is an actual fact that there has not burnt any peer for him in India.

All the respectable saints! Readers of history know well that Sheikh Abdul Haque Muhaddith Dehlawi (Rah) d.1052 A.H. performed the prominent conduct in propagation of traditions through teachings, instruction, compilation and literary works and after him, who was exalted the dignity of magnificent personality for lightning the atmosphere of India through shining beam to illuminate the extinguishing lamp of revealed books and Sunnah, the world know him as Shah waliyullah Muhaddith Dehlawi (Rah). He was that august slave of Allah, who through full strength of faith, stopped the storm of Polytheism and Innovations and made common convocation to follow the revealed books and the Sunnah instead of superstitious beliefs. And now a days, wherever in sub-continent, the sound of Qalallah and Qala Rasulullah are heard are the indebted of this holy family and auspicious fruits of his efforts and inquiries. It is an incontrovertible fact that which foundation for popularization of Traditions was founded by Sheikh

Abdul Haque Muhaddith Dehlawai (Rah), Shah waliyullah Muhaddith Dehlawi (Rah) reached its wall to the sky and made in India the real literary taste for revealed Books and Sunnah.

### Hadith Literature:

The word Hadith is used in complete opposite meaning of old news, narrations, sayings, descriptions. It means the same, in Arabic language, which we mean, in Urdu with conversations, talks and descriptions.

Conventional definition of Hadith (*Narrative science*) is a science in which discussed, with trustworthy junction and separate proofs of, the sayings, conducts and orations as well as Taqirrat (*Attributes*) of Prophet S.A.S.

In the Shari'ah, after the Bountiful Quar'an, the other great authority, to rely upon, is the Tradition; it is the foundation of the religious sciences and occupies a very high position among certain sciences.

Shah waliyullah Dehlawi (Rah) realized fully that, for the restoration of a decadent community to his original seat of dignity and honour, it is necessary to revive the science of Tradition and dispel confusion from it wherever it appears. With this object in view he instituted an academy (Daru-al-Hadith), the first of its kind in the Subcontinent, which was adequately developed by his son Shah Abdul Aziz Dehlawi (Rah) after him. He narrates: When I found the theologians at variance and the learned among them divided into sections, each one given to playing tricks in supporting the view of one's Imam, I turned to God in prayer to show me the right path through. Luckily I was given a hint to have recourse to the Muwatta of Imam Malik (R.A.), and then, later, I was convinced that at present no book on Jurisprudence is more authentic than that Musaffa.

### Shah waliyullah Dehlawi (Rah) learnt Hadith two times:

First time, in India from Imam-i- Hadith Sheikh Muhammad Afdal known as Haji Siyalkuti (Rah) the celebrated Traditionist of his time, some books like Mishkatu-a-Masabih, Shama'ilu-al-Nabi and portion of Sahihu-al `-Bukhari, but all these were incomplete and far from being satisfactory.

Second time, in 1143, A.H. in Medina, the thirst which Shah sahib had for the acquisition of the science of Tradition could not quench at Delhi. He completed the study of this science and acquired proficiency in it at the hands eminent scholars of mecca and Medina when he visited those cities mainly from Sheikh Abu Tahir Muhammad bin Ibrahim Kurdi Madani (Rah) who was a reputed and incomparable livelihood Traditionist of his time. He always boasts of Shah Sahib and said:

“Waliyullah earns diploma in words from me and I take diploma in meaning from him”.

Moreover he learned Hadith from other prominent scholars, Muhaddith's, Mufties and Sheikhs, i.e.

- *Sheikh Wafadullah Ibn-i-Sheikh Suleman Maghribi (Rah).*
- *Sheikh Muhammad Ibn-i-Muhammad Sulaiman Maghrabi ( Rah).*
- *Mufti Mecca Sheikh Taj Uddin Hanafi (Rah).*

- Sheikh Sanami (Rah).
- Sheikh Ubaidullah bin Salim Basri (Rah)
- Sheikh Ahmad Qashashi (Rah)
- Sheikh Mawsuf (Rah)
- Sayed Abdur Rahman Idrisi (Rah)
- Shamsuddin (Rah)
- Muhammad bin Allaba Billi (Rah)
- Sheikh Isa Jafari (Rah)
- Sheikh Hasan Ajimi (Rah)
- Sheikh Ahamed Ali (R.A.)

About his knowledge in Traditions, Shah Abdul Aziz says:

*Ilm-I-Hadith Padr-i-Min Az Medinah Awrad Char dah Mah Dar Haramain Budah Hasil-i-Sanad Kardah.*

**Meaning:** My august father took Traditional Science from illuminated Medina, presented narrations of Hadith, staying fourteen months in Haramain.

Shah Sahib, after gaining knowledge's from benevolent Haramain, in 1146, A.D. returned in India, said at the time of departure to his teacher of Tradition Sheikhu-al-Hadith Allama Abu Tahir Muhammad bin Ibrahimu-al-Kurdi-al-Madani.

### Teaching of Tradition:

After attainment of knowledge on Traditional Science there in his life, commanded a vicissitude of thinking life. In this Science the condition of concentration became such that all the Scientific occupations became definitely dependent from him; rather the death of his august father he sat on flourishing presidential throne of teachings and series of teaching and instruction which he started in his ancestral flat (Madrasah-i-Rahimiyyah) a large number of desirers for Sciences and fields of knowledge came and sat respectfully.

Sovereign Muhammad shah Ranguli of Delhi bestowed to Shah Sahib, a spacious flat from inside of Town, when reached to him the news of plenty seekers for Traditions and narrowness of room, to where Shah Sahib shifted along with his students and overflowed the goggles of knowledge and Discernment from this Madrasah to Perfidy. There in Perfidy, this flat destroyed with Delhi. Now a days, there have built a lot of buildings, but still this colony is called the Madrasah of Shah Abdul Aziz (Rah)

Approach of Shah Waliyullah Dehlawi (R.A.) towards the study of the Hadith is that the famous and celebrated books should be read as, for example, Muwatta Sahih Bukhari, Sahih Muslim, Sunan of Abu Daud and Jami' of Tirmidhi, because the validity of these books were established. The complete study of these books he says can be gained in a short time, and this for the students of Hadith is the most precious things these days.

Shah Waliyullah Dehlawoi (Rah) realizing the importance of Muwatta and calling himself the promoter of its cause, is so anxious for its study that at one pace, making no secret of his mind he fervently appeals that when the students found fit and is capable to understand Arabic, he should be taught Muwatta. He believes that it is the very foundation of the science of Tradition and its study is a great blessing.

This book had great Importance to him about which he says:

This commentary book is the foundation and principles of narrative Science. There are many good influences in studying it. And I have obtained its musical consecutives.

Laying further emphasis on its usefulness he remarks:

I am convinced for various reasons that to-day the door of Ijtihad (independent thinking on the derivation of religious was from the Bountiful Qur'an and the Tradition) is complete closed save that one were to keep Muwatta before oneself for consultation.

He was engaged twelve years in teaching and Instruction and dispersed outdated ornaments of educations on literary books and Sunnah. His worthy son Shah Abdul Aziz says:

*Ma'mul Walid Majid 'a Bud keh Ba 'd khatam Qur'an Dars-i-Hadith Mi Shud.*

**Meaning:** It was the custom of my honorable father that he got done review of students on Tradition after Bountiful Qur'an.

### Writing books on Tradition

Shah Sahib, the respectable personality, founded, at first, the foundation of translation in India for Bountiful Qur'an and Hadith in Persia, the then current language; which was most important memorable work for Muslims in the History of religion and learning in this country. But the darkness worshipers and wrong and learned men condemned him infidel and the ignorant attacked him in front of Fatehpur Jam'I Mosque. Help of Allah was connected with him that he came out from the cordon of enemies; otherwise, he would be paid with life, the fine of his crime! He translated the Victorious Qur'an in Persia and wrote concise commentary on Muta Imam Malik in both Arabic and Persian languages along with the Instructions of Hadith. He called special attention for broadcasting & publication Prophetical Traditions, notes & expositions and translations. His great and holy purpose was to connect the direct connection with the Prophetic Sunnah, those both the Arabic and Persian languages; so that they may try to understand and read the Sihhah Sittah (six correct volumes) instead of content only on Mashariqu-al-Anwar and Mishkawatu-al-Masbih.

The Shah Waliyullah Dehlawi (Rah) wrote a number of works on Hadith and its allied subjects. A brief description of these is given here:

**Musaffa Shurh-i-Muwatta:** A commentary of Imam Malik bin Anus (d. 179 A.H.) on Muwatta in Persia. In which he narrated the Juristic significance. It also represents Shah waliyullah's methodology in the



teaching of Hadith. It was first published in 1293 A.H. in Delhi in two volumes. It has been translated in to Urdu by Saiyyid Abdullah and was published from Calcutta in 1294 A.H.

***Al-Musawwa min Ahadith-i-al-Muwatta:*** It is another highly technical commentary of Imam Malik bin Anus (d. 179 A.H.) on Muwatta in Arabic on this early collection of traditions compiled by Imam Malik bin Anus (d. 179 A.H.). There in it are the explanations of strange words & short disagreements of religion. This book had great Importance to him about which he says:

This commentary book is the foundation and principles of tradition science. There are many good influences in studying it. And I have obtained its musical consecutives. It was first published in Delhi in 1293 A.H.

Both the above works were written by Shah to illustrate the way of teaching Hadith and drawing legal rulings from them. They also show the depth of his knowledge and insight into Fiqah and Hadith.

The Shah gave precedence to the Muwatta of imam Malik in the six most authentic works of Hadith and assigned it the same place as given to Ibn Majah by others. He always pleaded to give it precedence in teaching of the subject. He writes in his will:

When one has attained proficiency in Arabic, he should be taught Muwatta with the chain of narrators through Yahya b. Yahya Masnudi. No deviation should be made in this regard, since it forms the central work in Hadith literature. Its study is of great merit. I have studied it thoroughly.

***Sharhu Tarajimu Abwabu-al-Bukhari:*** The commentaries on Bukhari have always been deemed essential for higher studies in Hadith with the result that every generation of scholars has attempted a new commentary adding new dimension to its Significance. The Shah has compiled it in Arabic on the view point of importance of commentary of Imam Bukhari which was first printed in 1323 A.H. by Dairatu-al-Ma'arif Haidarabad, India. Thereafter Ashahu-al-Mutaba of Delhi included the work as introduction to the Sahih Bukhari published by it.

***Majmu'ah Rasa'il-i-Arba'a:*** It is a collection of four short tracts and includes Irshadu ila Muhimmatu-al-Isnad and a Tarajimu-al-Bukhari.

***Al-Fazlu-al-Mubin fi-al-Musalsalu min Hadith-i-al-Nabiyi-al-Amin-al-Nawadiru min Hadith Saiyidu-al-Awa'ilu wa-al-Awakhir:*** This brochure sets forth the merit of compiling forty Ahadith. Earlier scholars have penned treaties on the subject in their times but the Shah has collected smaller yet significant Ahadith. It needed to be committed in to memory and taught to the students.

***Musalsalat:*** Shah has also written several treatises not properly on the subject of Hadith but indirectly connected with it which needed to be gone through as preparatory works for Hadith studies. These works evince his depth of knowledge and insight in to the science of Hadith and the manner in which Fiqah and Hadith can be harmonized. They also show his breath of vision in a dispassionate evaluation of different

works on the subject including their authors. Actually speaking they speak of the Moderation and poise of the Shah with which he had been gifted by god.

The books falling in this category are:

**(I) *Al-Insafu fi Bayan-i-Asbabu-al-Ikhtilaf*:** Two epilogues are included in the Hujjatu Allah al Balighah which cover 22 pages and are divided in to four sections. According to the publisher,(Maktuba Salfia, Lahore.) these concluding chapters were included in only one manuscript of the Hujjat. In the concluding lines of these epilogues the Shah says:

It had decided to write a treatise under the title Ghayatu-al-Insafu fi Bayan-i-Asbabu- al-Ikhtilaf.

In which I want to discuss in some detail the reasons for differences illustrating them with examples and evidences but I could not find time for it. However, while dealing with the issue in this work (*Hujjatu Allah al-Balighah*)

I thought it proper to pen whatever I had in mind at the time; since it was then easier to do so (*A striking example of it is furnished by Nasbu-al-Rayatu fi Takhrij-i-Ahadithu-al-Hidayah of Zaila'ee*)

It seems that the Shah was able to find time to re-write this portion, with certain additions and omissions in the epilogue spoken of earlier.

***Al-Insaf*:** It is a unique work on the topic and has been several reprints in India and other countries. It was also published in Egypt, First in 1327 A.H./1909 A.D. by Shirkata-al-Matba'tu-al-Imiyah and then by Maktubatu-al-Mansurah. I have before me another copy brought out by Daru-al-Nafa' is Beirut which covers 111 pages of average size. It has been checked and edited by the noted traditionist Sheikh Abdul Fattah Abu Ghaddah of Egtpt.

**(II) *Iqdu-al-Jid fi Ahkamu-i-al-Ijtihadu wa-al-Taqlid*:**

**(III) *Al Mubhathu-al-sab'a of Hujjatu allah-al-Balighah*:** The portion of the Hujjat extending from the second chapter of the first part to the last portion of the second one gives a logical and convincing exposition of the secrets and wisdom of Hadith and the method of its practical application for deduction of Juridical rulings in way typical with the Shah-unequalled by any scholar either before or after him. It is regrettable that certain people studying or even teaching the Hujjat sometime skip over this part as if it were of less consequence.

Moreover: Arba'una Hadithan, Al-Fawzu-al-Mubin-fi-al-Musalal Min Hadith-i-al-Nabiyu-al-Amin, Al Irshadu Ila Muhimmatu-al-Isnad, Al Daru-al-Thamin fi Mubashshirat-i-al-Nabiyil Amin, Ittihafu-al-Nabiyah fima Yahtajju Ilaihi-al-Muhaddithu wa-al-Fiqyah etc. such like other respected books were published by him. In this connection if we do not mention Hujjatu Allah-al-Balighah, the magnum opus, then this topic will remain thirsty; because this is a magnum opus book in Fiqah Hadith. In which a Muislim jurist gets his Jurisprudential problems, a traditionist gets his authentic and correct ahadithes and a philosopher gets his Philosophical guides fully.

I shall not be exaggeration to say, about this book, that there has not been written any book of this rank in last thirteen hundred years till now in this arts. Nawab Siddque Hasan Khan has written:

*Iyn Kitab Agharcheh Dar Ilm-i-Hadith-i-Nist*

*Amma Sharah Ahadith-i-Basiyar Daran Kardah*

This book is not confined in traditional Sciences only but also done commentary of many Ahadith. It is the fact that the great thinkers and critics have confessed his famous works and the time cannot demolish the flourishing works in Hadith.

In reference to saying of Allamah Rashid Rida Masri (Rah), Allamah Manazir Ahmed Ghilani says:

These works were not the works of the Indian scholars but the

Flourishing works of Shah Waliyullah Muhaddith Dehlawi (Rah)

Because the first study on this topic was done by Shah Sahib.

Actually the interest of services on Hadith came to his mind after the dream at illuminated Medina Sharief like follows:

*Kana-al-Hasanu-wa-al-Husainu alaihumu-al-salamu, Nazala-fi-Baiti wa biyadu-al-Hasanu (Rad) Qalamam Qad Ankasara Lisanuhu, wa Basata olya Yadahu li Yu'tini wa Qala Hadha Qalamu Jaddi Rasulu-Allah (Sm) Thumma Qala Hatta Yuslihahu-al-Hasainu Kama lam Yaslihahu, fa Akhadhahu-al-Hasainu (Rad.) wa Aslahahu nawalinihu fa Sirtu bihi Thumma Jiya bi-Reda'n mukhattatu fihi khattu akhdara wa khattu Abyada fa wada'a Bayna Yadahuma Rafa'a Husainu (Rad.) wa Qala Hadha Reda'u Jaddy Rasulu-Allah (Sm) fa Wada'athu Ala Ra'sa Taziman wa Hamdatu-Allah-i-Ta'ala.*

**Meaning:** As if both of Hasan and Husain came to my humble home, Hazrat Hasan (Rad.) manifested his auspicious hand holding a tip broken, pen to present me and said: This is my grandfather Prophet (S.A.S.)'s fortunate pen I shall present it you if Hazrat Husain (Rad.). Hazrat Husain (Rad.) had taken the pen and presented me after repair. Again a stripe of green colour and another of white colour, both the two stripes were presented before them. Hazrat Husain (Rad.) took up both the sheets and said; these are my grandfather Prophet (S.A.S.) lucky veils and covered me. I wearied these on my head and obliged Allah the almighty.

In short Shah Waliyullah Dehlawi (Rah) followed the sea of educations and encyclopaedia through teachings, instructions, writings and compiling on hadith Literature. And he did such like the strong works that very rare former persons got divine help to do.

The valuable service which Shah Waliyullah Dehlawi (Rah) has done to the Science of Tradition will never be forgotten by the inhabitants of the Indo-Pakistan Subcontinent.

Nawab Saiyyid Siddique Hasan Khan (Rah) has alluded to the illustrious services of Shah Waliyullah Dehlawi (rah) to the cause of Hadith in his two Arabic couplets in these words:



*Whoever comes to your door, all his limbs get engaged in, Rehearsing the Hadith, Eyes speak of its coolness hands rejoice of its wealth, Heart speaks of the contentment and peace and the Ears announce the virtuous talk they hear.*

In the above couplet the different Arabic words used for the limbs allude to the earlier Scholars of Hadith such as Qurrata bin Khalid-al-Sadisi (Rah.), Sillata bin Ashim-al-Adwi (Rah.), Jabir bin Abdullah (Rah.) and Imam Hasan Basri (Rah.).

### Conclusion:

It may be concluded that Shah Waliyullah Muhaddith Dehlawi (Rah) was one of the most dynamic and splendid personalities of Indian Muslim community particularly of 12<sup>th</sup> century. As an outstanding scholar of tradition, social reformer and political thinker, he contributed enough to all round development of the Muslims of undivided India and other parts of the world. Shah waliyullah Dehlawi (Rah) was undoubtedly and Imam of his age. His works on different topics whether these topics treated were, political, Economical, Social, Cultural, Historical or Philosophical and religious, unmistakably bear the stamp of his originality and creativity. He spent the whole of his life in the service of religion. His services rendered to religion are fully recognized. He lifted the thick veils of untruth which had covered and disfigured the real shape of Islam after the first to centuries. So far as the modeled and symbolic life of Shah waliyullah dehlawi (Rah) and his manifold activities as a pioneer educationalist, Scholar of tradition and socio-religious reformer are certainly beneficial and prototypical for coming generations not only for Indian communities but also human societies as a whole. He removed the long standing prejudices and un-Islamic practices that were prevalent among the Muslim societies and played a matchless role in the process of Modernization of Indian Muslim Community. Moreover he was one of the celebrated harbingers who tried their level best in bringing peace, progress and unity in India.

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