

Contributions of Shah Waliullah in terms of social and moral revival of Muslim community in 18th century Indian Subcontinent:

Introduction:

Shah Waliullah directed all his efforts towards reforming the social and moral lives of Indian Muslims in the 18th century. He saw the decline of the Mughal Empire and tried to preserve Muslim identity and Islamic values by undertaking the Herculean task of reforming the society. His reform agenda was revolutionary and his writings had huge impact on the Muslim society. He translated the Holy Quran for the first time in history into Persian. He favoured ijthad and his reforms were

based on **adl** and **tawazun** i.e. justice and balance.

His contributions for the social and moral revival of the Muslims:

following are some of his greatest contributions.

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1. Reconciliation of **Wahdat-ul-wjood** and **wahdat-ul-shuhud**
2. Reconciliation of **Shias** and **Sunnis**
3. Translation of **Quran** in **Persian** to lessen the need for intermediaries i.e. **ulema**
4. Favoured **ijtihad**
5. Wrote 50 plus books including **Azalat ul khifa** **Hujjat ul baligha**
6. Introduced economic system based on **adl** and **tawazun**

following are the details.

1- Reconciliation of Shias and Sunnis

To eliminate the vices of sectarianism and to avoid further divisions in the fabric of Muslim society, he tried to reconcile between the Shias and Sunnis. In *Izalat ul Khifa*, he declared that despite numerous contentions between these two sects, they are not that different and Shias are within the pale of Islam.

2- Reconciliation of two strands of Sufism:

Hama and *Hamaaz* were considered poles apart but Shah Waliullah iterated that there is no significant difference between *wahdat ul wujud* and *wahdat ul shuhud*. Thus, he tried to unite the Muslims.

3. He favoured ISTIHAD:

In Shah Waliullah's opinion, 'ijtihād' was the need of the hour because Islam being a rational dīn allowed the use of reasoning in order to derive new laws based on Quran and Sunnah. Thus the use of 'ijtihād' to make Islamic laws in accordance with contemporary times was greatly favoured by him.

4. Elimination of intermediaries' i.e. Ulama's influence by translating Quran into Persian:

Ulama had great influence in the lives of Muslims and they as a class had monopolized religion. To end their monopoly over religion, Shah Waliullah took the bold step of translating the Holy Quran into Persian to grant all the Muslims direct access to the teachings of Quran.

5. Economic reforms based on **adl and tawazun:**

Shah Waliullah was against the concentration of wealth in a few hands. He promoted the social justice of Islam by stressing the importance of **zakat** and charity. Distribution of wealth and halal earnings were favoured by him. He based his economic system on **adl and tawazun**.

6. His writings:

He wrote more than fifty books including **izalat ul Khifa** and **Hujjat ul Balagha**. No other book had a greater impact on the Indian Muslims in the 18th century than **Hujjat ul Balagha** of Shah Waliullah.

7. Preferred Muslim identity and Islamic values:

By taking above mentioned steps, he emphasized that Muslims were categorically different from Hindus. He preserved Islamic values by subordinating **tariqat** to **shariat**. He stressed the importance of salat, zakat and saum etc.

Conclusion:

In a nutshell, by taking numerous revolutionary steps like translation of Quran in Persian and uniting Muslims despite their differences, Shah Waliullah reformed the Muslim society of the Indian subcontinent morally and socially. He was the great reformer of the 18th century.