

Syed 'Alī Tirmidhī and Akhūnd Darwezah: Mughal Agents or Popular Saints

- *Shāhbaz Khan*
- *Dr. Himayatullah Yaqubi*

Abstract:

The Sixteenth century proved an eventful period with regard to the Mughal-Pakhtūn relations in the north-western borderland region. Besides the political tug of war it witnessed a clash of religious nature between the two Ṣūfī saints of the area namely Bāyazīd Anṣārī and Syed 'Alī Tirmidhī Aliās Pīr Bābā. Settled in the pre-dominantly anti-Mughal Pakhtūn abode Bāyazīd Anṣārī was an opponent of the Mughals in his political orientation in religious jargon. Pīr Bābā challenged his Ṣūfīc interpretation based on the Waḥdat al-Wūjūd concept of Islamic mysticism. Their confrontation of mystic traditions gave birth to a debate that whether Pīr Bābā had confronted Bāyazīd for religious reasons or he was working for the interests of the Mughals. The present article aimed at to investigate the matter and to establish a factual position. It would further be explored to understand the nature and contents of the conflict that whether it was religious or otherwise.

Keywords: Bāyazīd Anṣārī, Syed 'Alī Tirmidhī, Akhūnd Darwezah, Roshaniyya Movement, Mughals, agents

Introduction:

In Islamic mysticism two basic concepts of *Waḥdat al-Wūjūd* and *Waḥdat al-Shūhūd* are much popular among the Ṣūfī saints and mystics. It was in the middle of the sixteenth century that the Pakhtūn borderland area witnessed a pro-long and tough conflict between the two religious personalities. Bāyazīd Anṣārī lived in Kānīgurām who initiated a religio-sufic movement namely the Roshaniyya Movement. He resisted not only the Mughal dominancy in the area but also

-
- *Assistant Professor, Pakistan Study Centre, University of Peshawar*
 - *Research Fellow, National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad.*

challenged the traditional concepts of Islamic jurisprudence and *Šūfi* orders. His controversial beliefs stirred strong reaction from the traditional 'Ulamā and mystics. His religious beliefs came under scrutiny which was often debated among the 'Ulamā which gradually generated heated discourses. In the initial phase of his movement he faced tough resistance from his father and local muftis. A few orthodox religious scholars of his area condemned Bāyazīd for his wrong religious beliefs. However, his beliefs penetrated into the main stream Pakhtūn population and thousands of people joined his movement. Gradually, he mobilized people on two planks i.e. Roshaniyya concept of Islamic Sufism and anti-Mughal connotation.¹

Considerable number of Pakhtūns became followers of Bāyazīd Anṣārī who were ready to lay their lives for the cause of Roshaniyya movement. He gradually emerged a popular figure who could challenge not only famous 'Ulamā but also the Mughal dominancy at least in the borderland areas. Pīr Bābā in a later stage also opposed him for his controversial Islamic and mystic beliefs. He was a popular saint who settled among the Yūsufzai Pakhtūns in Buner area. He wielded utmost respect and influence on his followers. His father was Mughal commander in the army of Bābur and Humāyūn. Due to this Mughal connection some of the authors are of the view that as Bāyazīd was an opponent of the Mughal rule; therefore, Pīr Bābā tried to minimize his influence on the instigation of the rulers. This charge leveled against Pīr Bābā and his disciple Akhund Darwezah, triggered a discussion whether they opposed Bāyazīd for religious reasons or they work to protect the interests of the Mughals.

To establish a logical conclusion based on the available sources it would be rather extremely necessary to understand the nature of the conflict between the two saints. The matter would be looked from various angles to understand its different paradigms. To understand the crux of the issue i.e. it is extremely necessary first to check the relationship between the Mughals with the three saints who played crucial role in the whole phenomena. These saints were Bāyazīd Anṣārī, Syed 'Alī Tirmidhī and Akhund Darwezah. To make the issue more precise and understandable it is pertinent to discuss brief sketches, political and religious backgrounds of the three personalities, involved in the issue and the events which shaped up the problem afterwards.

Bāyazīd Anṣārī:

Bāyazīd Anṣārī was born in 1525,² in the house of Abdullah, a religious scholar and local *qāzī* of Kāñīgurām, a town situated in the South Waziristan agency of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). The family of Abdullah was settled in Jalandhar in the present day Indian Punjab. Bāyazīd was born in Jalandhar but owing to the Mughal attack on Delhi in 1526 he along with his mother migrated to Kāñīgurām. Therefore, he spent his early days in the company of his father and other relatives in the town. Bāyazīd was an intelligent boy who was interested in learning from his childhood;³ however, due to domestic problems he failed to get proper education in his hometown.⁴

There are different versions of Bāyazīd early education. Majority of the Pakhtūn writers are of the view that he got little formal education in Kānīgurām and Jalandhar. Since, his family environment was tense and acquiring education in the prevailing atmosphere was rather impossible for him. His father was more inclined towards his first wife Fatima. This attitude of his parents led to some sort of internal strife in the family. It was an eventful period for him. At Jalandhar he was deprived of the love of his father and in Kānīgurām he was dispossessed of the motherly care.⁵ Although Bāyazīd failed to get formal education but right from his childhood he showed interest in learning. He used to read religious texts and mystical literature. He kept himself aloof from the society and indulged in mystical practices. He underwent excessive meditations (*chillas*) in his house. In the field of mysticism he was often in search of "Truth". With the passage of time he became a mysterious figure in his locality. He used to avoid unhealthy activities and abstained himself from meaningless gossiping. He restricted his daily routine only to learning and mystic practices. He often asked questions like "the heavens and earth are here, but where is God".⁶ Bāyazīd had heard from some *Mashāikh* (Saintly guides) that perceiving the "Truth" is possible through the guidance of a *Pīr-i-Kāmil*⁷ (perfect spiritual guide). He, in this connection, wanted to become a disciple of Shaikh Ismā'īl but his father did not approve this idea as according to him he had more religious knowledge and considered it shameful for him if his son had become a disciple of an Ismā'īlī saint.⁸

Shaikh Ismā'īl was the son of Shaikh Khudadād, his affectionate uncle. Owing to religious differences and family politics he was always opposed by his father in this adventurism. 'Abdullah's warning prevented Bāyazīd from doing so; however, he followed his path in mysticism. He began to eat less, sleep less, avoiding mixing with people, and remember Allah all the time.⁹ He had the divine inspiration suggesting him to seclude himself at home for a period of five consecutive years, during which he should remember Allah and get proximity with him.¹⁰ This was one of the longest meditations he underwent at his home. During this period he was helped by his wife Bibi Shamsu, his first cousin and the daughter of Shaikh Ḥasan. It was a period of mystical experiences for him. He observed metaphysical things which drastically changed his ideas about life and mysticism.

On the authority of *Şirāṭ al-Tauḥīd*, Abdul Akbar Khan reported that Bāyazīd believed in the concept of *Pīr-i-Kāmil*. He listened sermons of learned men and spent life according to the principles of Islam and sayings of the Holy Prophet (SAW). From the start, a life of austerity was pursued with complete abstinence from all sorts of sins. Apart from other things he liked Şūfīmusic. He held the belief that truth could not be ascertained without a spiritual guide. He mentioned:

Translation: Understanding and consistent search of truth is obligatory upon every individual. Worship, obedience, good deeds

have no value without knowing of Allah. And achieving this is difficult without a *Pīr-i-Kāmil*.¹¹

After a year and a half Bāyazīd heard a Divine Voice "O Bāyazīd if a sincere seeker comes to you and seeks sincerely the path, which you have adopted, inform him of the fact that many lamps are illuminated from one lamp and its light is increased."¹² He considered it a call from Allah to propagate his ideas among the people. After this Bāyazīd claimed himself to be a *Pīr-i-Kāmil* and started calling people to his path (his way of Sufism). Many people became his disciples and took oath of allegiance to him. Many of them used to set with him in the meditation at his home. Even some women developed interest in his ideas. It sounds strange that a person who was in search of *Pīr-i-Kāmil*, suddenly announced that he himself was *Pīr-i-Kāmil*.

Some people accepted Bāyazīd's call and became his disciples. They propagated the ideas among the people through which the popularity of Bāyazīd spread to far-flung areas. *Ulama* (religious scholars) like Maulana Zakariya and Shaikh Awriā accused Bāyazīd for spreading un-Islamic ideas among the public. People were divided due to some of his religious beliefs. Maulana Zakariya accused him of claiming himself a perfect spiritual guide and being divinely inspired¹³ while Shaikh Awriā, after meeting Bāyazīd, accused him of creating disruption among the public by declaring Muslims as disbelievers.¹⁴

During this time Bāyazīd also sent one of his disciples Khalifa Dawlat to Mughal emperor Akbar. He presented him the message of Bāyazīd and his book *Sira-tu-Tawhid*. He was received warmly in the court by Akbar himself. He was accorded royal reception. It is stated that Akbar took interest in his ideas. Khalifa Dawlat was given with precious gift for his *Pīr*. Akbar even told him that he is ready to take the oath of allegiance to Bāyazīd but it would not be possible for him to formally visit him due to political expediencies.¹⁵ It clearly indicates that even in the start of his movement Bāyazīd established cordial relations with the Mughals.

Bāyazīd believed in the Islamic traditions of *Sunnah* and *Ijma*. In his scholastic discussions, he argued with examples from history, Sufic traditions, quotations from Holy Quran and *Aḥādīth*. He was a perfect religious man with sharp intelligent and inquisitive mind. His objective was to realize the spirit of prayers and rituals. He was a bold missionary and practised what he thought to be correct.

Through meditations, he wanted to find the right path towards *Tauḥīd* (belief in oneness of Allah) and passed through different experiences. He became seriously engaged in invoking mentally the divine name (*Ism-i-A'zam*). It has been stated that he heard the voice from the unknown and received inspiration from God. A number of writers are of the view that he came across various stages and discovered many new dimensions in spiritualism through revelation from God. He was instructed to indulge in secret remembering of *Kalimah Tayyebah* during

meditations. Later, he was asked to understand the true meaning of *Kalimah* and unshakable faith in the unity of God. In fact, it was revealed upon him that:

In the phase of *Sharī'at* the meaning of *Kalimah* is that there is no God but Allah. In the second stage which is *Tarīqat* it means that there is no endeavour of human being but to seek Allah. In the next step which was called *Haqīqat* the meaning of *Kalimah* is that nothing exists except Allah¹⁶

Bāyazīd, afterwards, left his native land and embarked upon a journey to enlist more people as his disciples. He visited places like Tīrāh, Peshawar and Hashtnagar etc. He was slowly and gradually making followers who would in coming days give a whole hearted support to him in his political struggle against the Mughals.

War between the Roshaniyyas and the Mughals:

The term Roshaniyya was coined and referred to the followers of Bāyazīd. The followers of Bāyazīd called him Pīr *Roshan* or enlightened Syed. After some time the movement became popular with the name of Roshaniyya Movement. It was after this word that Mullah Zangī, an opponent of Bāyazīd, referred to him Pīr *Tarīq* or Darkened Syed.¹⁷ The relations between the *Roshaniyya* and the Mughals remained cordial as far as the religious matters were concerned, however, later on their relations soured when a specific incident took place. A caravan moving from India to Kabul was attacked by the followers of Bāyazīd on the pretext that instead of doing business they should be worried about the Day of Judgment.¹⁸ The aggrieved party, after reaching Kabul, reported the incident to Mirza Hakim, Governor of Kabul, and told him that Pakhtūns had gathered under the leadership of Bāyazīd Anṣārī and had raised arms.¹⁹ The Governor without any enquiry ordered a prompt action against Bāyazīd. Although the latter condemned the act of his followers,²⁰ nevertheless, it fell on deaf ears as the Mughals were bent upon to teach him a lesson.

Syed 'Alī Tirmidhī

Syed 'Alī Tirmidhī Aliās Pīr Bābā, was born in 1502²¹, in the town of Qunduz (a city in the present day Afghanistan). He originally hailed from the town of Tarmiz situated in Uzbekistan. His last name 'Tirmidhī' refers to his ancestral area. Syed Qambar Alī Shāh, father of Syed 'Alī Tirmidhī, was a relative of Bābur and Humāyūn and one of his high ranked commanders in the Mughal army. When Zahir-ud-Din Babar decided to conquer India, he ordered his son Humāyūn to join him from Badakhshan. Syed Qambar Alī and Syed 'Alī Tirmidhī, along with Humāyūn, came to India. It was in 1526 at Panipat, exactly one year before the birth of Bāyazīd that Babar defeated Ibrahim Lodhi, the last Lodhi Afghan monarch and established the Mughal dynasty of India. Syed 'Alī Tirmidhī was a witness to that change of dynasties when the Mughals replaced Lodhi Pakhtūns in 1526.

Syed 'Alī Tirmidhī, right from his childhood, was inclined towards religion and mysticism. The victory of Babar over Ibrahim Lodhi brought a drastic change in Tirmidhī's way of thinking. He was surprised that God took the kingship from one and gave it to other and he came to the conclusion that the world was very transitory in its nature. After this it was not possible for him to waste his precious time and in his heart he resolved to travel in the world and search for eternal solace and satisfaction. He wanted to search the true meaning of Islam and to indulge the worship of his beloved Allah.²² He, with his father's permission, embarked upon on a journey in quest of his mystic goal. Syed 'Alī Tirmidhī visited different religious and spiritual persons and *Khānqāhs* (shrines). He met with many sufis in various regions just for quenching his thirst of knowledge. He finally arrived at Ajmer (India) and became the disciple of Shaikh Sālār Rūmī. Syed 'Alī Tirmidhī fully benefitted from the company of his spiritual guide and was able to gain sufficient religious education and spiritual training from Sālār Rūmī. He was trained in different orders of Sufism during this period. He learnt Islamic fiqh (Jurisprudence), philosophy, history and study of Quran and revealed religions. He was a capable disciple who took unbounded interest in Sufism and mysticism. After the completion of his studies, he was advised by Sālār Rūmī to guide the people to right path in some mountainous area. This was proved to be the initial encounter with Sufism in which he exhibited much interest.

Syed 'Alī Tirmidhī set out from Ajmer towards Kashmir, as he thought that was the area his Pīr (spiritual guide) had indicated to him. On his way he arrived at Pind Dado (Pind Dadan Khan) in Gujrat present day Punjab and stayed there for some time. When the people of that village came to know about the spiritual stature of Syed 'Alī Tirmidhī, they did not let him go. The people of area requested him to establish a madrasa and educate them in the true path. He then started educating people in religious and spiritual matters. It was the time period when the Pakhtūns in India again resurged under the leadership of Sher Shāh Suri.²³ Initially he defeated Humāyūn in Bihar and then kicked him out from Agra and Delhi. Humāyūn fled from India towards Persia. Syed Qambar Alī accompanied him during this journey. It was here that Syed 'Alī Tirmidhī met his father who, after the defeat of Humāyūn (1540) at the hands of Sher Shāh, was going back to Persia via Kabul. He received his father who requested him to go with him to his native land. But Syed Alī refused his offer and decided to dedicate his life to mysticism and learning.

Afterwards, Syed 'Alī Tirmidhī, decided to visit Shaikh Sālār Rūmī in Ajmer, but on his arrival there, he came to know about the death of his spiritual guide. He spent some time in Ajmer and benefitted from the company of Şahibzādah Ḥussain, son of Sālār Rūmī. Şahibzādah Ḥussain, reminded to Syed 'Alī Tirmidhī, the instructions of Sālār Rūmī and he once again embarked upon a journey in search of the desired destination.

Syed 'Alī Tirmidhī, on the way to his destination, stayed in Peshawar with two of his disciples, Saifullah and Malik Gadai, who had met him in his first visit to Ajmer. They requested him to stay in their area, so that their people may benefit from his knowledge of Islam. Syed 'Alī Tirmidhī, after a stay of one year in Duaba (present day Shabqadar, Charsadda) intended to go to Tirmidh, but his followers requested him not to go on account of the activities of two false *Pirs* (guides) who were misguiding people, in Yūsufzai area (Buner), in the garb of religion. The disciples of Alī Tirmidhī wanted him to go to Yūsufzai area and help the poor people against the false *Pirs*. The false *Pirs* namely Tayyab and Pīr Walī, would listen to music and arranged gatherings participated by both males and females. They were also involved in certain other un-Islamic practices.²⁴ Syed 'Alī Tirmidhī, therefore, went to Yūsufzai area and started calling people to the right path. His efforts bore fruits and people thronged him. It was due to his dedicated struggle that the influence of the false *Pirs* diminished.

Syed 'Alī Tirmidhī married the sister of Malik Dawlat Khan of the same area. Sons and daughters were born to him of that marriage and he then realized that Shaikh Sālār Rūmī had indicated towards this area for preaching because after raising a family it had become his permanent abode. He, after a few years, went to Qunduz, to see his parents but his father had died by that time whereas his mother was still alive. He spent some time with his mother and with her permission came once again to the Yūsufzai area, where he died at the age of eighty one years.

Akhūnd Darwezah:

Akhūnd Darwezah was born in 1533 in the house of Shaikh Gadai. He was a Turk²⁵ by decent but his forefathers, for a long time, had lived among different Pakhtūn Tribes. Shaikh Sa'adi, grandfather of Akhūnd Darwezah, had migrated with Yūsufzais to modern Khyber Pakhtūnkhwa. When Yūsufzais captured Swat and Buner around 1514, Shaikh Sa'adi received share in land along with other Pakhtūns because of the respect he enjoyed among them. It is not exactly known that where was Akhūnd Darwezah born but it seems that his birth had taken place somewhere in Buner.²⁶ Akhūnd Darwezah, from his childhood, had inclination towards religion. Initially he failed to get proper education but, later on, he realized his deficiency and went to a few learned religious scholars like Syed Mesar Ahmad, Mullah Zangī and Mullah Sanjar to make up for his deficiency and to learn sufism. But his thirst for knowledge remained unquenched and he, therefore, journeyed to Hindustan as well. Akhūnd Darwezah, through the good offices of his teacher Mullah Sanjar, has met Syed 'Alī Tirmidhī, sometime between 1552 and 1554.²⁷ He was extremely impressed by his piety and knowledge. He afterwards took his oath of allegiance. Alī Tirmidhī trained Akhūnd Darwezah in his Sufic path and he later on became one of his trusted *Khalifas* (deputies).

Debates of Syed 'Alī Tirmidhī and Akhund Darwezah with Bāyazīd Anṣārī

Bāyazīd Anṣārī, as mentioned earlier, had sent a pamphlet regarding his religious thoughts to Syed 'Alī Tirmidhī. However the latter denounced it and in the words of Akhund Darwezah, said: "The Afghan regions have been afflicted with mighty trials and tribulations. Only God knows whether or not these afflictions will be done away with. For such trials and tribulations could not be dispelled without the mighty force of the Muslim kings. The truth of the matter is that the independent Afghan regions are devoid of a Muslim ruler. The exposition of Islam is the task of the *Ulama* (Religious Scholars) whereas its implementation is the task of the Muslim kings."²⁸

Syed 'Alī Tirmidhī and Akhund Darwezah considered it as their religious duty to protect the Pakhtūns from the onslaught of Bāyazīd's religious beliefs. Akhund Darwezah, in his book, referred to the unawareness of Pakhtūns regarding Bāyazīd's beliefs and said: "Though they (Pakhtūns) had love for *Sharī'at* but did not know about the wrong beliefs of Bāyazīd Anṣārī."²⁹ They considered Bāyazīd a heathen saint whose aim was at to exploit the love of Pakhtūns with the true religion of Islam. In this connection both the parties arranged several debates (*munāzaras*) in various places. The topics of these discussions ranged from basic Islamic concepts to Sufism, oneness of Allah, *Waḥdat al-Wūjūd* and *Waḥdat al-Shūhūd*.

Syed 'Alī Tirmidhī and Akhund Darwezah came to *Hashtanaghar* (Charsadda) for a debate with Bāyazīd. Akhund Darwezah writes that: "he and Syed Alī Tirmidhī, with their arguments, silenced Bāyazīd but even then he did not leave his heretic beliefs".³⁰ Akhund Darwezah, for the second time, came alone to *Hashtanaghar* and had an argument with Bāyazīd but could not convince him. Syed 'Alī Tirmidhī and Akhund Darwezah, once again visited *Hashtnaghar* for a debate with Bāyazīd but this time he did not appear before them. It was there that the teacher (Mullah Zangī) of Akhund Darwezah suggested the name Pīr *Ṭarīq* for Bāyazīd.³¹ Afterwards, the opponents called him the Apostle of darkness in contrast to Pīr *Roshan* (The Apostle of light).

Syed 'Alī Tirmidhī and Akhund Darwezah Mughal Connection: Myth or Reality:

A number of writers have come up with the idea that Syed 'Alī Tirmidhī and Akhund Darwezah were playing the role of the agents of the Mughal rulers. They are of the view that since Bāyazīd was an anti-Mughal Pakhtūn leader who wanted to revive the Pakhtūn authority on this area, therefore, Mughals implanted their agents to weaken the Roshaniyya Movement through religion. Hence they termed Pīr Bābā and Akhund Darwezah as Mughal agents. Allah Baksh Yūsufī, in his book writes that as the mother of Syed 'Alī Tirmidhī belonged to the Mughal Royal family and his father was an officer in the imperial army Syed 'Alī, therefore, had a soft corner for the Mughals in his heart.³² He further states that the Mughals wanted to cement their political position in the Pakhtūn majority areas but could not do so in the presence of

Roshaniyyas, although Pīr Bābā (Syed 'Alī Tirmidhī) and his followers tried their level best to damage this movement on the pretext of its being un-Islamic.³³ He has, in fact, tried to give the impression that Syed Alī was planted by the Mughals to oppose the *Roshaniyya* Movement as it was a hindrance in the way of the political designs of Mughals in the Pakhtūns borderland. Abdul Akbar Khan Akbar, another critic of Syed Alī and Akhund Darwezah, is of the view that both, Syed 'Alī Tirmidhī and Akhund Darwezah were the well wishers of Emperor Akbar.³⁴ He, in other words, tries to say that they were protecting the Mughal interests in the region. The above mentioned claims, however, need analysis in the face of the new facts.

Syed 'Alī Tirmidhī was so moved by the large scale massacre and changes of political power from the Pakhtūns to the Mughals in 1526 that he decided to leave the material world and entered into the spiritual arena. He lost interest in politics, war games and gaining material advantages out of it. Despite his father persuasions he declined to accompany him towards Delhi and Agra. This is evident that he did not, any more, enjoy the temporal affairs, what to talk about siding with the Mughals. Syed 'Alī Tirmidhī, even before opposing Bāyazīd Anṣārī, had stood up against Pīr Tayyab and Pīr Walī in the Yūsufzai area when they were found indulged in some un-Islamic practices. It is a clear proof that Bāyazīd was not the first one who faced the opposition of Syed 'Alī Tirmidhī rather; he opposed everyone who went against *Sharī'at* (Islamic Code of conduct). The fact of the matter is that Syed 'Alī Tirmidhī, neither received any reward from the Mughals nor did he keep any contact with them.³⁵

Yūsufzais, among whom Syed 'Alī lived, had not raised any objection against him in spite of the fact that they were deadly opposed to the Mughals. The Yūsufzais, rather, approved and spread his message. Akhund Darwezah, in his book *Makhzan*, lamented Akbar for his ignorance of Islam,³⁶ which speaks for itself that they were not the agents of the Mughals but challenged every single person who deviated from the right path. It is mentioned by some writers that when Akhund Darwezah failed to defeat him through discussion, he invited Mohsin Khan, *naib* governor of Kabul, to take a strong action against Bāyazīd. Akhund Darwezah wanted to punish Bāyazīd for his "un-Islamic" preaching. But there is no evidence to prove the authenticity of this allegation. Rather Akhund Darwezah himself remained the target of the Mughal atrocities in a number of times. At the time of the Mughal's invasion of the Yūsufzai area he migrated to Peshawar along with other people. Had he been in contact with them then definitely he would have been rewarded and safely evacuated. These allegations are polemic which contains no historical truth. Besides, there is no evidence to support that Akhund Darwezah was in constant contact with the Mughals. These are mentioned in a number of studies which seem as passing references. There is no evidence to authenticate the claim that he invited the Mughals to crush the *Roshaniyyas*. It was rather Bāyazīd's activities which attracted the wrath of the authority against him at Kabul.³⁷

It is very much evident that Bāyazīd himself wanted to establish relations with the Mughals. Initially, he has sent his Khalifa towards Akbar who introduced his message in the Mughal court and then accepted hefty gifts from the side of Akbar. Contrary to the claims made by these scholars Bāyazīd provided strategic support to Akbar in replacing his step-brother Mirza Hakim from the throne of Kabul. Akbar wanted to create troubles for him in the Pakhtūn borderland area through the tribes. And Bāyazīd served that purpose of Akbar very well. Secondly, when a number of Bāyazīd's sons were killed in fighting against Hamza Khan it was a hard time for the followers and successors of Bāyazīd. Only Jalālah, Bāyazīd younger son survived during that hour of trials. He took shelter in the court of Akbar. Jalālah was presented to Akbar at the fort of Attok by some well-wishers and then Akbar took him away to Agra. So it is also a clear indication that actually they were in contact with the Mughals not Pīr Bābā or Akhūnd Darwezah.

The arguments given above prove that Syed 'Alī Tirmidhī and Akhūnd Darwezah opposed Bāyazīd Anṣārī for purely religious reasons and they did not have any political motives in front of them. At the same time it is wrong to state that both were planted by the Mughals, because their opponents have failed to bring forth any documentary proof in favour of the claim.

Conclusion:

The Mughal connection of Syed 'Alī Tirmidhī and Akhūnd Darwezah, since long, has been a debatable issue. The supporters of Bāyazīd Anṣārī consider him the pioneer of the Pakhtūn nationalism, as he had stood up against the Mughals. The fact of the matter is that he had launched a Movement, which was initially religious and Sufic. A specific incident gave it political color otherwise he had no issue with the Mughals.

As far as the question of Syed 'Alī Tirmidhī's Mughal connection is concerned it is an undeniable fact that he left the material world after the defeat of Ibrahim Lodhi, because according to him the world was very transitory in its nature and he resolved to travel in the world in the search of Allah. It suggests that he had very little interest in material gains and what to talk about becoming a Mughal agent.

Syed 'Alī Tirmidhī and Akhūnd Darwezah opposed Bāyazīd Anṣārī, for purely religious reason. Prior to that Syed 'Alī Tirmidhī had taken action against two false *Pirs*, who had no regard for Islamic norms and were involved in some un-Islamic practices. It is also true that Syed Alī had made efforts to convince Bāyazīd by arranging dialogues with him which indicates towards the fact that he had opted for a peaceful method for resolving the issue. He, otherwise, could have opted for an armed tussle with Bāyazīd, as he too enjoyed the support of Pakhtūns. Akhūnd Darwezah, in his book, has lamented Akbar for his ignorance of Islam which is yet another proof that both were not the agents of the Mughals whatever they did was purely on religious grounds. Moreover Syed 'Alī and Akhūnd Darwezah inhabited among the Yūsufzais who were the opponents of

the Mughals. Had both the above mentioned personalities been the agents of the Mughals, Yūsufzais would have not tolerated them in their area.

Notes and References:

- 1 For a detailed study see Himayatullah Yaqubi, *Mughal-Afghan Relations in South Asia: History and Development* (Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, 2015).
- 2 Kaikhasru Asfandyar, *Dabistan-i-Mazahib*, Urdu Trans, Rasheed Ahmad (Lahore: Idara-i-Saqafat Islamia 2002), 312.
- 3 Sher Afzal Khan Barikoti, *Bayazid Ansari* (Lahore: Millat Educational Printers, n.d), 84.
- 4 Abdul Qudoos Qasmi, *Introduction, Khair-ul-Bayan of Bayazid Ansari*, 2nd ed (Peshawar: Pakhtu Academy, Peshawar University), 42.
- 5 Himayatullah Yaqubi, 'Conservative Sufism in the Pakhtūn Borderland: Bayazid Ansari and Roushaniya Movement' *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies*, Villanova University USA.
- 6 Kaikhasru Asfandyar, 312
- 7 Yar Muhammad Maghmoom Khattak, *The Rowshnites & Pashto Literature* (Peshawar: Pashto Academy, University of Peshawar, 2005), 87.
- 8 Muhammad Abdul Qudoos, *Bayazid Rokhan, Vol.11 No.1* (July-October 1957), 24-35.
- 9 Mir Wali Khan Mahsud, *Introduction, Maqsud-al-Mumunin of Bayazid Ansari* (Peshawar: Khyber Printers, 1980), 3.
- 10 Ibid., 104.
- 11 Abdul Akbar Khan Akbar, *Rokhaniyan da Mughalo Ṭqrīqyan* [Pashto] (Peshawar: Idara Ishaat-i-Sarhad, n.d.), p. 18.
- 12 Yar Muhammad Maghmoom Khattak, 9.
- 13 Ibid., 104.
- 14 Mir Wali Khan Mahsud, 23.
- 15 Himayatullah Yaqubi, 'Bayazid Ansari and Roshaniyya Movement: A Conservative Cult or Nationalist endeavour?' *Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan*, Vol. 50 No. 1, 2013.
- 16 Saif-ur-Rahman Mehsud, *Pīr Rokhan ao Rokhani Inqilab* (Peshawar: University Book Agency, 1998), p. 14.

- 17 Himayatullah Yaqubi, *Mughal-Afghan Relations in South Asia: History and developments*, p. 190.
- 18 Akhtar Khan, "Bayazid Ansari", M.Phil dissertation, Department of Pakhtu, University of Peshawar, n.d, 47.
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 Ibid.
- 21 Syed Taqweem-ul-Haq Kaka Khail, Introduction, *Makhzan* of Akhund Darwaiza, 2nd ed. (Peshawar: Pakhtu Academy, University of Peshawar, 1987), 9
- 22 Syed Abdul Jabbar Shah Sithanvi, *Kitab-al-Ibrah* (Islamabad: Purab Academy, 2011), 24
- 23 Sher Shah Suri was the son of Hasan Khan. He spent some time in the Mughal army of Zahir-ud-Din Babur. During this time he learnt the weaknesses of the Mughal army. Initially, he strengthened his position in Behar and Bengal. He gained much power and authority. During 1538-39 he outclassed the Mughals and defeated Humayun. he captured the Delhi throne of India again from the Mughals.
- 24 Ibid, 35
- 25 Taqweem-ul-Haq Kaka Khail, 2
- 26 Ibid, 6
- 27 Ibid, 13
- 28 Syed Abdul Jabbar Shah Sithanvi, *Kitab-al-Ibrah* (Islamabad: Purab Academy, 2011), 70
- 29 Akhund Darwaiza, *Makhzan*, 2nd ed. (Peshawar: Pakhtu Academy, 1987), 130
- 30 Sithanvi, 72
- 31 Darwaiza, 132. The nature of the *Roshaniyya* movement was directly influenced by the personality and teachings of Bayazid Ansari, who had proclaimed himself *Pīr Roshan* or *Rokhan* (the apostle of light). However, some of his opponents dubbed him as *Pīr Ṭarīq* (The apostle of darkness). Likewise all his followers were referred to as *Ṭqrīqyān*. According to Dr. Muhammad Hanif Khalil the modern intelligentsia including Qalandar Mohmand, Dr. Yar Muhammad Maghmoom and Dr. Parvez Mahjoor, after thoroughly scrutinizing the works of Bayazid Ansari could not find him *Pīr Ṭarīq* in the light of his beliefs. Dr. Himayatullah, however, has a different view. According to him it was Bayazid Ansari who ignited the controversy when he claimed all his opponents as infidels and declared that following him is incumbent on all the Muslims. He further states that the opponents of Bayazid Ansari considered him as *Pīr Ṭarīq* because of his un-Islamic methodologies of learning and preaching.

- ³² Allah Bakhsh Yusufi, *Yusufzai Pathan*, 4th ed. (Karachi: Muhammad Ali Educational Society , 1973), 168
- ³³ Ibid, 169
- ³⁴ Abdul Akbar Khan Akbar, *Rokhanyan Da Mughalo Tqrīqyan* (Peshawar: Idara Ishat-i-Sarhad, n.d), 70
- ³⁵ Main Zahir Shah Qadri, *Akhund Darwaiza Baba* (Madyan: Maktaba Ghousia, 2000), 328
- ³⁶ Darwaiza, 134,5
- ³⁷ Himayatullah Yaqubi, *Mughal-Afghan Relations in South Asia: History and developments*, p. 124.