

Tahmina Iqbal\*  
Mazher Farid Chishti\*\*  
Nazir Hussain Shah\*\*\*  
Tahira Parveen\*\*\*\*  
Muhammad Raza Taimoor\*\*\*\*\*  
Muhammad Abrar Zahoor\*\*\*\*\*

## **Political Role and Impact of *Chishti Dargah* of Sial Sharif in Pre and Post Partition Era of Punjab, Pakistan**

### **Abstract**

The aim of this article is to highlight the political role of the *Dargah* (shrine) of Khawaja Shams-ud-Din Sialvi, Sial Sharif in Punjab, Pakistan. This *Dargah* is considered one of the most renowned in the entire Punjab region and has a historical significance for playing a multidimensional role in the community. The research attempts to particularly unfold its political contribution in the pre and post partition phases of Punjab. It was not the norm of *Dargahs* to indulge in political activities as per *Chishti* tradition, hence the study highlights the reasons the *Chishti Dargah* functioned in a unique and distinctive way, and helped shape the political attitude of Punjab. The paper locates the role of the *Chishti Sufis* in facilitating the Pakistan Movement leading to Pakistan's creation in 1947. It also elaborates how these *Sufis* and their disciples worked towards the establishment of Islamization especially during the 1970s.

**Key words:** *Dargah, Sufi Pirs, Qamer-ud-Din Sialvi, Quaid-e-Azem Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Pir Mehr Ali Shah, Muslim League,*

### **Introduction**

Before going into details of Shams-ud-Din Sialvi, his *Khanqah* and its role in the Punjab, it is vital to know about the geographical location of the town Sial Sharif where his *Khanqah* is located and also about Sial Family.

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\* Dr. Tahmina Iqbal, Assistant Professor, Department of History, Email: [tahmina153@gmail.com](mailto:tahmina153@gmail.com).

\*\* Mazher Farid Chishti, Assistant Professor, Garrison University Lahore, Pakistan. Email: [al-farid@lgu.edu.pk](mailto:al-farid@lgu.edu.pk).

\*\*\* Nazir Hussain Shah, Hod, Department of IR and Political Science, Lahore Garrison University, Lahore.

\*\*\*\* Tahira Parveen, Assistant Professor, Govt. Degree College, Sadar Cantt: Lahore.

\*\*\*\*\* Muhammad Raza Taimoor, Ph. D Scholar, Department of History and Pakistan Studies, University of the Punjab, Lahore.

\*\*\*\*\* Abrar Zahoor Bhatti, Assistant Professor, Department of History, University of Sargodha

Sial Sharif is a small settlement in the Sargodha Region of Punjab, Pakistan. It is positioned in Sahiwal Tehsil and is 48 km (30 miles) away from the main urban city of Sargodha. Sial Sharif is well-known for the *Sufi Dargah* of Khawaja Muhammad Shams-ud-Din Sialvi, generally famous as *Pir Sial*, a *Chishti Sufi* belonging to the *Chishti* chain of Sufism. His *Dargah* contributed a lot towards spreading the *Chishtiya* Sufism in the region of Punjab in 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century. His spiritual offspring reached the highest levels of sainthood and fame like, Pir Meher Ali Shah of Golra Sharif Islamabad, who was one of the leading *Chishti Sufis* of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and Khawaja Qamer-ud-Din Sialvi (his grandson and spiritual descendent). Currently, the *Dargah* of Sial Sharif is considered amongst the notable *Chishti* hubs of the Punjab. Many spiritual personalities are or have been associated with Sial Sharif<sup>1</sup> such as Hazrat Pir Syed Haider Ali Shah and Jalal Pur Sharif. Other prominent pupils include Pir Muhammad Karam Shah Al-Azhari of Bhera Sharif and Hazrat Molvi Abdul Ghani Chishti of Bareela Sharif.<sup>2</sup> The *Dargah* of Sial Sharif has been the most respected *Dargah* in the Shahpur/Sargodha constituency.<sup>3</sup> Hakeem Atta Muhammad Qureshi writes about the village Sial Sharif,

In official documents the name of the village is mentioned as Sial but the word Sharif has been attached to the village name Sial and became permanent part of it. I found this village too small, containing only few houses and streets but owing to the *Dargah* of Khawaja Shams-ud-Din Sialvi this tiny hamlet is recognized far and wide.<sup>4</sup>

There are two families surnamed Sial in Punjab. The one who lives in district Jhang's surroundings are commonly known as Rajpoot whose ancestors embraced Islam at the time of Baba Farid Ganj Shaker. While another Sial family has its roots in Khokhar Quteb Shahi's family whose genealogical basis goes back to Hazrat Abbas-bin-Ali Murtaza (r.a) and his broods. Sial Sharif family of Sargodha belongs to the second family of Sial. The word "Sial" is actually from the word "Saal" which was the name of a pious man from the existent Sial family. "Sial" is thus the deformed version of that "Saal". Zaman Ali Khokhar-bin-Auon was the sixth generation of Quteb Shahi. His family later on was acknowledged as "Saal" and then as "Sial". Hazrat Khawaja Shams-ud-Din Sialvi was from the forty-first generation of Zaman Ali Khokhar. Shams-ud-Din Sialvi was the great *Chishti Sufi* of his time and his *Dargah* is highly venerated in the Punjab region.<sup>5</sup>

Khawja Shams-ud-Din Sialvi was born in 1799 A.D. (1214 A.H) in Sial. He was born of a very religious family at the time of Sikh regime in the Punjab. At that time the Sikh rule was growing rapidly in the region and it was the time of pain and difficulties for the Muslim community of the region. Even the father of Shams-ud-Din Sialvi, Mian Muhammad Yar, was once arrested by the Sikhs and his family had to suffer as a consequence. His father paid special attention towards the education and guidance of Shams-ud-Din Sialvi who turned out to become a *Hafiz* (one who recalls Quran by heart) at the age of just seven years. He received religious education from renounced institutions of his time. He left for Kabul, Afghanistan, where he was awarded the authorization of hadith (sayings of Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H).

At the age of eighteen, he travelled to Taunsa Sharif, located at District. D.G Khan. At Taunsa Sharif, he came under the studentship of Khawja Suleiman Taunsvi, another significant *Chishti Sufi* of the region. He had great respect and veneration for his *Murshid* (Teacher). Several times, he travelled to Mahar Sharif to pay homage to his teacher. At the age of thirty-six Shams-ud-Din became the Khalifa of Khawja Taunsvi. Being a determined follower of Quran, Sharia and Sunnah (practice of *Din* Islam by Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H) his wisdom performed an imperative function in stimulating the essence of Islam in Muslims that was under attack of Christian missionary literature and subjugation by Sikhs.<sup>6</sup> At his *Khanqah Langar* (Free food) was distributed twice a day to the travellers and needy.

According to Gilmartin, it was the Mughal regime's downfall that instigated the *Chishtiya* renaissance in Delhi. In Delhi, the downfall of the Mughals was sensed most strongly and that had an effect on the performance and philosophy of *Chishti Sufis* particularly on Fakhir-ud-Din Dehlavi (1717 –1785) and Shah Kalim-ul-Allah (1650 –1729).<sup>7</sup> Many scholarly readings and hagiographic works acknowledged Noor Muhammad Muharvi (1730 –1790) and his supporters for introducing the *Chishtiya* renewal in Punjab.<sup>8</sup> Noor Muhammad Muharvi founded his *Khanqah* at the small settlement of Muhar nearby Bahawalpur in the mid-eighteenth century period. Consequently the *Chishtiya* renewal extended to its height in Taunsa, Golra and Sial Sharif.<sup>9</sup> Accordingly Muharvi's sway materialized as conspicuous *Chishti* hubs, such as Sangharh, Ahmadpur, Chachran, Makhad, Jalalpur, Bahawalpur, Multan, Pakpattan, Dera Ghazi Khan, Hajipur, Rajanpur, Narwala, Muhammadpur, Ferozepur, Kot Mithan and Sultanpur (towns and cities located in South Punjab and Sindh).<sup>10</sup>

Zameer-ud-Din Siddique is of the view that Muharvi was an initiator of the *Nizamiya* wing of the *Chishtiya* order in Punjab and Sindh. He also looked after its progress to the degree that it concealed other predominant *Sufi* networks of the *Qadiriya* and *Suhrwardiya* orders that had dominant mystical power and inspiration in the Punjab up to the eighteenth century.<sup>11</sup> Religious awareness, as Metcalf argues, amplified for the period of the nineteenth century, amongst *Ulama* along with the *Chishtiya Nizamiyah Sufis* of the Punjab. Afterwards, these *Chishti Sufis* were recognized for the teachings of Islamic law which was the domain of the *Ulama* only.<sup>12</sup>

Within a few years, a net of revived *Chishti Khanqahs* were proliferated all over the country, especially in the Punjab, with the highly spiritually intended task of refreshing the religion along with sewing up together the detached fractions of the society by generating the spiritual wisdom inside the followers. These *Chishti Khanqahs* of late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries achieved the spiritual target of self-awareness well under the supervision of "God-knowing servants of Allah".<sup>13</sup> Noor Muhammad Muharvi's strong admirers comprised the *Sajjada Nashins* of Sial Sharif. Shams-ud-Din Sialvi (1799 –1883) was Muharvi's famous descendant and the spiritual preceptor of Shah Suleiman Taunsvi (1770 –1850) from Tuansa Sharif, region Dera Ghazi Khan. He founded his *Khanqah* in Sial Sharif and led Muslims to grip obstinately to the pathway of the *Shariyat*. He guided his devotees to bring improvement in their manners and ethics.<sup>14</sup>

**The political role of his *Dargah* in pre-partition and post partition scenario** was highly significant. With the introduction of democratic system in British India, election was continually contested in the subcontinent. The elections of 1945-46 were held at a very critical time and these were meant to stimulate the demand for Pakistan which was going to change the map of India. In those days, the Punjab was a fortress of the Unionist Party of feudal lords who had a strong hold over regional politics. *Biradari* (caste system) was deeply penetrated in the social set up of rural Punjab and the provincial politics were not free from it. Hence, in Punjab, the Muslim League (ML) had to tackle many problems and its power was put to a real assessment. *Sufi Pirs* also supported ML in the decisive fight of election<sup>15</sup> and thus religion and spiritual teachings helped to assemble the separate groups of people around their political parties.

Historical investigation suggests that the *Sufi Pirs* worked for the political movement of Pakistan. They enthusiastically participated in 1945 for political development of the Muslims in the subcontinent. They committed to the public in a society where strong caste and tribe association formed indigenous, social and political establishments. They were successful in collecting people beyond familial ties and gathered support for Pakistan. That helped indeed to alter the political trend in favor of the ML. *Sufi Pirs* also participated in the election campaigns by using all their resources and influences to support ML and performed a very substantial part in its victory.<sup>16</sup> Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's policy was to defy the Unionist Party for its indigenous domination inside rural Punjab where he desired to construct the foundation for Pakistan.

“In building its base for Pakistan in the rural Punjab, the League dramatized its claim to speak for a self-conscious Muslim community that transcended the local identities around which rural politics had been built.”

Spiritual leaders played an imperative and substantial role in this procedure. The rural Muslims gave high regard to the religious headships and saw them as dominant political leaders. These headships presented Pakistan as an ambitious symbol for the Muslims. In the view of David Gilmartin, massive turnout for Pakistan in the general election clearly meant that they had associated themselves with the broader Islamic society. Consequently, the politics in rural Punjab controlled by the feudal aristocrats faced a huge set-back. The League, under the headship of eminent religious leaders evacuated the influential Unionist Party. For this astonishing and great success the ML was obliged a lot to the massive determined struggles and spiritual inspiration of the *Sufis* who entirely transformed the direction of the political flow. These regionally influential teachers offered their commitments to Quaid-i-Azam and fulfilled them, for they made Quaid's mission easier and made the decisive creation of Pakistan possible.<sup>17</sup>

**The effect of the spiritual and religious forces on the political scenario** in the general elections instigated secular minded politicians to also use this force for their election campaign. David Gilmartin highlights through his investigation that Sardar Shaukat Hayat attempted to invite the Muslims in the name of Islam and by September 1946 he affirmed that Pakistan will have Islamic way of government. In February 1946, *Pir Jama'at* Ali Shah also defending upholding Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah at the Sunni (sect within Islam) Symposium at Banaras,

professed that Jinnah was a saint of God.<sup>18</sup> Such political cum [religious] announcements had stunning influence on the public who had deep love for the *Sufis*.<sup>19</sup>

During the highlight of the political campaign, *Sufi Pir* of Taunsa, Khawaja Hasan Nizami delivered the following announcement:

“Pir Ghulam Mohyi-ud-Din, Sajjada Nashin of Hazarat Pir Mehar Ali Shah has ordered his followers to side with the Muslim League. The Jamat’ul-Ulama-i-Islam of Calcutta has also issued a Fatawa exhorting all Muslims to support the League, and he who does not abide by it would be sinful.”<sup>20</sup>

The ML won 75 out of 86 Punjab Muslim seats whereas the Unionist grieved an embarrassing loss and had been cut down to a minor group of 20 only. Later, four Unionists became the members of the League raising its strength to 79 and six members joined over independent and other seats, causing the Unionists massive loss and renouncing the party with an inconsequential supporting of ten. David Gilmartin articulates that zones like Jhelum and Rawalpindi, which were extensively toured by *Pirs*, the League won over 70 percent of the countryside Muslim vote. This magnificent success of the League was combined with a clean sweep of the Muslim urban electorates also.

The Muslims of the pastoral regions kicked out the indigenous and ethnic thought beginning for rural politics and made the league’s outstanding achievement unproblematic.<sup>21</sup> History cannot ignore the religious aspect of Pakistan Movement. For instance, the reports of the Governor of the time strengthened the evidences concerning the Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Islam (religious, political party) Symposium that was assembled at Lahore and joined by 20,000 people comprising *Sufi Pirs* and *Ulama* from Delhi, Punjab, UP and NWFP (now Khyber Pakhtoon Khaw KPK) in which the spokesmen clearly urged the Muslims to vote for the Leaguers for the sake of Allah.<sup>22</sup>

Likewise the *Zamindara* League<sup>23</sup> of district Montgomery (now Sahiwal) prearranged a camp on the yearly *Urs* of Baba Farid at Pakpattan to draw the common people but it could not be operative because neither public nor *Sajjada Nashin* entertained them. However, the League upheld the privileged status throughout this occasion.<sup>24</sup> So this is how the indigenous headship associated themselves to the democratic route by starting the manifestoes ingrained in the spiritual association.<sup>25</sup>

**The role of Dargah before partition** was very influential. Ghazi Islam Pir Muhammad Shah Bhairvi (1890-1957), the disciple of *Sajjada Nashin* Khawaja Muhammad Zia-ud-Din Sialvi and father of *Pir* Kerm Shah Al-Azheri was an active participant in Pakistan Movement. He strongly supported Pakistan ML and its political activities and asked his disciples to join ML. He personally participated in Kashmir *Jihad*.<sup>26</sup> In Aakaber Tehreek-e-Pakistanit is stated:

He has served Pakistan’s Movement with his personal efforts. When Quaid-e-Azem started the Movement of Civil Disobedience, he participated in it. He fervently supported and promoted the message of Muslim League. Even he disowned his disciples who did not vote for the Muslim League. After partition he

fought the war for Kashmir independence with his fifty *Mureedin* (Disciples) His and his companions' efforts were officially acknowledged.<sup>27</sup>

Due to his active participation in civil disobedience movement against Khizar Hayat, he was imprisoned by the government in Punjab. He was a *Sufi* who worked for the freedom of Pakistan. His teacher of Hadith Maulana Naeem-ud-Din Muradabadi and his Murshid Khawaja Qamar-ud-Din Sialvi were advocates of the Pakistan Movement. He himself campaigned for Pakistan Muslim League in the election of 1946. He had great reverence for Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Allama Dr. Muhammad Iqbal.<sup>28</sup>

Though Pir Meher Ali Shah, *Murid* (Disciple) of Khawaja Shams-ud-Din Sialvi and later *Khalifa/Murshid* (Teacher) at the *Dargah* of Golra Sharif, did not participate in any pre partition political activity as he strictly avoided politics as per the instructions/tradition of *Chishtiya* order, yet he was always there for the Muslims of the subcontinent at the time of need. For instance, when Justice Daleep Singh released Rajpal who was charged for blasphemy, Pir Meher Ali wrote to Viceroy of India that:

Despite various differences amongst Muslim community it is united when comes to the respect of Holy Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. Muslims can never bear disrespect of their Prophet. They can offer their lives even over the matter.

He did not advocate the movements of *Khilafat* and *Hijrat*. At that time he had to face severe critique from the Congress Muslims and *Khilafati* newspapers for not supporting the movements. Moulana Zafer Ali Khan, a renowned political figure of Punjab and editor of the famous newspaper *Zameendar*, went to meet him at his *Khanqah* in Golra Sharif to convince him on the *Khilafat* and *Hijrat* movements but Zafer Ali could not convince him and returned back. The *Dargah* of Golra Sharif was under harsh attacks by the press and different political platforms for not being involved into both movements. Even many Muslim *Ulama* highly criticized Pir Meher Ali Shah and his *Dargah*. Consequently, both movements badly failed especially the *Hijrat* (Migration) movement. Moreover, keeping the *Chishti* tradition alive he refused the invitation of attending the British Royal Court by the government due to which he had to face strict repercussions. Once he was offered hundreds of acres of land by the British government as a gift but he refused to accept it.<sup>29</sup> It is also important to know that *Pir Meher Ali* and his *Dargah* played a very active role against the Wahabi Movement and Qadiyani Movement. Both movements deeply affected the socio-political and religious set up of the Indian subcontinent.<sup>30</sup> The *Dargah* of Sial Sharif performed its dynamic role in the form of *Pir Meher Ali Shah* and his *Dargah* in Golra as well.

Qamar-ud-Din Sialvi's participation in the ML (established in 1938 in Sargodha) had a profound impact. He was selected as president of ML in 1942 and was a very active participant of the Pakistan Movement. He toured the provinces of Punjab and Serhad (now Khyber Pakhtoon Khwaa) to motivate the people, particularly his followers, for the struggle of Pakistan. In Sehlat Referendum his efforts was there to make public opinion in favor of Pakistan's establishment. At that time district Khoshab was part of district Sargodha and at present tehsil Sha Pur was the hub of Sialvi followers. It was the place from where Malik Khizer Hayat Tiwana was also participating in 1946 election as president of Unionist

Party and as Prime Minister of the united Punjab. Qamer-ud-Din Sialvi's participation in ML made him very nervous about his victory in the election for he knew well that *Chishti Sialvi Dargah* had a strong influence on its followers and that they would whole heartedly vote for the ML.

Tiwana tried many tricks to stop Qamer-ud-Din from supporting ML but his attempts proved futile. He was afraid of losing some of his family votes as distant relatives had become disciples of Sial Sharif. He thus faced a lot of internal opposition. As a last resort he sent the women of his family, bare foot, to Qamer-ud-Din Sialvi for *mela* (a Punjabi tradition whereby to resolve a conflict between two parties one family sends women folk to the other family for productive talks). The female clan from Tiwana's side met Qamer-ud-Din Sialvi and begged him not to support Quaid-e-Azam and ML in elections and to support Khizer Hayat Tiwwana. Sialvi gently refused by saying:

It is not the *Chishti* tradition to send back the guests without considering and fulfilling their demands. *Chishti Khanqahs* are not used to refusing the requests of the visitors and they are never returned back empty handed but this time I have to say NO as I am strictly committed to Quaid-e-Azam and cannot leave my commitment to ML.

Sialvi faced severe opposition from the Unionist party when visiting the whole subcontinent in support of ML. His *Khanqah's* role is worth mentioning here as it declared clearly and openly that every *Khalifa* and *Murid* attached to *Dargah/Khanqah* had to work for the Pakistan Movement by supporting ML. The *Dragah's* attitude was strict towards the non-supporters to the extent that they were not allowed to visit the *Dargah* as was the case with *Pir* of Khara who supported the Unionist party and had to apologize to Sialvi in order to be welcomed at the shrine again.<sup>31</sup>

Sialvi found a lot of staunch support in the form of Qazi Zafar Hussain<sup>32</sup> who was an influential political figure of the province. Ian Talbot inscribes:

"Another leading Chishti, Sajjada Nashin, Pir Qamer-ud-Din of Sial Sharif held a meeting on the outskirts of the Kalra estate in which he publically challenged Khizr and Allah Baksh to come to terms with the Muslim League. 'I have never begged for anything in my life before', he declared, 'but today I have come out of my home to beg for votes, believing God is present here (the meeting was being held in a *Masjid*) it is Islamic to ask for vote and "religious" to give them. The Muslim League is purely a religious movement in which all the rich, poor, Sufis and scholars are participating. Not as a Pir but even as a Muslim, I have repeatedly advised Nawab Allah Baksh who is my Murid not to desert the Muslims at this critical time."<sup>33</sup>

Like Pir Mehr Ali Shah, when Sialvi was the president of ML in Sargodha, he was asked to keep himself impartial from Pakistan Movement by several British politicians. He too was offered acres of land and millions of rupees by Khizer's administration to keep himself away from supporting Quaid-e-Azam and Pakistan but he replied:

Pakistan Movement and Two Nation Theory are identical to Islamic Ideology. My support to Muhammad Ali Jinnah and to Pakistan can never be purchased at any cost.

Khizer's management banned Sialvi's speeches in processions but despite that people eagerly attended his congregations and his jargon and words inspired people to support the creation of Pakistan. Sialvi participated in the All India *Sunni* Conference held in Banaras, along with thousands of his followers and affirmed his vote for Pakistan's creation. This conference left a deep impact on the political scenario of the subcontinent. After that conference, Quaid-e-Azam and Liaqat Ali Khan developed admiration and deep respect for the sufis of Sial Sharif. Quaid-e-Azam wrote a letter to Sialvi and acknowledged his efforts for the Pakistan Movement and affirmed that there would be an Islamic system of governance in Pakistan. He also appreciated Sialvi for uniting the Muslims of India which would have been tough in his absence.<sup>34</sup> *Pir Kerm Shah Al-Azheri* is of the view that Sialvi observed the actuality of Quaid-e-Azam's view whereas great intellectuals of that time could not choose whether the demand of Quaid-e-Azam had any recognition or significance in it or not and most of all whether it was feasible or not. History, thus, greatly affirms Sialvi's support and devotion to Quaid-e-Azam in the struggle to acquire Pakistan.<sup>35</sup>

After partition of the subcontinent, Pakistan faced much instability as a nation especially in the 1970s. There were some secular forces who were interested in making Pakistan a secular state in the name of socialism and movements like *Nizam-e-Mustafa* (Islamic Governance) and the *Khatm-e-Nabuwwat* (Finality of Prophet hood P.B.U.H) started to counter the secularist approach. Here *Dargah* of Shams-ud-Din Sialvi performed a pertinent role as many disciples took part in socio-religious and political activities. Sialvi became the founding member of the political party *Jamiat Ulama-e-Pakistan* (JUP). This party's aim was to implement Islamization in the state through constitution. In 1970, he became the president of JUP and under his headship the party won eighteen seats of the National Assembly in the general elections.<sup>36</sup> He was chosen as a member of the Islamic Ideology Council twice, where he effectively worked to Islamize the prevailing laws.<sup>37</sup>

During that period, many religious teachers and scholars supported Bhutto's socialistic ideology and this created anxiety and unrest amongst religious circles of the country. Keeping in tradition with the pre partition role of the *Dargah* in which Sialvi's role in Pakistan Movement was very noteworthy, it was impossible for him to remain silent at the turbulent time. Despite his old age he gathered *Ulama* and *Sufis* of the time at a religious conference in Toba Tek Singh and was unanimously selected as the president of JUP. He raised the slogan "Socialism *Ka Qaberstaani* (Graveyard for Socialism), Pakistan, Pakistan" and it was a clear reaction to the secular mindset. He conducted an "All Pakistan Tour" in order to encourage Islamic ideology that worked well with the establishment of the country. Addressing a massive *Sunni* Conference in Multan he declared:

Pakistan is an Islamic Republic and no un-Islamic set-up will be tolerated in the state. It was the force of Islamic ideology that made possible the creation of Pakistan and this force will keep continuing to perform its unique role even after the birth of Pakistan.



The prime minister of Pakistan at the time was Zulfikar Ali Bhutto who held a meeting with Sialvi in Islamabad. In the meeting Bhutto requested him for support and secular advocacy, but Sialvi declined saying:

If you want your peaceful stay and success then you have to enforce the Islamic system (*Nizam-e-Mustafa*) in the country. There is no other way that will provide security to your regime.

Bhutto pledged that he would implement Islamization in the state in the future but he could not materialize his promises. Sialvi wrote him a letter about the execution of Islamic Laws in the country but Bhutto kept following his socialist ideology. Sialvi was of the view that Sufism was not about pledging to a *Khanqah* alone and merely performing religious rituals, but the name of a practical school of thought that contributed socially especially towards establishing truth and righteousness.<sup>38</sup> Sialvi received support from his *Chishti Sufi* brotherhood in the post partition activities, especially from *Chishti Sialvi Sufi Pir* Kerm Shah and his family. The only son of Shah, Syed Ghulam Muhay-ud-Din, famously known as Babu Ji actively participated in *Tahrik-e-Khatam-e-Nubuwwat* in 1953. He, by following the way of his ancestors, shunned having relationships with the regime of his time yet for the sake of Islam and Pakistan his efforts were always there. He held meetings with rulers of that time such as Governor General Ghulam Muhammad and Prime Minister Khawaja Nazim-ud-Din and other high officials regarding the issue of *Khatam-e-Nubuwwat*.<sup>39</sup>

Pir Kerm Shah himself actively participated in the politics of the country by joining *Jamiat Ulama-e-Pakistan* as senior vice-president. He was a courageous man who openly condemned what was un-Islamic in his view and strongly disapproved all man-made systems of the Government. He criticized Bhutto due to his socialistic philosophies. Shah played a dynamic part in *Tehrik Khatm-e-Nabuwwat* in 1974 and emphasized in his essays in *Zia-e-Haram Journal* that *Qadianis* should be affirmed as non-Muslims. He also partook in *Tehreek Nizam-e-Mustafa* in 1977. His monthly journal was retained under the regulations of press restriction by the government and was jailed by Bhutto only to be unconfined on imposition of martial law by General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq in 1979. He requested General Zia for the Islamization of the system of the state. General Zia had great reverence for him and considered him a great scholar of the twentieth century.<sup>40</sup> In August 1988, upon the invitation of General Zia-ul-Haq, Shah went to Geneva and advocated the point of the government of Pakistan upon the issue forwarded by the Pakistani Qadianis at the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations.<sup>41</sup>

Thus, *Chishti Sialvi Sufi Pirs'* vigorous involvement in the movements of *Nizam-e-Mustafa* and the *Khatm-e-Nabuwwat* and the way they put their struggles forward for the duration of that period cannot be ignored historically, particularly when it comes as a role of *Chishti Sufis* in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Conclusion:**

The study aims to reveal the lesser known aspect of one of the important *Chishti Sufi Dargahs* in the region of Punjab. *Dargahs* are usually understood to perform religious and social functions but they, as history makes evident, are institutes with

multidimensional objectives. The research highlights Sial Sharif's active operation and participation in the politics of the region and its influence on the dogmatic attitude of the local community. The research locates the unknown yet valuable efforts made by *Chishti Sufis* of the Punjab who somehow digressed from the established principles of their *Sufi* Order of not becoming part of the politics, took part in and fully supported the Pakistan Movement and Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. This also shows that *Khanqah* and *Dargah* culture is not merely mystically symbolic in its character, which is usually considered and associated with it, rather it is progressive and has the ability to deal contemporary challenges too. The research can be further developed by studying the way the actual *Sufi* practices and concepts of *Baraka* along with the pupil-teacher relationships helped in the strengthening of the *Sufi* order and thereby, achieving the purpose taken up by the *Chishtiya Sufis* during the partition period.

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- <sup>6</sup> K. A. Nizami, *Tarikh-e-Mashatekh-e- Chisht*, Vol. V (Karachi, 2007 ), 372-75.
- <sup>7</sup> David Gilmanton, “Religious Leadership and the Pakistan Movement in the Punjab,” in Mushirul Hasan, ed., *India’s Partition: Process, Strategy and Mobilization* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994), 489.
- <sup>8</sup> “With Sulaman Taunsawi, Khawja Muhammad ‘Aqil of Kot Mithan and Hafiz Muhammad Jamal of Multan, Chishti pirs came to epitomize the Islamic revivalist streak, which seemed to have lent an exclusionary character to Taunsawi and his successor s despite t heir Chishtiya denomination. The pirs of Golra Sharif and Sial Sharif were disciples of Taunsawi.” Tahir Kamran and Amir Khan Shahid, “Shari’a, Shi’as and Chishtiya Revivalism: Contextualising the Growth of Sectarianism in the Tradition of the Sialvi Saints of the Punjab”, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, no. 3, (2014): 5, doi: 10.1017/S1356186314000194.
- <sup>9</sup> Khwaja Noor Muhammad was the prominent *khalifa* of Fakhir-ud-din Dehlavi. He received his early instruction at Lahore and then proceeded to Delhi for higher esoteric learning from Fakhir-ud-din. Later on, at the persuasion of his teacher (*Murshid*) he came to Muhar (Bahawalpur) and settled there. Muhar in due course became the center of *Chishtiya* activity. Ibid., 6. For further details, see Nizami ,*Tarikh-i Mashaikh-i Chisht*, Vol. V, 210–234, and Qazi Javaid, *Punjab ke Sufi Danishwar* (Lahore, Fiction House, 2005 ), 201– 219.
- <sup>10</sup> Nizami, *Tarikh-e-Mashatekh-e- Chisht* Vol. V, 278, 211.
- <sup>11</sup> M. Zameeruddin Siddiqi, “The resurgence of the Chishti Silsilah in the Punjab During the Eighteenth Century,” *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, 1970* (New Delhi: Indian History Congress, 1971), 408. Also see Liyaqat Hussain Moini, “Devotional Linkages of Punjab with the Chishti Shrine at Ajmer: Gleanings from the Vikalatnamas”, in *Sufism in Punjab*, (eds.) Surinder Singh and Ishwar Dayal Gaur, 379– 382; Sanyal, “Devo tional Islam”, 46 – 47.
- <sup>12</sup> Barbara Daly Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband 1860–1900* (New Delhi, 1986), 40.
- <sup>13</sup> Justice Shaykh Muhammad Karam Shah al-Azhari, “The Gnostic of Siyal; Shaykh al-Islam wa'l-Muslimeen, Khawaja Muhammad Qamar al-Din (1324-1401 AH / 1906-1981 CE)”. *Diya-e Haram*, (August-September, 1981): 2
- <sup>14</sup> Kamran and Shahid, “Shari’a, Shi’as and Chishtiya Revivalism”, 8.
- <sup>15</sup> A. Sattar Khan, “The Role of the Ulama and Mashaikh in the Pakistan Movement”, *The Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan*. 36, No. 2 (1999): 21-23.
- <sup>16</sup> Ibi.,
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid.,

- <sup>18</sup> Gilmartin, “Religious Leadership,” 223-24.
- <sup>19</sup> Akhtar Hussain Sandhu and Amna Mahmood, “Revisiting the Elections 1946 and the Punjab Politics” *Pakistan Vision* Vol. 14 No.2 (2013): 212.
- <sup>20</sup> Khan, “The Role of the Ulama and Mashaikh in Pakistan Movement”, 21-32.
- <sup>21</sup> Ibid., 21-23.
- <sup>22</sup> Governor’s Fortnightly Report, (Punjab) Second half of January 1946, L/PJ/5/249.
- <sup>23</sup> *Zamindara* League was an extra-parliamentary group of the Unionists which was originated by Ch. Chhotu Ram in 1920s and afterward it was invigorated in 1944 to offset Muslim League’s politics. In the 1940s, *Zamindara* League expected to be a assisting platform of the Punjab Unionist Party.
- <sup>24</sup> Ian Talbot, *Khizr Tiwana, the Punjab Unionist Party and the Partition of India* (London: Curzon Press, 1996), 132.
- <sup>25</sup> Sandhu and Mahmood, “Punjab Politics,” 208.
- <sup>26</sup> Ibid., 301-09.
- <sup>27</sup> Muhammad Sadiqe Qasoori, *Aakaaber Tehreek-e-Pakistan*, Vol: II (Lahore: Noori Book Depot, 1979), 241-42.
- <sup>28</sup> “Justice Pir Muhammad Karam Shah Al-Azhari (1918-1998),” accessed June 21, 2014, [http://www.pakpost.gov.pk/philately/stamps2004/pir\\_mohammad\\_karam.html](http://www.pakpost.gov.pk/philately/stamps2004/pir_mohammad_karam.html).
- <sup>29</sup> See for detail, See Moulana Faiz Ahmad Sahib Faiz, *Mehr-e-Muneer* (Islamabad: Syed Pir Ghulam Moin-ud-Din Shah and Syed Pir Shah Abd-ul-Haq Shah, 1987) 144, 277-79.
- <sup>30</sup> See detail notes in chapter 5 and 6 Ibid.,
- <sup>31</sup> Haji Muhammad Murid Ahmed Chishti, *Fouz-al-Muqaal Fi Khulfa-e-Pir Sial*, Vloume: viiii (Karachi: Anjuman Qamer-ul-Islam Sulaimania), 151-54. See for the detail same pages from the same book.
- <sup>32</sup> “Qazi Zafar Hussain,” accessed September 07, 2014, <https://sites.google.com/site/alwisawan/qazi-zafar-hussain>.
- <sup>33</sup> See Talbot, *Khizr Tiwana*.
- <sup>34</sup> Syed Arif Hussain Shah Gilani, *Qamer-e-Du-Aalem* (Faisl Abaad: Anjamen-e-Ghulaman-e-Pir Sial, 2012), 18-20.
- <sup>35</sup> Al-Azheri, “The Gnostic of Siyal,” 4.
- <sup>36</sup> “Sial Sharif,” accessed July 17, 2016, <http://sialsharif.org/golden-chain.html>. Also see, Muejeeb Ahmad, “Jam’iyyat ‘Ulama-i-Pakistan, 1948-1979”, *National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research*, Historical studies (Pakistan) series, Vol,12, (1993): 59.
- <sup>37</sup> Al-Azhari, “The Gnostic of Siyal,” 5.
- <sup>38</sup> Gilani, *Qamer-e-Du-Aalem*, 18-23.
- <sup>39</sup> Faiz, *Mehr-e-Muneer*, 606-08.
- <sup>40</sup> “Justice Pir Muhammad Karam Shah Al-Azhari (1918-1998),” accessed June 21, 2014, [http://www.pakpost.gov.pk/philately/stamps2004/pir\\_mohammad\\_karam.html](http://www.pakpost.gov.pk/philately/stamps2004/pir_mohammad_karam.html).
- <sup>41</sup> “Justice Diya al-’Ummah Hadhrat Shaykh Mawlana Mufti Muhammad Karam Shah al-Azhari,” *Zia-ul-Ummah Foundation*, accessed August 30, 2014, <http://ziaulummah.org/karam-shah-al-azhari/>.