

KHODJA AKHMET¹ YASAVI²
and
TURKIC LITERATURE IN SELJUK TIMES:
A HYPOTHESIS FOR THE STUDY OF LINGUA-GENESIS
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This paper, as the subtitle suggests, is the statement of a hypothesis; it is based on four postulates. I have drawn on the nature and content of the work of Khodja Akhmet Yasavi to state my hypothesis and have postulated four ideas which are reflected in the context of time and space to rationalize the historical process. The paper is essentially a statement of the historic ethnic and linguistic relationship between Pakistan and Central Asian Turk peoples and how ethno-linguistics was applied to spread Islam; Khodja Yasavi's Hikmats are used as a case in point. We will discuss the first three postulations in the introduction and deal with the fourth along with the hypothesis in the main text in the discourse on the Hikmats. The four postulates that form the basis of this proposition are:

1. There are different time and space watersheds for political, cultural and religious history. Within a cultural context, economic, ethnic and linguistic movements are influenced, each by its own dynamics, evolving at different rates of development.
2. Sufi tariqat was a Turkic innovation in Muslim spiritualism just as sultanat was an innovation of the Turks in Muslim statehood³.
3. The ethnic and linguistic linkage between Central Asia and Pakistan can be traced back to the Stone Age and provides the basis for religious, spiritual and cultural markers which are deeply ingrained or embedded as components in both regions.
4. Tariqas absorbed Arabic language to discuss Quranic concepts, especially when there were no Persian and Turkish words to identify them. They used Persian for concepts and institutions of statehood except when they had Turkish equivalents or needed to revert to Arabic. However, for cultural consonance, they absorbed local words from the spoken medium in the various societies within the catchment area of their respective orders. This brought about a lingua-genesis and a cultural syncretism in which racial identity was subsumed within an ethnic reorientation.

Even if we mark all the religious, political and ethnic watersheds with a coeval pre & post-Islamic marker, which is reasonable, the economic and social markers cannot be divided at the same point in time because of the uneven pace of Semitic movement or socio-administrative assimilation of the conquered territories. In religious or spiritual terms Khodja Yasavi is in the third phase: starting with the Quranic for the Arabs and the Fiqhi/tasavvuf in a sophisticated/urban jurisprudent spiritualism of the Persian and Byzantine peoples of ancient civilizations⁴. In political terms, the Seljuks were in the fifth phase if we distinguish between varieties of Khilafat; and a third phase if Amirs are taken as the first political variation of leadership after the Khilafat. In any event it is at the periphery of the second major Sultanat that the Khodja resided, practically in the region contested between the Khwarizm Shah and the Kara Khitai, half a century before the Changezid reshuffle. In the ethnic context, the phase may be marked as the third starting with the Semitic, followed by the Iranian and the Turkic. When placed on a time line each of these phases started at a different time: the Turkic ascent began first, c900, the first sultanate came into being c. 1000 and the Silsilas began c. 1100.

Even though The Chishti Silsila, in so far as the formalization of silsilas is concerned, may have been the earliest to form a continuous chain [c. 950 AD]; silsilas, as socio-political spiritual entities, began to play a central role in Muslim spiritual life during the twelfth century. Early sufis had to perform a delicate task of cultural reorientation from the previous spiritual-religious ethos into Islamic frames of reference. Thus we see that Khodja Yasavi used five terms for a creator in his Hikmats one to five: Allah, Rab and Haq from the Quran, Khuda from the Persian and Tanri from the local ethos. In the same way he has used Arabic terms for spiritual conceptualization, even when some local concepts could have been used, perhaps in order to endorse or enforce the Islamic concept but he occasionally used local equivalents to facilitate the transition from one tradition to the other. This construction does not presuppose that all known Hikmats originated with Khodja Yasavi himself; rather it may even be used to assess the possible origin of a Hikmat or its verses ascribed to the Khodja while estimating the authenticity, age or place of compilation of different manuscripts.

By the end of the third Hijra century, Seerat of the Prophet SAW had been elevated and made remote⁵ by tradition on the one hand and alienation from Arabian culture on the other; particularly in the remnants of the Abbasid domain. Turks especially and neo-converts in general needed role models that were culturally more consonant and physically more visible. Thus was born the need for Tariqat which in turn led to the formation of the Sufi Silsilas. While the roots of Sufi thought and practice are traced through Arab spiritualists to Hazrat Ali and Hazrat Muhammad SAW. Arab tribalism had ascribed a centrality to the Quraish and Iranian sophistication promoted primacy of the Syeds; as such no counter tribal affinity was permissible. The worldly primacy of the Quraish as Khalifas and that of the Syeds as spiritual leaders became sacrosanct therefore the Turks invoked the Sultan for devolution of worldly power and the shah or sultan of spiritualism was the Khodja [Khwaja in Ajmer], the Qutb, Abdal and Vali whose ability to dominate both realms made him more powerful than worldly Sultans.

Spiritualism of the Arabs had been stark and simple but contact with the sophisticated civilizations of Iran, Egypt and Rome forced them to generate a body of jurisprudence resulting in the Fiqh interpretations of different schools responding to questions from the neo-converts. Beginning towards the end of the Umayyad Khilafat, these schools may have had a primary role to play or have been influenced by the fragmentation of the monolithic Muslim state and its emerging units. If the nomadic Arabs needed only the Sharia and if the city dweller needed some form of Fiqh, the tribal Turks needed a simple statement of the role model to follow as a seerat. The aftermath of Mutazillaite thought saw the emergence of Tariqat which was unknown to sufia like Ali Hajveri⁶.

The rhythm of ethnic flow of the Turks from about 500 AD was a molecular sporadic one, sometimes on an individual or family scale and at others in tribal groups. In all cases they tended to be assimilated in the mainstream of existing population although they remained distinct as outstanding individuals⁷. The Mongols coming after Khodja Yasavi's time arrived like a deluge in several phases, gradually becoming a trickle or a dripping flow. The Turko-Mongol states that emerged soon became homogenous in the form of a socio-linguistic fabric within unsynchronized timelines in irregular units of space. A study of the then contemporary socio-linguistic fabric is beyond the scope of the present paper but we may hope to provide the basis for such a study.

The historic period witnessed east-west movement of peoples only on a limited scale, mainly as individuals and small groups; but the north-south movement was on a large scale, generally in the form of communities or ethnic groups. Almost all these groups may be linked with the Turks, most of them being identified as Turkic, amalgamated with Turks or Turkophiles. We need not dwell here on pre-Islamic Huns and Kushans who may have given their names to the Hind-o-Kush Mountains that they straddled, but move on to the Turks who entered the Abbasid Khilafat. Yet let us note in passing that cultural and linguistic trade between these Turkic people and their southern hosts of Scythian or Parthian times was no less than during the Kushan or Bactrian periods. This not only led to further assimilation in later times but also provided a foundation of affinity which determined the respective locations to which newcomers gravitated; thereby laying out the structure of each new ethno-lingua-genesis.

The Central Asian pre-Islamic links go back to Scytho-Parthian times when language of Pakistani regions may first have become uniform and spiritual and cultural markers of Buddhism were exchanged. In the Muslim context, the Ghaznavi sultanat revived this direct linkage even though the Abbasid Khilafat had maintained indirect contact between them, first as components and later as breakaway units in a variety of Imarat. The Ghorid state replicated the Ghaznavi pattern till the Changezid upheaval. Khodja Yasavi's time is coeval with the Ghorid ascendancy which was a dissociating phase due to the conflict in the region which even embroiled Sultan Sanjar at one time. The Buddhist influence, which moved to Central Asia via Pakistan, probably because it was subsumed by culture in both regions, remained a common denominator even if the linguistic commonalities were reduced and partly disoriented at this time.

Although the spiritual commonalities remained powerful, the political disconnect was responsible for a time lag between the emergence of the Khodjagan and the influence of the Naqshbandi tariqa in the region of Pakistan⁸. Contemporaries of Khodja Yasavi in Pakistan included Baha-ud-din Zakariya and perhaps even for a time Moin-ud-din Chishti⁹. The political disconnect notwithstanding the emphasis on Sharia at this time seems to dominate the tariqas though none of these sufia appears to have gone as far as Khodja Yasavi in emulating the life of prophet Muhammad SAW. The Naqshbandi silsila acquired its formal name at about the same time as the Qarauna ascendancy in India and Central Asia. This would certainly have facilitated the interaction but would not have ensured the popularity of that tariqa in India. The political turmoil following the decline of the Qaraunas brought the Bhagti movement to the fore in the Sultanate of Delhi and it was not until after the Muslims managed to rationalize and neutralize its effect that the Naqshbandi order was able to acquire centrality in India.

A major share of literature in Seljuk times is in Persian even when contributors were non-Persian speaking peoples. This fact deserves special attention for constructing a contemporary lingua-cultural spectrum. Biruni, Firdusi and Ali Hajveri are members of a Ghaznavi literary tradition which began infiltrating spiritualism and academia after having stamped its mark on poetry and history. Nizam-ul-Mulk Tusi, Ghazali, Khayyam and Qabus, the second stage, received more state sponsorship; Rumi, Attar, Saadi, Khusrau and Hafiz merely continued the linguistic trend while adding to its cultural and spiritual dimensions. Ethnic movements in the region that is of particular interest in this paper are divided in two broad phases, the pre-historic and the historic.

THE HYPOTHESIS:

In this climate of spiritual and temporal ethnic restructuring that was inevitable with the movement of Turkic peoples, Tariqas played the central role in a syncertic process for lingua-genesis and ethno-genesis. A comparison of Divan-i-Hikmat with the other contemporary¹⁰ Turkish works like the *Divan Lughat-ut Turk*, *Katudgu Bilig* and *Ahabat-ul Hakaik* on the one hand, and diachronic Turkic literature on the other, would prove invaluable to assess the nature and form of linguistic trade in the regions where the Turks were creating new ethno-genesis during the first half of the previous millennium. It is noteworthy that the other three contemporary Turkish sources have much smaller vocabularies of Arabic and Persian compared to the Divan-i-Hikmat.

Minor ethnic modification has continuously taken place within the geographic region under review. This includes the region of modern Central Asia, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran. In general a north to south demographic flow has been the norm, sometimes due to pressure from Sino-Mongol regions, at others due to overflow of people from Central Asia. Mongol-Tatar contribution to Turkic lingua-genesis before Changez is perhaps difficult to document but their pastoralist movements had been going on for centuries before they were successively exposed to teachings of Islam. The Mongols caused a vigorous ethnic upheaval and linguistic trade in Central Asia and Iran which led to spiritual and socio-political restructuring on a large scale.

The Spiritual restructuring in particular reflected the ethno-genesis and dominated the syncertic lingua-genesis in three forms. A study of Hikmats given in the next section will attempt to display these three aspects given below:

- a) Culturemes being manifested in spoken languages and dialects became rooted in some structure of tariqat and provided the basis of syncertic ethno-genesis. Local languages and vernaculars provided the mould for tariqat through culture/beliefs.
- b) Lingua-genesis [framing of the new language structures] was primarily motivated by the complex and delicate function of divorcing the incipient ethnic entity from its older [previous] belief system. As such the language used needed to not invoke erstwhile religious concepts while Islamizing the community.
- c) Antithesis for lingua-genesis was provided by communal socio-cultural responses. When people were unable to absorb Islamic concepts without some linkages with their earlier beliefs and practices the tariqas had to realign themselves or give way to new tariqas. Thus alternative formulations emerged in response to social norms and practices, setting up a cyclical system for lingua-genesis. Even if states could not enforce or create an ethno-genesis, tariqas provided the necessary dynamics.

The thesis and antithesis formulation, based on modern analytical epistemology of the West is actually inadequate and misleading as it suggests a diachronic sequence. Ying and Yang, allowing for both synchronic and diachronic occurrences better explain the phenomenon which is really a kneading action that homogenizes and integrates grains of both community and culture through the lubrication of language. The next section will highlight characteristics of syncretism, ethno-genesis, lingua-genesis and tariqat formation that can be identified either in Hikmats of Khodja Akhmet Yasavi or from the historical events of his time and the two succeeding centuries of Mongol eruption and its consequent ethnic restructuring in Turkistan and its environs.

The hypothesis put forward relies heavily on two of my own articles and near-native competence in all dialects of the Punjab¹¹. Oral tradition attributes various renderings of poetic expression; each being consonant with a specific community and its earlier linguistic forms. Various texts of the Hikmats ascribed to the Khodja may depict later formulations of Yasavi thought according to a number of fresh ethno-geneses caused by the movements of Turko-Mongol peoples from the time of Chinggis for nearly five centuries¹². It is unfortunately impossible to date oral traditions, so we have to rely on written texts to identify the time and space of a particular rendering. Even written text may reflect some version of thought or language from a previous time or a different space. Available variations of Turkish literature of the 12th and 13th centuries may be analyzed for linguistic forms and commonalities between Pakistan and Central Asia¹³.

Ethnicity, sometimes confused with race, is generally understood as a cultural term which, properly applied, refers to a specific time and space; in this context communist historians discuss the occurrence of ethno-genesis, that is to say coming in to being of an ethnicity. Russian historiography traced ethno-genesis in Pakistan through several stages but failed to identify its causes or manifestations. A detailed analysis of their writings shows that they normally found the emergence of an ethnicity in a state or a condition of enforced administrative commonality and identified it in the emergence of a new common language. Although culture is much more than a common language and its obvious manifestations may include dress and food; language is by far its most pervasive element and even possesses the power to delimit cultural parameters. It is also an essential acquisition for any person or group to gain inclusion in an ethnicity when they have not historically been part of it. Ethno-genesis is almost invariably an ethno-lingua-genesis; which is why lingua-genesis is the core issue in this study.

A feature of the socio-linguistic fabric is that it is knitted on the basis of small units of space [bana] and large units of time [tana]¹⁴ for linguistic and ethnic integration. The strength of the fabric depends on the length of time over which a single administrative structure is maintained in a region as unity of administration is a catalyst for lingua-ethno-genesis. A basic assumption of the present study is: while the essence of views ascribed to Khodja Yasavi must have been propounded by him, much of their form is based on variations developed by his disciples. Thus each construction may represent a local adaptation with words that were familiar to the contemporary community and concepts acceptable to the ethnic base of the society in which the version was used. In most cases the use of various languages would facilitate intra-ethnic communications and made it possible to endorse Islamic beliefs while using some un-Islamic concepts.

During its first phase the Khilafat gradually extended to Central Asia; reopening gates for Turkish southern movement and a new lingua-genesis. Probably a similar lingua-genesis had taken place in Kushan times but it is not easy to identify due to dearth of written text. However, in the eighth century AD Persian and Arabic entered a contest for supremacy as the language of knowledge in the Abbasid state. A scattered Turkic population, in the lower echelons of society, cast its lot with the subject Iranians and made important contributions to Persian literature¹⁵. Incidentally they inducted some of their own linguistic forms into the emerging dialects. This influence was greater in the eastern areas of the Abbasid domain, particularly in Afghanistan. The concept of a sultan was no more alien to the Abbasids than was the idea of tariqat to the Arabs.

Rationale and Historical environment:

In the tenth century, Turks began acquiring the status of rulers in Muslim regions. Their patronage of Persian continued but the intrusion of Turkish in the 'vernacular' within their domains became greater. In these sultanates Sufi silsilas performed two important functions: first, they translated Islamic thought in a spoken language with which common people were familiar; secondly they provided culturally consonant role models in the form of the sheikh's tariqa. It is vital to remember that this function was not confined to the sheikh; it extended to the entire tariqa¹⁶ through generations of its Khalifas and sajjada nashins. The Divan-i-Hikmat, whether as the original text of the Khodja or variations on it performed both services through lingua-genesis and advocacy of the life of Hazrat Muhammad SAW. Khodja Akhmet belonged to a time-space when Persian had established its dominance in courts but spoken languages of the common people were being revived as mediums of communication for the Sufis¹⁷. His choice of Turkish as the medium of expression is thus particularly noteworthy; it was the first step in religious integration and ethno-genesis through lingua-genesis.

The first syncertic need was to construct a system whereby Semitic spiritual heritage could be acceptable to the Turkic communities of Central Asia. Khodja Yasavi's life provided several convenient events to facilitate this. The facts that the Khodja's name was Ahmed and he was orphaned at the age of seven¹⁸ were providential similarities but he was also intent on emulating the Prophet SAW¹⁹ in every way possible. Thus he literally retired to a grave upon reaching the age when Prophet Muhammad SAW was buried. In other matters also he mirrored the life of Muhammad SAW, like the manner in which he decided on the place where he should settle²⁰. History is invoked for linkage with Arab tradition but language was used to enhance cultural affiliation.

Khodja Yasavi's diction may upon occasion be similar to that of his contemporaries in the Seljuk Empire; but his subject matter is distinct, having hardly any reference to rulers and faqihs. He used local idioms like pir-i-mughan to facilitate communication with his disciples. Whereas part of the reason may be sought in the Turkic content of his language, which was due to the fact that his audience was nomadic and Turkic, it was mainly because these elements were not materially affected by doctors of religion or worldly rulers. Khodja Yasavi's peripheral domicile vis-à-vis the Seljuk state may perhaps indicate that the choices of both, language and subjects; were deliberate and voluntary²¹. The Persianized Turks living in Iran, Afghanistan and even in Samarqand or Bokhara did not need either adaptation to facilitate syncertic absorption.

While the Turks, like the Arabs who had to transform themselves from Jahiliyya to Islam, were nomadic-tribal people, their origins did not have a Semitic culture where Adam, Ibrahim and Moses were integral parts of tradition. The tenets of Christianity or Judaism had no place in their cultural frames of reference; even Islam, with which they came into contact in Iran, had already been formalized by several interpreters of jurisprudence. Thus the need for some culturally sensitive mediums of expression and concepts arose. While Persian had the ability to transmit Islamic concepts among the Persian speaking people, as it reached its linguistic frontier, the need for collaboration with local languages within the region arose. This at times took the form of intrusion into local idiom and at others the inclusion of local words into Persian; we see both these processes in the various versions of the Divan-i Hikmat of Khodja Akhmet.²²

The Samani decline and the rise of the Ghaznavi Sultans initiated ethnic restructuring of Turkic peoples and the reformation of a pre-Islamic state system in Transoxiana. It thus created the conditions necessary for non-Persianized Turks to enter the Muslim community. Persianized Turks like Tusi and Saadi contributed to Persian literature in Iran, Yusuf Has Hajib, Kashgarli Mehmud and Edib Akhmet Yuknek, like Akhmet Yasavi, contributed to Turkic literature, mainly in the Karahani region. It was in this, the peripheral region, where the older state system was renascent, that ethnic identity was becoming hazy; it was here too that Silsilas were born: The Chishti, at Chisht²³, near Heart; the Khwajgan at Bokhara; the Suhrawardi in Khwarizm; and the Qadri at Gilan on the bank of the Caspian. When the Seljuks emerged on the scene, they, like the Ghaznavis before them, soon became Persianized but Khwarizm, Transoxiana and the Caspian regions retained their Turkic temperament. The Mongol eruption brought swift changes in the region's ethnic construct, accelerating lingua-genesis in its wake.

Since we are working on the assumption that at least the wording if not the content of the Hikmats would have been adapted from time to time and place to place, it is likely that over the centuries many versions emerged with the changing state systems of the region. Changez integrated an enormous region within a single state but his sons were to control different parts, acquire different beliefs and lead some mutually exclusive ethnic groups along with some mixed ethnicities and some common racial stock other than their own Mongol nation. The state that held together for about a century under three generations began to break up by the middle of Kublai's Khanate. Another three generations saw the rise of a quasi-Mongol empire builder in the person of Timur and another fragmentation to follow, perhaps spawning many new versions.²⁴ Universally faiths may be divided into three broad categories: Atheism, Monotheism and Multi-theism [generally tending to some form of mythology]. The study of world history indicates that people and cultures find it difficult to transit from one frame to another. When such transition takes place it is often partial and the residue of abandoned faiths remains imbedded or ingrained in a "new version" of old beliefs. The Turko-Mongol settlers of the 13th and 14th centuries, because they settled in new environments with a large indigenous, homogenous population, and because they carried little baggage of religion, were most adaptable and supple in ethno-genesis. Mongols became Christian in Europe, Buddhist in China and Muslim in Iran but Turks mostly became Muslims. Perhaps the only choice the individual made was that of the location where he settled.

Movement of population during two centuries between Changez and Timur as well as tumans and armies constituted by the conquering Mongols had two advantages. First, as a group the army was an a-religious combination of races, tribes and ethnicities but as individuals its components had proclivities toward different faiths and beliefs; and second, being semi-nomadic in origin they had no great difficulty in settling in a new environment when the opportunity of sedentary life was offered. Changez had used a highly effective mechanism of ethno genesis by eliminating the leadership of tribes or clans which opposed him and then absorbing their common people within his tribe as full and equal members. The evenhanded distribution of spoils and continuous inflow of wealth through conquest was an equally effective cementing force²⁵. The absence of religious commitment of the state was a natural outcome. Because ritual rather than religion formed the basis of faith, these people were prime material for conversion to any creed that offered ethno-genesis into the mainstream of society.

Hikmats of the Khodja – examples of ethno-lingua-genesis through syncretism:

In this section we will discuss **how the tariqas used language variations, especially the spoken local form, vernaculars and dialects, to surmount barriers of culture, space and time; how they looped around and threaded Islam through cultural fabric, rejecting or applying previous faiths [their ritual and dogma] as needed and how popular response determined which linguistic, cultural and conceptual grafts would take root in society.** Naturally the examples of this process will primarily be identified in the Hikmats of the Khodja but we will reinforce them with contemporary examples from Pakistan.

As mentioned above, there are many variations of Hikmats in numerous manuscripts some of which have been compiled and edited in the recent past. Here we will briefly describe some of the salient language variants found in these edited texts; we will also identify some of the linguistic attributes of the diction of the Hikmats. One aspect that is visible in the edited texts used for this study is a variable usage of Turkic language forms. A second aspect is using the grammatical form of one language with a word of another language; this is similar to the findings of the Divan of Bairam Khan. A third is the use of more than one word for a single concept for linking or de-linking aspects of belief. In the case of the divan-i Hikmat the fact that there are also a larger number of non-Turkish words compared to its contemporary Turkic literature is noteworthy.

Bice has given two parallel versions of some Hikmats; preliminary survey shows that vocabulary has been changed: words like soleyip for aytip or iste for mena, men for ben or didar for jamal form one pattern²⁶. On the other hand we can see the alternate use of Khuda and Allah as the context demanded²⁷ and similar variations of Persian, Arabic and Turkish terms as well as Arabized or Persianized variations of Turkish words and Tukiized forms of Arabic and Persian. Thus ruh becomes ruhlar and other plural forms are created by adding lar to insan, maqam, paighambar etc. On the other hand gonlumu is also used in place of ruh as is goge chikip in place of arsh, probably to link with previous culture and delink from previous faith as needed for context. A vocabulary of more than a hundred non-Turkic words has been identified in the first five Hikmats; some of them have been Turkicized through grammatical usage like lar.

The five pillars of Islam are of course included in the Khodja's teachings; five more are added²⁸ by him as practices for the righteous Muslims. These include Sunna, Ilm, gentle speech, amar bil maroof and nahi al munkar. As with the early propagators of tariqat, Khodja Yasavi emphasizes the primacy of Sharia over Tariqat²⁹. However, the Sunna provided justification of the passage from Sharia into tariqat and the liberty to emulate the murshad if imitating the sunna seemed presumptuous. Gentle speech and Ilm as universal values accompanied the essential Islamic ethics to provide a formula in which possible failings in the five pillars could be covered by devout observation of the additional tenets which came more naturally to the Turkic temperament. The complex interplay of tradition and innovation within a society in transition need not be delineated here but its effects visible in the Divan-i Hikmat need to be scrutinized. Spiritual powers claimed by shamanist and Buddhist priestly class posed a challenge for propagators of Islam. Being heirs to the knowledge of the older faiths, converts to Islam practiced their spiritual art even after conversion; as such sufia performed acts and claimed powers equal or superior to a yogi or a bhikshu. Karamat attributed to the sufia reflect an Islamized version of spiritual powers compatible with bhikshus etc.³⁰

The key words and concepts associated with Yasavi thought are also indicative of the complex interplay of tradition [Islamic/pre-Islamic] with innovation for contemporary needs³¹. While the pillars of faith mentioned above were meant to guide the mureed, a set of instructions and procedures was needed for the Khulafa or the future murshads. The Yasavi procedures included sehl-i mumtina, malamati, sohbat, rizq-i halal va tayyib and rabta-i murshad; the necessary tools were ilm-i din va yaqin, hilm-i mubin, sabr-i jamil, raza-i jaleel and Ikhlas-i khalil va kurb-i jalil. The five procedures were advocated because of flaws that had been observed in the spiritual leadership, Muslim as well as non-Muslim. Thus mureeds were advised to be ware of false spiritualists such as the riyakar zahid, saudai abid, harjai dervish and begging sufi.

Whereas the distinctions between the Arabi and Ajami, Irani and Turani or Tajik and Turk can be identified at many levels, the essentials of Islam were always linked with Arabic terminology. The Yasavi nexus with the Nakshbandi silsila in later times, its roots in the Junaidi tradition and potential links with the Qazilbash notwithstanding, Arabic terminology dominates in its Islamic orientation. Thus we see injunctions like: Yakin-i mustaghraq, sidq-i muhaqqaq, tariqat-i ahkumin and tavakkal-i rizq-i muallaq etc; the last two in particular depict the innovations for cultural consonance³². While tariqat harkens as much to deen as to Taoist practices, rizq-i muallaq echoes of yogi or bhikshu practices of unsecured livelihood as much as it corresponds to the tavakkal in Allah as raziq. The lovelorn [harjai] devesh and the begging sufi on the other hand have been castigated to draw the distinction between the Islamic and Buddhist ways. A similar trend may be observed in the treatment of the concept of nafs where Islamic tenets of self-discipline are laced with ideas inherent in Buddha's quest for nirvana.

Among Khodja Yasavi's heroes are Yusuf Hamdani and Mansur al-Hallaj³³, who is referred to as poor in one verse and a king in the other. This is a typical sufi form in which Mashaikh aspire for worldly poverty and spiritual wealth; the Khodja's other ideals include Moses and Majnun. Moses, being the most mentioned prophet of the Quran, is rightly given a prominent place; Majnun and Hallaj are symbols of devotion to the extent of obsession signifying the difference between ways of sufia and Ulema. One fixation of Khodja Yasavi seems to be the identity of mureeds as members of the "umma". This may have a significance in the consciousness that the unity of the state having been lost, common Muslim identity and religious integrity depend on unifying the Umma through the common value structure. Thus, not to deny but to reinforce, an original Islamic concept that bonds of Muslim brotherhood are stronger than state and society, tribe and race or culture. A continuous concern with orphans is visible in the Hikmats; this is very much a Quranic concern both for itself and because Muhammad SAW was an orphan, another commonality between him and Khodja Yasavi.³⁴

The relationship between tariqat, Sharia, haqiqat and rivayat have been spelled out in Hikmat IX, verse 18b and again the difficulty of adhering to Sharia, the inability to get to tariqat without Sharia as well as the problems of haqiqat and marifat are taken up in the context of the need for a murshad in Hikmat XXX second last verse. It could be inferred from the puritanical importance attached to Sharia, the primacy of tariqat and importance attached to the murshad that these Hikmats are original unadulterated Yasavi thought which formed the basis of the silsila/tariqa. Arguments on the need of murshads were replaced by contention between tasavvuf and Sharia in due course.

CONCLUSION:

We have basically explored two aspects of ethno-genesis in this paper: first, the perspective and background within which Khodja Akhmet's spiritual leadership led to the formation of the Yasavi silsila; and second the environment within which the silsila developed. The form and process of this ethno-genesis was deeply influenced by spiritual discourse as used by the sufi silsilas to maintain balance between earlier cultural forms and Islamic beliefs and values; this has influenced Pakistani languages. It is our contention that most Pakistani languages and dialects experienced three stages of lingua-genesis in pre-modern times. The first due to an overlay of Aryan language on the language of the Indus valley civilization; second under the several state formations during the millennium between the 4th century BC and the 6th century AD; and third as the result of Turko-Mongol movements between the 10th and 16th centuries AD. The last phase is a well documented period in which the linguistic structure of the literature produced in the Persian speaking world provides ample testimony of the relative shares of Iranian-Turkic contribution to language and concepts both in the form and in the content of the writings of various people in different places and times. The analysis necessary for testing this hypothesis must proceed on a study of sounds in spoken languages of Pakistan, compared with Central Asian dialects and the historical texts of the Divan-i-Hikmat etc.

¹ The pronunciation here is especially fascinating for a resident of Rawalpindi who will find similar sounds for similar names in the Pothohar and adjacent areas, for example: Usuf Khamdani, Bakha-ud-din, Khanfi.

² Born in the northeastern corner of the Muslim world at the end of the fifth Hijra century, Khodja Yasavi received the higher levels of spiritual guidance in Bokhara under the first Khodja: Yousuf Hamdani.

³ For a survey of the stages in which the Turks converted to Islam, the forms their conversion took and rise of the Turkic Muslim states see: Doc. Dr. Nesimi Yazici, "Hoca Ahmed Yesevi, Doneminde Turk-Islam Kulturunun Olusumu-Gelisimi", in *Diyanet*, 29:4, pp. 3-16.

⁴ The age of the fuqaha is essentially the century from 130 to 230 H. Imam Abu Hanifa, born in Iraq, was the first of the fuqaha, may have been of Persian origin. He probably made his place as Faqih c.750 H. at about the same time as Jafar Sadiq. Imam Malik born at Medina and Imam Shafi in Gaza [in the same year that Imam Abu Hanifa died] may have been closer to the Arab mind but Imam Hanbal was born at Merv in Khurasan and may also have been of Persian descent. The Shafai faith has gained a following mainly in the East of Africa and in Indonesia; Maliki concentration is in Africa west of Egypt while Hanbali beliefs hold sway in the Arabian regions but from Egypt to Central Asia, predictably, is the domain of the Hanifi creed.

⁵ There are three aspects that made the seerat of Muhammad SAW remote for the Turks: first the distances of time and space; second the difference between the Arab culture of desert Bedouin of hot Arabia and the cold desert of the pastoral Turks and; third the remoteness born of veneration especially of a person who is revered by the most venerable and pious of the living examples available to a community and society. If he was venerable for Khodja Akhmet Yasavi, Muhammad SAW must be venerable beyond the imagination of a poor disciple of the Khodja especially in later times when the Khodja himself become remote and highly venerable for his Khalifas as an image if not an incarnation of the holy Prophet SAW.

⁶ Doc. Dr. Nesimi Yazici, "Hoca Ahmed Yesevi, Doneminde Turk-Islam Kulturunun Olusumu-Gelisimi", in *Diyanet*, 29:4, pp. 3-16, p.14 also has an interesting statement regarding the peculiarities of three ethnic groups: "Arapca eserleri fasih, Farsca eserleri melih, Turkce eserleri sahih idi".

⁷ Fakhr-ud-din Marvrudi, *Tarikh-i-Fakhr-ud-din Mubarak Shah*, ed. E. Denison Ross, London, 1927, gives an insight into the status of Turks outside their homeland likening them to pearls outside their shell.

⁸ The Naqshbandi Tariqa, successor to the Khodjas came into being in the 14th century and probably found its way to Pakistan along with the Qaraunas but did not make an impact due to the peripheral status of the region at that time. The Mongol movement under Changez broke the barrier between Central Asian Turkic people and the mixed races of Afghanistan and Pakistan but could not dislodge the Suhrawardi silsila from Pakistan. As the Chishti silsila had made its hold in the Doab region, it was difficult to dislodge, however, while the Khaljis had issues of power with them, the Qaraunas had conflicts of belief and usage. None the

less the Yasavi order made its way into Kashmir at about the same time as the Naqshbandi made inroads in the Mughal Empire; a namesake of Khodja Yasavi gained influence in Kashmir which exists to this day.

⁹ While the seeds of thought emanating in the Muslim world were quick to reach all corners of its expanse due to extensive mobility of intellectuals, its form was distinct in different regions. The Yasavi silsila did not make inroads into India and the Naqshbandi silsila reached there several centuries later than its origin. However the Chishti and Suhrawardi silsilas were quick to find roots in different areas of the Sultanate of Delhi, the former with considerable variation from its homeland became dominant in the Gangetic plains. In Central Asia, by contrast, the population was more influenced by the Khodja and other affiliate silsilas.

¹⁰ The contemporary literature was Kara-Khani and, apart from the poetry and prose that was produced as an 'informal outpouring' in one's native tongue, may be counted as the first period of Turkic literature; see Kadar, *Türk Edebiyatleri Antolojisi 1: Azerbaycan*, Türk Edebiyatı, Ankara and *Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*, eds. Talat Sait Halman [gen. ed.] Osman Horata [gen. ed. Yardim cisi], Yakup Celek ... Ocal Oguz, published by Turizm Bakanligi Yayinlar, Istanbul, 2007, who suggests that early patronage of Turkic literature came from the Samanids. also see Nesimi Yazici, "Hoca Ahmed Yesevi Donemeinde Turk Islam Kulturunun Olusumu-Gelisimi" in *Diyanet*, 29:4

¹¹ K. Qadir, "Linguistic Shift during the 4th century Hijra in the lands of the Eastern Khilafat" *Journal of Asian Civilizations*, December 2002 and "The Divan Bairam Khan", a paper presented at 2nd Pak History Conference held on 17-18 March 2010, Department of History, Baha-ud-din Zakariya University, Multan.

¹² Four printed texts of the Divan-i-Hikmat are available at iSAM in Istanbul. Two of them, edited by Hayati Bice, in 1993 and 2009 respectively, both published from Ankara provide extensive lists of Hikmats and variations of words/pronunciation which are particularly relevant for our present hypothesis. I have not been able to ascertain if the additional Hikmats referred to by Mehmet Mahur Tulum, "Yeni Bir 'Hikmetler Mecmuasi' Munasebetiyle Yesevi Calismalari Uzerine Kisa Bir Degerlendirme ve Ibrahim Kissasi" are not included in Bice's version. Another version, edited by Hazirliyan Ibrahim Hakkulov is published under the title of *Ahmet Yesevi (Hikmetleri)*, Istanbul, 1995, but gives only 68 Hikmats, some of which are compiled differently from Bice; a third version by Yusuf Azmen published from Istanbul in 1994 gives the English translation as well but has fewer Hikmats than the others. Due to the limited ability to understand Turkish, we have used the version of Azmen for the linguistic analysis of specific Hikmats.

¹³ Unfortunately this is beyond the scope of this paper as it will require many years of research to analyze.

¹⁴ The concepts of tana and bana are employed in weaving in Pakistan. Longitudinal strands are tightly knit on a frame, these are called the tana and the weaving is done through these strands by a lateral, but shorter, uniform breadth of the fabric. The lingua-genesis, in a similar process operates on a tana of time and a bana of space; this would also generally be true of ethno-genesis but is not as essential there as in lingua-genesis.

¹⁵ See K. Qadir, "Linguistic Shift during the 4th century Hijra in the lands of the Eastern Khilafat" *Journal of Asian Civilizations*, December, 2002 for the protagonists and duration of the struggle for supremacy etc.

¹⁶ Bruce G. Privratsky, *Muslim Turkistan*, Curzon Press, Surrey, 2001, p.98 quotes Shalinsky [1990] who is of the view that there are two types of Sharia in Turkic communities. This error is due to lack of knowledge regarding cultural and ethnic assimilation of religion; it is this assimilative force that generated tariqat as a method and the Tariqa as an instrument of cultural integration. Tariqat, we contend, as a means of cultural assimilation was a Turkic innovation which was utilized in Sultanates, which too were Turkic innovations.

¹⁷ Devin DeWeese, "Sacred Places and 'public' Narratives: The Shrine of Ahmad Yasavi in Hagiographical Traditions of the Yasavi Sufi Order, 16th-17th Centuries" in *The Muslim World*, Vol. 90, Nos. 3 and 4, Fall 2000, pp. 353-376, p. 356 ff tries to prove that the evolution of traditions related to Khodja Yasavi were not his views but responses to the politics and sociology of religion of the Turks in later times.

¹⁸ Bruce G. Privratsky, *Muslim Turkistan*, Curzon Press, Surrey, 2001, p.55. We may note that the entire Semitic history was not needed but the Muslim history of the Arabs needed to be imbibed/acknowledged.

¹⁹ Khodja Yasavi is remarkable in his Tariqat because personally he tried to follow as closely the life of the Prophet SAW as he could. He probably construed the seerat as an aspect of Sharia. However, for the novice he advocates muridi of a pir, Necdet Tosun, "The basic views of Khoja Ahmad Yasavi and his followers", in *EKEV Academic Review [social sciences]*, Year 13, Number 38, winter 2009, pp.29-38, p.30, for Khodja Yasavi's inclination towards Sharia see also Dosay Kenjetay, [Ars. Gor., Ahmet Yesevi U.], "Hoca Ahmet Yesevi: Yasadigi Devri, Sahsiyeti, Tarikati ve Tesiri" in *Tasavvuf*, 1:2, 1999, pp. 105-133. Also Dr. Osman Truer, "Hoca Ahmet-i Yesevinin Turk-Islam Tarihindeki Yeri ve Tasavvufi Sahsiyeti" in journal of Ilahiyat faculty of Ataturk university Erzurum, 1995, vol. 12, pp. 11-27.

²⁰ The event is mentioned by Bruce G. Privratsky, *Muslim Turkistan*, Curzon Press, Surrey, 2001, p.56. We may also note that Buddhist influence in the early poetry and prose of the Samani period is considered quite prominent, see *Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*, eds. Talat Sait Halman [gen. ed.] Osman Horata [gen. ed. Yardim cisi], Yakup Celek ... Ocal Oguz, published by Turizm Bakanligi Yayinlar, Istanbul, 2007. It would not be out of place to suggest that Khodja Yasavi needed to rely on Arabic and Persian vocabulary to counter this Buddhist influence for Islamization of his fellow Turks. We may also note that the way in which Arsalan Baba [a companion of the Prophet SAW] carried the date to Akhmet Yasavi could easily be a Buddhist or Shamanist way of imagining transmission of spiritual power as it is a far cry from Semitic imagery.

²¹ A detailed analysis of the diction of the *Divan-i-Hikmat* is not included in the current paper because a lot of work is yet to be done on the preliminary analysis which forms the basis of this hypothesis.

²² These trends were visible in Sufi literature in the region of Pakistan to the beginning of the colonial era.

²³ Founded by Abu Ishaq Shami, c.930 AD in Samani times.

²⁴ The compilations of Bice and Hakkulov are probably only samples of possible variations and versions. Not only does Bice have more Hikmats [217] and a Munajat compared to 68 Hikmats of Hakkulov, number of verses in each Hikmat vary between the two editions and some verses included in the second Hikmat by Hakkulov have been placed in the first by Bice reflecting their opinion based on the study of various texts.

²⁵ History has seen the emergence of many mega-states and empires; it has also witnessed the megalomania of world conquerors. On the other end of the spectrum are recluses and nomads who defy collective human settlement. In between are states, micro-states and state systems etc which reflect environmental and human limitations and abilities of collectivization. Whereas ethno-genesis and lingua-genesis will take place even in mega-states its occurrence on such a scale is likely to be both limited and mild. Pakistan and Afghanistan lay on the periphery of Changez's mega-state as they had lain on the periphery of Alexander's and Ashok's empires. The ethno-lingua-genesis in the region occupied by these states during the rise and fall of all three mega-states mentioned above was, therefore, mild and limited. However, the wake of the ebb of these three empires provided a deeper and more extensive interaction with Central Asia.

²⁶ See Hayati Bice, *Hoca Ahmed Yesevi Divan-i Hikmet*, Ankara, 2009, who has given two parallel forms of Hikmats and added several others not given in the other editions consulted by me. He has added a glossary of Turkish, Arabic and Persian words not used in Turkish today, pp.433-485.

²⁷ See Azmen, p. 124 first verse.

²⁸ See for a more detailed discussion on the subject: Doc. Dr. Irfan Gunduz, Marmara University, Ilahiyat faculty, "Ahmed - i Yesevinin Tarikat va Irsad analizi" in *Ilm ve Sanat*, 1993, vol. 35-36, pp. 6-9.

²⁹ Necdet Tosun, p. 30. One need not go into the stages through which tariqat acquired a focal position in the life of sufis except to refer in passing that although sufism traces its origins to Muhammad SAW it did not acquire the tariqat form until about 1000 AD. Perhaps the oldest silsila with a continuous chain of khilafat is the Chishti silsila. The Junaidiya silsila [came to be known as Naqshbandi later] was certainly older but does not seem to have had a strict line of Khilafat; it included Ali Hajveri among its Sheikhs. The possibility of attributing Shia proclivities to Khodja Yasavi is rejected by Tosun but Serdar Erkan, "Hoca Ahmet Yesevi ve Turk Dusunce Tarihi Icerisindeki Yeri" in *Türk Dunyasi Arastirmalari*, Sayi 180, Haziran 2009, pp.47-64, is not so unequivocal. Since the Sufia were keen to integrate society, we may assume that while remaining within the framework of Sunni Islam, Khodja Yasavi and his followers created space for the Shias among their murids.

³⁰ Necdet Tosun, "Ahmed Yesevinin Menakibi" in *Arastirma (Dergisi)* 3:1, 1998, pp. 73-82, has noticed a Persian document of the 14th century [perhaps written in 1311] called the *Risala-i Husam-ud-din-i Signaki*. The karamat attributed to the Khodja provide a case in point; the *Mirat-ul-qulub* of Sufi Muhammad may, like many sufi texts also be seen as a source of such practices.

³¹ See Doc. Dr. Irfan Gunduz, "Ahmed Yesevinin Tarikh ve Irshad Analizi" in *Ilm ve Sanat*, 1993, Vol. 35 & 36, pp. 6-9, for requirements, warnings and advice to murids in Yasavi tradition mentioned here.

³² *Ibid*, gives a long list of more than a dozen such guiding principles or ideals which a Muslim associated with the tariqa could be expected to adopt.

³³ The divide with the Ulema is in sharp focus on p.85, Hikmat XIX, where it is pointed out that the ulema do not understand the Auliya who was punished because they did not understand the worth of tariqat. The Auliya here seem to compete with the power and status of the Bodhisattva.

³⁴ The symbolisms, identities and concepts discussed in this section without reference to source are derived from the text and translation given in Azmin op. cit. The word forms generally relate to Hikmats I-X while the concepts are from the entire English translation, pp. 61-115.

Amr bil maroof = advocate the correct path
Haqiqat = TRUTH [the absolute truth]
Harjai Darvesh = unreliable mendicant = one who changes his stance to suit his audience.
Hilm-i-mubeen = clear and visible patience/gentleness
Ikhlas-i-Khalil = sincerity of the friend: absolute sincerity to Allah as that of his friend (Ibrahim).
Ilm-i-din wa yaqeen = knowledge of religion and complete faith in the correctness of faith.
Karamat = extraordinary, metaphysical, almost supernatural act exhibiting spirituality of a sufi.
Kurb-i-Jalil = nearness to the mighty [seeking closeness to Allah]
Malamati = one who blames [attitude of self blame adopted by some sufis to remain innocuous].
Marifat = attainment of knowing, gnosis, revelation of [some aspect] of the TRUTH.
Nafs = lower, personal or individual self [human inclinations as distinct from soul]
Nahi al Munkar = resist/object to that which is wrong
Qutb, Abdal & Vali = hierarchy of sufis
Rabita-i-murshad = contact with the spiritual guide.
Raza-i-jalil = great subservience to the Divine will
Rivayat = tradition
Riyakar zahid = deceiver in piety [a person who pretends to be pious]
Rizq-i-Halal va Tayyab = the just, pure and allowable earning/worldly sustenance and goods.
Sabr-i-jamil = absolute patience and peaceful resignation to the will of Allah.
Saudai Abid = profit seeking prayer [one who prays for worldly benefit/love]
Sehl-i-mumtina = forbidden or impossible ease
Shariat = The Path of the true believer as lived by Muhammad [SAW] and exposed in the Quran.
Sidq-i-Muhaqqiq = researched or verified rectitude/truthfulness
Sohbat = spiritual affiliation, association or attendance with a Sufi guide [Murshid]
Tariqat-i-Ahkumin = The way of the ordained
Tawaqqal-i-rizq-i-muallaq = faith in suspended [hanging] sustenance [that will seek you out]
Yaqin-i-mustaghriq = immersed in the assurance that Allah's knowledge and will is supreme.

Dates of death

910 Junaid Baghdadi
922 Mansur Hallaj
1012 Qabus bin Washmgir
1020 Firdausi
1048 Albiruni
1077 Ali Hajveri
1085 Yusuf Khas Hajib
1092 Nizam-ul-Mulk Tusi
1102 Kashgharli Mehmud
1111 Imam Ghazali
1131 Umar Khayyam
1166 Khodja Akhmet Yasavi
1212 Attar
1230 Moin-ud-din Chishti
1267 Baha-ud-din Zakariya
1273 Rumi
1283 Saadi 1291
1325 Amir Khusrau
1390 Hafiz

Kindly correct the sentence on p.3, last para as I mis-phrased it! It should be as follows:

Nizam-ul-Mulk Tusi, Ghazali and Khayyam received more state sponsorship; the second stage, Rumi, Attar, Saadi, Khusrau and Hafiz merely continued the linguistic trend

A few verses from the Hikmets referred to in the text are given below. Turkish text & its English translation are taken from the Azmun ed. *op.cit.* page numbers are given after the verse and the relevance of the verse is given in italics below each selection.

Alti yasa devamli kactim insanlardan; At six I continually ran away from people
Goge cikiptler ogrendim maleklerden; I ascended to heaven & took lessons from angels
El etek cikip tanidik bildiklerdin; I dissociated myself from acquaintances,
O yuzden ben altmis ucte girdim yere. Hence I went underground at sixty-three. p.4/64
*Here 'larden' is used to Turkicise a non-Turkic term as **Insan** and **Malek***

Akilliysan arenlere hismet goster; If you are wise, then go, serve the enlightened
Emr-i maruf uyana izzet goster; Exalt one who enjoins the path of virtue,
Nehy-i munker edenlere hurmet goster; Respect one who prohibits that of vice. p. 5/65
Not only extensive use of non Turkic vocabulary but also dominance of Quranic concepts.

Sukur Allah'a pir hizmetini ettim tamam; Thank God [Allah] I fulfilled the service of the Elder.
Dunyadaki Kurlar Kuslar etti selam; All creatures in the world did make Him greeting;
O yuzden Tanriya yakin oldum iste. For this reason I approached closer to God [Tanri]. p.6/66
The tariqat concept, the use of Tanri and Allah as interchangeable to make Allah closer to the tradition of the ethnic group. In place of 'for this reason' we should read 'this is how', meaning service to the pir.

Uc yuz molla toplanip yazdi cok rivayat Three hundred Mullahs gathered, many stories were spread,
Seriati geregi ben de yazayim rivayet; It is shariah, let me write a story too;
Tariqat ve hakikatte Tanri yardimsi olur; On the path and in reality, the Lord supports us
Basimi vererek Hak sirrini bildim iste. I gave my head and learned the Lord's secret. p. 14/74
This Hikmet is primarily focused on Mansur Hallaj and highlights the distinction between the ulema and the sufia as it was becoming sharper with the emphasis of the latter on tariqat and of the former on shariat.

Bilmediler mollalar Mullahs do not understand,
"Ene'l-Hakk" manasini; The meaning of "ene'l-Hak".
Kal ehline hal ilmini The inner world is wisdom to the worldly
Tanri gormedi munasip God did not find seemly
Rivayyetlar yazildi, Stories were written of him,
Halini kimse bilmedi, No one knew how he was
Mansur gibi evliyayi An awliya like Mansur
Koydular daragasina asip. Was hanged on the gallows.
Efsanedir seriati Shariah is a legend
Erdemlaidir tarikati, Tariqa possesses virtues,
Yuz bin veliler gecdi A hundred thousand awliyas passed
Sirri sirlara catip Adding secrets to secrets. p. 25/85
Again the glorification of Mansur and endorsement of the non-Arab tradition of the tariqa because the path is full of secrets that may only be understood by the initiated; this harkens to the Buddha and Bodhisattva.

Gecti omrum seriata ulasmadim; My life passed and I could not reach shariah;
Seriatsiz tarikata gecemedim; I could not pass on to tariqa free of shariah;
Hakikatsiz mafelete batamadim; I could not submerge in gnosticism free of truth; p. 34/95
Cetin yoldur, pirsiz nasil gecdi dostlar A difficult path; how to pass without a sage, O friends?
Having challenged the 'mullah's concept of Sharia, the justification of the murshid as the tariqat path to Sharia; thus reasserting tariqat and reinstating Sharia provided the murshid has shown the path.

Kul Hoca Ahmed dunya gorsen muhakkak kac O Khoja Ahmad, if you see the world run away;
Zikrini edip tarikatin yolunu ac; Repeat His name and open the path of tarika;
Ayat, hadis sozu ile dunyalar sac; p. 46/107 With ayat and hadith you will open up worlds;
In the realm of otherworldliness concepts of the Khwaja's socio-cultural milieu, zikr, ayat and hadis are integrated with the tariqa.