

Traditionalist Trends in Pakistan's Ideology: Critiquing Deobandis, Tablighi Jamāt and the Taliban

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Abstract:

This paper attempts to give brief introduction to the concept of ideology and its role in shaping society. The main purpose of this paper is to analyze critically the traditionalist's ideology. An attempt has been made to provide the historical background of the traditionalists. The paper also describes the 'traditionalist model of state' and the revival of traditional Islam. The paper has divided the traditionalists into three main categories i.e. Deobandis, Tablighi jamaat and the Taliban. An attempt has also been made to study their belief system (aqaids), social and political agendas, and their views regarding women's Rights, minority issues, and welfare activities. The paper deals each group of traditionalists separately.

Keywords: Pakistan, Ideology, Taliban, Deobandis, Talibanization etc.

Introduction:

One of the legacies of Protestantism, which has become a part of the western intellectual tradition, is the knowledge that to change men's hearts you must also change their minds. The dynamic core of a radical movement has to be its expression of the vision, the values and the social analysis which will accomplish this change of consciousness. In other words, its ideology. Ideologies give direction to the demand for change, they give the radical movement whatever coherence and meaning it has for its followers; in an important sense they are the movement, in a sense in which the social base, the organizational structure or the external stresses which give rise to it are not.

Blumer (1951, 149) wrote:

“obviously, the aims, the myths, the claims, the criticism, the arguments, and the

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Rationalizations which collectively constitute an ideology have a vital effect on the participants in a movement. However, questions as to how an ideology functions in the life of a movement, and as to how it must be shaped and presented to be effective, have been scarcely touched in the literature (P.10)

Ideology:

Ideology is more or less a coherent set of ideas that provides the basis for organized political actions, whether this is intended to preserve, modify or overthrow the existing system of power. All ideologies therefore

- a) Offer an account of existing order, usually in the form of a ‘world view’,
- b) Advance a model of desire future, a vision of the ‘good society’, and
- c) Explain how political change can and should be brought about.¹

In general terms, ideology may be defined as a cluster of beliefs, ideals, and concepts that has become deeply ingrained in the social consciousness of a people over time, that has become enmeshed with the subterranean vagaries of their ancestral heritage and ethos, and that, moreover, is charged and saturated with emotions. In consequence, ideology touches the hidden springs of emotions of the people as nothing else does, inducting as almost instinctive allegiance to causes inspired by the belief, ideals and concepts encapsulated by it, in sum, the ideology a people committed to, comes to acquire an organic relationship with, and becomes integral in a real sense to, the ethos of the people.²

Asta Olesen defined ideology in as the integrated assertions, theories, and aims that constitute a socio-political program. A schematic image of the social order. Ideology is the medium through which his consciousness and meaningfulness operate.³

Economic and social factors alone cannot attract men to such a society and hold it together; there must also be ideational, that is religious, factors. Above all, men must be able to see that membership of the society gives significance to their lives as individuals, and that involves them seeing that the life of the society has a significant place in the world as a whole.⁴

¹Andrew Heywood, *Political Ideologies, an introduction*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan,2003) p.12

²Sharif Al Mujahid, *Ideology of Pakistan*, (Karachi:2000), p.1

³Asta Olesen, *Islam and Politics in Afghanistan*, (Curzon press:1995), pp.3-4

⁴ Sharif Al Mujahid, *Ideology of Pakistan*, (Karachi:2000), p.13

By the ideological impulse I mean merely the forms the of political thinking, in which emphasis falls neither on philosophical analysis and deduction, nor on sociological generalizations but on moral reflection-on elaborating and advocating concepts of the good life, and of describing the forms of social action and organization necessary for their achievement.¹

Ideology seeks to transform society totally along unadulterated sacred lines, while outlooks are inclined towards gradual change within the prevailing value system. But howsoever insistent an ideology may be about its unconnectedness with contemporaneous outlooks and creeds, it nevertheless shares many basic moral and cognitive affinities with them, since they all originate within the same ongoing culture. Ideologies are always concerned with authority and therefore they cannot help being political, except in cases of complete withdrawal from society, outlooks prevails among the incumbents of the central institutions in society while ideology, which seeks total changes, arises amongst those actors of society which reject the prevailing outlook an ideological primary group often acts as the bearer of an ideology.²

As a belief system, ideology provides a cognitive structure. Collectivities can relate their experiences against an easy frame of reference and understand the complexities of the societal phenomenon. It is a lens through which they focus the world around them. In its simplest form, ideology helps categorize society into a 'We-They' dichotomy. This is the identification function of ideology.³

On the basis of the discussion above, we can define ideology thus: An ideology is a set of belief, values, norms, symbols, goals, and practices incorporated into generalized formulations about a good society. These generalized formulations encompass salient, desirable, social, economic and political relationships. This cognitive structure lends direction to moral reflection and activities concerned with tangible social goals.

Religion and Pakistani Ideology:

Pakistan was a contested idea at its birth in 1947 having lost their privilege status when the British supplanted India's Mughal Rulers, Indian Muslims divided in responding to their deepening cultural and political insecurity under colonial rule. Culturally schism emerged between the Aligarh tradition, which balance selectively embracing western notions of modernity and learning with retaining an Islamic

¹ Ishtiaq Ahmad, *The concept of an Islamic state in Pakistan*, Lahore: Vanguard Book Pvt. Ltd, 199, p.19

² Ibid, p.23

³ Ibid, p.26

identity, and the Deoband tradition which rejected western Morse as a deviation from religious orthodoxy. Politically as the independent struggle gathered pace, Muslims divided into three groups the first affiliated with the congress party advocated territorial nationalism. The second was affiliated with all India Muslim league lead by M. Ali Jinnah, which contended that Muslims had a special identity that would be erased in a Hindu majority India- an argument that evolved from calls for political safeguards and a federation to an eventual demand for a separate homeland. The third included the religious parties that shared the Muslim league's concerns but opposed a separate homeland on the grounds that the Ummah should not be divided by the dubious concept of nation state. Ultimately the Muslim league prevailed and the Pakistan was carved out of the sub-continent.¹

The Pakistan resolution injected religion into the core of Pakistan. Such a formal association between Islam and Pakistan was in many ways natural but it was the subsequent manipulation of religion for political and strategic ends that sadly emerges as a central theme in Pakistan's Islamic narrative.²

Squaring off against India over the disputed territory of Kashmir in the hour of their separation, officers in the Pakistan's army involved in the Kashmir operation of 1947-48 invoked jihad to mobilize tribesmen from the frontier and send them to raid and seize Kashmir; the government in turn called on religious scholars to issue supportive *fatwas* are religious decrees.

Turning to the role that ideology has played in Pakistan's evolution, Ziad Haider argues that religion has been used for multiple purposes including nation building and security objectives. This has produced a blow back that now confronts the country with an unprecedented challenge.

This was to be the beginning of a long standing state policy of using religiously motivated proxies to asymmetrically secure political and territorial gains vis-à-vis seemingly hegemonic India.³

¹ Ziad Haider, (2011), *Ideologically adrift*, in Maleeha Lodhi, *Pakistan beyond the 'Crises State'*, Karachi: Oxford University Press, pp.113-14

² Ibid, P.115

³ Ibid, 116

Traditionalists/Islamists:

A broad definition of an Islamist to denote that who believes that Islam has something important to say about how political and social life should be constituted and who attempts to implements that interpretation in some way. Reflecting diverse interpretations, Islamists vary politically across a wide spectrum. Movements differ in their acceptance of rejection of violence, their choice to work openly or underground, the urgency with which they insist that change must come, the degree of political engagement they pursue within the system, the institutions they build and operate from their preference for either an elite or a mass structure, their ideological or pragmatic nature, their degree of flexibility in attaining goals, and the degree of transparency and democracy in their internal proceedings.¹

Islamist movements of are naturally replete with references to various school, trends, and branches. The most familiar group within Islam, are the *traditionalists* who basically accept Islam as it has evolved historically in each local culture. They are aware of accretions of pre-Islamic or local practice in the daily practice of faith, but they accept these as long as they are not openly anti-Islamic in character. The traditionalists cannot be considered to be Islamist since they have no specific agenda of political change, do not seek to shake up the system, and are generally accepting of existing political authority as a reality of life. The long tradition of Islam carries great weight in their thinking, As John Voll points out, the traditionalists (or conservative) seek to *hold the lid down on too rapid change*; they represent a force of conservation and preservation, a critical factor of cultural and community coherence and continuity in time of turmoil. But this school will also adapt to new conditions when necessary to keep Islam alive.²

Some Islamists conservative or hard-liners argue that their duty is to struggle against exactly those liberal formulations of Islam that reformist and many westerners propose, insisting that Islam and the *umma* will prosper only through close adherence to the fundamentals of Islam and in opposition to the modernists, secularizing, and globalizing trends of the world that are designed to weaken Islam. They perceive “reform” of Christianity and its liberalization, for example, as having contributed directly to its social decline. They ask whether it is appropriate for a religion to “conform with the realities” of contemporary societies if those societies are perceived to be morally degenerate of failing.³

¹ Graham E. Fuller, *The future of political Islam*, New York: Palgrave macmillon, 2003, p.47

² Ibid, pp.47-48

³ Ibid, pp.53-54

Revival of Traditional Islam:

The operationalization of the concept of Islamic polity accordingly denotes the process whereby religious doctrines, concepts, symbols etc in the widest sense which are constituent of religious discourse, are turned into integral elements in a political discourse.¹

An Islamic is based on the sovereignty of Allah. This means that it cannot be a democratic state: a democratic state being founded in an ideal sense on popular will and the sovereignty of the people. Shariah forms the complete code of social and individual conduct. It provides the constitutional and legal structures and the social and moral norms, with detailed instructions of every aspect of life. God had not omitted any facet of human life from his scheme. By following the procedure perfected by the imams, a present day Islamic state engages in law-finding and not law-making. However, this responsibility cannot be left to layman, only the outstanding *ulama* can exercise this right. An Islamic state is fully equipped to competently with all complexities of modern life. All existing Islamic laws upon which the consensus of the community has been reached in the past are binding upon the later Muslims. Such law is protected from error and limited relevance by the fact that it is based on revelation, which is always true and therefore not subject to change.² The principles of secular democracy are diametrically opposed to the fundamentals of Islamic state. All the *ulama*, except the *Shias*, believed that the madinese state under the pious caliphs was the ideal Islamic state. However, dynastic rule was not declared categorically a corruption of Islamic model; but rather, certain pious *sultans* were deemed worthy examples of good Muslim rulers.

Form of Government:

The pious caliphate is the standard measure of righteous government. The absolutists aspire after the creation of a theocracy in which whosoever forms the government subordinates his rule to the ordinances of Islam as interpreted by them.³

Law:

Law means Shariah which in turn means *fiqh*, i.e. the whole of law on which consensus obtains. In political terms the Hanafi *fiqh* is to be public law. For the absolutist the Islamic law is complete and through the processes perfected by the jurisconsults laws can be derived for all occasions and cases.⁴

Categories of Citizens:

¹ Asta Olesen, *Islam and Politics in Afghanistan*, (Curzon press:1995), p.6

² Ishtiaq Ahmad, *The concept of an Islamic state in Pakistan*, Lahore: Vanguard Book Pvt. Ltd, 199, p.87-88

³ Ibid, p.177

⁴ Ibid, p.178

An Islamic state by definition observes distinction between Muslims and non-Muslims. Muslims have primary, participatory political rights, non-Muslims secondary, basically passive rights. The absolutists assert that such a distinction is innate to the logic of an Islamic state. The ulama would like to impose *jizya*, although some believe that the Pakistani *dhimmis* may be exempted since they are not a conquered people. Some would like only Christians, Jews and Sabians to be deemed *dhimmis*, not idol worshippers, also non-Muslims could be converted into slaves, becoming slave citizens.¹

Political Parties:

Traditionalists consider political parties contrary to Islam. For them, the Muslim community is a politico-ideological entity demanding adherence to uniform divine commands. Such commands prescribe only one consistent conduct. The *Shariah* being a complete guide to true conduct and belief, there is therefore no place for political differences or political parties in an Islamic polity.²

The Economic Basis of the Welfare State:

For the absolutist the basis of the welfare is an increased involvement of the state, but voluntary contributions. *Zakat* and other Islamic dues are the only rightful due which the society can expect of the rich. Whether the state is competent to collect them in its own right is not a settled fact in *fiqh*. But over and above *zakat*, no regular taxation can be imposed by the state.³

The position of Women:

For the absolutists strict segregation of the sexes is necessary for keeping society free from of sin and evil. They do not favor the idea of the equality of women in any sense of the word. Thus disenfranchisement of women would be required as an Islamic society moves closer to the ideal milieu. They consider right to vote for women as harmful. The idea of keeping four wives simultaneously is a divinely-approved right of Muslim men. No human plea for tampering with this sacred sum can be accepted, since interference would be a defiance of a divinely-approved social balance. Besides the existence of concubine is recognized in *Fiqh* and the practice of the *medinese* state. All these facts point to the recognition in Islam of the leading position of men, and the concomitant of subordinate position of women.⁴

Position of Art and Science:

How should an Islamic state receive the growing body of scientific knowledge and the various art forms is a question which perplexes Muslim opinion deeply. For absolutist all revealed knowledge, as

¹ Ibid, pp.179-80

² Ibid, pp.181-82

³ Ibid, p.186

⁴ Ibid, p.187

understood by them is final, immutable, and authoritatively binding.¹ Science and Art should be subjected to Islamic standard of Truth and morality.² Source³

<i>Legitimacy</i>	<i>Form of Govt.</i>	<i>Law</i>	<i>Citizens</i>	<i>Political Parties</i>	<i>Freedom of Belief</i>	<i>Non-Muslim World</i>	<i>Private Property</i>	<i>Welfare State</i>	<i>Position of women</i>	<i>Science and Art</i>
Traditional doctrinal state	No particular form provided by Islam; pious hate ideal	Derived entirely from Shari'ah as elaborated in fiqh	Muslim separate nation. non-muslims have no political Rights	Contrary to Islam	Muslims cannot change their faith; non-Muslims can retain their faith	Peace temporarily; confrontation unavoidable	Sacrosanct; state cannot interfere with justly acquired property	Based on Zakat and voluntary charity	To be segregated and excluded from public life	To be subjected to Islamic standards of truth and Morality

Deoband:

Deoband is a district of Saharanpur in the Uttar Pradesh province of India. The Darul Uloom seminary established here in 1879 by Maulana Abul Qasim Nanotvi concentrated on the instruction of the Quran, realigning the mystically inclined Muslim population with the basic teachings of Islam. Deobandi scholars adopted Shah Waliullah (1703-1762) as their spiritual patron. Shah Waliullah is probably the most revered Islamic thinker among the Muslims of South Asia and Afghanistan.⁴

The Deobandi group is a group of Muslims that is connected to and named after the University of Deoband, Dar al-Uloom, in India. It is an intellectual school of thought that is deeply rooted, and everyone who graduated from that university was influenced by its academic characteristics, so that they became known as Deobandis.⁵

¹ Ibid, p.188

² Ibid, p.192

³ Ibid, 191,192

⁴ Khalid Ahmad, *The Grand Deobandi Consensus*, The Friday Times, Feb. 4-10, 2000

⁵ IslamOnlin.net/living shari'ah/Fatwa bank

Thoughts and Beliefs:

With regard to basic tenets of belief (*`aqidah*), they follow the school of Abu Mansur al-Maturidi.

They follow the school of Imam Abu Hanifah with regard to fiqh and minor issues.

They follow the Sufi orders (*tariqahs*) of the Naqshbandiyyah, Chishtiyyah, Qadiriyyah and Saharwardiyyah with regard to spiritual development.

The thoughts and principles of the Deobandi School may be summed up as follows:

- 1) Preserving the teachings of Islam and its strength and rituals.
- 2) Spreading Islam and resisting destructive schools of thought and missionary activity.
- 3) Spreading Islamic culture and resisting the invading British culture.
- 4) Paying attention to spreading the Arabic language because it is the means of benefiting from the sources of Islamic Shari`ah.
- 5) Combining reason and emotion, and knowledge and spirituality.¹

The Deobandis claim that the four Imams Were Mujtahid and had the ability to deduce the principles of the Sharee`ah. After their time, the door to Ijtihad has been closed. They make Taqleed a requirement even for the scholars who can directly understand the Qur'aan and Sunnah and have knowledge of the Ijma, Qiyas, Abrogation and other related fields of knowledge.²

Exaggerating in the importance of Taqleed, the Deobandis consider it part of one's Eemaan. They say, "(Belief in) ... Taqleed is essential for the protection of Eemaan. Without Taqleed, one cannot obtain a true understanding of Eemaan and Islam".³

¹ Ibid

² Sajid Abdul kayum, *The Jamaat Tabligh and Deobandis: A Critical Analysis of their belief, books and Dawa*, Ahya Multi-Media, 2001 <http://www.ahya.org>

³ Ibid

Various classic subjects such as Qur'an (interpretation and recitation), hadith, jurisprudential reasoning, and ancillary science such as logic, grammar and rhetoric were taught through Arabic.¹

The Deoband School has long sought to purify Islam by discarding supposedly un-Islamic accretions to the faith and reemphasizing the models established in the Qur'an and the customary practices of the Prophet Mohammed (SAW). Additionally, Deobandi scholars often have opposed what they perceive as Western influences.²

The hallmark of deobandi *ulema* was their unremitting anti-colonialism. It took the Deobani ulema many decades before they began to show their deep resentment of British rule. There were three contexts in which the changes affected them;

- a) In the pre-colonial era the *ulema* plying central role in the judicial system and were having influential positions, however, they lost their positions after the establishment of new legal system to meet the expanding demands of colonial capitalist economy.
- b) The ulema were pushed out of the educational system. Their classical learning was not suited to the new colonial administration.
- c) The third factor underlying the anti-colonialism was the plight of Indian weavers' the *julaha*, who were their most fervent followers.³

These factors bound the ulema to the Indian nationalist cause. They never argued for the formation of an "Islamic State" or a Muslim state. They call upon the Muslims to joined hands with Hindus in the patriotic cause opposing the foreign rule. To rationalize that position, they put forward a theory that constituted an essentially secular public philosophy. They separated the domain of faith, as a private domain, from the public domain of politics and government. This was formulated quit explicitly by Maulana Hasan Ahmad Madani that;

- a) Faith was universal and could not be contained within national boundaries but

¹ Barbara D. Metcalf, 'Traditionalist Islam' *Islamic Activism: Deoband, Tablighis, and Talibs*, ISIM Papers, p.4, http://www.isim.nl/files/papers_metcalf.pdf (from here onward Barbara)

² <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military> menu

³ John L. Esposito, *Islamic Reassertion in Pakistan: The Implication of Islamic Laws in Modern State*, Lahore: Vanguard Books(Pvt.) Ltd, 1987, pp.28-29

- b) That nationality was a matter of geography and Muslims were bound to the nation of their birth by obligation of loyalty along their non-Muslims fellow citizens.¹

They would live in harmony in independent India which, although not a *darul-Islam* (under Muslim rule), would be *dar-ul-amn* (the land of peace) where Muslims would be guaranteed freedom to practice their faith and where it would be their duty to live as and law-abiding citizens.² The political philosophy of the *ulema* was a peculiar amalgam of pan-Islamic and Indian nationalist ideas which were fused in their common anti-imperialism.³

Those who were attached with this institute did not directly engage in politics. They were providing both practical and spiritual guidance to their followers. They encouraged a range of rituals and personal behavioral practices such as dress, worship, and everyday behavior. They are different from Islamist parties as their lack of systematic ideology and global political agenda. Oliver Roy described them as neo-fundamentalists because of their continuity with earlier institutions.⁴

They guide their followers by issuing fatawa. “*Fatawa were judgments, attempts to fit sanctioned precedent to present circumstances.*”⁵

Sufism was practised in Deoband. Deobandi deplored a range of customary celebrations e.g. excesses at saint’s tomb and practices attributed to the influence of Shia. Deobandi are facing rivalry from certain Islamic reformist schools such as Ahl-e-hadith and Berelvi. This has created sectarianism among Sunni Muslims.⁶

Deobandi organized the Association of the Ulama of India (Jamiat ulama-e-Hind). They supported Gandhi and Congress against British rule. Most of the Deobandis opposed the creation of Pakistan.⁷ It was this movement that the ulema made their biggest impact on Indian politics.⁸

¹ Ibid , p.30

² Ibid

³ Ibid

⁴ Barbara, p.2

⁵ Ibid, p.5

⁶ Ibid, p.6

⁷ Ibid, p.7

⁸ Sohail Ahamd, *Islamic Fundamentalism in Pakistan, Egypt, and Iran*, Lahore: Vanguard Books(Pvt.) Ltd, p.368

Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI):

In the final years of colonial rule, a minority group of among the Deobandi ulema dissented from support for the secular state and the privatization of religion espoused by the Indian nationalist movement.¹ In 1945 a group of Deobandi ulema supportive of the league, formed the JUI. Jinnah had finally won over the endorsement of the great Deobandi *pir* –Asharaf Ali Thanwi. Upon his directive his disciples began to support the League. Shabbir Usmani, an eminent *alim*, became the head of JUI. Mufti Shafi, another disciple and *khalifa* of Thanwi also joined the JUI. The Muslim majority who championed the Pakistan movement respected Usmani as a symbol of Islamic backing for their cause. At the time of independence of Pakistan, Usmani was the only renowned alim and JUI, the sole *ulama* party in the country.² The JUI has been described as a “progressive” political party dedicated to constitutional rule directed by Sunni Islamic principles.³ The JUI ulama seek the renewal of conservative Islam. They assumed that God has expressed his will on all matters of individual and collective conduct and that there is technically no situation for which the Sharia has not provided guidance. The ulama believe in unquestionable submission to revealed dictates and claim that Islam is complete, perfect, and superior to all other ideologies. Islam is the only system that caters to human aspirations and needs. Deobandis think that humankind should not try to change the Sharia, but just follow it.⁴

The JUI wants that the Islamic system of politics follow the Sunnah and the practice of the companion of the prophet.⁵ The *ummah* is obligated to choose a deputy to the holy prophet. The proper way to do that was to first select a khalifa who would then be accountable for the preservation of religious and worldly order.⁶ Only a certain qualified group of Muslims could rule and even these did not have the power to challenge the Sharia.⁷

Deobandi ulama are very conservative in their views on women’s issues. They believe that Islam required total subjugation to its laws, even outside looks and the dress of a Muslim was determined by the Sharia. Muslim women must observe *pardah* and not try to emulate men. They can enter certain professions like teaching and medicine but it is best that they remain as house makers. Shafi claims that the wife is dependent upon the husband to provide a place for her living, and that she must live

¹ Barbara, p.12

² Sohail Ahamd, *Islamic Fundamentalism in Pakistan, Egypt, and Iran*, Lahore: Vanguard Books(Pvt.) Ltd pp.368-369

³ Ibid. 377

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Ibid p.379

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Ibid, p.380

in her husband's residence. Thanwi opposed the Muslim family law which according to him was deviation from Islam. He considers *talaq al-bida* as constituting legal divorce in Islam.¹

The JUI was founded by followers of the Thanwi *maslak* but was taken over by the followers of Husain Madani. This was surprising given the fact that Thanwi had supported Pakistan movement while Madani had opposed it. Mahmud who led the JUI in the 1960s and 1970s was a disciple of Madani. This was an unfortunate development in JUI politics. The Thanwi faction has all but totally eclipsed from the party leadership.²

Tablighi Jamaat (TJ):

The largest and most prominent *da'wa* movement in the world is *Tablighi jama'at*. *Tabligh* literally means propagation (of the faith), a word closely linked to *Da'wa* in meaning. The *Tablighi Jama'at* is characterized by a resolute determination to stay outside of politics and to dedicate itself exclusively to *da'wa* among Muslims. It has no distinct ideological message or intellectual content beyond the propagation and purification of Islamic teaching and the betterment of Muslims. While its members may participate as individuals in politics, the organization refuses to speak out on any political issue, even about the establishment of sharia law. Its body of belief is quit traditional and socially highly conservative, especially on women's issues; it also incorporates many features of pietism and folk Islam. It believes that devoting a few weeks each year to participation in the pious task of itinerant preaching among the people at their own economic level is a form of worship and moral improvement for the message bearer themselves.³

The *Tablighi Jamaat* was an offshoot of the Deoband movement. In some ways it represented an intensification of the original Deobandi commitment to individual regeneration apart from any explicit political programme. The *Tablighi* put their weight wholly towards the end of reshaping individual lives.⁴ The heart of TJ strategy was the belief that *the best way to learn is to teach other and encourage others*. The main aim of the TJ is to spread the teachings of Islam away from madrasa to layman, high and low ranking, learned and illiterate, to share the obligation of enjoining other to faithful practice.⁵

Its founder a charismatic *allim* Moulana Ilyas believed that Muslims had strayed far from the teaching of Islam. Hence, he felt urgent need for Muslims to go back to the basic principles of their faith, and to strictly

¹ Ibid, pp.378-79

² Ibid, p.388

³ Graham E. Fuller, *The future of political Islam*, New York: Palgrave Macmillon, 2003, p.127

⁴ Barbara Papers, p.8

⁵ *ibid*

observe the commandments of Islam in their own personal lives and in their dealing with others. This alone, he believed, would win for the Muslims the pleasure of God, who would then be moved to grant them 'success' (*falah*) in this world and in the life after death.¹

This movement started to sought a way to reach peasants who were nominal Muslims being targeted by Hindu conversion movement. Maulana Ilyas strategy was to pursue Muslims that any amount of knowledge they had could go out in and approaching even the ulamas to remind them to fulfill their fundamental ritual obligations.²

A pattern emerges of calling the participants to spend one night a week, one weekend a month, forty continuous days in a year, ultimately 120 days once in their life engaged in Tablighi mission. A periodic convocation also came to be held e.g. three days annual meeting in Raiwand (Pakistan) and Tungi (Bangladesh).³

These convocations were considered of intense blessings vis-à-vis occasions to organize for tour. The emphasize of the movement not only place on book learning but face to face and heart to heart communication. Their books topically arranged prophetic traditions used as stimulus to everyday behavior.⁴

Tablighi also amalgamated the holiness associated with Sufis and pir into the charismatic body of the jamaat. So that missionary group itself became a channel for divine intervention.⁵ Tablighis define their efforts as jihad. Following a hadith, they classified jihad into two categories the greater jihad and the lesser jihad. The key difference between the two kind kinds of jihad is, of course, that one is the jihad of personal purification and the other is of warfare.⁶

TJ and Politics:

Most writers and critic of the TJ vis-à-vis TJ authorities themselves described the organization as apolitical. They have taken the movement's aloofness from direct involvement in party politics as adequate proof. Faruqi opines that the TJ advocates a "complete and deliberate isolation from politics. TJ activists and leaders also insist that they have nothing to do with politics. "We concern ourselves only with what is in the heavens above and the grave below" is a favorite Tablighi refrain.⁷

¹ Yoginder Sikand, *The Tablighi Jamaat and Politics: A Critical Re-Appraisal*, the Muslim World, Volume 96, January, 2006, p.175 (from here onward yogindar)

² Barbara, p.9

³ Ibid, pp.9-10

⁴ Ibid, p.10

⁵ Ibid, p.11

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Yogindar, pp.175-76

The TJ political vision is not clearly stated by the movement's leaders and can only be uncovered through an examination of the various political roles that it played in different spatio-temporal context. Ilyas own belief that Islamic missionary work was, above all, practical activity, and not something to be simply written of talked about, but also a strategy to avoid coming to the notice of government authorities which might seek to interfere with the activity of the movement.¹

Ilyas believed that the loss of political power of the Muslims and their increasing marginalization at the hands of non-Muslim forces, in India as well as elsewhere, owed entirely to Muslims having abandoned the path of the faith. He insisted, if Muslims were to strictly practice Islam in their personal lives they would earn God's grace, and God would then enable bless them with success '*falah*' both in this world and the life after death. God would be moved to grant Muslims political power as his khulafa or deputies if only they would go back to the path of the prophet Muhammad (SAW) and his companion. Muslims were promised that if they faithfully followed the example of the prophet in their personal lives they would dominate over non-believers and would be destined to be the masters of each and every thing on the earth. Political Power, Ilyas declared, can never be the objective of a true Muslim. However, walking in the path of the prophet if we attain political power then we should not shirk the responsibility. Hence, political power Ilyas insisted, was not to be shunned, but neither was it to be directly struggled for. Rather, it would be granted as a blessing of God to the Muslims once they returned to the path of Islam, after which the Islamic state and social order would be establish.² For this Ilyas presented six principles as '*chhe baten*': *kalima shahada* (the Islamic creed of confession), *namaz* (ritual worship), *ilm-o-zkr* (knowledge of the basic of faith and constant remembrance of God), *ikram-e-muslim* (respect for the Muslims), *tashih-e-niyat* (purification of the intention), and *tafrigh-e-waqt* (sacrificing time for missionary work).³

Abiding by these strictures, ordinary Muslims would gain a sufficient understanding of Islam and commitment to the demands of the faith. This would then inspire them to abide by the teachings of Islam in their collective affairs. Once sufficient numbers of Muslims began to pattern their personal as well as collective affairs in accordance with the laws of Islam, God would bless the Muslims with political power, and eventually an Islamic state based of shariah would come into being.⁴

Taliban:

The origin of Taliban can be found during 1980s. Afghan Taliban entered into the international arena in the late 20th century. They

¹ Ibid, p.176

² Ibid,p.180

³ Ibid

⁴ Ibid , p.181

identified themselves with Deobandi school of thought that had its origin in the late 19th century.¹

One cannot define the Taliban as the expression of the afghan ulama either. They are in no way a clerical institution. There are many other ulama in Afghanistan who do not recognize the Taliban as ualama both because of the ethnic divide and second, because they are not ulama: they call themselves 'student' not 'ulama'.² The predicament of the Taliban is that they use two contradictory sets of legitimacy (the *Shariah* and afghan/pakhton nationalism) and refuse to address the real issue, that of ethnicity, except in words. By doing that, they are in tune with the way the afghan monarch had built the state.³

The emergence of the Taliban in the autumn of 1994 dramatically changed the course of afghan civil war. By imposing new clerical order, unknown in Afghanistan or in other Muslim countries, the Taliban has changed the course of power politics in the region.⁴ The Taliban ideology of the Islamization of the society at the grass root level is derived from the fundamentalist movement inspired by Shah Waliullah and the Deoband School. This movement is puritanical and reformist, apposing all unorthodox practices. And although the Taliban is more puritanical and reactionary than the majority of the *ulama* before the war, it does not oppose traditional practices (like the cult of the saints), and therefore, it is acceptable to the rural population, as opposed to the Wahabi movement that has failed to gain support in Afghanistan. The enforcement of *Shariah* is the main point in the Taliban political agenda. It aims at building a theocratic state in which the *ulama* have the power to designate and control the government. Furthermore, the Taliban does not permit the emergence of any political party; elections are said to be unislamic, and a source of *fitna* within the Muslim community.⁵ Clearly the legitimacy of power is not political, but religious and charismatic. The Taliban's interpretation of *Shariah* is extremely conservative. It condemns any attempt at *ijtihad* (interpretation) and, perhaps because of its *pakhton* background, forbids any kind of public activity for women. Adultery and male homosexuality are severely condemned, and stoning has been publicly conducted in such cases. Music is forbidden till the end of jihad and kind of representation of living creature is prohibited.⁶ The *Amir* claimed Islamic legitimacy: the sermon (*khutba*) was read in

¹ Barbara, p.1

² Christopher Jaffrelot (Ed.), *Pakistan: Nationalism without a Nation?*, Delhi: Zed book Ltd. 2002, p.158

³ Ibid

⁴ Ibid ,p.161

⁵ Ibid.pp.163-164

⁶ Ibid

his name.¹ The Taliban, thus, validates the return to a political legitimization of power in religious terms.

In accord with its religious discourse, the Taliban refuses a *pakhton* nationalist ideology, but the *qwam* (network of solidarity) plays a major part in the power structure.²

The emergence of the Taliban attracted media attention because of their remarkable success in capturing a large area in a very short time, and because their explicit denial of female access to education and employment and the imposition of ultraconservative dress codes made news.³ However, the Taliban, if they were previously aware of the UN human Rights Conventions and the importance attached to them as a model for international behavior, have not given the impression that these weigh anywhere nearly as heavily as their interpretation of Qur'an and the *Shariah*. If anything they have responded to the condemnations of their policy by interpreting them as attacks by the West, based on Western liberal ideologies, rather than as expression of an internationally held view. The Taliban have drawn a distinction between what they term the international and national value system.⁴

The Taliban adhered to the Hanafi school of Sunni Islam, making it the dominant religion in the country for most of 2001. For the last 200 years, Sunnis often have looked to the example of the Deoband madrassah. Most of the Taliban leadership attended Deobandi-influenced seminaries in Pakistan.⁵

They were having very rigid and repressive rules of control for individual behavior which they justified in the name of Islam. They set certain standards of dress and public behavior, which were particularly extreme in relations to women, limiting their movement in public space and their employment outside home. They enforced their decree through public punishments.⁶ These Taliban are shaped by many of the core Deobandi reformist causes all of which were further encouraged by Arab volunteers in Afghanistan. Fulfilling religious rituals and opposition to certain custom laden ceremonies like weddings and pilgrimages to shrines, practices of Shias and seclusion of women were certain principles laid down by Taliban for a morally ordered society. This

¹ Ibid

² Ibid , p.165

³ Musa Khan jalalzai, *Taliban and the Great Game in Afghanistan*, Lahore: Vanguard Books (Pvt) Ltd.,1999, p.131

⁴ Ibid, p132

⁵ <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military> menu

⁶ Barbara, p.1

severity of the Taliban approach made them unique. They could not be manipulated easily¹.

The Talibanization of Pakistan:

Talibanism has started spreading across the border. The afghan war has left an indelible imprint of Pakistan's cultural, economic, and political life, especially in the Tribal areas bordering Afghanistan and even in the adjacent settled districts. In January 1999, the Tehrik-e-Taliban-e-Zargari launched a movement of Taliban model. The Tehrik-e-Nafaz-e-Shariat-Muhamadi (TNSM) led by Sufi Mohammad in Malakand Agency continues to challenge political institutions and the demand a Shariah based system. Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan is another organization working in Waziristan Agency. Lashkar-e-Islam is working in Khyber Agency. All these organizations are currently involved in deteriorating security situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab. The Taliban are traditionalists seeking to return to the purity of the teachings of the Qur'an and the Sunnah - the practice of the Prophet. The Taliban, being products of religious madrassas in Pakistan, are more inclined towards that country. Taliban are still not organized along party lines.

Conclusion:

The revivalist movement of Islam started by ShahWalliullah culminated into the establishment of Darul ulum-e- Deoband. Since the 19th century this institute is busy in reviving the teaching of Islam. Deobandis, Tablighis and Taliban the various trajectories of this institute working for the revivalism of traditional Islam.

They have demonstrated practical approach in various environments in which they find themselves. Taliban for sure is an exception to this because of their certain rigid principles e.g. in relations to women. The TJ is enjoying much respect throughout the world because of their accommodative strategy with modern liberal states. Even the Taliban had moderate voice vis-à-vis pragmatism in their alliances that might one day have made their society more acceptable to the international standards, but this dream dashed to ground after 9/11 incident and American war on terror.

Pakistan's viability depends in large parts on its ability to develop a new Islamic narrative that can be a force for progressive change.

¹ Ibid, p.13

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