Religious Ideology: Origin of Transnational Terrorism in Pakistan

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to investigate the causes and international links of religious groups that are supporting their sect fellows in dissemination and acknowledgement of their specific rigid sectarian religious ideas that may contrary to the other sect ideology. Iran and Saudi Arabia play as a leading actor in the promotion of transnational religious extremist ideologies in Pakistan. Later Afghanistan and Central Asian states also play their role in the propagation of polarization on the basis of sects. It is posing severe security threats to individuals, society and the government. After the incident of 9/11 the emergence of different terrorist international Islamic networks, such as Al Qaeda, the Muslim Brotherhood etc., which are helping to disseminate a specific religious ideology across the world and have a great impact on the pre-existing religious groups in Afghanistan and Pakistan. This article gives an overview of the role of transnational militant Islamic groups in Pakistan. It also explains how they use religious ideology for transnational terrorism in Pakistan. This paper also highlights the role of Taliban in Pakistan and formation of strange relationship between different religious groups and ethnic groups. When the religious tension increases the ethnic tension decreases and this relationship is vice versa. It also makes suggestions for curbing transnational terrorism in Pakistan.

Keywords: Religious Ideology, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Transnational Terrorism, Pakistan Introduction

Pakistan Population Profile

About 96.4% of the total population of Pakistan is constitutionally certified Muslims and principally divided into three main sects i.e., Sunni, Shia and Ahle- Hadise. The Sunnis and Ahle -Hadise both comprises 84% of the total Muslim population and 12% are Shias. The founding father Quaid-e-Azam was from the Shia minority. In 1947 and afterward there is no specific sectarian differences on the common public but it is existed on religious studies level. In 1980s and onward the sectarian differences emerged and protected nationally and internationally by the religious groups on the basis of religious ideology. It is the time period in which transnational religiously ideologies divide the nation horizontally and vertically. The horizontal division is limited to within the country and vertical division divide the Muslim countries on the basis of sects. Iran and Saudi Arabia play as a leading actor in the propagation of transnational religious extremist ideologies in Pakistan. Later Afghanistan and Central Asian states also play their role in the circulation of polarization on the basis of sects. Pakistani research scholar Imran khan of Area Study Centre (Russia, China and Central Asia), University of Peshawar, in his article, "Pakistan: The Scourge of

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Terrorism" has named Pakistan the Cradle of terrorism. In his opinion Pakistan has been a safe haven for terrorists and a cockpit of terrorism parachuting militants in Afghanistan as mujahidin or freedom fighters in Kashmir (khan, 2005).

Another German journalist Lutz Kleveman's book, "The New Great Game: Blood and Oil in Central Asia' named Pakistan "the cradle of Terror". As more than 30,000 militants of diverse nationalities-among others Arabs, Chechens, Kazakhs, Tajiks, Slavs and Afghans-are marauding within and without Pakistan's frontiers (Kleveman, 2004).

Religious Ideology, Radicalization and Transnational Terrorism

According to the Researcher the religious ideology is the shared system of religious beliefs, religious values, and attitudes. According to the Marx and Engels, "Ideologies perpetuate the power of the Elites." Easton consider ideology as "articulated sets of ideas, ideals and purposes which help members of the system to interpret the past, explain the present, and offer a vision for future". Religious extremist ideology provides a conceptual framework or understanding for the recruitment of like-minded people in the militant groups all over the world. It also explains the justification for the terrorist activities. Religious Ideology has the deep relation with the Transnational Terrorism in Pakistan. The precarious phase of radicalization, which professionals also terms as 'cognitive radicalization' and which splits the world into two extremes of good and evil can be best understood by looking at certain local, sectarian and global political positions held by ideologies and actors of violence in Pakistan. This 'good us' and 'evil them' mental state paves the way for adopting extremist belief system that legitimize violence for religio-political goals and eventually leads to terrorism (Ramarkrishna, 2010). Dr. Davin Hansen has also noted in his recent research on radicalization in Pakistan that People in Pakistan had a common tendency to use radical rhetoric when discussing other religions, sects, nations and people, but when it came to their practical behaviour, the majority of Pakistanis was moderate (Hansen, 2012). Some analysts have the opinion that the non-violent extremism and some analysts call 'virtual radicalism', is present in Pakistani culture and society to a significant magnitude and the non-violent or virtual radicals be blame able for Ideological support and a breeding ground for the militant extremism .The transformation from the former to the latter is also very difficult to envisage and both forms of extremism are discrete but they are equally critical. It was dominance of religious speeches, fatwas, and radical rhetoric, an expression of extreme feelings of anger and promotion of hatred instigated among the masses mainly by the religious political parties that motivated a police guard to assassinate the Punjab governor in January 2011 in Islamabad because of the latter's criticism of the man-made blasphemy law. Many other examples abound of religious extremist, religious rhetoric and fatwas leading to acts of sectarian violence, in Pakistan (Ramkrishna, 2010). Transnational terrorism involves the unlawful use of force or indiscriminate violence by internationally linked groups against persons and properties in many different part

of the world. They have international membership and conduct activities in many countries. They aim to bring about regional or global political, religious or social Peter Mandaville has the opinion that Al-Qaeda claimed that her initial change. success was due to global technology and religious ideology. After the 9/11 the study of religion in politics increased many fold. In the words of Robert Keohane, "the events of 9/11 provoked the realization that 'world-shaking political movements have so often been fuelled by religious fervor' (Keohane, 2002). There are the many political, religious, ideological and personal reasons for individuals to join terrorist groups. But the religious reason with some economic personal benefit is the most appealing one. For example, if Tehrek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) seeks to establish a pure theologian state in Pakistan and promises fighters from all over the world better life style in Pakistan as compared to their home countries. The militant organizations have the global appeal for membership and funding through the cyber technology and through different organizations. Cyber Technology plays a vital role in the propagation of the organizational objectives and motives for religious purpose.

Militant Religious Extremism and Ideology of Pakistan

Pakistan is a Muslim state but its idea does not have any connection with the ideology of militant religious extremism. Islam is derived from the word "Salam" which means peace. It preaches the establishment of an egalitarian social structure. The theme of Holy Quran is humanity. Hazrat Muhammad (S.A.W), the prophet of Islam, is called the Rehmat-ul-lil-alimeen (Blessing for the entire Universe). Islam orders its followers to keep away from militant religious extremism, aggression, corruption, injustice, violence, chaos, and disturbance. Islamic teachings promote modernity, tolerance and moderation.

Some writers, religious elites, politicians, Intellectuals, and religious extremist people believe that Pakistan was created for Islam and Islam being an ideological command should lead all socio-cultural and political matters. The problem does not end here; People of Pakistan belong to various sects and every sect is demanding enforcement of its own version of Islam. Pakistan was not created under the leadership of religious Ulema and it was not created as an ideological state. Islam might be used as a political tool during freedom movement to gain support of the Muslim community at lower level but neither Jinnah nor top leadership of Muslim League ever used the slogan of Islam.

After partition the founder of the country, in his 11th August 1947 speech in Constituent Assembly clearly rejected the idea that Pakistan would be an ideological state by committing to the secular idea of equal status of all citizens irrespective of their religion. Unfortunately religious elites began to demand an Islamic constitution and political system in the state. Objective Resolution was passed which says that state will enable its individual to follow Islam. Later on it became a trend to use religion to sanction political activities. Even Ayub Khan (considered as liberal politician) used religion to oppose candidature of Fatima Jinnah who was contesting elections in 1964 against him by raising the issue that women cannot become a ruler in an Islamic ideological state. Z.A.Bhutto used and misused Islam to get the support of religious parties. Zia- ul-Haq misused Islam for the protection of his despotic rule in the country. Almost every politician used and misused the religion and ideology of Pakistan according to suitability of their self-interest and environment of the country. The protection of ideology which is based on biased extremist narratives culminate the sectarianism and hatred for America

Sectarianism and jihad both are mixed in Pakistan. Because jihad in Kashmir and Afghanistan was commanded by the state and it was the strategy of the government to protect the national interest of the country against the India and the Soviet Union. When a Jihadi outfit got into troubles as a result of its indulgence in sectarian or simple criminal violence, it was rescued by the intelligence personnel, usually drawn from the army". The jihadi outfits were raising money freely from the public through the use of religious notion of Jihad. Apparently they were fighting against the Soviet and Indians but critically they have the sectarian political agendas also. They were considering Mujahidin for public who were working for the freedom of the Kashmir and Afghanistan but minorities and Shia community in Pakistan always feel threat from these groups. Jihadi outfits remained fully armed while located inside the cities. Pakistan was a little sectarian at the time of birth. But it became more after the passage of time and the period of 1980's was the most favorable period for the growth of sectarianism. The religious parties during all previous elections in the history of Pakistan could only win a few seats. The best strategy for these religious parties is to divide the country on religious sectarian grounds. The leader of these religious political parties wanted to reach the corridors of power through the use and misuse of religion in their politics.

In Pakistan the hatred for America and western countries is a very popular slogan in all the religious groups and even the large part of the society. They generally condemn the America and western countries for making conspiracies against the Islam and Pakistan. They blame them that all the miseries and poor condition of the Muslims is only due to the west. The opposition of western countries is a popular slogan of almost all the religious groups. A large number of religious groups spread hatred against America and the West on the issue that Islam is endanger due to the friendship of the America and the West. They urge Muslims and religiously fanatic's people to kill the western and American national that they are killing Muslims in Afghanistan and Palestine. For a justification of their attitude towards the America and West, the religious elite and religious groups mostly refer to the pathetic and miserable situation of Muslims in various parts of the world. They claim that the west is uniting to keep the Muslims backward only because Muslims have the potential to fight for their dominance. They view that the USA leads the entire move. The NGO's are the tools and so fighting them is an Islamic obligation. They express Jihad as the only option left to deal with western countries and minds.

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Growth of Transnational Terrorism in Pakistan

Sectarian and ethnic conflicts, International intervention in politics, foreign attacks on Muslim countries, Kashmir issue and the post-soviet era and the new chapter of 9/11 all are the major developments in the promotion of militant religious extremism and Transnational Terrorism in the country.

Kashmir, Chechnya, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Palestine, Kosovo, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, etc. all are seen as full of human tragedies and many Muslim have the opinion that all these sufferings of the Muslim world are only due to the West. USA attack on Iraq proves that America has no regard for Muslims. Abbas asserts "international political factors as key causes behind Muslim radicalism, particularly in Eurasia. Most of the Muslims, including those in Pakistan, are susceptible to a widespread perception that frames all these issues as a war against Islam and victimization of followers of the religion" (Abbas, 2005).

Kashmir Issue

Kashmir issue is the most important issue between Pak-India relations. The killing and brutalities of the Indian army against Kashmiris boost the feelings of 'Jihad' among the religious community of the Pakistan and international Muslim community.

Many religious Ullema and scholars issued fatwas for jihad in Kashmir and in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (NWFP) many voluntaries took part in Kashmir Jihad on the request of their religious scholars. In Friday Prayer, religious scholars always try to boost the feeling of Jihad among the Pakistani Muslims on explaining the brutalities of the Indians on Kashmiris. The Kashmir-focused militant groups have contributed substantially in radicalizing the people in the name of jihad against India and recruiting them for that purpose.

Role of Saudi Arabi and Iran

The Arab countries particularly Saudi Arab along with the help of different organizations established a network of charity and welfare organizations to all over the country and the purpose were to adopt the Saudi version of Islam. These organizations also helped the families whose male members were engaged in Jihad or died during the Jihad. In the poor and backward areas of the Pakistan, one can easily exploit the poor masses and the slogan of Jihad can serve the best tool in the recruitment of the Jihadism. Furthermore, theses charity organizations are involved into the propagation of Saudi Wahabi ideology along with the concept of Jihad in Afghanistan and Pakistan. In Saudi government, different NGO'S and organizations encouraged the establishment of Wahabi Madrassas in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Besides, encouraging and promoting the Wahabi ideologies these madrassas served three other purposes. First of them is "channelizing recruits for Jihad" and the other is "breeding hatred against the West" while the last one is advocating an Islamic revolution not only in Muslim countries but also across the globe

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Saudi Arab and Iran both are the Islamic countries based on different sects of Islam. The Afghan jihad was promoted under the aid and assistant of Saudi Arab along with USA. In Afghan Jihad, the foreign militants along with some Arab militants initiate the jihad in Afghanistan and Pakistani militants and Jihadi groups also joined hand against Soviet Union. Shared goals, common training camps, financial and operational interdependence, and common fighting fronts in Afghanistan had brought the Arab, Afghan and Pakistani militants closer. Similarly, transformation of many sectarian and other militant groups in Pakistan, including those focused on Kashmir, into global jihadist entities, adoption of violent Takftri ideology by some Pakistani groups, and later Pakistani militant and. sectarian groups' use of violence against the Pakistani state and people have been some of the consequences.

The Larger Religious Discourse

Large religious discourse means availability of the different religious discourses in the country. The country is full of sectarian religious madrassas along with some government madrassas. Different religious and non-religious political organisations and militant groups are present in the country. All the madrassas have their own religious syllabus according to the suitability of their religious school of thought. Moreover, madrassas are mainly represents their own specific school of thought as compared to Islam. Some Madrassas work under the supervision of Saudi and Irani government to disseminate the knowledge of their specifics school of thoughts. Saudi's represents the Wahhabi school of thought and Iran represents the Shia school of thought (Urwa Tul Wusqa, Jamia Tul Muntazir, Al Qadsiya etc). In addition, some political parties, militant organizations, sectarian groups are also attach with the madrassas and use the madrassas for their own political interest. There are the four objectives of the Madrassas. First, is to Islamise the country according to the teachings of their specific sect. Second is the establishment of the Islamic government i.e. system of caliphate. Third, is to implement the Islamic laws and punishments by force in the Islamic state of Pakistan. Ironically which are more sectarian as compared to Islamic? Fourth, is to preach the specific sectarian ideology, so that all the people turn themselves in to their specific version of Islam.

The large religious discourse has the three shades, one is the religious political parties, second is the madrassas and the third is the religious organisations, which can be further divided into sub-categories.

Sectarian outfits

Religious-political parties

Non-political religious organizations

Khilafah movements

Student wings of religious parties

Militant groups: Militant groups are basically the fragments of the political religious parties and highly involved in jihad either in Kashmir or Afghanistan. These groups are also involved in sectarian killings, and religious conflicts. "These include the banned *Jaish-e-Muhammad, Harkatul Mujahideen, Al-Badar Mujahideen and Lashkar-e-Taiba*"

Since the Iranian Revolution of 1979 and the Soviet Union's military intervention in Afghanistan in the same year, group claiming inspiration from religious ideas have come to play leading roles in terrorist dramas around the world. Not religions in general but groups asserting their fidelity to Islam have become widely associated with particularly horrendous attacks, such as September 11,2001 attack by al Qaeda on the world trade center towers in New York City.

Countering Transnational Terrorism

There are the following countering transnational terrorism strategies.

Ideology of Pakistan must be done away with

Nothing could have pushed Pakistani Society towards radicalism (without any significant resistance from any social group) more than ideology of Pakistan. Ideology of Pakistan was fabricated by religious elites with full support of establishment of Pakistan. Creation of Pakistan was justified on the basis of making it a laboratory where principles of Islam could be tested and then adopted. Fake quotes have been attributed to Jinnah to prove this. For example according to one such false reference on 13th January 1948 in Islamia College Peshawar Jinnah said that "we did not demand Pakistan to get a piece of land, instead we wanted to get a laboratory where we could experiment principles of Islam" (Fake Quote: Laboratory of Islam, 2016). Narratives were created and popularized that Pakistan is the castle of Islam (Haggani H., If the Generals have Changed their Mind, 2014). Using of word castle militaries the whole concept of Pakistan. Analogies were created in which Indian Muslims who left India to come to Pakistan were equalized to the Muslims of Mecca who left their place for the sake of protection of Islam. It was said that Islam was in danger and Pakistan was established to protect the religion. With much care the grounds of militancy were evened to flourish jingoism. Leader of the Pakistan movement, Jinnah, was a liberal man who believed in coexistence and tolerance. He was western educated and was admirer of liberal and secular values. He was not the person who would make a policy to enable people to live in accordance with principles of Islam. He was against state influence in religious affairs as is revealed in his August 11, 1947 speech, surprisingly absent in text books taught to the students – a deliberate omission. Jinnah went for the movement of Pakistan only after he realized again and again that the Hindus were not ready to share political power with the Muslims. It was Congress rule of 1937-39 under which Muslims were deprived of their political and economic rights that Jinnah distanced himself from Indian National Congress and Pakistan Resolution was passed in March 1940 (Mahmood, 2013). Afterwards Jinnah

was ready to accept Cabinet Mission Plan which divided India into three units but with a Central Government to deal with central issues like defense, foreign affairs etc. Again it was Congress that sabotaged the whole idea and Gandhi said that this plan could be amended with majority vote (Creation and Aim of Pakistan-Two main Views, 2009). The Hindus being a majority of 4: 1 could change the plan without

193 getting Muslim votes. It was after that Jinnah was not ready for anything less than

creation of Pakistan and popularized the idea of Pakistan through an active movement of processions and corner meetings. Perhaps Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan, felt that some elements were using the name of Islam as a purpose of creation of Pakistan, he quelled it in his first speech in Constitutional Assembly by declaring Pakistan a state where other religious groups would have equal rights (Jinnah Speech, 1947). Unfortunately he left the world after almost a year of Pakistan's creation and could not protect the country from falling into the hands of forces of obscurantism. The narrative of ideology of Pakistan succeeded to such an extent that the state became an Islamic State where any villain could occupy power in the name of enforcing Sharia and making people of Pakistan better Muslims (as General Zia did from 1977 to 1988). The real purpose of Pakistan i.e. protection of political and economic rights of the Muslims of India was disappeared (Creation and Aim of Pakistan-Two main Views, 2009). People were wronged double as they were deprived of their political, religious and economic rights on one hand and on the other they were radicalized in the name of Islam. They did not come to the roads to safeguard their political or economic rights; instead they swelled the movements for the imposition of Shania in Pakistan time and again.

Curricula must be revised to cleanse it from biased ideologies

The phrase Ideology of Pakistan was never used during Pakistan Movement. In order to impart the well edited concepts and ideas to the students, text books were used. The most important damage was done with History which was written on religious lines alone. All Muslims were presented as heroes and all Hindus as conspirators. It was told to the students that Pakistan was created to protect Islam and to glorify it. The most amazing thing was that the students were taught only about Muslim invasions and their rule in India by skipping periods of Hindu rulers (Paracha, 2016). The policy of excluding others narrows the outlook of students.

Islam must be liberated from the clutches of militants

Militants often quote the Holy Quran's verse no five of Surah At-Tauba in the meanings as was conveyed by Qutb. The verse says "Fight and slay the pagans whenever you find them, beleaguer them and lie in wait for them in every strategies of war". This verse was revealed in the context of Arab pagans who broke a treaty with Prophet (PBUH) and made aggression but Qutb (and his followers) isolated the part where injunctions regarding fighting were given. If the verse is taken individually

without its context, it would abrogate many verses of Holy Quran in which message of tolerance and mercy has been given.

Peace is central to Islam and violence is peripheral. The Holy Quran permits violence only in defense. It is against aggression. It forbids killing of children, women and non-combatant. Its aim has never been to start a war of total destruction as is being led by terrorists and militants in the name of Jihad. Asghar Ali Engineer laments the fact that word Jihad has been used 41 times in Quran and not a single time to refer war. For war words qital on harb are used. Jihad according to Quran is used in its root meaning i.e. to strike, and to struggle (for betterment of society) (Engineer, Making a Mockery of Jihad, 2008).

Policy makers must convey that Pakistan is not a gun for hire

After 9/11 government in Pakistan has been accused by people of being a US puppet as during the period Pakistan tried to be more loyal to USA than its own as it failed to pursue an independent policy regarding self-interests. On the other hand Saudis seem to be still involved in funding militancy in Pakistan (Siddiqa, Is the Saudi Connection the Main Problem? 2015). It seems that Pakistan has become a battleground for various vested interests. Both USA, and Saudi Arabia are promoting their interests in the region and Pakistan is silent spectator in need of foreign debt and donations. In order to eliminate militancy Pakistan has to be conscious of its own interests and should defend these without any other consideration. It should tell Saudi Arabia that funding for sectarianism or terrorism would not be tolerated any more. Pakistan can take independent line own to the fact that with depleting oil resources, Saudis will not remain generous in their aids to Pakistan. The state has shown some signs of independence regarding Saudi Arabia by not sending its troops to be deployed on Saudi-Yemen border when was asked by it (Siddiqa, Changing Times, 2015). As far as US is concerned, its strategic leaning towards India is not liked by Pakistan. On Kashmir issue it failed to help. It is the time that Pakistan should take off the baggage of US obligations. The state should fight militancy for its own survival and not for obedience to US commands. It is the fight of survival of Pakistan. The state should understand that it borders Afghanistan, the hub of militant Islam, and therefore it must be very vigilant. Pakistan has to send clear signals to the world that it will not act as a gun for hire; however it would fight vigorously where its own interests would be threatened

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