

## **Pakistan's Religious Elite and Afghanistan: Antecedents**

**Qamar Fatima**

### **Abstract**

Religious commonalities between Pakistan and Afghanistan are inevitable part of their relationships. So there is a need to understand the ramifications of dynamics of religious elite approach of Pakistan in order to comprehend the true nature of Pak-Afghan relations. Pakistan right after its creation faced a dilemma about that what role should Islam play in the Pakistani state. The Modernists were not ready to reconcile with the idea of theocracy. The conservatives with contrary position over role of religion believed that only Sharia Law should govern it. This debate stiffened with the passage of time and finally religion was followed as a consistent policy of state for defining Pakistan's identity as Islamic state. Eventually the role of religion in Pakistan's political system gave birth to a unique power pole, that is the priest class, the 'Ulema' in the capacity of leaders of religious political parties. Who, however, despite being in an ideological state, failed to secure a significant political representation in elected bodies and take an influential and meaningful share in the strata of ruling elite. However, these religious elite have always had relevance with Afghan affairs. Specifically, their role became more visible and relevancy increased owing to their proactive role during the Afghan Jihad against Soviet Union, and later during the Taliban Rule. The central question of research is why religious elite in Pakistan have always shown a proactive stance towards Afghan affairs. So this study would be analyzing the role and relevancy of Pakistan's religious elite with Pakistan – Afghanistan Relations. This research would also substantiate the current scenario of Pakistan Afghan Relations with special reference to religious elite approach.

**Keywords:** Pakistan, Religion, Ulema, Ruling Elite, Afghanistan, Afghan Jihad, Taliban, Deobandism

### **Introduction**

Religious elite had always been an inseparable part of Muslim societies. Most importantly, even the despotic rulers could not negate their significance and influence. However, for one or the other reason, they had been usually on the fringes of politics, but retaining the role of religious consultants in power structure. During the British rule, Ulema played a crucial role in nurturing the resistant character of Muslim society. They were important segment of 1857 war of Independence. During the First World War, the religious elite for the first time politically mobilized the Indian Muslims, which resulted into formation of religio-political parties in sub-continent. The Ulema's role in politics had started with their confrontation to the alien ruler (the British) in sub-continent and Muslim world at large. This was foreign affairs dimension of the politics. Anjuman-i-Khudam-e-Kaaba set up in 1913, and then

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Jamiat-Ulema-Hind (JUH), Khilafat movement appeared on the political scene of sub-continent. Khilafat movement and JUH were of stark opponent of British government and their allied policies towards Muslim countries. In an address Maulana Madni at annual session of 4-6 May 1919 condemned the British government for attacking Afghanistan to eliminate the Muslim government from there.

The prominent religious leaders before Pakistan were Maulana Madni, Maulana Mohammad Mia, Maulana Syed Fakhar-ud-Din Ahmed, Maulana Abdul Haq, and Maulana Ahmed Ali Saeed who issued fatwas and opposed the demand for a separate state for Muslims of sub-continent. Maulana Maudidi, the founder of Jamat-e-Islami, though not opposed Pakistan, but he could not reconcile with the Muslim Leagues, idea of Muslim nationalism, his argument was based upon the concept that a national government based on secular or Muslim nationalism would not be qualitatively different from the imperial government of India. Nationalism was an alien concept imported by colonialism to break up the unity of Muslim world (Moten, Abdul Rashid, 2003, p. 23).

However, Muslim League succeeded in securing the favor of some prominent religious leaders from Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam and Maulana Akram Khan, the Pir of Manki Sharif, Maulana Shabir Ahmed Usmani who campaigned for Muslim League's cause. On 26 October in 1945, 500 religious scholars including some Pirs and Mashaikhs gathered and passed a resolution in favor of demand for a separate homeland for Muslims of sub-continent.

### **Religious Elite in Pakistan**

Quaid –i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan, invoked the two-nation theory, a calling for the formation of a state of a Muslim homeland in the sub-continent, believing that 'India is not a nation, nor a country, it is a sub-continent composed of nationalities, Hindus and Muslims being the major nations (Hussain Asaf, 1979, p. 28). There seemed no obscurity in his mind about religion as being the sole source or a way of life for the Muslims in sub-continent. He, despite his Western orientation, sternly believed in necessity of acquiring a separate portion of land for the preservice and observance of Muslim identity in Hindu majority dominated sub-continent. As per his vision, there was not any possibility of cultural amalgamation or Hindu-Muslim cohesion, or even as political entity, in spite of indoctrination of Western democratic norms of Indian nationals by British colonial rulers. Quaid-i-Azam, highlighting all the multifarious differences between Hindus and Muslim's, clarified that Islam and Hinduism are different and distinct social systems. He also

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reiterated that the conception of common nationality would ultimately lead towards the destruction of India. Therefore, the dangers, as perceived by him in common nationality, led him to identify Islam with Pakistan as a justifiable rationale under his leadership. However, the corps of traditional Ulema could not reconcile with the idea that a westernized leader was pleading in the name of Islam, so these reservations did not let them to support Muslim League's demand for Pakistan. The self-proclaimed guardianship of Muslims' interests in sub-continent by Ulema was seemingly under threat by the hands of a secular leadership.

So the urge of preserving the Muslim identity had fully beholden the Muslim mindset and moved intelligentsia to secure the separate homeland of Muslims. As Majawar Hussain Shah explains, "The mere arithmetic of numbers would place Muslims permanently under Hindu domination. With such fears the idea of Muslim identity was born and nurtured under the rubric of religion" But he also clarifies one point here that ... the basic documents outlining the demand for Pakistan such as Iqbal's Address at Allahabad and the Lahore Resolution of March 1940 do not identify religion as the main force behind the demand for Pakistan. Iqbal's addresses are essentially devoted to the conceptual framework where culture appears prominent under the name of Islam (p. 32).

The traditional Ulema deriving their intellectual inspiration from Deoband Madrasatul-Uloom appeared hesitant to reconcile the idea of Muslim nationalism because as per doctrinal interpretation, the Muslims cannot be confined into territorial boundaries as a nation on Western standard. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Maulana Hussain Ahmed Madni shared the viewpoint of Muslim nationalism and opposed the creation of Pakistan prominently. So, priest class, specifically the Deoband Darul Uloom qualified, issued decree (Fatwa) declaring Jinnah "Kafir-e-Azam and advising Muslim not to join Muslim League .But refuting this religious decree the democratic vote of Indian Muslims gave birth to Pakistan (Akhtar, 2009).

The predicament and paradoxes emerging out of a situation in which Pakistan was created as a nation state, pleaded in the name of religion, born out of a democratic process, baffled the relationship of religion and politics in the political system. Since the creation, Pakistan was fraught into an intricate debate of "what role Islam should play in the state". Jones Owen Bennet (2002: XV) commented, "A strict interpretation of the two nation theory has led many Pakistanis to conclude that country was always intended to be the Islamic state. But, others in my opinion, in majority, have a different view. They believed that Jinnah was trying to create a country in which Muslims could live in safety, free from Hindu domination. So Most of Pakistanis

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could not settle with the idea of theocracy, rather aspired for a modern, tolerant, and a stable state and a political system for Pakistan. This group, to instantiate its arguments quoted Quaid's speech on 11 August 1947, in Constituent Assembly.

You may belong to any religion or caste or creed that was nothing to do with the business of the state, you will find that in the course of time Hindus would cease to be the Hindus and Muslims would cease to be the Muslims, not in the religious sense. Because, that is personal faith of each individual, but in the political sense as citizens of the states (Toheed, Ahmed. 2010).

He was determined to establish an inter-communal harmony, as observed by Sharif-ul-Majahid. "Statesmanship [sic] now demanded the healing of the wounds, the burying of the bitter memories of the past, the building up first and foremost confidence in the minorities" (Hussain, Mujawar, Shah, 1996, p. 41).

Modernists substantiated their claim by giving examples from Quaid's speeches delivered in pre-partition era as well. To them, Quaid dismissed the demand of Ulema for the imposition of shariah law "Whose Shariah," Jinnah asked "I do not want to get involved, the moment I enter this field, the Ulema will take over, for they claim to be experts. I certainly do not propose to hand over the field to the Ulema" (Bennet Jones, 2004, p. 12).

Similarly, in a broadcast talk to the people of the United States, Quaid - e -Azam repudiated any possibility of Pakistan to be a theocratic state, to be ruled by the priests with a divine mission. However, radicals did not give in and continued with their arguments that Quaid had no secular orientation (Bennet, 2004, p. 12).

This rivalry fully permeated in the society, finally passing through the events, the adoption of the 1949 Objective Resolution, 22 points of Ulema, the 1953 anti-Ahmedia agitation and the constitutional debates leading to the formation of new constitution, culminated into declaring Pakistan a Muslim state. Since then, religion, as a consistent policy of state, became in one or the other form and in varying degrees as an instrument of Pakistan's identity. No doubt, the government and power apparatuses in Pakistan slipped into the hands of top Military Brass and Civil Bureaucracy from the politicians in a very short span of time. However, the solidification of religion in the polity gave birth to a third power pole i.e. the priest class, the Ulema or Mullahs, who despite declaring Pakistan an act of unfaithful have claimed to its ownership in the name of Islam, formed the religious elite. The religious elite derived their power from religion and its political role in the polity. As Haqqani (2005, p. 15) relates:

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The emphasis on Islam as an element of national policy empowered the new country's religious leaders; it also created a nexus between the "custodian of Islam" and country's military establishment, civilian Bureaucracy, and intelligence apparatus, which saw it as the guardians of the new state.

The Religious Elite are composed of three elements; local Maulvis, the learned Maulanas (Ulemas) and the Pirs and Mashakihs (spiritual leaders), sharing conservative outlook, influencing masses through sermons and subscription to maximizing their power in the political system. In coming years, they have gradually strengthened and organized in the form of Western types of political parties, but surprisingly, despite having all appeal of religious ethos, they failed to secure a significant political representation in elected bodies. The doctrinal antecedent of religious elites goes back to either Deoband Darul-Uloom India or to Bareilvi school of thought. Deband, a small town in the District of Saharanpur (UP) at a distance of ninety miles away from Delhi, appeared as the learning seat of traditional Ulema, in which a small Arabi Maktab was raised, in 1867, to the status of Darul-Uloom, which soon began to attract the students and learners, of Islamic ideology from almost all the Muslim world. Haji Imdad-Ullah, Maulana Qasim Nauntwi and Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gaunghi, the founders, represented the rebellious spirit of the disgruntled Muslims, who since the days of the Faradiyah Movement had been manifesting their uneasiness and dissatisfaction in one way or the other with the state of affairs, created by the establishment and perpetuation of foreign rule in India. They were not going to surrender before the resultant sufferings (Faruqi, 1962, pp. 23-25).

Ulema of Deoband, negating the concept of Indian Muslim nationalism, ideologically associated themselves with the International Muslim Community. (Muslim Ummah) in 1919, during the Khilafat Movement they formed their own political party, namely Jamiat-Ulama-i-Hind. This party stood by Indian National Congress and opposed the creation of Pakistan However, in 1945, a group of Ulema headed by Maulana Shabir Ahmad Usmani in a convention at Calcutta defected from the Jamiat-Ulama-i-Hind and formed Jamiat-Ulama-i-Islam. This organization whole-heartedly supported Pakistan. Maulana Shabir Ashmad Usmani believed that, exemplifying the migration of Holy Prophet from Macca to Madina, Pakistan would become a bulwark model and a source of inspiration for the whole of the Muslim world. Therefore, the services rendered by JUI during the referendum in 1947 in NWFP were commendable, and motivated many notable Mashaikh and saints, like Amin-ul-Hasnat the Pir Manki Sharif to the cause of Pakistan. Besides Maulana Madni, the other great supporters of Pakistan included Maulan Ashraf Ali Thanvi, Maulana Ihtisham-ul-Haq Thanvi,

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Maulana Zafar Ahmad Ansari and Mufti Muhammad Shafi. They supported Pakistan with a common aim to convert a country created by a Westernized secular leadership to an ideological Islamic state. Maulana Madni also proposed 1949 Objective Resolution.

Bralevi School of thought, no doubt a product of traditional Islamic education, appeared with distinctive features under the known personality of Raza Ahmad Khan Bralevi, at Braeli, a town at UP India. The Ulema from Bralevi tended to be the tolerant of Sufism, mysticism and numerous local or regional customs and traditions, commonly referred to as 'folk Islam or popular Islam'. They perceived Islam just not as a set of abstract and utopian ideals, but a combination of comprehensive and living belief system connecting historical and cultural traditions of those who call themselves devout Muslims.

Besides Ulema, the Pirs being an important constituent part of religious elite formed a more powerful source of religious influence than the traditional or fundamentalists Ulema of both Deohandi and Bralevi Schools of thought. Sufism in Sub-continent, and original founder Sufis of these orders were followed by Pirs, called Sajjada Nashins, either appointed or hereditary successors of the original saints. These Pirs have always had a role in propagating Islam and Khanqahas appeared as a source of religious guidance for ruler Muslims. Mujawar Hussain quotes (Riaz Hussein, 1996, p.21).

Khanqahas (shrines of the Muslim Sufi saints) were instrumental in the spread of Islam as well as in the development of popular Islam in India and Pakistan. Hussein (1996:2) stressing the importance of Pirs in political and sociological perspective states that the Muslim League could not do better in the 1937 election as it heavily relied upon the support of the urban-based Ulema, who promoted the mosque based "orthodox Islam, with which the rural masses could not readily identified. The Unionist Party (Punjab) enjoying the support of Pirs won 99 seats while the Muslim League captured 19 seats only. So, Muslim League also appealed to the Pirs for electoral support for 1946 elections. The reason of powerful and influential role of Pir among rural population has been subscribed to a factor that is according to Hussein. The Pirs believed that an Islamic state under the leadership of the Muslim League would be quite acceptable since their own belief system would reflect in the politicians' behaviors, who were likely to be their "Murids.". These Pirs performed exceptionally an important role in the propagation of Two Nation Theory amongst the rural population, especially during the last phase of the Pakistan movement (Waseem, 2007:157). Muhammad Waseem, while discussing the genesis of Islamic

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establishment (religious elite) outlined four major settings of the Islamic establishment.

- a) Organizational setting
- b) Sectarian setting
- c) Educational setting
- d) Iconoclastic setting

In organizational setting, he includes Islamic parties such as JI, JUI, Jamiat-Alh-e-Hadith and Tehrik-e-Nifaz-e-Fiqah-e-Jaffaria (NFJ). These parties generally have been the part of mainstream politics either by contesting elections at the national or provincial levels or by agitating in the streets on the specific issue. Though, these Islamic political parties failed to secure any considerable share in elected bodies since 1947, consequently remained out of the preview of decision making apparatuses, however, exerted pressure through indirect means in spite being apart ideologically from each other. These parties maneuvered to take same viewpoint on various issues, ranging from domestic to foreign policy arenas such as at domestic front, 22 points of Ulema, 1949 Objective Resolution, 1979 Hudood Ordinance, 1991 Shariat Act, the separate electorate for religious minorities, entry of religion on passports, Ahmedia issue and also Blasphemy law, on foreign policy front, they jointly presented their views on Palestine, Kashmir, Bosnia, Chechnya, Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq etc.

For the first time in 2002, an alliance comprising six religious parties; JUI(F) JUI(S), JUP, Jamiat Ahl-Hadith (Sajid Mir) Tehrik-e-Nafaz-e-Fiqah Jaffaria, and (JI) Jamat-e-Islami performed well in electoral competition at provincial level. They formed their own government in NWFP and managed to make a coalition government in Baluchistan. Similarly, at national level they bagged 68 seats. However these successes were, as understood by some analysts, subscribed to the handiwork of ISI and military establishment which thought that the "Mullhas could be of great help in solving the Kashmir issue. The military could also use the mullahs of bullying India, the traditional adversary of Pakistan. The absence of the mainstream political parties from the country was another cause of success of the MMA.

The sectarian dimension had ushered religious violence since 1980s, which alienated and unsecured the minority community Shia and others such as Christian, Hindus and Ahmedias. These sectarian outfits managed to kill their rivals and get away without any punishment because of some clandestine patronage of political forces and state establishment as presumed. The regional security milieu with rivalry of international

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forces, within the context of revolution in Iran, wars in Afghanistan and Kashmir, combined with Iran-Saudi proxy war on the soil of Pakistan gave impetus to domestic sectarian division.

The educational dimension depicts the Madrassah system spread all over the Pakistan and considered main source of power for religious elite. Madrassas have expanded not only quantitatively but also qualitatively in terms of extending their influence in the political system. At the time of independence there were only 13 madrassas, as stated by Tariq Rehman (Baxter, 2001, pp. 180-181). These madrassas represent all the sects of Islam; Deobandis, Bralvi, Ahl-Hadith and also Shia, but at marginal level. He quotes Khalid Ahmed.

“The largest number of seminaries are of Deobandi, at 64 percent, followed by Brailvi, at 25 percent only 6 percent are Ahl Hadith. But the increase in the number of Ahle Hadith seminaries or madrassas has been phenomenal at 131 percent, going up from 134 in 1988 to 310 in 2000 (Baxter, 2001: 180).

The Tanzim-al-Madaris, situated at Lahore, function to control the Brailvi Madarassas throughout Pakistan. Similarly, the Wifaq-ul-Madris at Multan and Faisalabad administer the Deobandi Madaris and Ahl-Hadith respectively. The Wifiaq ul Madaris Shia at Lahore is the custodian of Shia Madaris in the country (Pakistan’s Deeni Madaris in Politics, P.95, Central Asia).

Religious elite, deficient in vote bank, but successfully utilized the street power, available to them due to extensively spread network of Madrassa system as commented by Saeed Shafqat that the Mullahs have shown the ability to mobilize. They may not have the largest vote bank, but thanks to the Madrasah, street power is always available to them. The madrassa student’s role became more obvious, when they were frequently used by the civil military establishment to fight with Soviet forces in Afghanistan in 1980s, and continue to be used by the state apparatuses, military, intelligence agencies, in Afghanistan and Kashmir as well.

The iconoclastic setting, according to Mohamed Waseem, denotes the Tablighi Jamat, a non-militant organization, devolved to persuade non-practicing Muslims to observe the basic tenants of Islam. Its annual meeting is convened at Raiwind, a village near Lahore; attracts millions of people from all corner of the world. (P. 159).

Dr. Saeed Shafqat while discussing the ‘religious elite’ come to the conclusion that religious groups have proliferated in Pakistan in the past two decades and derive their strength not only from their followers but also their institutions back in history( such as pre-independence Nadwa, Deoband ) and post-independence Madrassas and



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politico-religious parties. He vociferously states that religious groups are potent force in Pakistani politics and enjoy power and influence quite disproportionate to their actual size.

### **Foreign Policy and Religious Elite in Pakistan**

Speaking on foreign policy in the National Assembly on 29 November 1962, Maulana Mufti Mahmood, the leader of JUI, condemned the West sponsored alliances and Pakistan's adherence to them as most deplorable. In his speech, he insisted upon an independent foreign policy. He was in the opinion that it would be wrong to think that:

We would be doomed if we lose the friendship of America. Look at Egypt, Iraq and Algeria, who have chosen a neutral policy for themselves if these countries can survive without throwing in their lot with any power block. I do not see why Pakistan should not be able to do so we should die rather than live as slave (Pirzada, 2000: 210).

After emergence of Pakistan, the ideological factor played an important, though not major role in the strands of Pakistan's foreign policy. Pakistan since its inception had been in a phenomenal struggle to cultivate special ties with Islamic world with a claim of being the only modern state created exclusively in the name of Islam. Nevertheless, pragmatist decision makers, due to one or the other reasons from early phase of 1950 to upcoming years chose to side mainly with Western and partly even with communist countries to meet the defence needs and challenges of security environment. The pragmatism required not only depending upon Islamic world; foreign policy and religion have to be kept separate (Alam, Mansoor, 2002, pp. 1-18). In general, religious elite had pursued anti-Western and anti-imperialist stance in an undivided India. They maintained the same stance and implored Pakistan's pro-Western policy over the Suez crises. There was severe criticism, and concern shown up by the leaders of the religio-political parties over the plight of Algerian, Palestinian and Kashmiri people.

As far as Pakistan is concerned, the matter of amalgamation of foreign policy and religion becomes more complicated because of sectarian polarization and controversial debate over the role of religion in politics and trickling effects on relations with other nations. The Islamic history is replete with internal clashes and Islamic countries fought with each other many times and religion could not prevent these conflicts i.e. Iraq-Iran War, Iraq-Kuwait or secession of East Pakistan. In a

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situation like that attempts to make Islam a guiding principle for states, foreign policy is practically impossible. (Alam, Mansoor, 2002, p. 16).

However, the rhetoric of Islam is found running through the different phases of Pakistan's foreign policy during both the civilian and military regimes. Pakistan's inclination towards Western bloc in 1954-62 eras has been rationalized as a necessity to counter the threats emanating from Hindu India and Godless communists as well. Here religious propensities have had profound impact. Similarly, Bhutto's inclination towards Islamic bloc brought Pakistan worthwhile advantages in all spheres i.e economic military and social etc. In 1971 war, Pakistan lost military equipments worth 2.00 billion US dollars. To meet the further security needs and make up the losses of the war, Pakistan in 1972 spent 1.15 US dollar, this led highest percent of defence spending of the annual GNP i.e 6, 7. So Pakistan was in dire need for assistance. The Arabian Peninsula and Persian Gulf countries phenomenally helped Pakistan. These countries had joint ventures in cement, polyesters, textiles and fertilizer sectors, and also extended substantial personal donations for meeting the foreign exchange reserves and occasionally helped to defray oil price increases. Besides, this generosity, they became potential markets for the skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled Pakistani labor, which since then have become a major source of remittances for Pakistan. All this new dynamics of Pakistan's inclination towards Islamic world has had two dimensions. Firstly, this helped Pakistan to successfully face and neutralize the US pressure to delimiting its nuclear program; secondly, the most pertinent effect of this policy was the enhancement of the role of religio-political parties in Pakistan's political system. Shirin Tahir Khali has observed the effects of increasing relations with Islamic world. She expresses the viewpoint that relations with Islamic block have greatly enhanced the credibility and prestige of the right wing political parties. Because, since long these parties were in the opinion that Islamic connection can ensure the future of Pakistan, an idea that was visualized by Bhutto in 1971. The role of religion in foreign policy appeared more meaningfully when Zia-ul-Haq redefined the idea of Islamic state. Others had played with the idea of the Islamic state and much lip service had been given to that objective. Gen. Zia was the first to profess that goal as his greatest duty.

Therefore, this self-presumed divine duty led Zia-ul-Haq to give Pakistan a true Islamic character by introducing Islamic laws, Islamic punishments, Islamic judicial system, and Islamic education system that intrinsically mirrored the Deobandi-Wahabi school of thought, widely practiced by Saudis but scarcely adhered by Pakistanis. This school of thought was widely promoted which resulted into religious chaos,

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factionalism in the country. As commented by Hassan Abbas, it “led to disastrous results putting bigotry and intolerance at a premium. Not only did it divide the country along the lines of minority and majority sects it divided the majority into mutually hostile factions of their own.” (2005, p. 13).

Zia-ul-Haq's facilitation by the profound use of Zakat resulted into mushroomed growth of religious schools, ranging their number more than 30,000 in 1998 (Marcose, Marco, 2004.p.42). The number cited by S. R.Vali Nasar reached 5, 40,000, with about 2, 20,000 in Punjab only (Jane's intelligence Review, 1999,p.64).

The Asnad given by Madrassas received recognition at par with government public universities and colleges. The Madrassas graduates were considered eligible to be appointed as Qazi and other Islamists positions in government institutions including military posts (Shuja, 2007, p 29a). This was the first formal recognition by the government and in ensuing years they became incubating force for thousands of radicalized young man, some of whom fought during the ending days of Afghans' resistance against the Soviets, others formed the Taliban force in the capacity of fighters, leaders and administrators (Hassan Abbas, 2005, p. 108).

### **Religious elite connections with Afghanistan**

General Zia's policy of Islamization of Pakistani society coincidentally got along with the time period when Islamic dissidents in Afghanistan were rising up to meet challenges which they were facing due to modernists and communists' efforts of transforming Afghanistan into a modern progressive and communist state.

Afghanistan has always remained a society welcoming religious zealots and historical Afghan opposition to British influence framed due to religious sentiments. The religiously motivated Afghans, in the nineteenth century, fought against British people in Anglo-Afghan wars. Similarly, King Aman Ullah faced challenges for his (1919-1929) internal strife to modernize Afghans by conservative religious leaders. The Pushtun King Nadir Shah and King Zahir Shah established a wide network of Madrassas in Afghanistan to give state patronage and kept government control over residential clergy in Afghanistan in 1955; a Sharia faculty was established at Kabul University in co-operation with Al-Azhar University of Cairo. This was an important step to forge conscious attempts to give boost to the rise of educated elite among Afghan clerics (Haqqani, 2005, p. 170).

The 1960s Afghanistan was marked by the clashes between conservatives and progressives over the issues like emancipation of women, land reforms, and educational reforms. The pervasiveness of the progressive faction of society continued

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its efforts to revolutionize Afghan society giving way to penetrate communist Soviet Union. Specifically Daud, who proclaimed himself president under whom the Islamic movements suffered repression and most Islamic dissidents fled to Peshawar in Pakistan (Barnnet, Rubin. R. 1992, p. 82.). The ideological debate remained largely confined to capital Kabul having no direct impact on village Mulavi and Mullahas. Specifically Southern Afghanistan had been out of any serious clashes; rather religious clergy in South Afghanistan had worked closely with governmental functionaries. Mullah Zaeef described the affiliation and support of one of his teachers at Madrassa for Tarkai's Land reforms (Linschoten, Alan. Strick van Kuehn, Felik, p. 36-37).

The Southern Afghanistan had been influenced by Deobandi traditions being in the vicinity of Pakistan. In undivided India, there had been frequent contacts between the Deobandi seminary in Northern India and Pashtuns residing in tribal belt and Afghanistan and Pakistan territories. This became later a source of bond between Afghanistan and Pakistan's Islamists' groups.

Pakistan's Jamat-e-Islami was looked up both as model and mentor for Islamist groups in Afghanistan. Because it had established links with other Islamist groups of Muslim world, and Afghanistan being in the neighborhood was among the first, who received the influences of Jamiat literature and its ideology. Jamat-e-Islami headed by Rabbani and Hizbi-Islami, led by Gulbadin Hikmatyar had ideological links with Pakistani Jamat-e-Islami. Pakistan's military and civilian establishment forged link with these Islamists parties in Afghanistan to expand its influence to counter anti-Pakistan elements in Afghanistan. According to General Mahmood Arif as cited by Hassain Haqqani (2005, p. 103) Afghan cell had been created in the Pakistan Foreign office in July/August, it met regularly for the next three years, under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Bhutto or Mr. Aziz Ahmed then foreign secretary and gave out policy guidelines. The Inspector General Frontier Constabulary a tribal paramilitary force and the D G ISI Director General Inter-Services Intelligence worked in consultation to conduct intelligence missions in Afghanistan. The Afghan leaders, Gulbadin Hikmat Yar and Rabbani came into contact with Pakistan authorities during this period. The Pakistani intelligence agencies also kept communication channels open with the deposed King Zahir Shah who was living in exile in Italy. This arrangement continued during the Zia-ul-Haq period transforming the total geo-political character of the region by waging Jihad in collaboration with USA and Saudi Arabia against Soviet occupation.

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The most pertinent consequence of this Jihad was influx of refugees towards Pakistan from Afghanistan. Three million refugees housed in tented villages mainly in K.P previously (NWFP) and Baluchistan. Eventually these camps turned out to be the recruitment centers for these Islamist resistance parties. The arrangements for the education of Afghan refugee children were done in the manner that converted young Afghan to the cause of Jihad which was observed by Craig Davis (2002) in these words "Far more violent, religiously oriented, and politically and potentially damaging to Afghan children was the next generation of textbooks, developed in Peshawar in the late 1980s by a committee of Afghan educators under the auspices of seven party alliance of Mujahedeen. These textbooks aimed to both counterbalance the Marxist ideology of the communist series and to indoctrinate young Afghan children in Islamic militancy. Madrassas set up by religio- political parties in these refugees camps became the main threshold of connection between Afghan Taliban and Pakistan religious elite.

Jammat-i-Islami was not the only Pakistani religio-political party, which remained engaged with Afghan mujahedeen and solely setup madrassas in the refugee camps in Baluchistan and NWFP now (KP). The other mainstream Deobandi political party Jamiat-Ulmae-Islam also had its share in this task, which later appeared as protagonist of Taliban supporters in Pakistan. JUI established in 1945, divided into many factions, of which two remained important, one led by Maulana Mufti Mahmood and later by Maulana Fazal-ur-Rehman, the son of Maulana Mufti Mehmood, the other one organized under the leadership of Maulana Sami-Ul-Haq (Zohab, Alo Mariam, Roy. Olivier, 2002, p. 20).

JUI traditionally had its power base in KP and Baluchistan. It always aimed to expand its sphere of influence in masses through providing free education by establishing madrassas across the Pakistan. Free education through Madrasas also became an instrument to enhance its power bases in Afghan refugees camps, which came into existence in the wake of Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. Throughout the 80s Zia-Ul-Haq instrumented his Afghan policy in complete harmony and collaboration with Jamiat-i-Islami and Gulbadin Hakmit Yar. The largest portion of the Saudi and US aid was funneled through Gulbadin Hikmat Yar, the protégé of JI.

JUI during the entire period of Afghan resistance, though in contact with Afghan mujahideen, but was not part of, as appeared in the literature, any resistance scene either staged by Pakistan government or Saudi players. Similarly, during the post Zia period JUI had remained in opposing camps to Mian Nawaz Sharif of PMLN, Zia-Ul-Haq's political heir. He co-operated Benazir Bhutto during her second term, unlike

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father, who defeated Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in the 1970's general election. The Taliban government in 1996-2001 in Afghanistan, is considered to have enhanced his political importance in Pakistan because of JUI (Amir Intikhab(2001) Mentors of Taliban, Dawn April, 15).

His intimacy to PPP resulted his selection as the Chairman of the National Assembly committee of Foreign Affairs. His support for PPP appeared very crucial as it incorporated religious elements in PPP. In this capacity, Fazal-ur-Rehman established close links with ISI, Army and General Naseer-Ullah Babar, the main advisor of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and then Benazir Bhutto on Afghan affairs, whose expertise relegated Foreign Ministry and the ISI to a back seat role (Rasanayagam Anegelo, 2003,p. 144). JUI superseded JI and Naseer-Ullah-Babar civilianized Pakistan's Afghan policy and replaced Army's primacy in Afghan affairs (Magnus Ralph, 112).

Maulana Fazal-ul-Rehman provided support and assistance at multiple levels i.e diplomatic financial, strategic and operational. He visited Washington, Saudi Arabia and Gulf states, from where he successfully bagged handsome financial assistance (Jacob, Happymon, 2006, p.327& Coll, Steve, 2004, p. 296). Pakistani madrassas turned into melting pot for the support and assistance of the Taliban regime from all quarters of Pakistani society and state institutions. Besides Maulana Fazal-ur-Rehman, Maulana Sami-ul-haq also had close connections with Taliban. His Madrasa Darul-Uloom Haqania had been the Alma Mater for majority of Taliban leadership. Therefore, upon acquiring power by their students, they with extra ordinary enthusiasm had been under the obligation to support them with men and material. At the time of defeat at Mazar-e-Sharif in 1997, he, on the request of Mullah Umer closed down his madrassa and sent all students to Afghanistan to fight along with Taliban (Hussain, Zahid, 2010:81& Fair Christine C, 2009, p. 577 Abbas, Hassan, 2005, p. 155).

Binori Town Madrasa Karachi, as presumed, also sent 600 students to crush anti-Taliban forces in Afghanistan (Rashid, 2000, p. 92). Stephen Tanner (2002:282) has viewed the alliance of ISI and religious elements in these words "Pakistan's ISI discretely shepherd this flock making sure all the new recruits were properly armed and somewhat trained".

This had also been believed by some other quarter, that such a large scale movement across the border was not possible without the cognizance of Pakistan's intelligence agencies (Hussain, Zahid, 2010,p. 81). Ahmed Rashid had estimated that around

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80,000 to 100,000 Pakistani trained mujahideen fought in Afghanistan between 1994 and 1999 (Rashid, Foreign Affairs, 78, 6, 22-35).

JUI Ulema delegation visited Kabul and met, many times, top leadership proving that they had direct links with the Taliban movement and eventually became the source for outside world to convey the success stories of Taliban's governance (The News, 19 November, 1996). These connections vice versa beefed up the role of religious political parties and even militant violent organizations.

As the bulk of Taliban militia got their education from Madrassas in KP, and Baluchistan or border areas of the Afghanistan, established during the Afghan resistance against Soviet Union by JUI and Jamat e Islami. Much of Taliban leadership was the students of JUI Madrassas.

In 1980's, Pakistan channelized its Afghan Policy through ISI-JI and Hikmatyar collaborative network. This arrangement was partly successful as it instrumented in forcing Soviets out of Afghanistan but failed to install a pliable pro- Pakistan government in Kabul. So the necessity to make new arrangements for having new friends in Afghan political forces coincided with the emergence of Taliban in mid-1994 when Pakistan's civil government under the auspices of an ex-Military man General Naseer Ullah Babar was considering to open trade route with Central Asian states. The shortest trade route was from Peshawar-Jalalabad Kabul Mazar and onwards to Uzbekistan, but this route looked impracticable due to continuing civil war along this route specifically around Kabul. The alternate route was via Quetta-Kandahar-Herat and to Turkmenistan. Naseer Ullah Babar wanted to make this route open. The advent of Taliban along this route and their subsequent victories in 1995 towards Helmand and Herat provided an excellent opportunity to fulfill the objective of opening southern trade route. So Naseer Ullah in the process of civilianizing the Afghan Policy and ISI's realization of failure of JI-Hikmatyar nexus in bringing pro Pakistani government decided to use the Taliban's Deobandi belief and JUI links with Taliban. Following this policy Maulana Fazal ul Rehman advocated Taliban's case vociferously. As mentioned earlier, he visited Western and European capitals. The most significant achievement was his success in mobilizing financial cum logistical support from Saudi Arabia and Gulf countries

All this reveals that there was apparently a convergence of interests and harmony between religious elements and military civil bureaucratic governing elite which yielded enormous outcomes. As the more conservative fundamentalist armed splinter groups over-shadowed the political scene of Pakistan. There was an increased

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connectivity between Pakistan's religious elements and international Islamic activists. Abdullah Azam of Muslim Brotherhood established his institution in Pakistan and strengthened these links. Osama Bin Laden in Sept. 1989 after the death of Abdullah took the responsibility to carry out his mission. Pakistan's authorities, as presumed, in pursuance of Kashmir policy did not check the activities of international Jihadists as they were providing volunteers to fight in Kashmir. The militant organizations included Sipah-e-Sahaba, Jaish-e-Muhammad, Harkat-ul-Ansaar, Lashkar-e- Jhangvi, Tahreek-e-Nafaz e Shariat-e-Muhammadi. These were mostly splinter groups of JUI, follower of Deobandi school of thought. Afghanistan under the control of Taliban facilitated these groups to impart military training freely. The training camps in Southern Afghanistan and Western Afghanistan previously managed by JI now became the hub of their activities when US cruise missile attacked at Khost and Jalalabad and other places in 1998, the activist of Harkat-ul-Ansar were being under training to be used to infiltrate Kashmir

Vali Nasr commenting on the linkages of Pakistani religious outfits with the Afghan Taliban reflects that "with the rise of Taliban, who like SSP are Deobandis and who hail from the same madrasah structure and networks and even training camps in (KP) and Southern Afghanistan...Mullah Umer routinely called on Deobandi Madrasahs across Pakistan to provide him recruits.... The Taliban have in addition strengthened SSPs ideological position and strategic importance, greatly enhancing the significance of the organization and expanding its potential role in Pakistan's politics in general and the Islamic clerics in particular (Vali Nasr,2000,pp162-163).

After 9/11 incident, the Bush administration militarily intervened in Afghanistan with a purpose to oust the Taliban regime and installed a friendly government in Kabul. Prior to September 11 attacks, US was generally applying only diplomatic pressure on Taliban to curb its terrorist activities and engagement with worldwide terrorist organizations. Though Bush administration had started with a bent of mind to give Northern Alliance, an anti-Taliban force, a meaningful military assistance side by side to other Pashtuns forces as well who were against Taliban. In pursuance of this policy, Pakistan was contacted for a change in its policy to support Taliban. The 9/11 incident brought an end to the US restrained policy towards terrorism, finally resorted to capture Al-Qaida operatives in Afghanistan. Operation Enduring Freedom launched on October 7, 2001, striking Taliban and Al-Qaida forces. Finally there was a change of regime on December 9, 2001 when Taliban surrendered Kandhar and Mullah Omer fled towards an unknown hideout. This change also ushered a change into the religious connections between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Government of Pakistan



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joined a War on Terrorism, while religious clerics jihad against America. The pan Islamic vision remained intact even after the regime change of Taliban in 2001. This added a new dimension to religious connections between Pakistan and Afghanistan. The common feeling of anti-Americanism and anti-Westernism appeared in religious corps of Pakistani and Afghan society which unleashed a new wave of terrorism in Pakistan. Many Taliban and Al-Qaeda elements took shelter in the tribal areas of Pakistan as to carry out their activities. These militants conjoined their activities because of the porous border between Afghanistan and Pakistan (Javaid, 2011:227-239). However, the substantial increase in militant activities in Pakistan engendered a new look to main religious political stance towards Afghan and Pakistan militant religious outfits. As in a statement, Maulana Fazl ur Rehman, leader of Jamiat –e- Ulme Islam (F) November 27, at the Shariat Conference in Dir fully denounced any kind of violence. He categorically declared that law of land should be respected by all people and further strengthened his point of view by saying that terrorist attacks on Ulema and other people are un-Islamic. On the same line, the Jumaat-e-Islami, rejected militancy purported in the name of Islam. The religious elite are seemed to move towards a conclusion that religious factions in Afghanistan should strive to unite for positive and peaceful negotiations, between Kabul government and the militants.( The Guardian International Edition, 12 august 2015)

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