

## An Explanation of our Long Hiatus

By Masood Ashraf Raja

Now that we are getting ready to publish this much delayed issue of *Pakistaniaat*, I owe it to our readers to explain our long hiatus. This break in our publication schedule occurred due to various personal and professional reasons. Before I explain, please accept my sincere apologies for this delay. I understand that it is crucial for a journal to publish its issues on time and to give the authors the kind of attention and care that they deserve.

Last year I had to deal with a couple of personal medical emergencies in my own life, which slowed me down a bit in my scholarly and editorial work. At the same time, we also lost some very capable and wonderful members of our editorial team due to their other professional engagements and, as a result, the combination of these factors disrupted our normal schedule of publishing. Furthermore, we also had to move the entire content of the journal from one digital hosting service to another, which slowed down and disrupted our editorial processes.

We have now gathered our forces and reorganized our publishing venture and, thus, hope to respond to your submissions in our usual time. I am still looking for interested editors and writers, so if you feel so inclined, please feel free to contact me.

This issue concludes the fifth year of *Pakistaniaat* and we will now move on to publishing the issues specific to our sixth year. A lot has happened since we started publishing in 2009. The Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC) first accepted us as a “Y” category journal, but then they changed their criteria and we lost that status. While we will try to meet their requirements, I personally am not so interested in following their policies as I find them to be overly patronizing and unfair.

I believe that *Pakistaniaat* is an important journal on Pakistan and it will continue to be acknowledged by the scholars in the field whether or not a bureaucratic institution such as the HEC recognizes it. However, pragmatically speaking if you as a Pakistani scholar do need publications to meet the HEC requirements, please do keep in mind that *Pakistaniaat* currently does not meet the HEC criteria for

inclusion. We may eventually get there, but to be honest I am not losing much sleep over it.

I would also like to send my thanks to all of you out there who have published with us, helped us establish the journal, and have helped us make it better.

Another way you can help us is by citing materials published in our journal. If we were to apply to be included in the Thomson Index (a requirement by the HEC) we will have to improve our citations and you can certainly help us in this quest. Otherwise, it has been a beautiful and rewarding journey and thank you so much for making it so much fun.

So, my apologies for the hiatus and welcome aboard, yet again, to make *Pakistaniaat* the best publication on Pakistan

# Help to Helpers: A Quantitative Study on Child Labor in Pakistan and its Dynamic Solutions

By Muhammad Kashif and Munir Hussain

## 1. Introduction

We live in a world where 306 million children are employed (ILO report, 2010). Among those children 215 million children are proclaimed as child labor in which 115 million children are compelled to work in hazardous work conditions.

Pakistan is suffering from extremely tender socio-economic and political chaos. There are many reasons why share of child labor is increasing such as poverty, large family sizes, social attitudes and low literacy rate, worst economic crises, symmetry of natural disasters; devastation of infrastructure due to country-wide floods, earthquake, and large increase of unemployment (Human Rights Report, 2010; Bhalotra, 2007; Ahmed, 1991).

There is no recent data available in Pakistan about child labor before 1996. Most recent data available is from 1996 where a survey was conducted that showed that there are 3.3 million children in Pakistan who are victims of child labor. Human Right Commission Pakistan estimated in 2005 that there are 10 million underage children linked to labor in Pakistan.

In addition, one more report by Federal Bureau of Statistics under the Labor Force Survey 2007-2008 shows more eye-opening facts according to which there are 21 million children in Pakistan between the ages of 10 to 14. The ratio of gender is 73 to 27 percent in boys and girl relatively.

These statistics are significantly more than the facts and figures used to be in 1996. These drastically severe statistics demonstrate that child labor is continuously increasing in Pakistan. On the one hand according to the International Labor Organization, around the globe there was a major decline in child labor during 2004 and 2008 (ILO, 2010). But on the other hand, according to ILO, effort for elimination of child labor was worst in Pakistan (Human Rights Commission, 2010). HRC report also implies that there has been the 18th Amendment to the Constitution in Pakistan according to which this matter and elimination of this issue has been transferred to the provincial government. The report also proclaims it a positive step that can enhance the area centric policies towards elimination of child labor. Although, it could happen if 18th Amendment Act 2010 is fully enforced. Current situation, according to that report, is that government did not show much enthusiasm as there was no publicity, advertisement, public campaign program, and clear policy come into sight until 2010. On the contrary, some positive steps are carried out by the Provincial Child Labor Unit (PCLU), in which all four provincial governments at different times and in diverse conditions are focusing on the neutralizers of child labor in Pakistan in terms of education, skill training programs, small credit plans and community watch. These units were established with the collaboration of government's (provincial) labor departments, ILO and European Commission. (Human Rights Commission, 2010).

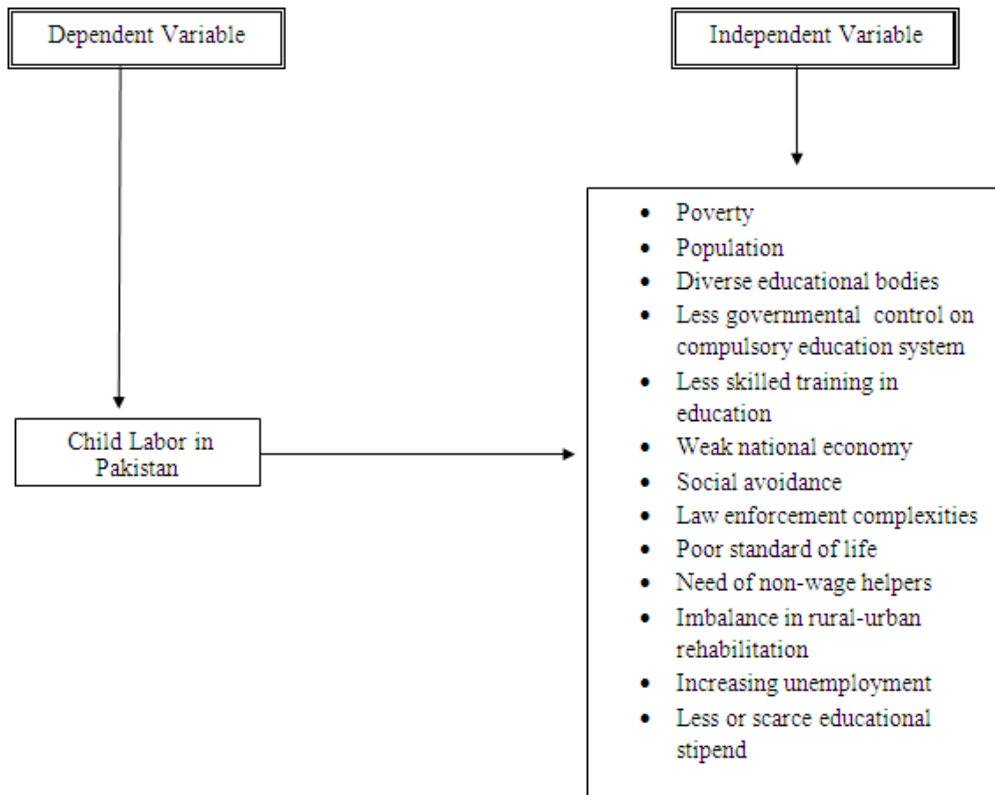
### 1.1 Aims and Objectives

- To explore the situation of Child Labor in Pakistan
- To study the factors involved in child labor
- To investigate sufficient alternatives for elimination of child labor in Pakistan
- To provide pragmatic solutions and recommendations for Pakistani community, government and international community

### 1.2 Methodology

This study has been conducted by the primary data in quantitative research framework (Cresswell, 1994), derived from 439 Pakistani samples (through stratified random sampling) from different cities of Pakistan. Fifteen responses were from Denmark and twenty six from the UK. The likert-scale based questionnaire was distributed by hand, email and a social networking website (Facebook.com). For acquiring best understood responses the questionnaire was written in Urdu language but some respondents asked for English version therefore it was also translated into English. For data analysis computer software SPSS was used for Reliability, Frequency, and one-sample statistics; and computer software PHStats was used for Z-Test.

Conceptual Framework:



Equation: The formula for calculating Z value is as under:

$$Z = \frac{\bar{x} - \mu}{\frac{\sigma}{\sqrt{n}}}$$

Where

$\bar{x}$  represents the sample mean;  $\mu$  represents the population mean; and  $\frac{\sigma}{\sqrt{n}}$  is standard error

At the Level of Significance  $\alpha = 0.05$ , the critical values will be  $\pm 1.96$ . The value of  $\mu$  is taken as 3.

### **Hypothesis**

H1: Child labor is an important problem in Pakistan

H2: Using children as labor force is unethical

H3: Socio-economic problems are reasons of child labor in Pakistan

H4: Government efforts are important for elimination of child labor

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Defining the Child Labor**

International consensus by UN convention on Rights of Children Article 1 (1989) defines a 'child' as an individual under the age of 18 years (UNESCO). Internationally the child labor is defines as the economically active population. (Edmonds, 2008; Becchetti & Trovato, 2005; Beegle & Dehejia & Gatti, 2005; Neumayer and De Soysa, 2005; Shelburne, 2001; Cigno et al, 2001; Hussain and Maskus, 2003).

Child labor is a historic phenomenon; Horn (1994) refers child labor history to pre-industrial era that was increased during the Industrial era. That was the time when most of child work used to be in agricultural societies (Shahrokhi, 1996). Pettitt (1998) explains that non-agricultural and industrial employment caused long hours working conditions in unhealthy, dank and sometime cramped work places. First legislative effort for elimination appeared in 1802 when child labor was restricted in cotton-mill industry in England (McCall-Sarbaugh & Zald, 1989). Donnelly & Petherick (2004) and Siddiqi & Patrinos (1995) estimate initial probable internationally organized efforts for elimination of child labor in 1980 with first International Labor Conference at Berlin

### **2.2 Reasons of Child Labor**

There are many scholars disclosed the factors and reasons of child labor. Basu and Van (1998) and US Department of Labor (2000) proclaim the household poverty constraints a primary reason. Fallon & Tzannatos (1998) and Udry (2003) also state that household income is a significant determinant of child labor. On the other hand Krueger (1996) believes that geographic division of child workers and the financial account of particular regions reveal a negative relationship between child labor and cumulative income. Different researchers argue that formulation of effective policies are very important in reducing and finally eliminating it. (Patrinos & Psacharopoulos, 1997; Jensen & Nielsen 1997). Apart from this, Bhatta (1998) furnished a survey in India and investigated that the population

increase, child schooling and child labor are interdependent so this is very important, giving special attention to this interaction and making policies with the help of this close relationship. Becker (1965), Chernichovsky (1985) and Rosenzweig & Evenson (1977) also insist on schooling variable as a significant factor of child labor. Grootaert & Kanbur (1995) include social inequality as a determinant.

Swaminathan (1998) relates economic growth increases with the demand for the child labor force especially when government does not intervene for resolving this problem. This is a factor why labor market opens up its doors for child labor. In some research works such as Kambhampati & Ranjan (2006), Tesfay (2003) and Kak (2004), it is highlighted that the ratio of child labor reduces with the economic development. Tesfay (2003) determines considerable consequences about participation of child labor which primarily enhances with economic growth but reduces in the subsequent periods in the underdeveloped countries that have 1000 USD or more per capita GDP. Kak (2004) concludes that economic development is a factor explaining the scale of child labor and there is a non linear relationship between each other. Kambhampati & Ranjan (2006) mention equilibrium between the economic development that increases the demand of child labor and the economic development that decreases the supply of child labor. Lopez-Calva (2001) links the social and cultural norms with the child labor and argues that there is a tendency for higher social acceptance for child labor in developing countries. He also mentions that increase of globalization can decrease this social acceptance and people may prefer to send their children to education centres rather to work place. Similar alternative is derived by Davies & Voy (2009) in which they insist parents send their children to the school that is according to them a 'substitution effect' for child labor. This purposeful discussion provides very useful variable to be tested and these variable are used in establishing the questionnaire.

### **2.3 Child Labor in Pakistan**

The Constitution of Pakistan respects the children rights and provides for defending children. According to the Constitution, no child under the age of fourteen shall be employed in any factory or mine or any other hazardous employment. (Online resource: [www.Pakistani.org](http://www.Pakistani.org) )

Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (2010) reports poverty, social attitudes, large family size and low literacy rate as factors of child labor in Pakistan. Bhalotra & Heady (2003) and Dumas et, al. (2004) also connect the child labor with household poverty, lack of connectedness between subsistence requirements and other income resources. Ahmed (1991) calculates the reasons of child labor as poverty, illiteracy, survival, large families, rural and urban migration and labor troubles. He also discusses the inadequacy of enforcement of elementary education laws, very high birthrate and the lack of economic resources. This is the reason why he believes the proportion of children in Pakistan as larger than most other countries.

A research conducted by Ray (1988) investigates the comparison between Pakistan and Peru in terms of child labor. He examines some similarities between

both countries, for example the impact of child's age, gender and level of education for females in the household are quite similar in both countries. On the other hand, in description of dissimilarities he indicates that the household expenditure and cultural impact are two important dissimilar variables in both countries. He also worked on the comparison between Pakistan and Nepal (2001), a comparative research between Pakistan and Ghana is conducted by Bhalotra, et al. (1997).

Pakistan is multi-linguistic and diverse society. Rana (2003) indicates a comparison between two cities (Faisalabad and Pakpattan) of Pakistani Province Punjab. Barki and Fasih (1998) examine that the cultural and demographic disparities among four provinces of Pakistan are the reasons why the determinant may differ across provinces.

This report investigates the intense condition of this issue in Pakistan. According to the report the violence with child laborers is a worse problem in Pakistan that had been persistent in year 2010. Most of the time, this type of violence is being unaccounted for and unnoticed. It is also not even covered by labor laws. An NGO (Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child) estimated that nearly one million children (most of them were girls) were associated with the working as domestic servants. Often time these Children during domestic serving are victimized physically and sexually (HRCP, 2012).

Human Rights Commission of Pakistan also suggests some very considerable recommendations which are very remarkable for this research to attain an appropriate research framework. According to HRCP (2012) Pakistan suffered deadly natural disaster during last decade that destroyed the infrastructure. So it is very important to give serious attention to recovery mechanism which has a connection with increase of child labor. The report also recommends government to expedite restoration of schools destroyed in natural disasters (horrible earthquake and floods) and in the conflict in the northwestern areas of Pakistan. Secondly the Human Rights Commission suggests giving full rights to provincial governments to play their role in the elimination of child labor under the umbrella of 18th amendment of Constitution. Third, explicit rules, regulations and policies against domestic child and protecting house servants must be formulated. Fourth, there should be a new child labor survey conducted to evaluate the existing condition and to develop properly the rules and policies accordingly. And fifth, the government should develop special training for judges, prison staff, probation officers, and police. (HRCP, 2012)

### **3. Data Analysis and Findings**

**3.1 Reliability:** The reliability test finding of the data through SPSS software's evaluation is as below:

**Case Processing Summary**

		N	%
Cases	Valid	433	98.6
	Excluded <sup>a</sup>	6	1.4
	Total	439	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

**Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.863	33

The Cronbach’s Alpha is commonly used for measurement of internal consistency or reliability. This is very useful for likert-scale questionnaires for testing reliability. Cronbach’s alpha is 0.805 that indicates a high level of internal consistency.

**3.2 One-Sample Statistics**

One sample statistics are used to compare whether a population mean is notably different from some hypothesized value. One sample statistics acquired through SPSS are as below:

**One-Sample Statistics**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
H1	439	4.2620	1.02355	.04885
H2	439	4.0173	.64777	.03092
H3	434	3.8338	.57209	.02746
H4	435	4.1011	.59907	.02872

**One-Sample Test**

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
H1	25.833	438	.000	1.26196	1.1659	1.3580
H2	32.905	438	.000	1.01731	.9565	1.0781
H3	30.363	433	.000	.83381	.7798	.8878
H4	38.337	434	.000	1.10115	1.0447	1.1576

**3.3 Hypothesis 1:** First hypothesis covers the attributes/dimensions of understanding the view point of Pakistan public about child labor whether they generalize this as a problem or not. This aspect also covers the notion that most people think this a negative phenomenon.

HO1: Child labor is NOT an important problem in Pakistan

HA1: Child labor is an important problem in Pakistan



Hypothesis 1	
Null Hypothesis m=	3
Level of Significance	0.05
Population Standard Deviation	1.02355
Sample Size	439
Sample Mean	4.262

Intermediate Calculations	
Standard Error of the Mean	0.048851376
Z Test Statistic	25.83345852

Two-Tailed Test	
Lower Critical Value	-1.959963985
Upper Critical Value	1.959963985
p-Value	0
Reject the null hypothesis	

**3.4 Hypothesis 2:** This hypothesis covered five elements/attributes in which people were asked to furnish their response whether it is unethical to allow work to children under eighteen, it is unethical of the parents to send their children to work, and it is a crime to send children to work under the age of 14 and use of children as non-wage helpers.

HO2: Using children as labor force is NOT unethical

HA2: Using children as labor force is unethical

Hypothesis 2	
Null Hypothesis m=	3
Level of Significance	0.05
Population Standard Deviation	0.64777
Sample Size	439
Sample Mean	4.262

Intermediate Calculations	
Standard Error of the Mean	0.030916375
Z Test Statistic	32.905

Two-Tailed Test	
Lower Critical Value	-1.959963985
Upper Critical Value	1.959963985

p-Value	0
Reject the null hypothesis	

**3.5 Hypothesis 3:**

This hypothesis covers the reasons of child labor such as poverty, population, diverse educational bodies, less governmental control, weak national economy, social avoidance, law enforcement complexities, poor standard of life, need of non-wage helpers, imbalance in rural-urban rehabilitation, unemployment, less or scarce educational stipend and non-schooling.

HO3: Socio-economic problems are NOT reasons of child labor in Pakistan

HA3: Socio-economic problems are reasons of child labor in Pakistan

Hypothesis 4	
Null Hypothesis m=	3
Level of Significance	0.05
Population Standard Deviation	0.57209
Sample Size	439
Sample Mean	4.262

Intermediate Calculations	
Standard Error of the Mean	0.027304366
Z Test Statistic	30.363

Two-Tailed Test	
Lower Critical Value	-1.959963985
Upper Critical Value	1.959963985
p-Value	0
Reject the null hypothesis	

### 3.6 Hypothesis 4:

This hypothesis covers governmental efforts through social security rehabilitation, macroeconomics, and less governmental control on law enforcement.

HO4: Government efforts are NOT important for elimination of child labor

HA4: Government efforts are important for elimination of child labor

Data	
Null Hypothesis m=	3
Level of Significance	0.05
Population Standard Deviation	0.59907
Sample Size	439
Sample Mean	4.1011

Intermediate Calculations	
Standard Error of the Mean	0.028592051
Z Test Statistic	38.337

Two-Tailed Test	
Lower Critical Value	-1.959963985
Upper Critical Value	1.959963985
p-Value	0
Reject the null hypothesis	

### 4. Conclusion

Our first hypothesis test proved that 50.1% respondents strongly agreed and 39.9% generally agreed that child labor is an important problem of Pakistan. It also shows that they believe this issue is a negative aspect of Pakistani society.

On the other hand, in the case of hypothesis two, 8.4% respondents strongly agreed and 59.2% respondents agreed that child labor is an unethical phenomenon. Most of questions regarding hypothesis two were designed for asking different facets of paid or unpaid child labor, some associated law for elimination, use of children as helpers, some barriers in law enforcement. The

respondents recognized that this is an immoral and unethical issue that needs to be resolved.

Third hypothesis was based on the key factors and root causes of child labor. The responses received were extremely varied in which Pakistani samples explained that some social issues especially the poverty, weak economy, civic negligence, parental no awareness, unemployment, and worse standard of life.

Last hypothesis was about governmental efforts for elimination of child labor. 71% respondents replied that government can play a very important role eradicating this problem. It shows that Pakistani people are eager to their government for playing a vigorous role.

## **5. Recommendations**

- Responses on question No. 23 show that lower standard of life is an important factor for child labor so Government needs to increase the life style of a common man.
- Question No. 5, 10, 11, and 18 relate child labor to low state economy so rapid policies are needed to adopt for macroeconomic rehabilitation.
- Responses on question No. 12 show that people believe that fast action are required for enforcement of labor laws.
- Situation of law & order and political instability should be controlled.
- It must be ensured that children spend their childhood in the school. Control on compulsory education should be entrained.
- This is recommended to conduct an up-to-date child labor survey for knowing current situation in the country (HRCP, 2010).
- One very important reason of child labor is lack of control due to untrained authorities. So it is recommended that government should arrange special training programs for police, judges, probation officers, prison staff and other authoritative agencies. (HRCP, 2010)
- As per responses on question No. 9 and 17, there should be furnished campaigns for social awareness and boosting civic sense about child labor.
- Question No. 21 shows that a reason of child labor is population so along with the government, the parents should work on family planning according to their resources.
- Responses on question No. 25 show that Pakistani samples do not believe that International Community is playing an appropriate role in elimination of this problem. The respondents insisted that Pakistan has its own demography and cultural norms so there may need different elimination models than the Western Europe, U.S.A, Australia or any other developed country. It is recommended to adopt models accordance with the necessities of Pakistani demography and culture.
- Question No. 7 was about free education and in question No. 8, respondents insisted for appropriate stipend.
- Role of NGOs in Pakistan is very important. This contribution needs to more enlarge.

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## War Game: A Panoptical Narrative of Terror

By Ana Ashraf

When reality is too panoptical, too suffocating, too authoritative, when the naked, crude power overshadows the mind resulting in greater ambiguity and an unconscious fear of the unknown, then there arises a need of some medium that may act as anesthesia; illusive (but only illusive) of power, of knowledge, of comprehension. The medium of Modern interactive video games, based on the modern armed conflicts, is one such illusion of reality. Today, it is a sheer challenge for the intellectuals to comprehend the totality of their effect and to critique how this effect helps in furthering the political-cause.

This research paper attempts to comprehend the effectiveness of war games and their use in the propagation of the rhetoric of modern war. The War in Afghanistan is an appropriate example in this regard for two reasons. Firstly, it can expound the shift in the conduct and perception of modern warfare. Secondly, the conflict in Afghanistan is used in many of the latest war games which studied intensively can reveal how the reality of war shapes the game world and how in return the game world makes war perceptible or 'real' for its audiences. For this purpose, three of the most famous and latest war games; *Delta Force*, *Call of Duty*, *Medal of Honor* are analysed in pithy detail. Where most of the criticism on video games is based on their form or structure, this article attempts at exposing the significance and complex inter-relatedness of content and form. It is strongly implied here that the medium of video games cannot be thoroughly understood unless their criticism involves an objective analysis of the content and form.

"Games are popular art, collective, social reactions to the main drive or action of any culture. Games, like institutions, are extensions of animal organism" says Marshall McLuhan, one of the pivotal critics of modern medium.<sup>i</sup> Hence it might be said that understanding war games will ultimately open up ways of comprehending the 'collective, social reactions' towards the phenomenon of modern war. Initially, critics embraced this novel medium by celebrating the idea that such war games

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ii. Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extension of Man* (London: Routledge, 2001) 235.



can actually 'divert' and 'modify' the 'bulging hatred' and warring masculine energy, and it can strengthen the vulnerable bond of human brain and technology. McLuhan emphasizes that it is the form of these games that is of prime import as the fundamental impetus to 'play' is created through the form. However, it will be argued in this analysis that the modern war and the games based on those wars are ambiguous for the reason that today form cannot be separated from the content. Form and content are not just intermingled rather one cannot be differentiated from the other. Similarly, another enthusiast critic of these games, Stewart Brand says:

Spacewar serves Earthpeace. Space, and by logical extension the new medium of video games, was remarkable, because it was intensely interactive in real time with the computer, because it bonded human and machine, because it served human interest, not machine and, perhaps best of all, it was merely delightful.<sup>ii</sup>

This idea is further encouraged by Geoff Keighley

Video games, in this view, are about problem solving and game play, the captivating, kinetic interaction between the movements a player makes on a controller and the simultaneous action on-screen whether this is set on Afghanistan or set on the moon, it doesn't really matter.<sup>iii</sup>

Indeed, it is considered that the medium of modern war games is a virtual space\_\_ a safe road to deliberate and controlled violence, a space that will save the actual world from being consumed by unnecessary, useless, and futile wars. Hence the main concern of this analysis is to see how an apparently harmless medium can propagate the hyper-real version of a particular war and change the general dominant political rhetoric into accepted sensibility. However, the objective is not to evaluate the technological particularities rather to find out similarities in their linguistic, formal, and contextual structures that give them a unified motif, namely, the perpetration of hyper real rhetoric about a certain war.

Here, it is significant to mention that like film media, United States dominates this medium hence making it a tool of economic, cultural and political hegemony. One example of this political hegemony manifests itself in the background information of these games. Primarily, the game info gives basic directions for the gamer's movements i.e. provides him with his 'plan of action' for which it can be termed as the 'plot' of the

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iii. Chris Suellentrop, "War Games." *New York Times*. (Sep 8.2010: Web, Dec 2010)

iv. Suellentrop, "War Games."

game, but this game info also serves as a sharp political maneuver based on the most trite political rhetoric.

This political rhetoric mingled with the game info serves dual purposes. Firstly, it creates a positive image of US in front of the world. Secondly, it creates a moral justification for the otherwise criminal interferences. This deception and politically charged initial info is formed by presenting one dimensional view of current U.S. military operations in other parts of the world. The popular FPS game *Delta Force*, developed by US Company Novalogic since 1999 reveals the same pattern. In almost all of the series, the player is provided with varied missions; to destroy the terrorist groups, to hunt terrorists, to save some hostages etc. However, the player is always a US Special Forces soldier. The terrorists are shown as the drug traffickers, hostage takers, and rebelliously wild people. But no logical reason or explanation is given for their hatred of US and its citizens. Rather in one of the game versions, the game info is as follow:

In October of 1977, the 1<sup>st</sup> Special Forces Operational Detachment\_ Delta was secretly formed to deal with the growing threat of world terrorism. At Fort Bragg, elite Delta Force operatives, recruited mainly from the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne, Special Forces Green Berets and US Army Rangers, rigorously train in hostage rescues, specialized reconnaissance and other counter terrorism techniques. Highly skilled in CQB (Close Quarters Battle), armed with the best equipment, and able to infiltrate as civilians, Delta Force is ready to deal with the most dangerous world threats. Due to the extremely sensitive nature of these low-visibility missions, the US Department of Defense still does not officially acknowledge the existence of Delta Force. You are the hunter. This is what you're trained for...what you live for... YOU are Delta Force.<sup>iv</sup>

In reality these secret missions are a reminiscence of War on Terrorism operation officially launched in 1985 during Reagan Administration against International Terrorism. The former Secretary of State George Shultz described it as a plague spread by “depraved opponents of civilization itself,” as “a return to barbarism in the modern age.”<sup>v</sup> It

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v. Steve Thorne, *The Language of War*. (London: Routledge, 2006) 82-83.

vi. Noam Chomsky, “The Journalist from Mars”, New York, January 23, 2002.

Thirdworldtraveler. Web. 2010.

appears that the game conforms to the jingoism of that age and does not revolt from it in any way. The only word used to elaborate Terrorism is ‘threat’ and ‘most dangerous world threats’. It has not been illustrated as to how and why this so-called ‘threat’ has generated over the years. On the contrary, all the emphasis is to describe the vital role Delta Force plays in saving world peace and security. The unquestionable tone in the information invokes an instinctive response from the gamer in such a way that not only the gamer would accept the reality of game but it would re-shape this sense of the recent history.

Moreover, immediately after the appraisal of US Special Forces, there is a rapid shift, from the passive descriptive mode of telling or rather narrating the facts to an emotional imperative mode which involves second person address to the audience; the passive listener is now an active participant ‘YOU’, “YOU are Delta Force”. Regardless of the political consciousness of the player, he will evidently assume the privileged role of Delta Force without ever knowing in actuality what this Delta is and how they function in secret operations in the far off lands.

Another example in this regard is the fourth edition of *Delta Force* called *Delta Force: Task Force Dagger* released in 2002. In *Delta Force* series it is the first version that was set in Afghanistan and is based on the US Special Force Operation: OEF (Operation Enduring Freedom), the player is one of the Special Force members. In the game information provided the soldier is told briefly about the missions that he has to accomplish during the gameplay.

As the US army’s elite special operations soldiers you are the most potent ‘smart weapon’ known to man. You are the ‘tip of the spear’ for covert operations around the world\_ you are the first line of attack. Nothing stands in your way... As the US military’s preemptive strike force you must work with your team to get the job done.<sup>vi</sup>

The player is involved into the ‘reality’ of the game by recurrent direct address, “you are ‘smart weapon’, you are ‘tip of the spear’, and ‘you are first line of attack’”. The reader feels that he is part of the righteous side because of this over-whelming language. However, the sensationalism of the game does not allow the player to think it over, he instinctively relies

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vii. 29Soft. Webhost4life. 2010. Jan 2011.

<[http://www.29soft.com/pc\\_game\\_download/Delta\\_Force\\_Task\\_Force\\_Dagger](http://www.29soft.com/pc_game_download/Delta_Force_Task_Force_Dagger).>

on the narrative voice of the game and his mind imbibes the game structure to a point that this instinctive dependence on game rhetoric formulates the general and accepted sensibility. In this way, the player is fighting, killing, and attacking the terrorists throughout the gameplay but he does not know who these terrorists are. The player 'feels' that he knows his enemy whereas the reality is that the structure of the game does not allow a comprehension of 'the other'. Those called 'terrorists' in the modern war games were once termed the great 'freedom fighters', 'mujahideen', and real heroes during Reagan Administration as they were fighting the greatest US enemy of that time; Russia. Not only they were admired at that time but the US government supplied them with the latest weaponry and other material aid for the noble cause of defeating Soviet Union.

The extremely rhetorical propaganda of US government has been registered in *A Case of Exploding Mangoes* where the author mentions: "General Zia was always ready to make an exception for a higher cause. And if the cause was a fund-raiser for Afghan Jihad, then no principle was sacred enough".<sup>vii</sup> Similarly, in the same novel, a very pro-active US journalist has published special invitation card for the same fund raising, on these numerous cards, different kinds of Afghan *mujahids* are shown, "others showed a nameless Afghan mujahid in an old shawl with a rocket launcher on his shoulder (Caption: Your ten dollars can help him bring down a Russian Hind helicopter)".<sup>viii</sup> However, no such reference is present in war games based on the War in Afghanistan. The game, effortlessly, imbibes the traditional political message that places US at the righteous side. The smudged truth of the past is cleaned up again with the use of typical, rhetorical language and by avoiding certain parts of the historical facts. Simple game information is twisted into a political tool as the addressed 'you' unconsciously considers himself the privileged member of Delta Force.

Similarly, 2007 edition of *Call of Duty* is placed in an unknown Middle Eastern Country which is invaded by American Special Forces Soldiers differentiating the two fighting forces as good guys (US Soldiers) and bad guys (the terrorists). "It sold nearly five million copies in North America and Britain, racking up \$310 million in sales in 24 hours. By January of

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viii. Muhammad Hanif, *A Case of Exploding Mangoes*. (New Delhi: Random House India, 2008) 94.

ix. Hanif, *A Case of Exploding Mangoes*.95.

this year, the game's worldwide sales added up to \$ 1 billion".<sup>ix</sup> 2009 edition of *Call of Duty* is set in Afghanistan with somehow exact simulation of the topography of that country using the exact names of the cities and towns. This game info does not provide historical background to the possible reasons and causes behind the rebellious attitude of some specific people in the modern world. Indeed this exclusion of certain historical facts from a specific narrative can be termed as the ahistorical discursive practice. In the game narratives discussed here, this ahistoricity is used to make the US motives and actions a self-righteous way in war. Similarly, these war games are turning bits and pieces of history into some generalized truism. Wars as complex as Iraq War or War in Afghanistan are 'defined' and made 'imaginable' through this naïve simplification and extreme generalization.

Here it might be argued that it is not the main function of video games to ensure political objectivity through microscopic analysis as video games are just a medium of entertainment for the general public. Why should the game producers be concerned about the political implication and the level of reality or irreality introduced in the game? And why should a gamer who bought the game for the sole purpose of being entertained worry about the level of truth and objectivity in it during the game play? And most importantly does the representation of war in game affect the actual war and its consequences in any way at all? The sheer size of the success of war games since last decade will open up ways of answering these questions. The unquestionable acceptability of this medium at a vast level prompts the intellectuals to understand their impact, content and greater motives. War games are the most popular medium these days.

In the Australian Entertainment and Media Outlook Report (2003), PricewaterhouseCoopers estimated the 2002 global market for interactive video game software to be worth \$40.9 billion, surpassing the total global film box office takings of \$39.6 billion."<sup>x</sup>

The tremendous popularity of these war games reveals that both their form and content is 'acceptable' to a vast number of people. Not just their popularity but the group of people most affected by these war games also raises doubts to their apparent harmlessness. Chris Suellentrop mentions in one of his articles about how these games are actually affecting the perception of the male adults of a society.

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x. Suellentrop, "War Games".

xi. Thorne, *The Language of War*. 79

The player \_\_ adults mostly between ages 18 and 29 (though some were in their 50s), largely Americans and almost all men\_\_ said playing the World War II versions of *Medal of Honor* or *Call of Duty* made them feel empathy for their countrymen. One wrote that, after playing games, his “feelings have deepened in respect for those who have died.”<sup>xi</sup>

Jacob Hodes and Emma Ruby-Sachs write in their article “America’s Army Targets Youth” that the US army recruitment figures were at the lowest in 1999 in over the last three decades and it is from then onwards that these sensational war games came to the fore. As they say:

In response, Congress called for ‘aggressive, innovative experiments’ to find new soldiers, and the Defense Department jacked up recruitment budgets to \$ 2.2 billion a year... But the goal of the revamped recruiting campaign is not just to raise short-term recruiting numbers, it also aims to ensure a steady stream of recruits in the long term. The goal, as spelled out in testimony before the Senate Army Services Committee, is to penetrate youth culture and get the Army into a young person’s ‘Consideration set’.<sup>xii</sup>

One need not be surprised of the US ‘all-volunteer army’ anymore as the free-thinking and decision-making process is controlled by the profusion of these mediums in everyday life. This medium, like any other medium of communication, controls and forms the ‘set of consideration’ of the most potent group of a society i.e. adults. Hence the way these games have become most popular, most influential to the adults of a society, and finally the way it helps in shaping one’s perception about the ‘important role’ army has in peace and security of the whole world indicates that war games are indeed a tool for manipulating the very thought-process through which important choices are made by the ordinary yet most potent people of a society.

Carefully measured portions of reality and irreality blended together strengthen the political bias. On one hand, there is great emphasis to create exact similitude of past or current wars, to simulate the exact locations of countries such as Iraq or Afghanistan, to use minor details, to make the ammunition used in the game as much ‘real’ as is humanly possible and yet at the same time there is an equally strong emphasis at never depicting what ‘happens’ in the actual wars. The Operational structure of US forces

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xii. Suellentrop, “War Games”.

<sup>xii</sup> Thorne, *The Language of War*. 85-86

has been described in minute detail but not how this Operation is actually performed. The soldiers use ammunition against the enemy in reality but how his ammunition hits and destroys ordinary people's life have not been registered in the game world. Even the characterization of US soldiers is no exception to this strange blend of real and unreal. The US soldier will always be a professional, tough and silent soldier, but the way many of those are just bewildered for the difficulty they face in this unknown land has been clearly omitted. Therefore, it can be said that the objective to make video game one dimensional way of looking at a problem is achieved by singularly focusing on a certain part of reality and completely ignoring the other.

Nonetheless, the so-called 'authenticity' created in war games is their biggest selling point. Nicholson Baker recently wrote in *The New Yorker* that *Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 2* might be "truer, realer than almost all war movies." Waylon Brinck, the computer-graphics supervisor for the game claims, "We want the player to feel, not like they're in a movie, but like they're in Afghanistan".<sup>xiii</sup> In almost all of these war games the sound recording of the weapons used is their real sound. To make the details of the military operation all the more real, the soldiers who participated in recent wars are consulted. All these magnanimous efforts are done to make everything in the game appear authentic and thus reliable for its users. Undeniably, the actual events that happened or are expected to happen, the precise geographical description, all makes this innocent game another means of experiencing wars. Hence, the game-text becomes the most authentic and influential medium of experiencing war in this age. Indeed, war games have left behind novels, poetry and even films in the sheer impact they leave on gamer's mind. It has been observed that most of the movies based on current war operations neither receive a very welcoming response from its viewers nor capture the attention of majority of general public. Even the Oscar winning film based on the current military operation in Iraq, "The Hurt Locker" could not gain much attention of the people at very large scale. Whereas games like *Delta Force*, *Call of Duty*, *Medal of Honor*, have been far more successful in being received as authentic depiction of current wars.

One of the many reasons of this popularity and acceptability at global level is the propagation of grand narratives about war. The majority finds it easier to relate with and believe in a grand narrative based on naïve simple and meaningless generalization. Reality that is otherwise multi-

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<sup>xiii</sup> Suellentrop, "War Games".

dimensional, complex and mind-boggling can be generalized through these grand narratives. War games also follow the same structures of grand narration: wherein negating the historical causation of events, the player views the game world in clean binary division. Every US soldier is a good guy because he is a US soldier and every 'other' is the terrorist/evil because he is not US soldier. Therefore, at one level, these games strike the mind for the level of reality it brings and at another level it silently cancels out its own reality. At one level, the game is situated in Afghanistan and at another it is not at all Afghanistan but a pure hyper real invention. At one level, there is the 'other' sharply defined for the gamer and at another level, the diversity and sheer variance associated with the 'other' has been completely and ruthlessly excluded. It can be said that the 'portion' of reality presented is carefully 'crafted', 'directed', 'channelized', and thus manipulated and controlled. In one of the versions of *Delta Force*, the game info says; "From the war torn streets of Somalia you have been re-deployed to take out targets in Colombia and Iran".<sup>xiv</sup> Now in this game direction, the player is addressed and acknowledged whereas the 'other', the 'enemy' is de-humanized by calling it 'targets'. The enemy is significant for the completion of the mission, but is made extremely insignificant on linguistic plane. Moreover, the omniscient voice that gives the game info compels the player to believe and obey this omniscient invisible character as an actual soldier unquestioningly obeys his senior's orders. The player as he depends on the guidance of this voice is also trained to believe in the righteousness of the given information.

As the US army's elite special operations soldiers you are the most potent 'smart weapon' known to man. You are the 'tip of the spear' for covert operations around the world- you are the first line of attack. Nothing stands in your way.<sup>xv</sup>

Apart from the narrator's omniscient and central position in the whole gameplay, another important factor is the use of adjectives in description. In the above quote from DFTED: *Delta Force-Task Force Dagger*, it is evident how all the positive and over-whelming adjectives are attached with 'us'. The positive adjectives 'elite', 'most potent', 'smart weapon' are used for the one who is among 'us'. The objective here is clearly to place an ordinary civilian into the boots of a special force soldier and force him to behave in a certain way at least in the reality of the game so that when the player himself kills the terrorist, orders the air strikes in some

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xv. [29Soft](#). Webhost4life. 2010. Jan 2011.

xvi. [29Soft](#). Webhost4life. 2010. Jan 2011.



village of Afghanistan, accidentally kills some local Afghans, then he will be mentally paralysed from criticizing his government's policies as the government is making the same decisions as he did during the gameplay. One of the game producers claims in an article, "That's where the fun comes in, at least for me," Farrelly said. "I've now created this soldier fiction for the player and put him in those boots. And now I'm making him think like a soldier".<sup>xvi</sup>

FPS games, unexceptionally, have a monotonous camera projection. Camera in visual medium is one particular angle from where the scene is shown in the gameplay. However, in the gameplay, camera angle is also the angle from where the gamer looks at the game world. This camera angle serves three different but important purposes in the gameplay. Firstly, it increases the level of reality and the sense of individual observation for the player. As in reality one looks ahead of oneself while looking at the world around similarly the player cannot see himself in the game only the front part of the body, the hands and the weapons of the player are shown on screen. All this is done to make the player an essential and natural part of the hyper-real world rather than a passive, excluded viewer as is the case in watching movies or reading books. It makes the game world all the more real for the player. Secondly, this 'camera' angle creates a feeling of freedom. The player 'feels' that he is free to look around, move about and explore the area the way he wants to. The camera angle of movies is fixed and similar for everyone, whereas in gameplay if ten people are playing a similar game they can choose to move in different directions and therefore explore different parts of the game world.

If anything, this is the greatest illusion created by game producers like rest of the illusionary constructs. The perspective or the view of the gamer is already 'controlled', 'limitized', and 'manipulated'. The game producers have already thought of the world which can be explored by the gamer while he is in Afghanistan or Iraq or Siberia or any other conflictive place shown in the game. Hence there is no choice for observation in these video games; 'you' watch what is selected for 'you'. The 'unexpected', the 'mysterious', the 'unknown' which is the essential part of actual war is removed carefully from the game world as it is removed from the political rhetoric, from the literary world or from the linguistic constructs used to describe the current wars.

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<sup>xvi</sup> Suellentrop, "War Games".

Thirdly, and most importantly, camera angle helps in looking at the world around the gamer as a mere target. The player always has a variety of weapons at his disposal, holding one of them in his hands. In general, FPS games start in a strange dangerous land where the player is one of the Special Force soldiers who is sent there to destroy the most dangerous people of the world. E.g. in one of the versions of *Delta Force* the US military aircraft has to leave the player in the mid of land surrounded by dangerous caves where terrorists are hiding. Now these situations impulsively make the player extremely cautious in his movements. He is forced to view the scene and the strange land ahead of him as 'target', as a place that should be immediately 'operated'. To heighten this angle of looking at the outer world as enemy mostly the land that is observed through this camera is shown to be barren, dry and infertile. It is inhabited by the evil terrorists and mostly there is no innocent civilian found in this dry land. The instinctive danger and the extremely cautious sensibility provoke a feeling that perhaps one is fighting a sub-human being. In actual conflict, the drone attacks and precise air strikes hinder the actual confrontation with the enemy and create a safe distance and at lingual plane this depiction of the enemy furthers the same imaginative distance. Such cold indifference in presentation evokes empathy for US political strategies and an unconscious acceptance and conformity of any US militaristic confrontation in foreign lands which can be termed as a formalistic device that intensifies the impact of the contextual message. Hence the camera angle plays multiple roles for the desired objectives. Like language, political rhetoric, camera angle also controls the way a player will think about his role and his mission.

As described before, the genre of these games is First-person-shoot-them-up, FPS also known as First Person Shooter. It is this mode of presentation that creates verbal and visual harmony in the game. Visual images correspond with the theme and the language signals and intensify the effect of other techniques used in the game. Indeed these visual images 'real-ize' the game world and give irreality to the actual war. Also visually, the gamer is convinced that he is the invisible player in the game. Visually he is the 'I' of the game. Now with this visual sensation that he is the 'first person' of the game the following instruction in *Delta Force: Task Force Dagger* will reveal how the player is controlled verbally:

- Take over the Kandahar Airport, raid rebel headquarters in Mazar-e-Sharif, ambush a convoy near the Pakistani border and demolish bunkers in the foothills of Kabul.
- Gear up with a huge arsenal of machine guns.

- Plan your attack with the element of surprise using visual intelligence.
- Call in devastating air strikes to take out key SAM and SCUD missile sites.
- Create your own multiplayer games and maps with the mission editor. 10 new multiplayer maps included!<sup>xvii</sup>

The player is involved in the gameplay by the use of imperative action verbs; 'take over', 'raid', 'ambush', 'plan', 'call in', 'create'. The presumed addressee of these action verbs is 'you'. The addressed 'you' is the playing 'I'. Hence, the visual images and verbal constructs strengthen each other. The player follows directions of the omniscient instructor like an obedient soldier. Indeed this imperative language creates an 'inclusive sensibility'. The player feels himself to be a part of a selected group. This exclusivity of the player's group is further enhanced by the defamiliarization of language. Not everyone would be able to understand so many of the acronyms therefore the player feels himself to be a specific and selected person for this task e.g. in *Delta Force: Task Force Dagger* some of the initials and acronyms are SFOD, SEAL, SF, SAS, SASR, SAM, SCUD. Apparently, these are used to simplify the otherwise difficult military terminology, but it also creates a sense of exclusivity of the player. Moreover, it also emphasizes the already established distance from 'us' and 'them'. The 'other' will not be able to understand 'our' code words. These acronyms further overwhelm the player and he is entrenched into the reality of the game. "The best games do not give you a sense that you are controlling someone else \_\_ they give you a sense that you *are* someone else"<sup>xviii</sup>.

The game world is dominated by the stereotypical masculine values such as bravery, courage, righteousness, self-defence etc. Through the form as well as the content of these games it appears that these are exclusively for the male audience. The extreme violence, the well-trained soldiers, and the upright objective of fighting the evil conform to the stereotypical idealism of manhood and heroism. It also helps in eliminating even a little speck of compassion and sympathy for the 'other' in real life as well. Traditionally, weaponry is considered the symbol of manhood. The tremendous use of all kinds of latest weapons and ammunition in war games also elevates the over-whelmed spirit of the gamer. In fact, being the greatest weapon manufacturing country, US has a special focus on habituating common

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xviii. 29Soft. Webhost4life. 2010. Jan 2011.

<sup>xviii</sup> Suellentrop, "War Games"

sensibility towards the use of ammunition and weaponry. The soldiers in the war games use all kind of weapons from simple knife to latest aerial bombing attacks. As the player assumes the character of a soldier, he depends on these weapons for winning the game and believing in the reality of the game world. During this involvement of the player, it is inevitable that the gamer would feel a sensational fascination for the militaristic equipment at his disposal. This process inculcates a positive, willful acceptance and craving for using these horrible weapons in reality. It also infuses a sensibility that whatever waste the weapons are doing around the globe is compulsory for maintaining peace in it which in fact means a continuation of militaristic intrusions. The following review by a gamer posted on internet shows the keen and irresistible interest of the gamers in the military hardware during the gameplay:

In some missions you'll want to find a nice place to hide and kill. For these types of outings, you'll have two choices. First there's the M40A1 Sniper Rifle which boasts on 800m effective range and an 8x scope (you can see up the enemy's nose with this eyepiece). If you're fairly sure that you're going to be a really long way away, you may want to consider the Barret Light .50 which has an effective range of 1500m and also has an 8x scope.<sup>xix</sup>

As the vast number of players is adults who yet have to choose a career for their life therefore it might be considered a typical jingoist strategy from the US government to influence and attract these young people so that they voluntarily join army. As Timothy Maude, the Army deputy chief of personnel mentioned about the production of video games that it will open a way to bring military profession in the "set of consideration" of the youth.<sup>xx</sup>

A very delicate but significant point in all war games is the end result of a mission. In past, wars were fought with a clear hatred and objective of killing the enemy. Rather even the propagandist literature showed that the winning of war is conditional to the final defeat and destruction of the enemy. However, in modern day video games the main objective is not killing the enemy and thus bringing victory for the homeland; in fact, the main objective may be based on achieving many important goals during the game play such as eliminate all hostile forces, rescue the hostages, intercept an enemy convoy, capture (or kill) an enemy leader, destroy (or recover) certain objects, and ensure the safety of a friendly leader. Indeed

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xx. Thorne, *The Language of War* 83.

xxi. Thorne, *The Language of War* 86

if a player wastes too much of his time in solely killing the enemy he might as well fail to complete the actual tasks during the game play and loose the game. Now this element in the game apparently seems quite insignificant but in reality it is based on the actual structure of modern war. Primarily it uncovers the fact that the terrorist groups are so infinitely dispersed in the world that it is not significant and fruitful to keep on killing them as they will always increase in number. More significant is to annihilate the temporary hurdles and difficulties created by these bad people. As today in Afghanistan it is said that the more important task for the NATO forces is to create a self-dependant Afghan army and Afghan police to establish a democratic environment in the region. Underneath this structure is the ancient rhetoric of the continuity of fight between good and bad. As the fight between good and evil will never come to an end, so this fight between the US forces and Terrorist groups never ends. Meanwhile the only important thing is to continue saving the innocent, trapped people and fighting the eternal war. Therefore, it might be said that modern war is the eternal war fought in the name of eternal peace.

Initially, war game was not taken as a very serious mode of communicating war experience; however, today, the unique structure of these games is gradually turning it into new art form of war narration. In novels, poetry, and movies the reader or the viewer is passively involved in the narrative process. The reality of a movie and a book cannot be changed by the passive involvement of the viewer or the reader. During the gameplay player can make on-spot-decisions and implement his decisions immediately. In fact, he can change a situation to better or worse by his decisions and thus while being immersed into the reality of the game, the player is creating and changing its reality simultaneously. Virtually the player has all the liberty of being part of a great event. Where other medium makes 'you' a passive receptor, these war games make 'you', 'I', of that event. Thus unconsciously without any political bias, the player may end up making clear political choices in a current war and on the basis of those choices, 'I' have also conformed to the political notion that it is the only possible way of handling the situation as such. This immediate participation of the player has played a vital role in making video games a new form of narration. Unlike, movies or fiction where the viewer or the reader is a passive receptor of whatever is given to him, the game-player is made an active participant as at every moment he chooses to do something and changes the problematic situation. This potential of the video game to enunciate innumerable interpretations of a single

military conflict is not only controlled but also deformed by a society paralysed by the rhetoric of political grand narratives.

A very interesting example of which is presented in the latest edition of *Medal of Honor* (2010), where for the first time in the history of these games, the player can play whichever side he chooses to. Previously the player had to assume the role of either a US Special Force or a member of terrorist group. Immediately after the release of this edition, there was strong uproar and protest against this game. Karen Meredith, the mother of Ken Ballard, an Army lieutenant killed in Najaf, Iraq, in 2004, protested against this game by saying that any game based on a continuing conflict was “disrespectful” to those whose family members have died in the war. Not just the ordinary people but the government officials came to the fore and tried to ban the game. As has been mentioned in an article:

Not long after Meredith’s interview with Fox News, Britain’s defense secretary Liam Fox, called the game “un-British” because, in its multiplayer incarnation, it will allow players to fight as the Taliban against coalition forces. “I would urge retailers to show their support for our armed forces and ban this tasteless product.”<sup>xxi</sup>

The strong response from the general public as well as from the authorities shows the intellectual paralysis and dependence of ordinary people on the accepted grand narratives. The binary division of the all-good US soldiers and the all-bad terrorists has been carved so strongly in the ordinary minds that they cannot accept any other construct. Hence it can be concluded that the very freedom and infinite possibilities that can actually bring positive change in the form and content of these games is deliberately distorted. The world is so much engrossed in virtuality that ultimately they cannot accept any other reality as that reality may go against their social, moral, ethical values based on the great grand narratives.

Are these war games just another extension of man’s unending urge to find respite in frivolous activities or is it more than that? The answer lies in observing the viewer-ship of these games. Recent surveys show that mostly it attracts people from eighteen to twenty-five years of age. When asked why many of them are interested in these games it was discovered that by playing these war games they have the opportunity of ‘feeling’ how their soldiers must be fighting in the foreign lands into a war that takes so much space in their newspaper, news channels and elite conversation, but is kept away from them physically. Moreover, the players appreciated war games based on contemporary wars rather than

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xxii. Suellentrop, “War Games”

the games about WWII or any other war in past. It shows that most of the people who buy these games do not play it primarily as entertainment source rather they want to 'feel' or 'know' the war experience that some of their citizens are going through right now in some mysterious unknown land. Hence intensifying the impact of actual war at global level:

Nearly 80,000 Americans are deployed in Afghanistan, Exum said, while 2.2 million played Modern Warfare 2 on Xbox Live during a single day last fall. There's something annoying that most of America experiences the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, which are actually taking place, through a video game.<sup>xxii</sup>

In the end, it can be concluded that an extremely shocking similitude between the video game and the actual warfare distances the 'real' from the common eyes. In reality, there is a war fought in distant lands such as Afghanistan or Iraq. The citizens get to 'know' about this war through media, or fictional records and they assume that what they know is the reality of this war. A vast majority of people are addicted to war games and they take the information given as reliable and authentic information about the otherwise alienated wars. However, the point here is that the war that is just as easy as game is not the actual war rather it is a virtual war. It is a manufactured version of that war created by the covert and distorted use of language, political rhetoric, historical facts and other virtual constructs.

In the main, this game structure is based on the same value system of which Twin Towers is just one minute symbol. As the Twin Towers is a superb example in architecture to understand how the virtual reality is dominating the human mind similarly technologically modern war and the video games based on these wars are Twin structure. They can easily alternate their roles: Game is war and War is game. As one cannot discriminate the Twin Towers, one cannot discriminate the difference between war game and game war. The Twin Towers represent the market supremacy of a country on the rest of the world. No one can be a competitor of US as it is its own competitor.<sup>xxiii</sup> Similarly, in case of war and video game the basic reality on which both are formulated is an image of mediatized event\_\_ a hyper real version of the actual war whereas the actual war is never 'signified' in the main discourse. The discussed portion of war is hyper-real and the games imbibe that hyper-reality and make that

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xxiii. Suellentrop, "War Games"

xxiv. Paul Hegarty, *Jean Baudrillard: Live Theory*. (London: Continuum, 2004) 106-109.

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war even more sensational and over-powering. This shows that the control created through hyper-reality is complete and absolute.



Nausheen Ishaque

# [De] Constructing the Feminine : Addressing the Postmodern Feminist Syndrome

By Nausheen Ishaque

## INTRODUCTION

The radicalism and stridence that characterizes postmodern feminism is potent enough to allure many. Postmodern feminists have been pretty successful in establishing a few primary facts that ultimately culminate into a singular mother reality stating that gender is nothing but a matter of social construction. Their grievances against both masculinity and feminity compel them carve out slogans against the phallogentric and patriarchal hierarchies that constitute the 'Symbolic Order' for the entire human race as mentioned by Kristen Cambell (2004). They are therefore at daggers drawn with the old thought, old language and finally the old 'Woman'. This is for all these, to them, are the products and by-products of an androcentric male order which reigns absolute and supreme. With the polemics of killing this old woman their corollary is the promotion of a 'New' one---a Woman who is emancipated sexually, linguistically, economically, psychologically, culturally, politically and yet there is a long list of many such 'cullies' that somehow promise the freedom that has ever been dreamed by the female race. As Kottiswari (2008) talks of Claudine Hermann's allegation of their being 'thieves of language' or 'female Prometheus's' is significant here since the language they employ to shed light on their own experiences is a product of an order which is quintessentially male-centered.

The Foucauldian dynamics of power and the rejection of universalization of experiences and values has actually led the postmodern feminists develop a disgust for the sisterhood of female experience around the world. We thereof have now two binaries: 'Woman' and 'Women'. Both of these stand foil to each other since they respectively project the individuation and collection of experience undergone by women belonging to varying geographical (and subsequently historical and cultural) situations in the world. This conviction today has become almost dogmatic with the result that there is yet another frenzy now bent upon uprooting the foundations of basic social and human values that constitute any phenomenon in our social and personal lives today. This primarily owes to Foucault's belief that all values are promoted for self-interest as they are not self-contained without an eternal reality to justify their existence and subsequent survival. The Foucauldian model of power sufficiently propagates his belief that power has no single point of convergence and it

rather diverges to scatter to be exercised everywhere. We thus have no single repository of power which can be taken as supreme or absolute. Nevertheless, with due respect to Foucauldian schemata of human survival at both micro and macro levels along with the same to that of his followers (the postmodern feminists), I dare say that one needs seriously sit and examine what actually happened as an after math to such a rigorous and unleashed decentralization of Reality and Values.

### **LOSS OF THE FEMININE**

Postmodern feminists actually gifted the entire female race with a sense of de-femininity. One critically needs to deflate certain bombasts and pretensions that characterize the critical and philosophical paradigm of postmodernism. The excesses offered by this theory need to be appropriated to the benefit of the kaleidoscopic world order. It is certainly hard to underpin postmodernism as a coherent or compact mode of belief and thinking, the reason being its diversity and an unleashed flexibility. Nevertheless, the positive openings and threads offered by this school of thought can be exploited to loose up and develop the already-existing theories, something which can be of substantial help in terms of the new theoretical syntheses. But unfortunately, it theorizes the liberation of women not only from men but from their own identity as women too. We all believe that every entity, material or non-material, possesses some essence which it essentially inherits. Eagleton (2008) believes that even if we posit our belief in Heidegger's hermeneutics of belief and Derrida's discredit of even the existence of meaning in any form, we still know that there is an arbitrary relation among varying objects that we human classify under one broad umbrella or label. So which group does a Woman fall into when she is ethically not permitted to be a 'Woman'? If her entire existence (at all varying social and personal levels) is a matter of mere politicization, what is that singular reality that can actually impart her a stable standing—a standing which can entitle her the privileges of a prosperous life and a sound identity of her own. Postmodernists, so far, have still been dreaming of such an individualist standing for women but it goes without saying that their effort has unfortunately turned itself on its own head---something that accounts for the familial crisis plaguing the entire West today.

If deconstructing the two genders is the agenda of the postmodern feminist paradigm, it calls for a real analysis if they have actually 'Deconstructed' it or it is the 'De- construction' that has been executed. Allowing all forms of deviant sexuality with a big 'No' to heterosexuality, these feminists have ironically annihilated the fact that everyone among us (whether male or female) biologically, psychologically and emotionally needs a mate, and to be honest more preferably one from the opposite sex. So how can the postmodernists claim loyalty to their agenda of unpoliticizing sex by terminating heterosexuality while they

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themselves are opening doors to yet a more rigorously political way of emotional biological fulfillment---something named 'Homosexuality'.

This animosity of postmodernists towards the identity of females as 'feminine' is ironically a challenge to their biological and natural survival as women. If a woman is not a 'Woman' or 'Feminine', what is she then? Is there any third or 'unpolitical' gender category she can proclaim? Or to be more realistic, she perhaps doesn't belong to any sex. To me, the new vistas opened up by the postmodernists are actually building up arenas for women where they are expected to begin the strife of re-locating their identity from the scratch. We actually need to be sure in terms of whether postmodern feminism really imparts radically new gender roles to the women or it even deprives them of the former, one which at least preserved for them a certain specified category of human existence i.e the Female.

Postmodern feminists reinforced the polemics of power struggle between man and woman by denying the institutions of heterosexual marriage, family, motherhood and child-bearing. In their strife to unpoliticize the binary of male and female, they have tended to develop Lesbian and Gayism---the two intensely political structures that were raised up as effective defense mechanisms against the conventional structures of heterosexuality.

#### **THE ORIENTAL 'OTHER'**

This is only the sexual and familial side of the issue however. There is yet another dimension that is invariably harming the quintessential identity of women as 'woman'. The Western feminists have managed to incur the cult of the 'Other' in their war against men. 'Other', as we all know, is a singular key term that denotes the marginalization women are subjected to as member of a patriarchal social order. Nevertheless, it is no less than an irony that the postmodern feminists (consciously or unconsciously) have developed yet another 'other' for themselves. This second 'other' belongs to their own race---the women of third world, under-developed and those belonging to Muslim countries. Chandra Talpade Mohanty (1991) evaluates the writings on Third World women by some western feminist authors and inferred that they:

. . . colonize the material and historical heterogeneities of the lives of women in the third world thereby producing/ re-presenting a composite, singular 'third world woman' - an image which appears arbitrarily constructed but nevertheless carries with it the authorizing signature of western humanist discourse . . . assumptions of privilege and ethnocentric universality on the one hand, and inadequate self-consciousness about the effect of western scholarship on the 'third world' in the context of a world system dominated by the west on the other, characterize a sizable extent of western feminist work on women in the third world.

I have no qualms in agreeing with the idea that the experiences of women inhabiting varying geographical territories of the world are never the same. Their lives are predominantly conditioned by a sense of hybridism and displacement. This is particularly true about the women hailing from the postcolonial regimes. In their strife to emphasize the 'difference' or 'differance' characterizing all the social structures constituting the society, they all bring into lime light the fact that the universalisation of the female experience is something that goes to the benefit of the male order. It is thereof necessary to preserve the individuality of their experience keeping in view the varying environments and social orders they belong to. Postmodernism's agenda of decanonizing the metanarratives and master codes should be utilized at this point. For the feminist critical position, patriarchy or male centricity is the primary metanarrative to be exploded. At a crude level, the struggle began in the latter half of nineteenth century with white women struggling for their political and social rights. In the course of its journey, the movement went through varying phases ultimately reaching a point where it had to take into account the feminine, feminist and female experience of all the white, black and brown women although it simultaneously appears to be posing a replica to the same metanarrative it struggles against. For the non-white women, the account of the feminine, feminist and female experience held up by the white women is no less than a metanarrative. If there is no truth (as proposed by the postmodernist stand point) and only representations, then the actuality of non-white woman (as the world knows her today) is in the control of the white feminist who is in a position to not only shape it up but theorize and canonize too. The gender identity attached to the female race is a matter of constant continuation and remains in flux. Taking support from Heidegger's philosophy of hermeneutics, we believe that history keeps on updating itself and is always exposed to fresh possibilities. Today's future is bound to be tomorrow's past. We never know what lies ahead for us in the moment to come. History is thereof dynamic as it keeps on accepting and accommodating the fresh possibilities. If this is the case, the history of the feminine, feminist and female has got serious gaps. The history of the experience and thought of woman needs to be revisited since the presently popular account of all that we call 'Feminism' is all about the codes produced by the white women. According to Kottiswari (2008) history (if it claims impartiality and flux) should be redefined in terms of the female stand point since it has no practical space for the lived experience of the non-white female. The re-visionist streams of postmodernism can be of fairly good help here. It should be made clear at this point that re-vision does not mean 'looking back' nor it is a mere matter of 'survival'. It rather alludes to the re-making of the past which entails a re-invention of a new tradition so much so that it proclaims creation and transcreation.

It is henceforth imperative to go back to the late nineteenth century or even before that in order to see and visit what actually had been there at the end of the so-called 'Orient'. One thus needs to take into account the kind of experience a Muslim woman had been through

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while she was an inhabitant of the 'Harem' in the medieval era. The Foucauldian politics of difference can be of significant utility at this point since the feminine or female experience of an Arab Muslim woman living a harem life is as 'womanly' as that of her white European counterpart struggling outside. Jane Austen's heroines too are taken as a stereotype or 'lady of the house' type of creatures whose experience is almost synonymous to that of an Arab Muslim woman, though the difference between the two is of socio-cultural and representational nature. So, the need is to revisit the history by incorporating both the historic narrative and politics of representation.

The postmodernists nevertheless, at times, appear to be interrogating the grand narratives in a way which paves way for an iconoclastic type of pluralism. This willfully opens doors to marginality and differences unwelcomed otherwise and hitherto. The claims pronounced by Jean Francois Lyotard against the totalizing structures of the master code facilitates and creates space for a novel kind of subjectivity and scope for having a 'room of one's own'. Kottiswari also refers to Alice Jardine in *Gynesis* who successfully establishes a link between the 'crises of legitimation' of the 'master narratives' and the feminist critical stance:

It is widely recognized that legitimating is part of that judicial domain which, historically, has determined the right to govern, the succession of kings, the link between father and son, the necessary paternal fiction, the ability to determine who is the father---in the patriarchal culture. The crises experienced by the major western narratives have not, therefore, been gender-neutral. They are crises in the narrative invented by men.

However, their obsession with this individuality of the female experience has actually led them develop a few misconceptions. This is particularly true of their perception about the lives and experiences of Muslim women monitored by the flawed retrogressive traditions of Islam. To illustrate, the observance of Hijab among Muslim women is a point of tragedy for the white feminists. It epitomizes the repressive male order under the surveillance of which the veiled Muslim woman is breathing. She is thus captivated to the 'heremic' life of a rigorously masculine and patriarchal order where she virtually enjoys no freedom to come up with the talents and capacities she inherits. Western feminist theory, when applied to the Arab or Muslim women, tries to exercise its liberal feminist politics instead of creating a scope to discover the varying shades of being a female. Marnia Lazerg holds the view that a new approach is needed which is tolerant enough to acknowledge the differences while recognizing the need to explore the lived experiences of women surviving in varying cultures. The lives of Third World women, to Lazerg, should be studied 'meaningful, coherent and understandable instead of being infused "by us" with doom and sorrow.

Similarly, the Marxist feminists talk about the financial independence of women in a milieu where they must be allowed to step out of the four walls of the house and exercise their potentials to the best of what they have. This could indeed be a plausible proposition for many a women from both West and East. Even the contemporary scholarship in Islam, which is believed to be androcentric in terms of the interpretation it gives out of the sacred texts, concedes to the fact that women can earn on their own while abiding by certain conditions. This is nevertheless a loop-sided view of the entire situation. We still have many women, from both West and East, who crave for financial stability and relaxation not by going out and working but enjoying what is brought to home by the males of the family. They prefer staying at home while availing themselves of all the benefits they can claim being the members of the 'weaker/soft' sex. So what about the inclusion and exclusion of the experience of such women? What place do modernists and their followers allocate them? Do these women have any place to claim in theory are they are simply a part of that horrid 'Other' that has been terrifying the feminists since decades.

Feminism, within the postmodernist frame of critical thinking, seems to be drifting away from the 'emancipation' agenda which feminism actually sets off with. One must bear in mind that social reconstruction is the primary drive and motif behind the feminist stand point, no matter whatever form it exists in. Seeking help from Lyotard's 'legitimation narrative' of the speculative mind, we come to determine that knowledge is self-containing and must be sought for its own sake. The feminist side of the proposition allows the development of consciousness among the female. It is by the virtue of this very consciousness that the women would be in a position to penetrate and go deep down the operations of the male power in a most contemplative and intellectual manner. However, it goes without saying that this could be achieved only if women have a commons stance to hold up against the patriarchal order. What they all need is a communal analysis if the self while targeting the deeply-rooted androcentric assumptions and ways of comprehension that rule the present-day world order.

Ruling out all the universality and essentiality of the 'female' and making her subservient to the dynamics of total 'difference' is an act of sheer injustice on the part of the postmodern feminists. We all agree that Foucauldian polemics of 'difference' substantially help the program of incorporating and including the lived experiences of the marginalized, speechless or the un-mentioned/ Feminism has to give up its Eurocentric tone and temperament if it desires to include those within its domain who have never been allowed any space to speak and thus heard. Feminism has to necessarily construct a universally essential female who sustains and inherits a certain difference from the male as both the subject and author of her own history. But the history she writes, should be impartial and welcoming towards the truth and experiences of those who remained unheard and excluded during its composition

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hitherto. The postmodernist agenda, in its operation and influence on feminism, appears to be scared of the idea of an 'impartial history'. Stuart (2003) holds the view that it hesitates to assume that both the self and knowledge can be parts of history and culture. While accepting the differences among the experiences of the women inhabiting various geographical territories of the world and belonging to cultures and histories of differing backgrounds, they seem to be accepting a position of partial knowledge. With the acceptance of this notion, feminism in fact manages to drift away from its motto of Enlightenment while entering and getting overwhelmed by the fuzzy and jelly-like domain of postmodernism. Accepting the cultural and historical difference of survival and lived experience among women all around the world is one thing, but making it an integral part of the female history is another issue. Postmodernist theory runs the defect that it theoretically opens doors to the experience of the non-white females around the world but never tends to travel back into their past with an end to trace out its threads of genesis and tie those up to the present of not merely their own but to the theoretical stance of their white counterparts too.

I, at this point, would specifically like to take up the illustration of the women in south Asia. The postcolonial regimes of states like India and Pakistan demonstrate a kind of picture with regards to the situation of the female which is altogether different from the one experienced by the white female in Europe and America. The instance is that of the centrality religion enjoys in sustaining the domestic colonization against women in these countries. 'Satti in India has been a matter of much debate among a number of postcolonial feminist writers. Similarly, if a woman manages to escape the annihilating ritual of Satti, she has to live a life of perpetual celibacy in the memory of the deceased husband. Same goes for the women in Pakistan, especially in Sindh and southern parts of Punjab, where they live their entire lives under the constant threat of 'Kari'. Being alleged of having an illegitimate relationship with a male of the hostile clan, the 'Punjayet' of the males of the village or clan decides whether she enjoys a right to live or not. This Punjayet comprises the 'supposedly' wise males of the clan who are believed to be all just and sagacious so much so that they can practically give a verdict over the life and death of a girl. Another case is that of marrying the girls with Holy Quran. This is an ages-long tradition rampant in Sindh where the feudal lord of the clan or village gives his daughter in marriage to Holy Quran. She lives her life as a spinster in celibacy while supposing that she is no longer vulnerable to psychological, emotional, bodily or sexual drives which are bound to take place after adolescence. The reason behind this marriage is either the absence of a male heir to the family heritage and property since marrying the daughter to someone means giving her due share in her property to her and losing a part of the feudal hierarchy. The male feudal master or the 'Wadera' thus wisely resolves the issue by punishing his daughter in a most horrid way. She is afterwards meant for the prayer mat and her marriage partner---the Holy Quran. Despite the fact that the entire thing is starkly in opposition to Islamic law and the spirit of Islam both as a code of

faith and that of life, the whole proposition is carried out in the name of religion. The female of the feudal's house is silenced through emotional lashing while making her believe that the whole thing is a part of the project of her 'divinization'. She is considered to be 'be sharam' or unbashed if she asks for a right of seeking her emotional and bodily fulfillment through the institution of marriage. Does this mute woman has any name in the annals of history of the feminist agenda which has been devised from the European or Euro- American quarters?

Challenging the universals of 'good' and 'bad', 'true' and 'false' or 'right' and 'wrong' means that postmodern feminism has to be holistic and all-encompassing. The non-white Arab Muslim woman is a female who follows all that has been written for her by her 'Lord'. But the story of Sheherzade and Shehryar in *The Arabian Nights* appears to be doing away with these accounts propounded by the white feminists at the point where the Arab Muslim wife of the king shows that she can win not only a life for herself but an entire structure of male psychological order which, at the outset, decides her destiny even to an extent of killing her. The western representation of the Arab Muslim woman is actually a certain master code and no more than a subjective and blind supposition. By this, I do not mean that she does not confront the wrath of the male or patriarchy, but her experience is entirely private and different from the one presented by her white counterpart in Europe. One hence needs to posit a fact at this point that if there is no ultimate truth and all we have is Representation, is the image of the Arab Muslim female a plausible one since she is undergoing an experience altogether different from the one attached to her. Furthermore, how can one build up a certain level of credibility of what has been canonized for her since Representation is a human activity which is exposed to the continuum of time and temporal which keep on refreshing itself on behalf of their exposition to cultural, historical and environmental happenings?

The agenda of 'differance' favorite with postmodern feminists should be actually employed for a more sacred purpose of exploring the reality and situation of non-white woman. Deconstructing the gendered identities in a postmodernist mode will certainly topple down the entire schemata of feminist domain which ironically materializes its existence on the foundation of this difference only. Taking the gender/sexual difference for granted implies an undermining of the very privilege proclaimed by feminism in general thus resulting in its own eradication. Postmodernism presents a stark opposition to the Enlightenment agenda and accommodating postmodernism manifests that feminism has disowned its slogan of 'enlightenment' thus giving up all the possibility of social and political action for betterment. An almost similar type of critique, as highlighted by Stuart (2003), has been proposed by Jane Flax who also paves way for a more conciliatory and pacifying version of feminism. Feminist theories, as she argues in *Feminism/ Postmodernism*, 'like other forms of postmodernism should encourage us to tolerate and interpret



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ambivalence, ambiguity and multiplicity as well as to expose the roots of our needs for imposing order and structure no matter how arbitrary and oppressive these needs may be .

Judith Butler, in *Inside/ Cut*, presents an anti-essentialist version of feminism on the way to the lesbian perspective. The respective unifying 'essence' of the female and male races that establishes their individual 'femininity' or 'masculinity' is more a matter of history than nature. Heterosexuality is in fact a 'regulatory function' that serves the quintessential heterosexual binarism. We are forced to be either male or female, something that is further reinforced by our observance of the phenomenon of heterosexuality. This can be further extended to the Foucauldian postmodernist belief that gender is actually not a matter of establishing and exercising identity among human race but an issue of power struggle characterizing the discourse through ages.

If this is the case, it is again hard to assimilate that what type of emancipation feminism seeks when it sink more into anarchy of a different kind. What solution Butler seeks when she pushes the feminists to celebrate the dissolution of gender into 'convergences of gender identity and all manner of gender dissonance'? The hope of developing new and more intricate subject positions is presumably poised with even greater possibilities of the Subject-Object conflict that characterizes the wrath of Third World feminism where white woman as subject is passing value judgments over the experiences and lives of non-white woman as the Object or 'Other'.

Foucault and his followers raise voice in favor of a discourse of resistance when they have plenty to say about individual perception and experience of power at an individual plane. Nancy Harstock nevertheless shows the other side of the picture by pronouncing that Foucault's is 'a world where passivity and refusal present the only possible choices. Resistance rather than transformation dominates his thinking and consequently limits his politics'. Stuart (2003) also points out that postmodern feminism harbors the dream of multiple embodiment as mentioned by Susan Bordo when she, in *Feminism. Postmodernism*, talks about 'the dream of endless multiple embodiments, allowing one to dance from place to place and self to self'. This ideal of divergence carries the potential to spread these multiple genders everywhere. And indeed to be everywhere is actually being nowhere. Moreover, the idealized notion of multiplicity when applied to the males, drifts them to a situation where their identity dissolves into femininity since carrying 'multiplicity' means carrying femininity. This compels Tania Modleska exclaim that 'male power...works to efface female subjectivity by occupying the site of femininity'

To many, Haraway's model of cyborg appears to be perfect in establishing both the situatedness and multiplicity of the female subject both within and without postmodernism. It goes without saying that the very ideal is too slippery to even hold itself as pointed out by

Susan Bordo who seems to be agitating when she submits that, 'What sort of body is it that is free to change its shape and location at will, that can become anyone and travel anywhere? If the body is a metaphor for our locatedness in space and time and for the finitude of human perception and knowledge, then the postmodern body is no body at all.

The problem again lies intact when one has to sustain the essential womanhood of the woman while incorporating the essential differences characterizing their lived experiences. Postmodernism is perhaps too stingy to allow any fundamentals of Being of any type thus proposing the intricacies of an unleashed multiplicity and indefiniteness. The employment of the postmodernist agenda to discuss and reframe the domain of feminist epistemology is in fact never a wise choice. The fracturing and disintegrating tendencies of the former impede the inevitably constant move of the later towards an 'essential oneness' which is generous enough to incorporate the equally significant 'essential non-oneness' of the women. As Tania Modleski argues that with postmodernism, we actually inherit a 'feminism without women' when it is necessary to 'hold on to the category of women while recognizing ourselves to be in the process (an unending one) of defining and constructing the category.'

## **CONCLUSION**

It is feared that feminism, under the postmodernist paradigm, is hegemonized so much so by the later that it ultimately loses its fundamental assertions. Perhaps, when there is a dissolution of the canons of feminism into the broader category of postmodernism, it would not be wrong to uphold that for the later, the former is not more than a mere inclusive category. Why can't one take postmodernism itself as a master discourse which is inclined to deal with the challenges of posed by the feminist critical disposition in a most iconoclastic and at times eccentric manner? It acts as a framing narrative encapsulating the feminist debate and perpetuating it as a part of its larger whole. If this is the case, the male postmodernist theory actually jeopardizes the feminist critical standing by both assuming and reproducing the gesture of its modernist predecessor where it appears to be appropriating feminism as one of its inclusive positions. As a matter of fact, it should be the feminist theorists who should appropriate the nuts and bolts of a male postmodernist theory. Leaving feminism at the mercy of man-made schemata of appropriation is equivalent to giving up its legitimate slogan of equilibrium between the two sexes. What preference, privilege or even balance feminism seeks today when the very race it speaks for will cease to survive and even exist at a certain point in time and theory?

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Ethan Epping

## Politics and Pirs: The Nature of Sufi Political Engagement in 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Pakistan

By Ethan Epping

On November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2010 a massive convoy set off from Islamabad. Tens of thousands of Muslims rode cars, buses, bicycles, and even walked the 300 kilometer journey to the city of Lahore. The purpose of this march was to draw attention to the recent rash of terrorism in the country, specifically the violent attacks on Sufi shrines throughout Pakistan. In particular, they sought to demonstrate to the government that the current lack of action was unacceptable. “Our caravans will reach Lahore,” declared one prominent organizer, “and when they do the government will see how powerful we are.”<sup>1</sup> The Long March to Save Pakistan, as it has come to be known, was an initiative of the recently founded Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC), a growing coalition of Barelvi Muslims. The Barelvi movement is the largest Islamic sect within Pakistan, one that has been heavily influenced by Sufism throughout its history. It is Barelvis whose shrines and other religious institutions have come under assault as of late, both rhetorically and violently. As one might expect, they have taken a tough stance against such attacks: “These anti-state and anti-social elements brought a bad name to Islam and Pakistan,” declared Fazal Karim, the SIC chairman, “we will not remain silent and [we will] defend the prestige of our country.”<sup>2</sup>

The Long March is but one example of a new wave of Barelvi political activism that has arisen since the early 2000s. Barelvis have begun to actively defend their religious identity and heritage in the face of increased aggression from Islamic militants. But this is a new phenomenon, unprecedented in the Barelvis’ long history dating to the origins of Pakistani Islam. While the Taliban and other Islamic militants may dominate the popular Western understanding of Islam in Pakistan, it is Sufism that has had the dominant religious influence in the region. Frequently described as the inner, mystical branch of Islam, Sufis were among the earliest Muslims to arrive in South Asia. Its most easily recognizable

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<sup>1</sup>Sunni clerics vow show of strength. (2010, August 8). *The Express Tribune*,. Retrieved from <http://tribune.com.pk/>.

<sup>2</sup>SUI announces long march against terrorism. (2010, August 9). *The News*. Retrieved from [www.thenews.com.pk](http://www.thenews.com.pk)

expression can be found in Barelvi practices, with their veneration of Sufi saints and ecstatic festivals. However, Sufism has also shaped the development of other more traditional, one might say more “orthodox,” Islamic groups in Pakistan, although they are reluctant to admit it.<sup>3</sup> In contrast to the ecstatic elements of Sufism adopted by Barelvis, these traditional groups have drawn on the more reserved and intellectual aspects of Sufism. But these two sects, ecstatic and intellectual, have been influenced by two very different, some might say opposite, elements of Sufism, and have frequently found themselves in conflict.

Despite the contrasts, and even contradictions, between them, Sufis of both the ecstatic and intellectual persuasions share a common nature in their approach to politics. Both groups can be characterized by two tendencies when it comes to political engagement. On one hand, they possess an implicit political power, a wellspring of political authority that exists predominately on a local, perhaps regional, level. On the other, both ecstatic and intellectual Sufis have been characterized by a historical disinclination towards wide-scale political involvement. Not that there are no Sufis engaged in Pakistani politics, but rather that their identity as Sufis has not been an important source of political identity or motivation. They have not organized politically on the basis of their religious identity, until recently. The 1990s and 2000s have seen unprecedented levels of activism on the part of Barelvis. In response to the intensified, and now violent, opposition from the Taliban and other militant groups, they have begun to mobilize on a national level. This deviation from political inactivity, however, is predominately reactionary in nature, and Barelvis have drawn together only in response to the threat posed by their opponents. These sparks of political engagement must be understood within their historical contexts, heavily influenced by the nature of Sufi political engagement in South Asia. Such an understanding offers important insight into the complex role played by Sufism in Pakistani politics, as well as how the West should approach engagement with religion and society in Pakistan.

### **A Brief History of Sufism in Pakistan**

In attacking the elements of Sufism present throughout Pakistani religious life, the Islamic militants are “though they refuse to recognize it...striking at the very roots of Islam in South Asia.”<sup>4</sup> Sufism is inseparably linked with the history of Islam in Pakistan, and all of South Asia – you cannot understand the latter without the former. Such history can be rather confusing, however, due to the

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<sup>3</sup> In Pakistan, the most prominent of these groups are the Deobandi and Ahl-e Hadith sects, and the Taliban.

<sup>4</sup> Lieven, A. (2011). *Pakistan: A Hard Country*. New York: Public Affairs. pp 134.

complexity of the term “Sufism.” When used in the popular discourse, Sufism implies a specific group of beliefs and practices, often described as Islamic mysticism. Yet, there are a wide variety of practices that fall under the label “Sufism,” with more differences than commonalities between them. Generally speaking, Sufi practices tend to focus on the personal and mystical elements of Islam. According to one scholar, “Sufis strive for a direct, intimate, and unmediated experience of the Divine. Sufi adepts tend to emphasize the inward over the outward, intuition over intellect, spiritual contemplation over scholarly debate, and ecstatic poetry over legalistic prose.”<sup>5</sup> While this gives a general understanding of the nature of Sufism, it is an oversimplification of the multiplicity of beliefs typically defined as Sufi. This is certainly true in Pakistan, where a wide variety of Islamic traditions have drawn on various aspects of Sufism. These expressions of Sufism tend to have little in common, and it becomes difficult to draw sharp lines both between and within such groups. However, upon close inspection, it is possible to draw out two main expressions of Sufism in Pakistan.

#### **Sufism and Pakistan: *Sukr***

The first of these expressions is characterized historically by the word *sukr*, frequently translated as “intoxication.” This strand of Sufism emphasizes the ecstatic and joyful union with and self-annihilation in Allah with the intent to be “overcome with divine love” emanating from the face of God.<sup>6</sup> Prominent scholar and Sufi Fethullah Gülen describes *sukr* as “when a heart boils with extraordinary joy and excitement in the moment when the person feels deeply the All-Beloved One.”<sup>7</sup> Such unions tend to be achieved through poetry and song, but also through the use of intoxicants and dance, which has sparked no small amount of controversy. In Pakistan, it is the Barelvi school of thought mentioned above that has embraced *sukr* and the ecstatic elements of Sufism. Barelvis trace their name to the Indian town of Barielly, birthplace of nineteenth century scholar and reformist Ahmed Raza Khan Barielly, who defended the particular practices of South Asian Islam. However, though Raza Khan lent his name to the Barelvi movement, and offers Barelvis a foundation of scholarly legitimacy, his influence

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<sup>5</sup>Rozehnal, R. (2007). *Islamic Sufism Unbound: Politics and Piety in Twenty-First Century Pakistan*. New York: Palgrave McMillan. pp 1.

<sup>6</sup> Chittick, W. (2000) *Sufism: A Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oneworld Publications. pp 26.

<sup>7</sup> Gülen, M. (2004) *Key Concepts in the Practice of Sufism: Emerald Hills of the Heart* (Vol. 2). New Jersey: Tughra Books. pp 126.

on Barelvi beliefs and practices has been relatively minor.<sup>8</sup> Rather, at the center of Barelvi practices are Sufi saints, who are seen not only as exemplars of faith worthy of imitation, but also as active intermediaries between humans and the divine.

The history of these saints, known as *shaikhs* in Arabic or *pirs* in Persian, dates back to the first arrival of Islam in South Asia. Although the region came under Muslim military and political control in the early 8<sup>th</sup> century, conversion was a slow, ongoing endeavor that would last centuries. It was a “lengthy process of attrition, of continuing interaction between the carriers of Islam and the local...environment.”<sup>9</sup> These carriers of Islam were most often Sufi saints, the “pioneers and frontiersmen of the Muslim world,” travelling mystics who arrived in South Asia shortly after the region was conquered.<sup>10</sup> Often hailing from the Arab world, the birthplace of Islam, and occasionally claiming to be descendants of Muhammad, these saints possessed great credibility in the eyes of many of their converts. In fact, many of these early converts to Islam “came to see the saints as embodying the only Islam they knew.”<sup>11</sup>

One important element of the conversion to Islam is that it occurred in a particular manner according to tribal geography. Conversion frequently happened on a tribal, not individual basis. The leader of a tribe would travel to the shrine of a particular saint, offering to convert not only himself, but his entire tribe, to Islam. Moreover, conversion was not necessarily understood at the acceptance of a particular doctrine, but rather an acknowledgement of the saint’s religious leadership. The act of conversion was frequently seen as a *bai’at*, or a vow of spiritual allegiance to a saint’s authority.<sup>12</sup> Over time, a “sacred geography” of the country developed, with the veneration of specific saints developed along regional and tribal lines.<sup>13</sup> Even today, particularly in rural areas, one follows a individual saint because he is the saint of their tribe, perhaps responsible for the tribe’s conversion or for performing a notable miracle. The importance of conversion for the development of Sufism, indeed Islam as a whole, in Pakistan cannot be

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<sup>8</sup> Khan, I. (2011). The Assertion of Barelvi Extremism. *Current Trends in Islamist Ideology*, Volume 12. Retrieved from <http://www.currenttrends.org/research/detail/the-assertion-of-barelvi-extremism>

<sup>9</sup> Ansari, S. (1992). *Sufi Saints and State Power: The Pirs of Sinds, 1843-1948*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992. pp 13.

<sup>10</sup> Robinson, F. (2002). *Islam and Muslim History in South Asia*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2006. pp 52.

<sup>11</sup> Lieven, 135.

<sup>12</sup> Ewing, K. (1983). The Politics of Sufism: Redefining the Saints of Pakistan. *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 42. 255.

<sup>13</sup> Talbot, I., & Thandi, S. (2004) *People on the Move: Punjabi Colonial and Post-Colonial Migration*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. pp 183.



understated. It left “such a deep impact that intense devotion for sufi saints and their lines of descendants became the hallmark of religious practice in the land.”<sup>14</sup> The nature of these initial conversion efforts laid the groundwork for the future relationship between the *pirs* and their followers, as well as establishing the *pirs*’ position within Pakistani society.<sup>15</sup>

As the first saints passed away, it came to be believed that possession of their *barakat* was passed down to their descendants. Their spiritual authority was “distributed among all the progeny of the saint and harnessed by the few who fulfill religious obligations.”<sup>16</sup> Some of their *barakat* settled on the burial places of these saints, and so the shrines built there became frequent pilgrimage destinations. Sainthood became increasingly independent of personal piety, and the saints’ role became institutionalized within South Asian society. While veneration of the original saints remained popular, “support for [their] successors came to be founded less on belief in an extraordinary power and mission and more on belief in spiritual authority sanctified by tradition.”<sup>17</sup> These descendants became the successors of the original saints, creating a hereditary *pir*-ship. The *bai’at*, the original ceremony in which the tribal leader acknowledged the saint’s spiritual authority, was repeated in front of the saint’s descendants, perpetuating the power relationship between *pir* and follower.<sup>18</sup> Frequently, the religious authority inherited by the saints’ descendants was used to solidify their own social position and wealth, ensuring that they remained central in Pakistani religious life up to the present day.

As noted above, Barelvis are the modern adherents to this system, continuing both the veneration of the original saints, and maintaining the role of the saints’ descendants.<sup>19</sup> While precise statistics are not available, most sources agree that Barelvis represent the majority of Pakistani Muslims, with estimates ranging from 50%<sup>20</sup> to 75%.<sup>21</sup> The shrines are still popular pilgrimage

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<sup>14</sup> Ansari, 13.

<sup>15</sup> Ewing, 251-268.

<sup>16</sup> Sherani, S.R. (1991). Ulema and Pir in Pakistani Politics. In H. Donnan & P. Werbner (eds.), *Economy and Culture in Pakistan: Migrants and Cities in a Muslim Society*, London: Macmillan. pp 221.

<sup>17</sup> Ansari, 23.

<sup>18</sup> Ewing, 252-3.

<sup>19</sup> Lieven, 136.

<sup>20</sup> Barelvi Islam. (2012, March). Global Security.org. Retrieved from

<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/intro/islam-barelvi.htm>

<sup>21</sup> Masood, S. & Gillani, W. (2011, April 3). Blast at Pakistan Shrine Kills Dozens. *The New York Times*.

destinations, and festivals known as *urs* commemorate the death of the original saint and celebrate his marriage with God. They draw hundreds of thousands of worshippers together for multi-day celebrations, involving music, dancing, hashish, and other methods for reaching ecstatic unity.<sup>22</sup> Nor do Barelvis limit their veneration to millennia-old saints and their descendants. New charismatic individuals are constantly arising, some of whom become popular enough to be considered modern *pirs*. A number of shrines have been built for 20<sup>th</sup> century saints by dedicated disciples, seeking to elevate their teachers to new levels (and thus improving their own prestige). These individuals, both new and old, still serve a tangible purpose in their communities, as explained by one observer of Pakistani religious society:

Many of the new *pirs* are not frauds. Ordinary people take great comfort from them. They give them an outlook on life, and an inspiration. They create an emotional counterweight against the constant troubles of life here, the calamities that everyone has to face, the sorrow and sheer mess of life. They provide a place of spiritual rest for the people. They also educate children - which is more than the state does most of the time - calm down local fights, reconcile husbands and wives, parents and children, or brothers who have fallen out.<sup>23</sup>

### **Sufism and Pakistan: Sobriety**

The ecstatic traditions of the Barelvis are not the only expressions of Islam in Pakistan that have been heavily influenced by Sufism. In contrast to Barelvis' *sukr*, or intoxication, a second path is characterized by *sahw*, or sobriety. Traditionally, once a Sufi experiences the temporary state of *sukr*, he or she then returns to the "station" of *sahw*, where one is "conscious, self-possessed, and makes deliberate efforts to feel the All-Holy Truth."<sup>24</sup> The experience of unity with God leads one to a greater understanding of and appreciation for the separation between God and Man, and a realization of the latter's absolute dependence on the former. As William Chittick describes *sahw*, "it is the human response to divine names that designate God's majesty, glory, splendor, magnificence, might, wrath, and vengeance."<sup>25</sup> In classical Sufism, both *sukr* and *sahw* are seen as important elements of one's experience with the divine, and the two are considered closely related. But if Barelvis have overemphasized the role

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<sup>22</sup> Schmidle, N (2008). Faith & Ecstasy. *Smithsonian* 39. pp 36-47

<sup>23</sup> Lievan, 143.

<sup>24</sup> Gülen, 127.

<sup>25</sup> Chittick, 26.

of *sukr* while downplaying *sahw*, this second school has done the opposite. They have focused on the importance of *sahw*, perhaps to the exclusion of *sukr*. This has led to a “reform-oriented intellectually motivated vision of Sufi practice and thought, which calls upon followers both to reform their lives according to the shari'a and to follow Sufi paths (tariqa) and teachings.”<sup>26</sup>

This reform-minded version of Sufism arose in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries as a response to the particular direction that Islam had taken in South Asia. A new breed of Sufi saints challenged the “certain tendency towards a religious and cultural syncretism [that] was then in the air.”<sup>27</sup> The Muslim empires of South Asia had grown prosperous and powerful, but had also become increasingly religious tolerant, even deliberately syncretistic, in order to promote harmony among its diverse citizenry. This openness was viewed by a number of religious figures as un-Islamic—a betrayal of orthodoxy. Reformist Sufis “adopted various tactics from physical assault to ‘ostentatious disdain’ to bring the lives of [Muslims] and their court closer to *sharia*.”<sup>28</sup> It is an ironic twist, then, that the great tombs which were constructed upon the deaths of these new saints became “objects of the popular syncretic devotionism which they themselves would have scorned.”<sup>29</sup> During their lifetime, however, these reformist saints laid the groundwork for the growth of an intellectually and personally focused version of Pakistani Sufism.

It is difficult to speak definitively of a specific intellectual, reformist movement of Sufism that arose in Pakistan, in part because it is not a clearly delineated category. But more significantly, the groups themselves shy away from the label of “Sufi.” The term Sufi is most often applied to the very practices of saint veneration and shrine worship these groups so heavily criticize. Unsurprisingly they prefer not to be associated with such practices. But regardless of their protestations, Sufism has exerted a powerful influence on these Muslims, one “visible in areas of religious experience other than shrine worship.”<sup>30</sup> Rather, when villagers from one community in northwest Pakistan visit the shrine complexes located in the nearby cities, they are “often shocked at what they say

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<sup>26</sup>Magnus Marsden. (2005). *Living Islam: Muslim Religious Experience in Pakistan's North-West Frontier*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 33

<sup>27</sup> Hermann Goetz, “The Fall of Vijayanagar and the Nationalization of Muslim Art in the Dakhan.” *Journal of Indian History* 19 (1940), 250.

<sup>28</sup> Robinson, 237.

<sup>29</sup> Eaton, R. M. (1978). *Sufis of Bijapur 1300-1700: Social Roles of Sufis in Medieval India*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press. pp 134.

<sup>30</sup> Marsden, 33.

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are the un-Islamic goings-on inside.”<sup>31</sup> For these Muslims, Sufism offers a unique source of values, often gleaned from classic Sufi literature and poetry. While the beliefs and practices of these Muslims are a sharp contrast with those of the Barelvis, the influences of Sufism are undeniably alive and present within them.

The most visible, and most representative, of the modern groups influenced by reformist Sufism is the Tablighi Jama'at (TJ), which roughly translates to “The Society for Spreading the Faith.” It was founded in 1927 by Muhammad Ilyas who, like many reformers of the time, felt that Muslims had strayed too far from the fundamental elements of Islam. But unlike other reformers, such as the Wahabis in Saudi Arabia, Ilyas chose to focus entirely on the individual elements of his faith. The TJ sought to move Islam out of the *madrassa* and away from the learned scholars into the streets, relying on “lay” Muslims to engage in missionary endeavors, calling others to the faithful practice of Islam. Ilyas eschewed fancy techniques, technology, and organizational methods in favor of the power of personal interaction. His strategy “was to persuade Muslims that they themselves, however little book learning they had, could go out in groups, approaching even the `ulama, to remind them to fulfill their fundamental ritual obligations.”<sup>32</sup> Today, the TJ is considered to be one of the largest Muslim organizations in the world today, operating in over 150 countries. Due to its decentralized organization, precise estimates of its numbers are difficult to make, but they range between 12 and 80 million.<sup>33</sup>

Despite the reformist stance taken by the Tablighi Jama'at and its founders, Sufism has had a profound influence on the organization. While they downplay such connections, and TJ leaders are extremely reluctant to acknowledge them publically, “they have partly preserved and partly developed an internal culture that is laden with Sufi-inspired rituals.”<sup>34</sup> The structure of the TJ draws strongly on that of traditional Sufi orders, publishing hagiographies that cast TJ elders as *pirs*. Some Tablighi leaders go so far as to act simultaneously as a *pir*, initiating followers into a particular Sufi order and collecting money from their Sufi disciples in order to finance TJ activities. This behavior reached such levels that a

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<sup>31</sup> Mardsen, 33.

<sup>32</sup> Metcalf, B. (2004). Traditionalist Islamic Activism: Deoband, Tablighis, and Talibs. In *Islamic Contestations: Essays on Muslims in India and Pakistan*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press. pp 272

<sup>33</sup> Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life. (2010, September 15). Muslim Networks and Movements in Western Europe: Tablighi Jama'at. Retrieved from <http://pewforum.org/Muslim/Muslim-Networks-and-Movements-in-Western-Europe-Tablighi-Jamaat.aspx>.

<sup>34</sup> Reetz, D. (2006). Sûfi spirituality fires reformist zeal: the Tablighî Jamâ'ât in today's India and Pakistan. *Archives De Sciences Sociales Des Religions*, 51. pp 38.

decision was made in the 1990s that members should refrain from promoting their position as *pir* using Tablighi resources. That such a statement would be necessary is a testament to the popularity of the practice.<sup>35</sup> It is not unheard of for groups of Tablighis to take on roles as spiritual conduits, similar to the *pirs*, and “the missionary group itself [has become] a channel for divine intervention.”<sup>36</sup> Although they would likely deny it, Sufism has undeniably exerted a strong influence in shaping the leadership, organization, rituals, and even philosophy of the TJ, to the extent that one scholar has referred to the organization as “a true modern incarnation of Sufi aspirations.”<sup>37</sup>

### ***Sukr and Pakistani Politics***

Returning to the Barelvis and their practices, the development of this unique system of saints and shrines in Pakistan has led to two central, and somewhat contradictory, trends in terms of political engagement. On one hand, the system of shrines has become implicitly, yet deeply, linked to the Pakistani political landscape. The *pirs* possess a significant amount of power in their role as religious mediators, the men who control access to the divine. Not only are *pirs* placed at the center of Pakistani religious life, but the ability to either limit or increase access to God serves as a powerful incentive for their followers. The centrality of the *pir* in regional Pakistani society has even manifested a capability to undermine and threaten the authority of larger political entities. The shrines and their saints draw loyalties to themselves, drawing citizens away from identifying with the Pakistani nation-state. This challenge to the state’s authority is intensified when shrines offer social services, such as food or education, which further supplants the state’s functions. In other countries, most notably Turkey, the authorities reacted to this challenge by attempting to suppress such institutions. Muslim authorities in Pakistan, however, have recognized the potential of such influence and sought to tap it into it in order to solidify their own legitimacy. They granted large tracts of land to the *pirs* and expanded their shrines, which further reinforced the *pirs*’ power.<sup>38</sup> The British, like the Muslim rulers before them, also recognized the *pirs* political role, and sought to gain their allegiance, or at least avoid revolt, through grants and land protections, with similar effects.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Reetz, 37-39.

<sup>36</sup> Metcalf (2004), 274.

<sup>37</sup> Reetz, 48.

<sup>38</sup> Eaton,

<sup>39</sup> Gilmartin, D. (1978). Religious Leadership and the Pakistan Movement in the Punjab. *Modern Asian Studies*, 13. pp 494-96.

Thus the *pirs* and their shrines acquired a powerful political influence that has played an important role in Pakistani politics up through the twentieth century. One should note, however, that such influence has been remarkably implicit and passive. While it is a source of political power frequently tapped by others, it has never been actively exerted by the *pirs* themselves. The Muslim League drew on “tacit religious support [from] the rural areas,” i.e. the *pirs* and their shrines, to secure victory in the 1937 elections.<sup>40</sup> Ayub Khan (President from 1958 to 1969), Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (President 1971 to 1973, Prime Minister from 1973 to '79), and General Zia ul-Haq all sought to tap into the *pirs* influence for their own purposes, which will be discussed later, but also recognized the challenge posed by the *pirs* to Pakistan as a modern nation-state. According to Javid Iqbal, the architect of the government’s policies towards the shrines, popular Sufism “enervated the people and kept them steeped in all kinds of superstition.”<sup>41</sup> The government distributed pamphlets that emphasized the saints as humans, highlighting their social goals and reformist activities as well as the government’s similar efforts. The government even tried to recast Sufi cosmology, emphasizing the immanence and accessibility of God, and removing the *pirs* from their role as intercessor.<sup>42</sup> But throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the shrine system served as a source of political authority upon which others drew on, not one prone to action itself.

Recognizing the danger, mentioned above, to Pakistan as a modern nation state, a concentrated effort has been made by several administrations to undermine the political power of the *pirs* and their shrines. The Auqaf Department, founded in 1959, gave the government the power to “take direct control over and to manage shrines, mosques, and other properties dedicated to religious purposes.”<sup>43</sup> The government began to construct large, modern, and highly visible additions to the shrines, recasting them as centers for social services. New schools and health clinics provided modern alternatives to the traditional education and medicine offered by the shrines’ caretakers. Under Zulfikar Bhutto, government officials were encouraged to take on a participatory role in the performance of religious rituals, such as washing the saint’s tomb, that were traditionally handled by the *pirs*’ descendants.<sup>44</sup> The government not only recognized the shrines as a center of latent political power, but considered the regional locus of loyalties a threat to the development of a cohesive nation state.

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<sup>40</sup> Gilmartin, 508-12.

<sup>41</sup> Iqbal, Javid.(1971). *Ideology of Pakistan*, 2nd ed. Karachi: Ferozsons. pp 58.

<sup>42</sup> Ewing, 259-65

<sup>43</sup> Ewing, 258.

<sup>44</sup> Buehler, A.F. (1997). Currents of Sufism in Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Indo-Pakistan: An Overview. *Muslim World*, 87. pp 310-11.

Despite the government's best efforts, and the view that "unless and until the Mullah and the Pir are excluded from our religious life there is no likelihood of the successful dissemination of enlightenment, liberalism and a meaningful and vital Faith among the people of Pakistan," the political influence of the *pirs* could not be suppressed. Even as he tried to undermine the *pirs*, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto presented himself as a "divinely inspired guide and teacher," and the mausoleum where he and his daughter Benazir are buried is highly reminiscent of a saint's shrine.<sup>45</sup> A great number of contemporary Pakistani politicians, including the Prime Minister, Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani; Deputy Prime Minister Makhdoom Amin Fahim; Foreign Minister, Syed Mahmood Qureshi; and Minister for Religion Syed Ahmed Qazmi are all from *pir* lineages, as are numerous prominent figures in the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), Muttahida Quami Movement (MQM), and various wings of the Pakistan Muslim League (PML). One such figure, Altaf Hussain of the MQM, is even referred to by his followers as "Pir Sahib."<sup>46</sup> Some politicians have gone as far as to mimic the rituals and festivals centered on the shrines. Anatol Lieven, British author and journalist, observed that "At PPP rallies, I have seen many party supporters shaking their heads violently from side to side in the manner of ecstatic devotees at saintly festivals."<sup>47</sup>

The second characteristic of Barelvis in regards to political engagement has been a trend of political quietism on the national level. Regardless of the strong ties between the *pirs*, their shrines, and political authority, Barelvis have historically avoided wide-scale, active political engagement. While the *pirs* possess a very tangible political power, they have rarely chosen to exert that power explicitly on a widespread level. Most notably, despite the prevalence of political parties in Pakistan grounded in an Islamic identity, Barelvis have not developed the powerful organizations such as the Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) or the Jamia-e-Ulema-e-Islam (JUI), both affiliated with the Deobandi school, which is the largest traditional Islamic sect in Pakistan.<sup>48</sup> Even their opponents have

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<sup>45</sup> Lieven, 136.

<sup>46</sup> Lieven, 136-7.

<sup>47</sup> Lieven, 135-7

<sup>48</sup> The Debandi are a reformist movement that arose in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century in South Asia, and is the most popular Islamist group in Pakistan today, as well as the second largest Islamic sect in Pakistan today, after the Barelvis. Deobandis are the most visible example of the traditional, or orthodox Islamic sects, preaching that the original ideals of Islam have been corrupted in the modern world, and calling for a return to a more "pure" Islam. They are the most politically active

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acknowledged the lack of political cohesion among Pakistani Sufis. Although Syed Abdul Ala Maududi, notable Islamist reformer and founder of the JI, recognized the pervasiveness of the tradition, “he did not consider [Sufism and Barelvism] a potent force, given its lack of a political system.”<sup>49</sup>

While the explanation behind this lack of political participation is complex, it is rooted in the very nature of the Barelvi tradition. Centering religious activity on the shrines has led to a religious geography that is very regional in nature, as discussed above. The result has been a highly decentralized religious movement, one that lacks a sense of unity across regions. Practically speaking, there is no uniting religious or political ideology out of which a national movement could be brought. One’s religious loyalties and interests often end at a particular *pir* and his shrine, which presents major challenges for any type of wide-spread organization. No one *pir* possesses much authority over the followers of another *pir* or his followers, thus preventing the development of effective leadership. Further, the lack of a compelling mutual interest has presented a fatal flaw for efforts to draw the *pirs* together. “Every attempt at creating [Barelvi] parties over the decades,” writes Lieven, “has foundered on the deep rivalries and jealousies between (and indeed within) the great *pir* families.”<sup>50</sup> There simply has not existed the sufficient ideological common ground to overcome the regional locus of Barelvi practices. One’s identity as a Barelvi provides connections on the tribal and regional levels, but little beyond that, which has tended to inhibit political activism beyond such levels.

### ***Sahw* and Pakistani Politics**

Although the elements of Sufism adopted by the Tablighi Jama’at look radically different from those of the Barelvis, the movement has developed similar characteristics regarding political engagement. Thus, the TJ also exhibits a tacit involvement with political structures contrasted with an explicit avoidance of active politicking. “Political power,” Ilyas stated, “can never be” the objective of a true Muslim.<sup>51</sup> In fact, the movement’s founder believed that political power could only be achieved when all Muslims had successfully brought their personal lives into accordance with Islam. Considering the propensity of human weakness,

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Muslim group in Pakistan, and have strongly criticized the Barelvi focus on saints and shrines as un-Islamic.

<sup>49</sup> Ahman, I. (2009). The Indian Jama’at-i-Islami Reconsiders Secular Democracy. In *Islam in South Asia in Practice*, ed. Metcalf, B. New Jersey: Princeton University Press. pp 448-49

<sup>50</sup> Lieven, 142.

<sup>51</sup> Ilyas, M. In ul-Haq, M.A. (1972) *The Faith Movement of Mawlana Muhammad Ilyas*. London: George Allen & Unwin. pp 137.



it is doubtful that such an event would ever occur. The TJ has shunned party politics, in Pakistan, India, and all countries in which the TJ operates, refusing to take sides in the political arena. As a result of this approach, the TJ is remarkably suited for operating in a secular environment, although the movement denies a secular orientation. Unsurprisingly, this has become a major critique of the TJ for Muslims who believe that secularism and Islam are completely incompatible. One Islamic activist commented that the TJ has influenced Muslims to be “docile, fate-oriented and has [made them] shun active involvement in real life things like politics and society.”<sup>52</sup>

However, recent scholarship has begun to question this view of the Tablighi Jama’at as a completely apolitical entity. Some believe that the TJ’s intentional effort to remain politically aloof is itself a political statement. Although not explicitly active, the TJ is “deeply engaged in questions of power, legitimacy and authority which are the very stuff of politics.”<sup>53</sup> In particular, the emphasis on the flawed nature of man and creation offers a powerful critique of organized political systems of all varieties. But, though refusing to become explicitly political, the TJ has also offered itself as a source of political energy available for others to tap. Particularly in Pakistan, the TJ has been used by militant Islamists as a springboard, utilizing the organization as a pre-existing structure through which to operate. A number of Islamic militants have been previously involved in TJ circles, including Richard Reid, who in 2001 attempted to destroy an American Airlines flight with explosives in his shoes.<sup>54</sup>

As with Barelvisism and the shrine system, there are a number of Pakistani political figures who have strong ties with the TJ. Muhammad Rafiq Tarar, President of Pakistan from 1998 to 2001, was a senior TJ member. Both Maulana Muhammad Zakariya, who served as Chief Minister of the North-West Frontier Province, and Lt. General Javed Nasir, head of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) from 1992 to ’93, have been connected to TJ groups. While there is little evidence that the TJ is deliberately pushing for members to take political office, or supporting Islamic militants, it is clear that the organization has been drawn into the political sphere. Despite the contrasts between the Tablighi Jama’at and Barelvisism in their beliefs and practices, the two are remarkably similar in how

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<sup>52</sup> Rahman, N.A. *The “Ulema: Zionist Tools?”*, Retrieved from [http://members.tripod.com/signs\\_magazines/issue10/ulema-zionist\\_tools.htm](http://members.tripod.com/signs_magazines/issue10/ulema-zionist_tools.htm)

<sup>53</sup> Sikand, Y. (2006). The Tablighī Jama’āt and Politics: A Critical Re-appraisal. *The Muslim World*, 96.1. pp 177.

<sup>54</sup> “Tablighi Jama’at,” The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life.

they have become passively intertwined with Pakistani politics, despite avoiding widespread, explicit political action.

### **Political Awakening**

In summary, Sufism has played a complicated role in the history of Pakistani politics. On one hand, Sufis of both the *sukr* and *sahw* persuasion have generally avoided political activism. Despite the overwhelming presence of Sufism in the Pakistani religious landscape, no effective Sufi political party has arisen. In fact, Sufism's influence has directed Muslims, both Barelvis and Tablighis, away from organized political involvement. On the other, it is nearly impossible to ignore how Sufism has become subtly involved in the Pakistani political environment. These effects have been implicit, until recently. Since the early nineties, Pakistani Sufis have begun to mobilize in a much more organized fashion. Barelvis, in particular, have begun to "shake off [their] traditional posture of political acquiescence" in response to increased hostility from more conservative Islamic sects, including militant organizations.<sup>55</sup> In the last ten years especially, Barelvis have come together on an unprecedented scale for the explicit purpose of protecting their religious traditions. However, this activism is reactionary in nature, and Barelvi activists have faced major challenges arising from those elements of Sufism that have inhibited political organization in the past.

The vast majority of this hostility has been focused on Barelvis, and other practitioners of shrine worship. The central role of saints and their shrines has been seen as much farther outside the realm of Islamic orthodoxy than the intellectual, reformist variety of Sufism. The legacy of competition between Deobandi and Barelvi mosques dates back over a century. Since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the two movements engaged in an ongoing "Fatwa War," as each school of thought seeks to delegitimize the other by often issuing opposite positions on legal issues.<sup>56</sup> But while critiques of this type of Sufism have existed almost since its founding, the policies of military dictator General Muhammad Zia ul-Haq, who ruled Pakistan from 1977 to 1988, empowered the critics. General Zia ul-Haq was personally sympathetic to the efforts of Islamists, and effectively placed government support behind conservative Islamic groups, most notably the Deobandis.<sup>57</sup> He initiated a state Islamization program that, while its short-term effectiveness is questionable, laid the foundations for the long-term strengthening

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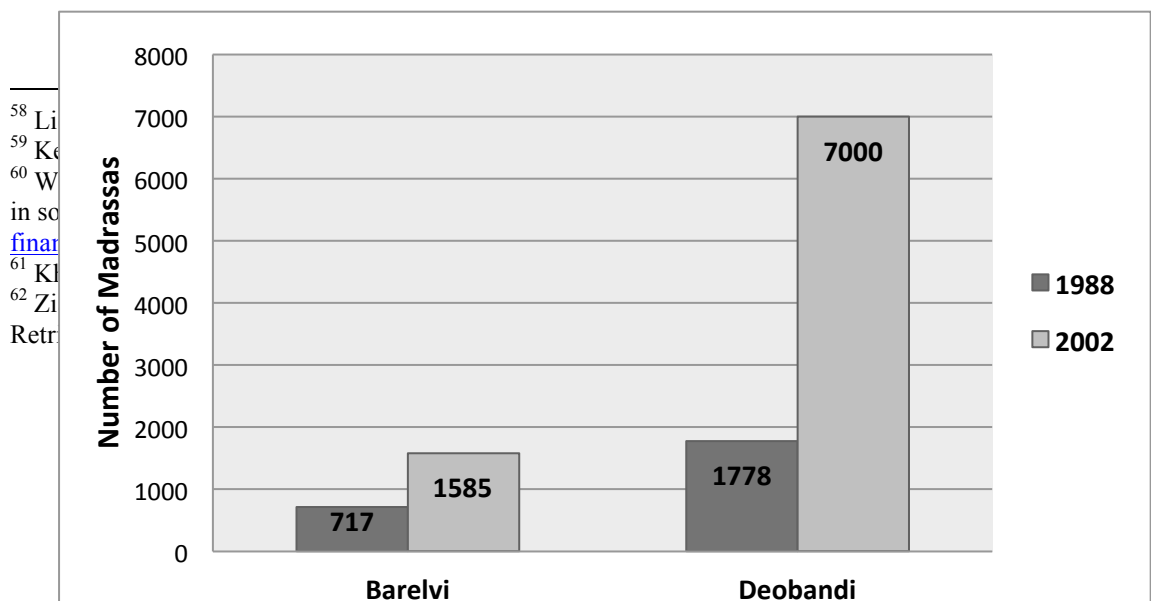
<sup>55</sup> Abouzid, R. (2010, December 21). The Hidden War. *Foreign Policy*. Retrieved from [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/12/21/the\\_hidden\\_war?page=0,7](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/12/21/the_hidden_war?page=0,7)

<sup>56</sup> Khan, "The Assertion of Barelvi Extremism."

<sup>57</sup> Khan, "The Assertion of Barelvi Extremism."

of Islamist groups, particularly militants, in Pakistan. An ardent anti-Communist, Zia ul-Haq provided funds, weapons, and training to the Mujahidin for their jihad in Afghanistan, much of which found its way into the hands of Islamist parties in Pakistan. Under the auspices of the Cold War, the United States also supplied money and arms to militant groups for use in Afghanistan, which were saved by those groups after the war, or simply never arrived in Afghanistan in the first place.<sup>58</sup>

This explicit state support combined with a number of other factors to promote rapid growth of Islamist groups in Pakistan. Another large source of support has been Saudi Arabian efforts at proselytization sparked by the explosion of the oil industry in the mid-twentieth century. Millions of dollars were poured into Pakistan, as military aid against the Soviets, but also as an effort to spread the Saudi's highly conservative Wahhabi brand of Islam.<sup>59</sup> Such money lasted well beyond the conclusion of the Afghan-Soviet conflict, and continues extensively today. A U.S. government official estimated that as of 2008, over \$100 million annually was making its way to Islamist clerics in Pakistan from sources in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.<sup>60</sup> One effect of this infusion of funding has been an explosion in the number of Deobandi madrassas, particularly as compared to their Barelvi equivalents. In 2002, there were over 7,000 Deobandi madrassas in Pakistan, up from 1,778 in 1988, a growth of 294 percent. In comparison, Barelvi madrassas only saw a 121% increase, going from 717 to 1,585 in the same period.<sup>61</sup> This increase in Deobandi mosques was not limited to new constructions, either. Barelvis have consistently complained that mosques "are being seized through armed conflict at an unprecedented rate," as well as through legal manipulation and intimidation.<sup>62</sup> Overall, the increase in support for the Deobandis and other Islamist groups, from a number of sources, that occurred in the 1980s served to intensify their historical animosity towards Barelvis. It would lead to two decades of escalated hostility between the two groups.



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Figure 1. Growth in Pakistani Madrassas, 1988-2002 (Data adapted from Khan 2011.)

In response to this increased animosity from Deobandis and other Islamists, Barelvis in the early 1990s began to respond, despite their previously apolitical character. One of the most significant of such organizations is Sunni Tehreek (ST). ST was founded in the early 1990s by Saleem Qadri and Barelvi youth who, in response to Deobandi aggression, “could no longer tolerate the occupation of Sunni mosques by Deobandis.”<sup>63</sup> It was not a political party, per se, but the ST represents the first truly popular expression of Barelvi political activism. The mission of the organization was laid out in four goals:

1. The protection of Ahle Sunnat (Barelvi) beliefs.
2. The protection of the rights of the Ahle Sunnat.
3. The protection of Ahle Sunnat mosques.
4. The protection of the Ahle Sunnat awqaf (religious endowments), such as shrines.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Crisis Group Report, "Pakistan: Karachi's Madrasas and Violent Extremism," *International Crisis Group*, 11. Retrieved from [http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/asia/south-asia/pakistan/130\\_pakistan\\_karachi\\_s\\_madrasas\\_and\\_violent\\_extremism.ashx](http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/asia/south-asia/pakistan/130_pakistan_karachi_s_madrasas_and_violent_extremism.ashx)

<sup>64</sup> Jamal, A. (2011, February 24). Sufi Militants Struggle with Deobandi Jihadists in Pakistan. *The Jamestown Foundation: Terrorism Monitor*, pp 7. Retrieved from [http://www.jamestown.org/programs/gta/single/?tx\\_ttnews%5Btt\\_news%5D=37562&cHash=520e65450a548a2042eeb6146b793490](http://www.jamestown.org/programs/gta/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=37562&cHash=520e65450a548a2042eeb6146b793490)

As the word “protection” implies, the ST was reactionary in nature, formed in response to a perceived threat to Barelvis and their practices. A particular focus was on not only defending, but reclaiming mosques that had been lost to Deobandis. They accused the government of favoring Deobandi groups, and demanded that a greater number of Barelvi imams be appointed to army-operated mosques.<sup>65</sup> Later, as the Taliban and other militants began to operate more frequently within Pakistan, they would expand their focus to include these threats as well.<sup>66</sup> In comparison, you do not see this same political activation by the Tablighi Jama’at, despite similarities in its approach to politics. The TJ’s practices simply did not garner the same amount of criticism, and thus did not have the same impetus for political organization as the Barelvis. They were not faced with the same threat as the Barelvis, and thus were not pushed to react.

It is important to note that, however, that from its very beginnings Sunni Tehreek has embraced force and even violence in order to secure its goals. Saleem Qadri was originally a follower of Pir Mohammad Ilyas Attar Qadri, who advocated for a non-violent response to Deobandi aggression. The two split over the latter’s pacifism, with Saleem stating that “non-violence was not taking the Barelvis anywhere.”<sup>67</sup> Throughout the 1990s, ST began to assert itself aggressively, using force when necessary to retake mosques that had allegedly been taken from them by Deobandi groups. Over the two decades since the movement’s birth, it has become increasingly militant. Many consider the organization to be responsible for the 2000 assassination of Yusuf Ludhianvi, a prominent Deobandi figure. Throughout the 2000s, the violence between ST and more conservative groups has escalated, with one attempt to seize control of a Deobandi mosque in 2007 turning into a shootout that left one bystander dead and several others injured.<sup>68</sup> While ST disputes its characterization as a militant group, insisting its purposes are “defensive” only, their willingness to resort to force has driven many Pakistanis to classify them as another violent sectarian organization.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Jamal, “Sufi Militants Struggle with Deobandi Jihadists in Pakistan,” 7.

<sup>66</sup> Paracha, N. (2012, February 5). What’s Your Poison?. *Dawn.Com*, Retrieved from <http://www.dawn.com/2012/02/05/smokers-corner-whats-your-poison.html>

<sup>67</sup> Jamal, “Sufi Militants Struggle with Deobandi Jihadists in Pakistan,” 7.

<sup>68</sup> Staff Report (2007, April 11). One dead as ST tries to take control of Ahle Hadith mosque. *The Daily Times*. Retrieved from

[http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2007\04\11\story\\_11-4-2007\\_pg7\\_4](http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2007\04\11\story_11-4-2007_pg7_4)

<sup>69</sup> Khan, “The Assertion of Barelvi Extremism.”

Although the intentional, if reactionary, activism of the Sunni Tehreek is a notable step into the political arena, Barelvi political activism has dramatically expanded in the early- to mid-2000s. The American invasion of Afghanistan further energized the Taliban and other militant activity in the region and conservative Islamist groups became increasingly violent towards Barelvis. In an early attack, Saleem Qadri was assassinated by a member of a Deobandi terrorist organization in 2001. Activity particularly intensified in the mid-2000s, with one independent study counting 35 separate attacks on Barelvi shrines since 2005, with hundreds of casualties.<sup>70</sup> In 2009, a suicide bomber from the Tehreek-e-Taliban, a Deobandi movement, killed Mufti Sarfraz Naeemi, a prominent Barelvi scholar and fierce opponent of the Taliban who had declared: "The military must eliminate the Taliban once and for all."<sup>71</sup> Perhaps most damaging was the Nishtar Park Tragedy in 2006, where a suicide bomber wiped out the entire senior leadership of the Sunni Tehreek along with dozens of Barelvis.<sup>72</sup> If the conflict between Barelvis and conservatives had been simmering since the late 1980s, it was in the 2000s that it expanded into a full blown conflict.

In response to this violent intensification, Barelvis have further increased their political activity. The strongest and most notable instance has been the formation of the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC), an alliance between eight smaller Barelvi groups. In 2009 they launched a "Save Pakistan" movement to "stem the menace of Talibanisation."<sup>73</sup> The organization has since ballooned to include over 60 groups and embarked on an aggressive public relations campaign. Goals include calling for the government to ban "incendiary Deobandi literature," crack down on supposedly banned extremist groups, and increase police action against terrorism suspects.<sup>74</sup> The previously mentioned Long March to Save Pakistan was one of the largest, but certainly not the only, example of the SIC's awareness

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<sup>70</sup> Attacks on Pakistani Shrines. *Terrorism Watch Pakistan*. Retrieved from

<http://terrorismwatch.com.pk/Attacks%20on%20Shrines%20In%20Pakistan.html>.

<sup>71</sup> Haider, Z. (2009, May 13). Pakistan moderate clerics speak out against Taliban. *Reuters*,

Retrieved from [http://uk.reuters.com/article/2009/05/13/us-pakistan-clerics-](http://uk.reuters.com/article/2009/05/13/us-pakistan-clerics-idUKTRE54C1JQ20090513)

[idUKTRE54C1JQ20090513](http://uk.reuters.com/article/2009/05/13/us-pakistan-clerics-idUKTRE54C1JQ20090513); Tenveer, R. (2009, June 13). Suicide bomber assassinates Mufti

Naeemi: Taliban turn against religious scholars. *Daily Times*. Retrieved from

[http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009/06/13/story\\_13-6-2009\\_pg1\\_1](http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009/06/13/story_13-6-2009_pg1_1)

<sup>72</sup> Bomb carnage at Karachi prayers. (2006, April 11). *BBC News*. Retrieved from

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/4900402.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/4900402.stm)

<sup>73</sup> Correspondent. (2009, May 9). Eight parties form alliance against Talibanisation. *The News*,

Retrieved

from <http://www.thenews.com.pk/TodaysPrintDetail.aspx?ID=22032&Cat=13&dt=5/10/2009>.

<sup>74</sup> Abouzid, R. (2010, December 21). The Hidden War. *Foreign Policy*. Retrieved from

[http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/12/21/the\\_hidden\\_war?page=0,7](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/12/21/the_hidden_war?page=0,7)

campaign.<sup>75</sup> Activists have gone as far as to express gratitude towards those militants for waking Barelvis from their political slumber. "We're thankful to them, those who started destroying things like the shrines, because they forced us to wake up, come together and confront them, God willing," declared Sayyed Safdar Shah Gilani, a Sufi cleric and a key figure in the SIC. "We [have been] compelled to come out on the streets."<sup>76</sup>

However, the Sunni Ittehad Council, like Sunni Tehreek, is a reactionary creature, and faces a number of challenges ahead. Contemporary attempts at Barelvi political organization must overcome the same factors that have hindered such activity in the past. The recently intensified hostility on the part of Islamist organizations has provided enough of a common cause to draw Barelvis together into a semblance of unity for now, but this newly found consensus is fragile. Critics have already pointed out that the movement's focus is predominately anti-shrine attack, rather than anti-terrorism or even pro-Barelvi. Above all, it is a coalition built on self-preservation, which poses serious challenges for the organization's leadership. Already factional divisions have arisen, both between the SIC and other Barelvi groups who have refused to join and between groups within the SIC itself. In 2011, one SIC leader sharply criticized several other senior members for receiving money from the United States. A number of groups neglected to participate in the 2010 protest march, despite previous promises to do so. Accusations have also been made that certain leaders are using the SIC as a platform to increase their own power and prestige. It is clear that the regional and structural aspects of Sufism that have inhibited political activity for centuries still exert a powerful influence on Pakistan today.<sup>77</sup>

### Conclusion

When the original saints first arrived in South Asia, it is doubtful that they imagined the extent to which Sufism would influence the Pakistani religious landscape. From the ecstatic shrine worship of the Barelvis to the missionary

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<sup>75</sup> Daily Times Monitor. (2010, November 29). SIC 'Save Pakistan' long march ends in Lahore. *Daily Times*. Retrieved From [http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010%5C11%5C29%5Cstory\\_29-11-2010\\_pg7\\_28](http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010%5C11%5C29%5Cstory_29-11-2010_pg7_28)

<sup>76</sup> Abouzid, R. (2010, Nov 10). Taliban Targets, Pakistan's Sufi Muslims Fight Back. *TIME*, Retrieved from <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2030741,00.html#ixzz1beNCvZII>

<sup>77</sup> Khan, A.U. (2011, May 9). Sunni Ittehad Council: The Strengths and Limitations of Barelvi Activism against Terrorism. *Center for Research and Security Studies – Pakistan*. Retrieved from <http://crss.pk/downloads/Reports/Research-Reports/Barelvi-Activism-against-Terrorism.pdf>

activities of the Tablighi Jama'at, a number of elements of Sufism can be found throughout Pakistan, and indeed much of South Asia. It is curious, then, that Sufism would not play a greater role as a political identity, considering its widespread popularity. Rather, as we have seen, the influence of Sufism has tended to suppress large-scale political organization. For both ecstatic and reserved Sufis, their religious identity has not been an important component of their political identity and, despite a number of Islamic political parties, no Sufi parties have materialized. Such was the nature of Sufi political engagement for centuries.

Yet, clearly this disinclination towards national politics has begun to change. Organizations like Sunni Tehreek and the Sunni Ittehad Council stand at the forefront of an unprecedented wave of Barelvi activism, drawing Barelvis throughout Pakistan together in the face of increasing hostility and even violence. While certainly a challenge to the militant Islamists who have caused so much strife lately, on a closer inspection these movements may not be as united as they appear. Both Sunni Tehreek and the SIC have mobilized in direct response to a perceived threat to the foundation of their religious practices. But their action is perhaps better described as re-action, and their unity is one imposed by necessity. Reformist Sufis, such as the Tablighi Jama'at, who have not faced the same hostility, have continued their political disengagement. Sunni Tehreek, the SIC, and similar organizations face many challenges on the road ahead, challenges rooted in the very nature of Pakistani Sufism. Despite new and novel political expressions, Sufis are still influenced by those factors which prevented political organization for so long.

The arrival of these Barelvi political organizations, then, is more complex than may first appear, and it is necessary to understand them within their historical and social context. The nature of Pakistani religious life is highly regional, with many loyalties extending no further than a particular saint or tribe. While Barelvi political activity has been noticeably absent from the national stage, Sufi shrines and descendants of saints are frequently found at the center of local political hierarchies. Over time, those who control the shrines have managed to accumulate a considerable amount of spiritual and political authority. And while this authority does not typically extend beyond a limited geography, and in fact it tends to inhibit widespread political activity, it is an integral element of both the Barelvi tradition and Pakistani politics.

Looking forward, this more complex and realistic understanding of Pakistani Sufism challenges our current conception of Pakistan as a nation-state. Noting the artificial nature of Pakistan is not a new observation, but it further underlines the need for a more flexible understanding of the country as a disjointed socio-political entity. The current nation-state framework has been



placed on top of a highly diverse and locally focused region and frankly, the wisdom of even speaking of Pakistan as a unified entity is questionable. Our knowledge of Barelvi history and traditions is quite limited, leading to an oversimplistic understanding of Pakistan's internal religious dynamics. The available literature on popular religion in Pakistan is sparse indeed. Yet, as this paper has hopefully shown, modern Pakistani Sufism is worthy of far more attention than it has received. As Pakistan's role in the global community continues to grow, it is more important than ever before, that we grow in our understanding of the nation's unique and complex religious traditions.

In particular, this complex understanding of religion in Pakistan, and its political engagements, challenges the frameworks with which the West has approached religion and politics in Pakistan. One such understanding of Sufism, frequently propagated by American think tanks, sees it as an asset the West should "harness" in the ideological struggle against Islamic radicalism, that Sufis are "natural allies of the West."<sup>78</sup> But this approach vastly oversimplifies and misunderstands the role of Sufism in Pakistan. The interests of the two simply do not line up quite that nicely, and Barelvi clerics are among the most outspoken Pakistani critics of U.S. foreign policy. A number of Barelvi scholars (including several central SIC organizers) rallied in support of Mumtaz Qadri, who assassinated the governor of Punjab in 2011 because of the governor's opposition to certain anti-blasphemy laws.<sup>79</sup> Some critics are concerned that, rather than marginalizing the voice of Islamists, promoting Barelvi organizations would simply lead to "a faith war between Sufi and Salafi in Pakistan."<sup>80</sup> This conception of Sufism as a panacea to Islamic extremism faces a number of difficulties, and fails to fully comprehend the complexities of Sufism in Pakistan. While some progress has been made, we must continue to push beyond a simple, dualistic framework and seek a more complex and nuanced understanding of Sufism, indeed the whole of Islam, in Pakistan today.

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<sup>78</sup> Tharoor, I. (2009, July 22). Can Sufism Defuse Terrorism? *Time*. Retrieved from <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1912091,00.html>

<sup>79</sup> Imtiaz, H. (2012, January 12). US aid to Sunni Ittehad Council backfired. *The Express Tribune*. Retrieved from <http://tribune.com.pk/story/320193/one-off-grant-us-aid-to-sunni-ittehad-council-backfired/>

<sup>80</sup> Eteraz, Ali. (2009, June 10). State-Sponsored Sufism. *Foreign Policy*. Retrieved from [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2009/06/09/state\\_sponsored\\_sufism](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2009/06/09/state_sponsored_sufism)

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## Feminization of Pakistani Political Discourse in Mumtaz Shahnawaz's *The Heart Divided*

Dr. Zia Ahmed

The political history of Pakistan included women out of political necessity to procure support for the establishment of Pakistan. This struggle on the part of women finds its place in the political discourse in Pakistani fiction. Shahnawaz's narrative, in her novel *The Heart Divided* (1957), is most dominant of all in this connection, which portrayed the voice of the struggle of the educated and politically active women. The political struggle contextualizes the current socio-political scenario of Pakistani women and necessitates the exploration of political discourse to find the extent to which it is feminized in the Pakistani context. After Shahnawaz, Bapsi Sidhwa introduced the tumultuous political scenes of the partition process and attempted a feminized political discourse of Pakistan, especially in her novel *Ice-Candy Man* (1988). Though Zulifkar Ghose, in his novel *Murder of Aziz Khan* (1967), does refer to the aftermaths of the partition process, he did not see it with reference to the women's discourses. Sara Suleri's *Meatless Days* (1989) also looks at the partition process with the eye of a woman, but the pre-partition political history of Pakistan with a feminist point of view is portrayed in the direct context of the politically charged environment of the Indo-Pak subcontinent in the 1940s in *The Heart Divided* (1957). This is the discourse that offers the readers the struggle of women which simultaneously reflected the modernization of Muslim women as well as friction that women had to face because of the patriarchal political discourse available during and before the Pakistan movement (1940s)

The need to question such a political discourse is because of the fact that the level of freedom of choice is determined by the level of freedom of its women and the right of choice exercised by the women. Similarly the level of civilization of a society is determined from the way the women are treated by collective society. Moreover the debate has established the analogy between postcolonialism and feminism because both oppose oppression of the dominant power and has also led to the feminizing of the political discourse, especially in the former European colonies. Jain (1997) also views literature as a cultural construct which reflects socio-political concerns of the age. She further says that the novel in India was more than a narrative device, rather it was an interrogation of political reality wherein the women writers expressed a new self-awareness and through which they attempted to construct an independent identity.

In this regard, only the discussion about Shahnawaz's novel *The Heart Divided* has been explored to determine to what extent Shahnawaz feminizes the political discourse of Pakistan and the consequences it had on the later Pakistani political discourses it had in postcolonial Pakistan, for example the short stories by Hameedullah (1957) and those of Tallat Abassi (2001). This novel is selected because it is the most relevant to this discourse and is written by a woman novelist. Mumtaz Shahnawaz particularly refers to the following passage of the novel which introduces her female characters:

Zohra and Mohni are the respective daughters of Sheikh Jamaluddin and Kailash Nath Kaul. Soon after Zohra's brother Habib comes back from England, Mohni, who has been ill, arrives unexpectedly for the festivities at the wedding of Zohra's elder sister, Sughra. (Shamsie 1998, 29)

The passage shows that the political discourse is viewed through the eyes of a female character, Zohra, and all the events related in the novel are somehow related to her. Even the love matter of her brother is with her friend Mohni. It is she who seems to be the protagonist of the novel. Zohra is portrayed as an educated young Muslim woman who is deeply influenced by the politically charged environment of India of the 1940s. Her deep interest in the political scenario of that time makes her involved with the cause of the freedom and independence of Muslim women. The writer has projected her character as a symbol of the change in the appearance of Muslim women and their participation in the political affairs. The writer, being a woman, sees the political discourse of Pakistan through the angle of a woman character. This is the first attempt of feminizing the political discourse of Pakistan even before the establishment of Pakistan.

Shahnawaz was not only a political worker but also had a deep sense of understanding about the changing role of the rich and poor women in India. She created the images of educated and politically active women who tried to stand side by side with their men and took part in many political activities. This could be the first step to the socio-political awareness of women which may lead them to their emancipation and empowerment. But this could not be realized so soon because this political awareness was available only at the politically important upper level of society or at the elite class level. The majority of women were still under the oppressive power of custom and tradition. Even these educated women failed in achieving equality and independence. But all this represents the start of the conflict between the culture conservatism and the will for independence and the first steps of change that could come in the lives of women. Shamsie says that Shahnawaz's novel, *The Heart Divided* (1957), mainly describes the struggle of

the Muslim women, which was waged by them for the sake of independence. In this way, the novel very clearly brings before us the picture of the educated, brave, and active women of the Pakistan movement before the establishment of Pakistan in 1947. “Her narrative is permeated by a strong consciousness of herself as an educated Muslim woman and political activist, welding both the personal and the public” (Shamsie 2005, 40).

In contrast to Ali (1940), Shahnawaz (1957) portrayed women in the light of the political movement for freedom that was going on at that time in the name of the independence movement. This gave a new boost to the fiction of that time. Shahnawaz (1957) not only took part in the early phase of the Pakistan movement but also did quality work by producing masterpieces like *The Heart Divided* (1957). Ali, in his novel *Twilight in Delhi* (1940), also portrayed the socio-political condition of men and women in the pre-partition Indo-Pak subcontinent. His women characters, like Begum Mir Nihal, Mehru and Begum Waheed, all seem untouched by the political situation around them. Ali (1940) portrayed his women characters as simply involved in the traditional domestic and social activities of that time in Muslim India. On the other hand, the only novel produced by Shahnawaz (1957) is a vivid account of the educated Muslim women and their lives in the British India just before partition. Her women are relatively more independent than that of any other writer of that time. She shows the women engaged in struggle against the social and political taboos. But this political independence does not lend them social independence, which is why they ultimately fail to fight against the social taboos.

*The Heart Divided* by Shahnawaz (1957) portrays Zohra, a young and beautiful daughter of Sheikh Jamaludin. Sughra is the elder sister of Zohra. But while Sughra vows to be more traditional, Zohra wants freedom to exercise her will. Though Sughra too changes her point of view in the later part of novel, in the beginning she tries to adhere to the social norms and customs as much as she can. On the other hand, Zohra is able to get a college education, but Sughra remains shy and reluctant in breaking traditions like *Purdah*. Zohra is able to break some of the boundaries. She, for example, attends gatherings and makes speeches and wins contests also. She becomes a lecturer and lives away from home. She continues to defy the tradition of *Purdah* and *Burqa*<sup>i</sup> again and again while she was still a student with the help of her friends, like Surraya. Yet her point of view is that she wants to fulfill the demands of the family as much as possible. Zohra says to herself that “she would live up to her ideals of Muslim womanhood: A dutiful daughter, a loving wife and a devoted mother” (Shahnawaz 1957, 7). This is the stamp she neither succeeds to realize nor is able to shed. Ahmed (2009) thinks that this is the very conflict which postcolonial women in Pakistan have been suffering from.



Zohra is able to get the support of her brother Habib also in order to maintain and to achieve freedom from the social taboos hindering the progress of women. The political environment of that time grew gradually conducive to the women like Zohra who could free themselves from their unjust social limitations. This was symbolic of the freedom that the Muslims were about to get if their freedom movement succeeded. Zohra is very much willing to defy the tradition of *Purdah* because she thinks that it hinders the progress of women and that she could maintain her purity even without this. She occasionally tries to flout this unnecessary ban of *Purdah* with her friend Surraya. This change in the attitude of the Muslim women outlook about *Purdah* is the part of a larger level of change in the mindset of so many intellectuals of the age. A renowned social reformer and novelist of the latter half of nineteenth century, Nazir Ahmed, acknowledges that “moral structure of the Muslim society was based on *Purdah* of women but this did not mean that Muslim women were to be confined to their homes or deprived of life’s happiness” (Ali 2000, 09). This was very deeply resented, but still these young girls continued to defy the ban wherever it was possible. The writer tells us in the words of one of the minor characters in the novel as to how the forces of conservatism in culture were struggling with the forces of independence and freedom for women,

That Surraya who goes about like a Farangan Mem<sup>ii</sup> and some Hindu girls. Well, it seems upon being told it would take 20 minutes to get the car going, all three of them jumped out of the car, called a Tonga and drove away in it, God knows where they went. And mind you, Zohra Bibi was without her *Burqa*. (Shahnawaz 1957, 13)

This defiance of *Purdah* discussed by the writer is more a deliberate discourse rather than a mere description. *Purdah* may be taken as an institution designed to control the movement of women. The freedom and independence of Indo-Pak continent meant the empowerment of the colonized people which would allow them to shift from slavery to the mastership of their own destinies. If women were to remain within the confinement of the socially designed institutions, the freedom would not mean the same for Muslim women. Therefore, the writers wanted to give a message through the portrayal of her women characters that the freedom for women should also mean their freedom from unnecessary controls on their lives. If it did not happen, they would remain colonized beings even after decolonization.

The portrayal of Zohra shows that she is a woman who not only has rich resources to support her but is also equipped with a modern western education.

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Her portrayal shows her as an intelligent and educated young woman who would love to achieve and maintain her freedom at all costs and who would like to play her role willingly in the freedom movement of the country. Such women characters are the role models created by Shahnawaz (1957). The process of claiming such a social position for women had already started because of the passage of various bills of the government in favour of women. “The communalization of female political identity started after the Act of 1935” (Ali 2000, 195). Women in undivided India were claiming this role, again because of their achievement with reference to the Pakistan movement. Ali (2000) further points out that their participation in such a movement was the direct result of the confidence they had achieved because of education and awareness to their rights and their experiences in the public and political life (Ali 2000, 43). Zohra’s character portrayal is the best example of the conflict between the new found freedom because of the modern education and the family conservatism which tried to restrict her movement and body. These two forces were at war with each other and the general social set up was still not so ripe to accept this change in the educated Muslim. It was, however, the political struggle and the common cause of freedom that has allowed a relative freedom to the women as well as by making them an active part of the political agenda.

Though the political environment lent courage and freedom to the women of the rich Muslims, at least, the social bindings and the limitations were still very strong and the educated Muslim women had to face social stigma. The conflict is also shown in the character portrayal of Sughra, another woman character portrayed by Shahnawaz (1957), who is the sister of Zohra. She is less interested in politics and society. Though educated, she is not willing to spend time in politics or the other gatherings. She therefore says ‘yes’ to her parents when they suggest her marriage to Mansur. But after getting married, she could not resist the desire for an active political and social life. It was not possible for her to live under strict *Purdah*. She tried to live by the social system, but the constant bickering of her in-laws ignited in her the desire to exercise her rights. She is educated and knows her rights, but she tries to give a chance to herself to uphold the values of her father. She keeps in mind the views of her father that “the *Purdah* of our women is sacred, I tell you, no woman of our family shall break it, while I live—yes, while I live” (Shahnawaz 1957, 70) but still decides to take action to get control of her life. This is the first such daring step mentioned by a writer in this part of the world.

But even if it is accepted that the rich and educated women liked to stay at home to serve their families, as said by Ali (1940), it would be wrong because Sughra could maintain her status as a house-wife only for a few months and started to feel the need of doing something for her nation in general, and for her

women-fellows, in particular. After the death of her son, her domestic and motherhood passion subsided, and her social side was roused sharply. She leaves her husband's home never to enter again. She develops a niche in her mind for doing social work. It created a stir in her about the social work and that pushed her again to her best side which was to devote her time and energy for her people as a social worker.

The portrayal of Sughra seems to support the idea that men and women who work for the social benefit cannot pay much attention to their family life in a traditional manner, especially in a society like that of Pakistan. They have to sacrifice one or the other. In fact, it was the spirit of the 1940s for the participation of women in the freedom movement that had infused into the mind of everyone who had a political and social consciousness of the time. The women of Muslim houses, especially the educated ones, were not away from it; rather, they had started to play an active role in the politics of the country. Such women were the role models of struggle and change for the next coming generations of Pakistan. Zohra, Mohni, and Sughra, in this novel, are the prototypes in this regard.

The portrayals of Zohra, Sughra, and Mohni show clearly that the educated rich women do not want to support the idea that women should be kept in seclusion or *Purdah*, and that is why we have the portrayals promoting non-observance of *Purdah*. Shahnawaz (1957) has also propagated that:

‘Times are changing’, said Habib for the second time that day. ‘Some Muslim ladies in other parts of India actually took part in the civil Disobedience Movement last year, and even from our own province, a Muslim lady had gone to the round-table conference. I remember all the English papers praising her speeches last year. Our women must come out of *Purdah* now for we shall never make progress until they do.’ (Shahnawaz 1957, 69)

Among all these women characters, the mother of Zohra is rich but a very traditional character who would like to stay in her family and work at home and run for the comfort of the family, because she belongs to the old generation which was also influenced by the old traditions to change themselves because of the modern awareness in the social set up. She had received the impact of neither the colonialism nor the modern western education. She was bound to tradition and was not ready to accept the change. She was rather shocked, sometimes, at the modern and changing roles that her daughters were playing. But the over-all environment had influenced her: also she started to accept the change in her

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daughters. It means that the portrayal of the mother is also shown to be flexible and willing to change for the greater role, which women played during the pre-independence era. According to Ali (2000) the participation of women in the political process and birth of role models like Fatima Jinnah<sup>iii</sup> and Begum Shahnawaz not only indicate the rising awareness of Muslim women of their rights but also that the freedom movement would not have succeeded without the active involvement of these women. But it is a reality that efforts for freedom of women and conservatism were present and equally impressed themselves on the lives of women in the Indo-Pak subcontinent.

The character portrayal of Zohra and Sughra are those political constructs which were outcomes of the new political role assigned to women because of the national liberation movement and later Pakistan movement. It was successful after the reformists' agenda and the access of women to modern education, heavily supported and encouraged by the British Rule as well as Christian missionaries in India. The women like Zohra are the prototype of the women struggling on the path of liberation, emancipation, and empowerment in conformity with the vision of Jinnah about the liberation of women. This was the very change that had come in the identities of women first because of the colonizers and second because of anti-colonialists. But it must be pointed out that all this was happening at the higher level of the society; the fruit of this liberation were yet to reach the common women of India and Pakistan. But whatever the case may be, the character of Zohra goes to prove that women are capable of performing great deeds if they are encouraged and given independence to play their role in the society. But men would not allow it until it became absolutely necessary because of the political demands as it happened in case of Pakistan movement. Women proved that they could also be as great leaders as men could be at any place or time. The concept of their being inferior is only due to man constructed identity. The novel also debates the lack of inter-racial harmony which becomes a source of pain for women because they fail to implement their decision in their lives. The portrayal of Mohni in *The Heart Divided* (1957) manifests this situation. Mohni, a Hindu educated and politically active girl loved Habib, a Muslim brother of Zohra. Not only the society but also the law prevented this situation. However, the British law allowed the inter-racial marriage under certain provisions, but Mohni was unable to cross the religio-politic boundaries that prohibited such a union. She was educated and was well provided for but these two things did not enable her to decide her life and to implement her decisions as well. The same lack of empowerment exists even today. Shahnawaz (1957) highlighted this issue while writing in the 1940s.

The portrayal of women by Shahnawaz (1957) in her novel is that of role-models, reflected in her fiction and shows that some women were able to cross the

barriers of *Purdah*, *Izzat*<sup>v</sup>, and other taboos of the society. These role-model women tried to maintain their hard-earned status after the struggle for independence was over and Pakistan was established. They did not surrender to the whims of the hard-line religious elements and continued to stress their experiences for the benefit of women in the newly born state. One of the specific examples, in this connection, is the establishment of All-Pakistan Women's Association, which became a symbol of women's feminist behaviour in the history of the struggle for women's social rights in Pakistan.

This discussion on the political role of women, as portrayed by Shahnawaz (1957), problematizes the history and politics defined previously in terms of male dominance. Shahnawaz being a women writer, further put to question the political history of Pakistan which has been seen and portrayed through the eyes of a woman in this novel. This phenomenon of the political discourse by Shahnawaz problematizes the whole established patriarchal tradition of the Indo-Pak subcontinent where women have been considered as 'Others' by men and in this discourse we see that women perform the same as men. Therefore, the portrayal of the political history of Pakistan through female characters is the first major attempt by any Pakistani writer, especially at the time when there was relatively low level of freedom available for a woman writer and the people were not willing to accept this new role of women, but it goes to speak volumes about the will and intention of the political leadership working at the forefront of Pakistan Movement during the 1940s. The leadership at that time advocated a proper role for women in the political system of that time, but as is witnessed the women were recolonized after the establishment of Pakistan and the attempts of women writers like Shahnawaz and the Muslim political leader were foiled.

This feminized discourse, on the one hand brings before us the vision of the woman writer about the perceptions of educated woman regarding the Pakistani political history being shaped during the 1940s, but it also makes *The Heart Divided* (1957) a particular postcolonial Pakistani feminist discourse which questions the disappearance of the majority of women in the most significant political event in the Indo-Pak subcontinent. This is evident from the discourses of the writers like Ahmed Ali, who were writing with the overtones of progressive attitude but failed to give the similar space to the role of women in the political history of that time. The male writers of 1940s probably committed a deliberate exclusion of women's political representation from their discourses.

The feminized discourse by Mumtaz Shahnawaz may be taken as a deliberate attempt for the representation of women in the Pakistani political discourse. This aspect of Shah Nawaz's fiction makes a text of Pakistani

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postcolonial feminism become a source of awakening of Muslim women for their rights in postcolonial Pakistan.

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<sup>i</sup> *Burqa* is an overall type garment to cover woman from top to bottom.

<sup>ii</sup> Local version of the word Ma'am.

<sup>iii</sup> Fatima Jinnah is the sister of the Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah who headed the movement for establishment of Pakistan. Miss Fatima stood by him in all public gatherings.

<sup>iv</sup> *Izzat* is concept developed by the patriarchal societies like Pakistan and can be roughly translated as the concept of honour based on social prestige.

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# Ethnic Politics in Pakistan

By Nasreen Akhtar

## **Introduction**

As a result of questions of ethnic identity, Pakistan has had enormous difficulty in developing a coherent sense of nationhood. Religion has polarized more than unified societies. Even within a single religious denomination one may find numerous strands. Doctrinal differences, political contestation for power, material gains and territorial space can make the particular religion and the question of authenticity one of great dispute.<sup>1</sup>

Complex historical and social factors have shaped the interaction between religion-ethnicity and politics in Pakistan, a state which came into being with the support of ethnic groups.

Pre-independence Muslim identity threatened by Hindu dominance was a more important factor than ethnicity among Muslim groups and political parties. Of course, Islam has remained at the centre of post-Independence political discourse; nevertheless it is today less important when the central issue has become the demand of constitutional rights by various ethnic groups.

The question of what type of state Pakistan should be -- liberal democratic or Islamic -- evokes distinct responses from each social sector and political interest. Military leaders, mainstream political parties, and Islamists have all attempted to define this relationship according to their vision of a just society and the role of religion in society and state affairs. Thus the Civil-military rule and their policy preferences provided a space for community groups to emerge as an effective force in the state.

Among the three main forces in the country, the quest for shaping the Pakistani state has added yet another dimension to the ethnic and political polarization in Pakistan.

As a consequence of this conflict of interests and the strange alliances it produces, the autonomy of the civil political sphere and civil liberties and minority rights has been severely compromised.

In this paper I shall explain how ethnic groups have been politicised and promoted by the state elite. I shall also examine two basic questions. Has the

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<sup>1</sup> Rasul Bakhsh Rais, *Recovering the Frontier State: War, Ethnicity and State in Afghanistan*, (USA: Lexington Books, 2008).P.1

democratic system in Pakistan diffused ethnic identity or exaggerated its effects, particularly in the decade of the 1950s'?

Secondly, how has ethnicity undermined or strengthened the democratic process? This paper also explores how the democratic process or the lack of it has accommodated and promoted ethnic groups in Pakistan.

Accommodation and promotion of ethnic groups in both military and civilian rule for political interests has been an open secret. General Zia-ul-Haq and General Pervez Musharraf both had used the ethnic minority party the Mohajir Qomi Movement(MQM ) to retain power and to suppress their rivals.

During the military regime the promotion of ethnic politics remained inevitable because military rulers needed the support of such minority political parties to balance and offset the mainstream parliamentary parties.

Pakistan suffered due to an excess of centralism and the lack of democratic values. Democracy and Authoritarianism cannot work together; the victor as we have seen in Pakistan will always be the latter.

Since 2008, the government has offered economic package to the Balochi people but separatist nationalists and Baloch leaders have rejected it. Akhtar Mengal has floated six demands which are being compared with Shaikh Mujib's six points. Thus we can see the politics of civil war in Pakistan where ethnic groups are playing cards to get power and have challenged the writ of government in some areas of Balochistan.

#### Theoretical Framework

As for the origins and continuation of ethnicity, two opposing schools of thought have appeared within comparative ethnicity: Primordialists consider ethnicity to be based on culture and they reckon it as something ingrained in human nature.

On the contrary, the instrumentalists propound that ethnicity is socially constructed and it is the elites of a group who construct ethnic identities<sup>2</sup>. A number of scholars follow the middle road by claiming that ethnicity has both objective and subjective dimensions. To them, it is the relative weight of each that counts in various situations<sup>3</sup>.

Pakistan is a fragmented, polarized and multi ethnic state. Ethnic movements have at times shifted from seeking advantage within the state to moving beyond to the realm of ethno-nationalism -- and then reverting to earlier positions. These

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<sup>2</sup> .Crawford Young, *Athenicity*. Annual Review of Sociology, (1985),p.660

<sup>3</sup> . Ibid.,P.661.

shifts have been correlated primarily to international developments such as the case of the “greater Balochistan” and Pashtun movements. We have seen in the elections of 2002 and 2008 the re-emergence of ethnic-coalition partnerships in the centre.

How should ethnicity be defined in the context of Pakistan? All ethnic groups claim to have a common language, culture and distinctive social traits, which differentiate or distinguish each from other similar groups.<sup>4</sup> But the important thing is that a group adopts a common identity and acquires a social label that is recognised as such by others. The political factors in ethnic politics have been highlighted by Hamza Alvi, a noted Pakistani sociologist, who has stressed the over-developed state structure, weak political institutions, and the perception of “Punjabi hostility” as major causes of regional-ethnic conflicts.<sup>5</sup>

While Walker Connor states that the ethnic group may evolve a structural identity by developing a particular type of ‘joint’ relation, differing from the way others organize their ‘social roles’<sup>6</sup>, Teodorson and Theodorson in their *Modern Dictionary of Sociology* define ethnic group as a “a group with a common cultural tradition and a sense of identity which exists as a subgroup of a large society. The members of an ethnic group differ with regard to certain cultural characteristics from the other members of their society”.<sup>7</sup>

Pakistan is comprised of heterogeneous ethnic orders; in fact, the people of Pakistan form a complex ‘polygot’ as Tahir Amin puts it, with migration from Central Asia, and Iran, plus the indigenous.<sup>8</sup> If we look at the history of pre-secessionist movement 1971, there were six major ethnic groups: Baloch, Bengalis, Mohajirs, (Mohajirs are called Urdu speaking in Sindh and migrated from Northern India), Punjabis, Pashtuns, and Sindhis.

But -- with the exception of the Bengalis in what was till 1971 East Pakistan -- there have always been a mix of ethnic groups in all the provinces. Unlike India, Pakistan has not altered the territorial status of the provinces it inherited from British India in 1947. So although ethnic groups claim a “home province”,

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<sup>4</sup> Riggs, Fred W. *Ethnicity: Concepts and Term Used in Ethnicity Research*, (Honolulu: International Social Science Council, 1985)

<sup>5</sup> Hamza Alvi, “ Authoritarianism and Legitimizing of State Power in Pakistan”, in Subtrata Mitra (ed), *The Post Colinal State in South Asia*, (London: 1990).

<sup>6</sup> Walker, Connor, “ Nation-Building or Nation- Destroying?, *World Politics*, vol,24.No,3. (April,1972). pp 319-355

<sup>7</sup> Theodorson, George A. & Achilles G. *Theodorson. A Modern Dictionary of Sociology*, (New York: Crowell Co, 1969).

<sup>8</sup> Tahir Amin, *Ethno-Nationalist Movements of Pakistan: Domestic and International Factors*, Institute of policy Studies, (Islamabad: 1988) pp.92-93

according to Rasul Bakhsh Rais, “the same territory is claimed as historic homeland by at least one other, and in some instances, more than one ethnic identity.”<sup>9</sup>

In fact, in Sindh and Balochistan, waves of migration have altered the demographic balance; firstly with the inflow of refugees from other parts of India in 1947, and then from Afghanistan in 1979, when the Soviet Union invaded the country. Since then, only ANP (Awami National Party) has demanded Pakhtunistan complaining about Punjabi domination.<sup>10</sup> Unequal distribution of economic resources has led to migratory movements and finally separatist movements in the case of Bangladesh and now Balochistan. Punjabi and Pashtun migration in Sindh have led to Sindhi and Mohajir movements. They use language and history to authenticate separateness – as Hindu and Muslim parties did in pre-Partition India.<sup>11</sup> In Punjab the Saraiki – who speak Saraiki -- community also claims to be a separate group in South Punjab an agrarian region and a major source of revenue.

The relationship between democracy and multi-ethnic polarized society is interactive. The ethnic character of society would influence first and foremost the political ordering of the community, determine rules of politics and shape the general patterns of political behaviour; a degree of democratic maturity would mitigate ethnic tensions.<sup>12</sup>

This is true in the Pakistani context since the British Raj supported Punjabis and Pashtun in comparison to other ethnic groups. As a part of their divide- and-rule strategy they termed ethnic groups who supported the British during the uprising of 1857 “martial races” while groups that had been instrumental in the uprising were dubbed “ non martial races,”<sup>13</sup> Also the biggest colonial legacy of the British has been the highly centralized and authoritarian state apparatus that came under the domination of Punjabis and Pashtuns over time. Consequently, the state elites of Pakistan have tried to create a single nation-state by using Islam and Urdu as a smokescreen for their nation–building policies.

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<sup>9</sup> Rais, Rasul Bakhsh “Politics of Ethnicity and Democratic Process in Pakistan” in *Ethno-Nationalism and the Emerging World Disorder* Gurnam Sing (ed),(New Dhlhi:Kanishka Publishers, Distributors,2002).

<sup>10</sup> Author’s interview with Islamabad based retired bureaucrat.

<sup>11</sup> Tariq Rehman, *Language and Politics in Pakistan*, (Krachi: Oxford University Press,1996).

<sup>12</sup> Rasul Bakhsh Rais, *Recovering the Frontier State: War, Ethnicity, and State in Afghanistan*,op.cit.

<sup>13</sup> Craig Baxter, Yogendra Malik, Charles Kennedy, & Robert Oberst. *Governments and Politics in South Asia*. Colorado: West view Press, 1998. pp 8-9.

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In West Pakistan, ethnic groups raised their voices against prejudice and discrimination by the Punjabi dominating class, and Baloch clashed with the centre in the late 1950s on the issue of land allotments to Punjabi settlers along with the border with Sindh. But the Issue was resolved. Since 1999, land has become a political issue, at Gawadar, non-Baloch have been allotted lands increasing local resentment.<sup>14</sup>

### Will East Pakistan crisis repeat in Balochistan?

In Pakistan rulers have assumed power through dubious means, and then re-employed dubious means to sustain their power. Ever since Pakistan's independence in 1947 until the fall of East Pakistan in 1971, ethno-centrism prevailed. The central government occasionally sought to provide an ideological battleground to all ethnic groups in East and West Pakistan, but that remained mirage.

Inequity and inequitable distribution of resources by the central government had isolated the Bengali from the state, especially after 1954, when the overall economic situation deteriorated. Out of the total development fund, East Pakistan's share was only 22.1% and non Bengali businessmen, financed by capital from West Pakistan had set up most manufacturing enterprises.<sup>15</sup> Limited Bengali representation in the central government had increased the sense of deprivation, suppression and exploitation. The fragile economic situation in East Pakistan made the Bengali people anti-West Pakistan and also enhanced their ethnic identity. The Bengali move for provincial autonomy encouraged other ethnic communities in West Pakistan. Unfortunately, the same ideology could not defuse the sentiment of separate nationalism between Bengalis and Punjabis. Ethnic identities were strengthened in East Pakistan, and, to a lesser extent, in the smaller provinces of West Pakistan, especially in Sindh. Ethnic sentiment between East Pakistan and West Pakistan increased after elections 1954, when all the opposition parties were united and they emerged as a binding force the United Front .They defeated the Muslim league, and their victory had lent greater impetus to Bengali ethno-nationalism. Increasing violence between Bengali and non-Bengali workers gave the central government a pretext for dismissing the United Front government, establishing Governor's rule in East Pakistan and banning the Communist Party. This dismissal caused further resentment amongst

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<sup>14</sup> . Balochi' student's interview with author.

<sup>15</sup> Tariq Ali, Pakistan: Military Rule on People's Power, (New York: William Morrow & Co Inc 1970).

the Bengali population and Communist Party<sup>16</sup> The close association of the governor General (Ghulam Muhammad) with the Punjabi elite and the neglect of the Bengalis increased the resentment of the Bengali people. The Governor's reliance on the Punjabi community widened the gulf of mistrust between East and West Pakistan.<sup>17</sup>

Parity was an issue of great concern. Weak and limited Bengali representation in the central government had increased the sense of exploitation. The Bengali demand for an autonomous province encouraged other ethnic communities in West Pakistan. In Sindh, G.M. Syed (Ghulam Muhammad) also wanted separate identity as 'nationalist. He formed a political block in 1953, Sindh Awami Mahaz (Sindh People's Front). He demanded full autonomy, except defence, currency, and foreign affairs: the Jeey Sindh movement was born in the early 1960s. The movement itself was not one organization, rather a cluster of parties joined by some groups in Balochistan and the North West Frontier Province (NWF) opposing the One Unit scheme. In the NWFP, Khan Abdul Ghafar Khan and Awami league (branch in NWFP), formed an anti one-Unit Front, which was joined by elites from the other provinces. G.M. Sayed argued that Pakistan was under the yoke of Punjabi and Mohajir domination and Sindhis had no chance for social mobility since they were not represented the two key institutions of the bureaucracy and the Army. He argued that Islam was an ideological façade used by the ruling elites to dominate other ethnic groups.<sup>18</sup>

In East Pakistan, Bengalis were quite bitter about West Pakistanis domination and they very naively branded every West Pakistani as Punjabi. The usual expression was, *Sala Punjabi Hey* (Brother-in-law/ also "swine" in Bengali is Punjabi).<sup>19</sup> Before the military action of March 1971, though common Bengali did not want separation, claims a retired bureaucrat, there were political leaders who demanded a separate land and had sowed the seed of ethnicity.<sup>20</sup> Indeed, the consequence of ethnic nationalism was the civil war of 1971 and a successful secession.

Over the past 60 years in Pakistan, the spectre of regionalism and possible future secession has been voiced by disaffected Pashtun, Baluchi, Mohajir, Sindhi and Saraiki radical groups. In many instances we have seen that failure to integrate

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<sup>16</sup>Khalid Bin Sayeed, *The Political System of Pakistan*, Printed in Pakistan by arrangements with Houghton Mifflin 1966.p.62

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.p.74

<sup>18</sup> ..pp-92-93.

<sup>19</sup> Author's interview with an Islamabad based retired bureaucrat, (20 August 2012).

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

ethnic groups into a national power structure or inability to grant them fair degree of cultural and political autonomy has politicized many of them, leading to civil war.<sup>21</sup>

The Baluch tribes have distinct territorial domains governed by tribal Sardars. Ethnically and politically, Baluchistan is much more fragmented than has been generally realized. A policy of offering cosmetic insubstantial authority to the Baluch people while denying real power has evoked considerable unhappiness. Baluch nationalists agitated their concerns under both the military and democratic regimes. The causes of the direct confrontation with the central governments have been the same, whichever the regime.

In Balochistan politics of civil war seems a disintegration of federalism. East Pakistan was lost because ethnic issues converted in civil war. Balochi separatist do not allow other factions to live in Balochistan. Punjabi<sup>22</sup> and Hazara<sup>23</sup> people are being targeted. Non-Baloch are considered alien.<sup>24</sup> Ethnic cleansing in Balochistan may have colossal impacts on Pakistani democratic society. Punjabi officials seem reluctant to join their duty in Balochistan and strive to change cadre if politically they have some influence.<sup>25</sup> Target killing increased after military operation 1996 against Akbar Bugti. Akbar Bugti challenged the development programme and declared that Balochistan is for the Baloch only “Balochistan belongs to the Baluch people and not to outsiders. The tribes have special interests, and control of natural resources is our primary demand. We own the natural resources, but these are being exploited for the benefit of others. We will not allow others to steal our wealth. Your sensitive installations will remain insecure, because you have pilfered, what belongs to our people.”<sup>26</sup>

President Mushraf was directly hit by Baloch nationalists when he visited Kohlu, one of the conflicting areas in Balochistan. Mushraf sent the army to curb ethno-ethno nationalists and increased Baloch alienation, Bhutto's military action failed to control the ethnic faction in Balochistan so Mushraf also could

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<sup>21</sup> Selig Harrison, “Nightmare in Baluchistan,” *Foreign Policy*, No. 32 (Autumn 1978), pp. 136-160.

<sup>22</sup> . For detail see Daily Times, July 7, 2012

[http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2012%5C07%5C07%5Cstory\\_7-7-2012\\_pg1\\_1](http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2012%5C07%5C07%5Cstory_7-7-2012_pg1_1)

<sup>23</sup> .Saleem Javed, Hopes Fades for Hazaras of Pakistan” DAWN, June 29, 2012.

<sup>25</sup> .Currently a police officer was transferred in Quetta but he was assigned some duties in Cricket Board of Pakistan. Revealed by author's colleague.

<sup>26</sup> Ayaz Ahmad Kahn, “A test case for Jamali's government, *Dawn*, (31 January 2003).

not resolve the longstanding issue. The same action was taken in East Pakistan by Genral Yahya Khan and he lost Pakistani unit.<sup>27</sup>

Does democracy accommodate or promote a divisive ethnicity in Pakistan?

In Pakistan, as in other developing countries, ethnic identity submerges narrow caste and tribal identities into a larger whole. Ethnicity, both in its subjective form of self-characterization such as Mohajir as well as in its objectivity of out-group recognition is determined by political conditions. The arousing of ethnic sentiment among the members of group is usually goal-oriented on seeking redistribution of power and national resources.

The politicization of an ethnic group usually gives rise to common demands which reinforce the political consciousness of the ethnic group. Mobilization may produce militancy, terrorism; or involve the community in a democratic process to effect a desired a political change.<sup>28</sup>

If democracy works it promotes pluralism, political tolerance, accommodation and equal economic and political opportunity. However, constitutional and political legitimacy, fair recruitment of political representatives through the electoral process from all sections of the population, fundamental liberty equal access to political power, the rule of law, and accountability are the core values of a democratic process. Unfortunately, these elements have never existed in Pakistan's undemocratic, which ultimately created the vacuum for ethnic groups. In Pakistan the true democratic system has not taken root. Centralization of governmental authority, military rule and its intervention in politics, and the feudal mentality have only complicated ethnic politics in Pakistan. The fundamental challenge that the developing democracies face is this; how to accommodate the interests of the ethnic minorities?<sup>29</sup> Two major provinces of Pakistan, Sindh and Balochistan have become hub of ethnic conflict. In Karachi, confrontation between MQM and ANP (Awami National Party) Pashtun

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<sup>27</sup> . In December 1971, Pakistan as federal state failed after losing her Unit East Pakistan.

<sup>28</sup> Anayatullah, C. "Democracy ,Ethno nationalism and the Emerging World Order", in Sushil Kumar(ed), Gorbachev's Reforms and International Change, (New Delhi: Lancers Books 1993.), p201

<sup>29</sup> Ghosh, Partha S., Ethnic Conflict and Conflict Management: The Indian Case, (ICES Pamphlet Series-3, Kandy: International Centre for Ethnic Studies, 1996) pp 34-35



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increased violence and unrest. During the last four years both Ethnic-Political parties tried to suppress each other<sup>30</sup>.

In Pakistan, undemocratic process has enhanced ethnic conflict. Ethnic politics has been dominated by the state elite. Punjabi and Sindhi have dominated in the central government; while Pashtuns, Balochs, and Mohajirs have been deprived. Mohajirs, however, have been glorified during the Mushrraf era, also MQM and Peoples Party have an un-natural alliance in the centre.<sup>31</sup>

### Emerging Ethnic Politics in Pakistan

Ethnicity was consolidated in an undemocratic regime during Ayub Khan's period. He took over as the first military ruler in 1958 and started a process of modernization of Pakistan with the military as its purportedly enlightened spearhead. His political policies had two objectives: centralizing the state and creating an authoritarian system. Although the One Unit scheme<sup>32</sup> had already been in place since 1955 when the acting Governor General, Iskandar Mirza promulgated it, the pursuit of the first goal prompted Ayub Khan to bolster the system by strengthening the executive branch vis-à-vis the legislative.

The second prong of Ayub's strategy emphasized the establishment of an authoritarian system in order to ensure political stability, as manifested in the Basic Democracies limited franchise introduced in the 1962 Constitution.<sup>33</sup> On the cultural side Urdu had already been declared the national language in 1952. On the whole his policies led to severe discontent among ethnic communities across Pakistan. The processes set in motion by Ayub Khan were primarily responsible for the creation of Bangladesh in 1971.

Under General Yahya Khan, ethnic conflict and contradiction between the state and the Bengali community took off. Sheikh Mujib, the leader of the Awami party, obtained the majority of the seats in the general election of 1970 – and should therefore by principles of majority rule have been able to head the government of

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<sup>30</sup> . Farrukh Saleem, "Why Karachi Bleeds"? The News, April 1, 2012

<sup>31</sup> . It is unnatural political alliance because MQM and Peoples party both have different policies. Moreover, MQM was separated from PPP thrice in less than four years.

<sup>32</sup> Under this scheme the following were integrated into the new province; the former province of Sindh, Punjab, and NWFP; the city of Karachi; the former states of Balochistan, Bahawalpur and Khairpur, Balochistan, and the Tribal Areas (Pakistan: from 1947 to the Creation of Bangladesh", Keesing's Research Report No.9 Charles Scribner's Sons, New York: 1973). p.64

<sup>33</sup> Rasul Bakhsh Rais. Building Nation and State in Pakistan. In Charles Kennedy, Carl Ernst, Kathleen McNeil, & David Gilmartin, *Pakistan at the Millennium* (Karachi: Oxford University Press 2003). Pp.7-17

Pakistan. But Zulfqar Ali Bhutto, the founder of the Pakistan People Party (PPP), who received the majority in West Pakistan, was not ready to share power with a Bengali leader. General Yahya Khan could not defuse the tension between the two leaders. The result was widespread ethnic violence and agitation in East Pakistan. The violence escalated to such an extent that Indian forces were involved in support of Bengali separatists and helped them to recognise their separate identity as 'Bangladeshi'. This successful movement encouraged another set of ethnic conflicts between the state and regional elite of rural Sindh.

### Promotion of Ethnicity in Democracy

Pakistan emerged as a polarized but Muslim state in the world. The formerly united Islamic republic was now divided into two states, Bangladesh and Pakistan. It was not Bengali sentiments against the West Pakistanis, but against the centralisation of power. Bengali politicians and leaders were considered incompetent and unreliable in west Pakistan, and Punjabi establishment was dominated<sup>34</sup> which was not ready to accommodate Bengali leaders.

After the separation of East Pakistan General Yahya resigned and handed over power to Zulfqar Ali Bhutto, who tried to deal with Sindhi grievances about government jobs under the quota system, and the language issue. Soon however he started targeting his rivals in Balochistan, NWFP and Punjab, and dismissed the elected provincial governments in Balochistan<sup>35</sup>.

Bhutto had declared Urdu as the national language in the 1973 Constitution, yet he adapted certain policies to encourage regional language and cultures<sup>36</sup>. Although card of language was played between east and west Pakistan, it was materialized by Zulfqar Ali Bhutto.

Bhutto's downfall came in 1977 when General Zia-ul-Haq took over under martial law. While earlier leaders had made claims about Islam. Zia went ahead and actually imposed Islamic law, in a selective and flawed way. Zia introduced the Zakat Ordinance empowering banks to deduct Zakat from the saving accounts of individual depositors. The Shia community protested against this act and they were exempted<sup>37</sup>, dividing Pakistan in Shia-Sunni (sectarianism). Yet he allocated vast development budgets to Balochistan from 1982-86.<sup>38</sup> His policies had

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<sup>34</sup> . Interview with Bangladeshi scholar during the workshop in New Dehli in January 2010.

<sup>35</sup> .Khalid Ahmad, Reareview Mirror, (Alhamra: Islmabad).pp35.

<sup>36</sup> Tahir Amin,op.cit. p.133

<sup>37</sup> Syed Shabir Hussain, *Ayub, Bhutto and Zia: How they fell victim to their own plans*, Lahore: Sang-e-Meel,2001.p114

<sup>38</sup> Sayed Shabir Hussain, op.cit. P. 179

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enhanced ethnic and religious extremism in Pakistani society.<sup>39</sup> General Zia faced resistance from the PPP during the Restoration Movement of Democracy (MRD) uprisings of 1983 and 1986 that demanded an end to martial law rule and the revival of the 1973 Constitution.

Zia's obsession with suppressing the PPP led him to support the formation of MQM and to search out G.M.Sayed who shared Zia's antagonism to PPP.<sup>40</sup>

As mentioned earlier, the military regime has alternated between promoting or oppressing ethnic groups as it suits them. But the restoration of democracy in Pakistan in 1988 opened up the political system to participation by all ethnic groups. This surely reduced the degree of alienation they had felt during the long military and Martial Law rule of General Zia –ul- Haq.<sup>41</sup>

Muhammad Khan Junejo, a Sindhi politician, nominated as Prime minister by Zia in 1985, invited Benazir Bhutto to an All Parties Conference to discuss the Geneva accords setting a time table for a Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan. General Zia dismissed Junejo in May 1988<sup>42</sup>; after Zia himself was assassinated general elections were held.

Since 1988, Pakistan has held six general elections, which have been contested by all mainstream national political parties and ethno-regionalist groups. Election 1997 saw a remarkable change in terms of building political coalitions across ethnic and provincial boundaries. The Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) after sweeping the elections yet decided to form a coalition government with all significant regionalist parties, Awami National Party (ANP), Balochistan National Party, (BNP), MQM .

The ANP, that had had demanded establishment of Pakhtunistan and had opposed the creation of Pakistan became the coalition partner of the Muslim League. For a decade the two parties worked very closely on national political issues .They separated when the Muslim League Government refused to agree to the demands of the ANP to rename the NWFP as Pakhtunkhawa and scrap the plan of building the KALABAGH dam.

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<sup>39</sup> Ian Talbot. Back to the Future? Pakistan, History ,and Nation-Building. In Charlesenedy, Carl Ernst, Kathleen McNeil, & David Gilmartin, *Pakistan at the Millennium* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2003). P72

<sup>40</sup> Iftikhar H. Malik. The Politics of Ethnic Conflict in Sindh. Nation, Region,and Community in Pakistan. In Subrata K. Mitra & R. Allison Lewis (ed) *Subnational Movements in South Asia*, (New Delhi: Segment Books, 1998). PP08-81

<sup>41</sup> Rizvi,Hasan-Askari, “ The Legacy of Military Rule in Pakistan”

<sup>42</sup> Benazir Bhutto, ‘*Reconciliation: Islam, Democracy & the West*’ (London: Simon & Schuster 2008). Pp.91-92.

Baloch leaders who took up arms against the federal government when Zulfqar Ali Bhutto dismissed their government in 1973 were pulled back by the imperatives of democratic politics. In Sindh, successive elections had exposed the hollowness of the popularity of the Jeey Sindh Movement. Sindhi nationalists failed to win a single seat in any election. On the other hand, electoral process has brought into fore a new ethnic force in Sindh, the MQM, which represent the Muslim immigrants from India, concentrated in urban areas. The emergence of MQM was partly a response to Sindhi nationalist sentiment, and partly to the declining power of the Mohajir community<sup>43</sup>.

The tricky questions of provincial autonomy, devolution of power and inter-ethnic relations have not been resolved. The democratic process offers merely a framework to address many of these issues. In general, democracy has contributed to the diffusion of ethnicity, while imposition of army rule has revived fissiparous ethnic sentiments and delayed ethnic accommodation.

Four different trends in Pakistan's ethnic politics show that democracy may offer the best political framework for the promotion of multi-culturalism and peaceful accommodation among diverse ethnic groups in a transitional state.

### 1. Punjab and Pakistani Nationalism

Punjab is the richest in terms of agricultural and industrial production. A growing number of Punjabi educated families have adopted Urdu as the first language in urban and even rural areas. Ordinary Punjabis feel that Urdu is a superior language and a symbol of literate status. Today, the best Urdu literature is being produced in Punjab where hundreds of popular magazines are published every month. The intellectual and political environment of Punjab has not been congenial to the growth of Punjabi nationalism.

There are material reasons for the support to Pakistan nationalism in Punjab as well. The Punjabis comprise the largest single ethnic group (60-65 percent) in the Pakistan Army,<sup>44</sup> which for almost two decades has been the largest employer. Likewise, they have the greatest representation in the civil services. They have also made tremendous gains in business and industry.

It is estimated that in the 1980s, 85 percent of the 1.3 million Pakistani workers in the Gulf countries were Punjabis and Pashtuns, Punjabis constituting the

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<sup>43</sup> Zulfqar Ali Bhutto's decision to introduce the quota system for Sindhi and ,provincial government's decision to introduce Sindhi language

<sup>44</sup> Kennedy, Charles H. "The Politics of Ethnicity in Sindh," *Asian Survey*, ol31, No.10 (1991).p.946

overwhelming majority<sup>45</sup>. This means that 75 percent of the remittances in the 80s that were in the neighbourhood of \$ 2.5 to \$ 3.00 billion annually was invested in Punjab.

### Saraiki Belt in Punjab

The people in southern part of Punjab, comprising three administrative divisions, Multan, Bahawalpur, and Dera Gazi Khan, called the Saraiki belt, where Saraiki is the main language. The Saraiki people or Multani are an ethnic group from the south-eastern areas of Pakistan, especially in the area of the former princely state of Bahawalpur. The Saraikis maintain that they have a separate language and culture, but their language is often viewed as a dialect of Sindhi or Punjabi<sup>46</sup>. In 1960's Saraiki nationalists under Riaz Hashmi started efforts to for Saraiki to gain official language status and efforts for a new Saraiki province out of Southern Punjab were started. This movement however died down during General Zia-ul-Haq's era and reemerged only after his death. This time the goals were to have Saraiki language recognized and to have official documents in southern Punjab printed in Saraiki along with a few other demands like a Saraiki radio and television channel<sup>47</sup>. There have been two movements in Southern Punjab, one political and the other cultural. The people of the former princely state of Bahawalpur launched a political agitation in support of a provincial status for Bahawalpur and against its continued merger with Punjab in 1969 after the One Unit was disbanded. The movement evoked a popular response. The demand for the separate province gained so much support that almost all the candidates fielded by the Bahawalpur Muthida Mahaz (Bahawalpur United Front) won national and provincial seats from the region in the 1970s elections. However, the PPP government weakened the movement. The east Pakistan crisis and the dismemberment of Pakistan in 1971 made the central government and the Punjabi elite hostile to regionalist movements. There is a significant presence of Punjabi settlers in Bahawalpur, Multan, Dera Ghazi Khan, who dominate business, government jobs, and industry, while the Saraiki community is largely peasants of mainly Saraiki landowning class, small business, (Shopkeepers). But significantly the Saraiki feudal class (Mazari, Laghari, Makhdooms) that dominate electoral politics have never given any support to the idea of a

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<sup>45</sup> .Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> . <http://waseb.wordpress.com/2010/04/19/saraiki-people/>. Accessed on November 4, 2012

<sup>47</sup> .Adeel Raja, "Saraiki Language", <http://www.dostpakistan.pk/geography/languages/316-saraiki-language.html>. Accessed on November 4, 2012

Bahawalpur or a larger Saraiki province that would include all the three administrative divisions mentioned above. This feudal class which provides some leadership is integrated with the power structure of Punjab. As the Punjabi settlers form a large vote bank in most constituencies, the Saraiki political elite prefers to remain silent, often denouncing those who support regional movements. The ousted Prime Minister, Makhdoom Yusaf Raza Gilani, was Saraiki, but has never supported the Pakistan Oppressed Nation Movement (PONM) founded in September 1998. However, he supported Pakistan Muslim League Quaid (PMLQ) on a separate province, South Punjab. South Punjab is the most underdeveloped area where people have no basic facilities e.g clean drinking water, good infrastructure, and medical facilities. Poverty is the major problem in South Punjab. Democratic representatives have always failed to produce mega project in this region. Indus river is situated in District Rajanpur and waiting for a bridge which would provide opportunity to the people of Rahmiyar Khan, Bahawalpur and Rajanpur to establish their business. Both military and democratic regimes have failed to keep their promises<sup>48</sup>. Comparing with the other regional belts in Pakistan, the Saraiki belt is more accomodationist. All communities, Saraiki, Mohajir, Punjabi and Pashtoons live with peace and harmony. They have assimilated and accepted each other's culture. Intermarriages are common and mother tongue has lost its significance because all communities speak all languages.<sup>49</sup>

#### Pashtun Political Integration

The North Frontier Province (NWFP) and the adjoining Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) have 15.1 percent of the total population of the country. The Pashtuns are the predominant ethnic group in these areas. They also form a majority across the Durand Line in Afghanistan, which was founded by a Pashtun ruler more than two centuries ago. But Pashtuns also dominate northern parts of Balochistan, and in the past 50 years a very large number of them have migrated to Karachi, the big city of Sindh. There are two other ethno-linguistic groups in the NWFP, Hindko and Saraiki. The original people of Peshawar city and surrounding areas are Hindko Speaking. They are mainly concentrated in the Hazara District. A vast majority in Dera Ismail Kahn Khan speaks Saraiki. Both

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<sup>48</sup> . In 1980s, GneralZia made promise to build a bridge and in Benazir Bhutto's era President Laghari who belonged to South Punjab also committed to grant funds for the Indus river, Chief Minister Pervaiz Elahi promised and failed, and the last Saraiki Prime minister Yousaf Raza Gilani also announced to build historical bridge on the Indus River but yet it is not materialized.

<sup>49</sup> . Author's personal experience , author belongs to Saraiki belt.

these languages are closer to Punjabi than Pashtu. This linguistic divide also marks the political divisions in the province, historically; these two groups have been the strong supports of the Muslim League and the demand for the Pakistan in 1947. On the other hand the Pashtun leader Abdul Ghaffar Khan wanted a third option for the Pashtuns, meaning a country of their own.

The political bitterness between the central government dominated first by the Muslim League and then by Ayub Khan and the Pashtun nationalists led by Ghaffar Khan and his son Abdul Wali Khan lasted for more than two decades. Ghaffar Khan and his followers continued to champion the cause of a separate state of the tribal areas along the Durand Line. The demand for Pashtunistan received political support only from Afghanistan India and the Soviet Union<sup>50</sup>. But the Pashtun movement never posed a serious threat to Pakistan because it did not receive wide support among the Pashtuns.

Other the other hand, Pashtuns present a classical case of integration through economic modernization and political democracy. In the 60s the industrial development in Karachi and parts of Punjab attracted Pashtun workers. And their flow to these areas has continued. They form now roughly 4 percent of Sind's population. A significant portion of unemployed Pashtuns were absorbed by the new industrial activity in their home province, particularly in the decades of 1970s and 1980s.

The Pashtuns are the only ethnic group that has disproportionately excess representation in the armed forces (30-35)<sup>51</sup>. The elite is very integrated into the economic and political power structures of Pakistan. The business community owns some of the big industrial houses in the country. In the 1990s, Gaddon-Amazai areas of the Frontier emerged as one of the developing industrial zones in the country. These developments have dampened Pashtun separation.

#### Renaming the NWFP

The ANP in 1997 demanded the renaming of the NWFP as Pakhtunkhawa province. The people of Hazara Peshawar and the Dera Ismail Kahn resisted the move because they preferred some con-ethnic name for the province. The PML government that had reached some understanding with the ANP on this issue refused to accept this demand, fearing such a concession would erode its support in Punjab as well as among its traditional constituents, such as the Hindko, Hazar and Saraiki speaking population of NWFP. This fight over the re-naming of the province ended the 10 year partnership between the ANP and the PML.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> .S.M.Burk, Pakistan's Foreign Policy: An Historical Analysis,

<sup>51</sup> Kennedy Charles, op.cit..

<sup>52</sup> The Nation, 4 February 1998.

The coalition government PPP-PML-N and JUI have accepted the ANP demand and the PML-N had no objection<sup>53</sup>. In fact, the sense of ethnicity has increased and other ethnic groups such as the Saraiki, Mohajir, also demand their separate areas.

### Baloch Ethno-nationalism

Balochistan is the largest province but contains only 5.1 percent of the population of Pakistan. The Baloch tribes have distinct territorial domains governed by tribal *Sardars* (chief). Ethnically and politically, Balochistan is much more fragmented than has been generally realized.

Balochistan has seen four conflicts with the central government over the past sixty years. Although the Shai Jirga, the official consultative assembly of the Baloch tribes established by the British decided to accede to Pakistan, the Khan of Kalat, a ruler of princely state, in the province, declared independence. As this action was against the declared principles of the partition plan, and could pose serious threat to the integrity of the new state, then central government sent a limited force to put pressure on the Khan to sign an accession document on April 1, 1948. The second conflict took place in 1958-59 over the allotment of lands to the Punjabi settlers in the areas close to Sindh, to be irrigated by a new canal called the Pat Feeder dug from the Guddu barrage in upper Sindh. These clashes did not provoke any coordinated Baloch response. The issue was resolved when local tribes were also allotted land.

The third direct confrontation between the Baluchis and Pakistan armed forces began in the February 1973 when the central government of Bhutto dismissed the provincial government of Balochistan on the trumped up charges that it was violating the Constitution and raising Baluch armies to secede from Pakistan.

The Balochis were outraged over the dismissal of their first elected government and launched a guerrilla war which went on for four years until Bhutto was thrown out of power by the military.

Bhutto's decision to deploy the army in Balochistan against some tribal groups was his political mistake. The action in Balochistan affected the country's direction in many ways and provincialism assumed new dimensions"<sup>54</sup> The military regime released Pashtun and Baloch leaders who had been incarcerated for more than four years and were facing treason charges before the special courts that Bhutto had set up. The Baloch coalition forged a close political alliance with

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<sup>53</sup> . Later PML-N quitted PPP in the centre and became opposition in the House.

<sup>54</sup> Khalid Hassan.p.186



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Pashtun nationalists from the NWFP that helped them to win political support of Pashtuns in Balochistan. That demand for provincial autonomy persists today. In 1978 the military regime granted amnesty to Baloch guerrillas, allocated funds for their resettlement and released thousands of remaining prisoners. This tragedy took the lives of about 5,300 Baloch guerrillas and 3300 Pakistan army personnel. The economic and human cost of this conflict was horrendous.<sup>55</sup> Baloch guerrillas had considerable support from Afghanistan.

The revival of democracy in 1980s in Pakistan brought about fundamental change in the politics of the Balochistan National Party, the Balochistan National Movement and the Jamhuri Watan Party. The mainstream parties such as the PPP and PMLL have also increased their support in the province. The Pashtuns are no more aligned with the Balochis. With the inflow of the Afghan refugees to Balochistan the interests of the Pashtuns and Balochis now clash. Balochis fear that Afghan refugees are going to tilt the demographic balance in favour of Pashtuns, who want to carve a separate province out of Balochistan.

The Baloch elite continues to voice concerns about the distribution of financial resources between the central government and their province. They want a greater share of royalties from the sale of natural gas, a better deal in the allocation of finance for development, and greater provincial autonomy.<sup>56</sup>

A fresh conflict has erupted after Nawab Akbar Bugti's death on 26<sup>th</sup> August 2006 . The Musharraf regime had a confrontation with Bugti who demanded an increase in royalty. In January 2003 Bugti said, "Balochistan belongs to the Baloch people and not to outsiders. With a party which has manipulated into power with a powerless prime minister, the future is uncertain. We remain deprived and exploited.... The tribes have special interests, and control of natural resources is our primary demand. We are not beggars. We own the natural resources, but these are being exploited for the benefit of others. We will not allow others to steal our wealth. Your sensitive installations will remain insecure, because you have pilfered, what belongs to our people."<sup>57</sup>

The Musharraf regime outdid its predecessors. It not only added Gawadar, new cantonment plans, Akbar Bugti's killing and disappearances to Baluchistan's festering sores, it also dared the nationalists to climb the mountains and put a seal

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<sup>55</sup> Sartaj Kahn, Riaz Ahmad, "The Changing Face of Pashtun Nationalism", The News: The Political Economy Section, (2 July, 2000)

<sup>56</sup> DAWN, (January 23, 1998)

<sup>57</sup> Ayaz Ahmad Kahn, "A test case for Jamali's government, *Dawn*, (31 January 2003).

on its implacability by dismissing the recommendations of a sympathetic Senate committee.<sup>58</sup>

Sanauilla Baloch, General Secretary Baloch National Party, stated that since 1999, land allotment to Punjabi in Gawadr has posed a serious threat to Baloch nationalism. The Baloch are being converted to a minority; land is sold to Punjabi elite and community.<sup>59</sup>

### Ethnic Polarization and Conflicts in Sindh

Sindh has witnessed more ethnic polarization and violence since the 1980s, than any other province of Pakistan. Most of the violence has been confined to Karachi the port city of Sindh and the financial and Industrial centre of the country. Various ethnic groups live in this city. They represent all nationalities of Pakistan. Sindhis are the only native groups while others have settled there after the creation of Pakistan. Mohajir came to Karachi in large numbers at the time of Partition. Sindhis protested against Mohajirs because they feared that more refugees from India would be brought in. In early years of Pakistan from 1947 to 1951, one million Mohajirs were settled in Sindh. Liaqut Ali Khan, the first Prime Minister of the country, and himself Mohajir, had a generous policy towards the newcomers in the allotment of prime urban properties through the Evacuee Property Trust.<sup>60</sup>

They gained majorities in Karachi, Hyderabad, Mirpur Khas, and Nawab Shah.<sup>61</sup> More significantly, Mohajirs dominated the newly established central government of Pakistan. The Sindhis resented the concentration of the Mohajirs in their province, their monopoly over government jobs, state institutions, and favours in allotting urban properties. The political and ethnic polarization that has taken violent form in Sindh goes back to the early years of Pakistan's policy of resettlement of immigrants from India.

The dynamic economy of Karachi and Sindh have attracted immigrants preferentially. According to the 1981 census Sindhis made up 55 percent of the population of the province. Mohajir constituted the second largest group 24

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<sup>58</sup> I.A.Rehman, "Pacifying Baloch", Dawn, July 31, 2008

<sup>59</sup> Talk with Geo tv channel "Jawabdhey", on 10-08-2008

<sup>60</sup> Policy of allotting land to all Mohajirs discriminated against the Sindhis – a simple unverified affidavit was enough to claim property in Pakistan as compensation to leaving India.

<sup>61</sup> Kardar, Shahid, "Polarization in the Regions and Prospects for Integration," in S.A.Zaidi (ed), Regional Imbalances and the National Questions, (Lahore: Vanguard, 1992)

percent<sup>62</sup> (Pakistan 1981). Punjabis were 10.6 percent; Pashtuns were 3.06 percent, Balochis 6 percent.

Most of these ethnic groups have taken up jobs and business in Karachi or in other urban areas. The flow of other ethnic groups from neighbouring provinces has continued. Bhutto, who was not willing to share power with Mujib in United Pakistan, accepted power with his political opponents in NWFP and Balochistan. NWFP and Balochistan had adopted Urdu as the official provincial language. Then the leader of National Awami Party (NAP), Wali Khan declared:

‘We are not even thinking of renaming the NWFP as Pushtunistan because it is no longer an issue for NAP.’<sup>63</sup>

Bhutto’s government allowed Sindhi language as the official language in Sindh. Bhutto’s policy of adopting a regional language in this major province caused discontent among the other communities; Mohajir, Punjabi, and Pashtun. The language issue triggered NWFP and Balochistan demands to protect their language. Although Pakistan is a fragmented state people want to retain their identity with their language. The PPP government has seen the danger signal and therefore amended the language bill to adopt both Sindhi and Urdu as official languages .

The Bengali political leadership had no role in the political process but their agitation was mobilised on the issue of language, which was surrogate for many of their grievances. Bhutto wanted Sindhi as the official language because he saw the Mohajir as the future political threat . To this purpose, he introduced the quota system for Sindhis in provincial and federal government. Although the quota was implemented in other provinces too in Sindh it caused great damage. Two major conflicting ethnic groups emerged: Mohajir and Sindhi. These groups have changed the political path in Sindh particularly. Later General Zia ul Haq played the Mohajir card and helped that community form their political party Mohajir Qomi Movement (MQM).

Bhutto was an ambitious person with a feudal mentality as well as being an actual feudal lord; he could not have had a working relationship with the NAP in the tribal areas NWFP and Balochistan. Wali Khan managed to exploit PPP’s policies regarding language in Sindh. Bhutto dismissed the governments in NWFP and Balochistan. Regional ethnic movements were suppressed by force and the Army was sent to take over in 1973. Bhutto’s decision to deploy the army

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<sup>62</sup> Census Report 1981, Islamabad: Governemt of Pakistan Publication Bureau

<sup>63</sup> Thir Amin, op.cit.pp.122-125

affected the country's direction in many ways and provincialism assumed new dimensions"<sup>64</sup>

Bhutto started to redress some of the grievances of the Sindhis in early 1970s. Bhutto was Sindhi and he understood the feeling of his community. To compensate for the past deprivation, he decided to fix quota for the rural Sindhis in provincial and federal jobs on the basis of their population. He inducted Sindhis to provincial and federal offices of employment without a competitive examination where it was feared they might have lost out to Mohajirs. Quotas were not confined only to jobs; they were extended to admission to professional institutions, such as engineering and medical colleges. Such policies had long term effects on inter-ethnic relations.

In 1972, the provincial government headed by Mumtaz Ali Bhutto, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto's cousin, made Sindhi the official language of the province and compulsory from the fourth to twelfth grade.<sup>65</sup> This provoked riots by the Urdu-speaking Mohajirs.

The question comes why did Bhutto adopt a clear ethnic agenda in Sindh? One can see the growth of Sindhis nationalism, the PPP had emerged critical as the largest national party on the political scene. In 1970s election there was no question of Sindhi grievances articulated by the nationalists such as the late G.M. Syed and his party being taken seriously. Sindhi voters voted PPP, and rejected all Sindhi nationalists. Bhutto's party dominated the politics of rural Sindh. After Bhutto's death nationalist groups had hardly any representation in the provincial or national legislature. The PPP was reduced to a regional party of rural Sindh. In the 1997 elections it failed to win any seat in other provinces. In 2002, Benazir Bhutto, the party chairperson, was in exile and the party had representation in all provinces and at the centre as well. In 2008, after Benazir's assassination, PPP emerged as the largest party in the country but could not form the government in the centre. Like the first government of Benazir Bhutto 1988-1991, it formed a coalition government with the alliance of PML-N, and ANP. Once again ethnic groups have their representation in the centre. Zardari's government unanimously agreed to impeach president Musharraf and this threat forced him to resign on 18 August 2008.

In contrast to Sindhi nationalists, the MQM the driving force behind Mohajir ethnicity, has dominated elections in Karachi and Hyderabad since 1988. The MQM has been riding on the strong wave of Mohajir identity and the issue of ethnic rights. Politically, they have influence in Karachi and have been supporting

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid.p.186

<sup>65</sup> .Lawarance Ziring, *Pakistan in to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*,( Vanguard:Islamabad),

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PPP, PML-N, PML-Q and they want to be recognised as a fifth nationality, and separate Karachi from Sindh. They received political support from general Zia-ul-Haq's military regime which did not confine its strategy of countering Sindhi militant nationalism to military means. It encouraged, financed and organised the MQM as a counterweight to the Sindhi separatism.<sup>66</sup> So Zulfiqar Bhutto's ethnic card was matched by the military; but all this has unhappy consequences for democratic politics in Pakistan.

The MQM has used all legal and illegal means to establish itself as a separate group in Karachi, Hyderabad. It has vigorously pursued a nationalist ethnic agenda, more dangerous than the Sindhi and Baloch nationalists. Its act of violence, kidnapping and terrorism that grew after a number of splits in its organization in the early 1991, finally evoked a reaction from the central government which ordered the army in June 1992 to suppress terrorism in Karachi. The military operation started under the PML, PPP government of Benazir Bhutto. There have been several instances of extra-judicial killings of suspected MQM terrorists in police custody. The Bhutto government and general Naseerullah Baber, then the Minister of Interior, justified these killings as "police encounters". Some claim that the MQM is a fascist organization with a separatist ideology<sup>67</sup>. It is the only party that uses terror as a political tactic and has its own torture cells across Karachi. Sindhi nationalists claim that the Urdu-speaking intelligentsia has failed to condemn the violent practices of MQM.<sup>68</sup>

The Muttahida Qaumi Movement observed a countrywide protest against controversial remarks by Sindh Senior Minister Zulfiqar Mirza during a speech against MQM chief Altaf Hussain and Urdu-speaking people.<sup>69</sup>

#### Ethnic group an Instrument of the Political Leadership

In Pakistan, any ethnic group can be used as an instrument of the political leadership.

May 12, 2007 saw a direct ethnic conflict between MQM and PPP. The MQM government in Sindh sponsored its workers. The deposed chief justice (CJ), Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhary<sup>70</sup>, was to address the Sindh High Court Bar Council in Karachi. Since the MQM was an ally of Musharraf they decided not to

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<sup>66</sup> Rasul Bakhsh Rais,

<sup>67</sup> Abbas Azhar, "Eyeball to Eyeball", *Herald*, July 1997.37

<sup>68</sup> Fayaz Alam Solangi, "Sindhi Nationalist Movement :1988-2004, unpublished paper. Department of Social Science, University of Management Sciences Lahore, 2005.p54

<sup>69</sup> .Asad Farooq, "MQM Protests against Mirza's remarks, Daily Times, July 15, 2011

<sup>70</sup> On 9 March 2007, the chief justice of the Supreme Court was removed by president Musharraf.

allow the deposed CJ to address the lawyers on 12 May. MQM held a large rally to denounce what it called 'political jugglery' in the name of the independence of judiciary. The MQM controlled the traffic and looked after the security arrangements at the venue of rally. They sealed off Karachi city. The CJ was being supported politically by PPP, PML-N and other political parties. In clashes between MQM and rival groups 34 people were killed and over 140 others injured including Pashtuns (the supporters of Imran Khan's party PTI). Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhary remained confined to the lounge of the airport throughout the day and returned to Islamabad. MQM claimed that 10 activists were killed, while PPP said its 15 party workers lost their lives. The Pashtoon Action Committee Loya Jirga claimed that 16 members of Loya Jirga and ANP were killed in that incident.

Yet on the same day in Islamabad, the pro-Musharraf PML-Q and allies staged a big show to their support and strength. Musharraf declared that "politics will be countered by politics" and he chose to address rallies in his support. 60,000 vehicles were booked from Punjab for 500,000<sup>71</sup> people brought to Islamabad by district nazimz (governor) and ministers danced in front of the national parliament to the beat of *dhol* (drum), in the traditional Punjabi *bhangra* style, as young men fell to violence. Then the railway minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmaed called it the "awakening of Punjab". Divisive ethnic politics was openly employed by the Head of the State and his political allies.<sup>72</sup> The Pashtoon community reacted strongly over MQM's violent action. The Peshawar High Court Bar Association (PHCBA) warned MQM ministers not to visit NWFP and urged lawyers and Pashtoons to shoot ministers if they crossed the Attock bridge "Burn down MQM offices and wage a jihad on its members on seeing them anywhere in the provinces". MQM closed its office in Peshawar. OHCBA president Latif Afridi declared "Pashtun will avenge the bloodshed of innocent Pashtoons in Karachi by the MQM, which is a group of terrorists".<sup>73</sup> It is mainly due to the ineptitude of the 3<sup>rd</sup> rate politicians Pakistan suffered.<sup>74</sup> The recent ethnic uprising in Karachi has broken the previous record. Both ANP and MQM blame to each other, they are plying ethnic cards to retain political powers but common and poor people are being killed. Blaming foreign hands in Karachi killing is an excuse to divert the people's attention. Political parties in Sindh have failed to perform according to the democratic values.

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<sup>71</sup> Dawn, MAY 11, 2007.

<sup>72</sup> Rasul Bakhsh Rais, "Where do we go from here?", *Daily Times*, (May 15, 2007)

<sup>73</sup> Launch Jihad against MQM, PHCBA chief asks Pashtoons, *Daily Times*, (May 15, 2007).

<sup>74</sup> Interview with Dr. Abdul Khaliq Kazi, an Australia-based scholar, (July 30, 2008)

### Conclusion

Ethnic politics are at some level an indication of immaturity; citizens in a democracy cannot be appealed to on public policy, but must be canvassed solely on the basis of their tribe, language or religion. Such politics most often prevails when the most immediate needs have not yet been served, as is the case with backward or Third World countries.

Democracy, or at least its formal expression of electoral politics, has legitimised the power of the MQM. Without democracy its claims of mass following would have remained in doubt, and it might have been suppressed by the state. Other ethnic and regional groups have either lost out to their mainstream political rivals or have joined them in broader national coalitions. The case of fragmented Baloch political groups and the ANP, the traditional torch-bearer of the Pashtun nationalism, is in point. They have formed coalitions with other parties, notably the PPP, after 2008. The democratic process, in this respect, seems more integrationist than the old-fashioned dictatorial approach, sadly much appreciated in Pakistan. It has brought leaders of different regions and political perspectives closer to one another than ever before. The alliance among the PPP, PML-N, and ANP promoted better understanding of Pashtun concerns in Punjab and Sindh. But Balochis are seen as separatist: military operations started by the Musharraf regime continue today despite the change of government.

The democratic process does not guarantee a climate of reconciliation among the main ethnic groups. Zulfqar Ali Bhutto's period had divided the community between Sindhi and Mohajir and drawn the line of hate and prejudice. Ethnic polarization in Sindh continues to fuel tensions between ethnic Mohajirs and Sindhis. A similar fault line is emerging between Pashtuns and Balochis in Balochistan province and at a lesser scale among the Pashtuns and peoples of HAZRA division and Dera Ismail Khan district in NWFP. Yet the military in politics can only exacerbate ethnic problems; democracy provides the best framework under which various ethnic groups have found political space. However, during the last democratic regime, all ethnic groups became active and their demand for separate units in Pakistan has been accelerated. Pakistan needs more provinces; this may bring peace and stability in Pakistan.

## Language Planning: An overview

By Abbas Zaidi

### 1. The problem of terminology

In this paper the term *language planning* has been preferred to *language planning and language policy*. Cooper (1989), Schiffman (1996), and Kaplan and Baldauf (2003) argue that language policy and language planning are two different concepts: language policy is about decision-making and goal-setting; language planning is about implementing policies to obtain results. On the contrary, Rubin (1971) argues that language policy is a part of language planning. According to her, language planning is comprised of four phases: fact-finding, policy determination, implementation, and evaluation. Fishman, Das Gupta, Jernudd, and Rubin (1971) support Rubin's preference for the term *language planning*. They argue that the process of language planning has four major divisions: "policy formulation, codification, elaboration, and implementation" (Fishman, *et al*, 1971: 293).

Many linguists prefer the term *language planning* to *language policy* or *language planning and language policy* because they take 'planning' to be inclusive of policy. For example, Ashworth (1985), Wardhaugh (1986), Fasold (1987), and Ferguson (2006) prefer language planning. In *Sociolinguistics: A reader and coursebook* (Coupland and Jaworski, 1997), there is not a single entry on "language policy"; the term *language planning* is used in the chapter that deals with language planning and language policy. Mansoor (2005) too subsumes *language policy* under *language planning* in her discussion of the history of language education in Pakistan. Carroll (2001) sums up her discussion of the issue by saying the term language planning is the most widely accepted "umbrella term for the broad range of activities seeking to change language and its use" (Carroll, 2001: 13).



## 2. Understanding *Planning*

It is important to clarify *planning* itself because as a concept it cuts across disciplines and occupies an important place in subjects like architecture, economics, human resources management, sociology, tourism, and urban planning. Since planning is basically societal (see below for discussion), language planning cannot be discussed in isolation from its social context, and since planning, in Faludi's words, is associated with organizations, one must draw upon social sciences to understand the very concept (Faludi, 1973).

In her discussion of language planning, Joan Rubin (1971) deals with the very notion of planning itself before defining language planning. She acknowledges the role of management sciences.<sup>1</sup> "The definition of planning", according to Rubin,

has ranged from one specifying an activity that includes the broadest kind of human problem-solving or decision-making to a more limited one specifying an activity that is initiated and supported by some formal body. The more limited definition (of what is still a very complex activity) views planning as an activity whereby goals are established, means are selected, and outcomes predicted in a systematic and explicit manner. (Rubin, 1971: 217-218).

Other disciplines have taken a similar approach to defining planning. For example, Schermerhorn, Hunt and Osborn understand planning as a "process of setting objectives" (Schermerhorn *et al*, 1997: G-3) in which "rules and procedures" are developed (Dressler, 2000:2) to achieve those objectives. There are a few more relevant definitions of planning taken from various disciplines. For example, David (1997) regards planning as plotting of a course of action. Hilgert and Leonard (1997), Robbins, Bergman, and Stagg (1997), and (Fletcher, 1998) unanimously view planning to be about what should be done in the future: it consists of setting goals or objectives and establishing an overall strategy for achieving these goals.

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<sup>1</sup> See her citation of Bicanic's work: Rubin, 1971: 236.

All the above citations have one thing in common: whatever the field of investigation, planning is about *formulating a future/futuristic strategic course of action to deal with a given problem*. This point seems relevant and valid. However, beyond this point, these definitions suffer, just like the definitions found in specialist dictionaries, encyclopedias, and textbooks, from what Basin in his discussion of the nature of definitions calls “the general epistemological semantic idealism” (Basin, 1979: 228). By this expression Basin seems to mean that understanding of a concept is often conditioned by “formalist essence” which diminishes its contextual-social significance (Basin, 1979, especially his concluding chapter).

It may be argued that ‘planning’ is not a neutral, hygienic concept, but a practice aimed at changing or affecting states of affairs or a course of action. The above definitions are semantically descriptive and imply developmental organicity, but they do not seem to define what new realities the working of planning creates (or tries to create), and the role of politics and ideology that underlie planning. Understanding planning without understanding socio-political-economic realities and agendas behind it causes confusion and reduces it to an ambiguous “meta-narrative” (Allmendinger and Chapman, 1999: 3). Planners deal with issues that affect organizations and societies (or polities) in which human beings interact. It is but natural that at times planners have their own views, self-interest or bias, or are ideologically motivated: What they plan ‘for the people’ can actually run counter to the interests of those whose lives are supposed to be improved through planning. For example, government-backed urban planners can acquire a piece of land in the name of progress and development, but in reality their purpose is to grab prime land by driving away squatters or indigenous people. Tollefson narrates such an incident in which urban planning and language planning based upon hidden micro-capitalist agenda are subtly interwoven.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Tollefson’s account is about a poor Filipino taxi-driver who because of his low socio-economic status could not get quality language education for his children and at the same time was threatened with eviction from his slum dwelling in the name of urban planning and development (Tollefson, 1991: 137-139).

Planning purports to change a state of affairs, and since change brings about consequences, it always affects people either favorably or unfavorably. This brings in the dynamics of power. Change and power dynamics are so closely interrelated that one can define *power* the way one defines *change*: Power, argues Luke, is about “bringing about consequences” (Luke, 1978: 634). Hence, planning serves and protects the interests of the powerful. Planners, whether working on behalf of the powerful or on their own, wield a lot of “political-economic power” (Eastman, 1991: 135) because of different resources at their disposal, and their power to effect changes in a polity, organization, or system. It is this fact that has led scholars like M.J. Minnett to assert that planning is concerned with “manipulating things, not only understanding them” (cited by Faludi, 1973: 14). The role of planners and ideologues becomes indistinguishable given the political (or manipulative) nature of their jobs: Planning is no different from ideology because both serve interests of the powerful. Allmendinger and Chapman (1999: 4) have also noted this fact,

Planning now encompasses such a variety of issues that one could include everything from saving the planet to where swings should go in a children’s playground. . . . *Planners themselves are having their technical and apolitical stance challenged by the increasingly political and inclusive nature of the subject.* (Emphasis added.)

The bottom line of the above discussion is that while examining the very term *planning* one must not just be content with its given meaning(s), but try to understand its consequences too, and also the hidden agenda, power relations, conflicts, and ideological interests behind those consequences. Lovejoy’s approach to understanding the world we live in supports this view: “In the whole series of creeds and movements going under one name, and in each of them separately, it is needful to go behind the superficial appearance of the singleness and identity, to crack the shell which holds the mass together, if we are to see the real units [of meaning]” (Lovejoy, 1964: 6).

### **3. Defining language planning**

As mentioned above, planning is an issue that plays an important part in a number of disciplines and subjects, but the *modus operandi* of planning may differ when applied in different contexts.<sup>3</sup>

Rubin and Jernudd's definition of language planning is not very different from Weinstein's (see the footnote below); they call language planning a deliberate change in a language by an organization set up to bring about the change. They argue that language planning in all cases is "future-oriented; that is, the outcomes of policies and strategies must be specified in advance of action taken" (Rubin and Jernudd, 1971: xvi). Wardhaugh (1986: 336) defines language planning as "an attempt to interfere deliberately with a language or one its varieties". In Wiley's opinion, "language planning entails the formation and implementation of a policy designed to prescribe, or influence, the language(s) and varieties of language that will be used and the purposes for which they will be used" (Wiley, 1996: 107-108). For Fasold, "Language planning is usually seen as an explicit choice among alternatives. This, in turn, implies that there has been an evaluation of alternatives with the one that is chosen having been evaluated as the best" (Fasold, 1987: 246). Fishman says that language planning is done at the national level and defines it as "the organized pursuit of solutions to language problems" (Fishman 1974: 79).

All the above definitions of language planning imply *de jure* legitimacy behind language planning. A democratic government that does language planning is authorized to legislate through popular will and consent. Hence, the Galbally Report (1978), the Senate Committee Report on National Language Policy (1984), and the Lo Bianco Report (1987) in Australia, and the Bullock Report (1975) and the Swan Report (1985) in the UK had government authorization and political legitimacy.

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<sup>3</sup> It would be interesting, for example, to note that although urban planners and language planners have more or less the same goals (*viz.*, change and/or development), the strategies applied by these two groups of planners can be very different. Urban planning is "a form of state intervention in a development process dominated by the private sector" (Adams, 1994: 2). The private sector usually is not the prime mover in language planning; hence Weinstein's (1980:56) definition of language planning as "a government authorized, long term, sustained, and conscious efforts to alter a language's future in a society for the purpose of solving communication problems".

Just as I have discussed in the case of planning, language planning too is not a straightforward practice: Governments are guided by their own assumptions and ideologies in planning language. Language planning can create as many problems as it intends or claims to solve. More often than not, it is seldom that language policies affecting minorities are welcomed by them, and in the case of Pakistan it would be interesting to note that language planning has seldom been friendly to the majority (in fact, majorities) of the population (for details, see Rahman, 1999 and 2002; Mansoor, 2005; Zaidi 2011). Although some linguists like Putz (1997) have argued that an adequate language policy program must take account of the various opinions and beliefs of the speakers belonging to a social or ethnic group, many sociolinguists have shown that language planning which is supposed to benefit minorities actually makes them feel being discriminated against (for details, Wardhaugh, 1986; Fasold, 1987; Tollefson, 1991; Martin-Jones and Saxena, 1995; also see section 7 below).

#### **4. Language planning: *raison d'être***

Language planning (hence LP) is a phenomenon that can be called post-colonial (Pakistan, India, Malaysia, Algeria after World War II), post-revolutionary (the Soviet Union in 1917, socialist Ethiopia in the 1980s), or post-independence (Norway in the early 19th century, Central Asia republics after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991). Not all language planners of these “post” countries had the same objectives: some of the newly independent countries decided to continue to use the language of their erstwhile colonial masters (e.g., English in Singapore, India, the Philippines, and Papua New Guinea). They had their reasons: the colonial language meant administrative continuity; it was extremely helpful in functioning on the international scene also, and it could keep a lid on ethnic divisiveness that the introduction of new local languages (at the perceived cost of other languages) could have brought on. In the case of many newly independent countries, a new national language was synonymous with a new nation.

It has been claimed that LP is an official/governmental long-term, sustained attempt to solve the communication problems of a community by studying the various languages and dialects it uses (see, e.g., Ashraf, 1994; Davis, 1994; Amienyi, 2005; Simpson, 2007). Most sociolinguists agree that in the postcolonial

world, newly independent nation-states feel need to unify their peoples, often a set of ethnicities, for the purpose of nation building (Holmes 1992; Williams 1992; Daoust 1997; Wiley 1996). Since LP is held to be an instrument towards achieving destiny of a nation, policies that have been adopted at national or territorial levels claim to be geared towards contributing to nation-building (Ingram, 1994). Thus, since language policies are part of national agenda of development and “entry into the modern world” (Eastman 1983: 31), they are goal-oriented and involve decision-making (Cobarrubias 1983; Cooper 1989), and since LP involves “an explicit choice among alternatives” (Fasold 1987: 246), language planners are supposed to be mindful of the choices they make. Selection of one language or dialect, known as *status planning*, can be perceived as a threat to other languages and/or dialects if the speakers of the latter come to see the selected language/dialect to be thriving at the cost of their own. Tollefson (1991) calls it language hegemony. Minority languages, in Williams’ words, are supposed to be at risk because one important feature of “minority languages is that they tend to be systematically separated from those domains which are crucial for social reproduction, domains such as work, administration, etc.” (Williams 1992: 147).

### **5. Approaches to Language Planning**

Understanding an issue depends upon how people approach it. “What language planners,” says Williams, “seek to do will derive largely from how they perceive language change” (Williams, 1992: 123). Tollefson (1991) identifies two approaches to LP: *neoclassical* and *historical-structural* by which he means methods employed to do LP. His discussion of the approaches can be summarized thus:

The neoclassical approach puts emphasis on individual choices where “the rational calculus of individuals is considered to be the proper focus of research” (Tollefson, 1991: 27). He also says that the neoclassical approach is synchronic as it deals with current language circumstances. Also, it is a-historical and amoral, and assumes that people involved in LP are apolitical.

The historical-structural approach, on the contrary, emphasizes centrality of socio-historical factors in LP, takes into account past relationships between the groups who will be affected by LP, and claims that people have strong political views. Tollefson distinguishes the historical-structural approach from the neoclassical approach by arguing that while “the neoclassical approach emphasizes the rational decisions of individuals, the historical-structural approach emphasizes the origins of the costs and benefits confronting individuals and groups” (Tollefson, 1991: 31-32).

The neoclassical approach cannot not be ignored, however. Given that it focuses on formal properties of language and on the importance of an individual’s motivation in learning a language, the neoclassical approach can guard scholars against putting too much emphasis on the macro factors in LP. The historical-structural approach is not perfect, and behind its claimed critical stance may lurk ideologies and group interests. A good challenge for a researcher is to combine both factors, individual and political-societal, in dealing with an LP scenario in hand.

To a question like which of the two approaches is better, one can only say that it would be difficult to altogether reject one approach in favor of the other. However, a few observations can be made. For example, despite its seemingly scholarly dispassionateness, the neoclassical approach has a few problems. If we look at the societies/countries where LP was done, we find a lot of controversy and protests followed in the wake of LP. India’s example, a huge mosaic of languages and ethnicities, is instructive. Shortly after independence, India wanted to realize its pre-independence nationalist dream of having “an Indian language” in place of English which was supposed to be “a symbol of slavery” (Nayar, 1967: 12). The government decided to make Hindi the official language India which led to extreme violence in the Southern states, especially in Tamil Nadu. Das Gupta (1970) details how a Madras State Anti-Hindi Conference on January 17, 1965, a week before the January 26 date scheduled for Hindi’s ascent to the role of sole official language of India, was organized to protest against “Hindi imperialism”. The campaign against Hindi cost sixty-six lives, which included two persons who committed suicide. The result was that the government had to devise the Three Language Formula of education which stipulated that non-Hindi

speakers would study their regional languages, Hindi, and English (or another European language), and Hindi speakers would study Hindi, English, and another language. According to Sridhar, the Three Language Formula was “a compromise between the demands of the various pressure groups and has been hailed as a masterly—if imperfect—solution to a complicated problem. It seeks to accommodate the interests of group identity (mother tongues and regional languages), national pride and unity (Hindi), and administrative efficiency and technological progress (English)” (Sridhar, 1989: 22).

## **6. Language planning: Haugen’s model**

There are more than one LP models available to researchers. For example, in his discussion of what he calls *language development* with reference to language planning, Ferguson (1968) comes up with his three-category model: *graphization* (choice of an alphabetic system, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization), *standardization* (developing the so-called ‘best’ variety that will be the language of a speech community), and *modernization* (expansion of the lexis of a chosen variety so that it can keep up with the ever-increasing needs of society). For Cobarrubias (1983), there are four ideologies which can have great impact on decision-making in language planning in a particular society: *linguistic assimilation* (everyone in society should learn its dominant language), *linguistic pluralism* (the recognition that more than one language can be given its due status), *vernacularisation* (restoration or revival of an indigenous language for national or official purposes), and *internationalism* (implementation of a non-indigenous language as official language). Ferguson’s and Cobarrubias’ models have received good attention from scholars researching LP. However, it is the Haugen Model that has dominated discussions on LP since it was first enunciated by Einar Haugen in the mid 1960s. Haugen is a pioneer in the field of LP.

In one of his earliest works on LP, Haugen deals with what he calls the “taxonomy of linguistic description” which is “greatly hampered by the ambiguities and obscurities attaching to the terms ‘language’ and ‘dialect’” (Haugen, 1997 [1966]: 341). After clarifying the difference between *language* and



*dialect*,<sup>4</sup> he almost imperceptibly introduces his model of standardization by saying that a so-called “underdeveloped” language is the one which “has not been employed in all the functions that a language can perform in a society larger than that of the local tribe or peasant village (1997 [1966]: 344). After giving examples of the development of different languages, he defines his model: (1) selection of norm, (2) codification of form, (3) elaboration of function, and (4) acceptance by the community.

*Selection* refers to a language or a variety, which will be developed for broader communication. *Codification* (also known as corpus planning) refers to “developing the form of a language, i.e. its linguistic structure, including phonology, grammar, and lexicon” (1997 [1966]: 348). *Elaboration* refers to the scale of the utilization in writing. Both *codification* and *elaboration* are distinct. Haugen gives the distinction thus: “As the ideal goal of a standard language, codification may be defined as *minimal variation in form*, elaboration as *maximal variation in function*” (1997 [1966]: 348; italics in the original). Because the codification of form is inherently delimiting, Haugen argues that the elaboration of function counterbalances it.

Expanding on *selection of norm*, Haugen claims that it is very important because the success of *codification* or *elaboration* is dependent upon it. He is careful enough not to lose sight of conflict, politics, power, and ideology in the selection of a language as norm. In his own words,

Where a new norm is to be established, the problem will be as complex as the sociolinguistic structure of the people involved. There will be little difficulty where everyone speaks virtually alike, a situation rarely found. . . . To choose any one vernacular as a norm means to favor the group of people speaking that variety. It gives them prestige as norm-bearers and a head start in the race for power and position. (1997 [1966]: 349).

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<sup>4</sup> In his words, “Language is always superordinate and dialect subordinate; dialect is regional; as a social norm, dialect is a language that is excluded from polite society, etc.” Haugen, 1997 [1966]: 341-342.

The last part of Haugen's model, *acceptance*, is "part of the life of a language" (1997 [1966]: 350). A norm must be accepted by a "body of users", and the most important factor in the acceptance is that it (the norm) "must somehow contribute to the well-being of the learners" and also "offer its users material rewards in the form of power and position" (1997 [1966]: 350).

Haugen concludes his essay by saying that *selection of norm* and *codification* "refer primarily to form" and *elaboration of function* and *acceptance by community* to "the function of language" (1997: 350). *Selection of norm* and *acceptance by community* "are concerned with society", and *codification* and *elaboration of function* are concerned "with language" (1997 [1966]: 350-351).

Haugen believes in the validity and strength of his model that he presented in 1966. Writing in 1983 he claimed that he had seen "nothing in the literature [on language planning] to make me reject the model as a framework for the starting point of language planners everywhere" (Haugen, 1983: 269).

The strength of Haugen's model is that it tries to combine the neoclassic model with the historical-structural model. He brings in the neoclassic model when he claims that LP is about systematizing a language in which the written word, which is taught, has complete precedence over the spoken word; to him a language must be based on its literary form (Haugen, 1972 [1962]). But he is aware of the importance of norms of society and their influence on language and language planning when he says that if "dialects are to be tolerated, the teaching of tolerance must begin with other and more basic features of inequality in society than the purely linguistic one" (Haugen, 1972 [1962]: 253). In another place Haugen says, "Wherever language problems have appeared, there has been some form of what we have chosen to call 'language planning', a form of social planning" (Haugen, 1985: 7).

## **7. Language planning: Critical issues**

Who plans language? Why? For who? Is LP cement that binds people (nation-building)? Is it divisive? Are there hidden ideologies in LP? Is LP hegemonic? Does it create a class of subalterns? Is LP only a macro phenomenon (affecting a

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society, country, or state), or is there a micro dimension to it too (the family as a language planner)? Is there such a thing as family/home LP enforced by those members of the family who wield power (e.g., parents)? Is LP is a result of ideology? Does it have anything to do with, say, language attitudes and diglossia? Does LP empower anyone? If yes, who?

Language, says Terdiman, is “always engaged with the realities of power” (Terdiman, 1985: 38). In the post-World War I scenario, German in the United States was almost wiped out from schools: between 1915 and 1948, students studying German dropped from 25 to 1 percent (Leibowitz cited by Wiley, 1996: 132). Commenting on this, Wiley says that in order to understand this event “a historical-structural analysis is necessary” (Wiley, 1996: 132).

The nexus between LMLS and language planning is very strong. David (2008) has put it thus,

There are several reasons for language shift and death. Apart from natural disasters resulting in the death of a speech community, many man-made factors can cause such disasters. One of these man-made factors that can cause language shift and death is language policies. (David, 2008: 79).

The issue of identity and social standing of who plans language for who is also an important one. At times LP is done by those who have very few stakes in a language and its speakers. Harlech-Jones, for example, says that in Africa language planning,

is done by people who have been thoroughly unrepresentative of the polity on whose behalf they have affected to speak. They have been the unelected decision-takers and politicians of one- and no-party states, relying for power at first on a brief and vacuous populism following decades of repression, dedicated to nothing more noble than the enhancement of their personal positions and the enrichments of their own pockets. (Harlech-Jones: 1997: 224; also see, Kaplan and Baldauf).

Many linguists view LP to be an instrument through which inequality and powerlessness are bred. This is because LP works with, and not against,

prevailing “social currents” (Romaine, 2002: 19), an argument anticipated by Haugen who called LP “a form of social planning” (Haugen, 1985: 7). Tollefson perceptively argues that language policies are both the outcome and arena of power struggle (Tollefson, 1995). Pennycook, Garcia, and Watson-Gegeo and Gegeo in their respective studies in *Power and Inequality in Language Education* (1995) try to unravel the hidden agenda in language policies. English, says Pennycook, has become a very powerful means of inclusion and exclusion. He gives the example of Kenya where despite Swahili’s status as the official national language, the dominance of English in Kenya’s “economic and legal spheres. . . has sought more to prepare an elite for higher education than to educate a citizenry capable of maintaining a policy of socialist self-reliance” (Pennycook, 1995: 41). The situation seems even worse in the Solomon Islands where Watson-Gegeo and Gegeo found that English is spoken by no more than 10 to 15 percent of the population, and yet it is required for all middle to higher jobs in private and public sectors, which in the words of these scholars contributes to “the undermining of traditional sources of knowledge, growing inequalities between urban and rural areas, and the emergence of social classes” (Watson-Gegeo and Gegeo, 1995: 66).

Scholars like Auerbach and Martin-Jones and Saxena have drawn attention to the micro-sites of the ideologies as they are played out in the name of ESL or bilingualism: the classroom. Auerbach (1995) claims that an ESL classroom is one place where powerlessness is reinforced through the exclusion of the learners’ knowledge, life experience, and language resources. Martin-Jones and Saxena (1995) argue that in England, despite all the rhetoric about the benefits of supporting bilingualism, the very marginalization and inferior status of bilingual support teachers greatly reduced learning opportunities for bilingual children: policies, power asymmetries and pedagogical practices led to containing rather than supporting bilinguals. In his study of schools in Australia, Bullivant has found that the classroom reproduces the interests of the ruling class, and the result is that the working class students’ life chances are reduced because they end up in “low-paid, repetitive, and unrewarding jobs” (Bullivant, 1995: 61).

Tollefson's *Planning language, planning inequality* (1991) also supports this view of the planning as a term, concept, and practice. On the use of descriptive terms and definitions in the area of language planning, his remark is worth quoting,

It is the language research itself that dehumanizes and depersonalizes. . . . Thus research investigates the impact of 'plans' which are 'formulated' and 'implemented' upon 'subjects' and 'populations' by means of 'empirical' research involving 'studies', 'data', and 'generalizations'. . . . In the impersonal language of research, people do not exist as living, breathing, feeling human beings. . . these terms are not characteristic of people at all: they are fictions that limit, restrict, determine, and disempower. (Tollefson, 1991: 205)

Last, a realistic research on LP must take into account the LP done in the home domain. Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas have argued, "Language policy is a super-ordinate category, within which fall operational concerns such as language planning and, as one form of normative regulation, language legislation" (Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas, 1997: 116). This is true in terms of the macro view of LP, but there is another, micro, aspect of LP. Kaplan and Baldauf call it "micro-planning" (Kaplan and Baldauf, 1997: 88). Omoniyi uses the term "microlanguage literacy planning" for it (Omoniyi, forthcoming). The home is a quintessential site for micro-language planning; it is the last bastion of language maintenance. What happens if, say, parents do LP in the home forbidding use of one language and making sure that another language is spoken? For instance, the Urhobo of the Niger-delta part of Nigeria are ashamed of Urhobo, their mother tongue, and generally are not willing to speak it to their children. They prefer the English pigeon spoken in their area (for details, see Ojaide and Aziza, 2007). Implications of such LP in the home can be extremely destructive for the language, which has been forbidden.

## **8. Language planning and postcoloniality**

LP is a postcolonial phenomenon as most of the nations who implemented LP were former colonies of various Western powers. Post-independence linguistic fervor in countries like Tanzania, Namibia, Malaysia, and Somalia can be cited

where new national identity-seeking slogans aimed at building new nations argued in favor of local languages at the expense of the languages of the colonizers (Fierman 1991: Chapter 1). One could hardly distinguish between language planners and politicians; hence the validity of Fierman's contention that language planners are politicians who do not always reveal the motivations or goals which underlie their actions; their "actions frequently produce unexpected results and the environment in which their policies are implemented may include factors which they did not adequately anticipate" (Fierman, 1991: 5). However, it may be pointed out here that this phenomenon is not a matter of being able to "anticipate" or not. *New-nation-new-language* can be a manipulative move by the ruling elites (the beneficiaries of the former colonial master's legacies and policies) to continue to hold on to power. The people, the masses, are given a (new) national language in which they are educated in government schools, but the colonial language remains the truly important language through its official status. Thus despite Swahili's promotion as Kenya's national language, Tagalog in the Philippines, and Malay in Malaysia, English has remained the language of prestige and political-economic mobility in which the ruling elite educate their children (Watson 1983; Zuengler 1985; Tollefson 1986).

Walker (1984) observes that the elite in newly independent countries realize that a status reduction of the former colonial language will ultimately undermine their own status and "put them much more on a par with other speakers" (Walker, 1984: 172). Scotton (1982) too makes more or less the same observation when he says, "The fostering of the colonial language is held in check because it best serves the elite's socio-economic interests, and they do not mind even if the national-official language divide is brought about at the cost of limiting national integration" (Scotton, 1982: 69).

## **9. Conclusion**

It may be argued that planning language is planning inequality in socio-linguistic-economic terms if one language is elevated at the cost of another language(s). LP is done on certain so-called nationalist principles. Thus, the French language is supported and promoted because it stands for being French, Breton, Provençal,

and as a result, many immigrant languages such as Arabic and Vietnamese are casualties. The problem is that a national language is more than an official language because it is “the symbol of people’s identity” (Fasold, 1987: 247). However, identity is *per se* frictional, indeed conflictual, aspect of social functioning. Language standardization is an instance of invasion on and exclusion of minority and/or native languages in the name of national unity. This is why, LP has not been a smooth sailing for language planners in most of the countries of the world because it is, in Wardhaugh’s words, a deliberate “human intervention into natural processes of language change, diffusion and erosion” (Wardhaugh, 2010: 379). One might add to Wardhaugh’s claim by saying that LP often results in subalternization of certain languages and privileging of the language spoken by powerful elites even if it is done with the best of intentions. Jomo Kenyatta promoted Swahili at the cost of his own Kikuyu and many other languages. Now all these languages are slowly becoming extinct.

It is certainly the case that in our world where there is a scramble for ever-shrinking resources, sociolinguistic Darwinism is an unpleasant fact. Nevertheless, this does not have to lead to the flourishing of some languages and the others going the way of extinction.<sup>5</sup> In any polity, possibilities exist to promote minority and native languages on communal, if not national, levels. In order to do so, the communities themselves have to take the initiative. However, how far minority communities are independent and powerful is a moot point. Sociolinguistic situations often hide histories of hegemony, power struggle, and suppression.

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