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Crisis of Globalization and the Rise of Global Terrorism

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Abstract

The globalization that emerged as an economic phenomenon in the last quarter of the 20th Century has now entered a deep crisis not only economically but also politically and culturally. Scholars like Huntington view it as a clash of civilizations and relate this phenomenon to global terrorism. The rise of global terrorism in different parts of the world is a kind of cultural crisis which led to ideological conflicts and wars in the last few decades, particularly with the emergence and consolidation of global Islamic terrorists in different parts of the world. Afghanistan is one of the examples of a clash between modernity and Islamic ideology, which has led to a deep social, cultural, and political crisis in the last few decades. The forces of globalization, which represent the transformation of modernity in the West, have struggled with certain religious ideologies that are static and radical since their origin. The efforts to modernize such societies lead to a resurgence of insurgency and terrorism. Information technology, while facilitating the process of economic, political, and cultural globalization on the one hand, also helps in establishing global linkages among different terrorists and insurgent groups operating in different parts of the world. A new form of cold war at the local (regional) level has global consequences today. The present paper attempts to analyze the current situation of Afghanistan from the perspective of globalization.

Key Words: Globalization; Global Terrorism; Afghanistan; Cold war

Globalization is a complex social, political, and cultural phenomenon as much as it is economic. The views of scholars on globalization are sharply polarized in terms of the benefits and negative consequences for human society. However, its existence and importance are undisputed in contemporary society. At the theoretical level, there are three approaches to globalization: hyper-globalizers (liberal globalizers), sceptics, and transformationalists.

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Hyperglobalizers believe that globalization represents a new epoch in human history, in which all types of relationships are integrated at the global level, transcending the nation-state and making it increasingly irrelevant. Ever-increasing cross-border flow of *capital*, *commodities*, *people,* and *ideas* is are defining factor of the new age. They are further divided into positive hyperglobalizers, mainly those who advocate for open global markets and believe that these will guarantee optimal economic growth and will, in long run, bring about improved living standards for everyone; and negative hyperglobalizers, mainly critical theorist and neo-Marxist scholars who focus upon negative impacts of globalization in a critical manner and rejected the notion of globalization in its totality. Anti-globalization scholars can also be put in this category (Held et.al. 1999)

Skeptics are those who focus on the economic aspects of globalization and argue that there is nothing new about this international economic integration. It is comparable to the period preceding to First World War. They generally prefer the term '*internationalization*' in place of globalization. They also argue that the role of the nation state remains intact (Held et.al. 1999).
The third category of scholars is transformationalists, who argue that globalization is the central driving force behind the major economic, cultural, social, and political changes that are affecting virtually all the world's people today. Globalization is seen as the overall consequence of closely interlinked processes of change in the areas of technology, economic activity, governance, communication, and so on. Development in all these areas is mutually reinforcing or reflexive, so that no clear distinction can be drawn between cause and effect. Transformationalists regard contemporary patterns of cross-border flows (of trade, investment, migrants, cultural artefacts, environmental factors, etc.) as without historical precedent. Such flows integrate virtually all countries into a larger global system, and thus bring about major social transformations at all levels (Held et.al. 1999). This perspective on globalization has now become a dominant perspective in sociology. Anthony Giddens, Manuel Castells, Zygmunt Bauman, David Held, and many other social scientists adopted this approach in explaining the process of globalization.

Before globalization, there were two contesting models of development: the socialist model of development and modernization as a model of development. In the late 1980s, both models faced severe criticisms as modernization failed to deliver the desired result in the developing world. At the same time, the socialist model also miserably failed with the fall of the Berlin Wall and the disintegration of the Soviet Union (USSR). Under these circumstances, globalization emerged as an important paradigm for explaining the changes taking place in the world economy. Wallerstein (1974) emphasized a 'world capitalist system', and today he is considered a proto-globalist by scholars of globalization. He is one of the scholars of the school of underdevelopment and dependency theory, which divides the world into core, periphery, and semi-periphery. But Wallerstein has a departure from here and argues that capitalism is now taking a new form, and he assumes the emergence of "one world society" as opposed to multiple societies during the twentieth century. His work is an early attempt to examine the nature of the process that integrates

capitalism at the planetary level, undermining the national economies. He lays the foundation of later globalization theory through the interdisciplinary nature of his conceptualization. He further argues that the capitalist world economy is facing a crisis, and the global capitalist system is an attempt to overcome this crisis, but in his view, this crisis will be terminal for the capitalist system Although he talks of globalization but his emphasis is mainly on negative consequences of globalization for the capitalist system.

Globalization follows, to some extent, 'modernization' (mainly Eurocentric/American-centric model) deployed in the 1950s and 1960s, prescribed to non-Western countries. This position can be observed in the works of those who view this as a process of internationalization that is creating a more globally integrated world order, and also an existing globalized society that all should aspire to (Munck 2007:4).

Although today globalization exhibits many new traits but it also discerns continuities with previous expansionary phases of capitalism. This position can be seen in the works of sceptics who see this as a new form of capitalism. The transformationalists see this as a reflexive phenomenon and make a distinction from causally related transformations following a pre-established path (Munck 2007:4), like modernization. Globalization is a complex phenomenon different from linear concepts of social transformation. It has 'inter-linked economic, political, ideological, social, and cultural facets'. The most distinctive feature of contemporary globalization is the 'interconnectedness, multiplicity and hybridization of social life at every level' (Amin 1997: 129). This is not an entity like a social structure but a set of relationships (social network as conceptualized by Barnes, 1954). Thus, our daily activities are significantly affected by these complex and interrelated social networks that are stretching social relations to an unprecedented degree (Giddens 1991; Munck 2007). Another important dimension of globalization is time-space compression, particularly the removal of spatial barriers at least in the field of trade and communications, and a change in the notion of time, which has become instantaneous rather than being a reflection of a natural process. The elimination of spatial barriers and the compression of time, however, do not promote 'homogeneous spatial development of capitalism' but a more heterogeneous, differentiated, and fragmented global capitalism.

Thus, "globalization weaves together, in highly complex and abstract systems, the fates of households, communities and peoples in distant regions of the globe" (Held and McGrew 2003: 129). The transformationalist accounts of globalization emphasize "a long-term historical process which is inscribed with contradictions and which is significantly shaped by conjectural factors" (Held et al. 1999: 7). The new global economy is less bound to territory and is a harbinger of a more transnational order. However, it has both positive and negative consequences for both the developed and the developing societies of the modernization era. While economic growth in China, India and other countries of Africa and Latin America has accelerated along with their increased integration with the global economy to some extent but there has been a considerable

opposition of globalization which emerged in the form of social movements focusing on the issues of 'commodification, consumerism, effects on the environment and exploitation of workers' (Munck 2007: 7). Thus, globalization has not only generated high economic growth for the countries who have successfully integrated their national economy with the global economy but it has also produced several negative consequences through marginalization and exclusion of a large chunk of population in global South as well as crises in the developed countries in the form of Anti-globalization movements both at the global and the local levels. One of the important dimensions of this process is the rise of global terrorism, particularly *Jihadists,* which has drawn the focus of scholars of globalization. Munck (2007) has discussed at length reactions to globalization in the form of nationalist movements, patriotism, and *Jihadism*. The focus of the present paper is on the third dimension, i.e., *Jihadism* in the context of modernization as well as globalization in general and in the case of recent developments in Afghanistan in particular.

Islamists and Jihad

The term '*Jihad*' (also spelled as '*Jehad*') is an Arabic term, means a meritorious struggle or effort (*https://www.britannica.com/topic/jihad*). However, its exact meaning depends on the context in which it is used. In the *Quran*, jihad is a term with multiple meanings. Initially (In the Meccan period, c. 610-622 CE), its emphasis was on the internal dimension of jihad, termed *sabr*, which refers to the practice of "patient forbearance" by Muslims in the face of life's vicissitudes and toward those who wish them harm. The *Quran* also speaks of carrying out jihad using the *Quran* against the pagan Meccans during the Meccan period (25:52), implying a verbal and discursive struggle against those who reject the message of Islam. Later during the Madinan period (c. 622- 632), a new dimension of jihad emerged: fighting in self-defense against the aggression of the Meccan persecutors. termed *qital*. In the later literature-comprising Hadith, these two main dimensions of jihad, *cabr* and *qital*, were renamed *jihad al-nafs* (the internal, spiritual struggle against the lower self) and *jihad al-sayf* (the physical combat with the sword), respectively. They were also respectively called *al-jihad al-akbar* (the greater jihad) and *al-jihad al-asghar* (the lesser jihad). A well-known Hadith, therefore, refers to four primary ways in which jihad can be carried out: by the heart, the tongue, the hand (physical action short of armed combat), and the sword (*https://www.britannica.com/topic/jihad*).

Thus, there are different meanings of the term 'jihad' in Islamic literature, which have been used differently on different occasions as per the convenience of the user. The second usage of the term, i.e., *jihad al-sayf* (the physical combat with the sword), has been more problematic as it was used to convert/remove those who don't believe in Islam or those who believe in other faiths. This gave rise to the spread of Islam in different parts of the world, right from the beginning of Islam till today. Different countries of Asia have faced this form of Jihad over centuries and converted totally or partially into Islam. As it was largely through invasion and war against the non-believers of Islam and converted people of different faiths into the Islamic faith, it

was not fully adopted in the context of the socio-cultural milieu of that particular society. Although the people practiced Islamic rituals in their social and cultural life but they also simultaneously maintained their social structure and several local cultural milieus. Thus, in these societies, Islam emerged in a diluted form. In order to overcome this problem, Islamic education was introduced in these societies through *Madrasas* and *Tabligi Jamat*. The *madrasas* are supposed to educate and socialize the new generation in pure Islamic faith, while institutions like *Tabligi Jamat* are engaged in adult socialization of the members of their respective society into Islamic faith and removal of alien cultural elements.

Yogendra Singh (1979) has discussed at length this dimension of Islamic tradition in (undivided) India and observed that "*during the periods of stable Muslim power*, *the religious*, *political and cultural elites of Islam enjoyed high social status and contributed actively to the perpetuation and expansion of Islam*. *Muslims used to be qazis (judges)*, *muftis (preachers)*, *faujdars (district administrators), and courtiers, and they held most of the positions of economic benefits and power*. *Under this sheltered existence, they contributed to the Islamic culture and way of life without hindrance*" (Singh 1979: 69-70). He further observed that this position changed during the British regime, and Muslim elites began to lose their pre-eminent status. The above-mentioned elite classes of *qazis* and *faujdars* were replaced by judges and district collectors in 1781 and 1790, respectively. This resulted in the decline of Muslim elites and the loss of political power to the British, making the former Indo-Muslim governing class bitter against the British and against the Western civilization which they represent. Thus, during this period, Islam lost more and more of its earlier syncretic and liberal tendencies, and in its place, orthodoxy and revivalism became its major preoccupations.

Thus, a reform movement was started 'to reactivate the solidarity of the *umma*, or the Muslim community, revitalize the member's commitment to the values embodied in *Hadith* and reduce the over-emphasis on the mere teachings of *fiqor*, the Islamic jurisprudence' (Singh 1979: 70). Although, there was also an effort to re-interpret the tradition (*ijtihad*) by modern needs. But the followers of the reform movement initiated by Shah Wali-Ullah were impressed by his militant appeal of *jihad* or holy war, to safeguard the identity of Islam. The various pulls in the reformation movement of the Great Islamic tradition began to polarize into two major schools, one which stood for liberalism and peaceful reform, and the other which was for more orthodoxy and militantism. The psycho-cultural phenomenon generated by these movements continued to grow and finally culminated in the creation of Pakistan. The large chunk of the Muslim population in undivided India failed to modernize during the British period in comparison to the Hindu population, which adopted Western education and captured important positions in all spheres of life. This process continued in post-independence India. Modern education was an important factor in the process of modernization of British India. However, after the partition of India orthodox Muslim population shifted to Pakistan, and a large part of the Muslim population remained in India and

gradually adopted modern secular education for their social and economic mobility. The liberal Hindu population, which was in the majority, moved smoothly on the path of modernization, which helped in the development of the Indian economy in the post-independence era and more rapidly in the era of globalization. Thus, modernity is an important base of globalization. In the case of Muslim countries, resistance to orthodox Islamic values is a major impediment to their economic development. Pakistan and Afghanistan have lagged in this process and for one or the other reasons have marched towards *Jihadi* ideology and due to this ideological dilemma are failed to modernize and to integrate with global economy.

In Afghanistan, there is a struggle between orthodox forces represented by the Talibans and other militant groups engaged in global terrorist activities in different parts of the world and opposing the forces of modernization and globalization. During the post-Taliban regime, one full generation has been modernized through secular education and refusing the rule of the Talibans. As today terrorism is a global phenomenon, there is a need to examine the sociological factors responsible for the rise of global terrorism in the context of transformations taking place as a result of globalization in different parts of the world.

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