

Looking at the Work of Myron Weiner and Ali Banuazizi for Tracing Tussle between Religiously Conservative and Liberal People in Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan regarding Social Transformation

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This study has no aim to hurt any ideological or social segment but is purely based on academic purposes.

Abstract

Like many other books. The work of Myron Weiner and Ali Banuazizi (1994) entitled “The Politics of Social Transformation in Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan” coerces the social sciences academia in the addressed countries to answer the critically highlighted questions about socially and religiously conservatism in Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan. At the same time during analyzing previous literature, it is found that no one author in Pakistan has been traced who emphasizes these questions as the “research questions” for any dissertation. If there is somewhat similar work published for the EU-funded project “Asia-Europe Connectivity” in Soft Vision University Tbilisi (Georgia), it deals only with Iran or the states encircling the Caspian Sea, but not Pakistan. Therefore, this study traces out the reasons for the tussle between religiously conservative and liberal elements in Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan; and they search for its solutions academically.

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Introduction

The issue of social transformation in Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan is being highlighted since the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan, or since the Iranian Revolution in 1979. On the other hand, the socio-cultural anthropology of Pakistan is also criticized by various western thinkers in a way that seeds of Pakistan's formation are based on theocracy or religious conservatism (Weiner & Banuazizi, 1994). Although Muslim scholars in Pakistan and Iran reject this hypothesis but significant part of social sciences academia still

believes on respective stance (Nau, 2013). Therefore, this study needs a phase of reconciliation between both groups of academia.

Within the Indo-Pak subcontinent, the roots of academic reconciliations have been traced from the life of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. When William Muir wrote the book “Life of Muhammad”, Sir Syed academically replied to him by visiting various libraries in London and wrote the book “Khutbat-e-Ahmadiya” by referring out the British authors against the claims of William Muir (Muir, 1864) (Khan, 1869). Hence, this study follows Sir Syed’s defined parameters and tries to academically negotiate with pro-Western writers (whether they are Muslims belong to Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan).

“The Politics of Social Transformation in Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan”; A Sample Book

Like many other books. The work of Myron Weiner and Ali Banuazizi (1994) entitled “The Politics of Social Transformation in Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan” coerces this study to answer the questions raised in general about Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan. In fact, no one author in Pakistan has been traced who emphasizes on these questions as the “research questions” for any dissertation. If there is a somewhat similar work of Dr. Muhammad Asim for an EU-funded project in Soft Vision University Tbilisi (Georgia) entitled “Cultural Europeanization of Muslim Societies in Caspian Region and Its Impacts on Asia-Europe Connectivity”, it deals only with Iran but not Pakistan (Asim, 2022). Therefore, this study first extracts the research questions that can be easily found in any literature published about the social transformation in Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan.

Research Questions

- 1) Unlike Afghanistan, why European Lifestyle is popular in developed cities within Islamic societies like Pakistan and Iran?
- 2) How do conservative religious people react to the European lifestyle in Pakistan and Iran?
- 3) Does the concept of Ijtehad not allow to adopt a modern lifestyle in Islam?
- 4) What is the solution of the tussle between religiously conservative and liberal people in Pakistan and Iran, and What can be the possibility for Afghanistan to be a progressive society?

Content Analysis

Following the research questions, the content analysis of this book is also divided into four parts.

Reasons for Largely Public Acceptance of European Lifestyle in Developed Cities of Pakistan and Iran?

The popularity of the European lifestyle in developed cities within Islamic societies like Pakistan and Iran can be attributed to various factors such as globalization, modernization, and cultural exchange.

Globalization has made it easier for people in different parts of the world to access information about other cultures and lifestyles. This has led to a greater awareness of the European lifestyle among people

in Islamic societies, which has in turn sparked interest in adopting certain aspects of it (Asim M. , 2022) (Bangash, 2022).

Modernization, particularly in terms of technology and infrastructure, has also played a role in the adoption of the European lifestyle in Islamic societies. As these countries develop and become more connected to the global economy, people in these societies are exposed to new ways of living, which can include aspects of the European lifestyle (Bayat, 2022).

Cultural exchange is another factor that has contributed to the popularity of the European lifestyle in Islamic societies. As people from different cultures interact with one another, they often adopt certain aspects of each other's lifestyles. This can include fashion, music, and cuisine, among other things (Behzad, 2022).

It's also worth noting that the adoption of the European lifestyle in Islamic societies is not universal, and many people continue to value and practice traditional Islamic customs and lifestyles. Ultimately, the reasons for the popularity of the European lifestyle in these societies are complex and multifaceted and vary from person to person (Bangash, 2022).

Reasons How and Why Religiously Conservative People React against European Lifestyle in Pakistan and Iran

Conservative religious people in Pakistan and Iran may react negatively to the adoption of the European lifestyle, viewing it as a threat to their traditional values and way of life. They may see it as a form of cultural imperialism, where Western values and norms are imposed on Islamic societies (Bukhari & Abbas, 2015).

Some conservative religious people may view certain aspects of the European lifestyle as immoral or sinful, and may take steps to discourage or prohibit them. For example, they may object to Western-style clothing that they deem immodest or provocative, or they may criticize Western music and entertainment for being vulgar or promoting values that they consider to be contrary to Islamic teachings (Bukhari & Abbas, 2015).

In some cases, conservative religious groups may try to impose their views on the broader society through protests, social media campaigns, or other forms of activism. They may also advocate for laws and policies that reflect their conservative values, such as restrictions on the sale or consumption of alcohol, or limitations on public displays of affection (Khanna, 2015).

It's important to note, however, that not all conservative religious people in Pakistan and Iran are opposed to the European lifestyle, and that there is a range of opinions and attitudes within these communities. Some may be more accepting of certain aspects of Western culture, while others may be more opposed to it (Price, 2001).

Relationship between the Concept of Ijtihad and Modern Lifestyle in Islam

The concept of Ijtihad, which refers to independent reasoning and interpretation of Islamic sources, does not necessarily prevent the adoption of the modern lifestyle in Islam. In fact, some scholars argue that Ijtihad is necessary for Islam to adapt to changing social and cultural conditions (Saikal, 2015) (Bayat, 2022).

However, the interpretation and application of Ijtihad can vary widely among Islamic scholars and communities, and there may be differing opinions on the extent to which modern lifestyle practices are compatible with Islamic teachings. Some conservative religious scholars may argue that certain aspects of modern lifestyle are incompatible with Islamic values and should be rejected, while others may argue that Islam can accommodate and even embrace certain modern practices (Bukhari & Abbas, 2015).

Ultimately, the question of whether modern lifestyle practices are permissible or not depends on how they are understood and evaluated within the context of Islamic teachings and principles. While Ijtihad can allow for greater flexibility in interpreting and adapting Islamic teachings to modern conditions, it does not necessarily provide a clear answer to every question or issue that may arise (Bukhari & Abbas, 2015).

Solution of the Tussle between Religiously Conservative and Liberal people in Pakistan and Iran

The tussle between religiously conservative and liberal people in Pakistan and Iran is a complex issue, and there is no easy solution. However, some steps can be taken to promote greater understanding and dialogue between these two groups:

1) Education:

Educating people about the diversity of Islamic thought and the importance of respecting different opinions and interpretations can help promote greater tolerance and understanding between religiously conservative and liberal people (Bangash, 2022).

2) Dialogue:

Encouraging open and respectful dialogue between religiously conservative and liberal people can help bridge the gap between these two groups and promote greater understanding and acceptance of different perspectives (Khanna, 2015) (Bangash, 2022) (Asim M. , 2022).

3) Empowerment:

Empowering marginalized groups, such as women and minorities, can help promote greater equality and tolerance within society, which can in turn help reduce tensions between religiously conservative and liberal people (Asim M. , 2022).

4) Civic Engagement:

Encouraging greater civic engagement and participation in the democratic process can help promote greater tolerance and understanding among different groups, as people can engage in dialogue and debate peacefully and productively (Saikal, 2015) (Siavoshi, 2022).

5) Respect for Human Rights:

Ensuring that human rights are respected and protected, including freedom of expression, freedom of religion, and freedom from discrimination, can help promote greater tolerance and understanding between different groups within society (Weiner & Banuazizi, 1994).

Ultimately, addressing the tussle between religiously conservative and liberal people in Pakistan and Iran will require a multi-faceted approach that takes into account the complex cultural, social, and political factors at play (Bangash, 2022).

Conclusion

By examining all the described facts, it has been investigated that the socio-cultural anthropology of the three states is based on historically rich civilizations and a joint product of Persian and Indus Valley civilizations where Central Asian and Mongol traits have also been found. However, the seeds of conservatism, orthodoxness and militancy were grown in the region by major powers during Cold War; specifically in the 1960s. Therefore, such codes of behavior are called the US and Soviet products for spoiling not only the soils of Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan but the lives of Afghans, Iranians and Pakistanis. And, these codes of behavior would only be revised when these countries will be once again associated economically, politically and socially as they were for centuries.

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