

The good governance model to counter extremism: an historical perspective

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Overview

Historically extremism finds strange ambivalence in Pakistan's secular record. At independence, the country under the leadership of secular and liberal politicians – most having enjoyed a western education – was not envisaged solely on the basis of religious doctrine. This is in contrast, for example to many African and Asian countries where religious leaders steered the course of the freedom struggle. However, it is difficult to reconcile the fact that the country's religious leadership began playing a dominant part right after independence, shaping legal and political institutions of the newly formed country.

If examples of intolerance and inequality are to be examined in Pakistan's prevalent turbulent polity, it can be noted that segments of society backed by religious political parties and militant groups are opposed to freedom of expression and human rights for all communities; whereas the opposite can be found in pockets where free-thinking traditions are permitted to flourish as much as is possible. Take the examples of secular, democratic leaders working to create a milieu of tolerance and human rights for all who have been targeted with impunity for their support and advocacy.

Although Pakistan became the first Muslim country to elect a female head of state in 1988, it is also where religious extremists have assassinated, at different occasions, liberal-thinking and secular leaders, including the former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, the Punjab governor Salman Taseer and the Minister of Religious Minorities Shahbaz Bhatti – both Taseer and Bhatti were murdered for showing support for persecuted religious minority communities.

In Pakistan's urban areas, especially dotted within the cities of Karachi and Lahore, the diversity of cultural and secular traditions is not entirely lost. Women have risen to occupy key positions in politics and within the workforce – as the head of the State Bank; within Pakistan's foreign affairs ministry at home and abroad and within ambassadorial divisions. This is in sharp contrast, of course to the lack of rights for those women and children from low-income groups who are victims of brutally violent practices perceived wrongly to have roots in traditional norms.

Ironically, religious parties have never won a majority in the general elections but Pakistan is among the few countries that have experimented with *shariah laws* (Islamic laws) both officially as well as unofficially through non-state actors.

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The question that has arisen on numerous occasions given this dichotomy of practice and belief within society – the secular versus the religious – is how the existence of conflicting social and political currents can or should be explained.

Admittedly, a religious and extremist mindset can be found among certain groups in most nations and almost in all times. Even Western democracies are not free from extremist organizations and exclusivist ideas targeting foreigners or non-white races (Hoffman, 2006:10-40). The disturbing aspect is that in Pakistan (and in many other developing countries) organizations propagating extremist ideologies are gaining ground both politically and in other spheres of ordinary life. Increased power and support – not to mention resources and manpower – have allowed these groups to openly challenge the writ of the state by establishing control over different areas within the country. For example, the Pakistani Taliban had virtually established a parallel government in Swat in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa before the Pakistani security forces reclaimed the area through launching an extensive military operation there in 2009 (Abbas, 2010: 13-29). Similarly, the communist ideologues in India and Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka are other examples of the same genre of extremists-cum-terrorists in recent times (Lutz and Lutz, 2008:150-153; Fair, 2004:11-68).

This paper focuses on the roots of extremist ideology as perpetuated in Pakistan. The objective is to trace the origins of such ideologies and forces that shaped them in the past and continue to keep them afloat in the present. Without elucidating this understanding, it is difficult to assume that extremism can be eliminated.

This paper also discusses the governance structure followed by Muslim rulers was based on openness and religious inclusiveness during most of their rule in the region known as South Asia. However, at different periods in history, the changing external environment provided opportunities to religious conservatives to propagate extremism. Their narrow perception of the problem resulted in incorrect diagnosis and prescriptions: fidelity, devotion and suppression of dissent were posed as the solution. It is argued in this paper that the extremist solution was not adopted by the general populace and religious extremists were largely ignored.

The rulers of the time were attentive to regional and religious specificities and the existence of a monolithic Islamic community is a myth developed to serve political purposes in the early 20th century. And as is shown recently, this myth is based on little evidence (Bose and Jalal, 2012:22-27). It can be said that Muslim rulers of the sub-continent followed what we now termed as principles of good governance. The use of religion was kept to the minimal pragmatic rather than at a high ideological level. Consequently, they faced no noticeable revolt from their non-Muslim population till the 18th century.

More recently, the creation of Pakistan caused a large number of Indian Muslims to migrate to Pakistan creating a more or less homogenous religious environment (Burki, 1999:181-186). This homogeneity, coupled with an exaggerated sense of multi-dimensional insecurity, reduced the social cost of ignoring dissent and debate. Adding fuel to fire, early experimentation of political elite to use religious nationalism as the very fountainhead of Pakistan's nationhood sowed the seeds of narrow world views and ego-centrism (IPBNU, 2014:118-120). It encouraged the habit of suppressing debate on fundamental issues related to both the politics of the nation and the role of religion in society. More unfortunately, it increased the payoff associated with religious intolerance among rival religious groups for each other. The preferred game was to knock off the rivals, and monopolize the guardianship of state's religious stance. This strategy is the root cause of schisms and confusion prevalent in our society (Siddiqi, 2014).

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Islam is flexible and can accommodate other religions and world views. The history of South Asia and Indo-Islamic civilization is a clear evidence of this claim. In fact, one of the four reasons cited by Cohen (2004:18-21) for the spread of Islam includes relative flexibility of the religion in the face of changing political, commercial and demographic realities of the time. The open attitude towards other religions and accommodative attitude of Muslim rulers contain important lessons for contemporary leaders and rulers. Historically, it was observed that good governance practices kept extremist elements at bay, whenever they reared their head, and thus these groups were unable to attract attention.

It can be argued that all forms of extremism and exclusivist mindsets that are challenging the writ of the state today have been observed through centuries, albeit in various forms and ways. The reasoning for growing intolerance taking on more violent forms is due to weaker governance structures. The South Asian Indo-Islamic civilization has shown that different religious cultures can coexist peacefully and amicably. What is required from the state is to adopt a policy of religious neutrality towards its subjects, and practice equality and the adoption of human rights and dignity for all citizens.

In the colonial era, Muslims faced political and economic decline and significant sections attempted an insulation of the community with a focus on inner purity. This approach sharpened the schisms, intensified sectarian conflicts, and engendered animosity towards western education and knowledge. Similar factors have allowed extremist ideologies to survive 68 years after the independence of Pakistan.

It can be argued that almost all extremist groups derive their inspiration from a narrow view of practices adopted by the earlier Islamic state of Medina. It is instructive, therefore, to explore the history of this stance and its practical relevance for today. This paper, therefore, attempts to explore in historical context various factors that have contributed to the development of extremist ideologies.

Certain factors that transform extremist ideologies into terrorism should be identified. Once such factors are identified, ways and means to influence their development can be found. These factors have to be curtailed, not only by force but through debate. If not then we cannot ensure a peaceful future. Needless to say this is the lesson that one can learn from history. For example, Nazi ideology was defeated both on the battlefield and through intellectual debate. This multifaceted defeat is what provides both necessary and sufficient condition for the elimination of extremism.

The Delhi Sultanate: how the principle of multi-religious accommodation forged greater security

The Sultanate of Delhi refers to an administration established first by Muhammad bin Sam in 1175. This administration continued under the rule of successive slave-soldiers of Turk-Afghan descent. This was the period of the Abbasid Caliphate in the region known presently as the Middle-East. The Delhi rulers, being Sunni Muslims, derived their legitimacy from Abbasid Caliphate. In 1229, the Delhi ruler Iltutmush was recognized by the Abbasid Caliphate and awarded the title of 'Sultan' which was used by subsequent rulers (Qureshi, 1970:5-8). This fact partly indicates an important development during this period, the seeking of religious legitimacy by rulers. And this also partly served the strategic purpose to undermine rival claims to the throne by acquiring greater legitimacy in the eyes of the masses. This was necessary at the time to ensure peace and discourage insurgencies.

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One can contrast the reliance of medieval Muslim rulers on religious legitimacy with that of the time of the first four caliphs when no such need arose. This difference reflects two aspects: the specialization of religious sciences, especially after ninth century (of the Christian era) led to the rise of a class of religious scholars. For example, five major and detailed legal and ethical strictures, namely the Malaki, the Hanafi, the Shafi, the Hanbali, and the Jaafri, where the first four are followed by Sunni Muslims and the last one by Shiite Muslims, were developed in the ninth century and expert knowledge was required to resolve legal disputes. Thus, the need for religious experts and scholarly guidance encouraged the role of the *ulema* (religious leaders/scholars) in Muslim polity, thereby ensuring that the rulers of that age relied on their judgments. This development, although gradual but persistence, increased the role of religious scholars in the system of governance (Jalal, 2008: 24-40).

Relatedly, the second factor could be the discouragement and distortion of the Quran's concept of deciding state authority through the principle of consultation or the *shura*. The Quran clearly recommends that Muslims must decide "their affairs by mutual discussion and consultation" (Quran 42:38), which, practically speaking, requires the participation and involvement of the community in the affairs of the government (Rahman, 2000: 132:144). What happened centuries ago was that the heavy-handedness of the rulers of the subcontinent meant, they hand-picked consultants on the basis of personal whims.

The history of Muslim rule and the development of Indo-Islamic culture is an excellent example of how good governance can accommodate groups with different religions, ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Jackson (2010:120-122) discusses the policy of Muslims rulers towards minorities using a two pronged criteria: (a) the fate of religious establishments in Delhi Sultanate and (b) the status of Hindus. He concludes that Hindu-Muslim relations were largely amicable, throughout the times as history has shown. Specific examples are also available. The son of a Hindu princess of Dipalpur, Sultan Feroz Shah Tughlaq who reigned over the Sultanate of Delhi between 1351 and 1388, for instance, was, like his predecessor Mahammad bin Tughlaq, used to participate in Hindu religious festivals. Similarly, Mahmud of Ghazni was a man of letters known to encourage arts, poetry and cultural openness. The notable poet Ferdowsi, after laboring 27 years, went to Ghazni and presented the Shahnamah to him.¹ The Sufi musician, poet and scholar, Amir Khusro (d.1325) was one of the most famous musicians of those times.

On the other side, there is evidence that both Hindu rajas and Muslim rulers of the time patronized religious establishments of different religions. Numerous instances point out the example of tax exemptions given to Hindus, Jains, and Jogis and Brahmans by Muslim rulers. However, interestingly, recent research points that stories of destruction of religious establishments were largely based on myths developed in the 19th century.

It is not the case, however, that the Delhi Sultans were completely devoid of religion. They relied on religion only to the extent of securing divine sanctification to their rule, a general practice of the time. Although religious leaders were allowed to play an important role within the Sultanate's administrative structure –

¹ Mahmud of Ghazni succeeded Sebuktigin as the ruler of Ghazna in 998. He launched a campaign against Hindu rajas to extend his rule and to ease the fiscal position of his government. "He did despoil and destroy many Hindu temples, but in his dealings with his own Hindu subjects he was tolerant, as is evident by his employment of Hindus, some of whom lived in Ghazna and rose to high posts." (Qureshi, 1970: 3-4)

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Shaikh Al Islam (or Islamic scholar) presided over judges in each city – this was largely symbolic and religious life was outside the state control:

Despite rapid dynastic change, these sultans created a stable political structure. In their rhetoric, “Islam” meant the political dominance of the Sunni Turkic and Afghan elite. This rhetoric (preserved in coinage, monumental architecture, and historical chronicles) should not obscure the fact that local Muslim communities were growing outside state control. Hindu kings (rajas) who fought against the Turkic dynasties employed South Asian Muslims as soldiers, just as Hindu soldiers fought with the Turkic armies. Political conflict between Turkic sultans and Hindu rajas was not a clash between two religions or two incompatible civilizations despite claims of colonial-era and contemporary nationalist histories. (Kugle, 2004:636)

Though relying on the model of the Abbasid Caliphate, the third of the Islamic Caliphate, the rulers of the Delhi Sultanate were pragmatic in their approach. The Sultan was the source of power but he had to rely on religious scholars for finding justification for his actions. The elite group, closer to the Sultan, followed Persian cultural traditions and those manners associated with the latter court. The principle of inclusive governance required that the large Hindu majority be allowed to play its part. This was achieved by assigning revenue collection and other local governance issues to the Hindus because they understood local customs and were aware of vernacular issues.

The Hindus community and other non-Muslims were guaranteed full protection. They enjoyed religious freedoms and were part of the governance structure. Many of their temples and other institutes received funds from the government. Stories about the onslaught of Muslim rulers against the Hindus are misconceptions developed only in the 19th century. Quoting Bose and Jalal (2012:22):

The colonial reinterpretation of Mahmud's attack on Somnath stressing religion rather than economics and politics can be traced to the period of the first Anglo-Afghan war of the early 1840s. Mauled in Kabul, the British forces retreated to India via Ghazni and dismantled the doors of Mahmud's tomb, which they mistakenly believed had been taken from Somnath.

The portrayal of iconoclastic wars waged by Muslim rulers against Hindu rajas was motivated more by economic reasons than religious reasons. More recent evidence suggests that, in line with the strategy of that period, the wars were a means to acquire one off booty and a continuous source of tributes and taxes from the defeated kingdom. Many Hindu rajas in South India followed the same strategy; for instance, Rajendra Cholas's northern campaigns from his South Indian base (Bose and Jalal, 2012:22-27). Similarly, the destruction of religious establishments had military importance and was not indicative of religious iconoclasm as the historians of later years would interpret. It was meant as a display of power and to establish one's authority within the masses. This strategy was also employed by Hindu rajas when they emerged victorious in a conquest.

There is an economic rationale why Muslim rulers were particularly accommodating towards their non-Muslim subjects. In the Delhi Sultanate, Hanbali legal jurisprudence was adopted. It has a special focus on providing security to non-Muslims as well as allowing the role of custom in legal codes (Jalal, 2008:35-40). Hindus being in majority in the sub-continent, the security tax levied on non-Muslims (*zimmis*) was a large source of revenue for the state. Moreover, Hindus were also relied upon for collecting agricultural taxes

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and to sort out issues directly related to village populations.² Hindus communities were related to the local population and fully aware of indigenous languages, customs and demands. In fact, the attempt by Aurangzeb (the grandson of the Mughal emperor Akbar) to reduce the role of Hindus by forcing them to accept Islam and/or by empowering rival Muslim landowners led to chaos and eventual decline of Mughal Empire in the 18th century. Cohen (2004:16) notes “the attempts of Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb to extend his control to South India, coupled with his brutal treatment of his subjects, led to a crisis of empire”.

The decentralization of Delhi Sultanate after the mid-14th century led to the development of smaller regional kingdoms.

“This process, however, was not entirely state sponsored in most regions, as it appeared to be in Kannada-speaking region of the south. The rise of the vernacular did not necessarily entail the decline of the universal as is sometimes supposed. Islam while adapting to the regional settings of Kashmir and Bengal, never lost its universal appeal”. [Bose and Jalal, 2012:26]

The Delhi Sultanate relied on Sufism and Shiite loyalties to justify their independent existence. This was the rational stance in the multi-religious multi-ethnic environment because both Sufism and Shi'ism favored the inner spiritual aspects of religion more than the visible ritualistic approach that gradually took root in later centuries. Thus, Ahmadabad (Gujarat) was named after the Sufi saint Shaykh Ahmed Khattu. Similarly, other dynasties build tombs to honour Sufi saints and show allegiance to the philosophy of spiritualism which was equally revered by Hinduism and Buddhism. “Some of the Deccani dynasties were Shia and fostered cultural and commercial relationships with Iran (Kugle, 2004: 636).

The Mughal era and Akbar's eclecticism

The Mughals retained the same principles of governance as the Delhi Sultanate. Ideologically, the Mughal rulers, except Aurangzeb, were more inclined “to sharing power with Hindu elites and Ithna Ashari (Twelver) Shiite nobles”, thus diffusing the insistence on Sunni or Turkic supremacy of Delhi Sultanate (Kugle, 2004:637).

However, an important development that helped the rise of exclusivist ideologues was Akbar's experimentation with religion. It earned him the wrath of radical Sufi scholar Ahmed Sirhandi, inspired by the writings of Ibn-e-Taymiyyah (Ali, 1996: 22-26 and 59-61). The latter wrote to purify religion from the influence of Ibn Arabi, a controversial Sufi saint who argued that God can be known through the forces of the nature.³ An important implication of this view is that there is no good and evil in the literal sense of the term as everything belongs to God. The opponents of Ibn Arabi charged him of heresy. The opposite view is that God is independent of the characteristics of this universe. The debate leads to what is called a conflict between unity of appearance and unity of creation. Ibn-e-Taymiyyah interpreted the Sufism of Arabi as an impurity and tried to purge religion from such views.

² It is important to note that the language spoken by the elite class at the time of the Delhi Sultanate was different to what was spoken by the masses. The upper classes spoke Persian which was the language of the court, while ordinary people used Hindi or Sanskrit or local languages.

³ Muhyi al-Din Ibn al-Arabi (1165-1240) was a mystic and sufi saint of medieval period. He believed that all tangible things in the universe are reflections of God and thus contain His essence which filled the universe. His opponents accused him of pantheism.

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The objectives of Ibn-e-Taymiyyah as discussed by Rahman (2000:132-165) were: (a) to rediscover and intellectually reconstitute the early normative community of Islam which is the most perfect example of Islamic community based on the Quran and Sunnah. His aim was to bring the Muslim community onto the true path adopted by that early community established by the Prophet and his close companions; (b) according to Ibn-e-Taymiyyah Islamic developments in law, theology, Sufism, and politics followed a wrong track and thus, needed to be put back on correct path. All the disciplines followed orthodox lines and represent unitary Islam until the fourth century of the Islamic calendar. Subsequently, however, they started to change. The reason for this degeneration, according to Taymiyyah, was weak Muslim leaders, and religious impurities added to Islam by the sects like Ismailias, Shiites, and sufis. Ibn-e -Taymiyyah attacked Arabi and other Sufis, especially of the later period. He interpreted their acts as indulgence in pleasure and ecstasy and equated their social seclusion as a way to seek pleasure.

In the sub-continent too exclusivist ideologues reacted against religious liberalism. As cited earlier, when Akbar (1542-1605), the third emperor in Mughal dynasty, adopted an eclectic approach in religious terms he was challenged by Shaikh Ahmad Sirhandi (1564-1624). Akbar encouraged inter-faith dialogues between Hindu, Muslims, Christians and other religions. His religious experimentation, especially the development of a new kind of religion, invited him the wrath of Sirhandi. Sirhandi was an orthodox sufi sheikh of Naqshbandiyya order and assisted Akbar's court historian for sometime. Sirhandi interpreted the ideas of Akbar against Islam and urged the people to avoid following such 'impurities'. In his own time, his criticism of Akbar was largely ignored (Ali, 1996:22-24). However, "his continued criticism of the inadequate role given to Islam in the politics of the state led to his brief imprisonment by Emperor Jahangir in 1619 in the Fort of Gwalior" (Sijapati, 2009:629). Although ideas of Shaikh Ahmad Sirhandi did not prove influential in his own times they inspired Shah Waliullah (1703-62) in whose hands these became more extreme and caused much violence in the sub-continent.

The main reason why the philosophy of Shaikh Ahmad Sirhandi was unable to gather support was because of the governance strategy practiced at that time. Muslims and non-Muslims were equally treated under the administration of most of the Muslim rulers. Security for non-Muslims was the responsibility of the ruler. The law of the land was accommodating and issues confronting non-Muslims that required their religious rulings were treated as such. By marrying Rajput and Hindu princesses themselves, Mughal rulers tried to set a role model for society where religion was a personal matter for the individual.

Meanwhile, the ideologies perpetuated by the likes of Shah Waliullah inspired from the writings of Sirhandi and Ibn-e-Taymiyyah argued for an authoritative stance on matters such as morals and prayers. He favored religion as a matter of demarcation from the non-Muslims (Jalal, 2008:40-57). This particular emphasis on religion as a line of demarcation provides the foundation of using religion as a motivation behind the demand for a separate homeland for the Muslim community during anti-colonial campaigns in the sub-continent in the early 20th century. Presently, it is the argument favoring religion as a source of identity that is vehemently employed with great effect by many religio-political parties in Pakistan like Jamaat-e-Islami, and Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam.

The revivalist movement of Shah Waliullah

The specific approach to religion propagated by Shah Waliullah that proved influential in the later years was a product of the times when strong central rule was over. During the reign of Aurangzeb many factors contributed towards weakening of state institutions and allowed for the greater role of religion in political

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and state activity. One important factor in this respect was the circumstances leading to Aurangzeb's accession to the throne. Being the youngest son of Emperor Jahangir he had to imprison his own father and kill his two elder brothers before sitting on the throne in Delhi. He used religious charges of apostasy against Dara Shikoh, his elder brother and heir apparent, which were then approved by his handpicked *ulema* to execute the prince (Ahmed, 2007:49-50). Perhaps these deviations and the use of religion for personal gains explain his later efforts to assign a far greater role to religion in the body politic of the empire compared to his predecessors. He commissioned religious scholars to compile a book of religious judgments, *Fatawa-i-Alamgiri*, to be used in the courts as benchmark and guidepost in legal cases.

There were other developments in the time of Aurangzeb that increased his reliance on religion as a source of justification of his actions. For example, trade with the Europeans had increased the economic and military power of the southern Indian rajas. Aurangzeb tried to include them in his empire but even after many prolonged battles he met with little success. His long struggle against the Hindu Rajas and the general strategy to decrease the role of Hindus was based on extreme religious ideology inspired from *Fatawa-i-Alamgiri*.

After the death of Aurangzeb, the remnants of the Mughal Empire fell into chaos and the political environment never regained its past stability. There emerged various types of governments in the subcontinent. Some areas were under the control of Sikhs and Marathas, others were ruled by Hindu Rajputs while some were occupied or rather plundered by Afghan conquerors, among them notably Nadir Shah. In this context, Shah Waliullah argued for a revivalist movement. Implicitly, he assumed that the strife and chaos in India, which used to be *Dar ul Islam* (abode of Islam), was due to deviation from the path ordained by God. The right path was the one given in Quran and Sunnah and it should be followed by all Muslims. He favored implementation of Sharia to ensure the path of Islam. Those who don't follow it cannot be part of Muslim community.

Shah Waliullah was particularly cautious in advising Muslims to avoid Hindus and Shias because, he believed, they had a bad influence on the faith of Muslims. This period was marked by Shia efflorescence in the sub-continent. The states of Bengal and Awadh were noted in patronizing mourning ceremonies and supporting the writing and distribution of Urdu language elegies (Metcalf and Metcalf, 2006:43).

The ideas of Shah Waliullah were more effectively propagated by his son Shah Abdul Aziz. His influence was notable among the elites of northern India. The ideas of reform which implied purging of Sufism from the practices of saint worship and the restoration of political and social order were the need of the circumstances of those times.

It was in the context of these uncertain and chaotic times that Shah Waliullah wrote a letter to Ahmad Shah Abdali to conquer Delhi. He was imagining a strong ruler in the form of Ahmad Shah Abdali.⁴ He even advised Abdali on how his army should behave once they conquered Delhi. However, the army of Ahmad Shah Abdali did not pay heed to the recommendations by the spiritual master and plundered and

⁴ Ahmad Shah Abdali (1722-1772) was the ruler of Afghanistan from 1742-1772. In 1761 he sacked Delhi causing much havoc, destruction, and atrocities. Many historians claimed that it was Shah Waliullah who instigated Abdali to wage *Jihad* against rulers in Delhi. (see e.g. Jalal, 2008: 54-56)

destroyed Delhi in a way that became a proverbial example of terror and horror for people for many decades into the future.

Conclusion: exploiting faith to divide and rule

A vast empire ruled by Muslims of Arabia, Turkish, Afghan, and Persian origins, South Asia provides an important repository to study Islamic ideals as they have developed and changed to adapt to societies and ideologies that are averse to integrating global strains. It is noted that Islam through the centuries has not played a significant role in the governance structure developed by Muslim rulers though they did seek religious sanctification for their rule from the Muslim Caliph in Central Asia and also from the doctors of religious sciences. At different phases in the history of Islamic civilizations, intellectuals and Sufis attempted to revive the 'true spirit of Islam'. Unfortunately these attempts focused more on the outward display of Islamic identity rather than its intellectual roots.

Most Muslim rulers adopted pragmatic approaches to diverse religious communities under their leadership and minimized the intervention of religion in affairs of the state. Therefore, they also succeeded to extend their rule despite rapid dynastic changes. The Mughals also adopted similar rules of governance, encouraging inter-faith dialogue and similarities between religions of the sub-continent to develop a unifying theology acceptable to all. These attempts invited a reaction from more conservative elements who only managed to gain ground during the reign of Aurangzeb. The latter instead of being pragmatic, encouraged a one-sided view of Islam, primarily to achieve personal political aims. This consequently weakened the Mughal Empire and brought it to its untimely ending. Conservative religious thinkers urged an armed attempt to restore a Muslim government in Delhi but their moves proved disastrous. In fact, they deepened the divide between Hindus and Muslims. It has been stressed that these fissures and cracks that gradually developed over centuries played an important role in formulating the independent struggle of Hindus and Muslims in subcontinent leading both groups on different paths.

The checkered history of Pakistan after independence from colonial rule displays a strange ambivalence between world views that are poles apart. The inability to explain Pakistan's identity at conception is debated to have become the root of its present-day dichotomy and complex socio-politics. On the one hand there are those minorities of all religions that share a liberal and secular outlook, willing to integrate with the modern world, and share values and a global business culture. Conversely, there are religious organizations and religiously inclined political parties censoring Western concepts and ideas to secure Islamic culture in its pristine purity of the early days of the Prophet Muhammad and his four companions.

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