

3 / Religious Revivalism across the Durand Line

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In the early twentieth century Afghanistan became a rallying point for anticolonial nationalists in British India, and between 1985 and 2001 it again became a rallying point, this time for Pakistani religious politics. In both cases, religious scholars (ulama) who called themselves Deobandi were engaged in projects in Afghanistan constructing a moral and authoritative framework that drew on the pedagogies of Sunni revivalist Islam in an attempt to co-opt the moral legitimacy of the faith for the state. Spanning almost a century, the events that I describe in this chapter demonstrate, not so much a consistency of intent among the ulama east of the Durand Line or of the governments of Afghanistan, but instead the ways in which Afghanistan and Pakistan have shared a history and a political economy of Islamic revivalism that is definitively anti-imperialist in its motivations.

The Deobandi Ulama in Afghanistan

Through the early twentieth century, the religious elites of Afghanistan worked in an uneasy accord with the government in Kabul.¹ Afghan rulers attempted alternately to subordinate and appease the many religious

figures whose own authority derived from localized influence.² One consistent strategy employed by all these rulers of Afghanistan was to try to absorb and control discourses of Islamic teaching, learning, and jurisprudence as educational management and lawmaking processes were centralized and regularized. However, the state periodically used the clergy as autonomous actors who could represent the will of the state outside Kabul, whether to forge consensus or to rally armed retainers.³ On the Indian side, the early twentieth century was a period of intense nationalist writing and activity alongside pan-Islamic leanings. Several ulama trained at the Deoband school in Uttar Pradesh conceived of a plan to free India of colonial control by mobilizing the northwest frontier Pashtun "tribes" as an army of liberation. The movement was called the Jama'at-e Mujahedin in a self-conscious linking with an earlier jihad against the Sikhs in the same region in 1831. When the plan was discovered in 1916, several of the conspirators based in the Pashtun frontier region of British India moved across into Afghanistan. Among the Jama'at-e Mujahedin were Fazl Ilahi, Fazl Rabbi, and Saif al-Rahman (1859-1949), all of whom had studied at the Dar al-'Ulum Deoband.⁴ The movement has been rightly understood as rooted in antipathy toward the British government in India and in a claim to political spaces within which the ulama could establish government and law on an Islamic model. But we should add to this rationale that the ulama who went to Afghanistan were not otherwise employed, had few chances for great social and economic success in India, and were highly educated and impassioned. After completing a grueling seven- to ten-year course of study, the ulama had been trained at Deoband in the Arabic language and sometimes in Persian, and in Quranic science, philosophy, and logic. They were writers, legal thinkers, and translators with scholarly and religious obligations to painstakingly establish the lines of authority of any argument they might make. This was a time when Islamic religious knowledge and training could no longer get a man a job in a colonial education system that drew on English linguistic skills, Western-style scientific and mathematical training, and British jurisprudential practices.

In Afghanistan, by contrast, Dar al-'Ulum Deoband's institutional reach was an important avenue of the Jama'at-e Mujahedin's contact with the government. Deoband's reputation, and the absence of an equivalent

madrasa in Afghanistan itself, meant that Deoband-educated ulama were brought into the state negotiation of Islam. Obaidullah Sindhi, an Indian scholar, along with two compatriots, arrived in Afghanistan in 1915 and presented himself at the court of Habibullah Khan in a meeting arranged by Hajji Abdul Razzaq, a Deoband-educated scholar and a member of Amir Habibullah's parliament, who had lived in Afghanistan well prior to the arrival of the Jama'at-e Mujahedin. Abdul Razzaq had also become a judge in Habibullah's government, in charge of the administration of sharia, and taught at the Madrasa-e Shahi, the state madrasa producing an official compilation of fatwas, or points of legal interpretation, in several volumes.⁵ These ulama taught in the madrasas and served as authoritative commentators on points of law and interpretation. During its early years Amir Habibullah Khan's Habibiyya College, the first institution of higher education in Afghanistan, largely recruited teachers educated in India.⁶ Meanwhile, Sindhi set up what he called the Provisional Government of India in Exile, representing a number of revolutionary parties, including the Jama'at-e Mujahedin as well as other Indian nationalists and socialists. The express purpose of the mission was to see through a "scheme" for the invasion and liberation of India from the historic northwestern route.⁷

British pressure to decrease Afghan involvement across the Durand Line and to control the Indian revolutionaries, the Jama'at-e Mujahedin, at his court suggested to Habibullah that he should take control of these relationships himself. Concurrently, his increasingly insecure position at the court forced him to rethink his domestic policy. Although he had initially appeared ambivalent toward the pan-Islamists at his own court, Habibullah silenced Mahmud Tarzi in his denunciations of British policy.⁸ However, in 1917 Habibullah had several of the Indian mujahedin, including Obaidullah Sindhi and Maulana Saif al-Rahman, placed under house arrest and removed Hajji Abdul Razzaq from government service.⁹ But the Jama'at-e Mujahedin came back into official favor in the Kabul court after Habibullah was assassinated in 1919 and his son Amanullah Khan took over. In April Amanullah declared in front of the British agent to Kabul that Afghanistan was thereafter "as independent a state as other states and powers of the world . . . [and that] no foreign power will be allowed to interfere internally and externally with the affairs of Afghanistan."¹⁰ On May 4, Afghan troops moved into Bagh, on the British side

of the border. Framed as a direct response to the British as they pushed forward into northwest India to establish garrisons in Waziristan, this mobilization was part of Amanullah's move to overturn the protectorate status accorded to Afghanistan under previous Anglo-Afghan treaties.¹¹ Amanullah then immediately returned to traditional Afghan military policy, rallying the Pashtun tribes under the Afghan flag and using the *Jama'at-e Mujahedin* to mobilize the Pashtuns across the Durand Line against the British Government of India.¹²

When Amanullah formally recognized the delimitation of the modern Afghan state at the Durand Line after 1923, a new period of modernizing and regularizing systems of government, defense, and education began in Afghanistan that engaged the Indian ulama in different ways. They remained socially distinct, living as a small diasporic community in Afghanistan, but contributed to the world of print, education, and jurisprudence in ways that continued to shape Islamic practice there. Maulvi Bashir stayed on to try to establish contact with the Russian consul in Afghanistan, possibly trying to solicit Bolshevik money and support for the "revolutionary bases" and providing services as an informer for the Kabul regime until his death in 1934.¹³ Fazal Ilahi and Saif al-Rahman also remained in Kabul, the former working as a teacher and the latter as a judge and advisor to the government in the field of jurisprudence.

As he began consolidating power, Amanullah aimed to appropriate the irrefutability of Quranic logic for the state. In addition to formalizing a legal code and administrative practices, the Ministry of Justice printed and circulated state-sanctioned curricula for legal studies.¹⁴ A curriculum was also laid down for teaching religion in schools with the stated objective of communicating principles of personalized, disciplined religious practice with an emphasis on teaching the singularity of God, observance of regular prayers, fasting in the month of Ramadan, charitable giving, and the obligation of Hajj.¹⁵ It encouraged a highly personalized and internalized practice of faith by an Afghan citizenry and allowed the state the autonomous use of Islamic principles as content for a national, state-administered legal system.

As he regularized and created consensus over state-controlled administration, legal practice, education, and the military, Amanullah needed allies who not only could create curricula and law but could contribute

to the creation of institutions—whether press, schools, or parliaments—that would reinforce the state's prerogative over lawmaking and law enforcement. He turned to Hanafi theological discourse, which had been influential in the Kabul area since 1858 and had been reaffirmed in the compilation of Afghan laws under Habibullah.¹⁶ The Indian ulama were uniquely suited to this project, communicating fluently in Persian in addition to Arabic and Urdu and often some English.¹⁷ It is important to note, however, that this involvement was not necessarily reflected in the nationalistic discourse of Amanullah's Afghanistan. In 1925 the editors of the newspaper *Ittehad-e Mashriqi* (mostly migrants from India) printed an announcement that the Afghan Publication Law stated that "only Afghan subjects may edit newspapers and proprietors and editors must be Afghans of a good character."¹⁸ In the edicts of 1927 Amanullah stated that only Afghan nationals could run schools.

The personal records of one Indian scholar describe his engagement with the state and Islamic practice in Afghanistan at a variety of levels—not necessarily impinged upon by the laws intended to regularize educational and administrative practices. Maulana Saif al-Rahman, a Pakhtun from Mathra, north of Peshawar, who had studied under Maulana Mahmud al-Hasan at the Dar al-'Ulum Deoband, was instructed by his teacher to perform *hijrat*—to migrate out of India as a mark of rejection of colonialism.¹⁹ He moved to Jalalabad, where he was invited to stay with the Afghan finance minister and began to receive an allowance from Habibullah Khan.²⁰ He then began to teach at "various madrasas" in Afghanistan, and shortly before Habibullah's assassination in 1919 he was appointed as a judge of the military court.²¹ On Amanullah's accession, Saif al-Rahman promised that he and other Indian ulama would "of course participate and contribute . . . religious, political and official service" in Afghanistan.²² During the 1923-24 Loya Jirgas and constitutional debates, Saif al-Rahman was appointed advisor as a member of the high council of state. He was also ostensibly charged with encouraging consensus among the ulama and fostering support for Amanullah's political reforms. Saif al-Rahman's papers include a series of notes written in Arabic quoting and explaining hadith (sayings attributed to the Prophet) and Quranic verses on the need for community building and consensus. Jotted alongside these hadith is a draft of a statement of agreement between

different ulama reached at a "grand gathering." These personal notes constitute Saif al-Rahman's core arguments to the forum of the Loya Jirga. They demonstrate the extent to which his knowledge of and authoritative use of Hanafi "authenticated" hadith and interpretations were fashioned as a basis for a wider political authority and participation in the Loya Jirgas of 1923-24.²³

Clearly highly regarded for his religious training, Saif al-Rahman was invited to participate in the process of fashioning a regular, state-monitored religious curriculum. First he was invited to the Ministry of Education to serve as an examiner for graduating judges.²⁴ Later he was asked back to discuss the appropriate syllabus for training judges and to participate in discussions over the appropriate syllabus for a school of sharia.²⁵ Saif al-Rahman's authoritative knowledge of Hanafi pedagogy was being appropriated by state-sponsored institutions. This made him a man of great significance in the relatively small Afghan world of teaching and learning of legal practice. He attended dinners at the private residence of the Minister of the Royal Office of the King²⁶ and fast-breaking parties thrown by the Ministry of Education in Ramadan.²⁷

Once the principles of Amanullah's constitution of 1923 had been decided, it was up to the *qazis* (judges) of different districts to enforce them. Saif al-Rahman remained involved in the central administration and oversight over legal practice, again applying his own expert knowledge of Hanafi jurisprudence to work out inconsistencies or contradictions that arose in the application of a central legal code. In one instance this involved conducting an investigation into three separate jail sentences—for ten years, three years, and four years, for identical crimes—handed down in Shinwari, Jalalabad, and a third location.²⁸ In another case, Saif al-Rahman worked through Hanafi law to come up with an absolute age of puberty for application in cases where the age of maturity was of relevance.²⁹ Mechanisms of centralization defined the role that Saif al-Rahman would play through at least 1936, when the number of official requests for his intervention decreased.

During Amanullah's reign, Saif al-Rahman had the state's authority as an interlocutor outside of Kabul.³⁰ Like Abdul Razzaq, Amanullah Khan's deputy in Waziristan from 1919-1923, Saif al-Rahman was not part of the system of tribally organized alliance to the state, and his involvement in

matters of government, like the involvement of Abdul Razzaq, suggests a parallel system of checks and balances. That the Afghan amir would use a scholar born and trained in India to serve as an intercessionary with his own population is an insight into how Amanullah attempted to overcome some of the restrictions of the tribal alliance systems and tradition as he created systems of state governance.

Like Amanullah, Nadir Shah (r. 1929-1933) reinforced the preeminence of sharia and Hanafi jurisprudence in the 1931 constitution and continued to assert the state's prerogative over lawmaking. A number of madrasas imparting training in Hanafi law were created between 1929 and 1960, beginning with the Madrasa Dar al-'Ulum-e Arabi, which was established in Kabul near the end of Amanullah's reign. These were followed by the Abu Hanifa school in Bagram, Fakhr al-Madaris and Madrasa Jami in Herat, Madrasa Asadia in Mazar-e Sharif, and Najm al-Madaris in Jalalabad.³¹

However, Nadir Shah was far less reliant on individual scholars, instead using systems of religious consensus created by his predecessor and building on constitutional agreements reached at the loya jirgas held by Amanullah. Almost immediately after taking control, he created the Jami'at al-'Ulama Afghanistan, a state-convened religious advisory council, and the 1931 constitution included a stipulation that Hanafi law and interpretation would be used to define Afghan law.³² The principal of the state-run madrasa Jami'a 'Arabiyya was nominated as an ex-officio member of the Jami'at al-'Ulama, and the body was mandated with the work of managing a religious studies curriculum in Afghanistan, forging continuity between Amanullah's policies and those of Nadir Shah.³³

During Nadir Shah's reign, Saif al-Rahman and other Indian ulama drew on their own networks of authority and fraternity based on friendship and patronage. Saif al-Rahman supported at least a few young Pash-tun students to study in Afghanistan during his time in Kabul.³⁴ He maintained close personal ties with Qazi Sayyid Mujaddid, governor of Shinwar, and with other members of the government, including a Mufti Jan Muhammad with whom Saif al-Rahman's son received an appointment for a short time.³⁵ And using his own connections in Peshawar, he began to engage in trade. At the same time, he became more reliant on his sons, one of whom began teaching English in a local Kabul high

school. Another son Abdul Aziz, who began to be referred to as *maulivi* (someone with authoritative knowledge about Islam) managed some of the family trade.³⁶

With the accession of Zahir Shah (r. 1933–1973), the influence of the Indian ulama within the Afghan state was clearly on the decline and the salaries and privileges granted by Amanullah expired and were not renewed.³⁷ Saif al-Rahman's 1930 petition to allow his sons to inherit his land was not answered, and his repeated requests to Zahir Shah's government asking that he be allowed to sell the lands were eventually refused outright.³⁸ The influence of the Indian ulama within Afghanistan's "Islamic bureaucracy," institutionalized by Nadir Shah as the *Jam'iyat al-'Ulama*, gradually declined while the state continued to try to centralize, regularize, and monitor religious discourse.³⁹ In later years the arena for this project moved to the faculty of Islamic law and the faculty of theology at Kabul University.⁴⁰ But despite the state's engagement with Islam and disengagement with the Indian ulama, the revivalist discourse was inherently self-sustaining and autonomous, because the markers of religious accomplishment and authority were based in knowledge of Arabic language and classical texts—not just in academic accreditations received through the *Jam'iyat* or at the university.

Saif al-Rahman, like other ulama, was aware of this autonomy and maintained his connections to an Arabic linguistic world. He subscribed to Arabic journals, ordered classical and contemporary Islamic texts on hadith, jurisprudence, and Islamic history from the Arabian Peninsula, used his own connections to call on King Abdul Aziz at the Riyadh court when he went on Hajj, and tried to initiate contact between the Afghan court and the anticolonial Sheikh al-Sanusi, whose religious movement had reverberations in the trans-Saharan region.⁴¹ Saif al-Rahman used his links with the Arab world to engage in a debate about a translocal Muslim politics. In his letter to the editor of *Shubhan al-Muslimin*, an Arabic journal published out of Mecca, Saif al-Rahman said, "I request you to add articles on political issues to its content for most countries and nations need to know appropriate politics. This is one of the most necessary areas [for comment]; most important and beneficial to alert men and awaken them."⁴² In this carefully worded suggestion, Saif al-Rahman demonstrated his enduring concern with rationalizing a politics based

on religion and led by the ulama—the position that had brought him to Afghanistan in the first place.

Deobandi Ulama and Shari'a in Pakistan and the Afghan Jihad

After decolonization and partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947, certain Deobandi ulama who found themselves on the Pakistan side of the border attempted to create local madrasas that would impart the Hanafi curriculum taught at Deoband, and hence continued to call themselves and their students Deobandi. They were the most organized of the ulama in Pakistan, and from early on have occupied a central position in religious politics. However, these politics were and are contended and complemented by other groups, including Islamists who are not ulama such as the *Jama'at-e Islami*, by ulama from competing scholarly traditions such as the *Barelvis* and the *Shafi'is*, and by other pedagogies such as that of the *Tablighi Jama'at*, which encourages a personalized practice irrespective of scholarly training, and the *Ahl-e Hadith*. Like many other new citizens, the ulama who found themselves in Pakistan in 1947 waited for the violence, migrations, and border adjustments to end before they reembarked on postcolonial religious projects. These included Maulana Maududi of the *Jama'at-e Islami* and Shams al-Haqq Afghani, a Pashtun from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and a former student of Obaidullah Sindhi, who was also minister for education in the princely state of Kalat. Abdul Haqq, a student at Deoband who could not return to India, set up a madrasa in the outskirts of Peshawar around 1952. In 1954 Maulana Yusuf Binori established the madrasa *Jam'iyat al-'Ulum al-Islamiyah* in Karachi. Mufti Muhammad Shafi, another Deobandi, established the madrasa *Dar al-'Ulum Karachi* in 1951 and went on to become a member of the Constituent Assembly.

In 1951 Pakistan's ulama signed a twenty-two-point declaration that stated that law and the constitution must not contradict Islamic principles—a position that was reiterated sporadically and eventually ratified in the 1973 constitution.⁴³ However, Pakistani approaches to law and legislation, Islamic and otherwise, were deeply ambivalent. This had much to do with the country's inability to create a constitution and stable legislative

bodies, and the fact that Pakistan retained (and still retains) a great number of laws made during the colonial period. Sharia was significant only in determining the outcome of cases relating to "inheritance, marriage and caste and other religious usages and institutions," as under the colonial definition of "Personal Law."⁴⁴ There were few Islamist parliamentarians in Pakistan who were interested in nurturing exclusivist religious discourses on social authority, law, and legislation. The authority of the Sunni Hanafi ulama over the definition of a political Islam was also contested by other Islamist groups—most notably by Maulana Maududi, who held strongly that the ulama did not have a place in politics.⁴⁵

Deobandis' combined pedagogic and societal objectives of creating an Islamic framework of knowledge for a wider Pakistani public were initially expressed through reprints of classic Deobandi texts on the role of the ulama in politics, in fatwas related orally and reported in the press, and in mosque sermons. In 1957 Mufti Mahmud and other Deobandi ulama set up a national curriculum for Islamic primary and secondary schools. Creation of an Islamic system of schooling set the stage for the organic evolution of an Islamic society that received and interpreted information through the framework of the Arabic language, Quranic knowledge, and the early history of Islam as an example of an ideal societal and social order. These schools became a system of patronage of the pedagogies of Islamic teaching and learning, creating jobs for the ulama graduating from the madrasas, and extending an Arab linguistic, Islamic historical, and Quranic moral framework as the basis for all historical inquiry.

The Pakistani ulama's discovery of a legitimate politics that knitted their religious interpretative authority with a mandate to govern began again with the jihad in Afghanistan. During the 1970s and 1980s some textual expositions on the logic and divinity of the Quranic revelation were published for a wider public.⁴⁶ Only after 1983, a year marked by little more than occasional calls by mujahedin for the help and advice of Pakistani ulama, did the concept of jihad become widely introduced in a Pakistani public religious discourse.⁴⁷ After this time, the politics of jihad in Afghanistan became pivotally linked to the still-nascent discourse on sharia in Pakistan.

The 1985–1986 parliament, which included members of the Jam'iyyat-e 'Ulama and Jama'at-e Islami, was presented with the Nifaz-e Shariat

Bill—a constitutional amendment that required that *all* Pakistani laws be brought into conformity with Islam in order to "protect the sharia." Passage of the shariat bill would have privileged the ulama as the determinants of which laws were Islamic and which were not. In rallying a base of support for the Nifaz-e Shariat Bill, the Deobandis of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (then called North West Frontier Province) created the organization Tehrik-e Nifaz-e Shariat-e Muhammadi, which organized conferences through the cities and towns of the Pakhtun northwest in 1985–1986.⁴⁸ Great public resistance to the passage of the bill was posed by more secular-minded groups and also religious groups such as the Sunni Ahl-e Sunnat wa al-Jama'at, whose own differences with the Deobandis meant that the passage of the bill would have excluded them from mainstream definitions of Islamic law. As a result, the passage of the bill was prevented at the national level.

At exactly the same time, between 1985 and 1987, the ulama of Pakistan decided that they must come out in material and military support of the Afghan mujahedin. In schools and mosques, Deobandi ulama began calling for Pakistanis to join in the jihad. In a speech to a gathering of members of Dar al-'Ulum Haqqaniyya in 1986, Abdul Haqq said the following:

Now our country is in a fragile state and we are trapped between two issues. The first is the government's hypocrisy as it battles us with delaying tactics in passing the shariat bill. In fact now there is open opposition to us. On the other hand the socialist group has come back to life and the powers of those without religion have come to life. . . . May God keep the Afghan mujahed alive and keep him steadfast and give him victory. If these people were not here then the Frontier and Balochistan would have been in the grip of Russia. And if the Afghan mujahedin are fighting for the freedom of Afghanistan today, then on the other hand they are also fighting for the time that it is Pakistan's time for war. . . . The way all of you have achieved laureates and wondrous accomplishments in the field of education, don't fall behind now in the battle field of jihad. Our struggle and efforts will not be to bring strength to any religion-less powers, nor for western democracy nor for governing power. Our effort should be purely for shariat. . . .

Now we want that the ulama should unite and for the sake of the way of shariat put their hands on the collar of the government and make them agree to the shariat bill.⁴⁹

The politics of militancy, as demonstrated in Afghanistan, came to be seen as the solution to the impasse reached by the Deobandi ulama and specifically the Jam'iyat al-'Ulama in the world of participatory politics in Pakistan. They pointedly engaged with the politics of jihad as a politics of eventual governmental and authoritative reorganization of Pakistan.

Radicalization of ulama politics was not limited to Haqqaniyya in the northwest. It extended as far as Karachi. In 1988 Mufti Muhammad Rahman of Madrasa Binoriyya visited Jalaluddin Haqqani and other mujahedin leaders in Afghanistan, telling them that he wanted his students to learn the "mindset of jihad." Haqqani was reportedly very pleased at this offer and sent Fazl al-Rahman Khalili to Karachi to invite people there to jihad. Hence, "in the yearly vacations of 1988, large numbers of students from Binoriyya town went to training to Afghanistan and participated in the *jihad*." Among those students who joined the jihad at this time was Maulana Masud Azhar, who took "sixty days of training instead of the required three days." Azhar then established the group Jaish-e Muhammad, which has been under scrutiny since 2001 for its links to al-Qaida.⁵⁰

The jihad progressed and the Afghan mujahedin reclaimed Afghanistan. With the withdrawal of Soviet troops in 1989 and the slow emergence of the Taliban, the Pakistani ulama were excited by the success of jihad as a model for creating a new system of authority—pedagogic, jurisprudential, and representative. In 1991 a slim volume was published at Haqqaniyya called *Islamic Revolution and Its Philosophical Underpinnings*, a text explaining the necessity of complete revolutionary reorganization of society, which also argued that Afghanistan was the "point of entry of a worldwide Islamic revolution" because it represented a moral order that, by virtue of being based on sharia, would bring peace to a world otherwise torn apart by the warfare created by Western imperialism.⁵¹

Since 1986 the politics of Pakistani Islam have rejected the restrictions of a participatory arena of postcolonial politics that still privilege feudal elites and colonial law. Religious literary production and primary

and secondary education became the mainstay of the ulama's activities in Pakistan. The number of registered religious schools grew to over twelve thousand by 2008.⁵² Publishing activity also increased dramatically as part of the ulama's conscious imperative to expand the base of religiously inspired discourses. Journals edited by Deobandi ulama but intended for a wider circulation, such as *al-Haqq* in Akora Khat-tak,⁵³ *al-Khair* in Multan, *al-Balagh* and *Beenat*, *Khatam-e Nabuwwat* in Karachi, *Haqq* in Lahore, and *Talim al-Quran* in Rawalpindi, began to be published.⁵⁴ Commentaries, articles and sermons were published in popular editions.⁵⁵

Older works by Deobandis who had been part of the Jama'at-e Mujahedin movement were reprinted by madrasa presses and independent publishers and discussed as classic interpretations of the religious-political imperative of an anticolonial regional Islam. Letters and writings of Obaidullah Sindhi about Afghanistan, the Jama'at-e Mujahedin, and the jihad that they had emulated, that of Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed, were republished in Lahore, Peshawar, and Karachi.⁵⁶ Maulana Masud Azhar's sermons included references to the hazrat (respected people) of Deoband who had migrated to Afghanistan as a gesture of disgust with the British government of India. In these texts, the narrative of jihad based in Afghanistan was rationalized morally, intellectually, and historically.

Conclusions

Much has been made of the jihadis from the east crossing over into the Pakhtun northwest to fight jihadis in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and then again in the twentieth. To do so with a sense of unique insight and in search of a conspiracy is unnecessary because the Deobandis themselves created the historical narrative of these three jihads. At both the beginning of the nineteenth century and at its end, the ulama east of the Durand Line felt they could have no impact on the definition of state and law in their own countries without overturning a moral and political order first. Afghanistan gave them a base from which to do that. Those who went across in 1914 rationalized their jihad with reference to the nineteenth-century movement, while those of 1985 looked back to an institutional history from Deoband to justify their position.

Unlike the early nineteenth century, however, there is little to suggest that the Afghan mujahedin or the Taliban engaged the Pakistani ulama in a serious debate over the form and implementation of sharia in Afghanistan but looked to the latter only to rally military and diplomatic support for their position. Unlike Amanullah in the early twentieth century, the mujahedin worked across the Durand Line, negating the border and, with it, a geographically circumscribed politics. But precisely like their involvement in the creation of an Afghan legal code derived entirely from Hanafi jurisprudence, involvement in the Afghan jihad made it possible for the ulama to challenge the investment of power and authority in Western knowledge systems and colonial and postcolonial elites.

In the autonomous and fluid world of public discourses, the interpretative particularities of the Deobandi position become less relevant, and we can see the extent of the impact that Afghanistan's recent Islamist politics have had for Pakistan. Religiously motivated involvement in the Afghan jihad and in the post-jihad Taliban regime has received wide vocal support from a Pakistani public. This support is vocalized as anti-imperialist sentiment, which scholars and contemporary commentators have taken at face value as misguided expressions of solidarity with a global Muslim unity. In fact the empathy is related always to the present state of disenfranchisement in Pakistan itself, where the pedagogies imparted at a few particular elite institutions or in the West, the privileges conferred by a few genealogies, and the links of a very few to the export economy have concentrated wealth and power in a domain that is inaccessible to those educated in underfunded and poorly managed government schools and universities.

With a newfound legitimacy after the mujahedin victory over the Soviets, the ulama pushed the sharia bill through the Pakistan parliament in 1991. It created a constitutional amendment that privileged "shari'a as laid down in the Quran and Sunna as the supreme law of Pakistan," and required now that shari'a and the Arabic language be taught in universities.⁵⁷ In 1996 the Tehrik-e Nifaz-e Shariat-e Muhammadi gained new strength with the movement for the implementation of sharia in Swat led by Sufi Muhammad. Sufi Muhammad emulated the emerging Taliban regime in Afghanistan by creating vigilante militias who would oversee a public morality in the Swat area.⁵⁸

There has been a gradual disavowing of militancy by Pakistani ulama subsequent to the international vilification of al-Qaida and the regularizing of the religious schools by the government through curriculum reform and oversight. Pakistan's Islam is once more being brought back into a mainstream of participatory politics. But Pakistan's politics is a politics changed by the work of the ulama in a discursive and pedagogic sphere, and it is absorbing the moral and intellectual frameworks of Islamic enquiry, so passionately and forcefully expounded by the ulama.⁵⁹