

## **Bakunin Model of Anarchism and Militancy in Swat, Pakistan**

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### **Abstract**

The research is designed to study the tactics of the fighting of Taliban in the valley of Swat (Pakistan). The theory of anarchism is helpful in understanding their techniques. Anarchism has been explained and aptly applied here. The tactics proposed by anarchists suits the way of the struggle of Taliban in the valley. Bakunin model of anarchism is a good example in this regard. He has suggested the killing of intellectuals, kidnapping the wealthy and powerful, targeting the politicians, going into coalition with the criminals, supporting the loudmouths and nurturing the supporters. All these techniques were adopted and practiced by Taliban in Swat fighting. This is an important commonality between the Western anarchists and Eastern jihadists of the twenty first century.

### **Keywords**

Anarchism, Terrorism, Taliban, Swat, Militancy

War against terrorism is a war fought against Islamic militants, who have been creating anarchy for sake of getting strategic benefits and winning ultimate victory. The stories of violence in the war, strengthen the notion that anarchy is one of the most suitable tools for militants in this regard. As the very name 'war on terrorism' makes it clear that it is a conflict in which the phenomena of terrorism is its integral part. In asymmetrical warfare killings, kidnapping, targeting government officials and institutions, the spread of terror and common destruction is something natural. The ongoing war on terror is such a phenomenon. The non-state actors have been using guerrilla tactics which inflict heavy losses to public lives and property. Suicide bombings are lethal weapons in this regard. The bombing not only causing irreparable damage and destruction but also create an environment of panic and anarchy.

Militancy in Pakistan has been damaging the nation more than any other. More than 35,000 (Haider, 2011: June 03) people have lost their lives and millions of people have been displaced from their homes. The militant anarchy caused huge economic losses as well. According to an estimate, some \$ 68 billion is the total cost of the war for economically impoverished Pakistan (Ahmad, 2011: June 10, 08-10). Major militant uprisings in North West of the country derailed the routine life of the people. The terrorists adopted the following tactics which are the acts qualifying the basic tenets of anarchism (Taylor, 2012, August 18).

i Killing all those who are potential or open threat to them

- ii) Kidnapping the rich for sake of ransom to generate money,
- iii) Targeting politicians to pressurize and deter them,
- iv) Keeping close liaison and connections with criminals of the society and using them for their organizational objectives, and
- v) They are helping their supporters to groom and flourish them.

This study will trace a relationship between anarchism and terrorism. After analyzing the events of terrorism it could be established that how anarchism, though a political philosophy, fits in the scheme of the analysis to establish closer relationship with the present wave of terrorist events. Before going into detail, it is important to see the basic tenets of anarchism.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Anarchism is a mechanism and philosophy of carnage and destruction which can be defined as the violent wave of movements against the union and integrity of a society, and against the top authority and respect of a state (Hoffman, 2010: 36). Anarchism has resulted into creation of environment of oppression, tears and pain during the 20th century in various societies. It should be analyzed multi-dimensionally due to the reality that it is a notion defining different political ideologies, philosophies and social movements which defend to overthrow every types of the social hierarchy and political organization.

Bediüzzaman- a Sunni Muslim Theologian and who wrote a commentary on Quran- said that 'this century has caused the total brutality of all of the previous centuries only in one-time' (Bahar: 2006). While the twentieth century was going out, everyone hoped that the coming century and millennium would herald peace and prosperity for the whole world. But it did not occur. In the wake of attacks on Twin towers just at the start of the century, violence and terror became the mostly common issue in the world's agenda. After that, debate broke out over the link of terror and violence with the Islam, which contains peace and love at its core teachings (Haddad & Khashan, 2002: 817). The military attacks of USA, in coalition with some other western countries, on Afghanistan and Iraq caused new developments and discussions in the field of international politics.

Anarchy is a term, the relevance of which is found with the meaning of common panic, fear and confusion. The term has its own background in a philosophy, known as anarchism. The philosophy has its importance and background in history of politics. Certain Christian's mystics in the Middle Ages preached freedom from man-made laws and political organizations (Ellul, 1991: 45). Modern anarchism is the extreme left-wing socialism. The analysis of psychological traits of anarchist shows that some of their characteristics are

common. It includes love of freedom, rebelliousness, individualism, self-love, sensitiveness, altruism, sense of logic, sense of justice and desire for knowledge. These characteristics are also found in socialists and humanitarians (Hoffman, 2010: 30). It was first expounded as a political doctrine by an Englishman, William Godwin (1756-1836), and a Frenchman, Proudhon (1809-65) who were the first writers to call themselves anarchists. But its greatest exponents are three Russian thinkers; Bakunin (1815-76), Tolstoy (1828-1910) and Prince Kropotkin (1842-1921).

Bakunin was a scientific anarchist who attacked science and appreciated the wisdom of instincts and human reason. He was of the opinion that 'the urge to destroy is also the urge to create' (Woodcock: 1967). He sanctioned absolute liberty. Furthermore, he called for attacking institutionalized anarchy and authority to create a free society which will be called invisible dictatorship (Marshall, 2010: 263). Tolstoy belonged to Russian aristocratic family. He did not call himself an anarchist but his assumptions about politics made him an anarchist. He eloquently defended individual freedom (Marshall, 2010: 362). Kropotkin was also a Russian revolutionary anarchist. He colored anarchist theory with communism.

The basic principle of modern Anarchism can be summarized into three, viz., the opposition and abolition of state, the abolition of private property and the suppression of religion (Kropotkin, 2002: 166). These principles are relevant to my study. The pattern is best suitable for explanation of the carnage caused as a result of the war against terror. Anarchism is opposed to the existence state *in Toto* and advocates its abolition in all its forms and essence (Kropotkin: 2002). Anarchism is opposed not merely to the despotic and corrupt forms of the state, like autocracy, but also its best forms, like democratic and representative form of government (Ehrlich, 1979: 46). They advance several arguments against the very nature and existence of the state as follow:-

### **Methods of Anarchism**

The question of method has divided the anarchists, like the evolutionary and revolutionary socialists, into two groups, viz, the philosophical and revolutionary anarchists (Dirlik, 1993: 183). Philosophical Anarchists advocate peaceful and non-violent methods of education and persuasion to achieve their goal (Tucker, 1897: 415). Revolutionary anarchists, like Bakunin and Kropotkin, advocate revolutionary methods of violence, bloodshed and revolution to get rid of the state and establish an anarchist society (Sharma & sharma, 1998: 263). But they believe that revolution should aid evolution of present society which is already leading it towards the anarchist of the future. The current of events and facts is already leading mankind towards the anarchist goals: anarchists need only to accelerate this flow by removing obstacles and barriers. This may need the use of force, violence,

bloodshed and organized insurrection. The anarchist revolution is not like the communist revolution which would replace the capitalist state by communist state or dictatorship of the bourgeoisie by dictatorship of proletariat (Kropotkin: 1901). Such an anarchist revolution would put an end to the state as such. It would be the destruction of all political authority and law and public order. Rulers and officers may be removed from their seats of authority. Courts, police, jails, and all other instruments of coercion and force will be demolished. Thus as Kropotkin says, evolution must culminate in revolution; “a frightful storm is needed to sweep away all this rottenness, to vivify torpid souls with its breath, and to restore to humanity the devotion, self-denial, and heroism without which society become senile and decrepit and crumbles away” (Eltzbachor: 1908).

Bakunin's ideas deeply influenced anarchism. Most of the anarchists have adopted his principle of leaderless resistance, though having little knowledge and support of their groups. Sergei Nachaev, an associate of Bakunin, highlighted the "merciless" dimension of destruction. But it was Bakunin who gave six steps, necessary to destroy a social structure, as paraphrased below: (Borgeson, & Valeri, 2009: 20).

- *Kill the intelligensia* (kill those who are intelligent and most energetic in society)
- *Kidnap the rich and powerful* (those who will yield the biggest ransoms)
- *Infiltrate the politicians* (to find out their secrets and discredit them)
- *Help the guilty criminals* (to confuse society over justice and punishment)
- *Defend the loudmouths* (those who make dangerous declarations)
- *Nurture the supporters* (help fellow travelers who believe in societal destruction)

Important anarchist, like Karl Heinzen and Johann Most, established the concept that murder, particularly murder-suicide, constituted the main outline of revolutionary struggle (Borgeson, & Valeri: 2009). Both argued for the use of weapons of mass destruction. Other anarchists contributed other concepts, such as Peter Kropotkin's concept of "propaganda by word" or radicalizing the masses by exercise of rebellious propaganda materials (Martin, 2011: 41). It is worth mentioning, that the renowned Italian criminologist, Cesar Lombroso, gave his idea of the "born criminal". He examined the bodily features of some anarchists who were actually nothing more than criminals justifying their deeds with anarchist talk (Lombroso, Gibson & Hann, 2006: 386).

## **9/11 And Decent Into Terrorism**

The September 11 attacks were a chain of four synchronized suicide attacks upon Washington DC and New York on September 11, 2001 (widely known as 9/11). On that Tuesday four passenger jets were hijacked by members of Islamist militant group, Al-Qaeda. They calculatedly crashed two planes United Airlines Flight 175 and, American Airlines Flight 11 into the Towers of the World Trade Centre in New York City (Snyder: 2002). Both towers dashed to the ground within two hours. American Airlines Flight 77 was crashed into the Pentagon in Virginia. The fourth jet crashed into a field near in Pennsylvania, after passengers tried to control before it could reach the planned target in Washington, D.C. (9/11 Commission Report, 2004).

In 9/11 attacks, in total of 2,996 people laid their lives, including the 19 attackers and 2,977 fatalities. The deaths included 246 passengers (nobody remained alive on the plains), 2,606 in New York City in the twin towers, and 125 at the attack on Pentagon. Almost all of the deaths were common civilians; only 55 military people were among those killed at the Pentagon (Stone, 2002, August 20).

At least 200 individuals fell or jumped from the scorching towers, landing on the streets and roofs of contiguous buildings hundreds of feet down (Dennis & Martha, 2002 September 02). Some of the occupants of each tower made their way toward the rooftop in hope of rescue through helicopters, but the roof admittance doors were locked. No design existed for such a rescue as the thick smoke and extreme heat would have barred helicopters from approaching.

## **The Strategy of Terrorists**

Being asymmetrical war in nature, the fighting tools are different of the enemies in the war against terrorism (Stepanova, 2008: 04). For gaining strategic superiority, both the parties' select from the available options best suited to their goals. States are richer enough in the capabilities to easily surmount the non-state actors in conventional type of war. Especially, the air power in the hands of NATO and other state parties is such a tool which makes the opponent fighting forces to avoid direct physical confrontation (CRS Report, 2006: 8). The carpeted aerial bombardments against Taliban and al-Qaeda in various parts of Afghanistan are the examples in this regard. The Tora Bora military operation (Operation Anaconda) against Taliban caused irreparable damage to the organizations of al-Qaeda and Taliban. Improvement in Drone technology is regarded an asset for America and its allies while a huge concern for Islamic militants. All this means an implication for overall fighting strategies.

Strategic options for militants are limited. The government of Taliban was toppled after 9/11 attacks. The unexpected resistance of Taliban government kept them in survival struggle against USA for more than a month. After retreat, the strategy of Taliban and al-Qaeda went through a process of complete change (Jonson, Oradnik & Beth, 2011: 22). Now they were no more a state. Keeping in view a transformation in contextual situations, it became imperative to adapt to themselves to the changing strategic environment. And those who were at the helm of affairs were well aware of the fact.

After losing their government as a result of failed conventional struggle, the Islamic militants were in no need to retain the old type of strategy. Guerrilla warfare remained the only viable strategy for them. They are lucky to have a terrain fit for their hit-and-run tactics of guerrilla warfare (Johnson, 2011: 303). Afghanistan is a mountainous country with long and high ranges. It is easy for an insurgent to play his game in the type of region. Afghanistan in eastern side, borders with tribal areas of Pakistan. These tribal areas are semi-government areas controlled by Pakistan. This provides a type of strategic-depth to the insurgents on both sides of the boarder. Apart from this the population composition is also helpful to them. The tribes living on both sides of the boarder have same identity amongst themselves on one side and with militants on the other side. Society is considered to an insurgent as water pool to a fish (Lofland, 1996: 250). Therefore, it is easy for guerrillas to make an action and return to the society as other common people.

The common ideology of global jihad is shared by all the Islamic militant groups, fighting throughout the world (Drinkwine, 2009: 23). Therefore, resemblance is found in their tactics of war. Extreme level of indoctrination has made them extreme in this regard. The religious fanaticism mixed with the lust for strategic gains have turned them towards adopting extreme measures. The environment created as a result, is conveying the message of panic and anarchy. The type of anarchy suits the interests of anarchists (militants). They know how to exploit the confusion and fear created in the society. This serves them double edge purpose. On one side they try to pressurize the states and government while on the other side they are to cash the sympathies of the population in their favor (Bunker, 2005: 48).

Violence is blatantly used by militants as an integral part of their fighting strategy. Suicide attacks are the most horrific version of terror in their hands. It is very easy to understand the logic of such a war tool. The states powers can combat any type of attack but they are helpless to stop a suicide bomber from undertaking his plan (Merari, 2010: 275). Anyone who explodes himself is extremely dedicated to his cause. The primary purpose of his attack is to target the enemy forces or their supporters, but it also causes huge collateral damages. The aftermath of such an

attack is extremely shocking. Some suicide attacks are of huge magnitude therefore causing irreparable destruction. And if they are conducted in crowded areas it would cause emotional panic amongst people (Merari: 2010). The anger of the people is natural primarily, upon government and security agencies. In this way the terrorists are trying to alienate the public from government.

Kidnaping and killing of influential people in society is another strategy of terrorist in present day war against terror (Heymann, 2000: 03). This is very common in all areas where the militants are operating from. The purpose behind this is manifold. In some cases the kidnapped are the people who may be the part of opponent system or may be connected to the opponents through his relatives. This is done with the objective to get some tactical concessions from the decision makers belonging to the enemy camp. In some other cases the intelligentsia and technocrats are targeted not only to deprive the opponent from trained brains but also to force them use for the benefit of their own organization. But in most cases the kidnapping is a big source of earning for the kidnappers (Canter, 2009: 190). The major portion of their expenses is met from the money in ransom dealings. Anyhow it is the strategy which creates anarchy and the feelings of insecurity.

After security and government agencies, politicians are the next target of fighting Islamists (Lutz, & Lutz, 2004: 11). They consider politicians a serious challenge to their cause. These are politicians who are responsible for protecting the status quo which is never acceptable to militants who challenge primarily, the prevailing system. Anywhere, both in Afghanistan and Pakistan, the people linked with politics are attacked and challenged. In Pakistan there are many examples in which the sitting MNAs and MPAs are being targeted. Many of them have lost their lives. In Swat militant insurgency a prominent politician, Afzal Khan Lala and his relatives, were sieged for months and a protracted fighting took place between his supporters and Swat Taliban.

### **Application of the Theoretical Framework**

Though war on terror is very complex phenomena especially, when it comes to its sociological, philosophical, psychological, political and other aspects, the final outcome is violence and anarchy. The events of the war are full of the stories of humanitarian violation. There are humanitarian principles which should be observed. But they are blatantly violated. The calculations establish that only in Pakistan some 35,000 people have lost their lives.

There are views of important scholars who equate modern day terrorism with anarchism. They establish a relationship between anarchist tactics with that of terrorists. Anglo-Pakistani writer and commentator, Tariq Ali, has coined a new term Islamo-anarchism. He says,

“Ever since 9/11, I have been arguing that the 'war against terror' is immoral and counterproductive. It sanctions the use of state terror- bombing raids, tortures, countless civilians' death, in Afghanistan and Iraq- against Islamo-anarchists whose number are small but whose reach is deadly” (Ali, T. 2005: July 6).

Dr. Hassan-Askari Rizvi a political and defence analyst from Pakistan, wrote in July 2008 almost similar opinion by saying, “it is wrong assumption that Taliban will again become friendly to Pakistan if it gives up its support to the US led war on terrorism. The Taliban have an Anarchist Agenda that aims at dismantling the Pakistani state” (Dr. Rizvi, 2008: July 20). John Gray One of the eminent thinkers in UK makes a comparison between Bin Laden and the nineteenth century Russian anarchist Nechaev. He thinks that Bin Laden wishes to take the society back to the seventh century old world of the Prophet of Islam and his companions. He put Al-Qaeda into the categories of political movements which use violence for getting its objectives. He argues, “Al Qaeda's peculiar hybrid of theocracy and anarchy is a by-product of Western radical thought” (Gray, 2003: 117).

Tim Pendry, a leading public relations analyst, analyzing the nature of Al Qaeda by saying,

*“This always begged the question of what precisely Al-Qaeda was if it had no central command structure and no extensive identifiable cell system like international communism. The model was closer to pre-first world was anarchism. This could manage random and dangerous atrocities but was incapable of doing what the Muslim Brotherhood might do and the AKP has done, capture control of a government”* (Pendry, 2008: June 28).

Details of terrorism in Pakistan in general and in Swat in particular, fully qualify the assumptions of anarchism mentioned at the start of the chapter. Intelligentsias were targeted. Zia-ud-Din Yusufzai, the father of Mala Yusufzai has been a social activist, educationist and intellectual. He has been a strong voice against the militants in Swat. He was threatened several times in this regard. “Me and my family lived under continuous shadow of threat. Their aim was to stop me from providing education to children in school and college under my supervision. They wanted to deter me from leading the Swat Amn Council. All they wished to silent my voice for peace, humanity, love, education and justice”. (Zia-ud-Din Yusufzai, Personal communication, 2012, February 18)

The second tactic of anarchism was also seen in Swat fighting. Kidnapping for ransom and other purposes had been at peak during the crises. Great number of people was found lost. They include, common people, government officials, traders, business men NGO's officials, lawyers, doctors and politicians. Most of them were released after payment of ransom while others were executed in case of nonpayment

of ransom money. “Five people from my village were kidnapped. Three of them got free after ransom money was paid to the kidnappers, while the remaining two were found dead because they couldn't pay to the terrorists” (Bakhtiar kaka, Personal communication, 2012 April 10). “Yes, people were kidnapped in great number by militants in Swat fighting. Ransom money was a huge source of income for terrorists. Apart for ransom reasons, government officials were kidnapped for other reasons. It included to extricate information or simply to execute them for revenge purposes” (Zia-ud-Din Yusafzai, Personal communication, 2012 February 18).

Politicians were also targeted by militants in Swat. Few of them were killed including the grandson of the last king of Swat. Extremists regarded the state institutions as *kufir* (infidel). So anyone linked to them was the prime target of fighters in Swat. Afzal Khan *lala* case is the reflection in this regard. He resisted the militants with huge costs (Lieven, 2011: 472-73).

Militants also remained in alliance with criminals. Both facilitated each other. They supported Taliban in unleashing terror. Stories from the mouths of Swati people endorse the fact. “Local criminals joined Taliban. People of such background included from my own village as well. Some of them helped Taliban in slaughtering, torturing, kidnapping, and terrorizing the people of Swat” (Rafique, Personal Communication, 2012 August 15,)

## Conclusion

Terrorism and anarchism overlap each other in strategy and tactics. Both may be different in ideology and goals but share same process of violence. Religious militants or non-state actors are fighting against states. They should destroy state institutions if they want to defeat its enemy (state). Their prime target will be the institutions which are the symbol of a state power. Military, para-military forces and police is on top of terrorists agenda. If law and order agencies are dislodged, other state institutions will follow the collapse. They target everyone whom they consider the pillars of the state; they may politicians, journalists or even intelligentsia. This phenomenon is common amongst all the Islamic militant groups, found in any part of the world. It is enough ground for bringing them together. And the creation of al-Qaeda was meant for this purpose. The organization has provided a platform for coordination amongst various Islamic militants groups. The al-Qaeda factor has caused more anarchic feelings in its affiliated militant organizations, as the agenda of al-Qaeda is extremely violent. They are the actual non-state actors, fighting for global Islamic system. But the creation of such a world system is possible only if the existing state system is done away with. Therefore, the organization struggle is mainly against Western domination of Islamic world as well as the pro-Western Islamic states especially, Middle Eastern countries. Such an approach automatically, led al-Qaeda and other Islamic militant groups to apply the tactics of anarchists.

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