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THE BELIEF SYSTEM OF THE DEOBAND SCHOOL AND ITS POSITION TOWARDS SALAFISM

The Deoband school, which emerged in India, has become one of the topical issues recently. Groups are emerging in Kazakhstan who believe that Deobandism is correct and adhere to it. Spread of this ideology in our country was mainly due to the people who studied at the centers of this ideology, which are mainly Pakistan. Muslims in countries such as Pakistan, India and Afghanistan often follow Abu Hanifa school, Maturidi creed and are conservative in religious issues. In turn, the Kazakh people throughout the history combined religion and traditions. Therefore, the spread of Deobandi religious concepts in the Kazakh land creates certain misunderstandings. This is probably due to the fact that the religious views of the Deobandis are contrary to the Kazakh worldview. Research is needed to determine how and why these contradictions are emerging. Despite the relevance of the problem, there are almost no research on this topic in our country. The skeleton of any religious ideology is a matter of faith, therefore for this article as a research topic has been chosen Deobandi's faith. The purpose of the article is to determine what belief system the Deoband school adhere to and how they relate to Salafism. This is because research has revealed that the Deoband school representatives are close to Ash'arism and Salafism in their beliefs. The article contains a brief history of Deobandism, its belief system and the views of Deoband scholars on the prominent scholars of Salafism like Sheikh Ibn Taymiyyah. Also, the influence of Maturidi and Ash'ari belief systems on the Deobandis and generally their views on Wahhabism are analyzed.

Key words: Deoband, Islam, Salafism, India, Iman.

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Деобанд мектебінің сенім жүйесі және сәләфизмге қатысты ұстанымы

Түбі Үндістанға барып тірелетін Деобандия мектебі соңғы уақытта өзекті тақырыптардың біріне айналып отыр. Себебі елімізде Деобандия бағытын дұрыс санайтын және ұстанатын топтар пайда болды. Бұл идеологияның жайылуына негізінен Пәкістан секілді Деобандия идеологиясының ошақтарында оқып келген азаматтардың мұрындық болғаны белгілі жәйт. Пәкістан, Үндістан және Ауғанстан секілді елдердегі мұсылмандар көбіне Әбу Ханифа мәзһабын, Матуриди ақидасын ұстанады және діни мәселелерде консервативті болып келеді. Өз кезегінде қазақ халқы тарих бойынша дін мен дәстүрді қатар алып жүрген ел. Сондықтан табиғатынан консервативті Деобандия пайымының қазақ жерінде таралуы белгілі бір олқылықтар мен түсінбеушіліктер туғызып отыр. Бұған деобандықтардың діни көзқарастарының қазақ дүниетанымына қайшы келетіні себеп болса керек. Қайшылықтардың қайдан және не үшін туындап жатқанын анықтау үшін ғылыми зерттеулер қажет. Мәселенің өзектілігіне қарамастан елімізде осы тақырыпқа қатысты зерттеулер жоқтың қасы. Бұл жәйт осы бағыттағы ғылыми жұмыстардың маңызын арттырады деген сөз. Кез келген діни идеологияның қаңқасы сенім мәселесі болып саналатындықтан, осы мақалада Деобандияның сенім жүйесі қолға алынып отыр. Мақаланың мақсаты Деобандия мектебінің ақидасының қандай бағытта екенін айқындау және оның сәләфизмге қаншалықты қатысы бар екенін ашу. Себебі деобандықтардың сенімі әшғарилік пен салафизмдікке жақын екені зерттеу барысында анықталып отыр. Мақалада Деобанд мектебінің сенім жүйесі, қысқаша тарихы, деобандық ғұламалардың Ибн Тәймия секілді сәләфизмнің белді өкілдеріне қатысты көзқарастары қамтылады. Сондай-ақ деобандықтардың матуриди мен әшғариліктен алған әсерлері, уахабизмге қатысты ой-пікірлері сарапталады.

Түйін сөздер: Деобанд, ислам, сәләфизм, Үндістан, иман.

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Система верований деобандийской школы и ее отношение к салафизму

Деобандийская школа берущая свое начало в Индии, в последнее время стала одной из актуальных тем. Это связано с тем, в что в нашей стране есть группы, которые верят и следуют этому направлению. Известно, что распространением этой идеологии руководили в основном граждане, обучавшиеся в центрах деобандийской идеологии, таких как Пакистан. Мусульмане в таких странах, как Пакистан, Индия и Афганистан, в основном следуют школе Абу Ханифы, вероучению Матуриды, и консервативны в религиозных вопросах. В свою очередь, казахский народ исторически является страной, где сосуществуют религия и традиции. Поэтому распространение консервативного по своей сути деобандийского направления на казахской земле вызывает определенные проблемы. Вероятно, это связано с тем, что религиозные взгляды приверженцев деобандийской школы противоречат казахскому мировоззрению. Необходимы научные исследования, чтобы выявить, как и почему возникают эти противоречия. Несмотря на актуальность проблемы, исследований на эту тему в нашей стране практически нет. Этот факт повышает значимость научных работ в этом направлении. Поскольку основа любой религиозной идеологии – это вопрос убеждений, в этой статье рассматривается система убеждений деобандийской школы. Цель статьи – выявить направленность вероучения деобандийской школы и рассмотреть ее связь с салафизмом. В ходе исследования выявилась связь в вопросах акыды деобандизма с ашаризмом и салафизмом. В статье представлена система вероубеждений деобандийской школы, краткая история и взгляды ученых-деобандитов таких видных представителей салафизма, как Ибн Таймия. Также анализируется влияние матуридизма и ашаризма на приверженцев деобандийской школы и их мнение по вахабизму.

Ключевые слова: Деобанд, ислам, салафизм, Индия, иман.

Introduction

After the fall of the Great Mughal Empire in 1858, India became a British colony. At this point, Muslims in India were considered the second largest group after Hindus who followed the traditional Hindu religion. As a result of the religious and cultural expansion and colonization of the British, which began in the second half of the 19th century, among the Muslims of India and Sindh (today's India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh), conservative religious leaders began to appear who were against colonialism and the Christian propaganda and modernism (Hamid, 2005: 39). In 1857-1859 there were uprisings against the colonial power. But public upheavals and armed uprisings failed. In 1866, Dar al-Ulum Deoband madrasah was founded in Deoband village, which was located 150 kilometers from Delhi, under the leadership of Muhammed Qasim Nanautawi (Özcan, 1993: 554). Because after the fall of the Great Mughal Empire, which ruled over India and Sind for more than 3 centuries and was founded by Muslim Turks, the power passed completely into the hands of the British, the local Muslims who followed the Hanafi madhab realized that their spiritual and religious identities were in danger. Thus, in order to protect themselves from the religious and cultural expansion of the colonial British and local In-

dians, who began to surround them from all sides, as well as to resist the delusions, negative beliefs and heresies that began to spread among the local Muslim community, they founded the Deoband school which taught Islamic sciences on the basis of a conservative, classical education system (Al-Qasimi 2000: 33). A researcher of Deobandism Atif Suhail says: "When Darul Uloom Deoband was founded by Nanautawi some claimed that it is merely "attempt to foster traditional religious imaginaries." Others insisted that Deobandism "has inspired modern revivals of Islamic fundamentalism." But the reality is that the Deoband movement sought to revive the community of Sunni orthodoxy, strongly opposing non-Islamic elements in Islamic culture and society and fostering tendencies of selfassertion" (Siddiqui, 2020: 43). It is worth to mention that Darul Uloom Deoband, instead of collecting funds from royal or noble families (like madrasahs did before), preferred to receive public donations, which had a twofold effect: it allowed the madrasah to make its own decisions, on the other hand, the general public to identify themselves with him (Akhtar, 2022: 88).

The motto of Dar al-Ulum Deoband was "firm adherence to religion, including strict adherence to the Hanafi School, preservation of antiquity (old traditions) and protection of the Sunnah (from heresies)." Muhammed Ubaidullah al-Qasimi from

Deoband states the most important principle and mission of the academic policy of Dar al-Ulum Deoband as follows: “The main result expected from the subjects studied by our students is the formation of scholars and society who guide Muslims, especially in religious matters and in general worldly affairs... All this is realized on the basis of the Quran and the Sunnah, and on the basis of pure Islamic faith, which is free from all types of error and heresy. That is why this University is based on teachings that help Islamic subjects to understand the Qur’an and Sunnah and their meaning. And, does not pay much attention to technical, that is modern sciences (Metcalf, 1982: 32). Because in the Indian subcontinent there are more and more institutes and universities that teach modern sciences. Those educational institutions are producing many generations who compete with each other to achieve trivial worldly goals such as prestige, fame and position. Because those educational institutions produce intellectuals whose appearance and appearance are Indian, but whose thinking and knowledge and experience are western. This is as the member of the commission that oversees the field of education during the British colonial period openly stated the goal of his government, saying: “Our duty is to produce intellectuals who are Indian in appearance and English in mind.” Here, opposition to this in the path of Islam took place through the founding of this University by the scientists and scholars of our country. Their goal there was to produce an intelligentsia whose appearance and color were Indian, whose mind and heart were Hijaz, and whose goals and life skills were Mohammedan”.

Politically, the Deobandis generally supported the Ottoman Empire against the British. Because they saw the Ottomans as the last bastion of Muslims. Therefore, when the Ottoman Empire was defeated by the Entente countries in the First World War, Indian Muslims were greatly disappointed (Reetz, 2007: 142). In general, it can be said that the Deobandis were politically active. For example, Deoband intellectuals founded political organizations such as Jamiat-e-Ulama-e-Hind and Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Islam. While one faction supported the Muslim League’s demand for a separate Muslim region, the other collaborated with the Indian National Congress to oppose subcontinental partition (Momen, Ebrahimi, Hassan, 2023: 68). Also the Indian subcontinent and East Bengal, between the late 1910s and early 1920s, saw the emergence of the Khilafat Movement, led largely by the scholars of Deoband. The Khilafat Movement aimed to preserve the Ottoman Empire and the symbolic Turkish

Caliphate after World War I (Nazrul, 2022: 183). Deoband scholars accepted politics as an important component of life and considered it necessary to engage in it purposefully. If we pay attention to the political aspect of the Deobandian system in general, it can be seen that the category of ulama was more active than Daru-l Uloom Deoband as an institution (Abdilkhakim, 2022: 149).

Justification of the choice of article and goals and objectives

At the present time, the study of religious currents and directions in the region of Kazakhstan is becoming an urgent issue. One of them is the direction of Deobandism, which is gaining influence in Central Asian countries. Deobandism, which appeared in India in the second half of the 19th century, was active in our country in the form of the Tablighi Jamaat. Although tablighs are banned in the current Republic of Kazakhstan, it is known that there are Muslim communities that follow the Deobandian ideology. After the seizure of power in Afghanistan by the Taliban movement, which is related to Deobandism, the relevance of this topic has increased. In this regard, we believe that it is very important to conduct research on the circumstances and prospects of this direction, which has not yet lost its influence in Central Asia and has a strong position in neighboring countries such as Kyrgyzstan.

The purpose of this article, “The Belief System of the Deoband school and its Position towards Salafism” is to analyze the belief system, ideological direction and principles of Deobandism, and to determine how much it corresponds to the traditional Maturidi or ‘Ashari schools of faith. At the same time, it is said that although Deobandis adhere to Hanafi in Islamic law, they are close to Salafism in faith, we aim to determine how true this is. In order to achieve this goal, the article briefly discusses the history of the Deoband school, as well as the fundamentals and creedal positions of the Deoband school, the positions of the Deoband scholars regarding prominent representatives of Salafism.

The object of the research is to make a theological analysis and clarify the belief system of the Deoband school and its position in relation to Salafism.

Scientific research methodology

The article provides a theological analysis of the Deoband school’s religious belief system and

positions on Salafism. In order to determine and clarify the theological positions of this school, first of all, it is very important to study the scientific genealogy of Deoband scholars and to find out the religious consciousness formed on its basis. Because the religious and theological conclusions of any religious school originate from a certain religious consciousness. From this point of view, in the article, based on the scientific genealogy of the scholars of Deoband, after studying the influence of the Ahl al-Hadith school on them, we concluded that the belief system of the Deoband school is based on theocentrist religious consciousness typical of the Ahl al-Hadith school. That is why the later representatives of the Deoband school, which was formed and developed on the platform of the Hanafi madhhab, in general accept the creedal positions of the Salafi direction as well as the Maturidi and Ash'ari beliefs. We determined these conclusions based on the thoughts and views of the main scholars of the Salafi direction in the works of Deoband scholars. In addition, through theological analysis and differentiation, we demonstrated that the later Deoband scholars accepted the Salafi religious doctrine as correct, but did not succumb to Takfiri consciousness. Theological analysis and differentiation, hermeneutic method, retrospective and comparative analysis methods are used in this study. In the article, Islamic terms are given on the basis of the original.

Main part

Although the religious concept and educational system of the Deoband madrasahs was formed on the basis of the Hanafi school, it was greatly influenced by the Ahl al-Hadith (the people of hadith) school in India. Because the Deoband scholars trace their scientific genealogy to the spiritual leader of the school of hadith in the Indian subcontinent, the famous muhaddith scholar Shah Waliullah al-Dahlawi, his son Sheikh Abdulaziz al-Dahlawi and Sheikh Abdulaziz's great-nephew Sheikh Muhammad Ishaq, his brother's son al-Allama, Muhi as-Sunna as-Sayyid Ismail al-Shahid and his student al-Said Ahmad ibn Irfan al-Shahid. At the same time, the group known as "Ahl al-Hadith" or known as "Ghair Muqallidin" by the Deobandis, who are recognized as non-sectarian in Indian land, claim that their teachings originate from Shah Waliullah al-Dahlawi and his grandson Muhi al-Sunna al-Said al-Shahid Ismail ibn Abdulghani (An-Nadui, 1950: 109). Thus, Deobandis and representatives of the Indian "Ahl al-Hadith" who came from the same scientific genealogy

are opposed to each other in the matter of adherence to madhhab, while Deobandis call their opponents "ghair muqallidin" (non-madhhabians), their opponents label them as taqlidists, i.e. followers of Abu Hanifa, not directly of the Prophet. Even the first-generation scholars of ghair muqallidin from India, leaving aside the Deobandis who followed the school of Abu Hanifa, denounced Najdi Sheikh Muhammad ibn Abdulwahhab himself as a Taqlid follower of the Hanbali school (Al-Qasimi, 2000: 19). And it can be said that the dealings of the later non-Muqallids with the Salafis were not bad, probably because of the influence of Salafi Albanianism. However, for the Deobandis, who hated bid'a (new religious thing in shariah) and religious khurafa (unfounded stories, legends, false beliefs), it is better to fight with heretical Barelwis, Indo-Pakistani Shi'as, and Ahmadis, even though they are Hanafi in their madhhab, rather than fighting with a small number of non-madhhabian people. For both of these groups, who are descended from the same scientific genealogy, but are in conflict with each other in the issue of adherence to madhabs, opposing shirk, bid'a and religious khurafa is considered one of the main goals in the path of religion. The Deobandis were obsessed with the concept of bid'a. Although in Islam, bid'a is generally divided into good (bid'a hasana) and bad bid'a (bid'a sayyia'), there are no such concepts for the Deobandis, who consider all actions contrary to the Sunnah as bid'a in a negative sense (Tariq Moj, 2007: 170).

The religious activity of Shah Waliullah al-Dahlawi and his sons, grandsons and their students who continued his scientific path is to appeal to follow the Islamic religion in accordance with Arab religious consciousness and knowledge, to fight against religious beliefs that are not Islamic, and heresies that arose among Muslims under the influence of other religions and cultures. It consisted of such goals as fighting against foreign beliefs, opposing modernism and western thinking brought by the colonialists, not imitating and not being similar to those of other religions, sticking to the Qur'an and the Sunnah as much as possible, keeping the religion as it was held by the first generation of Muslims, and purifying it of bid'as and khurafas. These principles can be said to be common to all Muhaddith scholars of the Indian subcontinent, whether they belong to the Deoband school or not, who were guided by the teachings of Shah Waliullah al-Dahlawi.

Therefore, considering that the Salafi-Wahhabis came from the "Ahl al-Hadith" school, which is based on the theocentric and irrational religious consciousness, specifically from the Hanbali school,

there is no need to be surprised at the emergence of believers from the Deoband school, whose religious consciousness and understanding are similar to the Salafis, even though the name is Hanafi. Because it is known that radical religious views and positions arise from a certain religious-cognitive consciousness. For example, it is known that the religious consciousness common to all radicals is irrational and literalist religious consciousness. In other words, radicalization is a natural phenomenon of any religions that have the mentioned religious consciousness, regardless of the traditional madhab. It is undeniable that this religious consciousness is common to all Salafi-Wahhabis.

So the problem is the religious-cognitive consciousness that plays a big role in understanding religion and religious texts in general. Accordingly, as a result of the more or less influence of the representatives of “Ahl al-Hadith” who are distinguished by their irrational, theocentric and literalist religious consciousness, as well as their own hadith methodology, it can be said that the emergence of groups with radical religious views such as the Taliban, Tablighi Jamaat, and Inkar Yaqin among the Hanafis in the Indian subcontinent is a natural phenomenon. No radical views or groups emerged from the Hanafi-Maturidis, who were guided by the rational and anthropocentric (human-centered) religious teachings, the theory of taweel (explanation and elucidation of the religious text) and hadith methodology of Imam Abu Hanifa and Imam Maturidi. Each of these religious-cognitive consciousness and concepts contributes in its own way to the scientific methodology and concept of religious belief and jurisprudential schools, respectively, to the formation of religious concepts and positions of believers. This is especially relevant in the doctrine of creed, which forms the basis of religious ideology.

Results and discussion

Since the Deobandis are generally representatives of the Hanafi madhab, it may immediately come to mind that they adhere to the Maturidi creed in their faith. However, Indian scholar Sheikh al-Muqri Muhammad Taib (1897-1983), former rector of the Islamic University “Dar al-Ulum Deoband” in his book “Religious Orientation and Sectarian Positions of Deoband Scholars” says “Deoband scholars are neither Ash’ari nor Maturidi, they only follow the middle path (between the two)” and he describes the methodology and positions of the Deobandis in the creed as follows: “And now, as for the Kalam issues, the Deoband scholars had a moderate and compre-

hensive position in those issues as well. Instead of complaining, criticizing, rejecting and abandoning others in matters of the creed, they chose the way of maximum coordination and elimination of contradictions. So in this matter, a legitimate question arises whether Deoband scholars first follow Abu al-Hasan Ali al-Ash’ari (324/936 AD) or Abu Mansur Muhammad al-Maturidi (333/944 AD). The answer is that Deoband scholars are generally recognized as Maturidis, although some of them consider themselves to be Ash’arites. First of all, Shah Waliullah Ahmad ibn Abdurrahim al-Dahlawi, whose religious discourse is clearly Ash’arite, is their greatest teacher who left them a scientific legacy. That is why they consider themselves to be Ash’arites. Secondly, Deoband scholars base their lectures, writings and religious discourses on Ash’ari positions. However, (looking at their position of trying to combine the two schools and maintain the middle of both) it is better to describe them as Maturidis who are inclined towards Ash’arism, which they themselves admit (Al-Muqri, 2012: 253). As such, they are followers of Ash’ari and Maturidi combined. After studying all their research on this issue, it is clear that the differences of opinion between Ash’aris and Maturidis are ultimately differences of form (“Khilafat Surya”)...”. Al-Muqri shows how to reconcile the two schools of faith on the example of disputed topics between the Maturidis and Ash’aris, such as “husn-qubh” (good and bad), the rise and fall of faith, and human strength (istitaghat).

In fact, the tendency to harmonize the creedal concepts of Maturidi and Ash’aria schools of faith began in the Middle Ages. From “al-Qasida al-Nuniya” of Tajuddin al-Subki (771/1370 AD), a prominent representative of the Shafi’i madhhab and Ash’ari school, as well as from the commentaries of Ash’ari and Hanafi-Maturidi scholars on each other’s texts, such as Imam al-Taftazani’s “Commentary on the Nasafi creed”, the tendency to harmonize the two schools can be clearly seen. Scholars have called this period in the history of Kalam teaching “markhalatul-majj” (the period of fusion of two schools) (Ayub Ali, 1983: 305-306). As a result, the representatives of the two schools, who during the period when they were just getting to know each other (markhalatu-t-taaruf) strongly criticized each other’s religious positions and even accused each other of bid’a, understood each other’s logic and views, and agreed that the differences between them are only on branch issues and that most of them are “verbal” differences, that is, there is no reason to accuse each other of bid’a and delusion (Akimkhanov, 2019: 109). In this way, Maturidism and Ash’arism

were formed on the platform of the four fiqh madhabs of Ahl al-Sunnah direction and were adopted as a developed dual faith school. However, today's Salafis want to prove that they are the only Ahl al-Sunnah by putting forward a number of creedal issues that are the basis for the principled scientific debate between the Maturidis and the Ash'aris, arguing that "both of them do not belong to the direction of Ahl al-Sunnah, because there is a contradiction in creedal issues between them." Of course, from a purely scientific point of view, this is an unfounded and too incorrect conclusion. Because when we do a theologically deep comparative analysis of the fundamental issues between the two schools, such as "husn-qubh" (good and bad), "recognition of God by reason", "state of a person in Judgment Day whom the religion did not reach", "the attribute of takwin (creating)", in the end, it can be seen that two schools are more closer to each other than other directions. However, we cannot say that Deoband scholars' acceptance of Maturidism and Ash'arism as equals and reconciliation of controversial issues between the two is based on pure theological, comparativist in-depth analysis made by Kalam Scholars such as al-Fanhari, Sadru Shari, and Ibn Qutlubu. Because the Deobandis mainly give priority to fiqh, hadith and Qur'anic teachings and treat creed/kalam as an additional teaching. This can be clearly seen in the educational programs in Deoband Madrasahs and Higher Education Institutions.

The positions of the Deoband scholars regarding prominent representatives of Salafism

Deoband scholars especially praise Ibn Taymiyyah and his distinguished disciple Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyya, valuing their place in science and addressing their religious views. For example, al-Asghadi al-Qasimi writes about Ibn Taymiyyah as follows: "As for Ibn Taymiyyah, we have determined and studied his condition and found that he is well-versed in the Book of God, linguistic and Shariah meanings, also we found that he is a memory keeper of the Sunnah of the Messenger of God and the scientific heritage of the Salaf-Salih, and has a good knowledge of their linguistic and Shariah meanings..., he is a defender of the creed of Ahl as-Sunnah, and there is no information about him committing any sin (fisq) or bid'a. Of course, he did not mention the known issues that caused him to be oppressed, although he had evidence from the Qur'an, Sunnah and the words of the Salaf-Salih regarding all those issues...". It is known that one of the issues that caused Ibn Taymiyyah to be oppressed is the issue of Mutashabih (ambiguous) at-

tributes related to Allah, including "Istawa 'ala al-Arsh" ("He established Himself above the throne", Surah Sajda, 4) and "Nuzul" (to descend). Because of his own beliefs about Mutashabih attributes, had some discussions with Ash'ari scholars who were his contemporaries, and finally, because he did not back down from his position, he was brought to the Shariah court in Egypt by the judges of the Maliki, Hanafi and Shafi'i schools and imprisoned. Then his creed is strictly prohibited by law. It is known that Ibn Taymiyyah and his student Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyya had "shazz" (unusual) views from the framework of the four madhabs on many issues related to creed, fiqh and Sufism, apart from the mentioned mutashabih attributes. Scholars of Deoband have also said this. Initially many Deoband scholars also had a critical opinion about the mentioned sheikh and his disciple, as well as Muhammad ibn Abdulwahhab and his followers, but the later Deobandis argued that the previous Deobandi scholars had an excuse to criticize. Because Deobandis were not aware of the books of Ibn Taymiyyah and his students. They learned their views and messages mainly through Sheikh Ahmed ibn Hajar al-Makki (974 AH). However, they heard the positions of Ibn Taymiyyah not directly from his books, but only based on the narrations that reached them. In the past, there was no opportunity to establish a close relationship between India and Arab countries, and the books of Ibn Taymiyyah and Ibn al-Qayyim were not widely printed and distributed as they are today. And later, the works of these scientists spread widely to Muslim countries, and it can be said that Deobandis got hold of them and read them, they justified, defended, and even glorified them. We can clearly see this from the words of Muhammad al-Qasimi: "In their works and studies, Deoband scholars called Sheikh Ibn Taymiyyah a "flag bearer against bid'as" and glorified him and his wise student Sheikh Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyya according to their greatness and spoke with special respect. These are the famous scientists of the first generation and legendary figures in the annals of knowledge of this community. Our scientists who follow them still use the books and researches of these two Sheikhs and refer to the works and scientific findings of both of them in their speeches" (Al-Qasimi, 2000: 728)

Sheikh Muhaddith Abdulaziz al-Dehlawi, one of the spiritual teachers who stood at the beginning of the history of knowledge of Deoband scholars, when he heard bad words of his students about Muhammad ibn Abdulwahhab, he disliked their behavior and said: "Sheikh (Muhammad ibn Abdulwah-

hab) is a true, perfect Muslim and a follower of the Sunnah. Also Ibn Taymiyyah and Ibn al-Qayyim were also true and perfect Muslims. However, they are human and can make mistakes. We can't say a bad word about them."

Also, Sheikh Rashid Ahmad al-Kankuhi (d. 1905), one of the two scholars who founded Darul Uloom Deoband, was asked about the Muhammad ibn Abdulwahhab, he replied: "He was a good person. I heard that he was a follower of the Hanbali madhab, followed the hadith and strictly forbade bid'a and shirk, but he was a strict person by nature." In another word: "Indeed, those who follow Muhammad ibn Abdulwahhab are called Wahhabis. Their beliefs were correct and good. The schools of jurisprudence are Hanbali. However, there was hardness (tashaddud) in his nature. Those who follow him are good people, but those who go beyond the limit are different, they have gone astray. All of them have the same creed, the difference between them is only in the actions related to the Hanafi, Shafi'i, Maliki and Hanbali madhhabs."

Originally, in India, the name Wahhabi/Wahhabist was given to non-madhabian groups, later this name was given to the Hanafis (Deobandis) who strongly adhered to the Sunnah, opposed to bid'a, religious rituals not approved by the Shariah, and visiting the graves of saints. From this we understand that those who call the Deobandis Wahhabi are Barelwi who are identified with extreme Sufism. A similar situation is happening in our country today. It is known that even spiritualist sufi tariqats (the Sufi doctrine or path of spiritual learning) in Kazakhstan consider imams and preachers who are not like them, who do not follow their pirs as Wahhabis.

The reason why many Deoband scholars have a critical position about Muhammad ibn Abdulwahab and his followers is that, as mentioned in the previous topic, in the past, the works of Najd scholars were not as widely published as they are today, on the contrary, the books of scholars such as Sheikh ibn Dahlan, who mostly rejected the Wahhabi doctrine, and commentaries of Sheikh ibn Abidin on Al-Durr al-Mukhtar was widely distributed among the Deoband scholars. Even in the past, when the Deoband scholars went to Mecca and Medina to perform the Hajj, they would find works written mainly against Muhammad ibn Abdulwahab and his followers. This is how the later Deobandis, citing the above-mentioned reasons, say that the first generation of Deobandis were indecisive on this issue. And then, after the works of Najd scholars spread widely, after accessing and reading them, the attitude of Deoband

scholars towards Najd scholars changed radically. This tendency can be clearly seen in the letters and articles of a number of Deoband scholars. For example, Muhaddith Khalil Ahmad al-Saharanfuri (d. 1927), who was one of the famous scholars of Darul Uloom Deoband, wrote to Zafar Ali Khan, editor-in-chief of "Zamindar" newspaper from Medina, saying that Sheikh Ibn Taymiyyah and Ibn al-Qayyim were great imams recognized by Deoband scholars. He praised Shaykh Abdullah ibn Balhid, a neighbor and chairman of the local court, who read the books of the two imams a lot, as a great religious scholar who acted on hadith (bi zahir al-hadith), was against bid'a, and held monotheism and prophethood as the basis of his creed, and said about the Najdis following: "According to my observation, in general I did not notice anything that deviated from the creed of Ahl al-Sunnah..." he also said that the situation of the Najdis is very good in religious practice" (An-Nughmani, 1980: 62). And in his letter to Sheikh Muhammad Yaqub, saying that the Saudi government, especially Sultan Ibn Saud, is a very religious and reasonable person, he welcomed the destruction of all the graves and mausoleums in the country, and even said that it was obligatory to do so, and it was carried out by the fatwa of the scholars there. From these letters, it can be clearly seen that the author attaches great importance to the concepts of "bid'a", "amal bi zahir al-hadith" (to act according to the external meaning of the hadith), "tawheed" (oneness of God), "shirk" (idolatry or polytheism), as well as that he is against the construction of graves and mausoleums.

Prominent scholars of the Deoband school, such as Muhammad Manzoor al-Nugmani and his teacher Karim Bakhsh al-Sanbahli, claim that there is a great similarity between the spiritual leader of the Najdis, Muhammad ibn Abdulwahab al-Najdi, and one of the leaders of the Deobandis, Sheikh Ismail Abdulghani al-Shahid al-Hindi, in terms of their religious views and positions. Particularly, the main works of both of them, the books "Kitab al-Tawheed" and "Taqwiyat al-Iman" are considered to be very similar, even identical, in terms of their purpose and content. It is said that the main reason that prompted religious leaders, one from Najd and the other from India, to write these works was the period in which they lived and the religious situation in society and the condition of Muslims. Both of them were especially glorified by the people of Najd and Deoband as individuals who raised the banner of "true Tawheed and Sunnah" and opposed the religious superstitions and bid'a prevalent among the Muslims (especially sufis), as well as grave wor-

shipping and worshiping ghosts. As a result, some Deobandis, who read extensively about the life, religious personality and religious positions of Muhammad ibn Abdulwahhab, and read his works and those of his followers, found out that there are many similarities between him and the religious personality and positions of their spiritual leader, such as Ismail al-Shahid, and generally favored the Najd school (Al-Qasimi, 2000: 743).

Because of the above-mentioned religious figures and positions of the spiritual leaders and scholars who founded the Deoband school, the Deobandis were nicknamed “Wahhabis” by the extreme sufis of Badayun and Barelwi. Barelwi leader Ahmad Rida Khan criticized founder of the Deoband school Muhammad Qasim al-Nanautawi (1833-1880), Rashid Ahmad al-Kankuhi (1829-1905), Khalil Ahmad al-Saharanfuri (1853-1920) and Ashraf Ali al-Thawi (1863-1943). He argued that these were the followers of Muhammad ibn Abdulwahhab, who raised the banner of Wahhabism in the Indian subcontinent, and therefore they were unbelievers who had left the religion, and those who did not call them unbelievers and who doubted their unbelief were just as unbelievers as them. In this regard, he issued a fatwa and even made a special trip to Mecca and Medina in 1905 and confirmed this fatwa to the scholars there (Al-Mubarakfuri, 2021: 37). Later, his murids named that fatwa as “Husamu-l-Haramain” (Sword of the Two Holy Mosques) and distributed it in India. At that time, scholars in Mecca and Medina believed Ahmad Rida Khan’s words and accepted him as a religious figure fighting against the Wahhabis in India. Such support of the scholars of the Holy Land probably arose from the opposition to the Wahhabi rebellion that had stirred up the land of Arabia exactly one century before that time.

The British colonialists at that time were also interested in the further development of such irreconcilable enmity and hatred among the Indian Muslims. Because from the day when the British declared India as their colony, the first people who opposed them and organized an armed uprising were mostly local Muslims. In this way, the British tried to use the religious situation effectively for their own interests by creating a division among the Muslims who threatened their imperial goals and political plans. The British, who supported the Saudi tribe of Najd and the “religious reformer” Muhammad ibn Abdulwahhab from Najd against the caliphate in Arabia facing the Ottoman caliphate, called the Muslims who rebelled against them in India, including the religious figures who were

at the beginning of the Deoband school and their supporters, as Wahhabis and pitted the sufis against them. Unfortunately, there is still a rift between the Barelwi and the Deobandis in Pakistan and India. While the Barelwi label the Deobandis as Wahhabis, the Deobandis accuse them of grave/ghost worshipers and heretics.

At this point, a very important difference between the Deobandis and the Wahhabis of Najd can be observed. No matter how much the Deobandis accuse the extreme sufis who accuse them of heresy, as grave/ghost worshippers, superstitious and heretical, they do not accuse them of heresy, because the Deoband scholars doesn’t consider any Muslim or group of Muslims who face the Qibla (ahl al-Qibla) as a disbeliever until they utter a word of clear disbelief (al-kufr al-sarih) or commit a clear disbelief. For example, Sheikh Khalil Ahmad al-Saharanfuri said: “We do not charge Muslims who commit bid’a with kufr until they reject any ruling on religious duties. We exercise utmost caution in passing judgment on them (i.e., their faith). This is our steadfast position, the usual position of our great scholars!” (As-Saharanfuri, 2004: 14). Also, Sheikh al-Thawi (1863-1943) in the Delhi-based Huda magazine (November, 1995 issue) said: “Although they (Barelwi) accuse us of kufr, we do not accuse them of same. Our position is to show utmost caution and prudence in judging someone as a disbeliever, because if someone is actually a disbeliever, and yet we do not condemn him as a disbeliever, so what?! And if we call someone a disbeliever, but the truth is the opposite, then it is very dangerous! That is why we did not accuse the Qadiyani themselves of kufr. And they would accuse us of blasphemy. However, when their situation was clarified and the truth was revealed, that is, when it became clear to us that they consider Mirza Ahmad a prophet, we issued a fatwa regarding them as infidels. Because this is clearly kufr. As for their other religious views, we have tried to interpret them as much as possible. As for the Barelwi, we consider them to be misguided (from the path of Ahl al-Sunnah). All those who go astray (from the path of Ahl al-Sunnah) are not disbelievers” (Al-Thawi, 2015: 348). Once, when one of disciples wanted to blaspheme the Barelwi, Sheikh al-Tahanawi stopped him, saying: “We accept the accusations they made against us because they said them only because of their great love and passion for the Prophet, and we treat them with forgiveness.”

The teaching of Najd Wahhabis is ultimately based on Takfiri consciousness, which is why they are called Neo-Kharijites. On the basis of the triple

“tawheed” concept, which originated from Ibn Taymiyyah and was later revived by Muhammad ibn Abdulwahab, the Muslim ummah was accused of blasphemy, such as associating partners with God and denying the names and attributes of God, and as a result, the lives and property of Muslims who did not adhere to the mentioned triple “tawheed” creed were allowed to be taken away. Also, at the root of mass accusations of blasphemy against Muslims who do not adhere to the Wahhabi creed is the Hashwi concept of faith, including the principle that “faith and deed are one” and the principle of being guided only by divine judgments and laws in the affairs of this world and the hereafter, based on the slogan of the early Muhakkims, “la hukma illa lillah.” On the basis of these radical religious theories and principles, Najd scholars were distinguished by their radical views against other Muslims. Deoband scholars accepted the religious teachings of Ibn Taymiyyah and Muhammad ibn Abdulwahab as correct, but they did not succumb to the Takfir mentality like them.

Conclusion

As we seen from the research, the Deobandis adhere to the Abu Hanifa Madhhab in Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh), but they do not follow a certain classical schools in the matter of creed (aqeedah). Even the Deobandis do not seem to care much about it; the main thing is not to leave the circle of Ahl al-Sunnah wal Jama’ah (АҒЫЛШ МАҒЫНА). It seems like for them, whether someone is Maturidi or Ashari is a secondary issue. As Salafism, if we consider the position of Deoband scholars towards the Wahhabi leaders and their religious teachings from a historical point of view, we can see that the Deoband scholars who lived at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century were mainly against the Wahhabi doctrine, and their position from the second half of the 20th century to the present is clearly the opposite. Today, some scholars claim that the religious-ideological

evolution of the Deoband school consists of two periods, and divide these two periods into two, before and after Sheikh Muhammad Yusuf al-Binuri (Binuri, 1978: 7-61). From this it can be understood that Deobandis (especially today’s Deobandis) determine their position, including their position on religious-ideological issues, according to the religious-ideological positions of Hijaz, that is, Haramain scholars. In other words, the religious and ideological conjuncture in the holy Mecca and Medina is important for them. That is probably why the Deobandis generally do not look at the Salafi school and consider their religious convictions to be correct at their level.

In today’s Salafi/Wahhabi direction, especially among the representatives of extremist groups such as “Takfir wal-Hijra” and “ISIS” who openly adhere to the takfir creed, there is a tendency to issue creedal rulings on faith and disbelief on the issue of the relationship between faith and action, as well as on the issue of obedience to Shariah laws and secular laws. Strictly speaking, calling Muslims who do not fulfill the obligations of Islam, especially those who do not pray, as infidels by considering “action as a condition for the correctness of faith,” accusing Muslims who consider Shariah laws as legitimate as well as secular laws with taghutism and blasphemy, is a characteristic of all radical and extremist groups that are guided by Salafi ideology today. Even those who call themselves serious Salafis have this takfir mentality at the root of their religious beliefs. And in the religious positions and views of Deoband scholars, such takfiri consciousness is not visible.

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