

*Journée d'Etudes Wahhabisme*

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## Wahhabism and Islamic Modernism in Pakistan

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William Hunter, certainly in a negative connotation, used the term Wahhabi, in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century to characterize Indian Muslims. The main point of this characterization was Wahhabi inclination to Jihad and pan-Islamism. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan acclaimed as the founder of Islamic Modernism in south Asia responded to Hunter by defending Wahhabism and describing them as reformists. The Wahhabism as such did not take root in south Asia, probably before the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but Ahl al-Hadith; a south Asian counterpart did exist in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. As “ Ghayr muqallid” they protested against Taqlid and in favor of Ijtihad. Islamic modernism had several common features with this movement. Sir Syed opposed Taqlid, Qiyas and Ijma.

Iqbal spoke more clearly about Wahhabism as a movement of reform in Islam. He also shared several points of criticism of traditional Islam with them.

I propose to study Iqbal, and Fazlur Rahman as spokespersons of Islamic modernism. I shall analyze their affinities with and criticism of Wahhabism. In the second part of the paper I shall study the Wahhabi linkage and influence on Islamic movements of Ahl al-Hadith, Jama'at Islami and Lashkar Tayyiba.

I would like to explore the following hypothesis: Islamic modernism in its early stages was quite close to Wahhabism but later when Wahhabism became politicized and chose aggressive stance in da'wa, Islamic modernism and Wahhabism parted their ways. Jama'at Islami and other Islamic movements, even traditional, which began as a reform and modern movement moved closer to Wahhabism as they entered political arena.