

Ideological Positioning of the Islamic Fundamentalists and Moderates in Khuda Kay Liye (In the Name of God: A Pakistani Movie)

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Abstract

The aim of the present paper was to highlight the fact that how the certain individuals took certain fundamentalist and moderate (Difference) positioning in their conversations to support certain ideologies. By examining how individuals positioned themselves within the conversations, the researcher illustrated that the positioning often reproduced certain ideologies. Employing purposive sampling technique, supporting clips from the movie (Khuda Kay Liye) with English translations (dialogues) were watched and critically observed for the qualitative analysis, the dialogues were also exemplified/added in the analysis. Hence, the audio of the movie was in Urdu language (verbal), yet, for the better understanding of them at international level, the examples/quotations from the English subtitle were taken according to the needs. The research was done to differentiate the ideological positioning in the conversations (debates) between fundamentalist and moderate ideologies on the Islam. The researcher found two versions of ideological positioning; fundamentalist versions of ideological positioning, for instance, Islamic fundamentalist positioning through the characters of Maullah Tahiri and Shiekh along with Western fundamentalist positioning through FBI Supervisor (Sheldon Grad) and moderate (Difference) version of positioning through the characters of Maulana Wali and Husain, for instance, Maulana Wali encouraged music and free-will of women in marriage through moderate interpretations of Islamic instructions. In conclusion, the character of Maulana Wali supported the positive face of Islamic ideology (ies) keeping a durable (Difference) positioning, hence, abandoning the violent fundamentalist positioning of Mullah Tahiri (who retained a dangerous version of positioning on the behalf of religious beliefs and against state policies).

Keywords: Positioning; Ideological positioning; Fundamentalist positioning; Moderate positioning

Introduction

In the analysis, it is described how the researcher used the constructs of persuasive positioning and ideology (ies) as it pertains to conversation categories. The persuasive factors of all types of texts fascinated Althusser [1]; he saw how even an innocent-seeming written/visual text has the power to strengthen or 'position' its audience to agree to a particular way of observing 'others', i.e. to agree to a particular set of ideology (ies). This implies that a written or visual text is able to make its own 'ideal reader'. "Encoding-Decoding" design of interaction basically declares that meaning is encoded by the sender and decoded by the recipient (receiver) and that these encoded definitions may be decoded to mean something else. That is to mean that, the senders encode their information according to their values and opinions and the information are decoded by the recipients (receiver) according to their own values and opinions, which may cause miscommunication to the recipient knowing something very different from what the sender designed [2]. Althusser intended that a written text can act to convince and its focus on targeted audiences to look at the ways of considering designed by its designer. Althusser saw that written or visual messages act to strengthen what it indicates to feel a 'normal' participant of community – one within the standards of community rather than on the outside.

Literature Review

This research sketched upon earlier research to prove how this research surfaces past thoughts of positioning and ideology (ies) as it impacts individuals' thoughts. It is elaborated by the researcher on the perspective because it is necessary to comprehend the individuals' socio-cultural backgrounds to link their current discursive discourses to mainstream socio-cultural ideological positioning.

"The peculiarity of the disciplines (elements of Panopticism) is that they try to define in relation to the multiplicities a tactics of power that fulfils three criteria: firstly, to obtain the exercise of power at the lowest possible cost (economically, by the low expenditure it involves; politically, by its discretion, its low exteriorization, its relative invisibility, the little resistance it arouses); secondly, to bring the effects of this social power to their maximum intensity and to extend them as far as possible, without either failure or interval; thirdly, to link this 'economic' growth of power with the output of the apparatuses (educational, military, industrial or medical) within which it is exercised; in short, to increase both the docility and the utility of all elements of the system" [3].

From Foucault's idea, it can be observed that how the central towers i.e. dominant figures in any society, culture, or religion control the other dominated individuals and exercise power over them [3]. Then, the facts are explained through the clips of conversations that explored how the individuals in these conversations placed, as well as, how they placed themselves in highly effective positions. The empowered individuals were finding ways to accessibility power outside of world

knowledge activities and thus adapted to overt cultural-class macho stories that arranged them with hard cognitive abilities. The empowered individuals, however, arranged themselves with ideological powers and positioning, better planning of theirs for the modifying ideological positions. Through this analysis, it is discovered that both the regional perspective and over socio-cultural context is used to consider the exterior impacts that form these conversations. Lastly, the effects are explored for researcher and thinkers about how this understanding can impact on future researches.

Theoretical Framework

Interpellation and ideological persuasion

In Althusser's view, interpellation performs specifically the traditional part of the political agenda thereby generating subjects which fit into the judgments of an ideological perception of the social order [1,4]. Butler et al. [5] identified that, in a general type, interpellation performs a more wide-ranging part in the public procedures of making up individual subjects [6]. Althusser saw ideology (ies) as being the way community provides itself as 'normal' but which actually is no more than a 'representation of reality'. Mainly in Althusser's identification is the fact that truth can only be probably available for people at the stage of concept; we think we know what truth is, but all we can really know is a concept. Althusser did not believe that any truth other than this successfully existed; for Althusser, truth becomes a designed thing; and he considered, as a Marxist, that truth would be generally designed to match those in power [4]. The reality can only exist at an ideal level, through ideas. The ideas would be propagated by elite, ruling or powerful classes to persuade their receivers in specific ways of thinking rather than the natural way of thinking – the only and final way to think or for the construction of gendered concepts by media. Naturally, it is believed that the dominated willingly accept the dominant's norms of behaviors and attitudes – and they remain ever in power. Also, the social change would hardly be in the hands of the dominant and through the actions, we become socialized (i.e. Society's 'Ideological State Apparatus'). An ideology would represent the imaginary relations of the individuals with 'others' but not the system of real relations which governs the existence of individuals in which they live" [1].

For instance;

"Assuming that the theoretical scene I have imagined takes place in the street, the hailed individual will turn round. By this mere one-hundred-and-eighty-degree physical conversion, he becomes a subject. Why? Because he has recognized that the hail was 'really' addressed to him, and that 'it was really him who was hailed' (and not someone else)." (Althusser [1], Cited in Campsall [4])

The conclusion of the ideology by Althusser is totally different from the first section's elaboration of the essay ISA, and totally different: namely modern Christian Religious Ideology. He positions it in the following terms: "God addresses himself to you through my voice ... this is who you are ... this is your origin, you were created by God (in his image) for all eternity ... this is your place in the world ... this is what you must do ... by these means, if you observe the 'law of God,' you will be saved ... and become part of the glorious body of Christ! etc. [1]. Generalizing from this case, Althusser concludes that interpellation has a "doubly-specular structure", by which he means that it hails individuals "in the name of a Unique and Absolute Subject" – whether it is God, country, the President, Freedom, or

whatever – who (a) functions as a mirror image in which individuals can "contemplate their own image," but who also (b) enters into a relation of "mutual recognition" with individuals, which, in turn enables (c) "the subjects' recognition of each other, and finally the subject's recognition of himself" [1]. So, it may be concluded that the process of interpellation works as a social practice, intentions of individuals may not be participating into it. For Laclau [7], "the quilting function which, for Laclau, coincides with the constitutive operation of naming) is never merely a verbal operation but is embedded within material practices which can or may acquire institutional fixity (As in Althusser's concept "Hey, you there" we would not consider the interpellation as a law but the individual's own position)" [1].

Ideological positioning

According to Althusser, "the subject (that is, the audience for the text) is created – or what he called constituted – by the text. The power of the text resides in its ability to position the subject – or, as Althusser puts it, to create the audience as subject to the text akin to the 'subject' of a king – in such a way that the subject cannot easily adopt an alternative or contrary interpretive position without feeling 'the odd one out' – as an outsider from the mainstream" [4].

Author claimed, "in relation to the expectations of others and the social codes and discourses available within a given context". Author established "two types of positioning that could occur within a discursive event: interactive and reflexive. Interactive positioning is when one person positions another; reflexive positioning is when one positions oneself within a conversation [8]." Althusser's ideology: as a relationship between two subjects, even imaginary a subject (self) and a Subject ("The other-is the bearer of social injunctions, convocations, addresses etc."). For Althusser, an agency is needed for any interpellation i.e. "Hey you!" but if an individual is considering him/herself as an addressee, then what would be the situation for positioning or ideological positioning.

First, the positioning of the subject, prior to recognition in the other's positioning, is not the positioning of an individual. Where the (real) individual is taking the positioning of other (imaginary) subject (individual) then the "existence" of real positioning would be haunted by total lack. In an implicit way, "the Althusserian other must also be supplied by the subject. The Subject only exists through the subject's recognition in it; its retroactive existence is correlative to that illusory 'always already' of the subject" [9]. So, the question is, does the theory of interpellation allow the "real" and "independent" positioning of any individual?

Aim and Objectives

The aim of this research is to determine how individuals of different beliefs, cultures, and religions maintain their real ideological identities in the face of linguistic and multi-regional differences.

The objectives are:

- To detect how the positioning of individual beliefs, thoughts, and religions are maintained.
- To detect how they develop self-maintained organized associations and maintain their real ideological identities.

Research questions

To analyze and understand the ideological positioning of the individuals the present paper looks at the following questions:

- How do the individuals of different beliefs, thoughts, cultures, and religions maintain their positioning?
- How do they revive their 'real' position thereby giving up their heterogeneous multi-regional, linguistic, religious, cultural, and ideological positioning?
- How do they develop self-maintained organized associations and maintain their real ideological identities?

Research Methodology

The analyzed facts and the aspects of ideological positioning and fundamentalist ideology (ies) are based on critical reading of the research articles and papers in journals. Moreover, the supporting clips from the movie with English translations (dialogues) are watched and critically observed for the qualitative analysis, which are also exemplified/added in the analysis. Hence, the audio of the movie was in Urdu language (verbal) yet, for the better understanding it at international level, the examples/quotations from the English subtitle are taken accordingly.

Data collection

The primary data for the present research is collected from the selected movie Khuda Kay Liye (In the Name of God) fulfilling the essential requirements of the present title of the research, henceforth, the purposive sampling technique is employed. Though, the movie also discusses various other international issues related to Muslim community yet the data for the present research is purely collected related to the ideological positioning discussed in the research specifically.

Data Analysis, Findings and Discussion

Fascinated and ideological positioning

The story of the film comprises the main streams of ideologies – South Asian (Pakistani-Muslims) and the West (London and New York) and also has a clash of ideology between two main strains of Islam itself. There would be two main fundamentalist versions of ideological positioning, Islamic fundamentalists Maullah Tahiri (Rasheed Naaz) and Shiekh and Western (Christian) FBI Supervisor (Sheldon Grad). They both would be represented as the real/violent face of fundamentalist ideology (ies). In Shiekh's dialogue, we can observe how he is trying to elaborate the real/violent fundamentalist teachings of Islam, as in the following dialogue:

(Mister Sheikh to Husain: Have some shame, Hussain Khan. You are named after the prophet's grandson. And your deeds are so bad.)

Hussain to Mister Sheikh: What is this nonsense?

(Mister Sheikh to Husain: Because of people like you today Muslims' plight is like this! We are ruined!)

(Husain to Mister Sheikh: What happened? Why are you yelling?)

(Mister Sheikh to Husain: You had spent your life with white people. Now your daughter too is following your footsteps!)

(Husain to Mister Sheikh: What nonsense!)

(Mister Sheikh to Husain: My daughter studies with your daughter. Today she gave both of your examples to make me quiet. She thinks I am an orthodox Muslim! And you both father and daughter are really progressive Muslims. Were you not content with white wives! Now you are getting a white son-in-law! Why are you tarnishing your religion, Hussain Khan? Become a Catholic! Leave us and our religion alone!)

(Are you leaving or shall I call the police?)

(Mister Sheikh to Husain: I will leave, Hussain Khan! Think about yourself! Imam Hussain won't spare you! Go to Hell!) [10].

In the above mentioned text, although Sheikh's 'positioning' is interactive, for instance, the use of fundamental language would be the real face of ideological representation of Islam, for example, "(Mister Sheikh to Husain: Because of people like you today Muslims' plight is like this! We are ruined!)" and it would be violent [10]. Ironically, here, the situation supports the reflexive positioning of the fundamentalist (Mister Sheikh). In Islamic teaching or even in any religion, anyone cannot harm 'others' physically or psychologically. But the current situation supports Mister Sheikh, because the deeds of liberal Hussain would be harmful for 'others' (for other Muslims) as he had had many white women in his relationship in his past and even now living with a white woman without 'Nikkah (marriage)' which is forbidden in Islam i.e. "(Mister Sheikh to Husain: You had spent your life with white people...)" [10]. And now Hussain's daughter is also following her father i.e. "(...Now your daughter too is following your footsteps!)" and it would be harmful for 'other' individuals [10]. For example, Sheikh points out that because of Hussain's daughter, his daughter is also deviating from the religion or norms, and also reacting against him or the fundamentals of the religion i.e. "(Mister Sheikh to Husain: My daughter studies with your daughter. Today she gave both of your examples to make me quiet. She thinks I am an orthodox Muslim! And you both father and daughter are really progressive Muslims)" [10].

The positioning of Mullah Tahiri would be interactive, as he is positioning another's ideology (traditional norms or religious ideological positioning):

(Mullah Tahiri to English Interviewer: I am thankful to America's CIA who reminded me of Jihad. Right now Mujahidin from all over the world have gathered in Afghanistan. And with Allah's grace many more are coming... All over the world when the lovers of Muslims see Jews killing Muslims with the backing of American they are automatically reminded of Jihad).

English interviewer: Sir, Who finances everything...and who trains the Jihadis?

(Mullah Tahiri to English Interviewer: Till a few years ago CIA used to send dollars. Not only dollar, I used to receive latest arms and ammunitions. At that time our fight was Jihad! CNN used to call us Mujahidin. Now we are terrorist!

English interviewer: Maybe drug money is also helping you cause.

(Mullah Tahiri to English Interviewer: You are a reporter. But you can't see what you don't want to see even if it's lying in front of your eyes. Because Islam has prohibited any kind of intoxication. That's why Taliban has destroyed opium cultivation. But you can't see that) [10].

Although, the fact also needs to be understood that 9/11 proved to be a point for understanding Islam. People in America and Europe started to study Islam and the rate of accepting Islam increased. But it also left it's aftereffects on the Afghanistan and nearby nations. So that, they would have their own 'positing' and stance regarding it, i.e.,

“(Mullah Tahirih to English Interviewer: I am thankful to America’s CIA who reminded me of Jihad. Right now Mujahidin from all over the world have gathered in Afghanistan...)” [10]. It could be the reality of CIA who imposed post 9/11 Afghan-American war on the Muslims of the Afghanistan. Against the CIA’s positioning, the positioning of Muslims would be reflexive as Jihad is considered the basic pillar of Islam but ironically it is interactive. Unity for a nation against the evil or for self-defense is considered a fundamental right of any individual or a nation in any culture, religion or society, for instance, “(...All over the world when the lovers of Muslims see Jews killing Muslims with the backing of American they are automatically reminded of Jihad)”.

If self-defense is considered a ‘sin’ in the contemporary modern societies, then, why was CIA capturing the so-called Muslim terrorists in America or in any part of the world? It would be a great question by any Muslim or so-called fundamentalist Muslim.

Difference positioning

Furthermore, conflict of philosophy between two sources of Islam is posited through the language used in the movie. On the one side, there is the fundamentalist edition that is shown through the opinions of Mullah Tahiri (Rasheed Naaz). The younger Pakistanis could be encouraged by the cleric with his sermons on Jihad i.e. “(... This is the age of shameless and bad manners. To reform it we will have to do something, hence practically) and Dis/identifications of Islam as traditional religious and fundamental beliefs in which the privileges of females are declined and songs and art are regarded Haraam (forbidden) [10]. However, there is the generous experience which is presented through two primary characters: Mansoor (Shaan), the younger artist who has rejected to be taken in by dogma and has become a sufferer of national profiling and individual privileges misuse in the US; but on the other hand, Maulana Wali (Naseeruddin Shah), the educated spiritual person who has the knowledge of basic fundamentals of the religion, as well as, contemporary change and observations. Estimating substantially from written messages (Quranic Quotations i.e. Ayahs or Hadith), the Maulana has shown ‘Difference’ (the grey positioning) that Islam is not anti-woman and it also permits a girl to marry a man of her own choice, for instance, “(... Prophet offered her to finish the marriage right away... I just wanted to know my rights...)” [10]. Islam does not also look down upon songs, art and lifestyle i.e. “(I have plenty of arguments in favor of music... All these four were also blessed with miracles... And what did David get? Music. Birds from all over the world would rush towards his voice... he played in songs to praise God...)” [10].

Even more importantly, it has advocated the idea of Jihad, which has been misunderstood by the fundamental spiritualist Mullah Tahiri, as a war to get over the foibles within the fallible individual ‘self’, rather than as replacements for fear.

Implications

The aim of the present research is to highlight the two prominent ‘ideological positioning (s)’ represented in the movie; the fundamentalist ideological positioning and moderate ideological positioning which are used to represent the ideologies of the religion Islam. Though, the positioning is represented through the both

moderate and fundamentalist characters, yet, the conclusive positioning is purely represented through ecclesiastical (practicing) characters. So that, the implications of the present would address the religious topics to mobilize the knowledge purely through the observations of the researcher. The present topic doesn’t dictate any type sectarian, dogmatic or practical values or teachings of the religion Islam or any other religion specifically.

Suggestions for future research

The present research only highlights the facts related to the ideological positioning of the characters listening and observing their dialogues. The present could also be extended employing the other contemporary frameworks. For example, the aftereffects of 9/11 on Muslim community in West, as well as, in their home countries could also be highlighted watching and observing the full movie ‘Khuda Kay Liye’ (In the Name of God). Moreover, the diasporic identities represented the movie could also be highlighted as a separate topic of a research.

Conclusion

It can be determined that the film has proven three different individuals’ ideology (ies) or ideological positioning from different major regions or religions having issues that report to Oriental (especially Muslims) lifestyle and the following misinterpretations of Islam in Pakistan and European communities. The movie ‘Khuda Kay Liye’ (In the Name of God) is not merely a highly effective story; it’s a film that features excellent activities, excellent music and innovative manufacturing principles. Normally, the scene-stealer is Naseeruddin Shah who goes into only the penultimate minutes of the film, but contributes enough to keep a durable (Difference) positioning. He is similarly printed by his competing, the real or violent fundamentalist Mullah Tahiri (Rasheed Naaz), highlighting the precincts of the mosque through sermons that are a dangerous/useful mix of religious beliefs and state policies. The concept of difference (highlighting grey areas) is also reflected in the movie through the ideological positioning of many characters, especially by Maulana Wali (Naseer-ud-Din Shah).

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