



Islamic Awakening: a Theoretical Framework

Unlike Al-Tahtawi and Seyed Jamal Asadabadi's modernist thoughts that had emphasized the rule of law and constitution, Rashid Rida's traditionalist political thoughts opted for reconstructing the Islamic system to which a number of idealistic elements of the early Islam, which had not been tainted by worldly, racial and sectarian bias, have been added.

Rashid Rida believed that the West took advantage of the Islamic principles in order to pass through the stages of development, while the Muslims have completely underestimated them. Although Rida had failed to deal with the West in his traditionalist approach, his line of thought makes his aggressive approach vis-à-vis the West clear, as some optimistic views commonly found in the Arab (nationalist) streams are not found in his works.

Hassan Hanafi introduces Rashid Rida as follows: "After spending so many years as a reformist, modernist and progressivist, Rashid Rida decided to get rid of influence of the vanguard scholars such as al-Tahtawi, Asadabadi and Muhammad Abduh and decided to take refuge in Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab's thoughts that connected him to Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, Ibn Taymiyya, and Ahmad Ibn Hanbal. He preferred to undermine the West instead of supporting modernist methods and development patterns of his time.

Islamist Fundamentalist Trend: In his analysis of the Islamic fundamentalism, Jacques Berque states, "Muslim countries have adopted extremist approaches because they failed to offer models consistent with the 20th century's techniques and civilization." He also argues that the most important internal cause of emergence of this trend was cessation of individual reasoning (Ijtihad) and suppression of the reformist movements under the pretext of fighting against innovation in religion. In fact, such failures along with inability to conduct reforms have embarrassed Arab spirit. This wrecked havoc with the Arab morale like a terrible tragedy and pushed them towards passivity and political extremism.

In his description of Muslim reformers, Hasan al-Banna, the founder of Muslim Brotherhood Party, states, "Asadabadi was only a warner, Sheikh Abduh was only a mentor and philosopher and Rashid Rida was only a historian and diarist, while the Muslim Brotherhood means jihad, efforts and working and is not merely limited to a call."

The Muslim Brotherhood is a political-religious movement

which asks for the substantial reform of the Muslim societies. The invincible power of Islam in solving social and political problems of Muslims is one of the substantial points the Muslim Brotherhood advocates, which in fact is the essence of the Islamist movements, as well.

Although Hasan Al-Banna was the political leader and mentor of the Muslim Brotherhood, Sayyid Qutb and Sheikh Mohammed al-Ghazali were the prominent theorists of the party. It should be borne in mind that the main difference distinguishing Tahtawi, Hayreddin Pasha, Asadabadi, Muhammad Abduh, Rashid Rida and Sayyid Qutb from others is plainly evident in the evolutionary path of the Islamic Awakening movement. As we approach the movement its defiance aspect get stronger while its eclectic aspect pales away. Sayyid Qutb's thoughts indicate such purism, fundamentalism and defiance very well.

Sayyid Qutb describes all the current societies as ignorant (Jahil) societies and argues that all European societies are at the peak of modern Jahiliyyah (ignorance of divine guidance). Thus the main decisive difference

Imam Khomeini's movement is the best emblem of the Islamic principlism under which other Islamic movements across the globe achieved their goals. Imam Khomeini's scheme and thought was a combination of identity and development. While former leaders of the movement, such as Seyed Jamal, were looking for materialization of modernity and development. Imam Khomeini aimed at simultaneous resuscitation of the Islamic identity and realization of development. For Imam Khomeini, development was a concept defined within the framework of the Islamic identity.

