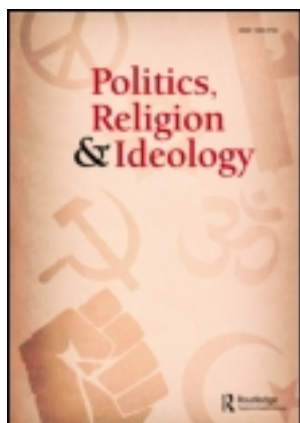


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Islamic Revival as Development: Discourses on Islam, Modernity, and Democracy since the 1950s

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ABSTRACT *The article argues that Islamic Revival can be read as the Muslim thinkers' and activists' critique of, and engagement with modernity. It further makes a case for multiple modernities and multiple Islamic discourses which have marked the last six decades of Muslim activism. Islamic Revival has gone through three distinct periods during this time. In each of these periods, the Revivalists have engaged in conversation with modernity, which manifests the co-constitutive nature of both Islamic Revival and modernity. During these conversations, both of these phenomena have been re-constituted and re-shaped by each other. In the first period, the conversation put Islamic Revival amidst the debates on capitalism, communism, and political development in general, within the contexts of post-colonial liberation and the Cold War struggles. In the second, the emphasis was on democracy, economic development, and human rights. Finally, in the third period, which we are still witnessing, the focus of Islamic Revival's conversation with modernity is on civic engagement and citizenship rights. Through these three periods, the paper traces the evolution of Islamic Revival from its often reactive past to the more proactive present.*

Introduction

This essay will explore a developmental reading of Islamic Revival – a movement which seeks to reestablish Islam in the socio-political life of Muslim societies. The paper is divided into several sections. First, I discuss the terminology the paper uses. Then, the paper turns to the main argument and its contextualization. After discussing the main argument, I provide a periodisation of the Islamic Revival since the 1950s until today. The goal is to understand evolution of the Revivalist ideas within broader global developments, including the Cold War, decolonisation, globalisation, post-Cold War, and the post-9/11 world. Finally, the paper ends with a conclusion, which summarizes the main findings and offers ideas for future research.

The aim of this essay is to demonstrate the interaction of Islamic Revival and modernity by focusing on the Revivalist critiques and engagements with Western modernity, and the syntheses which such engagements often produced. Islamic Revival is a broad social phenomenon which includes all those social and political actors whose aim it is to re-establish and re-institute Islamic teachings, in their broadest sense, into the societies in which they live. Covering all such actors in a single article would be an impossible

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task, hence my focus is on those actors whose writings and actions spoke directly, and most often explicitly, to the challenges modernity put in front of Muslims. Conversely, the Muslim actors who did not explicitly engage modernity, in their written works or in their activities, are not addressed in this paper. So, for instance, the Tablighi Jamaat's emergence could be connected to the challenges modernity presented to Muslims.¹ Yet, the Tablighis did not produce an analysis or a critique of Western modernity. True, their activism could be interpreted as a response to modernity, but there is very little in their opus to acknowledge that fact explicitly. The same could be said of other contemporary piety-based movements in Islam, such as the Sufis and many Salafi groups. The language and discourses these groups utilise are usually pre-modern. Therefore, I have decided to leave them out of the essay. Next, my focus on political development limits the scope of Revivalist actors and the time periods under consideration in this paper. Political development emerged as a political ideology of modernity in the post-World War II era.² It is this aspect of modernity which Islamic Revivalists sought to challenge in their writings and actions. Of course, modernity has its own philosophical bases: epistemological, ontological, metaphysical, moral and political, among others. The Revivalists' critique of modernity and their attack on its postulates acknowledged the multifaceted nature of Western modernity, but tended to focus on its applications. It follows from this that I am not conflating modernity and developmentalism. Indeed, modernity produces its own ways of critiquing developmentalism.³ The focus is simply on the actual and specific ways in which the two interacted with Islamic Revivalism. Finally, as this paper argues, Islamic Revival and modernity have been engaged in a constant conversation, which produced the Revivalists' significant contributions to both modernity and Islamic thought. Yet, this contribution is, most often, either unacknowledged or dismissed as apologia by Western scholarship on Islam. As Masud and Salvatore describe aptly, 'this bias and the argumentative aporias it produced prevents Western scholars from appreciating the contribution of Islamic modernism to the issue of the encounter between Islam and modernity'.⁴ The paper addresses and rectifies these biases and aporias.

The main argument of the paper is that Islamic Revival is a developmental program, encompassing political, economic, and social arenas. Its goal is to provide a developmental alternative for the Muslim world, one that is significantly different from the dominant liberal democratic paradigm and its socialist-communist counterparts. As such, this approach to Islamic Revival provides a toolbox of ideas about development which Islamic Revivalists tap into in order to accomplish several goals. First, they use the toolbox of ideas to formulate their own understanding about development. Second, they draw on these ideas in order to debate, argue against, and delegitimise the competing developmental ideas. Third, the Revivalists emphasize the Islamic nature of their ideas with the goal to frame the debate in such a way to enable localisation, acceptance, and widespread dissemination of these ideas.

¹Mumtaz Ahmad, 'Islamic Fundamentalism in South Asia: The Jamaat-i-Islami and the Tablighi Jamaat of South Asia' in Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (eds) *Fundamentalism Observed* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), pp. 457–530.

²Mark Kesselman, 'Review: Order or Movement?: The Literature of Political Development as Ideology', *World Politics*, 26:1 (1973), pp. 139–154.

³I am thankful to Darryl Li for this point.

⁴M.K. Masud and Armando Salvatore, 'Western Scholars of Islam on the Issue of Modernity' in Muhammad Khalid Masud, Armando Salvatore and Martin van Bruinessen (eds) *Islam and Modernity: Key Issues and Debates* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), p. 48.

For example, Islamic revival in Malaysia was framed in this way.⁵ Malaysian Revivalists used a developmental reading of Islam to delegitimise government-sponsored developmental programs.⁶ They also used the ideas derived from such a reading to mobilise students and social activists. Once mobilised, these social actors engaged in advocacy struggles, trying to influence both the government and the society. The stated goal was to re-orient the government-sponsored developmental programmes and the societal tendencies toward their own interpretation of developmental Islam. As a result of these social changes, the ideas of Islamic Revival were to become the guiding light for governmental policies. In addition, these ideas were meant to create a new basis on which the social, political, and economic relationships had to be recreated and reified. Since these developments were taking place in the context of the Cold War and the related ideological contestations among various competing ideologies, Islamic Revivalists believed it was necessary for them to explain their own understanding of developmental Islamic Revival in comparative terms. *What we have been witnessing throughout the Muslim world, from the 1950s onwards, is an ongoing struggle to define Islam within the developmental debates waged around the world in general, and in the Third World and the Muslim world in particular.* These debates took place within the contexts of decolonisation, post-colonialism, the rise and decline of the Cold War, globalisation, democratisation and the war on terror.

Malaysian Islamic Revival, used as a brief case study here, has to be understood in this context. When the still nascent Malaysian nation state faced its first hardships, barely a decade after the independence and in the wake of the 13 May 1969, riots, the entire direction of Malaysian development came into question. Malaysian Islamic Revivalists seized this opportunity to frame and construct their own vision of development, as expressed in the ideas of contemporary Islamic Revival. This paper outlines the wider context within which Malaysian Islamic Revival, and similar other revivals throughout the Muslim world, took place. It follows, therefore, that contemporary Islamic Revival in Malaysia, or any other such revival, cannot be viewed in isolation from wider developments, not only in the Muslim world but all over the globe.

Modernity, Development and Islamic Revival: The Conversation Among Multiple Modernities

Not long ago, Fukuyama proclaimed the end of history and declared liberal democracy as the only exit on the modernity highway.⁷ History, ever since, was not too kind to Fukuyama. Since the publication of his book, we have witnessed the rise of illiberal democracies which fuse electoral democracy with non-liberal practices,⁸ the emergence of hybrid

⁵I am using the Malaysian case to highlight the theoretical assertions and generalisations, but also to derive such assertions from a specific case study. I could have used many other case studies, but have chosen the Malaysian example because of the familiarity with it and because it is well documented. This example also underlines the global nature of Islamic revival and moves away from the general emphasis on the Middle East. For an excellent general overview of the Malaysian Islamic revival see Hussin Mutalib, *Islam and Ethnicity in Malay Politics* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1990). Other such cases of Islamic revival are briefly referenced in the paper. An extensive discussion of these case studies is outside the scope of the paper.

⁶For an overview of the Malaysian developmentalist state see Abdul Rahman Embong, 'Developmentalist State in Malaysia: Its Origins, Nature and Contemporary Transformation' in Joan M. Nelson, Jacob Meerman and Abdul Rahman Embong (eds) *Globalization and National Autonomy: The Experience of Malaysia* (Singapore: ISEAS, 2008), pp. 27–58.

⁷Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Harper, 1992).

⁸Fareed Zakaria, 'The Rise of Illiberal Democracy', *Foreign Affairs*, 76:6 (1998), pp. 22–43.

regimes that combine elements of both democracy and authoritarianism,⁹ as well as the relentless march of various ethno-religious movements.¹⁰ Islamic revival, as a representative of this last category, is often described as irrational and anti-modern movement. In contrast, I posit that Islamic revival – of which Islamic movements are the best known representative – is a modern movement, aimed at engaging modernity in ways congruent with Islamic tradition. As a result, the vocabulary of contemporary Islamic revivalists is predominantly modern. Their discourses contain the polemics about modern concepts, i.e., the state, politics, economy, social justice, and social change.

The implications of reading Islamic revivalism this way are multidimensional. They point to various possibilities with regard to how modernity ends and where it leads to. Could there be variations in the way different groups of people envisage their social, political, and economic lives? Is liberal democracy truly an end of modernity or could there be competing socio-political futures – liberal democratic, Islamist, neo-socialist (like we have been witnessing in Latin America)? Answers to these queries could question the unidirectional and linear metahistorical narrative which Fukuyama proposed.

The word ‘modern’ is used in common talk to denote something good, desirable, new. The opposite is ‘backward’ or sometimes ‘traditional’, which usually means negative and undesirable. Historically, the term ‘modern’ was introduced in the fifth century to distinguish Christianity from paganism. It gained currency in the seventeenth and eighteenth century in the post-Enlightenment Europe. It signifies the renunciation and rejection of the past and its re-interpretation.¹¹ Politically, it started with the American and the French Revolutions. It included abolition of monarchy, establishment of republics, and the emergence of political liberalism; hence, the importance of individual freedom. Modernity is, then, signified by industrialism, capitalism, secularisation, and the nation state. The beginnings of the nation state are in the Treaty of Westphalia (1648) which established the principles of territoriality and sovereignty. Some have argued, however, that there is no one modernity. Modernity itself changes as we change our understandings of the nation state, economy, sovereignty, and production. So, we can talk about multiple modernities. As Eisenstadt puts it:

The idea of multiple modernities presumes that the best way to understand the contemporary world – indeed to explain the history of modernity – is to see it as a story of continual constitution and reconstitution of a multiplicity of cultural programs. These ongoing reconstructions of multiple institutional and ideological patterns are carried forward by *specific social actors in close connection with social, political, and intellectual activists, and also by social movements pursuing different programs of modernity*, holding very different views on what makes societies modern.¹² (Italics added)

In its traditional form, modernity created a theory (or theories) of modernisation, i.e., what societies need to do in order to become modern, or to transition from tradition into modernity. This theory (or theories) is closely related to secularisation thesis: the claim that societies need to secularise in order to become modern. Secularisation, then,

⁹Larry Jay Diamond, ‘Thinking About Hybrid Regimes’, *Journal of Democracy*, 13:2 (2002), pp. 21–35.

¹⁰See Michael Ignatieff, *Blood and Belonging: Journeys into the New Nationalism* (New York, NY: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1994).

¹¹See Marshall Berman, *All That Is Solid Melts Into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (New York, NY: Verso, 1983).

¹²S.N. Eisenstadt, ‘Multiple Modernities’, *Daedalus*, Winter (2000): pp. 1–29; the quote is from 2.

is seen as a necessary ingredient of modernity and modernisation processes.¹³ As such, it projected a unilinear conception of history. According to this theory, as societies became more sophisticated they relied less and less on religious explanation of natural phenomena and turned to scientific explanations. Ultimately, everything would be explained and explainable by science; hence, no need for religion.¹⁴ Rationality and rationalism were thus awarded a special place in the modernisation programme, as evidenced in the classic works of Karl Marx and Max Weber, among others. This conception of the link between history, reason, and modernisation is necessarily homogenizing and hegemonic at the same time. Its best popular example is that of Fukuyama, who claimed that the world will finally be united under the banner of liberal democracy, which itself is an expression of modernity; for Fukuyama and the like, the only possible such expression.

History, as I have already mentioned, has not been kind to Fukuyama or to modernisation theories. The societies which emerged in the post-World War II world did not always follow the modernisation logic. If anything, a plural world was created, in which there were various and, almost always, competing claims regarding modernity (liberal, fascist, communist, socialist, religious fundamentalist, etc). As a result, one is obliged to talk about 'multiple modernities,' and not just one modernity. The variety of nation states, their modalities, ethnic and national groupings they fostered or challenged, has created the world in which there are competing national and cultural claims, each trying to find its way and expression within and into modernity. One of the crucial implications of reading modernity in this way is the acknowledgment that modernisation and Westernisation need not go hand in hand.

Islamic Revival and Modernity

The ongoing Islamic Revival can best be understood as a modern phenomenon. Its aims are to provide an Islamic answer (or answers) to the questions which modernity posed to all religions, including Islam. Since the Revival engaged modernity from its very beginning, it needed to use the language with which it would be able to converse with modernity. As a result of these conversations with modernity, Islamic Revival created a modern language in which it tried to address questions pertaining to Islam and modernity. The resulting discourses are uniquely modern in Islamic history and point to the essentially modern nature of contemporary Islamic Revival. I am using the word discourses, in plural, because – just like there is no one, single modernity – there is no one, single Islamic Revival. Instead of talking about Revivals in plural, I prefer to use the word 'discourses' which better captures the nature of the philosophical, linguistic, religious, legal, political, social, and economic aspects of contemporary Islamic Revival.

I consider contemporary Islamic Revival to have consolidated and expressed itself by the mid-twentieth century. Of course, its roots go back to the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, and the works of Khayruddin Al-Tunisi, Abdul Rahman al-Kawakibi, Jamaluddin al-Afghani, Muhammed 'Abduh, Rashid Rida, Muhammad Iqbal; in addition to Southeast Asian Muslim leaders and activists, such as Kyai Ahmed Dahlan, Hasyim

¹³On history and meanings of secularisation see Harvey Cox's *The Secular City*, originally published in 1965 and reprinted many times since. For a Muslim exposition consult S.M.N. al-Attas, *Islam and Secularism* (Kuala Lumpur: ISTAC, 1993), first published in 1978.

¹⁴This was an early version of modernisation theory. Later on, as religion proved to be more stubborn than initially expected, it was admitted that religion could retain some role in the society, but it should preferably be kept separate from public life, as much as possible.

Asy'ari, Syed Shaykh al-Hadi, Agus Salim and others. These early activists and their works, both in terms of writing as well as social artifacts which they left behind, emphasized mobilisation of Muslims under the banner of Islam, and did not often produce coherent ideologies. It should be said, for the sake of objectivity, that producing such ideologies was not their primary concern. The generations that came after them inherited strong anti-colonial rhetoric and activism which, coupled with strong Islamic commitments, necessarily drew Islamic vocabulary into a conversation with modernity and its institutions: nation state, industrialisation, means and nature of production and distribution, legislative politics and the like.

An important aspect of this contact and conversation of Islam with modernity was the rise of Muslim social movements, which interestingly were first promulgated in Southeast Asia (Sarekat Islam, Muhammadiyah, Nahdatul Ulama), a decade or two before such social movements became a reality in the Middle East. This very notion: that through an organized work a group of people can change and determine their destiny flies in the face of the wisdom of centuries prior to that. As Berman explains:

To be modern is to live a life of paradox and contradiction. It is to be overpowered by the immense bureaucratic organizations that have the power to control and often to destroy all communities, values, lives; and *yet to be undeterred in our determination to face these forces, to fight to change the world and make it our own.*¹⁵ (Italics added)

While there is no denying the fact that the first organized Muslim community,¹⁶ under the leadership of Prophet Muhammed himself, followed this path, the evolution or devolution of Muslim societies into kingships established a reflexive, quietist pattern, where obedience to the authority and patience with their transgression were deemed a virtue. Dissatisfied with state of the affairs in the Muslim lands, the newly organized social movements broke this mold and declared that 'Allah will not change the conditions of a people until they change what is in themselves' (The Qur'an, 13:11). This was, of course, a radical departure from the ways in which this verse was previously understood. Traditionally, this verse was interpreted in the light of another verse in the Qur'an:

Because Allah will never change the grace which He hath bestowed on a people until they change what is in their (own) souls: and verily Allah is He Who heareth and knoweth (all things). (The Qur'an, 8:53)

The change implied in this latter verse is from grace into fall, from favor into disapproval. No wonder the classical Islamic scholars and commentators interpreted the former verse in the light of the latter as they were, at that time, one of the most developed civilisations in the world. The situation at the end of the nineteenth century was a stark contrast from this previous condition; hence, calling for a different interpretation of 13:11. This is in itself a modern feature.¹⁷

¹⁵Berman, *All That Is Solid Melts Into Air*, p. 13.

¹⁶Muhammad Hamidullah, *The First Written Constitution in the World: An Important Document of the Time of the Holy Prophet* (Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1968).

¹⁷This interpretive framework goes back to Muhammad 'Abduh and his *tafsir* methodology. See Charles C. Adams, *Islam and Modernism in Egypt: A Study of the Modern Reform Movement Inaugurated by Muhammad 'Abduh* (New York, NY: Russell & Russell, 1968).

Islamic Revival and Modernity: A Joint Evolution

In order to show the continuing and ongoing evolution of the Islamic Revival discourses and their intrinsic connection to modernity, I am attempting here to provide a periodisation of the relationship between Islamic Revival and modernity.

- The modernisation–development phase (early 1950s–early 1980s).
- The democratisation phase (early 1980s–early 2000s).
- The civic engagement and citizenship phase (early 2000–present).

In the following sections, I will explain these stages by giving examples of the interactions between Islamic Revival and modernity, and how, in each stage, with changes taking places within modernity similar changes were occurring within Islamic Revival. The periodisation also reflects changes in international politics: from the beginning of the Cold War and the contestations between capitalism and communism, on to the decolonisation and post-colonial processes, through globalisation and democratisation, and the post-9/11 world. I should also say, as a caveat perhaps, that the periodisation provided does not mean there was no overlap between the periods. My claim is that the dominant features of each period can be discerned and that they are unique to the period under investigation. The presence of a few exceptions does not diminish the value of the present classification.

Modernisation–development phase (early 1950s–early 1980s)

During the period, the modernisation and development theories held sway in academic circles, policy-planning communities, and international organizations in the West. This was also the time where many nations in the Muslim world were acquiring or about to acquire independence. Questions surrounding development, in its various facets, were central to these newly established political entities. As virtually all of them were dependent on the West in terms of economic development, they borrowed significant amounts of money from Western countries and international financial institutions. These loans came with strings attached: the borrowers needed to follow modernisation and development programs as understood in the West at the time, with the ultimate objective of developing these Muslim nations into modern and secular polities. In order to better understand this process, we need to look briefly into the dominant modernisation and development theories during this period.

In Huntington's seminal study¹⁸ on development and modernisation, he defined modernisation as a 'multifaceted process involving changes in all areas of human thought and activity'.¹⁹ Modernisation involves a deep transformation on different levels: psychological, intellectual, demographic, economic, social, and political.²⁰ It creates significant shifts in values, attitudes, expectations, literacy, mass communication, education, life expectancy, labor activities, economic well-being, and geographical mobility. The principal characteristics of modernisation are 'urbanization, industrialization, secularization, democratization, education, [and] media participation'.²¹ Finally, it is posited that these characteristics 'have to go together'.²² It was assumed at the time that 'Islam is absolutely defenseless'

¹⁸Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1968).

¹⁹Ibid., p. 32.

²⁰Ibid., pp. 32–33.

²¹Daniel Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East* (New York: Free Press, 1958), quoted in Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies*, p. 32.

²²Ibid.

against the infusion of a 'rationalist and positivist' spirit.²³ Furthermore, the Western model of modernisation was self-consciously adopted as a baseline by the Muslim leaders at the time.²⁴

In response to both the Western conception of modernisation and development and their adoption by the ruling elites in Muslim countries, Islamic Revivalists promulgated their own set of responses, challenging Western understanding of development, and providing what they believed was an Islam-based answer to the questions modernity posed to Muslims. A brief survey of major works by leading Revivalists shows the breadth and depth of engagement with modernity, modernisation processes, and developmental programs based on these understandings. These works were written during the three decades which largely cover the period of first stage according to our periodisation. They came from the pens of Islamic Revivalist leaders, thinkers, and scholars from various parts of the Muslim world.

To give an example from Southeast Asia, one can point to the works of Mohammad Natsir, an Indonesian Muslim leader, a founder of the Masyumi Islamic party, and probably a first Islamist Prime Minister in modern times. M. Natsir or Bapak Natsir, as he was popularly known, was the Prime Minister of Indonesia in the period of 1950–1951. In the compilation of his writings, articles, pamphlets and polemics, *Capita Selecta*, which have served as an inspiration for generations of Southeast Asian Muslim activists, M. Natsir consciously positions Islam as an alternative to Western models of development and the prevailing ideologies of the time: capitalism, socialism/communism, and democratic liberalism. This is important to point out within our wider discussion on Malaysian Islamic Revival as M. Natsir's works were widely read among Malaysian activists in the 1970s. He was also hosted by leading Malaysian Islamic groups in the 1970s and 1980s during various seminars, conferences, and workshops.

In one of the pamphlets written in January 1952, titled *Jawab Kita* (Our Answer), M. Natsir outlines the two major developmental strategies of the time, communism and capitalism, and finds faults with each of them:

Communism, in its search to reach prosperity, represses and rapes human nature and basic human rights. Meanwhile, capitalism, in its effort to give freedom to each individual, ignores humanity and life through manipulation of people's sweat, and it opens the way to destroying the natural world.²⁵

What is Natsir's alternative to the two aforementioned ideologies? It is given in the following section, titled 'Solution is in Islam'. This is evocative for it has become customary for Islamists in various parts of the Muslim world, and especially in Egypt, to claim that 'Islam is the Solution' (*al-Islam huwa al-hall*, in Arabic). Natsir writes:

Islam, as a natural religion (religion of *fitrah*), grants complete and perfect guidance to humanity, which is compatible with human nature and creation. Islam gives freedom to people and directs them to seek sustenance and wealth with full effort, whether on the sea or on the land.²⁶

²³Ibid., p. 45.

²⁴Ibid., p. 46.

²⁵M. Natsir, 'Jawab Kita', in M. Natsir, *Capita Selecta*, Vol. 2 (Jakarta: Pt. Abadi and Yayasan Capita Selecta, 2008), pp. 64–271, quote is from 267. All translations from Indonesian, Malay, or Arabic are mine unless indicated otherwise.

²⁶Ibid.

At the end of the tract, Natsir concludes in the way that leaves no doubt as to where Islam stands in relation to both communism and capitalism:

Clearly, unlike communism, Islam recognizes [human] rights and individuality, and it gives freedom to people, often demanding from them that they should seek material goods and sustenance to the best of their ability. At the same time, and unlike capitalism, the acquired material wealth cannot be used only for personal needs, but it has to be shared (literally, extracted) in order to help others, to create common prosperity.²⁷

Several important Revivalist *leitmotives* are clearly outlined in the above paragraphs: Islam as a complete and perfect way of life; deficiencies of Western-based developmental ideologies; and the Islam-based solution for Muslim societies, which is juxtaposed against the two ‘imperfect’ ideologies of communism and capitalism.

In another tract, on the nature of relationship between Islam and democracy, Natsir replies to President Sukarno, who praised the role of the Young Turks and Kemal Atatürk in bringing about modern Turkish nation state. The Young Turks, it should be recalled, were Turkish nationalists who called for the establishment of modern constitutional republic and were opposed to the Sultan.²⁸ Sukarno was trying to assuage the fears of those who were apprehensive about the secular state he was advocating in Indonesia. He argued that, because many members of the Parliament were Muslims who were guided by Islamic beliefs, politics will always have some religious connotations due to the representative nature of modern democracies. For Natsir, that was not enough:

That is fine [what Sukarno is saying], but what if a great number of Parliament members follow the Islam of Kemal Pasha [Atatürk], i.e., Islam which does not care about religious rules even one percent, what will happen? . . . Maybe some will ask: ‘Does not Islam have democratic characteristics?’ We answer: Islam is described as ‘democratic’ insofar as Islam is anti-dictatorial [anti *istibdad*, in original], anti-absolutist, anti-lawlessness. In spite of that, it does not mean that, within Islamic teachings, all matters will be decided by deliberations in the Parliament. . . . If, because of this, Islam does not base its decisions and teachings on that which is called democracy, and if Islam – because of that – does not want to be named *democratic*, so be it! *Islam does not need ‘democracy’ 100%, and it does not need autocracy 100%, [because] Islam is . . . yes, ‘Islam’.* (Italics in original)²⁹

Other Muslim activists and thinkers also discussed issues related to Islam’s role in the modern world and how it fitted within the philosophies, social programs, and political ideologies of the time. Another good example, coming from the opposite side of traditional borders of the Muslim world, issued from the pen of Alija Izetbegović, the first President of post-communist Bosnia and Herzegovina, in his well-known work from this period, *Islam between East and West*. Even though the work was first published in Bosnian in the 1980s, its genesis and writing clearly happened during the period under the consideration

²⁷Natsir, ‘Jawab Kita’, p. 270.

²⁸For relevant discussion see Niyaz Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1999).

²⁹M. Natsir, ‘Islam “Demokrasi”?’, in M. Natsir, *Capita Selecta*, Vol. 1, pp. 550–552.

here.³⁰ In this book, Izetbegović juxtaposes Islam against the materialist Western philosophies, capitalism and socialism, on the one hand, and Christianity on the other. For the author, Islam is the only way of life which encompasses and includes both spiritual salvation and material wellbeing.³¹

It should be stressed that my aim here is not to discuss the validity, coherence, congruency or Islam-ness of these works, i.e., providing an evaluative assessment. The main objective is to show that Islamic Revivalists at the time were engaged with philosophical and socio-political currents coming from the West, especially those that were accepted within Muslim lands. They were active participants in the debates surrounding crucial questions related to the development of Muslim countries from philosophical, social, political, cultural, and economic points of view.

It is unavoidable to talk about these issues without mentioning Sayyid Qutb and his work. Qutb has often been called the ideologue of radical Islam, but his lifework is much more complex than that description suggests.³² In his two most famous ‘short’ works, *Social Justice in Islam* and *Singposts*, Qutb clearly juxtaposes Islam against the then prevailing models of political and economic development: capitalist democracy and socialism.

Democracy in the West has become sterile to such an extent that it is borrowing from the systems of the Eastern bloc, especially in the economic sphere, under the name of socialism. It is the same with the Eastern bloc. . . . now Marxism is defeated on the plane of thought, and if it is stated that not a single nation in the world is truly Marxist, it will not be an exaggeration. On the whole this theory conflicts with man’s nature and its needs. . . . It is essential for mankind to have a new leadership! . . . Islam is the only system which possesses these values [required for leadership] and this way of life.³³

This call is echoed in his *Social Justice in Islam*, through which Qutb established his reputation as a Revivalist thinker. Preempting Samuel Huntington by some four decades, Qutb positions Islam in between communism and capitalism. Then, he proceeds to paint a necessary clash both between these ideologies, as well as between Islam on the one hand, and communism and capitalism on the other. Yet, for Qutb, differences between capitalism and communism are not philosophical; rather, they are two sides of the same coin: what he calls a materialist, Western philosophy of life. Islam, on the other hand, provides an entirely different conception of life and social justice:

The real struggle is between Islam on the one hand and the combined camps of East and West on the other. Islam is the true power that opposes the strength of the materialistic philosophy professed by Europe, America, and Russia alike. . . . We are indeed at the crossroads. We may join the march at the tail of the Western caravan, which calls itself democracy; if we do so we shall eventually join up with the Eastern caravan, which is known to the West as communism.

³⁰Enes Karić, a professor at the Faculty of Islamic Studies in Sarajevo, maintains that Izetbegovic wrote his book in the period between 1965 and the early 1980s. Enes Karić, ‘Islam in “Islam between East and West”’ (Unpublished manuscript), pp. 7–13.

³¹The book has most recently been published in English as Alija Izetbegovic, *Islam between East and West* (Petaling Jaya: Islamic Book Trust, 2010).

³²For a more comprehensive treatment of Qutb’s life and thought, please see John Calvert, *Sayyid Qutb and the Origins of Radical Islamism* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2010).

³³Sayyid Qutb, *Milestones* (Kuwait: International Islamic Federation of Student Organizations, 1978), pp. 7–9.

Or we may return to Islam and make it fully effective in the field of our own life, spiritual, intellectual, social, and economic.³⁴

A less well-known work, *Ma'rakah al-Islam wa al-Ra's Maliyyah* (Battle between Islam and Capitalism), unmistakably positions Islam in opposition to capitalism.³⁵

Elsewhere in the Middle East, and during the heyday of Arab socialism, other Muslim scholars discussed the relationship between Islam and socialism. Some were sympathetic to socialism, others were not. Yet others, like the late leader of the Syrian Muslim Brothers, Mustafa al-Siba'i (d.1964), wrote about 'the socialism of Islam'. His work was not meant to show a supposed socialist nature of Islam, as some have assumed, but to speak the language of the time. This was, after all, during the ascendancy of Arab socialism, Nasserism, and the Ba'th Party in the Middle East. Al-Siba'i's objective was to show that the Arabs did not need socialism as Islam already incorporated a more superior version of welfare and equality than those present in socialist ideologies of the time.³⁶

During this period, the notion of the Islamic state was introduced by several Revivalist writers. The question surrounding the development of this concept seems to have centered around the problem of how should Muslims reconcile between the modern notions of constitutionalism and nation state, and the classical jurists' emphasis on the primacy of Islamic law (*Shari'ah*). One of the most important thinkers and activists of this period, Sayyid Abu'l-A'la Mawdudi, the founder of the Indian-Pakistani *Jama'at-e-Islami*, should be mentioned in this regard. For Mawdudi, a modern Muslim state is a constitutional state, but one which puts Islamic law at the core on constitutionalism and nation-making:

The establishment of a political authority that may enforce Islamic Law requires a *constitutional law*, and the shari'a has clearly laid down its fundamentals. The shari'a has provided basic answers to the basic questions of constitutional law and has solved its fundamental problem, namely: What is the basic theory of the state? What is the source of authority and its legislation? What are the guiding principles of state policy? . . . The guidance that the shari'a has provided in respect to these questions constitutes the constitutional law of Islam.³⁷

Likewise, Muhammad Asad, another prolific writer from the same period, explicates what he believed constituted an Islamic state:

A state inhabited predominantly or even entirely by Muslims is not necessarily synonymous with an 'Islamic state': it can become truly Islamic only by virtue of a conscious application of the sociopolitical tenets of Islam to the life of the nation, and by an incorporation of those tenets in the basic constitution of the country.³⁸

³⁴ Sayyid Qutb, *Social Justice in Islam*, translated by John B. Hardie, revised by Hamid Algar (Kuala Lumpur: Islamic Book Trust, 2000), pp. 316–318.

³⁵ Sayyid Qutb, *Ma'rakat al-Islam wa al-Ra's maliyyah* (Beirut, Dar al-Shuruq, 1974).

³⁶ See Mustafa al-Siba'i, *Ishtirakiyat al-Islam* [The Socialism of Islam] 2nd ed. (Damascus: NP, 1960).

³⁷ The book, *Islamic Law and Constitution*, was first published in the 1950s. The quote is from *Princeton Readings in Islamist Thought: Texts and Contexts from al-Banna to Bin Laden*, Roxanne L. Euben and Muhammad Qasim Zaman (eds) (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009), p. 98.

³⁸ First published in 1961, the book has gone through several reprintings by various publishers. The version used here is Muhammad Asad, *The Principles of State and Government in Islam* (Kuala Lumpur: Islamic Book Trust, 2001), p. 1.

These debates were not simply theoretical. They had important implications for the social development of Muslim societies. Islamic Revivalists, by providing an alternative model of development, have therefore challenged both the Western hegemony over theories and practices of modernisation and development, and the Muslim regimes who adopted these programs. That is why these regimes, feeling threatened by the Revivalists' works, often replied by imprisoning, torturing, or ultimately eliminating these alternative paradigms and their carriers. Such was the fate of Sayyid Qutb, who was executed not so much for the fact that he was a Muslim Brother, but because his ideas were a direct challenge to the concepts of development based on Arab nationalism and socialism as put forward by Nasser. A similar fate was shared by Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr, whose works on Islamic economics and political thought were a direct rebuke of the Arab nationalism and socialism of Saddam Husain in Iraq.

It is interesting to note that in al-Sadr's *Iqtisaduna* [Our Economics], the first parts of the book, more than one-third of the total volume, are dedicated to the discussion of historical materialism in its different variants – Marxism, socialism, and communism – and capitalism, with historical materialism taking the bulk of these discussions as it was more dominant in the Arab academic and policy-making circles at the time. Only after discussing these two developmental programs and critiquing their ideas and implications for the Muslims as well as their incompatibility with Islamic law, al-Sadr begins his discussion on Islamic economics, which he then develops into a theory.³⁹

As a central part of modernisation and development theories of this period, secularisation also received a great deal of scrutiny by Muslim scholars and activists. It is fair to say that one of the main lines of criticism these individuals mounted against Western theories and ideologies was that these were secular in nature, and hence antithetical to Islamic ethos, ontology, and praxis. One of the best known such works, which originated in Southeast Asia, is Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas' *Islam and Secularism*.⁴⁰ Published at the end of the first period according to my classification, this work has stood the test of time as one of the most sophisticated Muslim takes on modernity and secularism. In a way, it continued the criticisms of secularism, secularity, and secularisation as displayed in earlier works, while displaying a great deal of originality, especially at a higher, abstract, and more philosophical level. It is worth to point out that the Malaysian edition of the book was published by *Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia* or ABIM,⁴¹ manifesting thus an inextricable link between Muslim scholarship and activism during this period. It should also be mentioned here that ABIM's bread and butter was its relentless critique of the government's policies of development, especially as these were related to the New Economic Policy (NEP).⁴² The NEP was criticized not only for being un-Islamic, which was to be expected coming from an Islamic movement, but also because it was a bad developmental policy. This is why the then Malaysian Prime Minister, Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, asked a well-known American-Palestinian scholar, Ismail al-Faruqi, who was close with Anwar Ibrahim, ABIM's leader at the time, to

³⁹Muhammad Baqir Sadr, *Iqtisaduna* [Our Economics] (Beirut: Dar al-Ta'arif al-Matbu'at, 1982).

⁴⁰Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, *Islam and Secularism* (Kuala Lumpur: ISTAC, 1993; first published in Kuala Lumpur by ABIM in 1978).

⁴¹ABIM, or Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia [Malaysian Islamic Youth Movement], was the major social movement advocating a 'return' to Islam in Malaysia in the 1970s and 1980s.

⁴²The NEP was introduced by the Malaysian government in 1971 as a response to the inequitable distribution of wealth in the Malaysian society.

intercede with Anwar in order to stop ABIM's criticism of the Malaysian developmental programs. In a letter which Dr. Mahathir wrote to al-Faruqi, and which is now seen as the beginning of Mahathir's plan to bring Anwar into the government, Mahathir writes:

ABIM should not condemn the New Economic Policy as unIslamic but should instead clearly and openly support the attempts of the Government to better the lot of the Malays/Muslims and bumiputras [Sons of the Soil, i.e., native populations] in the economic and educational fields.⁴³

This period came to an end with the epoch-(un)making event of the Iranian Revolution. The Revolution came as the fruit of the efforts by the Iranian scholars, thinkers, and activists to challenge the Shah's – and by extension Western – developmental programmes. According to Boroujerdi, the Iranian intellectuals resisted Western philosophical and developmental encroachments into Iran by developing a nativist response,⁴⁴ which was often couched in Islamic terms. To the West, the Revolution was the most concrete challenge to Western ideology of development, as it turned the secular logic upside down. If such logic projected a view of history which favored secularism over religion, wherein historical progress inevitably led to a more secular, rational and modern (Western) future, then the Iranian Revolution was the prime falsifier of such a view of history.

It becomes clear, then, that during this period, Muslim scholars, thinkers, and activists were proposing an alternative model of development, while not rejecting many of the benefits brought by modernisation. In result, they were creating their own version of modernity. What is also important to understand is that both the Western conception of modernisation and development, as well as its Islamic/-ist critiques were rather exclusive in their approach, fomenting thus an either-or mentality, resulting in the juxtaposition of Islam with modernity. This exclusivism is perhaps responsible for the hegemonic approach of the West to the Muslim world, as well as for the violent response by radical Islamic groups. A reading of Islamic Revival which says there is only one way the Revival can be done, just like the reading which says there is only one way modernisation is executed, perhaps necessarily leads to a clash between cultures and civilisations.

Democratisation phase (early 1980s–early 2000s)

In the mid-1970s, world politics witnessed transition from authoritarianism to democracy, first in Southern Europe (Portugal, Spain, Greece), then in some Latin American countries.⁴⁵ Samuel Huntington dubbed this 'third wave' of democratisation in the book by the same name.⁴⁶ By late 1980s, with the fall of the Berlin Wall and the subsequent collapse of communism in Central–Eastern Europe, democracy and free markets were seen as in an unstoppable march, sweeping across the world. In the words of some writers and democratic scholars,

⁴³Dr. Mahathir's letter to Ismail al-Faruqi, reproduced in *Harakah* [the official newspapers of the Islamic Party of Malaysia], October 12, 1998, p. 22.

⁴⁴Mehrzad Boroujerdi, *Iranian Intellectuals and the West: The tormented triumph of nativism* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1996).

⁴⁵Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996).

⁴⁶Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratisation in the Late Twentieth Century* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991).

democracy was 'the only game in town'. Even the China's Communist Party was challenged in 1989 during the (in)famous Tiananmen Square Protests. It seemed as if the world was destined to become democratic, with the ideologies of individual liberty, market-oriented economy and the widespread respect for human rights based on the notion of individuality, universally adopted. This triumphalism turned into self-congratulation in Francis Fukuyama's famous essay turned into a book, 'End of History'. In it, Fukuyama proclaimed liberal democracy and market-oriented economy as the pinnacle of human social evolution and the only viable exit on the modernity highway. A few years later, witnessing the resistance still existing to the Western model of development, especially in the Muslim world and in China, Samuel Huntington penned his highly influential 'clash of civilisations' thesis, positing that future conflicts in international politics would be fought along cultural, i.e., civilisational, lines.⁴⁷ The most monumental of such conflicts will be between Western civilisation on the one side, and Islamic and Chinese civilisations on the other. What Huntington was arguing, in essence, was that the conceptions of modernity, as developed in the West, the Muslim world, and in China, are incompatible with one another. Huntington's world is not the world in which multiple modernities can coexist. It is the world in which one modernity will prevail over all others, preferably the Western being the victorious one.⁴⁸ Huntington's thesis was, and remains to be, prescriptive, rather than descriptive, and therein lie both its attractions and dangers.

As democratisation and democracy-promotion business started being adopted as a major foreign policy goal by western countries, the US and the EU members alike, the notion of political development assumed a new garb. In addition to the previously accepted categories of secularisation, modernisation, and industrialisation, the new language of development started looking at and measuring democratisation and democratic development. Development was now defined in democratic terms; democracy and development was a newly coined expression, not anymore modernisation and development. Modernisation, which took place in many so-called Third World countries, did not result in democratisation. So it was replaced. In this paradigm, freedom is seen as the ultimate value. Hence, no wonder that at the pinnacle of this period, toward the late 1990s, Amartya Sen published his influential *Development as Freedom*.⁴⁹ It is no accident either that, for instance, Freedom House started ranking countries in terms of their civil and political freedoms in 1972, or that Human Rights Watch was formed in 1978, known then as the Helsinki Watch.

Not oblivious to these new developments, Muslim scholars and activists started writing on, debating, engaging, conversing with, and critiquing democracy, democratisation, and democratic thought, including issues related to human rights, minorities, political participation, *shura*, political pluralism, participation of Islamists in non-Islamic governments, and women's rights in Islam. Not to be outdone, even non-Muslim scholars and especially social scientists, who started paying more attention to the category of 'political Islam' after the Iranian Revolution, started publishing extensively on the same topics: Islam and politics, Islam and democracy, Islam and human rights, Islam and minorities, and others. The works produced on these themes are too numerous to be cited and quoted here. It would suffice, though, to point to a few major works and how they engaged with the issues surrounding democracy and democratic development. As a final preliminary note, the discussion above is not meant to deny the existence of works on these and related topics prior to the early 1980s.

⁴⁷Samuel P. Huntington, 'The Clash of Civilisations?', *Foreign Affairs*, 72:3 (1993), pp. 22–49.

⁴⁸Samuel P. Huntington, 'The West: Unique, not Universal', *Foreign Affairs*, 75:6 (1996), pp. 28–46.

⁴⁹Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1999).

Of particular note is the effort by especially Southeast Asian Muslim scholars and leaders to make democracy and civil society relevant, not only within Muslim societies and for Muslims exclusively. They were also willing to extend the discourse to their societies as a whole. Such an example is Anwar Ibrahim in *The Asian Renaissance*, where he appeals to a broad range of Asian world of references, including Islamic ones, in order to impress upon the reader the importance of democracy and civil society.⁵⁰ At about the same time, the Indonesian discourse on civil society was undertaken by ICMI.⁵¹ Intellectuals such as Amien Rais, Nurcholish Majid, Azyumardi Azra, started developing the discourse of *masyarakat madani* (civil society) and *masyarakat religius* (religious society).⁵² For Nurcholish Majid, consultation (*musyawarah*) and participation are hallmarks of a Muslim religious society.⁵³ It is clear from their writing that they saw their work within the tradition of *tajdid* in Islamic thought. Another important part of the discussion on Islam and democracy in this period is the position of non-Muslim minorities in Islamic societies.⁵⁴ Fahmi Huwaydi argued that such minorities are equal rights citizens, not the classically protected categories of *ahl al-dhimmah*.⁵⁵ Rachid Ghannouchi, the leader and a co-founder of the Tunisian *al-Nahda* (Renaissance) movement whose political party emerged as the largest in the post-Arab Spring Tunisia, also developed a similar discourse on equal rights for all citizens in Muslim majority countries.⁵⁶ Perhaps the most emblematic and most significant statement on denunciation of violence, human rights, and political pluralism came from the Egyptian Muslim Brothers in 1994. Witnessing the movement for democracy after the Cold War, the Muslim Brothers issued a statement affirming their commitment to the above rights. The statement was confirmed in 2010, and it still features prominently on the Brothers' official website.⁵⁷ While the discourses on democracy among Islamic Revivalists were not unison, there emerged a strong democratic leaning, especially among modernists of both traditionalist and salafi orientations. Several areas, however, remained in dispute. First among these is the issue of sovereignty, or who is sovereign: God or people? Qur'an or the Shari'ah? If the Shari'ah, then which and whose Shari'ah?⁵⁸

This period was also marked by the emergence of the idea of Islamisation of knowledge. Again, this idea is a result of an ongoing conversation and discourse between modernity and Islam, in particular their epistemological foundations, and the way in which they interact, reinforce, or collide with one another. The basic premise of the 'Islamisation of knowledge' movement is that all knowledge comes from God; hence, all knowledge is sacred.

⁵⁰See Anwar Ibrahim, *The Asian Renaissance* (Singapore: Marshall Cavendish Edition, 2008), especially pp. 47–60. The book was first published in 1996.

⁵¹ICMI (*Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Indonesia*), or the Indonesian Association of Muslim Intellectuals, was established in 1990 under the patronage of the Suharto regime.

⁵²See Nurcholish Majid, *Masyarakat Religius: Membumikan Nilai-nilai Islam dalam Kehidupan* [Religious Society: Grounding Islamic Values in Life] 4th ed. (Jakarta: Paramadina, 2010).

⁵³*Ibid.*, pp. 8–22.

⁵⁴See Muddathir 'Abd al-Rahim, *Islam and Non-Muslim Minorities* (Penang: JUST World Trust, 1997).

⁵⁵Fahmi Huwaydi, *Muwatinun la Dhimmiyyun: Mawqi' Ghayr al-Muslimin fi Mujtama' al-Muslimin* [Citizens, not Protected Minorities: Position of non-Muslims in a Muslim [majority] Society] (Cairo, Dar al-Shuruq, 3rd printing 1999). The book was first published in 1985.

⁵⁶Rachid al-Ghannouchi, *Huquq Ghayr al-Muslimin fi al-Mujtama' al-Islami* [The Right to Citizenship: Rights of Non-Muslims in the Muslim Society] (Tunisia: 1989). For more on this issue and, in general, on Ghannouchi's thought see Azzam Tamimi, *Rachid Ghannouchi: A democrat within Islamism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).

⁵⁷'Our Testimony, Issued in 1994: In 2010, still true to our word', *IkhwanWeb*. <http://www.ikhwanweb.com/article.php?id=4185>. For the evolution of the Muslim Brothers' political views see Mona El-Ghobashy, 'The Metamorphosis of the Egyptian Muslim Brothers', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 37 (2005), pp. 373–395.

⁵⁸For a related discussion see Ermin Sinanovic, 'The Majority Principle in Islamic Legal and Political Thought', *Islam and Muslim-Christian Relations*, 15:2 (2004), pp. 237–256, especially pp. 246–251.

There is no distinction between religious and secular knowledge. As a result, a Muslim should approach all disciplines of knowledge with a religious outlook, seeking to understand God's plan in nature and society.⁵⁹ The think-tank behind this approach, the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT), was founded by a number of Muslim thinkers and activists in Herndon, Virginia, in 1981. Another institution, claiming the pioneering status within this approach, is the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC), founded by Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas in Kuala Lumpur in 1987.⁶⁰

Another important phenomenon is the question of Islamic banking and financing. Southeast Asia, and Malaysia in particular, and some Gulf countries, like Kuwait and the UAE, are among the frontrunners in this effort. The development of banking, lending and borrowing for investment and commercial purposes are held largely responsible for the capitalist development which took place in many parts of the world.⁶¹ Realizing that their religion has something to say about these matters, some Muslims have tried to develop a vision of Islamic banking and financing. It was during this phase that Islamic economics became a noticeable player in international financing.⁶² Intellectual foundations for the last two issues – Islamisation of knowledge and Islamic banking – were sown during the first phase, but their fruition happened during this particular phase, from the 1980s onward, hence their inclusion here.⁶³

What is again clear from the above-mentioned examples and the proliferation of Muslim works on democracy, economic development and related issues is that Islamic Revival is an ongoing process, one that is constantly engaged in a dialogue with modernity. As the Muslim societies were trying to find the *modus vivendi* between their religious orientations and the demands of modern life, so did the discourses of Islamic Revival grow more sophisticated, engaging in result with new questions which modernity and the engagement with the West were throwing at them. This period or phase is characterized, among other things, by the proliferation of Muslim voices, an emerging pluralism within Islamic Revival, and – to some extent – de-ideologization of the Revival, while focusing on more pragmatic questions and issues.

The civic engagement and citizenship phase (early 2000s – present)

The transition into the third period according to my periodisation started already in the 1990s, but became obvious in early years of the first decade of the twenty-first century. There are several reasons for this evolution⁶⁴ from more theoretical discussions on Islam and democracy to the questions surrounding what this meant in practice. It is also a transition from the emphasis on the top-down approach as embodied in the largely unsuccessful concept of the Islamic state, to a call for civil society to become more involved in

⁵⁹See *Islam: Source and Purpose of Knowledge* (Herndon, VA: The International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1988). For a critical appraisal see Mona Abaza, *Debates on Islam and Knowledge in Malaysia and Egypt: Shifting Worlds* (New York, NY: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002).

⁶⁰See his biography with a clearly suggestive subtitle: Wan Mohd Nor Wan Daud, *The Educational Philosophy and Practice of Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas: an Exposition of the Original Concept of Islamization* (Kuala Lumpur: ISTAC, 1998).

⁶¹Timur Kuran, *The Long Divergence: How Islamic Law Held Back the Middle East* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010). For a powerful critique of Kuran's argument see Arshad Zaman, 'Review Article of Timur Kuran's *The Long Divergence*', *Islamic Studies*, 49:2 (2010), pp. 277–286.

⁶²For a good overview of this phenomenon see Ahmed El-Ashker and Rodney Wilson, *Islamic Economics: A Short History* (Leiden: Brill, 2006).

⁶³Baqir al-Sadr's *Iqtisaduna* was mentioned as a foundational work of Islamic economics earlier in the paper.

⁶⁴I am grateful to Dr. Ahmet Alibašić for suggesting the points discussed in this paragraph.

creating democratic space in Muslim societies. In addition, the democratization wave of the late 1980s and early 1990s seems to have avoided the Muslim world, thus creating the notion of Muslim or Arab exceptionalism when it comes to democratization.⁶⁵ A late American-Egyptian scholar, Fathi Osman, anticipated the recent Arab Spring more than 20 years ago, suggesting that the only way to institute political change in the Arab/Islamic world is through a mass, popular movement (*al-harakah al-sha'biyyah al-jamahir-iyah*). According to him, this is the only way toward a workable Islamic democracy.⁶⁶ A more recent study suggested a similar scenario: 'The road to the establishment of democracy, and hence to the effective promotion and protection of human rights throughout the Muslim world, is likely to be long and arduous. There is, however, no viable alternative to genuine, homegrown democracy'.⁶⁷ The increased speed of globalization in the 1990s also led to the renewed migration from many Muslim countries into the Western world. The questions this newly found Muslim presence in Western democracies started generating needed to be answered. The seeds of the latest stage in the history of contemporary Islamic Revival have been sown during the 1990s. This preliminary discussion of the third period could be concluded by saying that the Islamists have most likely turned to civil society and civic engagement once they realized that pure political activism was leading nowhere and that the authoritarian regimes would not buckle under the Islamist pressures. This reorientation has led some scholars to advance the thesis of post-Islamism, which remains unconvincing, especially after the Arab Spring.⁶⁸

It is often said, especially in the United States, that 9/11 changed everything. While this is probably an over-exaggeration, it can be fairly said that many things have changed as a result of the terrorist attacks which took place on September 11, 2001. Most importantly, and directly related to the topic of this work, the nature of interaction between the West and the Muslim world, and between modernity and Islam took on a new phase. A lot has been written since that date about Islam, its role in the world, and its place in the West. There are multiple and often competing claims and visions regarding Muslims' place in this world. The Muslims themselves have not been silent on these issues. Partly as a response to the violent act committed in the name of Islam and partly as an answer to the perceived threats and dangers that came to be associated with living as a Muslim in the post-9/11 world, Muslim scholars and activists have produced a number of works in which they continued to engage in conversation with modernity.

Western policy-makers took note of the Islamic Revival taking place in the Muslim world, not always for the right reasons. Security considerations seem to be of primary concern nowadays, some would say understandably so. Others are critical of this approach.⁶⁹ As a response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks, some Western societies started moving away from multiculturalism, which was predicated on postmodernism, and retreating back into modernity. Both the British Prime Minister and the German Chancellor, David Cameron and Angela Merkel, proclaimed that multiculturalism was a failure. This is indeed an interesting phenomenon, coinciding with the rise in anti-immigrant

⁶⁵For this debate see Alfred C. Stepan and Graeme B. Roberston, 'Arab, not Muslim, Exceptionalism', *Journal of Democracy* 15:4, (2004), pp. 140–146; and Ellen Lust, 'Missing the Third Wave: Islam, Institutions and Democracy in the Middle East', *Studies in Comparative International Development*, 46:2 (2011), pp.163–190.

⁶⁶Fathi 'Uthman, *Fi al-Tajribah al-Siyasiyyah li al-Harakah al-Islamiyyah al-Mu'asirah* [On Political Experience of Contemporary Islamic Movement] (Kuala Lumpur: ABIM, 1990), pp. 85–90.

⁶⁷Muddathir 'Abd al-Rahim, *Human Rights and the World's Major Religions, Volume 3: The Islamic Tradition* (Westport: Praeger, 2005), p. 130.

⁶⁸For a critique of post-Islamism see Ermin Sinanovic, 'Post-Islamism: The Failure of Islamic Activism?', *International Studies Review*, 7:3 (2005), pp. 433–436.

⁶⁹See Jocelyne Cesari, 'The Securitisation of Islam in Europe', <http://www.ceps.eu/book/securitisation-islam-europe>.

right-wing rhetoric in the West, which needs to be studied more. On the upside, Western scholars and policy-makers could not anymore ignore the importance of religion in international affairs. Indeed, social sciences have been quite blind to the notion of religion as an independent variable, perhaps due to the opacity inherent in defining and measuring religion and religiosity.⁷⁰ During this period, a number of sophisticated works appeared, trying to rectify this problem and developing new ways and methods of studying religion and politics.⁷¹ Likewise, the concept of secularism is being studied, reappraised, and reformulated.⁷² It would be an overstatement to claim that Islamic Revival has been the only factor in creating this change, but it would also be short-sighted to dismiss its persistence and contribution to the study of religious affairs in international politics.

Among those Muslim scholars who continue working within the tradition of renewal and reform (*tajdid* and *islah*), the name of Tariq Ramadan deserves a special mention. For the past twenty years, he has been developing an ethics of citizenship for Muslims in general, and Muslims living in the West in particular. His concept of *dar al-shahadah* (the Abode of Witnessing)⁷³ is his response to the realities of post-World War II international order, which is meant to displace the outdated notion of *dar al-harb* (the Abode of War).⁷⁴ Likewise, the Bosnian Grand Mufti, Dr. Mustafa Cerić, issued the *Declaration of European Muslims* in 2005 in which he stated, ‘the land of Europe is the House of Social Contract because it is possible to live in accordance with one’s faith’.⁷⁵ Ramadan and Cerić are perhaps among the best known, but definitely not the only Muslim scholars advocating an approach to modern life, law-making, and Islamic jurisprudence through the lens of *maqasid al-Shari’ah* or the objectives (higher intentions) of Islamic law. The school of *Maqasid* is enjoying something of a renaissance right now, while the number of works produced is proliferating by the day.⁷⁶ The gist of the *maqasid* approach is emphasis on general principles and objectives of the Islamic law and not necessarily on particularisms. It is to be seen if this approach will produce an actual change in the life of Muslims. What can be said of this effort, however, is that it has become prominent due to the perceived inefficacy of traditional approaches to *fiqh*, as well as their unsuitability to a large number of practical questions the modern life asks of Muslims. This, again, is another conversation of Islamic Revival with modernity; one that is ongoing right now, in front of our eyes. It is perhaps premature to make a

⁷⁰See Jonathan Fox, ‘Religion as an Overlooked Element of International Relations’, *International Studies Review*, 3:3 (2001), pp. 53–73.

⁷¹For fine examples of these new approaches see Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, *The Politics of Secularism in International Relations* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007) and *Religion and International Relations Theory*, ed. Jack Snyder (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2011).

⁷²Craig Calhoun, Mark Juergensmeyer and Jonathan Van Antwerpen (eds) *Rethinking Secularism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

⁷³See Tariq Ramadan, *To be a European Muslim: A Study of Islamic Sources in the European Context* (Leicester: The Islamic Foundation, 1999). Also his *Western Muslims and the Future of Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).

⁷⁴For a good overview, and a critique, of traditional approach to international relations, see AbdulHamid A. AbuSulayman, *Towards an Islamic Theory of International Relations: New Directions for Methodology and Thought* (Herndon: The International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1993). See also Louay M. Safi, *Peace and the Limits of War: Transcending the Classical Conception of Jihad* (Herndon: The International Institute of Islamic Thought, 2001).

⁷⁵Mustafa Cerić, *Declaration of European Muslims*, available in multiple languages at http://www.rijaset.ba/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=66.

⁷⁶For a sophisticated overview of this theory see Jasser Auda, *Maqasid al-Shariah as Philosophy of Islamic Law: A Systems Approach* (Herndon, VA: The International Institute of Islamic Thought, 2008).

thorough analysis or evaluation of this period, but some common characteristics are already becoming discernible.

The question of citizenship is often followed by the considerations of civic engagement by the Muslims. It is interesting that many of these debates are taking places in Muslim communities in the West, for at least two reasons. One, the scope of freedom to debate, discuss, and deliberate on these issues is much greater in the West. Two, the practicality of these questions is most apparent in the West where Muslims are participants in the democratic politics. At the same time, one has to acknowledge that during the past two decades these questions have been gaining traction in majority-Muslim countries as well. In Muslim democracies, such as Turkey, Malaysia, and Indonesia, the issues of civic engagement, civil society, and citizenship are now in the mainstream discussion on Islam, politics, and society. In other Muslim countries, such as in the Middle East and North Africa, the recent 'Arab Spring' has brought these issues to the fore as well.

Among the Muslim countries where such participation is visible and permissible, the Southeast Asian majority-Muslim nations, Malaysia and Indonesia, again provide very interesting examples in the ongoing conversations between Islamic Revival and modernity. The largest Islamic political party in each Malaysia and Indonesia, PAS (*Parti Islam Se-Malaysia*, or the Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party) and PKS (*Partai Keadilan Sejahtera*, or Prosperous Justice Party), have during this last decade given us extraordinary examples of the interaction between their own missions of Islamic Revival, and the modern democratic politics in which they are participating.⁷⁷ First of all, both of these parties are currently participating in coalitions: PAS is a member of the opposition coalition in Malaysia, while PKS is a member of the ruling coalition in Indonesia. In both instances, they are participating and cooperating with non-Islamic political parties. Second, they have both considered or adopted non-Muslims as members of their own party, introducing a co-terminous motto for their party ('PAS untuk semua' or 'PKS untuk semua', i.e., 'PAS for all' and 'PKS for all', respectively). What is more astonishing is that recently PKS accepted about 20 non-Muslim members from Papua to be their representatives in regional representative assembly! These examples are just some of the many which this last decade has produced.

It would be apt to conclude this period by writing about Turkey. Probably better than any other country, Turkey's experience sums up the last several decade of Muslim activism, Islamic Revivalism, and Islam's dialogue with modernity. Turkey's assertive secularism⁷⁸ necessitated a certain perspective on religious activism. Since overt political organization along religious lines was not permitted in the post-Atatürk period, Turkey's activists and revivalists developed a way of 'vernacular' politics, influencing day-to-day activities of ordinary citizens. This process intensified in the 1990s with the emergence of the Welfare Party (*Refah Partisi*),⁷⁹ besides the already existing movement, such as the Nurcıs and the Güllen movement.⁸⁰ Even though the party was forced out of government

⁷⁷For a history of PAS please consult Farish Noor, *Islam Embedded: The Historical Development of the Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party PAS, 1951–2003* (Kuala Lumpur: Malaysian Sociological Research Institute, 2004); for PKS please see Yon Machmudi, *Islamising Indonesia: The Rise of Jamaah Tarbiyah and the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS)* (Canberra, ANU E-Press, 2008), available for download at http://epress.anu.edu.au/islam_indo_citation.html.

⁷⁸Ahmet T. Kuru, *Secularism and State Policies Toward Religion: The United States, France, and Turkey* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 10–34.

⁷⁹Jenny B. White, *Islamist Mobilization in Turkey: A Study in Vernacular Politics* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002).

⁸⁰See *Turkish Islam and the Secular State: The Güllen Movement*, M. Hakan Yavuz and John L. Esposito (eds) (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2003).

in 1997, and officially banned in 1998,⁸¹ its experience provided crucial in the formation of religiously-oriented civic-minded political parties. The banning of Refah led its members to reorganise and rethink their approach to Islamic activism in an inhospitable environment. Some of these members started the Justice and Development Party (AKP, for *Adalet and Kalkınma Partisi*). The AKP has been in power for a decade now, and its standing in Turkish politics and society is strong. While negotiating between modernity and Islamic Revival, the Turkish leaders have affirmed the allegiance to a religiously-friendly secularism, while propagating religious values in the society, causing the consternation both among the assertive secularists in Turkey and elsewhere, as well as among the most mainstream Islamists in the Middle East. At the same time, they are providing a powerful example for the liberal-minded Islamists, such as Ghannouchi in Tunisia, who explicitly stated that the AKP is the model for the post-Ben Ali Tunisia, while noting that his writings might have influenced the AKP members as well.⁸² In Malaysia and Indonesia, the leaders of the already mentioned PAS and PKS have expressed their admiration for the AKP. In PAS, some analysts have recently pointed to the existence of two factions, with the more liberal one being dubbed the 'Erdogans' after the Turkish Prime Minister.⁸³ The brain behind this more liberal approach in PAS, Dr. Dzulkefly Ahmad, is a self-avowed student of Ghannouchi.⁸⁴

While, again, it is too early to provide a thorough analysis of this period, it is obvious that the questions of citizenship, democratic participation, civic engagement, and involvement in the democratic process are at the forefront of the latest interaction between the discourses of developmental Islamic Revival and modernity.⁸⁵ The difference between this and the earlier two periods/phases is that in the latest phase Islamic Revivalists are taking on a more proactive role. While, previously, their work lagged behind modernity and almost always played catching up, this time around the Revivalists are actually challenging modernity and asking it to provide answers to the questions they are asking. In particular, the question of legal monism, or having one common law for the whole territory of a nation state, is being debated in the West due to the Muslim presence. Would Muslims be allowed to follow Islamic law principles in cases where these are in clear contravention with the law of the land? How are Muslims to obtain *halal* (Islamically permissible) meats in countries which ban *halal* slaughtering of animals? Are Muslim female headscarves a religious symbol or a piety requirement? Different Western countries provide varying answers to these questions, but it goes to show that the questions Muslims are posing to modern nation states are now making these states to (re)examine some of the basic issues related to constitutionality, rights of minorities, religious rights and the like.⁸⁶ Likewise, these new situations encourage Muslims to investigate their religious sources and find solutions for the questions which living in Western, liberal, and democratic societies now puts in front of them.

⁸¹The ban was curiously upheld by the European Court of Human Rights in 2003.

⁸²See the interview with Ghannouchi on Al Jazeera English, 'Interview with Rachid Ghannouchi', <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2011/02/2011233464273624.html>.

⁸³Bridget Welsh, 'Victory of the "Erdogans" Bodes Well for Pakatan', *Malaysiakini*, June 4, 2011, <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/166047>.

⁸⁴Personal interview, Kuala Lumpur, June 2011.

⁸⁵For an enlightened discussion on the question of citizenship and a survey of various Muslim views on the issue see Andrew F. March, *Islam and Liberal Citizenship: The Search for an Overlapping Consensus* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

⁸⁶For a good overview of the European countries' policies on these issues please see *Yearbook of Muslims in Europe: Volume 2*, Jørgen S. Nielsen et al. (eds) (Leiden: Brill, 2010).

Conclusion

This paper has demonstrated the co-constitutive nature of modernity and Islamic Revival. Just as modernity developed its multiple identities when brought in contact with various ideologies it spawned, Islamic Revival assumed on various discourses in its dialogue with modernity. As a result, the language of Islamic Revival acquired modern idioms and phraseology. Another important implication of the argument presented here is that neither modernity nor Islamic Revival are static phenomena. They both develop and evolve as they continue to engage in conversation with one another. They both adapt and change in response to newly found realities. This reading of historical interactions between modernity and Islamic Revival also suggests that there are numerous possibilities in translating human understanding of social life into practice. Limiting ourselves to just one such possibility is reductionist and impoverishing.

This account of Islamic Revival is also optimistic and empowering. Muslims are often left wondering if their destinies are controlled and shaped by both internal authoritarian impulses of their rulers and governments, and by external forces of global hegemonic discourse. Contrary to these notions, this paper argued that Muslims have, all along, had the agency and capacity to shape their own destiny in conversations with modernity. The end results of these conversations may have been suboptimal at times, but they at least allowed Muslims to create, shape, and articulate their own thoughts on various subjects related to Islam and modernity. This very notion, that a group of people can shape their own destiny, is a modern phenomenon; something which contemporary Islamic Revivalists understood and utilised all too well.

Furthermore, the periodisation provided in this paper has shown that Islamic Revival has evolved, from being largely reactionary in its first phase, to being much more proactive in the second and, especially, third phases. While Islamic Revivalists tried to answer the questions modernity put in front of them in the first two periods according to the classification provided above, they are increasingly posing questions to and challenging modernity on its own terms. If in the first and second periods the onus was on Islamic Revivalists to answer modernity's questions regarding democracy, citizenship, rights of minorities, and rights of women, for instance, during the third period Islamic Revival has created the same type of questions for modern nation states:

- Do Muslims have equal citizenship rights in Western democracies?
- What is the status of Muslim minorities in the West?
- Do Muslim women have the right to agency and free practice of religion, including the choice of clothing, in Western democratic nations?

Finally, the paper has argued throughout that, because of multiple modernities and plurality of discourses within Islamic Revival, there is smaller chance of homogeneity and hegemony. Stated differently, just like Islamic 'victory' is a form of utopia, so is democratic domination over the world. Furthermore, since there is no one modernity and no one, single Islamic Revival, the chance for clash between civilizations is reduced.

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