

The Paradigm of Knowledge of the Modern Islamic Resurgence

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Political and social explanations for the contemporary Islamic resurgence abound. Most of these, however, are reductionist in that they do not pay attention to the religious component of a clearly religious phenomenon. Without rejecting its social and political locations, I believe the Islamic resurgence represents a paradigm shift involving a major reinterpretation of Islamic sources in the modern world.

In the modern world, Muslims draw on a treasure of significant insights into the dilemmas and options facing them. The sources of these insights, from Shariati to Bennabi to Khomeini, may vary in many respects and often differ in fundamental formulations. In Islamic organizations and movements, however, Muslims draw on this diversity to construct meaning in uniquely modern ways. At the level of practice, in contrast to that of the thinkers, a measure of affinity is clearly noticeable in terms of modern Islamic thought and practice. I believe that the idea of a paradigm, proposed by Kuhn, is a useful and fertile way of coming to understand this common meaning-making exercise.

A new paradigm of understanding and living Islam, under the impact of the West, has taken shape over the past two centuries. The West as villain, the implementation of the Shari'ah, the search for Islamic solutions, and the Islamization of the sciences are some of the most important features of this new paradigm. In this paper, I will explore the basic idea and structure of the modern Islamic paradigm.¹

Knowledge, Power, and Paradigms

In his analysis of modern medical, human, and social sciences, Michel Foucault has unmasked the power relations inherent in the formation of

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these disciplines. According to him, the attempt of these sciences to understand the history, logic, and essence of all phenomena is intrinsically a quest for power. The “recovery” of the world by the method of the modern sciences contributes to the discovery of a universal, objective, and rational truth. However, pitted against earlier versions of truth, this new scientific truth commands acquiescence:

Each society has its regime of truth, its ‘general politics’ of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanism and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged as saying what counts as true.²

According to Foucault, the superiority of objective knowledge over irrational, magical, or esoteric insights does not reside in a universal truth witnessed and attested to by all. Rather, this new discipline of knowing conquered by consent, instead of by consensus, and subjugated or rejected any alternative claims on truth.³ This new order took control through its universal aspiration to uncover, dissect, and perceive. Moreover, its imperialistic designs were embedded in the very tools exercised. The universal “gaze” of panoptic representation, for example, embodied the attempt to redefine the world from a supposedly more objective vantage point. In contrast, all other perspectives were rendered subjective, parochial, and powerless.⁴

While Foucault emphasized the power relations inherent in the formation of authoritative knowledge, Thomas Kuhn identified the basic framework of the modern scientific disciplines in his discussion of a “paradigm.” According to Kuhn, a paradigm was elaborated in a specific community that embraces certain laws and definitions, exchanges standard examples, and shares common values.⁵ For initiates in that group, standard and well-known examples reinforced its paradigm. Differences of opinion and perspective might coexist within a paradigm, even on crucial issues, as long as they are based on the acceptance of shared ground rules within a given community.⁶

The regime of scientific truths has been felt by communities that experienced one form of colonialism or another. Science, civilized values, and the “white man’s burden” belittled, dismantled, and destroyed all local forms of knowledge regimes in favor of modernity and its colonial “interpretive community.” While recognizing this destructive role of scientific truth in the past two to three hundred years in Asia and Africa, I would like to explore the regimes of truths within local communities. In particular, religions and their complex materials provide useful materials in which paradigmatic changes may be investigated. They appear to exhibit the same traits as other knowledge paradigms.

Patterns of religious knowledge, whether theology, metaphysical wisdom, or esoteric illumination, can be analyzed as paradigms that exhibit the power to determine, authorize, admit, and exclude. Revolutionary developments in religious ideas within any historical context may accordingly be seen as new paradigms in place of the old. Christian theology, in the wake of nineteenth-century historical criticism, underwent precisely such a shift in its paradigm of religious knowledge. Paradigm shifts, moreover, always imply a power differential between the new and the old. Within communities of knowledge that try to embrace simultaneously the old and the new, power relations will necessarily be marked by both creativity and conflict.

Scripture-based religious traditions, such as Christianity and Islam, possess tangible textual origins for the derivation of religious knowledge.⁷ Access to these origins provides individuals and social groups with the power to work out authoritative religious knowledge. The historical development of doctrine and practice within these religious traditions may be viewed as a continuous cycle of reflection between the origins and present situations and circumstances. The present needs to be justified in relation to an ideal past, and the past must be made alive in the present. This cyclical relation between past and present constitutes both knowledge and power. For Muslims, the Qur'an as revelation (*wahy*) and the normative biography of the Prophet (*sīrah*) determine the originating past that must be related to the present. As Richard Martin has observed, these features of Islamic tradition provide the fundamental terms in which people "get things done in the social and political contexts of Muslims."⁸ By careful selection from these sources, religious actors can formulate a pattern of doctrinal beliefs and ritual practices that serves as a paradigm of religious knowledge. Drawn from a wide and divergent corpus, particular paradigms become empowered as authoritative definitions by religious actors who have access to and control over those sources and their interpretation. A paradigm of religious knowledge, therefore, is not merely knowledge; it is powerful knowledge in Foucault's sense, because it arises out of a "politics of truth."

Traditionally, members of the Muslim ulama have claimed the right to define Islam on the basis of their special access to the original sources. This right of definition represented an implicit exclusion of the illiterate and uninitiated from access to the texts that embody Islamic origins. Although many Muslims, in practice, might regard the ulama, shaykhs, and *sayyids* as invested with charismatic power, the Islamic tradition does not sanction the attribution to an established clerical class. Accordingly, in principle, religious knowledge was available to everyone. Leadership roles were assumed by anyone who could demonstrate expertise in religious knowledge. Even Ayatollah Khomeini, venerated as a descendant of the Prophet and the leader of a revolution, had to prove his credentials to the ulama by demonstrating his knowledge of the scriptural tradition. In practice, no doubt, access to Islamic higher

education has often been limited to the wealthy and well-placed.⁹ In almost all Muslim societies, ulama families have emerged to monopolize formal religious education, while the majority have tended to learn just enough to recognize the religious knowledge possessed by their superiors.

Nevertheless, contrasting Islamic paradigms between the "orthodox" focus on textual control and the nonscriptural "folk" Islam of peasants, bedouins, and urban masses are visible. While the former is rooted in normative foundation texts, the latter is sustained by the charismatic power (*barakah*) of the Prophet, his family, and other leaders. Even this "folk" Islam, however, can turn to the scriptural tradition for justification. For example, in response to the eighteenth-century Wahhabi declaration that all forms of "nonscripturalist" Islam had to be eliminated, Tunisian leaders of "folk" Islam used scriptural resources to defend their alternative positions on the *barakah* of the Prophet and his family, the practice of visiting the graves of the saints, and the waging of war against Muslims who did not conform to the strict discipline of Islamic law. In this instance, therefore, we find that both scriptural and "nonscriptural" Muslim paradigms of religious knowledge may be empowered through the appropriation and interpretation of scripture.¹⁰ As alternative paradigms, the Wahhabi and Tunisian positions exhibited contrasting and competing paradigms.

Beginning with the early days of Islam, legal, mystical, or philosophical schools generated competing versions of Islamic religious knowledge that were embedded in power relations. In nineteenth-century Qajar Iran, the mystical and philosophical approaches to Islam operated on the margins of the dominant Shari'ah vision that had been established at the center of society.¹¹ While different paradigms often came into conflict, attempts at synthesis, as found in the work of Junayd (d. 910), Ghazzālī (d. 1111), and Ibn Rushd (d. 1189) bear testimony to the possibility of achieving intellectual reconciliation among contrasting legal, mystical, and philosophical positions.¹² However, the paradigms produced by philosophers or mystics did not always achieve general recognition, and paradigms of religious knowledge, in general, have continued to be contested.¹³

The impact of modernization has engendered both creativity and conflict in the formation of religious knowledge. The political power of European colonialism and the hegemony of European science created a crisis in the Muslim world. Traditional elites in Muslim society, who had access to and control over the means of producing religious knowledge, were challenged by the emergence of new elites who derived their power from a direct or indirect involvement with the West. In this conflict between tradition and modernity, however, even members of the new elite turned to the originating textual sources of the tradition in their quest for legitimation. By reappropriating and reinterpreting those sources, they sought a religious authenticity that was based upon a new understanding

of Islam in the modern world. They developed what I prefer to call a modern Islamic paradigm, which I will now outline.

The Modern Islamic Paradigm

This paradigm has drawn on three centuries of encounter between the Islamic and the western worlds. In the eighteenth century, Sufi orders launched social and political resistance movements to colonial powers. In religious terms, they emphasized the importance of hadith, Islamic political mobilization, and a spirituality rooted in the personality of the Prophet.¹⁴ When this resistance collapsed, it was followed by an Islamic reformism that sought to reeducate Muslim intellectuals and demanded political representation from Muslim monarchs. Many reformists later joined the nationalists who inherited the reigns of power in the new nation-states. As these new nation-states could not realize the people's aspirations, an Islamic ideology formulated mainly by Egypt's Muslim Brothers and Pakistan's Jamaat-i Islami became the Islamic answer to modern worldviews.

The themes and structures of the modern Islamic paradigm constitute the shared meanings of a discursive universe. Although its images and forms have distinctive patterns in regional contexts, the commonalities are unmistakable. Indeed, Gellner likened standard Muslim beliefs and practices to a deck of cards dealt out differently in various Muslim societies.¹⁵ In the modern period, I believe, a corresponding deck makes up the modern Islamic paradigm.

As John Esposito has observed, Islamic discourse has moved from the periphery to the mainstream of the Muslim world.¹⁶ Numerous Muslim regimes have adopted the Islamic idiom as a social and political discourse. In spite of the failure of the specific political programs advocated by such organizations as the Muslim Brothers and the Jamaat-i Islami, the ideology of Islamic resurgence, with its promise of an Islamic society and an Islamic state, has captured the imagination of a wide range of social groups in the Muslim world.

The writings of the Muslim Brother's Sayyid Quṭb and the Jamaat-i Islami's Abū al A'lā al Mawdūdī captured the basic elements of the Islamic paradigm in the twentieth century. Their teachings were reflected and nuanced by others, among them Algeria's Malik Bennabi (d. 1976) and Iran's Ali Shariati (d. 1977). The modern Islamic paradigm is elastic and malleable enough to embrace both the conservatism of Mawdūdī and the radicalism of Egyptian extremist groups. In other words, divergent and individual groups use the ideas to construct their discourses.

All major ideologues of the new paradigm have had some kind of direct exposure to the West. The images of Shariati at the Sorbonne studying for a doctorate in sociology and of Quṭb as literary critic are linked inextricably with the production of the modern Islamic paradigm. Prominent western converts to Islam have added ingenious dimensions to

the paradigm by bringing their own understanding of the West and its possibilities and limitations.¹⁷

The paradigm is appropriated by an increasing number of modern and educated Muslims. In Iran, for example, Khomeini's popularity among the mullahs and the masses was matched by Shariati's appeal among the educated youth.¹⁸ The paradigm, however, enjoys its widest appeal among educated youths, especially those in the science faculties. Since the new Islamic paradigm is constructed at the intersection of the modern West and traditional Islam, it is most appealing to students who straddle these two worlds. Such support, especially in the science and technology faculties, is not surprising, for the most potent symbol of the West is technological advancement, with which science students come into direct contact. As a reaction to this challenge, the paradigm is born.

The paradigm is not appropriated by illiterate workers and peasants, for it rests on the twin legacies of Islam and modernity, both of which are logocentric discourses. The resultant discourse is also logocentric and thereby marginalizes such people. At the same time, the Islamic paradigm is not built on western philosophical foundations or the rational disciplines of Islam. For many students of science, contact with the Islamic legacy is tenuous. Similarly, they had only the most popular notions of modern philosophy and scientific methods. A free and random selection from both, however, ensures that the resources of the new paradigm appeared to be almost inexhaustible.

A key feature of the modern Islamic paradigm is its exclusive focus on the Prophet's life. This may sound like a standard feature of basic belief. The paradigm, however, focuses on the central importance of the sociopolitical dimensions of the Prophetic ideal. In this image, the political and social transformations brought about by the Prophet in seventh-century Arabia should be emulated in our own time and the political and social ideals of Islam ought to precede the purely religious dimensions emphasized by the Muslim legal and mystical scholars. Before the Prophet could be a source of ritual guidance or a model for the spiritual quest, he ought first to be an example of statesmanship and revolutionary leadership.

A little reflection on the access to the Prophet in Islamic legal thought, moreover, shows that the modern paradigm has a particular view of the foundations of Islam. Abduh's promotion of *talfiq* in Islamic law, which was adopted by contemporary Islamists, did not lend itself to idealizing a particular Islamic legal school and its eminent jurists of the ninth and tenth centuries. As an approach that favored choosing from an array of juridical opinions, *talfiq* promoted ideals and ideal personalities that had appeared in earlier Islamic history.¹⁹ In principle, later political and scholarly enterprises are relegated to a lower status by modern Muslim thinkers, whereas they were the chief mediators of the Prophet for Islamic legal thought in the premodern period.

The Companions shared the Prophet's eminence in the mythical ideal. This was the first Qur'anic generation, as Quṭb called it, which brought about total Islamic change. This aspect of the paradigm, however, did not overlook the quandaries of early Islamic history. For Mawdūdī, the second half of 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān's reign marred the history of the rightly guided caliphate, whereas Shariati saw this ruler's entire reign as anathema to the ideal Islamic polity. True to Shi'i understanding, Shariati presented 'Uthmān as someone who frustrated, more than anybody else, the true and legitimate rule of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib as successor to the Prophet. Hence, when Shariati deliberated on the ideal history of Islam, he dealt mainly with Alī's five-year rule.²⁰ In general the first Qur'anic generation, in terms of the new paradigm, included selective aspects of early Islamic history.

While twentieth-century ideologues rejected Islamic reformism's overt attempt to match Islam with progress and development, they borrowed freely from 'Abduh and Khan to espouse Islam's inherent this-worldly and positive contribution. For example, echoing Islamic reformists, Islamic ideologues rejected the institution of slavery and extolled Islam's contribution to the upliftment of women. Although slavery and its institutions occupied an important part in Islamic texts, they were rejected, in general, by Islamists as inhuman and degrading. Moreover, the conservative and traditional roles and positions of women in society espoused by Islamists was defended because of their alleged social benefit and not simply because of their conformity to textual evidence.²¹

The need to search for ideals in the past was justified by the perception that the Muslim world had lost its place in world history. The modern paradigm contrasts the ideal with this present malaise in a growing and elaborate map of crises facing Muslims. Bennabi posited a view of history moving from the spiritual (prophetic) to the rational ('Abbāsīd) and the instinctive (post-'Abbāsīd) and saw the last element as a negative and irrational abyss from which Muslim society ought to be rescued. Shariati asserted that the malaise of Muslims was due to their existing in the grip of political oppression, economic exploitation, and religious hypocrisy. Mawdūdī, on the other hand, attributed the Islamic world's decline to the accession to power of the tribalistic Umayyad dynasty. In general, ideologues emphasized the need to diagnose the problems facing Muslims.²² The perception of successive crises facing Muslims is illustrated clearly by contemporary history. Islamic resurgent ideologues, however, claimed a diagnosis for this decline and thereby gained a vantage point in understanding the root problems of Muslim society.

Most of the problems facing Muslims are attributed to an external enemy. The modern understanding of Islamic history projects a historical and cosmic confrontation between Islam and *jāhiliyah*, the Islamic term for pre-Islamic Arabia's ignorance of divine revelation. In contemporary times, the West is the chief manifestation of *jāhiliyah*. The term refers to

disbelief in general and to the rejection of Islamic ideology in particular. Even Muslims who serve the national and socialist goals of the nation-state are considered to be part of *jāhiliyah*. The demonization of the West does not pardon entirely those Muslims who are responsible for the Muslim world's decline. In some trends of Islamic thought, the West is still the arch-villain. In addition, however, Muslims are "colonizable," "lax," or devoid of true Islamic consciousness. In this manner, the West and its Muslim admirers are regarded as obstacles to the realization of Islamic ideals.²³

The modern Islamic paradigm is rooted in the modern world. From the point of view of modernity, it may often seem like holding on tenaciously to the past. But from the point of view of traditional Islam, it is unmistakably modern. Muslim ideologues, who are not uneasy in this position, are suitably placed to appropriate the technologies and images of the West to the advantage of the new Islamic paradigm. A distinction is made between western technology and its social institutions. The former is accepted, especially for its use in education and public announcements.²⁴ Unlike the traditional domain of the oral *khutabah* and lesson, which were the prime organs of communication, the Islamic resurgence exploits newsletters, magazines, booklets, brochures, and pamphlets. While the print media has the potential for a wider audience, its effective range is limited by the rate of literacy in particular countries. The Islamic resurgence does not avoid the use of personal oral communication and eagerly adopted developments in audio and visual technology. This particular approach was exemplified in the Iranian revolution when Khomeini's tape-recorded sermons and statements provided an effective means of communication.²⁵

The modern Islamic paradigm, however, does not only enjoy access to western technology but is prone to draw on the features of western social development. For example, the Jamaat-i Islami's argument against liberal measures favoring the emancipation of women drew on the worst scenarios of abused women and prostitution in the West.²⁶ This critique was used to bolster Islamic arguments for traditional family values. In a more sophisticated manner, the Islamization of the social sciences uses the critique of Habermas and Foucault to undermine the hegemony of western knowledge. It deftly avoided the possibility that Islamic knowledge is also prone to legitimate the status quo or to at least represent particular relations in Muslim society.²⁷ In short, from social institutions to knowledge formations, the Islamic paradigm fashions freely an ideal world between the selectively appraised decadence of the modern world and the carefully chosen ideals of an original Islamic society.

In Muslim society, the modern Islamic paradigm spurns the religious forms and patterns that do not conform to its ideal. Continuing the tradition of Islamic reformism, it is at best uneasy with the contemporary prevalence of magic and superstition, which are attributed to a degenerate

Sufism's penetration of local cultures and customs and the subsequent contamination of Islam.²⁸ According to the Islamic resurgence, Muslim society ought to be purged of these local cultures and replaced with the pure ideals of the prophetic community.

In the process of rejecting all local religious resources and accretions, premodern Sufism's ontological hierarchy of *sayyids*, *sharīfs*, and *qutbs* is rejected. An individual's special connection with prophetic and saintly lineages is regarded as an historical accident. Some thinkers of the Islamic resurgence tried to justify the presence of angels in the Qur'an as electromagnetic waves or methane gas.²⁹ Unlike traditional Islam, elaborate accounts of the afterlife that normally accord spirits and angels important roles are conspicuously absent from its discourse.³⁰ More recent formulations insist on belief in miracles and angels and reject earlier reformist and westernizing interpretations. At the same time, however, they espouse a stark historical drama of life in which miracles and *barakah* have little place. In principle, the modern Islamic paradigm's ontology consists of two modes of reality: the Creator (the ultimate and transcendent God) and created reality.³¹ This kind of dualism left no space for either human or spirit hierarchies. The modern obliteration of angels, holy men, and miracles is a key feature of the new Islamic paradigm's egalitarianism.

The paradigm presents Islam as the perfect system for social and individual existence. Perfection in this regard is often perceived as the rational foundation of Muslim belief and practice. Both the unity of God and the organization of the day into worship slots, for example, are manifestations of Islam's rationality. Moreover, it is believed that Islam is a *total* and *natural* system for human existence and that it represents the highest ethical and moral manifestation of human civilization as regards the promotion of freedom, human dignity, and justice. The human being is inclined by its very nature to conform to the system enunciated and illustrated by the Prophet. Islam's various components interact perfectly with each other and could not act in isolation. For example, theft was a moral, social, and criminal act that could only be addressed through the integration and simultaneous operation of the moral (Friday lecture of admonishment), social (public punishment), and criminal (amputating the right hand) systems. Even in such controversial areas as slavery and the status of women, modern writers insisted that the total Islamic solution offered the best humanly possible answer.³² Unlike nineteenth-century reformism, there was no overt attempt to show that the ideals of western civilization were matched by Islamic culture. Inspired by the strong sense of independence sweeping Africa and Asia, the Islamic ideology often claimed superiority over the West. The continuing predicament of black Americans as freed slaves in North America was cited as an example that could be used to incriminate the West. In contrast, it was argued that slavery in Muslim societies led to societies wherein slave scholars and dynasties flourished.

The paradigm aimed to promote a “conscientized” individual imbued with a new vision and ready to change the course of history. The goal of Islamic resurgence training was first and foremost a psychological attitude. Shariati called for new intellectuals (*roshanfikir*) who would take over the leadership of Muslim society. Qutb and Sa’id Hawwā awaited the true and believing commando (*kaṭibah*). Bennabi offered a new consciousness of civilization and culture (*ḥadārah* and *thaqāfah*) to inspire new intellectuals. Like Shariati, Bennabi used western notions to identify the role of Islam and Muslims in the modern world. All of these individuals, nevertheless, were committed to developing new visionaries and new intellectuals.³³

This new paradigm sought to redefine and reformulate the meaning and significance of institutional structures in society, including the mosque, the home, and the bazaar, all of which were subject to a policy of reform based on the ideal history projected onto the first Islamic community. In addition, new institutions (schools, welfare organizations, and clinics) were added to the traditional. Since the modern paradigm was located firmly among educated groups, its major activity was not the communal prayer or the collective *dhikr* but the study circle, discussion forum, seminar, and conference. These new meetings confirmed the salvific nature of the modern Islamic paradigm in a degenerate and decadent world. The traditional activities were convenient recruiting grounds for the new paradigm, or, once they had been reclaimed and redefined, symbols of its authenticity and legitimacy.

While the modern Islamic paradigm’s appeal is strongest among university students, it also has the potential to become the dominant paradigm—the “orthodoxy”—in Islamic communities. Student organizations did not always popularize the new understanding of Islam, but there were broader historical conditions that facilitated its understanding, such as the global village tendency of the modern world, which ensured that an increasing number of people would be affected by what Lawrence called the great western transformation. As western norms and values in everyday life affected more and more people in the Muslim world, very few Muslims remained unaffected.³⁴ Consequently, independent enclaves of traditional Islamic patterns could only survive as curiosities, for continual contact between the West and Islam resulted in the spread of the modern Islamic paradigm.

Within Islamic societies, moreover, traditional educational institutions are finding themselves in possession of texts and interpretations that are alien to an increasingly large numbers of Muslims. From Morocco to the Philippines, Islamic institutions face an uncertain future as they lose their vitality and continue to nurture Islamic disciplines as icons of the past. Egypt’s al Azhar University has had to accommodate the demands of successive Egyptian governments, while Deobandi institutions in India and Pakistan hold on dearly to an Islamic legacy in an ever-shrinking world.³⁵

The Islamic resurgence, moreover, has come of age and has established its own educational institutions. Though earlier attempts to reform al Azhar in the nineteenth century were unsuccessful, and 'Abduh's attempts to reform it were singularly rejected, in 1962 Saudi Arabia established an Islamic university with Mawdūdī as one of its founding members.³⁶ Other Islamic universities have taken educational reform one step further by pointing out the integration of the Islamic and the modern. Newly founded international Islamic universities in Africa and Asia espouse some form of integration of modern and traditional Islamic disciplines. The International Islamic University of Malaysia, for example, proclaims that it will

cater for students from any part of the world who wish to pursue a university education in Humanities, Science, and Technology, viewed from an Islamic perspective and fundamentally related to Islamic values and principles.

This integration has been formulated as the Islamization of Knowledge by such scholars such as al Attas, Nasr,³⁷ and al Fārūqī (d. 1986). It was the last-mentioned who proposed a whole program for universities from within the International Institute of Islamic Thought.³⁸ The Islamization of knowledge is the intellectual counterpart of the political project of the Islamic resurgence and represents the clarion call to subject all modern sciences to Islamic values and principles. In the context of the thesis of this paper, Islamic educational reform, up to and including the Islamization of knowledge, was the educational institutionalization of the new paradigm and contributed to its promotion among Muslims.

The global village of world communities, the weakness of traditional institutions, and the emergence of modern institutions favored the modern Islamic paradigm's success. Eventually traditional elites, such as Iran's Khomeini and Lebanon's Mūsā al Ṣadr, adopted the new Islamic paradigm.³⁹ In spite of initial hostility, other religious leaders are bound to follow sooner or later.

Conclusion

The production of knowledge, according to Foucault, was simultaneously the production of power. In the Islamic case, the emergence of a new paradigm based on a reinterpretation of the sources of Islam has empowered a new elite in the modern Muslim world. Despite its protagonists' loudly proclaimed divine intervention, the paradigm cannot be extricated from its particular historical location. It began to take shape in the eighteenth century, when neo-Sufi orders emerged, and has since matured as the Islamic ideology within Muslim nation-states.

The new Islamic paradigm available to the modern intellectual consists of fundamental themes, resources, and structures. It posits a belief in

an ideal history of the Prophet that focuses, first and foremost, on the sociopolitical transformation of society. Islam is an essentially this-worldly system whose various components interact perfectly in the right circumstances. The paradigm identifies a degenerate present, the main causes of which are the West's moral standards, western surrogates in the Muslim world, and Sufism, and seeks to redefine traditional Islamic symbols and institutions while introducing such new forms of religious significance as the study circle and conference.

Even as they differed in emphasis from one context to another, the themes of the paradigm were compelling. The spread of literacy, western domination, and its own institutionalization have promoted the paradigm. More importantly, as a knowledge claim, it challenged and acquired power over traditional patterns of understanding Islam. In local contexts, the paradigm became a key claim to authority among Muslims as it began to play a greater role in Muslim organizations and institutions.

By itself this would not be problematic. However, the divine origin of the modern Islamic paradigm is accompanied by a sense of self-righteousness that mirrors that of positivism and other modern ideologies. It is now a powerful worldview that perceives itself as locked in a profound battle with other ideologies, both among Muslims as well as the West. As a paradigm it has the power to legitimate, explore, and exclude. Simply by force of argument, it enables careers, projects, and political campaigns.

Endnotes

1. I have relied on several key analyses of the Islamic resurgence for my construction of the modern Islamic paradigm. A recent bibliography compiled by Hadad, Voll, and Esposito concurred with the notion of a shared meaning in the Muslim world. Cf. Yvonne Y. Haddad, John O. Voll, John L. Esposito (eds.), *The Contemporary Islamic Revival: A Critical Survey and Bibliography* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1991).

2. Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*, trans. and ed. by Colin Gordon (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 131.

3. *Ibid.*, 109-33.

4. *Ibid.*, 146-50.

5. Kuhn, in fact, derived his model for scientific revolutions from observing the development of new ideas in the social sciences and humanities. Since then, his insights into the nature of scientific developments have been used to describe shifts in a variety of social sciences. Cf. Jack Hexter, *Doing History* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1971); Stanley J. Tambiah, *Magic, Science, Religion and the Scope of Rationality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Bruce B. Lawrence, "Religion, Ideology and Revolution: The Problematical Case of Post-1979 Iran," in *The Terrible Meek: Essays on Religion and Revolution*, ed. by Lonnie D. Kliever (New York: Paragon House Publishers, 1987); Dale F. Eickelman, *Knowledge and Power in Morocco: The Education of a Twentieth Century Noble* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985).

6. Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2d enlarged ed. "Post-script" (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1970), 182-92.

7. Bryan S. Turner, "Origins and Traditions in Islam and Christianity," *Religion* 6, no. 1 (Spring 1976): 13-30.

8. Richard C. Martin, "Islamic Textuality in Light of Post-structuralist Criticism," in *A Way Prepared: Essays on Islamic Culture in Honour of Richard Bayly Winder*, ed. by Farhad Kazemi and R. D. McChesney (New York: New York University Press, 1988), 128.

9. R. Stephen Humphreys, *Islamic History: A Framework for Inquiry*, Studies in Middle Eastern History, no. 9 (Minneapolis: Bibliotheca Islamica, 1988), 173.

10. A. H. Green, "A Tunisian Reply to a Wahhabi Proclamation: Texts and Contexts," in *Quest of an Islamic Humanism: Arabic and Islamic Studies in Memory of Mohamed al-Nowaihi*, ed. by A. H. Green (Cairo: American University of Cairo Press, 1984), 155-77; Eickelman, *Knowledge and Power*, 19.

11. Marshall G. S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam: Conscience and History in a World Civilization*, 3 vols. (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1974), 1:362-64; Mangol Bayat-Philip, "The Iranian Revolution of 1978-79: Fundamentalist or Modern?" *The Middle East Journal* 37, no. 1 (1983): 31-32.

12. Junayd, al Ghazālī, and Ibn Rushd were leading scholars living in different epochs in Islamic history who tried to synthesize the mystical, legal, and philosophical visions of Islam.

13. Fazlur Rahman, *Prophecy in Islam: Philosophy and Orthodoxy* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, Midway Reprint, 1958), 92-105; Hodgson, *Venture*, 1:422-25.

14. John Obert Voll, *Islam: Continuity and Change in the Modern World* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1982), 44-49, 87-147.

15. Ernest Gellner, *Muslim Society: Cambridge Studies in Social Anthropology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 100.

16. John L. Esposito, "Trailblazers of the Islamic Resurgence," in *The Contemporary Islamic Revival*, ed. by Haddad, Voll, and Esposito (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1991), 44.

17. Martin E. Marty and Scott R. Appleby, "Conclusion: An Interim Report on a Hypothetical Family," in *Fundamentalism Observed*, ed. by Martin E. Marty and Scott R. Appleby (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1991), 825; Tomas Gerholm, "Three European Intellectuals as Converts to Islam: Cultural Mediators or Social Critics," in *The New Islamic Presence in Western Europe*, ed. by Tomas Gerholm and Yngve Lithman (London: Mansell, 1990), 275-77.

18. Mumtaz Ahmad, "Islamic Fundamentalism in South Asia: The Jamaat-i Islami and the Tablighi Jamaat," *Fundamentalism Observed*, 461; Said Amir Arjomand, "Social Change and Movements of Revitalization in Contemporary Iran," in *New Religious Movements and Rapid Social Change*, ed. by James A. Beckford (Paris: UNESCO, 1986), 87.

19. The very popular and modern compendium of Sayyid Ṣābiq, *Fiqh al Sunnah*, 2d ed., 3 vols. (Beirut: Dār al Fikr, 1980), illustrates the approach of the Islamic resurgence to the Shari'ah. Ṣābiq chose freely among the various interpretations of the prophetic practice. Moreover, where there was no clear prophetic basis for a particular practice, he simply cited the various schools' points of view and often left the reader to choose the correct practice in a classic promotion of *talfiq*.

20. Ali Shariati, *Hajj*, 2d ed., ed. and trans. by Ali A Behzadni, M. D. Denny, and Najla Denny (Houston: Free Islamic Literatures, Inc., 1978), 131; Sayyid Qutb, *Milestones (Ma'ālim fi al Ṭarīq)* (Kuwait: International Islamic Federation of Student Organizations, 1977), 21; Abū al A'lā al Mawdūdī, *A Short History of Revivalist Movements in Islam*, 3d ed., trans. by al Ash'arī (Lahore: Islamic Publications, 1976), 27.

21. Very few modern Islamist tracts supported the reintroduction of slavery, for which ample provision had been made in the Islamic corpus. Moreover, Zaka'riah Bashīr, a Sudanese ideologue, declared that the Islamist position regarding women could not be defended by the data of the Qur'an and the Sunnah alone. He called upon Islamic ideo-

logues to reformulate their views on women in society. His emphasis on the social benefit promised by Islamist ideology reflects the influence of early reformist thinking. More traditional notions, on the basis of a literal reading of Islamic texts, insisted on the restricted role of women in society, while Islamist ideologues emphasize their unique contribution therein. Cf. *Muslim Women in the Midst of Change: Seminar Papers* (Leicester, UK: Islamic Foundation, 1980). To my knowledge, only one resurgent group—led by ‘Abd al Qādir al Sūfi (now al Murābiṭ) of Norwich (UK)—has advocated the elimination of women’s education and insisted that they should be trained only in religion. He also taunts resurgent groups for their commitment to the sources of Islam by insisting that Islam was spread by the sword. See “From Sufism to Salafiyah,” *Al Qalam* 8, no. 4 (April 1984).

22. Ervand Abrahamian, “Ali Shariati: Ideologue of the Iranian Revolution,” in *Islam, Politics and Social Movements*, ed. Edmund Burke and Ira. M. Lapidus (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 289-97; Fawzia Bariun, “Malik Bennabi and the Intellectual Problems of the Muslim Ummah,” *The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* 9, no. 3 (Fall 1992): 325-27; Mawdūdī, *Short History*, 27; A. A. Sachedina, “Ali Shariati: Ideologue of the Iranian Revolution,” in *Voices of Resurgent Islam*, ed. by John L. Esposito (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983) 191-214.

23. Yvonne Y. Haddad, “The Revivalist Literature and the Literature on Revival: An Introduction,” in *The Contemporary Islamic Revival*, 6-7; Leonard Binder, *Islamic Liberalism: A Critique of Development Ideologies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 188; Barbara Daly Metcalf, “Islamic Arguments in Contemporary Pakistan,” in *Islam and the Political Economy of Meaning: Comparative Studies of Muslim Discourse*, ed. by William M. Roff (London: Croom Helm, 1987), 144.

24. Esposito, “Trailblazers,” 38; William Shepard, “Fundamentalism, Christian and Islamic,” *Religion*, no. 17 (1987): 360-67; Hava Lazarus-Yafeh, “Contemporary Fundamentalism: Judaism, Christianity, Islam,” *The Jerusalem Quarterly*, no. 47 (Summer 1988): 27-39.

25. Richard T. Antoun, *Muslim Preacher in the Modern World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), 240-41; Hamid Algar (ed. and trans.), *Islam and Revolution: Writings and Declarations of Imam Khomeini* (Berkeley: Mizan Press, 1980), 55.

26. Metcalf, “Islamic Arguments,” 140.

27. Eric A. Winkel, “Paradigms and Postmodern Politics from an Islamic Perspective,” *The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* 8, no. 2 (1991): 235-57.

28. Ismā’īl R. al Fārūqī has probably made the strongest statement on the anathema of Islam to Sufism. Not all Islamists share his passion, but there is a widespread notion that some Sufi institutions are responsible for many of the problems in modern Islamic societies. See his “Islam,” in *Historical Atlas of the Religions of the World*, ed. by Ismā’īl Rājī al Fārūqī and David E. Sopher (map ed.) (New York: Macmillan, 1974), 267-69.

29. See the study of Islamic science by Parvez Hoodbhoy, *Islam and Science: Religious Orthodoxy and the Battle for Rationality* (London: Zed Books Ltd., 1991) and its preface by Professor ‘Abd al Salām. As an undergraduate student in 1979, I remember listening to a South African leader of the Islamic resurgence in Durban, G. H. E. Vanker, expounding on the nature of angels as electromagnetic waves.

30. Mumtaz Ahmad presents a striking contrast between the opening and closing addresses of the Jamaat-i Islami and Tablighi conferences, respectively. The former reassured the audience as to the inevitability of “Islam in power” while the latter reminded the parting crowd to remember death and the Day of Judgment. Ahmad, “Islamic Fundamentalism in South Asia,” 457-58.

31. Ismā’īl R. al Fārūqī and Lois Lamyā’ al Fārūqī, *The Cultural Atlas of Islam* (London and New York: Macmillan, 1986), 74.

32. Metcalf, “Islamic Arguments,” 140; Ahmad, “Islamic Fundamentalism,” 462.

33. Bariun, “Malik Bennabi”; Sachedina, “Ali Shariati,” 211-12; Sa’id Hawwā, *Jund Allāh Thaḳāfah wa Akhlāq* (Beirut: Dār al Kutub al ‘Ilmiyah, 1979).

34. Bruce B. Lawrence, *Defenders of God: The Fundamentalist Revolt against the Modern Age* (New York: Harper and Rowe, 1989).

35. Fazlur Rahman, *Islam and Modernity: Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 42, 138.

36. While Mawdūdī was spurned by Pakistan's traditional ulama, he was welcomed by Saudi Arabia's ulama. See Charles D. Smith, *Islam and the Search for Social Order in Modern Egypt: A Biography of Muhammad Husayn Haykal* (Albany: State University of New York, 1983), 18; Rahman, *Islam and Modernity*.

37. Admittedly, Nasr's call for a sacred science is different from that of al Fārūqī. Both, however, appeal to young Muslims seeking authenticity and relevance in the modern world. Cf. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *The Need for a Sacred Science* (Surrey, UK: Curzon Press, 1993).

38. The International Institute of Islamic Thought, *Islāmīyat al Ma'rifah* (Herndon, VA: IIIT, 1986), 171-76; Haddād, "Revivalist Literature," 12.

39. For a classic case of the paradigm adopted by a cleric, see Fouad Ajami, *The Vanished Imam: Musa al Sadr and the Shia of Lebanon* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986) on the life and career of Mūsā al Ṣadr in Lebanon.