Chapter 1

The Arrival of Modernity and the Ongoing Clashes of the Modernists and Traditionalists

Although from its early days the Islamic civilization confronted the West in different ways, the eighteenth century and the occupation of Egypt by Napoleon is a turning point in the Muslims' history. It not only heralded the beginning of a new era in the region but also these new developments required a different type of encounter. Being under invasion and political hegemony of the West, the Muslims of the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries adopted two approaches: they either resisted the new changes and struggled for a return to a purified tradition, or by recognizing the Western sources of power and by identifying westernization with modernization they strove to imitate a Western pattern of development. Overall the present study believes that the last two hundred years Muslims' different encounters with modernity were a failure which unintentionally in many Islamic societies placed religion in a wrong position. This failure is, probably, the main reason for the delay of the democratic political development in the region. In the following chapter I try to find out why Muslims failed to encounter modernity and their own tradition in a more successful and productive way. It is not the goal of this study to explore the nature of the Muslims' encounters with modernity, but to be able to explain the causes of present situation and in order to answer the question of whether it is possible to transform from this situation to a better situation, we have to know the possibilities of the past in order to know our present options. In this way the study approaches the Muslims' encounters with modernity, with the questions which our present condition is imposing on us. Having their failed experience in our mind, our horizon of thinking is much
expanded than theirs. Hence, by going through their experience with the questions that is more related to our present condition, the study attempts to clarify the issues which were left un-thought by the those who struggled to change Muslims' condition of life in the last two centuries. The critical attitude of the study rather than being aimed at manifesting the deficiencies of their ideas is directed towards the formation of a more comprehensive view.
A- Islamic Civilization and the Rise of New Problems

Both environmentally and with regard to its civilizational aspect, Islam was born in an extremely harsh condition. In the deserts of Arabia of the seventh century there were no signs of the social arrangements that had been embraced by the neighboring civilizations, particularly the Romans and the Persians, not even the most basic elements of a state. Social relations were predominantly managed by a tribal way of life, which was based on a kinship relationship inherited from their forefathers. It was considered to be un-compromiseable duty to hand over this particular way of life, untouched, to their descendants. In such a land where time was in a standstill situation, in order to establish a better and truer way of life, Mohammed announced his prophethood.

Despite inheriting many pre-Islamic Arab tradition, Islam has brought about enough changes for it to be recognized by others as a new way of life. A few years after death of Mohammed the desire for a better future and the fulfillment of the divine task of constructing an ideal society, allowed Muslims not only to defeat the strongest empires of the era - Persians and Romans - but also to absorb many elements of other traditions into their newly established way of life. In this sense, although tradition includes all sorts of practices and beliefs that are handed down from previous generations to present ones, there is an assumed agreement over their continuity. Still however, it is open to change and to improvement or to deterioration and even to death. "(T)radsions are not independently self-reproductive or self-elaborating, only living, knowing, desiring human beings can enact them and reenact them and modify them" (Shils, 1983, p 14). By being open to human intervention, traditions are incipients toward many types of incarnations, which leads to emergence of rival traditions, even within a particular society. This dynamic relation between man and traditions is the driving force of the social movements in any society on the path of history, which at one level
keep the continuity and at other level promotes changes. Within this historical framework, the different traditions of thought - by providing complementary perspectives on the issues and related matters - enrich the life of the community.

In Islamic societies, the above mentioned dynamism in its early stages has been replaced by a view which, by endorsing an exclusive right of one particular tradition of thought, banished the other rival traditions from the life of community. It mainly happened when the particular tradition's claim to truth was sacralized in the minds of people. The meaning of tradition in the Islamic world was reduced to "a deposit of knowledge or truth, originating with a past authority, and handed down within a religious community... tradition in this sense is embodied in the *Sunna* of the prophet, preserved by his followers and faithfully handed down within the Muslim community" (Brown, 1996, pp. 1-2). In this sense tradition became a means of linkage to a sacred ideal time, a tool of continuation of the hallowed past into the life of every next generation. Therefore, for Muslims, the desirability of any age could be measured by the affinity and similarity that it could establish with the ideal past or the *Sunna* of the prophet.

Like many other religions, Islam had been open to many types of sociopolitical manifestations, and the above mentioned trend was simply one of them which became predominant in the Islamic world. Basically being a Muslim means to believe in one "God" named "Allah", in His revelation that is manifested in the "Quran" and in the "Sunna" or tradition of Mohammed as the final Prophet – The "Sunna" refers to the life of Mohammed comprising both his words and actions. Islam has created a triangular belief system: the belief in God as the apex and belief in the *Quran* and the *Sunna* of Mohammed forming the base. This belief system did not make Islam a monolithic religion; even in its early stages, Islam was open to many schools of thought and criticism including tolerant and non-tolerant varieties.
At the beginning of the eighth century with the passing away of Mohammad’s companions, the Islamic world witnessed the emergence of a rational school of thought: the Motazila, who mainly lived during the eighth and ninth centuries. The followers of this school were convinced of the supremacy of speculative reasoning over any other sources of knowledge. By introducing the Greek methods of philosophical reasoning into the religious debates, they were the first Islamic theologians. "For them, human reason became more basic in understanding than the revelation, and in case of a contradiction between the two, the Motazila were in favor of reason" (Abdolhai, 1983, p323, Own translation). Revelation and reason had become complementary sources of guidance for life. The unity of God cohabited with His justice, which was related to the free will of man. Consideration of justice as the characteristic of divinity convinced the Motazila to reject any notion of predetermination for human action. “They rejected the image of an all powerful divinity who arbitrarily and unpredictably determined good and evil, and instead declared that a just God could command only that which is just and good” (Esposito, 1998, p 72). To assume that men are responsible for their wrong-doings, the Motazila provided the basis for a social critique upon which the presence of corruption and evil were not related to the pregivenness of the universal order. “The actual manifestation of the God’s will, has a rational substance and since God is just and there is a promise of reward and punishment towards individuals actions, not only good and evil are recognizable by human reason, but also man is free to choose the good or the evil” (Pedram, 2003, p 41, Own translation). Within this framework of thought, the Motazila denied that the political leadership was a part of religious law, "unlike prayer or pilgrimage, it was simply a human convention that could be dropped if its utility was lost" (Crone, 2004, p 66). After the death of the Prophet and the end of the period of the initial four Right Caliphs, the Motazila saw no necessary relation between the leadership of political community and religion. In the absence of an Imam or a
legitimate religious leader, most of Motazilites, recommended for a self-management of society. This meant that the community itself, by taking law into its own hands, be in charge of sociopolitical matters. Although at the theological level, they accepted man's freedom and responsibility for his action, as well as man's right to select his political leader, the idea did not endorse a complete separation of religious from the political institutions as it happened in the New Age in the Western countries. This might be attributed to the absence of political philosophy in their framework of thought, therefore the entire issue was out of their horizon of thinking.

The hanging body of the great Sufi Hallaj on the gallows in 922 AD could be considered, not only as the end of a period which later has been called "the golden age of Islam", but also as the beginning of a new chapter in history in which Muslims or the predominant notion of Islam could not tolerate any type of unorthodoxy. Although from its very beginning Islamic society witnessed the presence of intolerant trends and orthodoxy among its groups and thinkers, it was only from the tenth century onwards and the emergence of the Ashari school of thought that orthodoxy became predominant in the Islamic world. According to this school which got its name from the founder of the school, Ismail Ashari (873-941), human reasoning and free thinking can interrupt the Islamic integration and solidarity of the community. For the Ashari, the disunity that created various conflicts among different Islamic sects was the result of a division in the realm of thoughts. To avoid the interruption, the followers of the Ashari School recommended for the limitation of human reasoning. By separating themselves from Motazilites, they considered the Quran and the Sunna of the Prophet as the criteria through which the boundaries of reason must be demarcated. In this way, "wherever there was a contradiction

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1 In this period, the political unity and solidarity of the Islamic world has been broken. In addition to the Abbassids (750-1258) who were ruling in the main land of Islam, there were minimum four more dynasties that by applying the name of Caliph on themselves, had an exclusive claim on true Islam.
between revelation and human reasoning, the Ashari were in favor of the revelation" (Abdolhai, 1983, p. 319, Own translation). By using the Aristotelian polemics, they converted reasoning into an apologetic means of theology - not a means of reaching the truth, but to prove the truth of established religion. The domination of Islamic thinking by the Ashari heralded the end of independent reasoning, not only in the realm of theology and religious sciences but in every matter of Islamic societies including politics and social matters. Unlike the West in the fifteenth century, the Islamic world in its early stages - where the order of society was disrupted by constant wars among the different sects - accepted religious rules on society to end the constant state of war. By establishing a causal relation between the presence of diversified ideas in society and the disunity of community, Asharites claimed that “it was only by divine intervention that humans could escape from their amoral state of nature” (Crone, 2004, p 264). Although there were many historical paths open to the Islamic World, Muslims upheld the idea that only rules that had been brought by Prophet Mohammed could be considered as the basis of social order. But why did human reasoning, despite its early development, have a short life in the Islamic world, and after Motazila, never become the dominant trend in the different Islamic schools of thought?

Like any other religion, Islam was - and is - the holder of many kinds of potentialities, and one of them is the situation that our question is indicated. Therefore the answer to the question must be linked to the historical context in which Islam has developed rather than to Islam as such. As a new religion that aimed at establishing a new social order, Islam carried the elements of detraditionalization as well as retraditionalization or the elements of change and continuity within the context. The predominant notion of Islam which equalizes the Islamic Sharia - the implementation of the rules of God - with Islam, manifests the unannounced return of the pre-Islamic notion of life
order, the kind of view that, in order to preserve the continuity of an unquestioned tradition of life, distances itself from any notion of progress in human life. To prove that the age of Mohammed was the best period in human history, which as a pattern of life must be imitated by the Muslims, the followers of Islamic orthodoxy transformed Islam to a change-resistant set of beliefs and rituals, as it was in the pre-Islamic Arabia, devoid of the desire for improvement. In other words, into a "straight path" towards an ideal society – a society ruled by God's will.

From the beginning of emergence of Islam, Muslims were preoccupied with the question of what is God's will? The basic question in the mind of any Muslim was, "as a Muslim" what shall the individual do in his or her personal life as well as social life, not only to differentiate himself or herself from non-Muslims but also to respond positively to God's will in everyday life. The Figh or Islamic jurisprudence, was established to discover the proper answer to this question from the Sharia. The ijtihad - a personal effort of a religious scholar to interpret the Quran and the Sunna regarding the emerging questions of every day life, was the means by which Islamic rules or God's will could be discovered. But ijtihad in its authentic sense had a very short life in the Islamic world. Islamic jurisprudence, exclusively in the hands of the clerics considered the Sharia "simply as the divinely revealed, perfect blueprint for society... Sunni jurists had come to believe that since the guidelines for individual and community life were established, personal ijti had was no longer necessary or permitted. Society was simply to emulate or follow (taqlid) the guidelines of sacred tradition as delineated and preserved in Islamic law." (Esposito, 1998, p. 227). By being based on the revelation and the Sunna, the Sharia became sanctified, and this sanctification standardized the Muslims way of life. The Sharia was presented as a common code of behavior. Although it brought harmony and cultural identity among the different local Islamic communities and societies, it
took away the dynamism and human creativity from the Islamic tradition. The domination of the Sharia led to the gradual disappearance of the notion of human development in the Islamic world. In this context, philosophy, which may be defined as branch of knowledge that uses reflection and the application of reason to clarify the underlying principles of events was condemned to decadence.

It was not only jurists who could not tolerate the 'whyness' of philosophy; the grand mystics like al-Gazali (1058-1111) and Molavi Roomi (1207-1273) and the greatest historian of the Islamic world, Ibn Khaldun(b 1332), were also among those who believed in a de-philosophization of Islamic thought. As mentioned by the contemporary Muslim thinker Abdul-Karim Soroush, although al-Gazali and Roomi, like many other Sufis, were hardcore critics of jurists and the way they handled the Islamic issues, both of them were also among those who believed in the strict confinement of human reason by the Sharia. More than two centuries after al-Gazali during the Renaissance movement in the Christian West, by applying a rational approach to historical studies, Ibn Khaldun was able to establish the new science of Omran, which could be translated as 'the knowledge that is related to the management of the society'. Ibn Khaldun was the first and probably the last Muslim thinker who recognized the signs of decadence in the Islamic Empire before the modern age. The decadence that Ibn Khaldun was referring to is more political and related to the power construction of the Islamic empire, than socio-cultural, which could be related to the social conditions of Muslims' life. Despite his genius, Ibn Khaldun failed to find any remedy for the sickness and the crisis of the Islamic empire. According to J. Tabatabai, (1995) his failure must be related to his antagonism toward philosophical reason and his inability to anticipate a critical reflection of the Islamic foundations. The following statement of Ibn Khaldoun is very illustrative; after considering that Islamic philosophers like Avicenna(980-1037) and Farabi (870-950) are men
of science who are misled by God, he mentioned that "from these types of knowledge [philosophical or reason based theology] and those who are practicing them, the decay of rationality came to the people of Islam, and so many people due to their infatuation toward them [philosophers and theologians] have lost their mind..." (Haeari, p. 132, 2002, Own translation) Regarding the Sharia, Ibn Khaldun was a mere imitator who was rejecting any type of rational or critical approach, “in your belief and conduct act in accordance with what ever has been ordered to you by the Author of the Sharia, because He knows better than you about your happiness and your interests... although reason is a good measure to base your ideas, in order to avoid lies and untruths, still you should not be inclined to use reason in the matter of God’s singleness, the other world, the truth of Prophethood, and the reality of the qualities of God. Whatever is beyond your mind should not be measured by your reason, because it is impossible... and reason is limited and is not able to take you beyond its limitation" (Tabatabai, pp. 112-113, 1995, Own translation). The damage of this anti-theological approach could be measured if we compare it with the impact of Western theology on the development of modern philosophy. “Western thought in the Middle Ages, particularly by Thomas Aquinas and the theology that he founded, has been driven to a path which was totally different from Islamic theology, and as matter of the fact, it was this development in the realm of Western theology, which paved the way for the foundation of the modern philosophy by Francis Bacon and René Descartes” (Ibid., p. 214). In this way, from the tenth century onwards, due to the attacks which were made by the supporters of the Sharia against the philosophical thinking, Islamic theology has been reduced to a conservative defense system of Islamic principles against the arguments that have been made by the non-believers. Since theology was never allowed to reconsider the basis of the Islamic principles it was never also able to go through the change that transformed Western theology and philosophy.
May be one of the reasons for the question as to why Muslims in the age of modernity are not able to change their world view according to the changing conditions of the new age, could be related to the theological immaturity and its failure to consider faith and divinity as the subject matter of human knowledge and reasoning. Therefore, despite great efforts of revivalists like al-Gazali and Ibn Khaldoun, and the existence of more prosperity in science and wealth and military power in the Islamic world in the Middle Ages, it was the West and not the Islamic world which became the cradle of Modernity and the future development of the world. Javad Tabatabi has related this failure to a logical condition which he defines it as the condition of “thought abstention”, a kind of condition in which Muslims are not able to question and reconsider the foundations of their worldview and therefore are unable to produce any new ideas or to act differently. As a result, despite a change of the socio-historical conditions, Muslims are in great trouble to adjust themselves to the new conditions of “the world history”.

The predominance of orthodoxy in the Islamic world, did not happen through intellectual debates, arguments and reasoning, based on challenges of different school of thoughts and thinkers, but was rather a result of the unification of a particular school of thought and its interpretation of Islam with the state power. Like Judaism and Christianity, Islam from its onset introduced itself as a faith-based religion with no claim to political power. It was only after three years of prophecy that due to an unbearable persecution of Mohammed and his companions in Mecca, the Prophet was forced to Emigrate to Yasreb (Madinah). In this particular context, in which the survival of the new religion had been threatened, Mohammed chose to become the head of the community. It is from this point of time that Islam amalgamated with the political power and simultaneously started to present itself as a religion of faith as well as a sociopolitical order. Despite this amalgamation there is no indication in the Quran which
favors any particular type of political system. Therefore the formation of the political authority in Islam during the time of Prophet Mohammed, rather than be considered as the outcome of a Quranic point of view, must be regarded as the unplanned result of the realities of Arab life at that particular point in history.

The inherited tradition, the Arab culture, the environmental aspects and influences of the political systems of more developed neighbors which were under Arab invasion and occupation, like Persian despotism, have had a more constructive role in the state formation in the Islamic world than the premises of Islam as such. Due to the silence in the Sunna and the Quran\(^1\) regarding the political structure of the Islamic community, Islam faced its main political crisis immediately after the death of Mohammed, when his successor had to be selected. Almost for a hundred years the political crisis continued and caused many civil wars in the Islamic society. It was only after 750 AD during the Omayed dynasty that the Islamic world could manifest a characteristic system of state and government, but despite this development from the outset of Islam, the combination of the political leadership with the religious one, never left the political leaders who succeeded Mohammed free of a crisis of political legitimacy. The Islamic heads of state, "Amir al-muminin" (commander of the faithful) or "caliph" (viceregent) were always in need of convincing the public that they were true guardians of Islam and true successors of Mohammed. This need for the legitimacy could only be fulfilled with the help of the Ulama or the Islamic jurists. As has been mentioned before, some Islamic branches of knowledge - including the figh or religious jurisprudence - believed that the main purpose of human life is to manifest a right conduct i.e. to act according to the Sharia. As a result the right conduct had no relation with a desire for the truth. They have preferred to eliminate opposition and contradiction rather than contemplate opposite ideas. To face opposing thoughts, including new ideas and questions, the jurists
took the help of the political powers and their iron fist for their own interests. In return they offered the rulers the legitimacy they needed. This relation was neither an even-handed relation between two equal powers, nor a division of spheres of influence as was the case in the Christian world, where the worldly matters were for the political leaders and the religious issues and the matters of the afterlife for the jurists and the theologians. It was more a coordinated affair for the protection and preservation of two institutions while the supremacy of the political power was safeguarded.

Consequently Islamic society evolved into a state that was resistant to change, in which for a better life people looked toward the past rather than the future and to more progressive ideas. The following statement of Islamic scholars in the tenth and fourteenth centuries could explain the situation which has been predominant in Islamic societies. In response to Zakriya Razi, the well-known physician and philosopher of the tenth century who believed in reasoning and critique of his predecessors, Abu-Hatem Razi, an Islamic scholar of the same century stated that “If a recent thinker has understood a matter in a way that is in opposition with the ideas of previous scholars as you are doing vis-à-vis your predecessors, there is no benefit in this confutation and disapproval, because controversy is the source of evil, of too much narrow mindedness, of strengthening the untruth, of deficiency and of corruption.” (Tabatabi, 1995, p. 66, Own translation). Four centuries later Abu-Ishaq Shatebi, another Islamic scholar who was living in the western part of the Islamic empire and had witnessed the beginning of change and revivalism in the Christian west, wrote that “It is better to refer to predecessors’ books rather than to those of present scholars, because they are more firm than contemporary ones. The advantage of the predecessors is based on their direct experience and better access to the news and information from Mohammed...In the narration (the words which are ascribed to Mohammed) it is stated that ‘the best century is the one in which I
(Mohammed) am living, then the century of those who are coming after me, and then that of those who are coming just after them” (Ibid., p. 67).

Under these conditions the Islamic world was totally blind toward the changes which were taking place in the neighboring West. Since Muslims were totally drowned by a standardized tradition they did not feel that there was any thing wrong with the stagnation of their way of life. It was only when the canons of Napoleon had shaken their complacency that Muslims were rudely awakened, but it was too late. In the situation of “thought abstention” and the disappearance of reason-based intelligentsia, the first cry of “What could be done?” was yelled by the Islamic rulers who were simply obsessed by the extraordinary military power of the West. It took years till the Muslim intelligence was able to contemplate the problems which paralyzed the Islamic world, and it took even more time to recognize that a new era with new challenges had dawned. But even when the new challenges were recognized, “in the absence of any philosophical thinking, along with the fundamental inability to establish a new system of ideas, it was natural that only ‘ideological systems be established which neither could understand the tradition nor was able to establish a modern system of thought.” (Ibid., p. 29).

The above mentioned ideas are mainly referring to the history of thought in main stream Sunni Islam; despite having a different history and being based to some degree on different principles, the Shi'a Islam ended up in the same dead alley of main stream Islam. According to the Shiites, since Mohammed had accomplished his divine mission before his death, the political future of the Islamic world had also been cleared up by him. The Shi'a political theory is founded on the idea of Mohammed’s infallibility and the inheritance of this character by his successors, whom are the twelve descendants of Mohammed as Imams, the last of whom is an occulted Imam who on one unannounced day in the future will reappear to bring the
promised justice and victory to Islam. For the most part of history the *Shiites* acted and lived as a minority which opposed the status quo, but whenever they had access to the political power they used politics in the same way as had been done by the *Sunni* mainstream.¹

¹ In last chapter of this study the *Shiites* views on the political establishment have been discussed in details.
B. The Clumsy Steps to Encounter Modernity

As mentioned in the previous part, the thought abstention, particularly the philosophical reflection over socio-political issues, preceded the process of political decadence in the Islamic world. As a result, in the age of modernity, the Islamic intelligentsia which was shaped by the traditional clergy and the Sufis could neither recognize the importance of the coming age nor they were able to go to the root cause of the problem in the Islamic societies in order to find a remedy. All they could do was to ponder why God had forsaken the Muslims. In the absence of a reason-based intellectual tradition, it was the Islamic rulers, who, after failing to confront successfully the hegemonic powers of the Christian world, cried out the necessity of modernization. May be this is one of the reasons that in the Islamic world modernization has not been considered as a process of rationalization through a openness of the human mind to his living context in order to eliminate the falsehoods of his worldview and ideas, hence to make possible to improve his living conditions. In Islamic world from its very beginning modernization has been considered as merely possession of scientific technology and modern sociopolitical institutions and organizations. The goal of this kind of modernization was to reach a state of power that could challenge the power of the west, or at least, could make Islamic societies free of the western political hegemony. The following statement of Abas Mirza, Iranian crown prince, in 1806 during the Russo-Iranian war when Jaubert, Napoleon’s ambassador visited the Iranian side, is illustrative; Abas Mirza told Jaubert: "My entire military force has been blocked by a bunch of Europeans [Russians]... I can’t understand the nature of your power that is dominating us, what is the reason of your strength and our weakness? You are so good in war, in dominating and in utilizing man’s rational power, but we are drowned in ignorance, and rarely we can predict the consequences. Is our population less than Europe, or the sun that is shining on us is less beneficial to us, or is God
more merciful on you and making you dominate us? I don't think any of these are the reasons. Tell me, stranger, what can I do, to awaken the Iranians?” (Haeari p.308, 2002, Own translation). Obviously this awakening of the first Iranian modernizer was indicative of the acceptance of the western powers but not challenging the untruths of Iranian society. In the absence of a philosophical ground to base the question of a new age, neither the question regarding the reason of the degeneration of a people bent by the heavy presence of a glorious past, pushed into a new age, could be asked properly, nor the question regarding the reason of the glory of the new aliens who were victorious in all fields could be brought up in an appropriate way.

Although the entrance of modernity into Islamic societies through military invasion could lead to a process of learning and the absorption of positive elements from a superior alien tradition, considering Islam as a perfect tradition which covers all aspects of human life and does not lack any element of a good life, led Muslims to conservative reactionism. According to religious scholars of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, who had shown the first reaction to the miserable conditions of the Islamic societies, since Muslims stopped to follow the true Islam, therefore, the superiority of the West is nothing but a divine punishment for the people who ceased to practice Islam in its proper way. The remedy was a radical return to the true Islam, to the unadulterated Sunna of the Prophet Mohammed. In this way during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries different schools of thoughts emerged which were aimed at purifying Islam. Basically they were critics of the Sufis as well as the attitude of the official law schools toward the Sunna. The Sufis were responsible for many kinds of bad inventions or “bidat” which was considered as a negative phenomenon, and the law schools were blamed for their emphasis on emulation. That is why some prominent Islamic thinkers opposed “taqlid” (imitation) and insisted on a return to ijtihad and its access to everybody, not merely to jurists. These last
pre-modern trend of revivalism have mainly been divided into two main schools of thoughts, the *Ahl-I-Hadith* and *Ahl-I-Quran*. The followers of the first school were claiming that the occurred impurity in Islam, could only be removed by returning to the authentic legacy of Mohammed and his companions, and therefore the only authorized sources of Islam which must be imitated by Muslims are limited to the *Quran* and the *Sunna* of Mohammed. Their main efforts were directed toward a purification of the words of Mohammed and the news of events which clarify Mohammed's conducts in his everyday life. The second school, the *Ahl-I-Quran* was arguing that the *Quran* by itself is the basis of the belief and actions for the Islamic community, hence, Muslims do not need any other sources. The *Sunna* of Mohammed was related to his particular time and context, and that is why it is not compulsory for Muslims to follow the *Sunna* in the other ages.

Shah Wali Alah (1702-1762), one of the prominent thinkers of the pre-modern age made a great impression in the following centuries on the modern revivalists. Particularly his criticism regarding the dominant doctrines of the legal systems, the classical views of jurisprudence, and his support for independent *ijtihad* have been embraced by modern reformists like Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan (1817-1898) and Iqbal (b.1867). Although Wali Alah played an influential role, his assessments were mainly negative in that means were focussed on elimination of adulterations and impurities of religion, therefore like the other revivalists of his age he failed to come up with a positive and constructive idea regarding to practical transformation of the society.

Basically the failure of the pre-modern revivalists to construct a developmental theory might be related to their framework of thought and their approach toward the tradition. Like the revivalists of the previous ages, their ideal pattern of society was the society which was established and managed by the Prophet Mohammed, not only they failed to reflect critically on the foundations of Islamic thought, but they also lacked an idea of progress in its modern sense, that means a
consciousness of time which could differentiate the past from the present and future. The Wahabi movement was the corollary of the revivalist thoughts of the eighteenth century, and the continuation of a traditional life in the modern world.

The real challenge to tradition in Islamic societies came in the mid-nineteenth century. It is in this crucial period that a new type of reformists emerged, who saw the cure of the suffocating situation, not in a backlash movement toward the past in order to reestablish the sociopolitical order of the time of Mohammed, but in an authentic process of modernization through a selective approach to modernity and tradition. Till this moment that means the middle of the nineteenth century, there were only two approaches towards modernity, either total rejection or total surrender. Undoubtedly Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and Seyd Jaml-adin Afghani (1838-1897) are the pioneers of the third approach or the third school of thought, the modern Islamic reformism. Like their predecessors, Islamic reformers also wanted to turn the tables in such a way that the Western countries would be forced to leave the Islamic lands, but contrary to the pre-modern revivalists, they wanted to achieve this not by ignoring the sources and the basis of the Western hegemony. They considered the Western domination as a relation, which on the one hand was based on the strength of the West, and on the other hand resulted from the weaknesses of the Islamic tradition, including the inflexibility, the scientific stagnation, the ignorance and the despotism which prevailed in Islamic countries. To convince the powerful jurists and their huge numbers of followers and to make modernity adaptable to the Islamic societies, the Islamic reformers tried to Islamize modernity rather than to modernize Islam. In those days this way of preaching their reformist views might have been considered as unavoidable. The Islamic nations were either directly under European occupation or under the yoke of corrupt and puppet dictators titled as kings or sultans, and it was only due to the conflicting interests of
some Western countries, that some of these Islamic nations like the Ottoman Empire or Iran have been saved from a direct occupation and the colonization.

The story of Seyd Jamal-adin Afghani is illustrative in this regard. Although he recognized the necessity of a reformist movement “akin to that of Martin Luther's Protestantism” (Pedram, 2003, p. 45, Own translation) but unlike Martin Luther, he did not try to extend his notion of reform to Islam itself. Mentally, he was over preoccupied by the weakness of Muslims and Islamic societies, but he saw no relation between Islam and the misery of Muslims' life. In such a condition and the state of mind, the best which could be done was to convince the Muslim leaders that the sources of Western power - science, technology, rule of law - were not alien to Islam, and to accept them meant not only getting power but also meant a return to Islam. Regarding the importance of science Afghani wrote: “In reality this usurpation, aggression and conquest have not come from the French or the English. Rather it is science that everywhere manifests its greatness and power... [s]cience is a changing capital. Some times it has moved from the East to the West, and other times from West to East... all wealth and riches are a result of science.” (Esposito, 1998, p. 129).

Having been himself subjected to the brutality of kings and Islamic rulers he continuously advocated a constitutional form of government to limit their power. This excessive emphasis on parliamentarianism was the main reason that Afghani could not be tolerated by any of the Islamic rulers - surely without Afghani’s ideas on the rule of law, Iran would not have had her constitutional revolution in the same way that she had in 1905. Afghani opposed the separation of religion from politics, as for him, Islam was a comprehensive religion which was able to cover every aspect of human life, private as well as public. Although he mentioned the necessity of religious reform, in reality he treated religion as a means of mobilization for his modern political goals. Afghani was a hardcore defender of pan-Islamism, he even had
some plan to realize the reunification of Islamic societies into a religious community. He hoped that by convincing some strong rulers this wish could be realized. Nazem-al-Islam Kermani, who recorded the documents and the events of the Iranian Constitutional Revolution (1905), attributes a letter to Afghani, which had been written to an Iranian friend from his prison in the Ottoman Empire after having been humiliatedly expelled from Iran; Afghani stated in the letter that: 

"...I am in jail because I am fighting for freedom... the hand of ignorance did not allow me to hear the voice of freedom from the Eastern nations. I wish, instead of contaminating the seeds of my thought in the uncultivable land of monarchy, I were planting them in the susceptible plantations of thought of the people; during these periods I failed to convince any ruler of the East to accept my good willed advise, [ he continued to tell his Iranian friend that ]...do not get tired of the ignorance of Iranians. Do not be afraid of the kings... the flood of modernization is flowing toward the East, the foundation of absolute government is destructible. Try your best to destroy the basis of absolutism, not to eradicate persons..." [It seems he is referring to the assassination of Naser-al-din Shah, the king of Iran, by one of his followers in the end of the nineteenth century] (N. Kermani, 1997, pp. 87-88, Own translation).

The fire that had been lit by Seyd Jamal Afghani did not extinguish with his death. Regarding his political impact it should be noted that he had the seeds of thought of many types of Islamic political movements including the Islamic fundamentalism of the late twentieth century, but he himself was a true democrat who could never have predicted that his idea of a comprehensive notion of Islam might end in an Islamic republic of Iran or the Taleban regime in Afghanistan.

Contrary to Seyd Jamal-adin, who was totally involved in political activities, the next generation of reformers like Abdoh, Reza and Iqbal were mainly involved in the realm of thought and academic activities while keeping their political sensitivities alive. Surely Mohammed
Iqbal is the most outstanding Islamic reformer of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. His proficiency in Islamic as well as Western philosophy made him able to stand between the East and the West. In an age in which most Islamic thinkers accepted the cultural hegemony of the West, and in countries like Turkey and Iran where the intellectuals along with the state machinery were projecting a forceful and total westernization of society, by bringing up the idea of a return to 'self-identity', Iqbal rejected the predominant notion of modernization. The difference between his "return to self-identity" and the 'return to authentic Islam' of the pre-modern revivalists is based on the idea of "reconstruction", which for the first time Iqbal introduced into Islamic societies. Contrary to the Wahabi type of revivalism, Iqbal's notion of "the return" was based on his emphasis on the substantial Islamic values which included social equality, brotherhood, respect for nature and the adoption of experimental and scientific knowledge. For Iqbal, modernity was nothing but an actual manifestation of Islamic values in the West. According to him, just like Europeans were able to enter into the age of modernity through the revolution of Protestantism, if the "Islamic world would be able to equip itself with effective ideas and the experiments of the new age, a courageous revival and reconstruction would be possible" (Sorush 1996, p. 375, Own translation). Like other reformers of his age, Iqbal was also obsessed by Muslims' inability to act, therefore the reconstruction that he was promoting, indicates toward a process of rehabilitation of the self-identity. English sociopolitical order and English empiricism are the sociopolitical and scientific pattern of Iqbal's thought and life which he is advising Muslims to apply them to their Islamic way of life. With the help of his mastery over Western philosophy and the different branches of Islamic knowledge Iqbal proclaimed that he has tried to establish a modern system of thought which could give Muslims the capability of producing thoughts related to all issues of modern life without losing their Islamic identity. The type of man that is the logical outcome of his reasoning is a Muslim
man inclined toward action rather than toward thought. After criticizing Nietzsche for his inability to go beyond the nihilism and criticizing Islamic Sufis who were trying to establish an "I" or a type of man who is only preoccupied with a direct feeling and understanding of divinity, he writes in his book, "The Reconstruction of Religious Thoughts in Islam" that "the goal of 'I' is not to see something but to be something. In his effort to be something the 'I' gets an ultimate opportunity to sharpen its attitude and vision toward the external world, to establish the type of 'myself' and 'I am' of which the reason of his reality is fundamentally related to a Kantian notion of "I can" rather than to a Cartesian "I think". (Iqbal, 1967, p. 224, Own translation) For Iqbal the 'I' or the 'self' has already been defined by Islam, the problem is thus how this 'self' can realize itself in the external world, therefore there is no need for a Cartesian type of doubt regarding the definition of an Islamic 'self'. To keep the Islamic tenets, particularly its moral basis intact, he intentionally ignores the fact that according to the Kantian notion, man's self-determinism realize itself through a process in which man reaches maturity by daring to question everything including the foundations of his thoughts. That is why Iqbal's project of reconstruction failed and he could not go farther than Seyd Jamal al-din. To consider the finality of Islam as a matter of fact that accomplishing the inadequencies of other religions, Iqbal, like other Islamic thinkers, not only held on to Islam as the only ideal and perfect religion which had no need for a fundamental reform but he also disabled himself to recognize that many matters and issues of modern sociopolitical life were 'un-thought' – like the rights of individual and a modern notion of social justice - in Islam.

Like his predecessors, Iqbal also emphasized a comprehensive notion of Islam, which is covering all aspects of human life including the political one. With the help of this comprehensive outlook toward religion, these early modern reformists have been able to end the passive obedience to the political authority which was predominant in
Islamic political theory since the eleventh century. But by seeing the Western challenge as a power challenge, rather than a philosophical or moral challenge, and by considering religion as a means to resist the challenge, they paved the way for a complete ideologization of Islam by the next generation of Islamic reformists. Despite the fact that in the historical context Islamic reformism proclaimed itself as a third approach to a total rejection or a total adoption of modernization, practically, every time the result of the reformists' efforts has been hijacked by one of the two other approaches.
C. Modernization Without Modernity

As had been predicted by Seyd Jaml-adin, the flood of modernity flowed into the Islamic societies and uprooted the foundation of the old regimes, but it has not resulted in political development or even into a benevolent governance as he had believed. The traditional style of absolutism was replaced by a modern one. The events of 1905-1925, including the continuous interventions of European powers in the Islamic countries, the First World War and the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, along with the development of a demand for internal and external security and a minimum level of human living conditions, led Iran and Turkey to pioneer a model of modern state which later on, after the Second World War and the end of colonization, has been followed by the most Islamic countries of the Middle East.

Since the challenge of modernity to the Islamic world has manifested itself as a military challenge¹, in the absence of a modern educated class, the military was convinced that they caught the spirit of the new age; therefore in order to carry on the needed change, they took the lead of a state-sponsored model of modernization. Modernity was not assumed as result of a process of sociopolitical and cultural change within a particular context in its historical development but rather it was considered as the transformation of some pre-made Western institutions and patterns of behavior into their non-western context. As result of the approach, for the modernists of this period modernization was just another name for Westernization.

In Western societies modernity was the outcome of a radical challenge to the institutions, patterns of thought and actions and social order which for hundreds of years had been dominating the western life – it was not just a mere replacement of some old-fashioned customs and

¹ it was on the battlefield that Muslims first faced the victorious power of the West.
institutions. Modernity as way of life in Western countries is entangled with the historical events which constitute its characteristics. The Renaissance, the development of Capitalism, Protestantism, revolutions, wars and, the Enlightenment (or in Kant's words, "man's emergence from his self incurred immaturity") are all part of this historical legacy. After a long process of struggles and challenges modernity founded itself as a new tradition, first with the help of progressive elements of the old tradition which could no longer sustain its claim to truth, It de-legitimized the old sources of guidance of man in his everyday life, and subsequently, by entering into the memory of man, became the established order of society. Although this transformation was not as peaceful as Kant had wished, for when man had the courage to "use his own understanding" he also dared to act independently or according to his understanding. Therefore, if not everywhere but in most parts of Europe, the process of de-traditionalization¹ was transformed into the destructive wars and revolutions.

In a country like Iran, where for decades, the battlefields were the only place in which Iranians faced modernity, the maturity that Iranians were hoping to gain through modernization, was de-linked from the issue of "understanding", or any kind of truth claim. Their perception of development was a mere physical one, in this way the Kantian immaturity was considered as a situation in which man is not able to fight well and due to his inability to fight well he could not handle the challenges. The physical weakness or the sickness was related to the tradition which was considered to be a trunk of old stuffs including customs, religious institutions and patterns of behavior and whatever could be considered old fashioned in Iranian life. On the contrary, modernity was considered as another trunk packed with the different

¹ By de-traditionalization, we mean the process by which the continuity of some institutions and elements of the old life have been stopped to continue their presence in the present time.
type of equipments possessing much better qualities. Therefore modernization was taken to be a procedure of replacement of the old and traditional elements of Iranian life by the new Western modern elements. This attitude toward modernity was the dominant characteristic of Iranian intellectuals during the nineteenth and the beginning of twentieth centuries.

While addressing Iranians, Mirza Malkom-Khan, one of the leading elite of the nineteenth century, had written that "you must wait for three hundreds years if you want to discover the path of progress by merely leaning on your own mind. Europeans discovered the path of progress, discipline and the principles of order in three hundred years. Just like they invented the telegram and subjected themselves to a particular law and order, if we were able to import the telegram from Europe without any problem and transform it up to Tehran, in the same way we are able to obtain the basis of social arrangement and ordering" (R. Jahanbeglou, 2000, p. 118, Own translation). Taqizadeh, another dominant thinker and a political activist of the early twentieth century whom also could be considered as the successor of Malkom-khan, wrote in a well known article: "The path of progress and prosperity is dependent on our ability to accept and propagate the European civilization, in an absolute manner, without any condition or restrictions, that means a total surrender to Europe in order to obtain their rules, customs, education, sciences, industries, in short, everything of the West except the language... Iran, inwardly and outwardly, materially or spiritually, should become westernized, and there is no other way." (Ibid., p. 35).

This was the blueprint of a wish-like plan, which from 1920 onwards, Reza shah becomes the agent of its compulsory realization in Iran. According to above mentioned notion of modernization, he was comparatively successful. By reforming the role and the shape of the army, he brought the urgently needed security back to Iran. Before Reza Shah there was no place in the country where people could feel
secure. The entire country was under the rule of brigands, Khans, landlords, princes and foreign forces. Many modern elements of Iranian life were established during his reign including, universities, banks, railways, dams, bridges, improvement of public sanitary conditions and, most importantly, the diminishing the power of the clergy, Khans and other peripheral sources of power. He established the first modern state of Iran, which could powerfully penetrate into every corner of Iran. Although the modernization of Iran dates back to Amir Kabir in the mid-nineteenth century, Reza Shah could rightly be considered as the father of modern Iran who established the modern central state with a strong bureaucratic system as well as the basis of a well-developed infrastructure.

In beginning of the twentieth century, since the majority of Iranians, including the traders and intellectuals, believed that the foreign interference in the country was the main source of the misery and instability of Iran, the emergence of Reza Shah as a strong and determined man who could change the situation, was welcomed by almost all social layers of Iran. Surprisingly enough, he came to power with the direct help of the British. For Reza Shah, Westernization or modernization was the sole remedy for the misery. In his mind it was a comprehensive project which could provide, on the one hand a better living conditions for the people by the construction of roads, industries, railways, hospitals, and on the other hand it was promising sovereignty, security and the revival of the Persian glory of the old ages. Hence, for him modernization was a practical blueprint of state as well as nation building. Contrary to the policies of the previous governments which derived their power from good relationships with the heads of clans, tribes and high ranking clerics, Reza Shah, by following the footsteps of Ataturk (1930s) in Turkey, challenged the traditional forces and radically restricted their sociopolitical power, as a result, he released the state apparatus from their fatal interferences. Reza Shah saw modernization as a state
sponsored project, therefore he forcefully stopped the newly started process of democratization, which had unintentionally unified the modern democratic forces with the traditional clergy. Later on, history has shown that this coalition would prove to be very disastrous for the people of Iran in their path of struggle towards democracy. Ethnic nationalism was the core of the ideology through which Reza Shah was projecting his modernizing measures. The Persian language and the pre-Islamic past of Iran were the basic materials of his nationalism. Iqbal and other Islamic reformists interpreted modernization as a process of repossessing the things which once upon a time belonged to the Muslims and pointed to the influence that Islamic scholars had on European scholars in the beginning of the modern age. In the same way, with the help of the western archaeologists' latest discoveries which shed light on many unknown aspects of ancient Iran, the nationalism that Reza Shah was promoting incorporated modernization not only as a means to regain the glory of the past, but also as a path through which Iranians could return to the bigger Aryan family of Indo-European language speakers and nations. In this way seems there is a similarity between Reza Shah and his successor with the Islamic reformists who also considered modernization as a return to the authentic self, but differently.

Following in the foot steps of his father, Mohammed-Reza Shah, regarding the relation of Iran, the West and modernity, wrote that "ours is the oldest continuous civilization racially and linguistically linked to that of the west, which itself owes much to ours; and that we are deliberately adding some of its most modern fruits to our own..." [M. Reza Pahlavi, p. 27, 1971]. Therefore, not only the Iranian's Islamic past was debased, but also the entire history and heritage of the pre-Aryan reign of the people of the land has been ignored. Accordingly, history became the history of the rise and the fall and the revival of the Aryans in Iran. As a result, modernization became a
mimic reproduction of the western values and institutions to make Iran and her people resemble to their proclaimed relatives in developed Western countries.

This pattern of modernity is not a historical outcome of struggles and challenges of a particular people with its historical heritage; it is based on the merit of the state and its capability to undermine and eliminate the traditional sources of power and interests. Therefore a strong army is the main precondition for the stability and continuity of this kind of modernization. Problems emerge when, due to some reason, the army is not functioning properly. In such a case there is nothing which can stop the return of the traditional forces. Therefore the continuity of secularism in Turkey is related to the army's ability to control the forces of traditionalism as opposed to a prevailing secular tradition. The history of modern Iran also shows that whenever the state failed to utilize the army in a proper way, the collapse of the political system and a return of the traditional forces into public life is unavoidable.

As has mentioned Durkheim, "[a] society can neither create itself nor recreate itself without at the same time creating any ideal. This creation is not a sort of work of supererogation for it by which it would complete itself, being already formed, it is the act by which it is periodically made and remade... The ideal society is not outside of the real society; it is a part of it. Far from being divided between them as between two poles which mutually repel each other, we cannot hold to one without holding to the other" (Durkheim, 1915, p. 53). Contrary to modernization which is a coordinated effort to change the reality, modernity is mainly a change in the realm of thought. If we accept Husserl's concept of "life world", as "a culturally transmitted and linguistically organized stock of interpretative patterns," which shapes the horizon of thinking and meanings; the ideal society that the project of modernization at the beginning of the twentieth century

1 These concepts are explained in chapter three.
hoped to realize in Iran and Turkey was totally absent in the horizon of thinking of the majority of the people in both countries. The consciousness of novelty by which Hegel is defining modernity is totally different from the notion of novelty and the spirit of new age which Ataturk, Reza Shah and their followers had in mind. Hegel's concept was linked to the concept of freedom and gradual removal of false consciousness from the human mind, and in this way western modernity was linked to the Reformation, Protestantism and Enlightenment along with a two thousands years old background of political philosophy and political reasoning. But the modernization that took place in the context of Iran or Turkey was alien to Hegel's notion of modernity. At best, the modernizers in these two states had a crude Comteian notion of the historical stages in which traditional life was considered as an expired stage of history which must forcefully be debased, and the only thing that was needed to enter the next stage of history in which the developed countries were, was to adopt the Western institutions and patterns of life. If at all there is any notion of rationality, in its Weberian terms in this framework, it is a limited notion of purposive rationality, delinked from the process of rationalisation of the world views in its historical context. Reza Shah and Ataturk rightly understood that modernization would change the way that people are doing things, but they ignored the fact that modernity rather deals with how people are seeing and understanding reality, including the reality of human relations. Like Marx they were expecting that by changing the material conditions, their consciousness would also automatically be changed. In Western society, modernity was a new phenomenon within western history, which means that tradition not only was the target of the change but also itself was the basis for this change, in other words, there was simultaneously continuity and transformation. By equalizing tradition

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2 These concepts are explained in chapter three
with ignorance and superstition, which must be forcefully eliminated, Muslims in the first place lost the basis for a modern change from and within their tradition, and then were disconnected from their premodern tradition of thoughts. As a result, their countries merely became a geographical realm for the extension of the western civilization and history. The dehistorisation\textsuperscript{1} of the project of modernization, failed to deal with the raising problem of self identity, but unintentionally prepared a fertile land for the ideologization of religious identity and the violent return of the past.

According to this study the above mentioned misunderstanding of modernity and the mishandling of the project of modernization if at one level is related to Iranians’ incapability to understand and to manage the project, at other level, as it is discussed in the chapter three, it might be related to the views by which the Western philosophers and thinkers, like Hegel and Weber, understood and presented modernity.

\textsuperscript{1} That means to project modernization without considering the compulsions of the local history and context.
D. Ideologization\(^1\) of Islam

In the West, the triumph of modernity could only be achieved when the proponents of modernity were able to dismiss religion from the political arena, but ironically the Islamic modernists tried to achieve the same goal by introducing religion into the political sphere. This was partly due to the history and nature of Islam, but also partly to the age gap of the two types of modernization and the Western domination over international politics. Seyd Jamal-adin and Iqbal are the pioneers of this kind of Islamic modernism which ended in the ideologization of Islam in the second half of the twentieth century. They are differentiated from Islamic modernists like Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, who considered Islam as a mere culture, and had no objection to the modernization of Islamic societies even under foreign yoke.

Iqbal is at home and in peace with himself when modernity is considered as an extension of the Muslim belief system, that means be considered as an historical point in the Islamic process of becoming on the everlasting path of betterment. The unity of God or 'Tawhid' is the constituent principal by which Iqbal tries to transform Islam from a mere culture and tradition into a modern comprehensive belief system. For him the unity not only indicates the oneness of God, but also clarifies His relationship to the world and His equal and identical consideration for the entire humanity. Equality, freedom, brotherhood and justice are the essential, eternal, and universal values of Islam, and it is the mission of Muslims to strive for their implementation in society. Iqbal glorified the early days of Islam and “viewed Mohammed as a revolutionary who did not blanch at the use of violence to change the world.” (R.D. Lee, 1997, p. 68). Since he has seen Islam as a

\(^1\) By ideology we do not mean a distorted understanding and misinterpreted truth which is aimed to falsify the truth of reality as may a Marxist consider it. We rather see it as a “justificatory blueprints for political action”, and as an “ordered system of cultural symbols organizing and integrating social and psychological processes into meaningful patterns, enabling purposive action” (Freedman, 1996, p 20).
comprehensive belief system, Iqbal rejected any notion of secularism. In his eyes the world is the sacred embodiment of divinity, therefore not only life and living have to be considered divine, but the management of social life also becomes the manifestation of a sacred order. As ‘Iqbal concluded, ‘All that is secular is therefore sacred in the roots of its being.’ There is no bifurcation of the spiritual and temporal. Church and State are not two sides of the same thing, for Islam is a single, unanalysable reality’ [Esposito, 1998, p. 139]. We have to mention here that this comprehensive notion of Islam has not led Iqbal to a totalitarian notion of Islam which, later on, has been applied to Islam by the religio-facist groups branded as the Islamic fundamentalists. Iqbal had a lot of respect for the individual self-determination and democratic values. Despite being critical of western imperialism and the economic exploitation of capitalism, he admired the Western democratic tradition and saw it as a manifestation of Islamic values in Christian lands. Regarding England, he said; “Democracy has been the great mission of England in modern times ... it is one aspect of our own political ideal that is being worked out. It is ... the spirit of the British Empire that makes it the greatest Mohammedan Empire in the world.” [Ibid., p. 141]. Iqbal’s comprehensive notion of Islam paved the way for the democratic as well as the non-democratic ideologization of Islam. First his views became the basis of a community identity, later became the base of an ideological doctrine which not only was providing meaning and direction to life but also transformed religion to a means of sociopolitical change.

In Iran, Ali Shariati followed the footsteps of Iqbal. Shariati transformed Islam from a belief system to a total ideology, an ideology of struggle to bring about justice in society. Shariati was respiring in an atmosphere which was filled by the air of the Cold War. Despite his criticism of the political system of the Soviet Union, his anti-imperialist attitudes did not allow him to scrutinize the problems of

\[^1\] The concept of secularism is discussed in chapter two.
modern Iran within her socio-cultural context. For him the problems were rather linked to an international context in which the fate of the Third World countries was tied to an unequal relationship to the economic interests of the capitalist countries headed by American imperialism. In addition, the academic atmosphere of France of the 1960s where he studied, and the replacement of the development and modernization theories by the dependency theory was not ineffective in the shaping of his ideas.

According to Shariati, freedom, justice and mysticism (divine love) are the constructive elements of the Islamic belief system; but due to historical events they have almost never been realized in Islamic societies. For him Islam, rather than being a matter of personal belief, is an unfinished sociopolitical project. To follow in the footstep of Mohammed, the Islamic intellectuals of each age are destined to struggle for the completion of the project or the realization of the above mentioned values. For Shariati Islam is by nature, an ideology, or in his words, "an aimed or directed culture", not only a set of values but also the framework of action through which these values could be realized. For Shariati, money, coercion and deception are the basic evils and in confrontation with the basis of Islam. Within this value-based framework of love and hatred, as Alijani mentioned Shariati admired democracy but rejected capitalism, wanted socialism, rejected Stalinism and wished for divine love but dismissed the presence of clergy. Like Lenin, Shariati considered ideology as a weapon, not merely in the class struggle but in a more comprehensive struggle of the value-based belief systems. "From its outset the true Islam was for Shariati a revolutionary party established by Mohammed, and aimed at fighting against the ruling aristocracy, deception, and whatever was hindering the unity of mankind" (Pedram, 2003, p.143, Own translation). Sunni Islam conceptually and historically cannot fulfil this task, but in Shiism he found all elements of a revolutionary party. Through reinterpreting and redefining Islam and its history Shariati
projects his own thoughts and actions as those of the founders of Islam in order to make Shiism the vehicle of a pre-designed sociopolitical change. Before Shariati the dominant attitude of the Shiia community was non-action or passivism as a result of the particular belief in the hidden Imam, hence, only the hidden Imam at his return can bring the promised justice to society, any political action was not only considered vain, but also a reason of delay for the reemergence of the hidden Imam. Shariati divided Shiism into the two opposing types of ‘Safavid’ and ‘Alavid’ Shiism. He considered the Safavid as a forged Shiism, which “itself is the result of an unholy alliance of the Shiia clerics with the Safavid kings during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries”(Shariati, Red and Black Shiism, Own translation). The result of this union transformed Shiism from a religion of resistance and struggle into a ‘religion of mourning’ and compromise at the service of the kings, the ruling aristocracy and clergy. For Shariati the Alavid Shiism representing an authentic notion of Islam, a religion of resistance and struggle for realization of the beliefs. Therefore Alavid Shiism “is the Islam which differentiates itself and selects its direction in the history of Islam with the “No” of the great Ali, the heir of Mohammed, and the manifestation of the Islam of Justice and truth... Shiism begins with a “No”; a “No” which opposes the path chosen by history, and rebels against history.” [Ibid.,]. By redefining the history and the symbols of Shiism, he created a new self-image: a 'red' Shiism which replaced the passive Shiism by a revolutionary one.

Accordingly, the twelfth Imam is not hidden just to allow the earth to be covered by different types of corruption, as has been presented by traditional groups, he is hidden to make man responsible and active in the shaping of his destiny. Husayn, the grandson of the Prophet and the third Shiia imam did not die to open a new gate to heaven (traditional Shiites believe that the mourning over the death of Husayn

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1 The official website of Ali Shariati: www.sharati.org
is a sufficient reason for somebody’s entrance into heaven). In Shariati’s eyes Husayn did not revolt to grasp the political power, Husayn knew he had no chance of survival if he wanted to face Yazid and his army, but he revolted to show that even in the most difficult situation, something can be done. Before this interpretation of Husayn’s Martyrdom, a person considered a shahid (martyrdom) if he was innocently and unwillingly killed by a tyrant or oppressor, or a Muslim who was killed in jihad (holy war); but Shariati’s interpretation of the ‘red’ Shiism, martyrdom is a rational choice and dying in the struggle becomes the goal itself. “[H]is (the Shahid’s] existence has suddenly become non-existent, but he has absorbed the whole value of the idea for which he has negated himself... [therefore] the thought “Nothing can be done?” changes into “something can be done”, or even, “something must be done. Such death brings about the death of the enemy at the hands of the ones who are educated by the blood of a Shahid” [Shariati, Jihad and Shahadat].

During the events of the Islamic revolution in Iran in 1978-1979, this notion of martyrdom was the main reason behind the transformation of the Shah’s strong army into an unusable tool in the hands of the state. By making Aboudar into a symbolic Shi'a figure, Shariati made Shiism a source of political mobilization. To overcome the contradiction between the Shi'a belief in the Imam (the exclusive right of leadership by the descendants of Mohammed) and democracy, Shariati introduced the notion of ‘committed democracy’ in which the benevolent political leader prepares society and guides the people in their movement toward a true democracy. Despite the fact that he dismissed any type of religious government, and favored the rule of

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1 The Islamic ruler in the eight century whom Husayn rised against him.

2 The official website of Ali Shariati: www.sharati.org

3 the great companion of Mohammed who was continuously rebelling in favor of the deprived against the status-quo.
revolutionary intellectuals on society, in their efforts to grasp the political power the clerics were very successful in utilizing his theory of "Ummah and Imamat" (people and leadership). Shariati was successful in transforming Shiism from passivism and functioning as 'opium of the people', into a source of mobilization and revolutionary activism. He succeeded in creating a national level movement, in order to establish a committed or limited democracy, but the outcome was an Islamic theocracy.

This failure might be attributed to the type of rationality through which Shariati was reconstructing Shiism. In one of his speeches he stated that, "the first condition and the first step is to give up all prejudices, a kind of Cartesian doubt. In this moment we are in need of a bold thought revolution, a kind of rebelling against ourselves. We must be totally sincere... we must be more interested in the discovery of truth than in the confirmation of the truth of our beliefs. [Alijani, 2000, p. 170, Own translation]. But in his life, Shariati did not follow the path of a "thought revolution", while equipped with the Kantian critical reason. He did not enter into the dark sides of his tradition and the mindset of his people. He loved man's self-determinism, but he could never recognize the absence of a conceptual basis of self-determinism in the Islamic tradition. The torch by which Shariati was criticizing the Islamic tradition was not fired by a Kantian courage of finding the truth in order to overcome immaturity, it was more a Leninian reason which he used to search in the tradition to find the good weapons of his struggle. The decadence that Shariati was attributing to Islamic societies was a result of a situation of non-functioning and passivism rather than of a state of non-producing, in particular a lack of thought production. He stated that "Allah promises that every group which struggles for its rights will be victorious over the powerful masses. This is a universal law... The present generation of Muslims can rule the world if they know Allah, understand the world and discover the great values that Allah has
bestowed upon them” (Shariati, A message to the Enlightened Thinkers, ). His excessive pre-occupation with the existing hardships of Muslims’ life did not allow him to draw a relation between Muslims present situation with Islam itself.

It is true that Shariati loved freedom and hated all types of dictatorships, and was committed to liberate Shiism from an ossified tradition, but like most other social thinkers with a third worldist attitude, the diagnosis was based on the sentiments of a beautiful mind that was at pains vis-à-vis the prevailing passivity of the society. This can be understood from his “admiration for Camus’s definition of being: “I revolt, therefore I am” [R.D. Lee, 1997, p. 133].

The modern Islamic reformists were successful in discovering the different potentialities of religion. They knew religion could be a source of mobilization, transformation, legitimization and preservation, but they could not recognize that in the absence of a lively tradition of rational thinking, within an environment dominated by modern conditions, religion could be transformed into a destructive force of political mobilization which for its mere survival is ready to destroy everything else. In the face of our admiration for Shariati’s sincere love for justice and freedom of man as human being, we are tied to say that logically speaking, opposite to his wish, the path that Shariati paved could be ended either to Khomeini or to Lenin, but surely not to a democracy.

Despite the political failure of the project of modern Islamic reformism, which might mainly be related to its activism and preoccupation with the question of “what should be done?”, it was much more successful than others in its pathological approach toward modernity and tradition. This success was mainly related to its definition of “self” vis-a-vis its relation to “historical change.” The Islamic reformists understood that any sociopolitical change is the result of a

1 www.nationmaster.com/encyclopedia/A-Message-to-the-Enlightenment-Thinkers
simultaneous continuity and breakup with the past. But due to their instrumentalist approach toward religion it was not capable of comprehending the complexity of the situation, thus failed to predict the fatal dangers which could emerge from the relation that they were establishing between their modern ideology and the selected element of an uninterrogated tradition.
E. The Post-Traumatic Resurgence of a Disordered Tradition

In the eyes of most political analysts of the Middle East the Islamic Revolution of 1979 was a witness to the failure of the theory of universal modernism, and a manifestation of the revival of political Islam. It is partly true that the Islamic Revolution was a practical objection against all social theories which were not taking culture seriously, including the modernization theory, but surely Khomeini and his followers were not revivalists in the way Seyd Jamal-adin, Iqbal and Shariati are considered to be. Hence, the revolution, rather than being a revival, was the exposure of the failure of two dominant modernist approaches in Iran: the Western modernization approach and modern Islamic reformism. The Islamic reformists or modern revivalists were mainly preoccupied with the problems and suffering of Muslims. Islam was thus considered as a matter of culture and identity which could be used as a means for the improvement of Muslims, rather than as a mere personal belief; but for Khomeini, the Islamic clergy or the jurists and Islam were identical with every necessary aspect of human life. The flow of modernization showed him the gradual disappearance of the role of clerics in the public arena and the shrinking of the advantages that they used to enjoy in the traditional life. After 1974 the opposition forces of the Shah regime considered Ayotallah Khomeini as a Weberian Charismatic leader who was standing between the two different universes of tradition and modernity and by his heroic rebel will lead the revolution toward an authentic state of modernity. But this, rather than being a truth, was the indication of a noble wish which was planted in the Iranian mind by the romanticism of Shariati and other Islamic reformists. Like all other fundamentalists, or better yet, 'neo-fundamentalists', Khomeini was standing between modernity and tradition, but not in favor of modernity in its Weberian sense. He exploited modern political concepts, institutions and technology to save traditional values and the traditional clergy from the deconstructive flow of modernization.
Choosing the path which was paved by Shariati’s notion of ‘red’ Shi‘ism, Khomeini advanced his own theory of Imamat, by which the Shi‘a clergy’s jump into political power could be legitimized. In traditional Shi‘a belief, the political leadership and the leader’s infallibility are inseparable, therefore in the absence of the twelfth imam and the inaccessibility of an infallible leader, till the return of the occulted Imam, the establishment of an Islamic government was not allowed. In 1972 Khomeini has argued in “The Great Jihad” that “infallibility was not exclusively a quality of divinity passed on from Imam Ali to his eleven heirs. Infallibility could also be derived from the protection of faith... If a man believes in God Almighty and with the eye of his heart sees Him as clearly as he sees the sun, it is impossible for him to commit any act of sin. Man acquires this ‘extrinsic’ infallibility, Khomeini asserted, when he renounces “the desires of his carnal self.’ Shorn of the ‘veils of darkness’ and ‘attachment to the world’.” [Brumberg, 1997, p. 36]. The mujtahidin or high-ranking Shi‘a jurists were the only ones who in the eyes of Khomeini could attain such a goal. During hundreds of years of Shi‘a history the Shi‘ites were following the decrees of jurists regarding legal issues and ethical matters of everyday life, public and private. In other words, the jurists were the guides of the people in their everyday life, despite the fact that jurists have never claimed the executive branch of government. By holding on to a comprehensive notion of Islam in his theory of Islamic government, Khomeini argued that establishing order was the main purpose of Islam, and it is the Muslims’ duty to preserve the Islamic order, “this duty is more necessary even than prayer”. As a corollary of this argument Khomeini concluded that, since the Islamic order can only be established under an Islamic government and jurists are the only ones who can achieve the conditions of infallibility, their divine mission is to establish an Islamic government under their direct control so as to apply sharia to society. “It would be ridiculous, he suggested, to believe that God wanted man to enforce his divine law only in the time of the commander of the Faithful [Ali, the only Shi‘a
Imam who ruled over Islamic society]... and that afterwards, men became angels. Since man was still evil, God surely wanted man to observe his laws forever. *The wisdom of the creator, Khomeini asserted, is eternal and immutable.*" [Ibid., p. 34]. The universalism, which Khomeini is indicating, is related to the rituals and religious practices rather than to the values and principles, in the way in which Iqbal and Shariati were applying them to Islam.¹

Khomeini was very successful in reconstructing the Shiā political beliefs and in transforming the status of the jurists from a counter power force or an ally of the political power into the claimants of political power and then to the executives and managers of politics and society. However, this success was the result of the particular historical context in which his theory emerged rather than being the result of a fine theoretical reconstruction. On the one hand, modern Islamic reformists, particularly Shariati, succeeded in ideologizing Shiā Islam and in transforming it into a revolutionary party. Khomeini replaced Shariati’s intellectual role with the clergy’s one. On the other hand, the Shah’s regime humiliated for decades the Shiā culture and the religious beliefs of people in favor of the Western culture and the pre-Islamic heritage of Iran. The examples of Iran and Turkey both show us that the type of modernization which the Shah was striving for, could only be implemented and overcome the identity crisis with the functional backing of an organized army. Whatever the reason might be, during the events of 1978-79 the Shah’s army lost faith in the regime and was not functioning properly. In this situation Khomeini arose as a savior, as an imam, for whom Shiʿites were waiting for hundreds of years, as a mystic who was redeeming the wounds,

¹ In chapter five we will discuss in details Khomeini’s view on Islamic government.
and as a remedy for a culture to forget all humiliations it had been subjected to. The irony is that the Islamic Revolution happened in a country where seventy-five years before, after the Constitutional Revolution of 1905, the same people publicly hanged one of the highest ranking jurist for being an obstacle to the secular revolution. After many decades, the same people came again to the streets to replace a modernizing government with a religious one. Although revolution is a modern phenomenon and the Islamic Revolution also enjoys this quality, it will be wrong if the Islamic government, as a result of a modern revolution, be analyzed as a mere modern entity. The Islamic government, like any other institution established by the neo-fundamentalists, enjoys the existence of a kind of rationality, which, in order to achieve its goals, instrumentally utilize all available options. For many it might manifest the characteristic of modern rationality, but we cannot confine our understanding of the Islamic government to this narrow definition of modernity. Therefore the study sees the Islamic Revolution as a result of mishandling and misunderstanding of tradition by the modernists including secular and non-secular. The Islamic government is a deformed modern edifice. Modernity which can be attributed to the Islamic government of Iran is a de-valued modernity - disconnected from the cultural values that modernity stood for from its beginning in the West. In a modern society, man is the author of his thought and action, therefore men are able to shape their destiny, thereby separating themselves from the traditional way of life in which the sources of the social order are beyond man's choice. The traditional social order originates from some particular institutions, which are related to some supernatural entities, and the holders of political power have the mission to implement the divine laws in human life. On this foundation the Islamic government is representing the continuity of the traditional values in modern life. From an historical point of view, it was only in modern age that Shi'ism experienced the political rule of religious jurisprudence over society, and traditional Shi'ism never demanded
such a role, but from a philosophical point of view, the spirit of the Islamic government is traditional and in a total contradictory relation with modernity which rejects the pre-givenness of the political formation. On this basis we disagree with those critics of modernity, who by equalizing the Islamic Revolution with the Islamic government, designate the latter as another symptom of the evils of modernity. We also disagree with those who see the emergence of an Islamic government as a sign of Islamic dynamism. The Islamic government, rather than being the fruit of a well based political theory, was a corollary of a shallow and careless modernization on the one hand and the ideologization of Islam on the other. In the official modernism, the state transformed itself into a huge bulldozer, which through the mechanistic replacement of traditional institutions by modern ones, was trying to implement secularization, without giving adequate attention to the consequences. The identity crisis which followed with the legitimacy crisis was the outcome of the secularization which in bottom was lacking a contemplated notion of secularism, therefore was realizing itself through a destructive replacement of religious institutions.

The other modernist trend which unintentionally helped the clergy to take over the government, was the Islamic reformism, although it took culture seriously and avoided the identity crisis, and was looking in a more mature way at the problem of historical transformation, by overriding secularism and overlooking the conceptual relation of Islamic values with democracy, they ideologized Islam and allowed clerics to utilize religion for their political ends. Therefore, we agree with Tabatabai that the Islamic reformists did not pay attention to the dangerous and unwanted outcomes of the revival of an undynamic tradition. When the entry of tradition into modernity is not the result of the extension of the internal capabilities of tradition (i.e. tradition being challenged by its own capabilities) as happened in the Western transformation from tradition into modernity, tradition can release a
huge amount of deconstructive energy. The disastrous events of post-revolutionary Iran were the result of an artificial transplantation of tradition to modernity through the ideologization of Islam, which eventually, placed religion in a situation that was neither appropriate for religion to be in such a position nor a convenient condition for society to go on with.

The above mentioned points can also be extended to the resurgence of political Islam among Sunni Muslims, but it should be mentioned that there is a lot of exaggeration in the Western literature regarding the role and importance of the Islamic Revolution in the politicization of Islam. Many years before the Islamic Revolution, Sunni intellectuals like Abul-ala-al-Maududi (1903-79) and Sayyid Qutb laid a solid foundation for fundamentalism. The Islamic Revolution was merely an approval of their writings, which were aimed at repoliticizing Islam for their non-religious ends related to Muslims conditions in the modern world. If they both lead to the same result, which was concluded by Iranian clergy, it would mainly have been because they lived under the same conditions. "Islamic fundamentalism is simply one variety of a new phenomenon in world politics... fundamentalism is an ideology symptomatic of the 'clash of civilizations'. It is not the cause of the current crisis of our world, but both an expression of it and a response to it." (Tibi, 1998, p. 2). Fundamentalists can be categorized neither as traditionalists nor as modernists; they are utilizing science and technology in order to change the world according to their ideology. They believe in God as a supreme ruler and law giver, whose rules cover the entire reality and the relationships among people, therefore the forceful implementation of the Sharia as a manifestation of the rule of God is the purpose of their ideology.

The last trend of thought which we are discussing in this chapter is called 'traditionalism', which is fundamentally different from all the trends that we have mentioned earlier. Traditionalists are against the modern world and its premises. For them the traditional world and way
of life was basically a good universe - evil in that life was exceptional - and this goodness was mainly related to the presence of divine love in human life. Man's consciousness was related to transcendental consciousness. Due to some event, man's relationship with the transcendental has been broken, and modernity is the result of this breakup in the human mind. Therefore modernity in its entire manifestation, presents something 'wrong' in human life, which from its outset neither was necessary nor desirable. The thing that differentiates traditionalism from fundamentalism, is not only related to a complete rejection of modernism, including its technological aspects, but also to a rejection of using force and political mobilization in order to change the world.

According to Seyd Hosein Nasar who is considered as the main representative of traditionalism in Iran, "[traditionalism] seeks to achieve the goal of Islamicization, through a recourse to the complete Islamic intellectual tradition combined with a critique in depth of the modern world itself based on traditional principles" [S.H. Nasar, 1987, p. 309]. In this sense traditionalism faces modernity through knowledge rather than action. "They [wahabi, neo-wahabi, fundamentalists] are all outwardly oriented in the sense that they wish to reconstruct Islamic society through the re-establishment of external legal and social norms, rather than by means of the revival of Islam through inner purification or by removing the philosophical and intellectual impediments which have been obstacles on the path of many contemporary Muslims." [Ibid., p. 85] By forgetting the domination over this world and rejecting the gaining of political power in the name of Islam, traditionalism believes that man must live for the afterlife. Therefore, the politicization of Islam as it has been done by Khomeini or Shariati, for traditionalism is among the wrongs and the evils of modern life. As a Shī'a traditionalist Nasar rejects all types of political resurgence and revolutions, it is only the reemergence of the Mahdi, the hidden Imam, that can bring about a revolution in a
real terms. In the social realm the main goal of traditionalism is to preserve and protect the entire Islamic heritage as a tradition. At the individual level, they follow the Sufist path of purity and love, and it is this notion of individualism which provides space for non-believers to establish their own life in a way that they wish. Traditionalists' Sufi notion of divine love, individualism, and nonpoliticalism, are attracting more and more people toward traditionalism, at least in the context of Iran, although they are still limited in number.

In all trends of thought that have been discussed in this chapter, somehow, religion was the center of debates and arguments. Either it was considered as a disturbing element of traditional life which prevent the society from success in the ongoing process of modernization, or by giving a omnipresence quality to religion, the forces of counter-modernism wanted to change the sociopolitical formation in a way that the society could be overwhelmed by religion. The Islamic reformists were, somehow, between the two opposite extremes. The last hundred years history of Iran shows us that Iranians, during their long encounter with modernity, were wrong about the nature of the presence of religion in society. This study believes that the reasons for this misunderstanding and misplacing of religion in society are related, on the one hand, to Iranians understanding of modernity and tradition and on the other hand, in practical level, to lack of a proper theoretical framework in which the nature of the presence of religion in public life could been clarified.

The time when Iranians along with other Muslims started their encounter with modernity, due to the stagnation of their traditions of thought, they were in a state of subjective death. In such a situation, in order to establish a more suitable sociopolitical order to modern life, they had no choice but to refer to the Western thoughts and experiences. The lack of a proper understanding of their own situation and their shallow knowledge regarding the Western life and ideas, made their strive for the change, through employing the Western ideas, a
failure rather than a success. They created a deformed reality, which eventually settled religion in a place where it should not be there. Our present situation in Iran is not so different from our forefathers. During the last hundred years of challenge with the West and with their own tradition, Iranians could not generate a tradition of thought on which it could accordingly be possible to form a modern sociopolitical order. As it was for our predecessors, we are also in need of the Western thoughts, not only to get rid of the deformation of the present reality of Iran and to move toward a better future, but also to understand the present situation and the influence that the Western ideas had in the formation of contemporary Iran. To have a better understanding of the concepts which we want to make use of them, in following chapters we are going to describe and examine some of the Western ideas and concepts which are relevant to the purpose of the present study. In the next chapter, in order to understand how is the relation of politics and religion in a modern society and how is our position regarding this relation, by going through the process of the conceptual formation of secularism and secularization, the thesis attempts to retain a better understanding of these concepts.