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THE NATURE OF ISLAMIC RESURGENCE IN NEAR AND MIDDLE EASTERN MUSLIM SOCIETIES

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INTRODUCTION

Not until the revolution of 1979 in Iran did Western scholars and students of Near and Middle Eastern societies pay attention to Islamic religious resurgence in Muslim countries. Soon after the Iranian revolution, academic circles witnessed a sudden increase in the publication of scholarly literature on religious revivalism in the Muslim world. Recently published books, articles and reports have focused on different aspects of new religious and political movements in contemporary Muslim societies.

The intellectual awakening of the Near and Middle Eastern Muslim peoples started long before the occurrence of the Iranian revolution. Western observers could not apprehend the revivalist wave of Islamic ideology in the political arena, for their methodological approach was based on a clear-cut separation of religious ideals and political order.

The political history of Muslim societies provides us with abundant evidence of the fact that there has, from time to time, been a resurgent expression of Islamic values, either on an individual level or on a societal level in the political arena.

Revivalist individuals and movements have played a pivotal role in the making of Islamic socio-political, socio-religious history. Contemporary Near and Middle Eastern Muslim societies are experiencing a dramatic increase in the use of religious language and symbols. In other words, there appears to be a heightening consciousness of Islamic ethics and ideology as alternative models to alien systems.

This paper will examine the process of religious reaffirmation of revivalist movements of contemporary milieu in five sections. Section one will present an overview of religious resurgence in Christian and Jewish societies, where revivalist groups involve in political life in the name of religion. Section two discusses the conceptual framework of this study. In this section, the meaning of religious revivalism is analyzed and possible methodological approaches to the phenomenon are reviewed. The third section provides a sketch of Islamic revivalist movements that inspired the latter movements. This section

endeavours to assess the extent of previous developments in the emergence of a rising wave of Islam. Section four reveals the indices of religious resurgence through case studies of Near and Middle Eastern Muslim countries. The last section attempts to identify and interpret different causes of Islamic awakening.

I. THE RETURN OF THE SACRED IN CONTEMPORARY MILIEU:

An Overview of Religious Resurgence

Recent scholars and students of Near and Middle Eastern Muslim societies have produced a considerable number of books and articles on socio-religious and religiously oriented political movements of the last few decades. In these semi-scholarly journalistic and scholarly works world attention has been drawn to a social and political phenomenon that is called Islamic revivalism, or resurgence, in Muslim societies. Meanwhile, the media coverage echoed the same image and precipitated the process of awareness of Westerners that a striking awakening was taking place in contemporary Muslim societies, in terms of the constant efforts for political participation, a resistance to economic, cultural and political encroachments by the West and a quest for an authentic identity, based on genuinely Islamic and traditional values.

Although the experience of the Muslim world, regarding a religious resurgence in different spheres of life on an individual and societal level, is a sociological and historical fact, it is not a unique phenomenon that is peculiar to Islam alone. Scholars of different academic disciplines provide us with abundant data, which document that non-Islamic societies are also experiencing an analogous religious revival. Unlike the conventional belief that religion is loosing ground in the scientific era, recent findings indicate an undeniable reality, as a well-known scholar of religion puts it "contemporary men are experiencing a world revival of religiously oriented forces."[1] The New Christian Right, the Moral Majority, the Religious Roundtable and the Christian Voice in the U.S.A.[2] Gush Emunim in Israel,[3] and the Liberation Theology in Latin America are movements of that nature.

Recent scholarship and observations enable us to see various indices of the resurgence of religious values in the U.S.A. According to the Gallup Poll, whereas 75% of the American people in 1970 felt that religion was loosing influence, only 46% were of the same opinion in 1980. The same sample indicated that 84% of those interviewed or questioned regarded religious beliefs and values as important in their life. The confidence of American people in organized religion increased sharply after 1973.[4] Researchers note that by the mid-1970s the evangelical or theologically conservative wing of Protestantism gathered considerable attention from both the public and the media,

acquiring influence in the political arena.[5] As religion and politics were becoming more deeply intertwined, Jimmy Carter declared himself a "born-again" Christian in a modernized and secularized society, where religion began to exhibit signs of major vitality.[6] After this religiously oriented announcement, Jimmy Carter won the presidential elections of 1976, when many American Protestant Christians made the same claim. Religious establishments are gradually becoming much more involved in political and social affairs. While an evangelical church organizes a vigil at a family planning clinic to protest against abortion and fundamentalist ministers of the church march towards stores which sell pornographic photography, many Christian parents challenge the content of school curricula in order to promote religious education.[7] If one asks for further exploration and enumeration of the indices of the religious revivalism in contemporary American society, Wuthnow has much to offer. He observes that the purchase of religious books rose from .15 book per capita in 1970 to .32 in 1975 and then to .38 in 1980. To put it more explicitly, about three in eight people, on average, purchased a religious book in 1980, whereas only one person in eight bought a religious book in 1970. The purchase of religious books rose from 5.4% in 1970 to 8.5% in 1975.[8] Evangelical publishers, especially, captured a major share of the commercial book market when evangelical writers began to lead the best-sellers list.[9]

The field of education is another indicator of a source for claims unfolding religious resurgence. Of all the degrees earned at the B.A. level, degrees in theological or religious studies rose from 3.9% in 1975 to 4.8% in 1980 and climbed to 6.2% in 1980.[10] The rise in the numbers of Christian schools supports the above findings. There were 5,870 Protestant-supported Christian schools by the late 1960s in the U.S.A., employing 66,080 teachers and with 1,068,000 students. In a relatively short period of time, between 1971 and 1978, there was a 47% increase in the number of Christian oriented and financed schools, a 113% increase in teachers and a 95% increase in pupils.[11]

Smart draws our attention to more recent times. He notes that "the movements known as the Moral Majority in the 1980s represented a resurgence of fundamentalist values coming after a period when liberal Christian and other lobbies had enjoyed a strong political entrenchment in Washington."[12]

Going from North to South America, one can observe similar phenomena, in that the intermingling of the church and politics is visible. Drawing our example from Chile in Latin America, it will be enlightening to recall Behrman's remarks. According to his observation "the priests may have influenced politics by shaping the ideas of the elite who passed through their schools. Also indirectly behind the political scene, the church definitely did contribute large amounts of money to favoured politicians. Openly and directly the priests sought to politicize the masses in church approved directions by organizing

Christian trade unions and social groups."[13]

If one moves to Europe for a social-psychological assessment of religious belief, at least on a personal level, a significant number of people can be portrayed as believers. An organized survey that was carried out by Gallup in Britain in 1978, as a part of an "European Values System Study", reveals to us interesting figures about the extent of religious belief in British society. Of those who were interviewed or questioned among the British population, at least 75% believed in God.[14] A comparison of data will enable us to see the rise of religious values:[15]

	(Argyle, Beit-Hallahmi)		(Thompson)		
	Year	%	Year	%	%
Belief in God	1973	74	1978	76	+ 2
Belief in Afterlife	1973	37	1978	45	+ 8
Belief in Hell	1973	20	1978	27	+ 7
Belief in the Devil	1973	18	1978	30	+ 12

So far, I have tried to demonstrate the fact that the religious resurgence is of poly-centric feature and of universal dimensions. The case of Israel, with respect to religious revivalism, and the increase in the use of religious symbols and language, will further enhance the foregoing argument.

As in Muslim countries and the Christian-populated U.S.A., Israel, in the Middle East, witnessed the emergence of an influential religio-political movement. Since its inception it has tried to promote its influence, in order to play a more powerful role both in the realm of domestic politics and foreign affairs.[16] Particularly Gush Emunim – the Block of the Faithful – has assumed considerable attention and visibility through its activities. Gush Emunim was founded in March 1974 as a subdivision and organized faction within the National Religious Party. After a short period of intra N.R.P. existence, subsequent developments led the Gush Emunim people to leave this party in the spring of 1974 and declare their independent entity in the social and political arena.[17] Some groups in this movement have argued that the whole of Jerusalem and the occupied territories belong to Israel,[18] because the Jewish people and the land of Israel are one. It follows from this belief that the complete land of Israel cannot be confined to the post-1967 Israeli borders, but includes the land of

Israel by the Covenant (Genesis, 15) and the promised borders.[19]

From the foregoing overview, one can rightly claim that religious and political motives are mingling more explicitly in many centres of contemporary society, regardless of the nature and origin of the religion. Although the Muslim world's experience of Islamic religious resurgence appears to be on the forefront of scholarly writings, one cannot ignore or underestimate the significance of the increasing use of religious language, symbols and values, which can be counted as religious revival or resurgence in non-Muslim societies. As Voll puts it, very succinctly, "the old ideas of the separation of church and state in many countries clearly do not signify the separation of religion from politics."[20]

II. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK:

Rubrics of Religious Awakening

In this section I will try to draw a conceptual framework, making use of the previous discussion on the very same issue, "religious revival or resurgence". One should bear in mind that, although language is the most effective way for the communication and dissemination of ideas, it has certain limitations which may impede real understanding of ideas and events. No matter what label one might employ to depict the phenomenon of a religious upsurge, any conceptualization or categorization, by which the readers are supposed to attain an insight, is subject to interpretation according to the given readers' understanding of used-language, as there is no "absolute" in the operation and utilization of language.

In Wallace's words, "various rubrics are employed depending on the discipline and the theoretical orientation of the researcher, and on salient local characteristics of the cases" in order to explore the study-subject of this paper. He enumerates the most commonly used labels as "nativistic movement, reform movement, cargo cult, religious revival, messianic movement, utopian community, sect formation, mass movement, vitalistic movement."[21] Some other terms can be added to portray the same or analogous phenomena, such as awakening, recrudescence, restoration, resurrection, risorginmento, resuscitation, revivification, rejuvenation, etc. These are all useful terms to describe the movements that we have been trying to understand in different cultural, political and geographical settings.

Vatin feels that "the concept of revival implies a reference to a renaissance to a humanistic renewal of thought, literature and the arts."[22] Wallace defines the revitalization movement "as a deliberate, organized conscious effort by members of a society to construct a more satisfying culture."[23] Linton calls the movements of revivalist nature "nativistic". He notes that nativistic movements aim at reviving

the ostensibly traditional culture of a dominated society so as to overcome at least some aspects of the domination to which the society in question has been subjected. Such movements typically occur when people feel that their cultural identity, as well as their cultural and political autonomy, is threatened by the domination of an alien society.[24]

The foregoing arguments reveal to us that the concept of revival or resurgence is not a simple matter, rather it is a complex progress which includes social, psychological, cognitive and intellectual elements, as well as political consciousness and traditional-cultural considerations, which were moulded by the historical experience of constructive forces.

Three levels of resurgence can be identified, depending on the nature of the circumstances in which attitudes and reactions are developed. Several variables impinge upon the formation of the heightening of consciousness and awareness, ranging from personal attributes, social and cultural drives, the state of political affairs, the internal and external scenario, to the impact of the inherent forces in nature. These three categories of awakening are as follows:

1. *Individual awareness*

This constitutes a personal awakening on an individual level. In the case of individual awareness, the person in question gains knowledge of the outer environment. This process liberates the individual from his/her egocentric nature. Individual awareness is not always necessarily conducive to a more complicated process of awakening. This type of awakening may lead a person to develop his/her own way of acceptance-reaction perception. Depending on personal characteristics and identity-orientation, individual awareness may lead a person to a more complex process of consciousness, which I will call "collective awareness."

2. *Collective awareness*

This refers to a wide-spread consciousness of social, cultural, economic and political variables, operating in society. Collective awareness frees the members of a society from their personal and egoistic considerations, enhancing the unification of collective forces on a societal level. This type of unified collective awareness may lead to a collective reaction-building process, which can manifest itself in intellectual terms through the reassertion of shared values and heritage, or in other ways, such as open protests or militant activism.

3. *Political awareness*

The third type of consciousness can be called "political awareness,"

which is the culmination of individual and collective awakening in such a way that heightened consciousness may find a way to express itself through political participation. Alien forces especially precipitate the proliferation of political appraisal when an indigenous tradition encounters pressure that undermines its validity and importance. Dissatisfaction, anomie, identity crisis, the flux of underlying values which were caused by internal or external encroachments of non-indigenous factors seem to appear as stimuli that culminate the first two types of awareness, reflecting them through a more active-demanding process of political consciousness and activity.

After these brief remarks on conceptual considerations, I would like to move on to our specific case: "Islamic resurgence." This subject is taken up by several scholars in order to highlight the recent development in Muslim societies of different national and geographical settings, employing various approaches.

A Western scholar notes that Western scholars "have come to use different labels to describe the phenomenon of the visible regeneration of the Islamic ethos and the intensified role of Islam in the political process in the Muslim world."[25] Another scholar identifies the following terms to portray the heightening of Islamic consciousness, such as "revivalism, rebirth, puritanism, fundamentalism, reassertion, awakening, reformism, resurgence, renewal, renaissance, revitalization, militancy, activism, millenarianism, messianism, return to Islam and the march of Islam. Collectively these terms are useful in describing the complexity of the Islamic phenomenon."[26] These are convenient and understandable shorthand expressions and are acceptable to use interchangeably, unless they are used "to imply that Muslims have only recently discovered their faith and dusted off the Qur'an."[27] In this paper "Islamic revival" or "Islamic resurgence" will be employed interchangeably to elucidate the central phenomenon of our study.

The term Islamic revival can refer to various situations. One can use it to invoke a new sensitivity to religious values, whereas another may use it to describe a spectacular upsurge in religious observance or a religiously-provoked militant movement in a specific part of the world.[28] Dessouki contends that the Islamic resurgence "refers to an increasing political activism in the name of Islam by governments and opposition groups alike. It designates a politicized, activist form of Islam and the growing use of Islamic symbolism and legitimization at the level of political action."[29] I feel that the majority of scholars tend to conceive "Islamic revival" as an expression of political discontent and dislocation. Two other writers on contemporary developments in Muslim societies seem to echo the same perception of Islamic resurgence. While Tibi understands this phenomenon as "the re-politicization of the sacred" and the revival of Islam as a political ideology.[30] Pipes interprets it as "an increase in Islamic activism"[31] The overemphasis on the political dimension runs the risk

of underestimating the significance of religious awakening at the individual level. It should be kept in mind that there are abundant data which document the manifestations of Islamic consciousness that motivates an individual to gain psychological arousal, so that the person in question may become able to develop his/her attitude, either in the intellectual arena or in a political scenario. I am inclined to argue that the issue of Islamic resurgence should be treated in a much wider context rather than confining this reality to its political manifestation, on which many scholars seem to have focused. When effort is spent to explore such a complex phenomenon, one should employ a comprehensive theoretical approach, which will enable the researcher to discover and unfold the very nature of a given case on a more satisfying level of knowledge.

Having appreciated the contribution of serious scholarship to the understanding of Islam, Hunter, in her introduction to *The Politics of Islamic Revivalism,* provides us with an outline of the shortcomings of Western scholarship in developing a theoretical framework to identify and analyze the underlying causes of the current revivalist wave. She notes that:

> "the most serious of these flaws has been the excessive degree to which some authors have tried to explain the revivalist phenomenon in terms of particular characteristics of Islam, rather than by analyzing it within the context of the social, economic, and political evolution of Muslim societies."

In her overview of various approaches employed by several scholars in order to highlight the factors and nature of Islamic resurgence, which are easily discernible in the increasing use of Islamic language, symbols and values, Hunter discusses and enumerates some of them in what follows:

1. Some writers feel that the underlying stimuli of the revivalist movement lies in the fact that this is a natural reaction of "Muslim" behaviour. It is true that certain characteristics of Islam, such as the fusion of religion and politics and Islam, being the most essential component of the Muslims' self-identity, contributed to the intensification of Islamic political awareness. Nevertheless Islam did not always remain as the foremost political force in Muslim societies, in at least the last hundred years of the political life of the Muslim world other ideologies have played a dominant role. Hunter contends that this conceptual framework runs the risk of underrating the importance of economic, political, cultural and secular concerns.

2. The second tendency, among some scholars who have brought the "crisis theory" to the forefront to reach insight, is depicted in Hunter's as follows:

> "Another tendency in some of the scholarship on Islamic revivalism, particularly in those works that have tried to develop, broad theoretical frameworks, has been to overemphasize historical analogies between the current revivalist wave and the previous Islamic reform movements. For example those scholars who have applied crisis theory to explain the current wave of revivalism have concluded that revivalsit movements have, in general, appeared at times when, because of military defeats, foreign incursion, or a general sense of decline, Muslim societies have felt threatened and thus have experienced a sense of cirisis."

Although Hunter finds in this view much truth and accepts it as being a significant contribution to efforts to explain the current phenomenon, she argues that:

> ". . . the history of many Muslim countries during the past two centuries shows that the crisis theory although important, is an inadequate explanation, or at least that past revivalist movements were overpowered by other reform or protest movements. For example, during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the Islamic world's state of decline and dependency was at an all-time high, and yet modernizing and largely secularizing forces gained more influence. Admittedly during the same period there also was an Islamic reformist or revivalist movement as best illustrated by the activities of Sayyid Jamal-ad-Din al-Afghani. But ultimately the modernizing trend prevailed. Moreover, historical evidence shows that a sense of crisis and decline is not the only spur to revivalist movements."[32]

3. A third tendency that I would like to add to those of Hunter's is that of the over-dramatization of economic development in several Muslim countries after the discovery of oil in the Middle East. Pipes, especially, takes up the issue in this perspective and tries to explain recent Islamic consciousness as a by-product of the oil boom.[33] It is true that the economic development of particular oil rich countries enhanced the idea of Muslim self-sufficiency and strengthened the Muslim stance against alien forces. Nevertheless, seeing the oil boom as the most salient factor of Islamic resurgence undermines the spiritual potentials of the Islamic faith and reduces the sacred to the profance. Concerning this discussion, Mitchell's argument reads as follows:

> "If the beginning of the Islamic resurgence is a function of Arab oil wealth, how can one account for the revival of the Society of Muslim Brothers in the years of 1951-54? How should one explain the movement's reappearance in 1964-66? Does oil wealth account for the emergence of Sayyid Qutb and his challenge to political

quiescence that characterizes the consensus of Sunni political theory?"[34]

Voll suggests a three-dimensional approach to understanding and analyzing recent forms of Islamic experience,[35] which Haddad calls either "acculturationist" designating "those who deliberately attempt to provide a contemporary Western ethos to Islam," i.e. modernists, secularists, and Westernizers, or "normativist," referring to those who hold the view that religion encompasses all spheres of life and that classical Islam is an exemplary period which remains valid, and "neo-normativist" depicting the movements such as the Muslim Brotherhood, which operates in a contemporary setting by using legitimate means to their ends after a long and grevious experience.[36] Voll's "three-dimensional" approach is founded on three underpinnings:

1. The fact that the movements in the Muslim world do not constitute a monolithic entity. Therefore, special circumstances in each area and movement should be carefully identified.
2. Islamic groups do not emerge in isolation from the rest of the world, rather they are the consequences of an active involvement "in the broader interaction of .odern global history." The second dimension entails an examination of the relationship of the various Islamic movements to the basic dynamics of modern history.
3. The third dimension encompasses a careful study of the historical dynamics of Islam, since Muslim societies have experienced somewhat recurrent themes throughout their history, facing the challenge of changing conditions.[37]

Taking all the arguments and suggestions concerning a conceptual framework and comprehensive methodology to understand the current phenomenal Islamic revival into consideration in the preceding section of this paper, I will try to apply a synthesized and compound approach to the probelms involved in order to identify and illuminate the catalysts of the recent Islamic resurgence.

III. THE ISLAMIC HERITAGE AND PERIODIZATION OF REVIVALIST MOVEMENTS

Western scholarship tends to emphasize the last decades of the twentieth century in its attempt to explain Islamic resurgence in Near and Middle Eastern Muslim countries. Not until the 1979 Iranian revolution did the literati comprehend the significance of Islamic development in this part of the world. Several assumptions appear for the dating of the Near and Middle Eastern Islamic revival, ranging from the inauguration of the Muslim Brotherhood's ideology in the

1920s and 1930s to the revolutionary triumph of Shī'ī political activism which toppled the Iranian dynasty in 1979. As Donohue points out, some writers would tend "to date the vitality of Islamic actors from the defeats of the Arabs in their war with Israel in 1967."[38]

There is a lot of truth in all these views. Admittedly, the aforementioned periodization is not completely inappropriate, for these developments played important roles in triggering the religious fervour in that particular time and geographical setting. What I would like to argue is the fact that history is a continuum. The historical process constitutes an ongoing experience of mankind, and this dynamic process cannot be divided into clear-cut compartments in such a way that each compartment is totally isolated from the preceding and succeeding one. Historical experience of one period is, in many ways, related to past experience and it impinges upon the making of the future. Islamic history is not an exception to this. Without understanding the centuries-old Islamic culture and its dyanmic forces, one cannot have any proper perception of current developments in the Muslim world. Any explanation of the contemporary Islamic resurgence will suffer from defects and shortcomings, unless Islamic history is perceived as a united entity of dynamic forces which have been operating in the rationale and life of Muslim societies. At this juncture, Gellner observes that:

> "It is the curious, yet supremely important fact that, of all the great traditional belief systems, Islam alone, far from weakening, has become an increasingly powerful social and political force. The other traditional faiths have had to retreat before diverse mixture of modernism and populism; Islam on the other hand, has retained and enhanced its social vitality, and is vigorously invoked both by conservative and radical regimes. . . it could simultaneously define itself against foreign enemies, against over-Westernized local rulers, and against the rejected moral corruption of the real local past; and it could also be used to invoke an uncorrupt ideal past, whose image has always haunted the society, and thus affirm past roots and future aspirations, both continuity and transformation, identity and purification under one single banner."[39]

I perceive Islamic history as a unity of dynamic forces which possesses a multi-coloured manifestation depending upon social, cultural, political and geographical context, of a given milieu. For I regard the contemporary religious resurgence in Near and Middle Eastern Muslim societies as an integral part of cumulative Islamic history and heritage; I find it very illuminating to give a sketch of "recurring themes" of Islamic heritage, generated by intellectual, spiritual, cultural and political challenges that Muslim people had to face.

From time to time in Muslim history, individuals and groups emerged as revitalizing forces to emancipate Islamic thought and Muslim society from their protracted decadent constraints. This revivalist and resurgent wave assumed different tones in accordance with specific circumstances. Nevertheless, efforts to regenerate competitive Islamic thought on the personal and collective level share some common characteristics and endeavour to convey a similar vision of Islam to society. Latter movements often refer to previous ones in many ways to take an impulse and to strengthen their own ideologies. In what follows I shall try to provide a short sketch of revivalist actors in different periods of Islamic history, which would enable us to arrive at a proper understanding of the resurgent wave in the Near and Middle Eastern Muslim societies. As Enayat notes, Islamic history shows "abundant evidence of the ceaseless vitality of Islam."[40] Esposito's proposition is complementary to that of the former one: "Understanding twentieth century politics requires an understanding of the character and legacy of both pre-modern Islamic revivalism which addressed the internal weakness of Muslim society as well as Islamic modernism which responded to the challenge of Western colonialism."[41]

From the very inception of Islamic history one can see the emergence of various individuals and groups who have operated to generate a new consciousness, stemming from original and authentic Islamic sources. As early as the 7th century A.D., the Kharijites appeared as a consequence of disputes between the fourth Caliph 'Alī and Mu'āwiyah, the governor of Syria, over "political authority." The famous incident of arbitration to settle the problem of "Caliphal authority" stimulated a group of people, called the Kharijites, to leave 'Alī's side on the grounds that he agreed to human arbitration instead of the Qur'ānic judgement. After this splitting occasion, the Kharijites developed their own ideology and continued activities in different tones in accordance with existing circumstances.

The emergence of the Shī'ī movement as a protest against Abū Bakr's accession to the leadership of the *Ummah* played a phenomenal role in the making of both the intellectual and political history of the formative period of Islam. Supporters of 'Alī developed an ideology of leadership, according to which the headship of the Muslim community rightfully belonged to 'Alī and his descendants. The bloody massacre of Ḥusayn, 'Alī's son, at Karbala in 671 A.D., triggered the religious fervour of Shī'ī groups and provided them with a fundamental religious impulse. In the Ṣafavid period Shī'ism was made into a state ideology in Iran, during which time many Shī'ī seminaries were established and the Shī'ī *'ulamā'* assumed a financial independence. The financial independence of the Shī'ī *'ulamā'* enabled them to play an important role in the intellectual and political history of Iran, culminating in 1979 by attaining political authority, in addition to that of their spiritual leadership.

As the title of his books *"The Revivification of the Sciences of the Faith"* implies, Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī (d. 1111 A.D.) appears as one of the most influential reformist persons among Muslim literati. Disillusioned with the *status quo* of traditional theology because of its formalism and externality, al-Ghazālī began to study philosophy, "but found it not only far from orthodox Islam in its teachings but above all lacking in certainty and its proofs."[42] In his search for truth, al-Ghazālī travelled between rational discourse and mystical experience, at the end of which he reached a synthesis, formulating a conciliation between reason and revelation.

Islamic history introduces us to another prominent revivalist figure, Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad Ibn Taymiyah (d. 1328 A.D.), who responded to the socio-moral corruption of Muslim society, calling for a return to the fundamentals of Islam. Ibn Taymiyah denounced all the innovations prevalent in Muslim society. In his attempt to reconcile and harmonize tradition, reason and free will, Ibn Taymiyah condemned the monism of Ibn 'Arabī and *ṣūfī* cults as deviations from the doctrine of *Tawḥīd*. Ibn Taymiyah's puritanistic ideology inspired a significant number of movements all over the Muslim world.

The movement known as Wahhābiyah was inaugurated by Muḥammd Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb (1703-1792), son of a learned Hanbalite jurist (*qāḍī*).[43] Having been inspired by Ibn Taymiyah's puritanistic notion, he tried to uplift the doctrine of *Tawḥīd*. To do so, 'Abd al-Wahhāb began his preaching by denouncing a number of beliefs and practices, since they violated the oneness of God. Accordingly he rejected the intercession of *ṣūfī-shaykhs* between man and God.[44] 'Abd al-Wahhāb states that true Islam is that of the first generation (*al-Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ*) and protests that all later innovations and superstitious accretions had brought "new gods" into Islam.[45] The Wahhabi movement did not confine itself to theological concerns. The search for political support and protection gave rise to the Saudi-Wahhabi alliance, by which the Saudi family assumed political legitimacy, through 'Abd al-Whahhab's backing.

Islamic history reveals to us two influential movements in an African setting: the Sanusiyah and the Mahdiyah. The Sanusiyah movement emerged as a mystic order under the leadership of Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Sanūsī (1787-1859). In the course of time the Order gradually assumed a political character as a consequence of military invasions of Libyan lands. Through its well organized network, the Sanusiyah Order was able to mobilize the Arab tribes against the invaders under the banner of *jihād* (holy war). On the doctrinal level, the founder of the Order, Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Sanūsī, seems to have been influenced by al-Ghazālī, Ibn Taymiyah and Muḥammad Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb. Following al-Ghazālī, he tried to reconcile the methods and approaches of the *'ulamā'* and of the *ṣūfīs*. One of the targets of al-Sanūsī was to denounce the blind immitation of the past by the Muslim *Ummah*. Analogous to the Wahhabiyah movement of Arabia,

the Sanusiyah Order led the divided tribal Arab society to establish a nation state.[45]

The Sudanese Mahdī is another striking example of politically oriented movements with purificationist and revivalist programmes for Islamic reform.[46] The founder of the Mahdiyah movement, Muḥammad b. Aḥmad (1844-1885), declared himself the Mahdī to restore justice. The use of Messianic-eschatological elements of the Islamic tradition enabled him to gather a significant number of adherents. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad succeeded in establishing a theocratic state, but it did not last longer than ten years. One writer portrays the Mahdiyah movement as fundamentalist, for several reasons. He feels that, firstly, the Mahdī "was not latitudinarian in his approach to the customs of the people in the Sudan." Secondly, the Mahdī's teachings were vigorously "anti-foreign." Thirdly, the Mahdī openly stated that his ultimate goal was to recreate a Muslim community that would be a "duplicate of the Prophet's."[47]

Indian Islamic history reveals to us several figures of whom Shāh Walī Allāh (1702-1762) and Sayyid Aḥmad Khān (1817-1898) appear as the prominent forerunners of Islamic modernism and revivalism among Indian Muslim literati. Like many other puritanist movements, Shāh Walī Allāh rejected all alien elements that entered into Muslim life.[48] He tried to re-operate the mechanism of *ijtihād*, by denouncing blind imitation and unquestioning submission to previous schools of law. Shāh Walī Allāh tried to reconcile religion and reason, adding a new dimension of mystical knowledge to that of al-Ghazālī's synthesis.[49] Having been influenced by Shāh Walī Allāh's revivalist teaching, Sayyid Ahmad Khan emphasized the importance of rationality versus obscurantist traditionalism.[50] He played an important role in the establishment of the modernist Anglo-Muhammadan Oriental College in Aligarh in order to disseminate modern knowledge among Indian Muslims.[51]

In the making of modern Islamic intellectual and political history some able figures had an underlying effect. Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī (1839-1897) appeared to mobilize Muslims in the political arena with his Pan-Islamist philosophy. According to al-Afghānī, the ultimate purpose of Muslim renewal and reform was a non-conditional liberation of Muslim nations from the yoke of colonial powers. One researcher observes that al-Afghānī spent most of his life in plitical activity.[52] But his activities cannot be confined to political emancipation of Muslim societies only. On the intellectual side, he tried to persuade Muslims to accept the fruits of reason and sciences of modern Europe. Al-Afghānī's revivalist philosophy attracted many intellectuals of his time who were disillusioned with the state of Muslim society. Muḥammad 'Abdūh (1849-1905) and Rashid Rida (1865-1935) are two religious thinkers who were influenced by al-Afghānī. The starting point of 'Abdūh's thought, as that of al-Afghānī's, was the problem of inner decay and the need for a dynamic inner revival. He spent great efforts to contribute to the awakening of Muslim society through the

introduction of educational reform at al-Azhar University, where the rational sciences are neglected. According to 'Abdūh, the decadence of the Muslim world lies in the incorporation of alien elements into Islam, excessive ascetism – saint worship, mixing up the essentials of Islam and trivial aspects and blind imitation of the past. The most effective way to protect Muslim society from this decadent situation, he thought, was the modernization of Islamic law and the reintroduction of ethical and philosophical learning, which would enable Muslims to appreciate the vitality of reason. Abduh's ideas played an effective role upon Rashīd Riḍā's intellectual position, along with those of al-Ghazālī, Ibn Taymiyah and Muḥammad 'Abd al-Wahhāb's puritanist theology. Riḍā began his discourse with the question of why Muslim countries are backward in every aspect of civilization. His answer to this acute problem aims at reviving the moral dynamics of Muslim life and thought. The way to attain this revitalization necessitates a true understanding of Islam and the implementation of its ethical precepts. He argued that the loss of Islamic truth led the Muslims to become backward in science and civilization. He urged Muslims to return to the Qur'ān if they wanted to re-erect Islamic civilization again.

The generation of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries witnessed the emergence of two different trends of thought; Muhammad Iqbal (1875-1938) and Abu'l Ala al-Maududi (1903-1979). Muhammad Iqbal formulated his philosophy of dynamic world view under the influence of Eastern Islamic mysticism, such as the works of Rūmī and Jilī, and the ideas of Western philosophers, Nietzche, Fitche, Bergson, etc. As one scholar notes, he rejects "quietism" and emphasizes the dynamism of Islam in philosophy and mysticism. The underlying source and principle of this dynamism is *ijtihād*, which liberates Muslims from parrot-like repetition of the past. A careful reading of Iqbal's *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* reveals to us his philosophical investigation, which seems to be based on a mixture of Western and Eastern thought. He sees the reconstruction of Islamic law (*fiqh*) as the greatest need for Islam, so that the revisited and recodified Islamic law may provide a satisfactory answer to a great number of questions that have been posed by modern economic, political, social, national and international developments. Unlike Iqbal, Maududi developed a different pattern of thought and action, which was publicized through Jamaat al-Islami, that devoted itself to the establishment of a thoroughly Islamic state and government.[53] In his revivalist writings, as Rahman points out, Maududi asserted that, "Islam is a complete way of life. Therfore it is a system and not just a set of certain dogmas and rituals."[54] Like other revivalist thinkers, he attributes the decline of Islamic civilization to the degeneration of its moral purity and alien elements borrowed from other religions. The essential remedy for the ongoing decline in Islamic lands is to return to *Sharī'ah* and to apply it to all spheres of life.

The foregoing sketch makes it clear that different individuals

and collective trends constitute a dynamic continuity in Islamic history. The heritage of the Islamic past has played a phenomenal role in the development of later individuals' and movements' thought and activities in one way or another. What I have tried to provide was a fairly short sketch of the continuing experience of Muslim societies. Of course, one cannot confine Islamic heritage to the above mentioned figures and movements only. There are other important figures and movements that have influenced the moulding of Muslim attitudes and ideology over the centuries. The shortage of space has forced us to follow a way as short as possible to present the significant trends in the making of Islamic history.

Going back to the problem of the "periodization" of Islamic revivalism that was posed in the beginning of this chapter, I would like to argue that the "absolute dating" does not seem to be convincing, since the "Islamic resurgence of the late twentieth century is only one of the many periods of dramatic renewal within the Islamic world. Muslim societies have experienced many times of expansion and reconstruction of crisis and renewal."[55] Especially;

> "When confronted with situations such as urbanization, migration, sexual liberation, and the like, contemporary Muslim society tends to generate strong reactive movements that seek, though frequently fail, to stop such trends, if not reverse them, or at least to safeguard the faithful from predilection in the pursuit of these new models of social and individual behaviour."[56]

IV. THE INDICES OF RELIGIOUS RESURGENCE IN NEAR AND MIDDLE EASTERN MUSLIM SOCIETIES

Various signs of Islamic resurgence can be discernible on the individual, collective and political levels.

Individual level

The reawkening of Islamic belief on the personal level refers to the heightening of religious consciousness and piety in an individual's life. Its indications are: increasing observance of traditional religious practices, such as daily prayers, fasting during the month of *Ramaḍān*, growing numbers of demands to visit Makkah for pilgrimage and veiling among young Muslim women, as pointed out by Sayari in Turkey and by Voll in Egypt. Voll also pointed out that in Egypt it is possible to see the signs of a reaffirmation of Islam among educated Egyptians. Administrators are becoming more regular in their prayers, the Friday prayers in the major mosques are much better attended and an increasing number of female students in the high schools and universities have adopted Islamically suitable clothing.[57]

Collective Level

At the collective level there has been a dramatic increase in the

publication of religious writing and the circulation of religiously oriented books, articles and leaflets in all Muslim countries. One writer provides us with two important periodicals: *al-Da'wa* (The Call or The Mission) and *al-I'tisam* (Perseverance) are run by former members of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. These periodicals, in which revivalist themes and tone are dominant, appeared in 1976, since then their readership has steadily increased.[58] An investigation of religious orders and organizations reveals that the number of their members is increasing and becoming more influential in disseminating resurgent ideologies. Moreoever, apart from these non-official popular societies, the governments are introducing religious education in the schools or modifying the curricula to give a greater emphasis to religious studies.[59] Another indicator of the rising tide of Islamic resurgence at the collective level was evidenced in Egypt by the landslide victories of Islamic groups in university students' union elections from 1975 to 1979.[60]

Political Level

We have abundant evidence of the increasing activities of Islamic revivalist groups in the political arena in Near and Middle Eastern Muslim societies. Political expression of Islamic consciousness assumed distinct characteristics, depending on their leadership, ideology, mthods and on the socio-political environment in which Islamic movements emerged. One of the most striking examples of the political reassertion of Islam is the triumph of Shī'ī political ideology, represented by the Iranian clergy, over Shah Reza Pahlawi's dynastic rule. The 1979 Iranian revolution is a culmination of the social, economic, political and religious dissatisfaction of great masses of Iranian people from all stratas of the population, regardless of ideology, class and national affiliation. Shī'ī ideology promotes the status of the religious clergy in society. Over the centuries in the Iranian setting Shī'ī clergy and organizations developed their independent status, which enabled the religious clergy to assume autonomous authority and self-determining clerical hierarchy in the society, along with non-controlled economic resources. The autonomous status of the Iranian Shī'ī clergy enabled them to acquire political leadership in addition to religious authority through the expression of discontent, frustration and resentment of Iranian society, employing religious language and symbols. Tabari draws our attention to the protest of the 1850s, during which the areas of conflict between the clergy and the state began to widen, since the religious clergy opposed the modernization efforts of the Qājār government. Politization of the Iranian clergy was precipitated by the protests in which the Shī'ī *'ulamā'* played a pivotal role against the Tobacco Concessions in 1891-1892.[61] Increasing political orientation and the engagement of the Iranian clergy in the affairs of state was once more displayed by

the clergy's impact upon the Constitutionalist Revolution of 1906-1911.[62] Having sensed the clergy's prospective efficacy to intoxicate and animate public opposition to the ruling strata, Reza Shah launched a widespread attack upon the *'ulamā'* to undermine their popularity and to cripple their influence on the masses. To do so Reza Shah started a modernization program which advocated the establishment of new institutions to replace the traditional ones run by the clergy. Modern schools were opened to take over *madrasah's* functions, on which the clergy had an absolute monopoly. The introduction of novel judicial systems was meant to undercut the authority of the religious courts. Supplementary to these measures, the administration of religious endowments was taken over by the official apparatus in order to end the financial independence of the Iranian *'ulamā'* on the assumption that the loss of economic resources would impede the clergy's propagation against the ruling elite.[63] Ayatollah Ruhullah Khomeini's first critique of the Pahlawi regime appeared in 1944 in a letter addressed to the *'ulamā'* calling on them to unite against immorality, decadency and anti-clerical intellectuals.[64] As Bashiriyeh notes, during his reign (1941-1979) Muhammad Reza Shah continued strongly secularist policies and became increasingly dependent on U.S.A. assistance for economic, political and military needs. Foreign investments were welcomed and subsequently international Western oil companies took over the control of oil production. Moreover, the intelligence agency, SAVAK was founded with U.S.A. advice and technical assistance. By the end of the 1950s, the political and military system of the Shah's Iranian regime was closely integrated in the Western club.[65] After the C.I.A. backed the coup of 1953 which toppled Mosaddeq's government, clerical elements for the first time began to gain an explicitly active political leadership in the recomposition of the nationalist movement.[66] The growing cleavage between the clergy and the Shah's authoritarian regime was proliferated by the appointment of Asadollah Alam as Prime Minister in 1962. He promised to implement land reform and provincial and local election bills which were issued to the proceeding cabinet by an imperial decree. The bill concerning woman suffrage in the local and provincial elections further intensified the polarization between government officials and the Shī'ī clergy.

It was with this bill, Floor notes, "that Ayatollah Khomeini made his first appearance on the national scene".[67] Khomeini was not only denouncing the Shah's monarchic regime, but also developing his theory of religio-political leadership, which was expounded in *"Islamic Government"* in 1971, a published form of collected lectures.[68] Khomeini's ideology concerning political leadership of the religious *'ulamā'* was centred around the concept of *Velayet-i-Faqih* (the Guardianship of Jurisprudence), which presupposes that "a jurisprudent has the same authority that the Most Noble Messenger and the Imam had."[69] It follows from that, that in the absence of an

infallible *Imām, faqih* should be ascended to the rulership as an agent of the Hidden *Imām*.[70] Khomeini's announcement on *Velayet-i-Faqih* unearthed a bifurcation between the advocates of the rulership of the clergy and those who disapproved the *'ulamā's* takeover of the political seat as embodied in Ayatollah Shariatmadari's opposition. Nevertheless Khomeini's view prevailed.

The massive appraisal against the authoritarian monarchic regime was very much contributed to by several intellectuals who have served as ideologues. Of them Mahmud Talegani (1910-1978) and the lay Shī'ī politico–religious thinkers Mehdi Bazargan, Ali Shariati (1933–1977) and Bani Sadr emerged on the political scene as vehicles to promote Islamic ideology and mobilize intellectual and popular forces to overthrow the Shah's regime. Mahmud Talegani, Keddie points out, was one of the most liberal and progressive figures among the Iranian *'ulamā'*, who established good relations with Sunnis and leftist groups against the common enemy. Mahdi Bazargan, again according to Keddie's investigation "addresses chiefly middle classes, merchants and lower civil servants, while Shariati and Bani Sadr became the ideologues of young revolutionary intellectuals" who endeavoured to demonstrate that "Islam is not against progress and that it has an answer to materialist ideologies in its positive approach to modern science and technology."[71] In his writings and lectures, Ali Shariati emphasized and enunciated the egalitarian, progressive and scientific features of Islam through a moving language which echoed the tone of Iqbal and al–Afghani of the Orient, and of Durkheim, Weber, Camus and Fanon of the Occident, with whom he became acquainted during his studies in the West. With respect to the illuminati's role in the Iranian revolution, suffice it to say that:

> "Shariati and his associates presented innumberable lectures on Islamic themes. These raised old issues in a new light. The discussions of theoretical tenets of the faith that had long been at the centre of clerical discourse were now presented from the perspective of social action and organization, as opposed to routine ethical pietism."[72]

It was not only Khomeini's charismatic leadership that brought him to power, but also the dynamic contribution of the literati, the ceaseless support of Bazaaris and the involvement of other actors in the process.

A careful investigation of Egyptian political history will uncover the existence of various Islamic revivalist groups that were involved in the political mechanism to re–intensify the influence of Islam on individuals and state ideology. As Ayubi truly assesses the most important and prevailing Islamic movement in the modern history of Egypt is, of course, the Muslim Brotherhood which played an important role in the promotion of the Islamic resurgence on the political

level.[73]

The founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, Hasan al–Banna (1906–1949) was born in an atmosphere of intellectual ferment. After completing his early education in traditional Islamic subjects; al–Banna went to Cairo where he, for the first time, became acquainted with the cosmopolitan influences which disappointed him. In Cairo al–Banna encountered many problems and conflicts, such as Westernization, materialism, growing numbers of places for entertainment and the laxity of adherence to Islamic principles which stimulated him to prepare a program of teaching and writing. In 1929 he founded the Muslim Brotherhood in Ismailiyya, where he had a teaching post at a primary school.[74]

Hasan al–Banna was convinced that only through a faithful return to Islamic precepts could the Muslim nation be motivated to awaken from its decline. Islamic renewal, he thought, was a necessary precondition for the cure of the Muslim world from the illness of Western secularism and materialism.[75] In the formative period of its existence, the Muslim Brotherhood seems to have concentrated on social and moral reform and on the construction of a well–developed organization. The Brotherhood (M.B.) began to run a network of educational, social and economic activities through hospitals, local social clubs, mosques and small industrial enterprises in harmony with al–Banna's description of the movement as "a Salafiya message, a Sunni way, a Sufi truth, a political organization, an athletic group, a cultural–educational union, an economic company and a social idea."[76]

In his book on the Muslim Brotherhood Husaini enumerates M.B.'s six principles as follows. (1) Scientific principle is meant to provide a true interpretation of the Qur'ān (2) Pragmatic principle aims at the unification of Egypt and other Muslims around the Qur'ānic principles expounded by the first principle (3) Economic principle means social justice, social security, equal opportunity, protection of national resources, growth and promoting living standards for citizens (4) Socio–philantrophic principle is based on human love and their protection from poverty and ignorance (5) Nationalistic principle proposes freedom of Muslim lands and the Nile Valley from the invasion of foreign powers (6) Humanitarian principle is of universal characteristic which endeavours to promote universal peace and world civilization.[77]

There is no doubt that the aforementioned principles are meant to be realized and implemented. Political power is the most efficacious way of putting these principles into practice. An investigation of al–Banna's writings reveals his method and strategy to achieve these goals. The underlying features of his strategy read as follows:

> "(1) Avoid the battleground of theological disputes; (2) avoid domination by notables and important men; (3) avoid divisive political organization such as parties; (4) emphasize gradualness because every movement must pass through several stages before arriving at its goal; (5) seek power in order to realize goals, including if necessary armed force; (6) set up a religious government, because government is one of Islam's cornerstones and includes education, legislation, adjudication, and implementation and action – all of which are inseparable from one another; (7) belief in Arab and Islamic unity; (8) revival of Islamic unity; and (9) consider and treat every country which aggresses against the Islamic homeland as a tyrannical state which must be resisted in every way."[78]

As this summary of al-Banna's strategy of action implies he increasingly employs political language to convey the message that without "political power" all the goals to liberate Muslim people from inner decline and external encroachments and to revitalize Islamic civilization will remain unfulfilled.

There was a discernible increase in political involvement of the Muslim Brotherhood after moving its headquarters to Cairo in 1933, where the Brotherhood developed into a well-knit religious and political organization and widened its membership network to different groups of the social strata, including students, clergy, civil servants, teachers, etc. Humphreys points out that ". . . in a climate of rapid change and intense stress on all levels of life, the Muslim Brothers offered in highly effective language an ideology that appealed to a very broad and politically conscious social base."[79] Heightening consciousness of religio-political activism of the members of the Muslim Brotherhood and the conversion of this understanding into socio-political protest led to a polarization between state policy and the Muslim Brotherhood's ideology. The assassination of Egypt's prime minister, al-Nuqrashi in 1949, precipitated the proliferation of hostile cleavages at the end of which the assassination was ascribed to the Muslim Brotherhood and accordingly the government dissolved the organization. Most of the Brothers either were sent into exile or driven underground, and more dramatically the leader of the movement, Hasan al-Banna, was himself murdered by Egypt's secret police in 1940.[80]

A new phase was opened for the Brothers when Nasser ascended to power after the Free Officers' overthrow of the Egyptian monarchy in the 1952 revolution, during which the Society of Muslim Brothers provided substantial support in both men and idea for it.[81] The relationship between the Muslim Brothers and Nasser's regime remained peaceful in the initial period of Nasser's regime. All the members of the Brotherhood who had been imprisoned under the old regime were released and although political activities of all groups were banned, Nasser's regime authorized the Brotherhood to continue its activities on the grounds that it was a religious organization. This honeymoon did not last long. The Brothers were disappointed by Nasser's ideological orientation, which centred on Arab nationalism

and Arab socialism, relegating Islam to a serving element to his ends. Nasser began to nationalize religious institutions in order to bring them under state control. Nasser's policy proved that he was not going to establish an Islamic state in which the Muslim Brothers would have a power-share. The increasing conflict between Nasser's regime and the Muslim Brotherhood reached a climax when an abortive assassination attempt against Nasser was carried out, allegedly by its members. Nasser used this occasion as a pretext to dissolve the Society of Muslim Brotherhood and either executed or exiled its members in 1954.[82] Following the June 1967 defeat against Israel some of the jailed Muslim Brothers were released.

Upon Nasser's death Anwar Sadat became the President of Egypt in 1970. Sadat released the remaining Muslim Brothers in prison and allowed those, who were exiled during Nasser's era to return to Egypt. Preceding the promulgation of the Sadat constitution, the Brotherhood announced a series of demands. They wanted Islam to be declared the official state religion and the *Sharī'ah* to be recognized as a primary source of legislation regarding the constitutionality of other laws and to be made the sole source of personal status laws.[83] The text of the accepted and promulgated constitution in 1971 was unsatisfactory and unacceptable because of the Brotherhood's insistence on the fact that the *Sharī'ah* must be the only source of legislation. The peaceful coexistence of Sadat's government and the Muslim Brothers between the period 1970-1978 began to fade as a consequence of certain events. Mainly four areas of conflict were identified: (1) Sadat's declaration on the prohibition of the establishment of an Islamic party along the lines and principles of the Muslim Brotherhood; (2) Sadat's open door policy and an obviously rapid increase in prostitution, gambling, the consumption of alcohol and the numbers of night clubs, etc.; (3) Sadat's policy on the emancipation of women and; (4) the signing of a peace treaty with Israel in 1973. According to Said Aly and Manfred these four conflicts set the stage for the confrontation between Sadat and the Brotherhood, whose participation in anti-Sadat strikes, demonstrations and campaigns markedly increased in the ensuing years.[84]

Although the Muslim Brotherhood exemplifies the most significant sign of the Islamic revival on the political level in the Egyptian setting, it was, of course, not the only movement that emerged in the name of Islamic ideology in Egyptian religio-political history. There are other Islamic groups of which al-Takfir wal-Hijra (Excommunication and Emigration), Shabab Muhammad (Muḥammad's Youth), Hizb al-Tahrir al-Islami (Islamic Liberation Party), Jund Allah (God's Army) and Jamaat al-Jihad (Holy War Society) can be mentioned.[85] The aforementioned groups are usually referred to as "militant" movements for their radical policy and involvement in numerous violent incidents.

Ideologically, Esposito argues, these militant groups heavily

borrowed from Sayyid Qutb and Mawlana Maududi. He enumerates the ideological framework of Islamic militant organizations as follows:

> "1. Muslims have a God-ordained purpose and vocation, i.e. submission to and realization of God's will.
> 2. God's will governs both individual and community life.
> 3. The correct path or divine blueprint for society or *Sharī'ah* is contained in the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*.
> 4. Islam is a total way of life which embraces religion and politics, state and society.
> 5. They demand an Islamic state, the Rule of God on Earth.
> 6. Therefore it is imperative that the *Sharī'ah* be implemented, replacing Western-inspired legal codes.
> 7. They condemn the Westernization of Muslim society and its models for modernization because they have failed and are thus responsible for political corruption, economic decline, social injustice, and spiritual malaise, just like the pre-Islamic period of ignorance.
> 8. They believe that a crusader mentality, neocolonialism, and the power of Zionism have resulted in a Western Judeo-Christian conspiracy which pits the West against the East.
> 9. Since the legitimacy of Muslim governments is based on the *Sharī'ah*, governments such as Egypt which do not follow the *Sharī'ah* are illegitimate. Those guilty of unbelief, "atheist states," are a lawful object of *jihād*.
> 10. Muslims are obliged to both overthrow such governments and to fight those Muslims who do not share the "total commitment" of militants. Like the Kharijites in early Islam, militants regard such persons as no longer Muslims but rather unbelievers.
> 11. *Jihād* against unbelievers is a religious duty. The life and goods of an infidel are forfeit.
> 12. Non-Muslims are no longer considered "People of the Book" but rather "unbelievers." Thus non-Muslim minorities such as the Copts are prosecuted.
> 13. The official *'ulamā'* are rejected for their tendency to down-play the meaning of *jihād* as armed struggle and simply reduce it to striving to lead a moral and virtuous life. They have succumbed to the West and be co-opted by the government.
> 14. The majority of mosques which are state supported and controlled are places of unbelief since God's will and the Prophet's teaching are not upheld there."[86]

Opposition of Muslim groups to Sadat gradually increased and took a more widespread and aggressive form which prompted Sadat to take coercive measures to silence growing critics. His disapproving

talks over the activities of Islamic movements, his executions and exile of their members very much widened the existing cleavages between the regime and the militants to the extent that Sadat was assassinated by a member of one of the militant groups in 1980.

Coming to power upon Sadat's assassination by an extremist activist, Husni Mubarak attempted to reduce the hostility of the regime's domestic opposition by releasing the Muslim Brotherhood's leaders and other moderate figures. He also allowed the participation of the Muslim Brothers in general elections as a part of the Wafd party in 1984. In the 1987 elections the Muslim Brothers formed a new coalition with two small parties which won about 10% of the parliamentary seats. Most of Egyptian university campuses still remain a powerful base for Islamic groups, as was proven in the 1985 student elections.[87]

A short inquiry about another Middle Eastern Muslim country, Saudi Arabia, will disclose the nature of Islamic revivalism and its expression in political language and activity. The emergence of the revivalist Wahhabi movement led by Muhammad Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb coincided with Muhammad Ibn Sa'ūd's bid for political power in 1745, during which a religio-political alliance was achieved between the holders of spiritual and political authority that needed and supported each other for the promotion of the Wahhabi ideology and for the creation of the Saudi kingdom. In the making of Saudi Arabia's history, Islam constitutes a pivotal role through mobilizing and indoctrinating Arab tribes for the cause of Islamic awakening and through legitimizing the Saudi family's claim for political authority. As we can see, from the outset of the establishment of the Saudi kingdom, religion and politics have very much interacted and intertwined. Nevertheless, subsequent developments seem to indicate that the *'ulamā,'* holders of spiritual leadership, were incorporated into the political system of the Saudi state.

The first religious opposition to the Saudi family occurred as early as 1925-26, when the Ikhwan (The Brethern) organization, which was set up and indoctrinated by al-Wahhab and al-Sa'ud to serve their ends in 1912, announced its disapproval of innovations inaugurated by Abd al-Aziz ibn al-Saud. The Ikhwan's opposition gradually assumed a militant character that precipitated the polarity between the two sides. The rebellious attitudes and behaviour of the Ikhwan's members prompted the ruling Saudi dynasty to take some measures to silence the Ikhwan's hostility. The Ikhwan's existence was terminated in 1929-1930, by military force.

Since religion serves as a factor for legitimacy and the representatives of religious authority, the *'ulamā,'* are incorporated into the political system, there has not been a serious movement against the ruling dynasty under the pretext of Islamic revivalism until the late 1970s, when the seizure of the Grand Mosque (Ka'bah) in Makkah took Saudi rulers by surprise. Regarding Islamic resurgence

in the Saudi Arabian society, one writer observes that "the importance of Islam and of its symbols in public life has been intensified in the 1980s."[88] In spite of the fact that Islam operates as a legitimizing device for Saudi rule, religious opposition assumed a more discernible form in recent years, aiming at the overthrow of the ruling dynasty and the regeneration of a genuinely Islamic state. Two groups are considered important for the role they played in the contemporary political history of Saudi Arabia. The first one, "The Organization of Islamic Revolution," was founded in the late 1970s with Iranian financial assistance and the participation of the Shī'ī population living in Saudi Arabia. The organization's main objectives can be outlined as; (1) turning to real Islam; (2) freedom and complete independence; (3) the overthrow of the Saudi family.[89]

The second significant event, the seizure of the Grand Mosque in November, 1979 by a militant group, which one might call "neo-Ikhwan," unearthed an Islamic protest against the Saudi dynasty. A group of people occupied the Grand Mosque, closed it to the public and declared the coming of the expected Mahdi. The organiser, leader and theoretician of the neo-Ikhwan moment was Juhaiman ibn Saif al-Utaibi, who had been a member of the Saudi national guard and a student of theology. He announced his brother-in-law, Muhammad ibn Abd Allah al-Qahtani, as the expected Mahdī. Their ideological purpose was (1) a moral cleansing of the kingdom in which widespread corruption and bribery among the royal family prevailed. (2) The overthrow of the Saudi dynasty, since the Qur'ān does not recognize a monarchic regime which is based on hereditary rule.[90]

Upon King Khalid's request, the *'ulamā'* issued a decree allowing the use of force against the so-called Mahdī and his followers. The Saudi army moved in and defeated the rebellious militant Muslim revivalists dramatically, after an armed confrontation lasting only a few days.

Syria, although 75% of the total population is Sunni Muslim, is an Alawite (11.5%) ruled country, with a secular nationalist ideology. The Islamic revivalist notion was represented by two important actors in Syrian society, which constitutes a mosaic of different sects and religions. As Hinnebush points out:

> "The Ulama have long been a political force in Syria, pressing Islamic demands on government and contributing to the politicization of the population. Traditionally, they have resisted the secularization of the state, demanding that Islam be designated the state religion, that the head of state be a Muslim and that the Shari'a (Allah's law) be the basis of legislation. Under the secular minority-led Ba'th, their political activism has grown. The Ulama led protests against radical secularizing tendencies in the regime in the sixties and Shari'a court judges

fought to introduce Islamic provisions into the 1973 constitution."[90]

The other important actor of Islamic revivalism in the political arena is the Ikhwan al-Muslimin (The Muslim Brotherhood), which was formed as early as 1935 in Aleppo and moved its headquarters to Damascus where Mustafa al-Siba'i, Muhammad Mubarak and Salah ash-Shah forged a merger of Syria's other Islamic groups in 1946. Al-Siba'i's ideological orientation was similar to that of al-Banna. Al-Siba'i denounced westernization and economic concessions to foreign investors in an anti-imperialist tone. He dissolved his group in 1958 to comply with Nasser's wishes for the sake of Islamic socialism.[92]

Asad's attempt to promulgate a secular constitution which made no mention of Islam, except to say that Islamic law was the main source of legislation, provoked large-scale demonstrations led by the Ikhwan in 1973. Upon sporadic strikes and the increasing cooperation between the *'ulamā'* and the Ikhwan against Asad's regime, he amended the constitution by adding a new article stating that the president would have to be a Muslim.[93]

The relationship between the Ikhwan and Asad was much worsened upon an abortive assassination attempt against Asad in 1980. This attempt coincided with guerilla warfare of the Ikhwan in Syria's northern cities and massive demonstrations and professional strikes joined by the *'ulamā'* and merchants, which were put down by the regime's armed forces. The second wave of appraisal took place in Hama, declaring that this city was liberated from the regime's control. Asad resorted to military force once again and silenced the opposition, massacring thousands of people.[94]

In contrast with the sectarian orientations of Syria's incumbents, the Sunnī minority enjoys political authority in Iraq, where more than 50% of the population is of Shi'i orientation, 20% of the remainder are Sunni Arabs and 17% are Sunni Kurds.

The most religiously oriented group in the recent political history of Iraq is The Islamic Da'wa party, which was established in the late 1960s. The increasing influence of the party's leader, Imam Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr, prompted the Iraqi regime to take measures against The Islamic Da'wa party, for the incumbents feared that the movement and its leader would be a threatening factor for the Ba'thist regime. One writer suggests that the same fear motivated the holders of political authority to execute the party's leader, Baqir al-Sadr, on 9 April, 1980.[95]

Our last example of Islamic revivalism on the political level is provided by the case of Turkey, where the secularist ideology was opted for and implemented from the outset of its establishment. A series of implementations has been carried out by the secularist ruling incumbents, including the abolition of the caliphate, the elimination of the state's traditional Islamic educational system, the termination

of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Pious Endowments, etc.[96]

The political scene of Turkey had been dominated by a single party, The Republican People's Party, which advocated a totally secular ideology and its quick implementation in society. Upon the disestablishment of the single party system the Democratic Party ascended to political power, during which restrictive secularist policies of the state were loosened.[97]

The first religiously oriented party to appear on the political scene of Turkey was the National Order Party (N.O.P.), which was established in 1970 and led by Professor Necmeddin Erbakan. The National Order Party's main goal was declared as "to revive the moral qualities and spiritual excellence dormant in the Turkish character, so that Turkish society can regain peace, order and social justice."[98] The existence of the National Order Party in the political arena did not last longer than seventeen months. It was eventually banned by Turkey's Constitutional Court on 20th May, 1971 on the grounds that the Party had broken the law by using religion for political purposes.[99]

The leader of the outlawed N.O.P., Necmeddin Erbakan, founded another party in 1972, the National Salvation Party (N.S.P.) and it competed in the 1973 elections, receiving 11% of the electoral vote and winning 48 seats in parliament. The election results enabled the N.S.P. to be a candidate for the coalition government.[100] Since parties are not allowed to use religious language and symbols in party propaganda, the N.S.P. employed a cautious method of propaganda, focusing on the moral revival of society. The N.S.P. advocated a moral and virtuous way of life and was opposed to the Westernization of Turkish society.[101] In contrast to other Islamic groups of Near and Middle Eastern Muslim societies, the members of the N.S.P. refrained from an open confrontation with the state apparatus and did not carry out militant activities. After the military's takeover of political authority in 1980 the N.S.P. was closed with other political parties and its leader was taken to court along with others. In contemporary Turkey, the N.S.P. legacy is represented by the Welfare Party, led by Necmeddin Erbakan.

The foregoing case studies of Iran, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Iraq and Turkey indicate that there has been a great deal of political activity to revive the Islamic notion in Near and Middle Eastern Muslim societies. Our sketch of the above mentioned Muslim countries reveals that there is abundant evidence of the fact that many revivalist groups expressed their cause on the political level through the appealing political language they employed and the widespread political activity in which they were involved.

The Islamic revivalist movements do not have a monolithic structure, since they emerged in different social, cultural and political settings, which impinge on the development and organization of the groups. On the ideological part, revivalist groups share similar and discrepant views, depending on the religious background and cultural

environment in which religious ideas are moulded and on sectarian orientation.

V. CONTRIBUTING FACTORS OF ISLAMIC RESURGENCE IN NEAR AND MIDDLE EASTERN MUSLIM SOCIETIES.

As I mentioned earlier in this paper, the revivalist movements are of no monolithic features in terms of their organization, ideology, leadership, membership and the pattern in which they manifest the revivalist notion of Islam in society. In other words, although significant similarities exist among Islamic movements, they possess diversified norms as a natural consequence of the multi-dimensional factors which have motivated the rise of Islamic movements and have moulded their ideological and methodological frameworks. Many factors can be enumerated as causes of religious awakening in the contemporary Islamic Near and Middle East, ranging from the perception of the failure of Western ideologies, the oil boom and subsequent development, mass migration and social change, continuing military defeats, legitimacy problems, identity crisis, etc. In what follows, I would like to examine the possible factors which stimulated the reassertion of Islamic values in recent years.

1. *The Idea of the Failure of Western Models and its Contribution to the Islamic Resurgence*

With the establishment of independent Muslim-nation states a new phase was opened in Near and Middle Eastern Muslim societies, where the ruling elite and literati opted for Western models and institutions, regardless of their nature and compatibility with the traditional Islamic way of thinking and living. Under the pretext of modernization a great deal of Western ideas and institutional formation was poured into the Muslim world by a small number of ruling incumbents, disregarding the will of the indigenous population. One writer accurately notes that:

> ". . . Western models of development had been abruptly transplanted; they were adopted, not adapted, to their new environments. Institutions and codes that were the product of the West's historical/cultural experience, spanning several centuries of development were often uncritically and suddenly applied to people with a different historical tradition, experience and values."[102]

European superiority in technology, power and wealth impressed the ruling elite of many Islamic countries and they kept, after gaining independence, the same institutions set up by colonial regimes, viewing Islamic values as not conducive to modernization and development.

Regarding the incumbents' attitude towards modernization, Enayat observes that:

> "Western oriented elites professed their belief in the superiority of the West, and a necessity of a total commitment to the thorough Westernization and modernization of every facet of Muslim social life. . . In these circumstances it may only be natural that traditional values should either be relegated to a secondary place or openly discarded to the mental obstacles in the way of modernization. . . The result was an uncritical application of the Western norms of progress to societies whose historical background and value systems demanded a more differentiating apporach."[103]

The process of modernization and Westernization have analogous impacts on individual and communal life of the Muslim people. Esposito provides us with an example of the effect of modernization on Saudi Arabia, where rapid modernization undermined Saudi Arabians' Islamic way of life through reducing the value of Islamic moral precepts.[104] Modernization and development programs necessitated the invitation of a considerable number of foreigners. Subsequent developments proved that moral degeneration was an imminent social phenomenon among the Saudi royal family. Corruption, gambling and other non-Islamic patterns of behaviour increased among some members of the ruling elite. This departure from puritanist Wahhabi understanding of the Islamic life style stimulated religious people to reassert the validity and vitality of Wahhabi Islamic ideology.[105] Piscatori enumerates some other unwelcome consequences of modernization in Muslim societies, such as an alarming increase in divorce, drug abuse, crime and psychological malaise.[106] The gradual degeneration of Islamic and traditional moral values had prompted Muslims to protect their indigenous ethical identity through a reaffirmation of Islamic ideology. One scholar notes that "a study of the history of revival and reform in Islam shows that moral rather than theological factors have been in the foreground. . . What does seem to have been the case, however, is that revival and reform in Islam resulted from a moral impulse."[107]

One of the Western models which was implemented by the incumbents is the secularization of the state in its political, economic and social institutions which, Ahmad argues,

> "tried to introduce and 'impose' a new social ethics deriving inspiration from a world view and policy perspective diametrically opposed to the basis on which a Muslim society is founded. In a Muslim society individual morality and social ethics are both derived from the same divine source: the Qur'an and Sunnah. In secularism divine guidance becomes irrelevant and man's roots

Islamic language and symbols by politicians for their own ends caused, to some extent, the bureaucratization of Islam.[119]

The political history of Muslim societies provides us with abundant evidence of the use of Islam to bolster their authority and to divert peoples's attention from the revivalist appeal of Islamic political ideology, which does not accept the legitimacy of the existing order. As mentioned earlier, Nasser tried to establish his legitimacy on a synthesis of Arab nationalism and Arab socialism. The defeat in the 1967 war was the beginning of a decline in Nasser's competency and legitimacy. Israeli notes that upon the rising wave of Islamic opposition, Nasser ordered the broadcasting of religious prayers on radio to reduce the influence of Muslim groups against his ideology.[120] Nasser's successor, Sadat, employed and used religious values more evidently. He increased Islamic programming in the media and Islamic courses in the colleges and universities. The government financed the building of thousands of mosques in addition to some forty thousand existing mosques in Cairo. Sadat had also tried to improve his relationship with official and popular religious leaders by allocating special financial support to al-Azhar University and by permitting the activities of *ṣūfī* orders.[121] One of the fruits of this friendly relationship enabled Sadat to obtain a religious decree from al-Azhar advocating his peace treaty with Israel.[122] In the Iraqi political setting, where the Shi'i religious opposition gained momentum, Saddam Husayn announced that the birthday of 'Ali, the fourth Caliph, a national holiday. He visited holy cities and shrines of the Shi'i Muslims in pursuit of Islamic legitimacy, donating great sums of money for the restoration of mosques and religious centres.[123]

No matter what means, be it even Islamic symbols and language, to which incumbents of Muslim societies resorted, the critique of the *status quo* was accentuated by revivalist groups through a politico-religious language. With regards to convictions and judgements of Islamic revivalist groups about the legitimacy of prevailing rulers and the political system in Egypt, Ibrahim observes that Muslim groups are in agreement that the political system is corrupt and inept. It has deviated from the straight path by adopting and enforcing man-made, Western-imported legal codes at the expense of the Islamic system.[124] This evolution makes the existing leadership illegitimate and entails a comprehensive return to the Islamic ideal as a sole alternative ideology. As one writer points out, as a consequence of the legitimacy crisis and the failure of the ruling elite to establish viable political communities, Islamic revivalists argue that Islam proposes its own formula of legitimization by refusing the efforts of secular leaders to install Western ideololgical structures in Muslim societies.[125]

3. *Urbanization, Social Change, Identity Crisis and Reaffirmtion of Islamic Values*

The process of industrialization was detrimental to agriculture

in many of the poor rural parts of Muslim countries, causing a massive migration of peasants to the cities and creating a huge urban agglomeration with a poor and isolated population in industrialized big cities, such as Cairo, Istanbul, Teheran, Damascus, etc. These cities became home for millions of dislocated Muslim peasants.[126]

In the overcrowded urban centres the newcomers were confronted with economic, social, cultural and moral problems. Economically they were struck by unemployment, housing shortages, lack of social services and support systems.[127] Rapid social change and urbanization caused the breakdown of the traditional family structure, religious and social values, causing alienation, culture shock and identity crisis among the traditionally oriented new urban population. The decline of moral values and the increase in spiritual malaise motivated discontented and dissatisfied Muslims to search for an authentic cultural heritage and an indigenous Islamic Identity whose roots lay in traditional Islamic values. On the impact of alienation on the Islamic resurgence Dessouki remarks that:

> "in a situation of economic stress and sociopolitical alienation, the recently urbanized sector of the lower middle-class is most attracted to the call of Islamic groups. These groups present a defense mechanism to protect this sector's social status from further deterioration and to maintain the integrity of its value system."[128]

The identity crisis of the culturally alienated and isolated mass population in the big urban centres seems to have constituted a social-psychological background to the reaffirmation of Islamic ideology. One scholar observes the extent of the influence of a search for an indigenous identity on religious resurgence:

> "In all cases, the religious movements are related to an assertion of identity – an effort on the part of previously intimated or relatively politically passive or inactive persons, groups or nations to make their voices heard over against formerly dominant ideologies, rulers, groups, nations or international groupings."[129]

4. *Exploration for Oil and its Impact on Islamic Resurgence*

The discovery of oil in a few Muslim countries and its widespread use in industrialized countries brought about remarkably rich economies and wealthy states. The significance of the oil boom in Middle Eastern Muslim countries for the rise of revivalist Islamic groups seems to have been overemphasized by Pipes. He argues that the oil wealth, more than anything else, has caused the recent reemergence and intensification of Islamic awakening, by means of improving the worldly standing of Muslims, thus changing their attitudes towards Islamic values and establishing a network of Islamic

influences. He goes further to say that the "oil boom marked a turning point in Muslim consciousness; more than anything else, it prepared the way for widespread Islamic political ideology." The future of Islamic revivalism, according to him, will be totally dependent on oil. In other words, the oil market will determine how long the resurgent wave of Islam endures.[130] Ayubi employs more cautious language when remarking on the importance of oil as a factor that facilitated the reassertion of Islamic ideology. Ayubi contends that the oil wealth might have had an indirect psychological impact on the revival of Islamic sentiments, nevertheless its role should not be exaggerated.[131]

The over dramatization of the ramifications of oil on the resurgent voice of Islamic ideology recalls Piscatori's critique of Pipe's conviction. Piscatori argues that any view which seeks the origins of the revivalist notion of Islam in oil or economic well-being reduces everything to the material and makes the spiritual dimension dependent on the material dimension. He concludes that:

> "Although the possession of vast amounts of capital may have accelerated the process, and perhaps also helped to coordinate Muslim activities, the revival had begun well before the oil revolution of 1970s."[132]

5. *Successive Military Failures as a Stimuli to Islamic Resurgence*

Presistent military defeats of some Muslim countries seem to have been a contributing factor to the return to Islam. After the achievement of independence and the establishment of nation-states, some Muslim countries have been defeated militarily by non-Muslim forces.

Two striking examples of military failures that might have facilitated the resurgent wave of Islam are Pakistan's successive defeats by India and the shattering Arab defeat of 1967 by Israel. The 1967 Arab-Israeli war ended with a total and catastrophic defeat of Egypt, Syria and Jordan, where there arose a sense of inferiroity as a consequence of the loss of sacred territory and becoming the laughing-stock of all the world. The devastating defeat of 1967 proved, for many Muslims, that the Arab ruling elite and their military regimes were inept at removing Israeli occupation of Muslim territory. The defeat for some Muslims, as Haddad notes, came as a punishment from God because the Muslims had departed from the God-made system to man-made systems for the pursuit of materialism, ignoring God and manipulating His revelation to serve their own purposes.[133]

One of the consequences of the Arab defeat of 1967 has been an increase in political activity in the name of God.[134] Muslims have come to feel that the only way to regain ascendancy and victory over the enemies of Islam is a total reaction against Western man-made

ideologies and a consistent dedication to the implementation of Islam.[135] The incompetence of Nasser's Western inspired Arab socialism and Arab nationalism culminated in 1967 and the catastrophic result of the war moved many Muslims towards a reconsideration of Islam as an alternative ideology.[136]

CONCLUSION

Our study clearly indicates that the very subject of this dissertation, Islamic revivalism, is a very complex phenomenon which entails much longer and more comprehensive research joined by scholars of different disciplines, for it is hardly possible to understand and explain the nature of resurgent religious movements from only one academic discipline's point of view or through a single-sided methodological framework. In explaining the contemporary Islamic revival one should employ a comprehensive approach, taking political, cultural, economic, religious, etc. variables into consideration.

As discussed in section One, the phenomenon of religious resurgence is not unique to the Muslim world. A careful investigation of the literature on the Sociology of Religion and recent political history will reveal that religious revivalism is also discernible in Jewish and some Christian societies where religious movements are gradually becoming more involved in political events to promote religious ethic in society. In other words, religious revivalism, to which Western scholars seem to be giving too much attention, is not a unique phenomenon in Muslim societies. Religious revivalism has its roots and indices in a much wider environment, of which Islamic revivalism should be explained as a dimension of this contemporary context. The Western conventional view that religion and politics constitute totally different spheres of operation seems to be losing ground, at least as evidenced by the rise of Gush Emunim in Israel and the Moral Majority in the U.S.A.

In the making of contemporary Islamic reaffirmation, the revivalist individuals and movements played a phenomenal role through providing a dynamic inspiration in the course of the historical process. Former thinkers and movements constituted a model for the latter ones' formation and developments. It follows from that that Islamic history is a continuation of dynamic forces, without a proper knowledge of which one cannot understand the contemporary Islamic resurgence in the Near and Middle Eastern Muslim societies.

Our study identifies three categories of religious awakening. The individual awareness refers to a personal consciousness of reality. Collective awareness refers to a societal understanding of social, cultural, economic and political developments, which determines the course of communal life. Political awareness is the consequence of the culmination of individual and collective consciousness through involvement in politics and claims for an efficacious political

participation.

The contemporary socio-political history of Islam enables us to see the obvious signs of recent religious resurgence in the Near and Middle Eastern Muslim societies as evidenced by the case of the Iranian revolution in 1979, activities of the Muslim Brothers and other revivalist groups in Egypt and the seizure of the Grand Mosque in Makkah in the name of Islam. Revivalist movements assume different natures, depending on their ideological orientation, leadership, methodological outlook and environmental setting where these movements emerged. In other words, resurgent movements of the Muslim World do not have a monolithic character, due to different variables which have influence on the formation of the groups in point. Economic, social, cultural, political and historical circumstances play a phenomenal role in moulding the nature of Islamic revivalist movements in different geographical and environmental settings.

As enumerated in section Five, many factors seem to have motivated Muslims to search for an Islamic value-system. The idea of the failure of Western models liberated contemporary Muslim illuminati from a number of conceptual constraints and gave an impulse to Muslim intellectuals to reconsider Islamic ideology. The successive failures of the Westernized elite to offer a viable system created the problem of legitimacy. The critique of the *status quo* made the existing elite illegitimate and stimulated Muslims to return to Islam. Economic development, urbanization, social change, identity crisis, alienation and persistent military defeats of Muslim countries can also be mentioned as possible factors of Islamic revival in the Near and Middle Eastern Muslim societies.

Althoug the revivalist movements of Islam are not monolithic, they have common features, such as the call for a return to the Qur'an and *Sunnah* and a decisive rejection of man-made ideologies which separate the realms of religion and society, for the revivalists contend that Islam encompasses all spheres of life. The establishment of an Islamic order based on Qur'anic and Prophetic precepts is an essential part of the Islamic revivalist movements' ideology. Blind imitation of the past and an unquestioning co.nmitment to the opinions of preceding generations are not acceptable to Islamic movements. Islamic revivalist groups reaffirm the authenticity and uniqueness of the Qur'anic experience as a source of their dynamic and continuous inspiration.

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