

**A STUDY OF THE THOUGHT OF SELECTED
MUSLIM INTELLECTUALS IN IRAN ON ISLAM
AND MODERNITY, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE
TO SCIENCE AND POLITICS**

MARYAM SHAMSAEI

**FACULTY OF SCIENCE
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MARYAM SHAMSAEI

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Name of Candidate: **Maryam Shamsaei**

(I.C/Passport No :) **L13406326**

Registration/Matric No: **SHC080047**

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ABSTRAK

Tiada apa yang lebih membebankan Dunia Islam pada awal abad ke-dua puluh satu selain cabaran modeniti. Ia telah menjadi keutamaan di dalam agenda budaya dan sosiopolitik pergerakan-pergerakan intelektual dan sosial, dan kerajaan di dunia Islam dan Iran sejak kurun ke-19. Tesis ini adalah satu analisis teoritis mengenai respons intelektual Islam dari Iran di dalam pertembungan dengan persoalan Islam dan kemodenan. Dua bidang utama modeniti yang akan dikaji ialah: i) arena politik dan struktur kerajaan, dan ii) sains dan teknologi. Tesis ini bertujuan untuk memeriksa dan menyiasat idea-idea kontroversial lima orang intelektual Islam dari Iran iaitu: Ali Shariati, Abdolkarim Soroush, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Mutahhari Murteza, dan Mehdi Golshani. Ide-ide mereka kemudian dibandingkan untuk mengenalpasti persamaan dan perbezaan di dalam pemikiran mereka mengenai Islam dan modeniti.. Adalah diharapkan bahawa hasil kajian ini akan dapat memberi sumbangan kepada perbahasan semasa mengenai Islam, sains dan politik, di samping mewujudkan pandangan alternatif Dunia Islam mengenai hubungan di antara sains, teknologi dan kerajaan dengan secara sistematik. Kajian ini adalah sebahagian daripada usaha ke arah kebangkitan semula Dunia Islam di zaman moden, termasuk di dalam bidang sains dan teknologi. Pemikir-pemikir agama telah mengambil salah satu daripada dua pendirian yang berbeza mengenai isu modeniti, iaitu: (a) menyokong pemodenan terpilih, (b) menentang pemodenan terpilih. Penyokong-penyokong pemodenan terpilih kebanyakannya mengambil berat tentang pembangunan dan kemandirian negara-negara membangun, sedangkan penentang pula lebih mementingkan budaya Islam tradisional. Oleh itu adalah lebih baik jika kita mengambil jalan tengah di dalam persoalan ini, dan mencari titik pertengahan; bermaksud bahawa kita menganggap bahawa pembangunan material adalah perlu bagi *survival*, tetapi pembangunan insan yang sebenar memerlukan

kesabaran dan kepatuhan kepada prinsip-prinsip Islam. Oleh itu, sokongan negara-negara Islam kepada idea-idea kemodenan hanya hasil dari keprihatinan untuk terus hidup, dan bukannya bagi pembangunan sebenar. Dalam ertikata sebenar satu langkah ke arah pemerintah sebenar Islam dan demokrasi Islam adalah pada hakikatnya, asas bagi jalan yang optimum ke arah pembangunan. Berdasarkan hakikat ini, dan dengan mengambil kira bahawa adalah perlu untuk terus hidup di dunia ini, kita perlu menerima pemodenan setakat yang perlu, dan sentiasa mempertimbangkan untuk mengambil bahagian yang perlu. Sebaliknya, dan berdasarkan idea pemodenan terpilih, kami bertujuan untuk menghidupkan semula negara Islam yang sebenar apabila bekerja ke arah pembangunan.

Kata Kunci: Kemodenan, Islamisasi Ilmu, Demokrasi Agama, Demokrasi Liberal, cendekiawan Islam, Sekularisme

ABSTRACT

Nothing troubled the people of the Islamic world at the beginning of the twenty-first century as much as the challenge of modernity did. It had occupied a central place in the cultural and sociopolitical agendas of intellectual and social movements, and state actors in the Islamic world and Iran since the 19th century. This study is a theoretical analysis of Iranian Muslim intellectuals' encounter with Islam and modernity. The two main spheres of modernity which are examined are: i) the political arena and the government structure, and ii) science and technology. The goal of this dissertation is to examine and investigate the controversial ideas of five Iranian Muslim intellectuals, namely: Ali Shariati, Abdolkarim Soroush, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Murteza Mutahhari, and Mehdi Golshani. Their ideas were then compared in order to identify the similarities and dissimilarities in their ideas on Islam and modernity. It is hoped that through this study, a contribution can be made to the current debate on Islam, science and politics, as well as creating an alternative Islamic perspective with regards to science, technology and a systematic government. This study is part of an accumulated effort towards the rejuvenation of the Islamic world in the modern era, including the field of science and technology. The religious thinkers have taken either of the following two major positions in viewing modernisation: (a) In support of selective modernisation, (b) In opposition to selective modernisation. The supporters of selective modernization are mostly concerned about the development and the survival of the developing countries and civilizations and the opponents have traditional Islamic culture in mind. We can therefore take the middle line and consider a middle point in this argument; meaning to suggest that instant development and survival is helpful and effective, but genuine, sustainable development requires patience and adherence to Islamic principles. Therefore the adherence of Islamic nations to the notions of modernity is just a result of the concern for survival, rather than true human development. In its true sense a move

toward a real Islamic ruling and Islamic democracy is in fact the basis for an optimal path to development. Based on this reality, and considering that it is necessary to survive in this world, we have to accept modernisation to the extent which is necessary. On the other hand and based on the idea of selective modernisation, we have to aim at reviving the real Islamic nation when working toward development.

Key Words: Modernity, Islamization of Knowledge, Religion Democracy, Liberal Democracy, Muslim Intellectuals, Secularism

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GLOSSARY

Allah: is the Islamic term for the one and only merciful God.

Hawzah: a seminary of traditional Shiite Islamic studies.

Mashru'iyat: the legitimacy that God bestows upon a system.

Maqbuliyyat: the extent of the people's approval of the government was seen as a crucial element.

Quran: is the book that is believed by Muslim to be word of God and revealed to Profit Mohammad.

Figih: is the Science of Islamic jurisprudence.

Mujtahid: highest religious authorities.

Tawhid : Uniqueness of God.

Sharia: divine laws.

Hadith: are a collection Profit Mohammad's record of action and saying. Hadith after Quran is the most important source of Islamic Figih.

Tafsir: commentary on Quran.

Shiie's and Sunni: refer to two principal factions in Islamic religion.

Ummah: nation

Velayate Faghih: is a post-Age-of-Occultation theory in Shi'a Islam which holds that Islam gives a *faqih*(Islamic jurist) or *fuqaha* (jurists) custodianship over people.

Fuqaha: refers to those who are expert in Figih.

Majlis : the parliament.

EDCS: The Expediency Discernment Council of the System.

Madhhab: religious

Madrasah: school

Tarikh: history

