

Global Implications of Modernity in Islam

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Abstract

Islam responds to the influences of modern life and its challenges in diverse forms and manners. This research article deals with the concept of modernity in Islam with its global implications by exploratory elaboration of origin of modernity in Islam, and its limitations. The aim of the study is to analyze the growth of Islamic modernity and its evolution with the passage of time. The research emphasizes on the challenges that are confronted by Muslim countries all over the world. This phenomenon had its repercussions so the reactions of Muslims to modernity are discussed and the views of modernist are also delineated. Theoretically this research evaluates the substantial challenges which are categorized as the challenges on the basis of theoretical aspects, traditional and also cultural aspects. These categories are explored with an insight in to the modernity in Islam from a global perspective. Once the challenges are identified then it is time to address them and hence this article also discussed the various possible solutions to it by proposing the bridging the gap between academic scholarship and public knowledge, area studies and the social sciences and the bridging of multiple eras.

Origin of Modernity in Islam

Islam has responded to impact of modernism in terms of its influence on intellectual, scientific and socio-political fronts.¹ Origin of modernity in Islam was initiated when the Muslims gave way to Greek philosophy into the early Islamic civilization according al Jabri,² but it did not prove to be a successful experimentation. The reason of its failure can be accounted for the clash of philosophies between Islam and Greek ones. Greek philosophies were manmade and it was based on the perceptions of the humans. Also, these were devoid of spirituality and therefore, these could not cater to the spiritual needs of Muslims. The Greek philosophy was also based on Greek gods and goddesses which was not at all acceptable for Muslims because Muslims were followers of monotheist religion Islam. Because of all these reasons of conflict, the Greek philosophy was found incompatible for the Muslim civilization as Muslims could not recognize it with their cultural background. The intrusion of these Greek ideas into Islamic culture was the first step towards modernity and then after their failure, the concept of modernity was associated with all those alien ideas that had nothing to do with the cultural background of Muslims or their roots were unfamiliar.³

For Muslims the concept of modernity is associated with the notions of

Western modernity⁴ and hence, it carries a negative connotation. The negative sense implies that only Western ideas are being followed and incorporated with no tinge of Islam in it. Still there are three major groups have emerged as a reaction to modernity. The first group is of revivalists and reformists who lay emphasis on the revival of spirit of Islam and reforming the society.⁵ Second group is of traditionalists who prefer to adhere to the traditions and reject the modernity.⁶ The third group is of Islamic modernists who not only favor the revival of spirit of Islam but also approve of modernity and sticking to the traditions. So a new theology is required to handle the challenges of modernity and to make Islam compatible with modernity. In this regard, old theology had its limitations that could not address the issue of modernity so it was not capable of handling this issue and consequently, it considered modernity as completely un-Islamic in nature. Eventually, the old theology had come up with the very idea of negation of the concept of modernity and the new theology was the need of the hour to cope up with the issues of modernity.⁷

Theology is concerned with the employment of reasoning.⁸ Mu'tazilites were staunch supporters of this but this theology had lost its charm when Ahmad b. Hanbal al-Ashari subjected them to criticism for their excessive dependence on the employment of reasoning rather than prioritizing the word of God in the form of Holy Qur'an. They stressed on the relationship between reasoning and the revelation so that both can be employed in the society and a balance is maintained. In fact, the approach required the use of reasoning in association with the revelation on account of the common cause existent between the two.⁹ Even Shah Waliullah also encouraged the new theology rather than the old on account of the accommodating power of the new theology.¹⁰

Islamic modernism was initiated due to some major reasons in the subcontinent. One of the reasons is the loss of influence of Islam in the subcontinent.¹¹ The second reason was the impact of colonial powers which knew no boundaries and it had a detrimental effect on the Muslim states. Thirdly the offensive wording employed by the Christian missionaries for not only the Holy Prophet but also concerning the doctrines of Islam was an important reason.¹² The last reason is that the young generation that had been exposed to the Western education system had realized the Western education and their culture to be the only goal of life and in this way they were being led away from Islam. So the perception of modernity for the young people was none other than the adoption of Western culture and lifestyle. Therefore, it was imperative for the Muslim intellectuals to come up and handle this issue by clarifying the true meaning of modernity in Islam. From all these reasons it is evident that Islamic modernism needed to be clarified, elaborated and defined as it was the need of the hour. Also, the basis of old theology was none other than the Greek sciences so it was not enough to cater to the issues of modernity.¹³

Muhammad Abduh had contributed to Islamic modernity by presenting new

theology and arguing that Allah Almighty has given the latitude to followers to the extent of use of reasoning to decide upon matter and hence, use of reasoning is not completely shunned at the hands of Holy Qur'an.¹⁴ On the other hand, Syed Ahmad Khan also favored modernity in Islam but he showed proclivity towards Mu'tazilites and upheld reasoning to be superior to revelation. Unlike Syed Ahmad Khan, Muhammad Abduh was upholding the views of Ash'arites. Whatever the views they supported and resorted to, Islamic modernity was the common idea cherished by both the intellectuals.¹⁵ When the concept of modern sciences was introduced in the Muslim states then it provided an opportunity to study the verses related to the decrees and miracles mentioned in the Holy Qur'an. The avenue for the scientific research in this arena was opened and the scientific evidences began to be explored for justification of the verses. This sort of scientific research also helped the Western world to understand the sagacious nature of Holy Qur'an. It also paved way for the concept of Islamic modernism.¹⁶ The other intellectuals also contributed to the Islamic modernity by expressing their views and highlighting other issues of Islamic jurisprudence so that the scope of Islamic modernity could be broadened.¹⁷

1.1 Growth of Islamic Modernity

The growth of Islamic modernity was dependent on liberation movements, national identity movements and scientific research and discoveries that were taking place at that time. These movements had broadened the views of Muslim intellectuals and they were more receptive to finding the similar ideas of freedom and use of human reasoning in Islam. In fact, the Muslim thinkers were beginning to think on modern terms with regard to the legal system of country, the political affairs, cultural changes and the sociological values.¹⁸

Democracy was being upheld in high esteem as a response to giving space to Islamic modernity. Not just that the political system of a country was being revised, but in fact the law making was thought to be in dire need of re-constructing in lieu of modernity. The issues of *maslahah mursalah* were being dealt with by prioritizing the public interest and to establish peace in the society. *Ijtihad* was emphasized and its rules were established.

Allama Iqbal also realized the significance of modernity in Islam and he believed that religion has to be in strong relationship with reasoning. Reasoning helps to strengthen the concepts and doctrines of the religion. Religion is not completely based on reasoning but the significance of reasoning cannot be denied. Also, the scientific knowledge was imperative to have thorough understanding of Holy Qur'an and the doctrines of Islam.¹⁹ *Ijtihad* should be considered as a mean to achieve the Islamic modernity. It can help Muslims to get rid of the stagnation that they were facing at the hands of the old theology the time had come for the Muslims to embark upon the journey that leads them to Islam modernity and the roadmap to it was none other than the *Ijtihad*. It was the key towards creativity in the positive sense. *Ijtihad* was

to be employed for the benefit of the Muslim community.²⁰

1.2 Challenges of Modernity

The term modernity implies the quality of being current or present one. This concept is associated with being up-to-date and not sticking to obsolete ideas. Nowadays this term modernity holds general meaning inferred from it is Westernism.²¹ Westernism implies the meaning of Western way of life, their ideologies, political, and socio-economic system. It does not appeal to the human nature to stick to old stone-age idea, thoughts of cave-dwelling eras and procuring food by hunting with stones ; the time has come when the dawn of twenty first century has opened up avenues of modernity in every aspect of life, be it transport, communication, politics, etc. So, modernity is to be accepted or one would face repercussions of lagging behind and not keeping in pace with the modern times.

The challenges of modernity are different for different communities. Ultimately their reaction to these challenges has also variations with respect to one another. Some communities are more receptive to it while some communities don't approve it and some communities chose the middle path and approve and disapprove modernity to varying degrees but neither there is complete rejection nor complete acceptance.

Modernity has crept into very sphere of life. One of these spheres is the religion. The entry of modernity into the arena of religion is not a novel phenomenon rather its entry is marked by making the religion compatible with the modernity. It can be achieved by its concordance with the modernity rather than disapproval.

1.3 Reactions of Muslims to Modernity

As the phenomenon of modernity appeared on the world horizon, Muslim communities had a different reaction to it. Muslims are now categorized on the basis of their extent of approval or disapproval to modernity as follows: modernists, fundamentalists and traditionalists.²²

Modernist Muslims realize the implications of not being up-to-date with the modernity as it would lead to the stagnation and they would be lagging behind. These were further bifurcated into secularist and modernists.²³ Secularists held view in total contrast with the modernists. Secularists believed that Islam was an obstacle in the way to modernization and it halted their progress towards modernity, therefore, religion should not be the priority in every matter where it acts as the impediment. Contrary to it, the Western ideas are more welcomed by the secularists and they seem to be more contented with these. They consider Islam as quite incompatible with the modern times. For them, Islam lacks the room for improvement and it is rigid and inflexible in nature. It seems as if religion is the bone of contention for secularists and they seem to be more desperate for removing religion from their lives and their society. They blame religion as the source and major cause of their lagging behind the modern world. For them, religion played a negative role in their progress to modernity

and they seem to be more influenced and inspired by the west for its culture, its modernity, its liberty, its policies, its cuisines, its morality, its literature, its infrastructure, its economy, its democracy and so on and so forth. It seems as if not only they are disengaged and detangled from the religion.

Modernists, contrary to the secularists, uphold the opposite views. They do not believe that Islam had been a hurdle or obstacle in the way to progress of Islamic world. They prefer to stick to the origins of Islam i.e., the basic beliefs and the roots of Islam. For them, the Western ideas are to be accepted and welcomed to the extent that they are not in conflict with Islam's basic beliefs. They are staunch believers of the fact that Islam is not a hardcore or rigid religion; in fact it is quite flexible in nature and therefore, it can be considered as fully capable of adapting to the modern trends and giving space to it. Unlike secularists, modernists Muslims consider Islam as the first and foremost priority in their matters. For them, the lagging behind of Muslims is not to be attributed to Islam but it was the fault of those who did not bother to adapt Islam according to the changing circumstances. Islam had suffered stagnation which caused the lagging behind of Muslims. But when the concept of modernists is explored, it is evident that Islam encouraged the Muslims to grow and develop according to the changing circumstances. Now there is a need to cope with the issues of modernity and this task can only be accomplished with the help of intellectuals who understand the religion better than the laymen and can find ways of making Islam conformable with modernity.²⁴

Challenges of Modernity to Traditional Sources

Traditional sources include the primary and secondary sources. These sources have strong foothold in Islamic jurisprudence. They are meant to regulate the conduct of human beings in the light of Islam. *Shariah* was developed in the early centuries after the advent of Islam but the changing times have posed various challenges to these sources.²⁵ The primary sources like Holy Qur'an and *Sunnah* required further elaboration and research to facilitate the human beings to facilitate them in leading their lives according to Islam in the changing times.

Holy Qur'an has discussed the decrees regarding different matters along with providing the moral and ethical values. Surah *Hujurat* is a fine example in this regard. It contains a number of decrees regarding the ethical values that Islam lays stress upon. The decrees of the Holy Qur'an need to be re-interpreted in the modern times and this requires delineating them in the backdrop of modern context. *Ijtihad* is one of the essential tools that act as an aid in this re-interpretation. *Ijtihad* provides a new outlook to the text under study and hence, it opens the avenues of human intellect and creates the possibilities for humans to seek out ways that would lead them to a better and compatible life with the modern times.²⁶

The countries do not favor the promotion of sense of cooperation among

religions on the different fronts such as the cultural, economic, environmental fronts, etc.²⁷ For this very reason the conflicts deepen and give rise to lack of communication and cooperation. Also, the cultural identities are at stake due to globalization impact. It is a problem not only for Asian countries but also African ones. The traditions play a vital role in sustaining a culture whatever the front might be. These traditions also determine the ethical values of a culture. When it comes to the Islamic culture, the attention is focused on the traditional sources from which traditions emanate. Therefore, the traditions shaping the ethical values in Islam have their roots in sources. It is to be understood that these ethical values are not different from the ones prevalent in the world. Islamic ethical values are not alien and therefore, these should be given space in the society. On a similar note, the ethical values of the Eastern and Western countries are not too different from each other. In fact, they are more or less the same but it is only the priorities that create the boundary line and distinguish the ethical values of West from the East and vice versa.²⁸

When the issue of bioethics is broached about in Islamic ethics, it is definitely part of it and the rules are enlisted for it. The purpose is to protect the sanctity of human body and human organs from misuse and risk of degradation. The same medical issues are posed to the world and the reaction to this is the seeking of possible solutions by pondering over the various factors regarding the bioethical issue at hand.²⁹ To ensure uniformity for the solution, the shared ethical standard is the highly preferred mode employed for taking decision so that all the communities are benefited from it irrespective of race, language or cultural differences as almost the same biomedical issues are confronted by the communities.³⁰

Challenges of Modernity to Theoretical Basis

Islam has a different concept of leading human lives as compared to the prevalent concept of secular world. It does not only focus on the material, emotional, economic and physical needs of an individual but also caters to the spiritual needs. On the contrary, the secular life style revolves mostly around the material and physical needs and instills the need to grow as selfish as possible to achieve one's goals of life regardless of other people's needs. Islam has a message that only Allah Almighty runs the entire universe and whole system is manifestation of his creativity, so it is imperative for the followers to accept the Divine reality and follow the Islamic law to win the favor of Allah Almighty. It is also important to strike a balance in the actions and conduct in the light of *Shariah* so that one is not at a loss but at the winning edge.³¹ Unfortunately, the modern world is more inclined towards the secular part and not the religious part. Eventually, it led to the lack of spirituality element in human lives.

The trigger for the modern civilization cannot be attributed to a single factor. Different movements in the history have played their part in it and hence, the concept of modern civilization has finally emerged. Reform movements have

been a ubiquitous phenomenon in the Muslim world since 18th and 19th century.³² Movements like Renaissance had great significance on account of spirit of curiosity that it harbored and the need to know and questioning was encouraged by it. The starting period of Renaissance is different for different countries but whatever the epoch may be the repercussions are more or less the same as it had invoked the spirit of questioning among the masses.³³

Another crucial factor that had contributed to the modern world is the Christianity itself which has paved way for the secularization of the world while simultaneously opening up the avenues of questioning the religious matters. These questions were the foundation stones towards the modernity and it led to the gradual development of modern world. Had it not been the freedom of questioning, the modernity picture might be different that the way it is today. Such roots of modernity proved to be problematic for Muslims as the very idea of Western modernity was totally incompatible with the concept of Islam. Islam did not approve of unnecessary questioning into the matters pertaining to the religion.³⁴

The colonial rule was the major event that subjugated the Muslim countries and shaped the concept of modernity in Islam. As a result, there was a reaction to it. Some Muslim groups were more prone to totally negate this modernity while others believed in embracing the Western modernity by being oblivious to Islam. These issues demanded that a middle path was to be sought after to avoid the conflicts.³⁵ So some modern intellectuals come up with the supposition that Western civilization has the full potential of being adjusted to the notions of Islam. Their efforts aim at bridging the gap between Islam and the Western world. To some extent, the identical areas are mapped out but still vast gaps needed to be addressed. There are some Muslim countries which are by origin Islamic states but are so much so under the Western influence that the laws employed in their states are also inspired from west rather than Islam. Those countries preferred to implement Western laws and it showed that Islamic law was not implemented on account of the fact that they believed that it was not compatible. It implies that this sort of attitude marked the theoretical challenge confronted by Islam in this modern era and being a serious issue, it needed to be dealt with utmost earnest manner. In fact it should be the top priority of a Muslim state. Nonetheless, it should also be kept in mind that the initiation of decline of west has begun and eventually the pressure of these theoretical challenges is now not in full bloom but still the after math is to be dealt with sagaciously on intellectual grounds.³⁶

Though the challenges by West are existent but the power of Islam cannot be underestimated. Islam has not only the full potential of dealing with the Western modernity challenges but also is fully capable of posing challenges to its adversaries. Therefore, in this regard Islam also has been successful and so the West is confronting the challenges offered by Islam. Being a monotheistic religion, Islam has come up with the concept of sovereignty of God and His

unity. This reality is to be accepted as such but non-believers are confronted with the issues of accepting it. They are struggling with this issue and are in constant dilemma to comprehend the true nature of this Divine concept.³⁷

The concept of truth and authority is another challenge faced by Islam. In the modern world, the idea of truth is associated with one's levels of perception that how one perceives it. There are different nuances of truth found with variation ranging from person to person. It implies that truth is perceived to be subjective in nature and not absolute as it varies. On the other hand, Islam presents the doctrine of Absolute Truth to the humanity and urges the followers to strive to achieve the Absolute truth to be close to God. This very idea of truth requires total subjugation to the will of god to win His love and to please Him. By following His laws, his decrees and His word, it becomes easy for the believers to get closer to Divine Truth. It is the essence of Islam and has proved to be challenging to the West as they find it difficult to accept and approve of the concept of truth associated with God.³⁸

On similar grounds, the authority rests with God and the believers recognize this fact. This authority is established when the follower believes that God is the Supreme Being and to Him only all the power and authority belongs. When one acknowledges this fact, then he is certainly duty bound to abide by Islamic law and follow the path of Islam. But to the west, the very concept of authority rests with the individuals. So there is an evident contrast between the views of both Islam and the West. Hence, it becomes quite difficult for the West to accept the authority doctrine of God and it assumes the form of a challenge to the West.³⁹

The notion of mysticism in Islam is delineated through its teachings and the followers are to stick to the primary sources and the *Shariah* to embark upon the path of mysticism. It is not something impossible to achieve but many have been successful to strike a balance in their lives between body and soul.⁴⁰ On the contrary, West upholds a view entirely different from this and there is more emphasis on the material world rather than spirituality. Again it is a challenge to West by Islam regarding the mysticism as the only way out for peace of mind, soul and body. On the whole Islam is not overwhelmed by the challenges of the west but in fact, Islam stands apart with its unique on account of its spiritual nature and the Divine revelation that has been the most influential impetus for its followers to excel in lives and to be contended with it. The reaction of Western modernity has been reversed and now the West is confronting challenges on account of Islam.⁴¹

Challenges of Modernity in Cultural Aspects

Culture of a state represents the traditional values of the people. A culture undergoes change only when the people opt for the change of traditional values. So it is dependent upon the people to decide what sort of change they intend for in a culture. Different factors influence the minds of people before they finally embark upon the decision for change. These can be economic,

moral, social or intellectual factors.⁴² Change is more likely to occur due to the external factors rather than the internal ones. Sometimes the external forces do not bring about a change in culture but they act as a catalyst in this process.⁴³

The Arab society went through the change process with the advent of Islam. The influence of religious movement had a significant role in bringing about the change in the cultural values of Arab society. The three important aspects that were subjected to change and were incorporated in the Arab society bringing about the necessary transformation of a pagan society to a monotheistic society are as follows:⁴⁴

1. The life is only a period of trial and whoever stands firm would eventually be a winner in the next life. It must be kept in mind that the worldly life is temporary and it should not be the ultimate goal of humans. In fact, they should strive for their goodness of the next life. The actions, conduct, attitude and behaviors observed in the worldly life would predict the outcome of the next life. The better would be the deeds of the worldly life, the better the prospects of the next life.

2. Why are the good deeds emphasized? The reason is that there would be the Day of Judgment and the deeds of every individual would be presented before Allah Almighty. So the belief on this day is very essential to have a check on an individual's deeds.

3. Political organization carries significance for the followers as it helps them in being organized as well as to observe the Islamic teachings in their lives. In fact, it also helps to have an Islamic ambient to keep them motivated for observing Islamic teachings and to win the favor of Allah Almighty.⁴⁵ It inculcates in them the sense of a community following the same religion and religious practices and sharing the same religious ideas. It creates harmony in the society and a bond is formed between the members of the community as they associate themselves to be linked with Islam. The motivation triggered by the community helps in accomplishing the religious duties by an individual.⁴⁶

All the above listed changes in Arab society could have been addressed effectively by educating them so that their outlook is broadened and the narrow-minded attitude is vanished. By educating they would become more receptive to new ideas.⁴⁷ Also, they have to realize the significance of political organization to succeed as a community. With the passage of time the Arab society began to transform with vivid changes in the culture.⁴⁸ These vivid changes were not easy to achieve. In fact, these changes required the intellectual changes which gradually accumulated to bring about culture changes. These were the historical changes.

When the Muslim culture had come in to existence, then it had to confront the cultural challenges from the other cultures. Either some of those external changes were totally negated or were assimilated in to it. Problem lies in the assimilation of other cultural ideas. Adaptation brings its own repercussions. These adaptive and assimilative cultural changes have posed the challenges to

Islamic culture.⁴⁹

One of the major challenges is the materialistic mindset of people which has crept in to Islamic culture gradually. People are more prone to worldly gains and achievements rather than pragmatic in nature. The only objective seems to be the satisfaction of material and physical needs. The lack of identifying the real goals of life is replaced by the transient objectives of luxurious lifestyle.⁵⁰

The challenge of freedom of expression has emanated as a result of culture influence of the West. The issues regarding the freedom of expression have little or no boundaries in West but in Islam no one is permitted to exceed the domains of the religion. Western culture has encouraged the liberal ambient and the freedom right exercised by the West is inspiring the individuals of the East as well. On the contrary quintessential of Islam lies in the acceptance of beliefs and the complete subservience to it and the Western cultural challenge has forced the Muslims to step out of the domain of religion which is alarming as it is none other than the influence of Western culture upon them. The intellectuals are trying to sort out the means to handle this situation by indulging in the research for re-establishing the cultural identity of Islam once again.⁵¹

The challenge of colonialism marked the cultural change of Muslim societies. It was an imposed change and not at all welcomed by the Muslims. The Islamic culture was at stake at the hands of the colonialists as they were the powerful and authoritative ones. The power imbalance created enormous issues for Islamic culture as it initiated the struggle to develop on the modern terms to cope up with the power imbalance in the region.⁵² Muslims are now striving to come at par with the Western powers on grounds of military and power. The aftermath of colonialism has even influenced the economy and hence, this affected the cultural norms of earning livelihood and the economic policies of Islamic culture. Now Islamic culture is more prone to develop banks and economic institutions based on *Shariah* rather than following the traditional banking system of the West.⁵³

On the whole, the cultural challenges posed by the West are causing issues of assimilation and adaptation to the Islamic culture. Now it depends upon the intellectuals to devise means and ways to cope up with such challenges so that Islamic culture does not lose its distinct identity but a middle path serves as the solution.

Bridging Academic Scholarship and Public Knowledge

The challenges and issues raised by modernity did have impact on Muslim thinkers and they decided to cope up with these issues in a more positive manner. The root cause of issues was outlined and then the task of dealing with the issues was accomplished by taking in to account all the possible means to counteract the issue at hand. This resulted in the emphasis on the re-interpretation of the issue in line with the prevalent circumstances. It was a major step towards the development of Islamic hermeneutics. Once the process

of hermeneutics was initiated then it resulted in mass production of re-interpretations to facilitate the Muslims. On the other hand, when the Muslim society is observed, the impact of those re-interpretations seems to lose charm in this arena. The public ambient seems to lack the receptivity to assimilate the re-interpretations. A wide gap is evident in the theory being produced in terms with the modern lines in accordance with the teachings of Islam and the public sphere where these are applicable and fulfill the pragmatic purpose. The most possible reason seem to be the lack of communication between the Eastern and Western societies and this lack provokes the situation by diminishing the giving space to other culture factors and another reason is the role of media in portrayal of Islam with negative tags. These negative elements further deepen the fissures on the roadmap to friendly attitude and hence, it attenuates this by the negative social behaviors which aggravate the situation with the repercussions of increasing the gap between the Islamic hermeneutics and the public domain. If only these two reasons are eliminated then the imbalance is restored to balanced state and re-interpretations by Muslim scholars would turn out to be fruitful rather than futile and an obvious change in the society would be observable and evident.⁵⁴

Bridging Area Studies and the Social Sciences

The people in the west might not be familiar with the historical background of Islam which might result in negative impression on their minds if they are exposed to the media based news regarding the negative image of Islam. There should be libraries stocked with books providing information about Islam in an unbiased manner by none other than the Western writers themselves so that their individuals also come to know about the true face of Islam. They should incorporate in their books the basic introduction of Islamic faith, the traditions, the culture, etc. In other words there is a need to incorporate history and knowledge of Islam in the various educational spheres of the west. It would help in minimizing the gap in the literature and intellectual writings being produced in the west and would eliminate the need to depend solely on the books by Eastern writers. The enormous benefits of introducing the very ideas about Islam in the Western books is to ensure that the readers might feel at ease when they confront the notion of Islam and Islam must not sound like an obscure, violent, oppressive and aggressive religion. It would also increase the level of understanding among the nations.⁵⁵

Bridging Multiple Publics

The very idea of tracing the history of Islam and its development in various eras and epochs is portrayal of the rise and fall of Muslims. These transitions are significant as they portray not only the glorious past of Islam and reveal the true nature of Islam in the classic period but also its decline due to various social factors, movements and phenomena such as colonialism, capitalism, etc. These areas are explored by the Western and Eastern writers and both hold their own perspectives regarding its description. The different angles of these

writers help to reduce the gap between the true understanding of Islam, its glorious past, its flexible nature and the reasons of decline until the present state. It seems as if history is before us on movie screen. So it is the historians that carry the responsibility of minimizing the clash of thoughts regarding Islam among the different nations. The different cultural aspects are also evident in this description. Economic aspects, social and moral aspects along with the legal aspects are discussed in the lime light of Islam. The writers play pivotal role in reducing the misapprehensions between the East and the West.⁵⁶

Conclusion

The concept of modernity has evolved with the passage of time and it encompasses the various repercussions. The most obvious is the reaction of Muslim world where one group reject it altogether while others might have the tendency to accept it while another group prefer the modernist approach. Modernity is dealt with by delineating the challenges that it poses and these challenges seem to exist on theoretical basis, traditional aspects and even on cultural aspects. These are to be addressed with a focus on finding the possible solution to these challenges by bridge the gaps to ensure that the issue of dealing with the challenges is addressed with sagaciously.

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