

Muslim Approaches To Respond Western Civilization (An Analysis In The Context Of Indian Subcontinent)

Riaz Ahmad Saeed, Muhammad Afzal, Shabbir Hussain, Altaf Ahmed

| Article Info | Abstract |
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| <p>Article History</p> <p>Received: May 11, 2021</p> <p>Accepted: December 13, 2021</p> <hr/> <p>Keywords : Muslim Approaches, Western thought, Civilization, Responses, Subcontinent, Analysis</p> <p>DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.5776468</p> | <p><i>This research paper examines the scholarly approaches of Muslims of 20th Century to respond to the modern western thought and its related issues in the context of Indian Subcontinent. It is a fact that Islamic and Western thoughts have been active opponents throughout Islamic history. Several Muslim and Western scholars have been trying to discuss these issues in their own ways and styles. In Subcontinent, Muslim scholars can be divided into three major groups to respond to the modern western thought and its related issues. One group differs from western thought, it is called the traditional approach; the second group accepts the Western ideas unchangeably, it is called the Islamic modernist approach. The third most important approach is in between its acceptance and rejection. It is named as the Islamic revivalist approach. This approach is preferable and reasons will be discussed in the main body. In this study, historical and analytical research methodology has been adopted by using a qualitative approach.</i></p> |

Introduction

The modern age is thought to be the most established era of human intellectual history. This is supposed to be the age of culmination and cultivation of human thought, civilization, and philosophy. In this scenario, the competition of thoughts and civilizations are going to be more intense. The philosophies behind the thoughts are discussed. Due to this competitive environment, Islamic and Western thoughts have attained a special role and status in the modern era. Islamic thought claims to have revealed foundation and the Western thoughts are man-made. Western civilization is a mixture of Greek and Roman civilizations. The major sources of it are Secularism, Darwinism, Capitalism, Nationalism, Materialism, etc.

Now both thoughts are known as leading thoughts of the world. One of the most important reasons for the spread of the Western thought and civilization is propaganda and weakness of Muslim response, otherwise, Islam has an absolute power to respond and encounter any thought and civilization. It is observed that The Holy Prophet (PBUH) brought a new combination of religious ideology. He shaped a new order and community, deeply rooted in a socio-religious monotheistic vision and way of life, old traditions transformed into the light of the Islamic worldview as new wisdom of identity, commonality, and authority. These two major thoughts (Islam and West) have influenced humanity based on their new approaches and ideas, innovations, and thoughts.

All over the world, especially in the Subcontinent, secular modernity and liberalism are the most important issues of contemporary western thought, and the Muslims community suffered a lot from them. Hence, the scholars of Islam and the West also review their approaches and trends in this regard. Accordingly, it is observed that one thought is representative of the maximum and absolute trend of freedom while the other is representative of a limited approach towards freedom.

Based on these approaches and methodologies, there have become two core trends of modernity and liberty in the present socio-political context. One trend is the mouth organ of freelance and unlimited freedom of expression and the other is the representative of controlled freedom of expression with some social and moral values of the state and society. These two trends and approaches express two schools of thought in the contemporary world. The West is the representative of the first one and Islam and some other thoughts are the representatives of the second one. In other words, Islamic thought is different from that of the West.

In this study, efforts are made to evaluate Muslims' variety of approaches to encounter and respond to the western thought and its related issues (modernity and liberty) in the context of the Indian Subcontinent.

B. Rresearch Method and Methodology:

1. Literature Review

There has been a lot of work in this area. For example, *Discovering Islam: Making Sense of Muslim History* (London: Routledge, 1992) by Ahmad Akbar S. This book concentrates on different dimensions of Islam. It discusses the past of muslims. Another book by the same author is *Postmodernism and Islam* (London: Routledge, 1992). The author gives an insight of postmodernism and Islam while discussing points of

convergences and divergences between the west and Islam. Moreover, the “Muslim Modernity’s; Interdisciplinary Insights across Time and Space by Charles Kurzman is an important resource in this regard. The author defines modernity and its types; he has analyzed seven trajectories of Muslim communities he also discusses different essays in which inter-disciplinary engagement, foraging in multiple directions in pursuit of fresh analyses is evident. Their insistent focus is on observation. Also, Islam and Modernity: The Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition (Chicago: University Press, 1984) by Fazal-ur-Rehman,” In this work, Professor Fazlur Rahman shows a positive attitude of the transformation of the intellectual tradition of Islam.

He elucidates the characteristic problems of the Muslim modernists and solutions for them. There is another good article “Muhammad Iqbal: Islam, West and Quest of the Modern Muslim Identity” by Rājā, Mas‘ūd Aḥmad it has been published in the International Journal of the Asian Philosophy Association 1:1 (2008): 37-50. The main focus of the research is to find out how Muhammad Iqbal sees the relation of Islam and the west. Protection of Muslim Identity during the modern trends has been emphasized and wonderful ideas have been put forward in order to preserve the identity. It is pertinent to mention an article “Islamic Modernist and Reformist Thought” by Pārrey, Tauṣīf Aḥmad, in World Journal of Islamic History and Civilization 1:2 (2011):79-93. The researcher has tried to figure out whether Islam and modernity are compatible to each other and what steps can be taken to bring both of them close to each other. The next source is Islam aur Tehdhīb-e-Maghrib Kī Kashmakash. (Clash of Islamic and western civilization) by Mowdūdī, Sayed Abū al-A‘lā. The writer points out differences between Islam and the west. He delineates ways forward to tackle challenges of modernity and other related threats. All of above academic works are somehow general in their nature, however, this research paper is different from other works as it focuses on reactions of Indian Muslim Scholars to the emerging trends of the west.

2. Research Methodology

Historical and analytical research methodology has been adopted by using qualitative approach. Basically, the study tries to analyze different approaches of Muslims which they have utilized to encounter the western Thought & Civilization. However, the focus of the research is limited to only Indian Sub-continent Muslim scholars. The primary sources are used as first priority but the secondary sources are also utilized where necessary. The Books, Research papers, websites resources are used to analyze the differences of views. In addition, the consultations and academic discussions are also made with current scholars of the field to reach the correct findings.

C. Discussion

1. Muslim Approaches to Encounter Modern Western Thought:

In fact, at the beginning of the 19th century, there was the announcement of Islamic decline and the supremacy of the West with the power and conspiracy both at the same time. Since then, Muslims face different challenges from Western thought and civilization both in thought and practice. The powerful West seems to see the complete failure of the Muslims. The colonial era and capitalism tried to subdue Islam and its spirit.

Here we feel that there is a dire need to compare the Islamic rule and its treatment with Christian and Jews minorities. Esposito writes: “The most eminent model of inter-religious tolerance is that of Islamic rule in Spain from 756 to 1000 AD, often romanticized as a period of interfaith tolerance”. (John, 2002) Perhaps, the Islamic thought is considered as one of the leading thought of the world and Western Thought is measured as the dominant civilization of the contemporary socio-political scenario.

We can say that the contemporary age is the age of competition between the two immense thoughts (Islam and the West). One of the important issues in the words of Prof. Dr. Muhammad Amīn is, “In the contemporary age, one of the most significant challenges and issues for Muslims is how to respond to the Western civilization and modern issues of the West” (Amīn M,2011). A prominent Muslim scholar Sheikh Yūsuf al-Qardhāwī finds out the answer;

“There can be three possible responses to human needs and requirements; 1- leave it free without any social, moral or legal restraints, 2- Ban it and do not permit anything and 3- Allow it with some moral and legal conditions”. (Qardhāwī, 2005)

In the case of freedom of expression and speech, I adopt the third approach. Islam prohibits only hate speech and defamation because it is not freedom of expression, but it is harmful to freedom of expression and simply can result in creating bad blood. No civilized society and state can permit this offensive style of expression. Even the West cannot afford it, their scholars and legal experts are demanding legislation against such rude expressions. The Islamic approach regarding freedom of expression is very clear that one must avail of freedom of speech but with responsibility. According to scholars, there can be three possible responses to any social or human need or issues. Bāsiṭ Bilāl Kūshal opines about the Muslim responses to Modernity and the Modern West in an article. He recognizes four types of Muslim responses to modernity. 1- The Isolationist (Traditionalist) Approach, 2- The Early Modernist approach, 3- The Revivalist approach, and 4- The Contemporary modernist approach”. (Koshul, 1999) Here it will be the matter of interest that the Western scholars as well consider the three approaches of Muslim responses to modernity. As renowned Western scholar John L Esposito states; “The

Muslim response to encounter the Western social, political, economic and civilizational threat can be divided into three major categories; 1- Rejection and Withdrawal, 2- Secularism, Westernization and 3- Islamic Modernism” (Esposito). Therefore, it can be considered that these were the major Muslim responses to encounter the Western thought and civilization in contemporary ages.

To respond to modern issues, Islamic scholars have different reactions and approaches throughout Islamic history. Especially, in the subcontinent of India when modern Western thought and civilization were introduced in the colonial age, the Muslims responded to it in three ways to overcome the issue of Western politics. Due to the activeness and diversity of Islamic thought, the different scholars adopted different strategies to handle modern issues. According to Khurshīd Aḥmad views; “During the freedom movement, we see different trends and approaches from Muslim scholars for dialogue with the West. 1- Traditional Approach, which was adopted by the Muslim ‘Ulamā’, 2- Modernist approach, this approach was adopted by the liberal and secular Muslims who understood the Western civilization as the most valuable, and 3- Revivalist Approach; it was adopted by the Modern Muslim scholars who wanted to compete for the Western values in every sphere of life”. (Khurshīd A, 2013)

It is also important to know that what kind of approach and adopted by whom to encounter Western thought and civilization. Esposito writes; “The traditional ‘Ulamā’ of Islam adopted the first response, the Muslim elite class adopted the second and the educated Muslim scholar went to the third one” (Esposito). We think the third response is the most reasonable Islamic approach about freedom, rights, and modernity. One can say that it is value-based freedom of expression but it does not mean banned freedom of speech or criticism. In other words, Islamic thought is considered as representatives of the morally, socially, and legally controlled freedom of speech. Now with the passage of time and under the influence of Western modernity, due to liberalism and some other reasons in the Muslim world, there have become three major trends, responses, and approaches to freedom of speech. With different names, one of them is the traditionalist approach and the second is named as revivalist or middle standard approach and the other is called Modernist or left-hand approach. Islam and Muslims has been a widely debated topic among academics, media institutions, Muslim organizations and the general public. The 9/11 events have made this topic exceptionally salient. (Murad Alazzany and Wong Bee Eng, 2014)

In the next point, we will try to describe these two major approaches and trends in the contemporary Muslim world. For this purpose, at this point, we will try to focus on two academic and prominent personalities of the Muslim world as a model on this issue. We will also mention some other academic references at this point. In this scenario, this study is an academic effort to elaborate on the Muslim approaches to respond and to encounter western thought and civilization especially in the context of the Subcontinent.

a. The Traditional Islamic Approach

According to this approach, we shall not involve in any outside activity and shall have a focus on the safety and protection of Islamic teachings and values. According to Bāsiṭ Bilāl Kushal’s views about the traditional approach to modernity, “The (Traditional) Isolationist Approach of traditional ‘Ulamā’ was founded on the traditions of conservative Islamic scholars, and was distinguished by a total refusal to interrelate with the contemporary West”. (Koshul, 1999) Commonly this approach was adopted by ‘Ulamā’ of traditional Madāris (Traditional schools of Islamic Education) especially Dār al-‘Ulūm Deoband and some other Madāris of Islamic education. Although later on with the passage of time ‘Ulamā’ updated themselves and got modern knowledge and education. In spite of this, a leading Indian Muslim scholar of the 20th Century Mawlānā Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī defends this cardinal approach which was adopted by ‘Ulamā’ of Deoband in the light of the well-known story of the Holy Quran named as Aṣḥāb al-Kahf (The Seven sleepers of the Cave);

“Or dost thou reflect that the Companions of the Cave and of the Inscription were wonders among Our Sign? We relate to thee their story in truth: they were youths who believed in their Lord, and We advanced them in guidance. We relate to thee their story in truth: they were youths who believed in their Lord, and We advanced them in guidance”. Sūrah al-Kahf 17:9, 13, 16.

In addition, Mawlānā Gīlānī considered this age (age of the Western supremacy, modernity, secularism, and liberalism) as the age of Fitnah (sedition) and suggested isolation. He said; “As the Aṣḥāb al-Kahf, when they did not have the power to face the government pressure to protect their faiths, they got separated from the society. This narrative of the Quran indicates a principle of isolation from society to save the faith when it is not possible to face the government’s stress”. (Gīlānī, 1957) His suggestion was valuable for gaining time policy for preparation but not sufficient on a permanent basis. A Hadīth of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ to this issue is narrated by ‘Abdullah bin ‘Amr (RA);

“O Messenger of Allah, what should I do at that time (of Fitnah)? He replied; “Stay in your home, stop your conversation, and admit what you endorse, and discard what you condemn, listen to your own dealings, and go away only the general issues”. (Abū Dā’ūd, Hadīth no.4343.)According to researcher humble opinion, this principle is fruitful when Muslims are less in number but in the subcontinent, they were in a huge number. So this rule may not be applicable in India. I think it was a temporary solution by the elders of Deoband. They also felt the fact that isolation from the socio-political issues and mainstream matters of the nation is not fruitful for

Muslims of India and for Deoband. So with the passage of time, their approaches changed and the majority of 'Ulamā' responded to the modern issues with reason and logic. As an instantaneous response; Shiblī Nu'mānī who was the follower and graduate of Deoband differed from this isolationist approach. He convinced the elders of Deoband to revise their strategy towards new ideas of the West. So the Deoband policy related to Aligarh was revised to make it soft. Therefore, a leading scholar and Principal of Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband India Sayed Muhammad Hussein Madnī said in the silver jubilee presidential Sermon of Aligarh University in 1937; "Some people criticize my relationship with Aligarh but I would like to clarify that if I learn something from Aligarh, also Aligarh learns more from me". (Madanī, (August 2015) Later on, we see a change in their classical approach. As a result of this relationship Deobandi student went to Aligarh for learning English and Aligarh's student came to Dār al-'Ulūm for learning Arabic and Islamic education. Does this combination have a kind of impact on Aligarh and Dār al-'Ulūm thought? It is a difficult question but it was a good experience. According to the representative scholar of Dār al-'Ulūm, Shawkat 'Alī Qāsmī;

"Islam due to its universal values and morals spread rapidly in Europe. Many European people have accepted Islam happily because they have known that Islam has complete solutions to their all grievances. Islam has answered all human issues and problems and can also prove the savior of the modern world" (Qāsmī,2015)

From the above two quotations, it can be imagined the difference of opinion in the traditional approach since its beginning to the modern age. It's basically an evolution of traditional Islamic thought to make it compatible with needs and requirements. Now they are totally changed and have adopted in between traditional and modern approaches near to the revivalist approach. Thus the Study observes, that it is a clear change in their methodology and thought both with the passage of time.

b. The Modernist Islamic Approach

The second contemporary approach towards modernity and freedom of expression in the Muslim world is the Modernist, rationalist, or left-hand approach. This approach has two historical phases in Islamic history: one is called the early modernist approach and the second is called the contemporary modernist approach. Sir Syed Aḥmad Khan (1817-1898) was the first regular representative of the early modernist approach. Basically, he was a rationalist, he tried to reconcile Islamic thought and values with modern science and Western sociology but wherever the reconciliation was not possible, he molded Islamic norms with his personal interpretations to give other meanings to them and sometimes rejected their conventional meanings. Sir Syed considered Science and Religion as two sides of God's natural plan. Here, Koshul affirmed it in an Article;

"According to Sir Syed Aḥmad Khan's perception, principally there is no contradiction between Science and the Quran. Science is the 'work of God' and the Qur'an is the 'word of God, any obvious clash between the two are only on the surface, in reality, there can be no clash between them". (Koshul, 1999)

For that purpose, Sir Syed focused strictly on the development of a new 'Ilm al-Kalām. "There is an appalling requirement for a new 'Ilm al-Kalām, in which either we prove that the primary intents of the Modern Sciences are bogus or guess, or else I confirm that Islamic thought is compatible with Modern Sciences". (Ikrām M,1992) So we can see this expression in his Tafṣīr al-Quran, where he tries to positively prove that the Quran is compatible with modern sciences in any case and wherever he saw conflict between them, he accepted science but modified or reject the meaning of Qurānic text, especially in case of miracles and faith in unseen. An important impact of this approach to the Muslim society of the Indian subcontinent was that there began a parallel debate that whether Islam was compatible with science and the West or not. After Sir Syed Aḥmad Khan, Amīr 'Alī Sayed (1859-1909) was the leader of this approach. Both were the great leaders of the freedom movement for a separate homeland with a different point of view, so later on, it is perceived as a division of fundamentals and liberal Muslim trends in Pakistani socio-religious and political perspective.

The second phase of the modernist approach is called the contemporary modernist approach. According to the scholars, principally there is no difference between the two but only in their effectiveness and intellectualism. For example, both are rationalists, agreed on the compatibility of religion and science (where incompatible religion is modified or rejected). The West and its institutions are the role model for humanity. They adopted apologetic behavior to defend Islam.

This approach is not resistance or competition against Western liberal values but actually it is a kind of apology and reconciliation. Khurshīd Aḥmad supposed, "Another reaction was acceptance and reconciliation with the Western thought and civilization. It was not a direct resistance but it was a soft deal with the West. It is called modernity or enlightened moderation". (Khurshīd A ,2003)

Basically they underrated religion and religious values and comply with what the West required. Actually, this approach helps the West to demolish Islamic thought and civilization in an academic way. It should also be necessary to understand what the basic focus of the contemporary modernist approach is and thought towards Islam and liberal values? Tawṣīf Pārray writes:

"Modernity or Modernism is a movement to reconcile Islamic believes and practices with modern Western values such as Democracy, Human Rights, Nationalism, Rationality, Equality, and Progress, appeared in the mid of the 19th century as a response to colonialism which led the Muslim world into different disasters". (Pārray,2011)

It is an inserting point to know that how modernity was adopted by the Muslim modernist scholars during the competition with Western thought and civilization all over the world, especially, in India. Bāsīt Koshul expresses his views; “The focal point of contemporary modernist efforts is to initiate different techniques and measures from within the Islamic tradition that will allow them to condemn those Islamic ideas that are measured to be irreconcilable with modern thought”. (Koshul) Another important drawback in the modernist approach is their compatibility with Western naturalism to interpret the Quran only. In this way, they refute or marginalize Ḥadīth of the Prophet ﷺ and focus on a personal and rational interpretation of the Quran. Ghulām Shabbīr writes:

“The basic tragedy with Sir Sayed Aḥmad Khan’s approach was that he tries to reconcile the Islamic world view with the Western standard of Naturalism. In later stages, Sir Sayed Aḥmad Khan and his fellow like Mawlā Chirāgh ‘Alī rejected Ḥadīth completely and focused only on the Quran and his personal interpretation. So, the Ahl-al-Quran is an inheritance of Sir Sayed’s thought in the Indian subcontinent”.(Shabbīr, 2012)

So in the subcontinent, the study traced out the roots of Ḥadīth refutation in the modernist movement of the subcontinent. Although the basic stand of early and the contemporary modernist movements are the same as the contemporary modernist differs strictly from the traditional as well as with the revivalist methodology towards the reformation of the society.

Fazlur Reḥmān (1919-1988) is considered another renowned modernist scholar of the contemporary age. He said about the revivalists’ approach, “To persist on a factual application of the Holy Quran, closing one’s eyes to the social amendment that has happened and that is deliberately going on in front of our eyes is equivalent to intentionally crushing its moral and social functions and objectives”.(Fazal-ur-Reḥmān, 1948) He suggests reinterpretation of Islam in the modern context to resolve the issues of reformation and decline. Dr. Fazal further said, “If the Muslims insist on constant conversions about the feasibility of Islam as a system of canon and practice in the contemporary world in real, then it looks apparent that they should yet again begin at the scholarly level”. (Fazal-ur-Reḥmān, 1970) The approach and methodology towards Islam and the modernity of Fazlur-Reḥmān is rejected and received major criticism from the mainstream Muslim scholars. Therefore, there are many voices raised against his thought. Koshul articulates in the journal of Islamic Studies; “In the view of many Muslim critics, Fazlur-Reḥmān’s views are extreme by any appraisal and enclose main mistakes. Though bearing in mind the appalling and the hectic status of the modern Muslim scholarship, his views need serious deliberation”.(Koshul, Bāsīt B ,1994)

A misconception that we see in the modernist approach is that they see the Western principles of socio-politics and technology as Islamic. According to some opinions, Muslim and Western intellectual approaches are the same. Jāvaīd Ahmad Ghāmidī, one of the renowned modernist Islamic scholar of Pakistan states; “Actually Islamic and the Western intellectual methodology are similar. Muslims reach Tawḥīd (Monotheism) to use this approach but the West cannot do this due to its contradiction”.(Johar.M, 2012) Consequently they intellectually understand that if we want to go forward, we should adopt them. At that point, a renowned scholar of 20th Century Moulana Mawdūdī, rightly argued:

“A big misconception which is found in the public, as well as, in Muslim scholarly spheres, the Western principles of development and progress are Islamic. We left them and West adopted them. Therefore we must follow these Western principles of progress to go ahead”.(Mawdūdī, 2008)

They are really in a great misconception because modernity and liberalism are the second name of the Western values and thought. Charles Kurzman states in an article; “Modernization is still often defined as the adoption of Western European institutions, norms, and values. These characteristics (Modern Liberal values) were associated with the West, not with other societies”. (Charles K, 2015)

It is a factual position that the West and America hold sway in the modern era and promote Western values as an absolute concept of human liberty. I think it is a big misconception. It is made to believe with the power of propaganda. There may project some superficial similarities between the two but actually the Western thought and civilization are totally different from Islam because both have different foundations: one is materialistic and the other is divine.

There are many scholars and advocates of modernity and Western thought in Muslim societies. Most important of them are, Akbar S. Aḥmad, ‘Alī ‘Abd al-Razzāq, Jāvaīd Ghāmidī, Zīā Gokal, Fataḥullāh Gollain, Mawlānā Waḥīduddīn Khan, Tāhā Hussein, ‘Abdul-Karīm Sarūsh, Amīna Wadūd, Hassan Hanafī, Ziauddīn Sardar, and many others.

The contemporary modernists have almost similar points of view on modernity and modern Western thought like Dr. Fazlur-Reḥmān but sometimes Akbar S. Aḥmad seems more advanced and active than Mr. Fazalur-Reḥmān to advocate modernity and Western liberal values in Muslim societies. He suggests Muslims understand the West with its context to move forward; “The Muslims must appreciate Western values and freedom according to its true context and also accept its characteristics for socio-political development”. (Akbar A, 1992) In his book he tries to present the reconciliation between Islamic and Western civilization but this was not an absolute solution.

Akbar S Ahmad deems Islam is politically and ideologically weak in front of the West and his values so we should leave confrontation and encounter. He affirmed in his book; "Because it appears in the most unexpected forms in the most unexpected places, Islam appears so threatened and vulnerable". (Akbar A, 1992) It has become an intellectual habit of most of the modernist scholars that they criticize Islamic thought but does not present any solution, except for reconciliation and acceptance of the Western model. It is also a fact that the liberal Muslim approach is influenced by the West to secularize the Muslim world. Basically, this approach is not a Muslim oriented approach but a Western-oriented approach, which is introduced by Western scholars to secularize Muslim society. Accordingly, it can be seen that the rapid growth of secularism, Western lifestyle, and obscene culture, in Muslim elite class day by day. Most of the Western values are not compatible to Islamic values so as a result, this creates conflict and clashes in Muslim societies. If the traditionalists are considered on the one extreme, the modernists are on another extreme. So we need a moderate dialogue on modernity in contemporary Muslim scholars.

One of the most significant and burning issues of modernity is freedom of expression. This is a practical form of conflict between modernists and revivalist scholars of Islam. A group of liberal modern Muslim scholars advocates and argues that unlimited freedom is necessary for intellectual development and human growth. Although it is claimed that absolute freedom of expression is necessary for social and intellectual development and also they suggest Western thought as a role model in this case. It is also a fact that absolute freedom is not prevailing in any place of the universe even in the Western secular countries. Here, Sindre Bangstad's views seem most relevant to the issue; "Freedom of expression is a central ternate of any liberal, secular and democratic society and so it must. But despite public assertion to the contrary, there is no society in the world where freedom of expression is absolute". (Bangstad S, 2014)

Despite this fact, some secular Muslim scholars do not bother the criticism on Islamic values even the Holy Quran and the personality of the beloved Prophet Ḥaḍrat Muhammad ﷺ. One of them is a famous scholar of India, Mawlānā Waḥīduddīn Khan. Although, it is a great debate and requires a separate study but we tried to present their point of view briefly. Mawlānā Waḥīduddīn Khan is not the only personality in this regard, but he is a thought and many liberal Muslim scholars and Muslim youth following him. He is a representative and spokesman of freedom of expression. Actually it is a contemporary liberal trend and approach of the freedom of expression. It is also a fact that it is a controversial approach and the majority of Muslim scholars and the public do not like and own it.

It is also a harsh reality that both schools of thought: the traditionalist and modernist have been opponents and rivals to each other.

c. The Revivalist Islamic Approach

The Third most vital and the prevailing mainstream Muslim approach towards modern religious and socio-political issues is the revivalist approach. The actuality is the middle, most reasonable and compatible approach with Islamic behavior which runs between the two extremes (Traditional and Modernist). In the Indo-Pak perspective, we can say Nadwat'l-'Ulamā' was the first regular revivalist encounter against modernity and other Modern Western issues. This institution is founded by Mawlānā Shiblī Nu'mānī after he parted with Dārul-'Ulūm Deoband. We see various bigger names in this approach as Jamāl al-Dīn Afghānī, 'Allāmah Muhammad Iqbāl, Sayed Abūl-Hassan 'Alī Nadwī, 'Shiblī Nu'mānī, Sayed Mawḍūdī, Hassan al-Bannā', Sayed Qutub, Muhammad 'Abduhū, Rashīd Raḍā and in the modern ages Yūsuf al-Qardhāwī, Ismail Rājī al-Fāruqī, Maḥmūd Aḥmad Ghāzī, Ftahī Muhammad Osmān , Zafar Ishāq Anṣārī , Prof. Khurshīd Aḥmad. According to Turāb al-Ḥassan Sargānā comments; "In the Indian subcontinent at the end of 19th century, Muslims had two main sources of inspiration, Aligarh and Dār al- 'Ulūm. But a modest group of 'Ulamā' founded a new Islamic education institution Nadwat'l-'Ulamā' in 1893 with some variation of views with the traditional scholars". (Sargānā, 2015)

The Revivalist Islamic approach towards modern Western issues represents the Muslim scholarly and open-minded understanding to others with reasons, respect and dialogue but with a different opinion. The original contribution of the revivalist Islamic approach towards modernity is its stand on Islam as a complete code of life. They presented Islam according to its complete spirit. It has a unique feature of the revivalist thought that it represents the mainstream Muslim thought and stands in between the Modernist and the Muslim traditional school of thought. According to al-Mawrid institute website: "It was Allāma Shiblī N'umānī who raised a third front within the ranks of religious thought. This front was progressive and revivalist yet it claimed to carry the burden of tradition as well. Allāma Shiblī was undoubtedly the first voice in the Subcontinent asserting the need for modernization of speculative theology. Syed Suleiman Nadwī, Abul Kalam Azad, Abul 'Alā Mawḍūdī, Allāma Iqbāl and Abdul Majid Daryābadī reiterated and built their work on this line of thought". (<http://almawridindia.org>)

The revivalist movement is a future based mediator movement, which represents the actual Islam between the right and left. Professor Khurshīd Aḥmad commented; "The Islamic revivalist movement is a future viewed movement and has no link to the thought of the fundamentalist groups. It focuses on the original sources of Islam and to stand with the contemporary situation". (Khurshīd A. ,2003)

Allāmah Iqbāl was the first person in the subcontinent who exactly encountered and deeply criticized the Western values and thought. To criticize the Western values was his famous topic of poetry. His criticism has value for Western scholars because he spent many years in Europe and had a chance to see closely the Western thought and civilization during his doctorate study. It seems necessary to overview Iqbāl's approach towards Western values, modernity, and civilization. Iqbāl was the declared opponent of Western thought and civilization, he considered the Islamic Renaissance as an encounter with the West and his approach was different from that of the early loyalists. Mas'ūd Rājā says; "Allāmah Iqbāl's vision on the West shows a completely different picture from the existing one by the early Muslim modernists such as Sir Syed Aḥmad Khan and Alṭāf Ḥusain Ḥālī, Amīr'Alī Sayed, etc." (Rājā, M, 2008) I think Allāmah has much credit for the improvement and up-gradation of the Islamic thought, especially, in the subcontinent and generally all over the Muslim world, but two of his works are very credible; first to pay attention to the reconstruction of religious thought in the perspective of the new age and the other was to acknowledge the evil of the Western civilization. The first work is done in his landmark sermons; "The reconstruction of Islamic thought was done by his excellent poetry in Urdu and Persian. He openly commented in his sermons; "We most welcome the liberal movement in the modern Islam, but it must also confess that the manifestation of liberal thoughts in Islam composes the most dangerous elements in Islamic history because the Liberal movement has a trend to act as a force of collapse". (Iqbāl, 1976)

Iqbāl did not literally oppose the modern change because Islam absorbs positive change but he suggested to be careful while moving forward; "Accordingly, it is the most important duty of the contemporary Muslim leaders to realize the true implication of what has occurred in the West, and then to go ahead with willpower to achieve the final aims of Islam as a socio-political force". (Iqbāl, 1976) It means we should reconstruct our thought according to Islamic principles of the continuous movement called Ijtihād to satisfy our requirement in the light of Islam. The second most important contribution of Iqbāl is to criticize Western civilization. His excellent and glorious poetry tells us about Western civilization. According to Iqbāl's opinion, Ijtihād in the light of the Qurānic basis is a vital key to solve the challenges. Therefore, in his poetry, he demonstrated special focus to Ijtihād. As well as, many studies show, and I also observe, Allāma Muhammad Iqbāl disliked the Western style of thinking and unlimited freedoms. In addition, he suggests a comprehensive solution to resolve the issues of Muslim Ummah in the light of Islamic teachings. Throughout Islamic history, while interacting Western thought and modernity, Muslim scholars have been trying to maintain dialogue, encounter, or reconciliation at the same time. These three approaches (Traditionalist, Revivalist and Modernist) have their weight on intellectual levels. There has been a competition among these approaches.

This is an important truth about the revivalist movement and its approach that it is not a traditional or modernist approach but it is the realistic and the middle standard approach to understand the issues and encounter western thought and its related issues in the Islamic context. It is also a well-known Islamic term to adopt the moderation and Muslim Ummah is (Ummah al-Wast) the middle one and modest nation which is mentioned at many places in the Holy Quran and the Noble Aḥādīth of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Particularly, Muslims should be aware of new trends and to analyse its acceptance or rejection by keeping in view the parameters of Islam. Therefore, it is the duty of the Muslim believers to prove it with their conduct and character and to promote the Islamic message of peace and prosperity. As Steven says that it is necessary to teach members of society its beliefs, customs and values. (Steven Eric K, 2008)

D. Findings, CONCLUSION and Recommendation

This study concludes that the Muslim response to the western thought in the subcontinent was diversified and versatile. Normally three approaches were adopted to encounter the west and its thoughts. The first approach was the traditional or Madrassah based approach and Dar-ul-Uloom was the leader of this approach. Basically this approach was statically connected with the tradition. Now, this approach is not applicable as even the Madāris have forsaken it. Basically it was the extreme reaction against modernity and secular western thought in the subcontinent. The concept of Mullah and Mr., secular and fundamentalist Muslims stared after it in the subcontinent and now this separation is increased day by day in Pakistan.

It is also noticed that the second most important approach was the modernist secular approach. Aligarh's educational movement of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was the pioneer of it. This approach was based upon the secular and scientific interpretation of Islamic theology to reconcile with western thought and civilization. It was not a separate approach but basically a replica of the western secularism under the title of modernist Islam. They have the same interpretation of Islam as the west wished and wanted. It started from an independent interpretation of the text of the Holy Quran and Hadith of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and ended with the rejection of the miracles, condemnation of knowledge of Unseen, and several metaphysical matters.

This is well perceived from the debate that the revivalist approach has been the most acceptable approach by the Muslim scholars and community. The leaders of this approach were the scholars who had traditional knowledge as well as the knowledge of western thought and civilization. This approach is considered as the middle standard approach of Muslim scholars to respond to modern western thought with its contemporary issues. This approach

allows us to get benefit from Western technology and innovations but it warns against adopting modern Western philosophy and social values because these are harmful to Muslim societies.

Therefore, it is suggested we should adopt the strategy of dialogue and encounter both at the same time to respond to the West. We should take benefit from this approach to nurture and reshape our national narrative. We cannot afford complete separations as well as complete acceptance of western thought. The best way is to adopt the moderate way between these two extremes of fundamentalism and secularism.

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Author Information

Riaz Ahmad Saeed

Department of Islamic Studies, National University
of Modern Languages , Islamabad

Muhammad Afzal

Institute of Islamic Studies, University of
the Punjab Lahore, Pakistan.

Shabbir Hussain

Department of Islamic Studies, Muhi-ud-Din Islamic
University, AJ&K, Pakistan

Altaf Ahmed

Department of Islamic Studies, National
University of Modern Languages,
Islamabad.
