

Principles of Islam

GARY R. BUNT - L.8 MODULE

Islam in the Contemporary World

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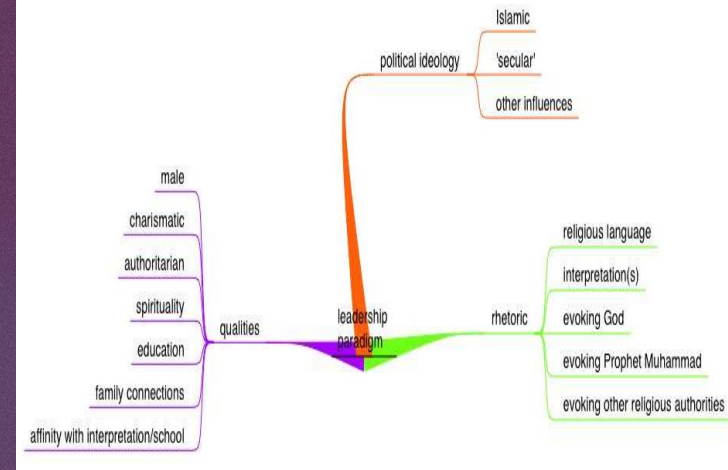
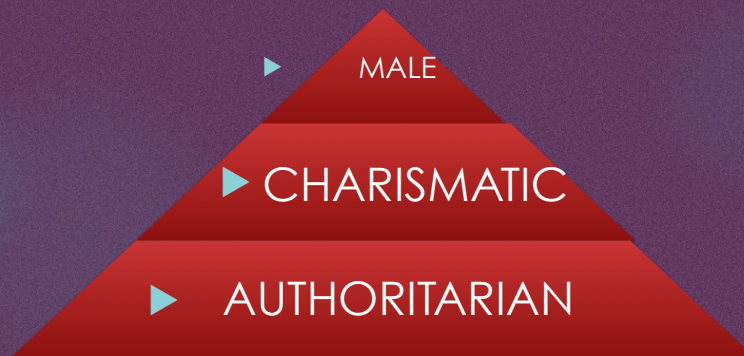
Politics and Islam

In Islam, politics may be associated (by commentators and participants) with factors such as nationalism, religious symbols, religious activities, modern values, and secularism.

RELIGIOUS ALTERNATIVE STRUCTURES



LEADERSHIP MODEL



An Islamic leadership paradigm
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RHETORIC



MOVEMENTS



LANGUAGE



Ernest Gellner

Gellner described these intermediaries as:

- ▶ hierarchical,
- ▶ specialized
- ▶ a class of religious personnel.

Ernest Gellner, *Muslim Society*, Cambridge University Press, 1983

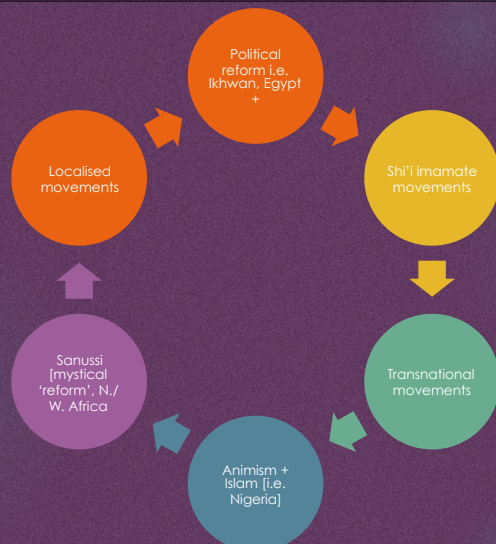
'ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTALISM'

- ▶ A unified 'Islamic Fundamentalism' does not exist.
- ▶ Instead, there are diverse movements, confined to regions or social classes (which may transcend barriers of social conditioning, language, religious practices, etc.).

DOES THE TERM 'ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTALISM' HAVE RELEVANCE?

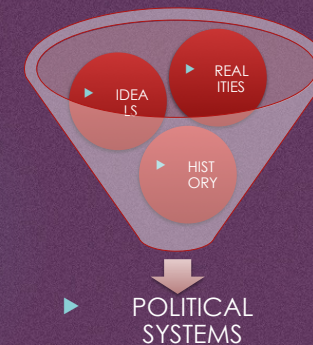
Seen as a "complex cluster of movements"

"Islamic fundamentalism ...will have to denote the reaffirmation of foundational principles and the effort to reshape society in terms of those reaffirmed fundamentals. This involves, in the words of Muslims who have described Islamic fundamentalism, the effort 'to call Muslims back to the path of Islam,' 'an assertive surge of Islamic feeling' which pervades the Islamic world, and 'the reliance of Islamic fundamental principles to meet the needs and challenges of contemporary times.'" (John Voll)



'Fundamentalism' and Religious Movements – © Copyright Gary R. Bunt, 2015

MODELS OF POLITICAL SYSTEMS AND MOVEMENTS IN ISLAM



IDEALS

- ▶ A return to the past
- ▶ Historical readings
- ▶ Traditional understandings
- ▶ Religious rhetoric
- ▶ Perceived interpretative norms
- ▶ Ideals of history and 'golden ages'
- ▶ No accommodation for innovation

IDEALS

"Ideal time is past time, and the duty of the Muslim is to avoid new ideas, customs or interpretations since they are simply innovations which act as barriers and impediments to the realization of ideal society." (Yvonne Haddad)

FUTURE ORIENTED MODELS

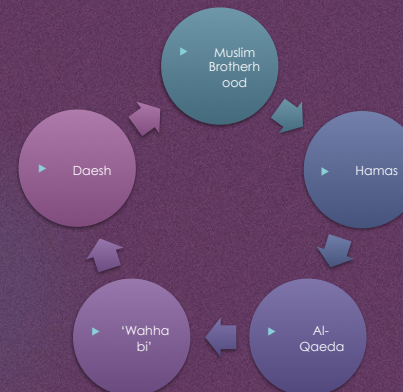
- ▶ The basis of many movements and ideologies
- ▶ Link into contemporary interpretations
- ▶ Globalised and localised contexts
- ▶ Adopt technology and communications tools
- ▶ Are associated with numerous understanding within the Islamic spectrum

“ ... Verily never will God change the condition of a people until they change it themselves (with their own souls).” Qur'an 13:12 (A)

TAJDID AND ISLAH

This is indicative of the need for human endeavour, and responsibility of an Islamic society for forward thinking (*islah*) and 'reform' (*tajdid*, in the sense of renewal and revival).

EXAMPLES OF 'MOVEMENTS'



Not all connected to one another, but assert a Muslim identity in actions, interpretation and politics

MOVEMENTS

- ▶ Important to distinguish differences in context
- ▶ Determination of influences
- ▶ Some core beliefs, but also major distinctions between and within these 'movements'
- ▶ Politics can inform elements of religious understanding and identity
- ▶ Leadership roles are critical
- ▶ Can operate in minority and majority contexts
- ▶ Inter- and intra-Muslim issues

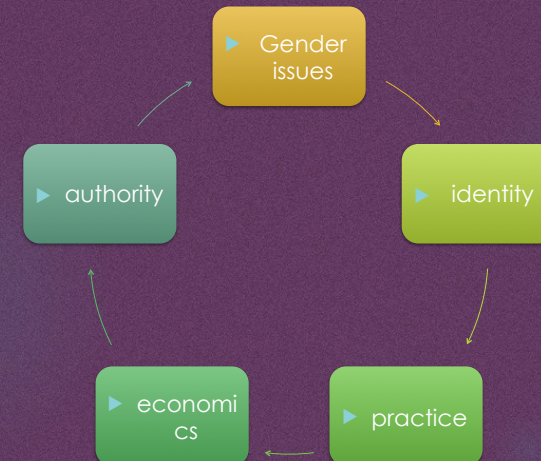
DISTRIBUTION OF CONCEPTS

- ▶ sermons,
- ▶ study circles,
- ▶ texts commentaries
- ▶ Education systems
- ▶ media-expositions: the printing press, the internet, broadcast media (satellite television, analogue television, radio, internet media), digital media, video and audio tape.

CONSIDERATIONS

- ▶ Dialogues are in multiple languages
- ▶ Inform approaches to contemporary issues
- ▶ Are diverse in scope
- ▶ Education plays a key role i.e. urban/rural approaches, culture, class, literacy
- ▶ Access to knowledge is a key factor

TYPES OF CONCERNS



CONTEXTS

- ▶ Majority and minority contexts
- ▶ Recognition of diversity of expression within different contexts
- ▶ Legal and 'shariah' influences
- ▶ Regional concerns
- ▶ Influence of leadership and movements
- ▶ Generational differences
- ▶ Shifting identities in response to globalised and local concerns.