THE CONCEPT OF TRADITION AND MODERNITY IN MADRASSAH SYSTEM OF EDUCATION

Tradition is derived from the Latin word *tradere* which means to ‘hand over’ or ‘hand down’ and in an etymological sense, “a tradition is a statement, belief or practice transmitted especially orally by practice from one generation to another generation.” Tradition is a mean of transferring of knowledge. Tradition is an essential characteristic and manifestation of Islamic teachings and philosophy from time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), and will serve as a torch bearer for upcoming generation of the world till the Day of Judgement. Modernity on the other hand is the evolution of knowledge from its primitive stages to advance stages. Tradition and Modernity seems somewhat contrasting terms, but in reality both facilitates each other. Tradition and modernity in *madrassah* education system means the re-thinking and reconstruction of sources of knowledge, and integration of the secular and religious education into one stream. Numbers of studies are available on different aspects of *madrassah* system of education, ranging from curriculum to terrorism/ militancy, and recently *madrassah* reforms, but none of the studies give full length detail to the concept of tradition and modernity with reference to *madrassah* system of education, and its interpretations by different schools of thought in Islam, and the extent to which they agree to re-think and reconstruct it in *madrassah* system of education, to bring it at par with formal system of education. There is a strong emphasis on the pursuit of *madrassah* education in the ongoing educational reforms in the country. Identifying researches on *madrassah* system of education around the globe, the discussion is broad in coverage and narrow in its focus when we emphasize the tradition and modernity in the *madrassah* system of education with special reference to Punjab (Pakistan). The study provides an overview of the current state of knowledge and evaluates the tradition and the modernity in the *madrassah* system of education.

Origin and Evolution

Tradition and modernity are two important concepts that may, to some extent, are opposite and contrasted in their meanings. Tradition is a mean of reaching truths or philosophy of divine Religion revealed or extended to mankind, through messengers and prophets. They aids in
application of the principles derived from them, in different spheres of life including ‘law and social structure,’ ‘art,’ ‘the sciences,’ and the embracing of best knowledge along with the means for its realization. With this background, tradition is a mean of transfer of knowledge. On the other hand, when we use the term ‘modernity,’ we mean neither up to date, nor triumphant in the worldly conquest and domination of the natural resources. Rather, here ‘modernity’ means evolution of the existing knowledge. “Tradition has always accompanied and in fact characterized human existence whereas modernity is a very recent phenomenon.”

In this respect, we can say that, the concept of tradition and modernity is not a new phenomenon. It has been in vogue from the time, when man first started thinking about its whereabouts. However, these concepts have always been confused that what is tradition and what is modernity? People often get confuse with similar terms, conformity, custom, tradition, and conventions. Usually, it has always been the concept or idea that the continuity of the old concepts, customs, rites, rules and regulations is the tradition. On the other hand, reconstruction, rethinking into the new ones with the latest demands, changes and evolution of the society is modernity. In this study, these concepts are critically and theoretically viewed, and historically analyzed.

The concept of tradition and modernity are focus of discussion among the intelligentsia, academicians, and scholars in the literary as well as religious circles these days, as it has been in the past. The reasons are cited as rapid globalization, industrialization, and evolution of the Muslim Societies. Globalization, modernity, and distinctiveness are primary issues in contemporary Islamic Studies in the past and present scenario. Muslim societies all over the world are experiencing same kind of structural changes like others, to name few of the most important issues are, “extensive migration of population from villages to cities means urbanization, spreading of education, hi-tech advancements, increased political awareness, and major transformation of the economy.

The study has found out that “these developments are accompanied by a wide range of community movements, and by complex, varied religious and ideological debates.” These issues need urgent addressing, and in order to solve these contemporary religious, social, political, economical, ethical and moral issues, we need to interpret basic sources of knowledge in Islam, i.e. Quran, Sunnah and Hadith.
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This debate has given rise to three groups of Scholars, the first one are traditionalist, and do not want any change, in theories, laws and practices of Islam, unfolded/revealed to mankind from Allah. Second group belongs to those Ulemas/Scholars, who are reformist, and in favour of synthesis, means believe in re-interpretation of the basic sources of knowledge, i.e. the Quran and Sunnah through Ijtihad, to address the contemporary issues, and third group is of those scholars who totally want to embrace European style of Modernity.

After the demise of Holy prophet Muhammad (PBUH), urgent need was felt to initiate a systematic method of accumulation of authentic ahadith and compilation of Quran, in order to transfer these to future generations, without alterations. Resultantly, the institution of Kuttab and madrassah came into being, where this knowledge could be preserved and propagated.

The madrassah is an Islamic learning centre, imparting education of Quran, Hadith, and Fiqah. So, the discourse of tradition and modernity is synonymous with madrassah system of education, it’s prudent to first evaluate and analyse terms, ‘tradition’ and ‘modernity’ in order to find its relevance with madrassah system of education. These concepts are discussed in this study generally and then specifically from Islamic point of view. The study takes the Islamic concept of modernity to integrate it with concept of tradition.

What is a tradition?

Broadly speaking, “tradition is defined as knowledge, concepts, superstitions and mode of life, which can be transferred from one generation to another generation.” According to analyses of different sources, the study discovered that, in its narrower explanation, “it is a society's approach and opinions, which remains legitimate for generations, on vital subjects such as sacred or political issues.” Traditions can be oral or written. Traditions are stronger than customs, and they play a main role in management and determining social fabrics of life. With their ‘conservative nature,’ traditions keep on influencing social institutions such as the ‘family law’, ‘religion’ and ‘politics’. It is analyzed that, the field of ‘Arts’ and ‘Science’ are less affected by traditions. A person living in a society, has to obey society’s traditions, otherwise he will face the sanctions in retaliation to the extent of that resistance. Just as with customs, traditions are also source of generating law. In general, traditions administer a wider area than legal codes.
Definition of Term “Tradition”

The word ‘tradition’ is derived from the Latin word verb ‘trader,’ and it means “to handover or to hand down’ and in an etymological sense, “a tradition is a statement, belief or practice transmitted especially orally by practice from one generation to another generation.” Tradition is a knowledge system (a mean of transferring knowledge). Traditions can be altered to suit the requirements of the day, and these alterations can be acknowledged as a part of the earliest tradition. Tradition in madrassah education system means, evolution of the knowledge of Holy Quran, Hadith and Fiqah handed down to generations from the time of Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

Definition of the word Madrassah

As discussed above, Islamic education is imparted in institutes, known as ‘madrassah,’ its plural is madaris. It is the Arabic word used for any type of school, secular or religious. Madrassah has centuries old tradition. Different spellings have been used in writing for ‘madrassah’ as, madrasa, modresa, madraza, etc. Madrassah literally means “a place where learning is done”. In the Arabic language and diction the word madrassah implies the same sense as school represents in the English language, whether religious or secular, i.e., place of learning.

Madaris from the very beginning have been imparting knowledge of Holy Quran, Hadith, Fiqh along with knowledge of languages, literature, reasoning, rhetoric, natural sciences, philosophy, Arabic and Persian grammar. This balanced combination of the syllabi resulted in making madrassah graduates, a successful doctor (tabib/hakim), engineer, architect, teacher and statesman.

Explanation of the term Tradition

A great number of scholars, historians and philosophers, both Muslims and Westerners have given very comprehensive explanation of the term ‘tradition’, which magnifies its origin and evolution. First the study takes the Western concept of tradition, and then discusses the Islamic concept of tradition. Armando Salvatore describes ‘tradition’ as:

Tradition is a more specific concept than the more general idea of culture. Tradition should not be understood as non-reflexive, primordial culture but, more dynamically as the ensemble of practices and arguments that rescues the social bond and provides
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cohesiveness to human communities of varying scale. We need to disentangle the notion of tradition from its lopsided identification with all manifestations of socio-economic stagnation and blind dependence on un-questioned authority. In this sense tradition is not the opposite of modernity intended as the manifestations of human autonomy and creativity.18

In his another landmark work Salvatore describes that tradition is anticipated as source of human progress, cohesiveness, permanence and creativeness, a process that enhances and facilitates modernity.

Similarly, Anthony Giddens defines tradition also in terms of progress of the society and traces out its history in these words:

The modern meaning of a tradition can be seen as having evolved in the European discourse in the last two hundred years, during the Enlightenment period, as philosophers and thinkers counter posed the concept of modernity with the concept of tradition, in the context of progress.19

In the same way, Samira Hiraj,20 presents a sensitive and perceptive treatment of how tradition evolves with in the womb of the modern. ‘politics and ideas are finely treated by her to reveal how complex ideas of the self, subjectivity and society are shaped and transformed over time in modern Islam21 and in this respect, she followed Alasdair MacIntyre’s (an eminent moral philosopher and critic of liberalism) conceptualization of tradition in these words as: “As an ever changing set of socially embodied arguments extended through time.”22 And infers that traditions are inquiry oriented and an essential component for evolution of human society and culture and for Muslims to face new challenges of the contemporary world legally, socially, politically, economically.

Keeping track with above explanation, Alasdair MacIntyre, an eminent social and moral philosopher, who has written extensively on ethics, political philosophy, and philosophy of religion, philosophy of the social sciences and the history of philosophy, which established him as one of the philosophical giants of the last fifty years. He has conceptualized that the tradition is the outcome of the negotiations and agreements by persons who are either in favour of this process or simply oppose it for their obvious reasons.23
Similarly with in this reference he adds that:

Focusing instead on the workings of tradition beyond the revolutionary breakthroughs, MacIntyre has stressed that in systematizing and ordering the truths (the traditions) take themselves to have discovered, the adherents of a tradition may well assign a primary place in the structures of their theorizing to certain truths and treat them as first metaphysical or practical principles. But such principles will have had to vindicate themselves in the historical process of dialectical justification.24

Another renowned Scholar Muhammad Qasim Zaman, , in his remarkable work explains emphatically the origin of Islamic tradition and carried out thorough study of the Western and Muslim Scholars explanation of the term tradition/Islamic tradition to elaborate the concept of tradition and modernity. He observes that contrast between ‘tradition and modernity’ help societies to get rid of particular hurdles to become part of modern world. Following the moral philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre and anthropologist Talal Asad, Zaman takes tradition to be a ‘discursive tradition.’ 25 Understood in this way, Zaman finds that:

Appeals to tradition are not necessarily a way of opposing change; that what passes for tradition is, not frequently, of quite recent vintage; and that definitions of what constitutes traditions are often the product of bitter and continuing conflicts within a culture. To a greater extent, however, such binary classification; have given way, in scholastic writing that ‘tradition’ is not a vast entity anymore than ‘modernity’ is; that appeals to tradition are not necessarily a way of opposing change but can equally facilitate change.

It is questionable in public discourse that either preservation or evolution of the tradition is a bridge between the past and the present will able to solve Juxta puzzle about the authenticity of the root and climax of tradition and about their accumulators in Islamic History?

Zaman, questioned that: “will traditions be able to serve as an logical tool in examining some of the contending discourses and conflicts in the Muslim Public sphere, in listening to debates on
issues of religious authority, in trying to understand how perceptions and imaginings of the past shape articulations of identity in the present.  

The Concept of Tradition in Islam

Tradition is an essential characteristic and manifestation of Islamic teachings and philosophy from time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), and will serve as a torch bearer for upcoming generation of the world till the Day of Judgement and now it’s the duty of the religious scholars to preserve its purity and at the same time make useful efforts to make it compatible with modern thoughts and changes that are taking place at a rapid speed in the world to prove that Islam is a dynamic religion and not stagnant as is assumed by the Western World and Secularist religious scholars.

Zaman has elaborated the concept of Historian of religion William Graham in this regard and maintains that;

Traditionalism ought to be seen as defining feature of Islamic thought. This traditionalism consists, he says, ‘not in some imagined atavism, regressivism, fatalism or rejection of change and challenge, ‘but rather in the conviction that ‘personally guaranteed connection with model past, and especially with model persons, offers the only sound bases….for forming and reforming one’s society in any age.’

Zaman further elaborates the point that:

The traditionalism is a characteristic of Islam and refereed in authenticating the statements attributed to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) (or statements about his conduct and teachings as reported by his companions) by affixing to each of these statements a chain of transmission that goes back to him or to one of the other early authorities.

Western scholars have usually characterized these discrete statements (hadith) as ‘traditions.’ Of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). But the traditionalism of which Graham speaks is something broader in scope and significance: “it is the periodic efforts by Muslims to coherent authority and evaluates claims to such authority by positing and reaffirming a connectedness to the past.”
Graham acknowledges that anchoring authority in efforts to establish a link with the past is not unique to Muslims but he argues that this effort is nowhere more persistent than in Islam and that it is institutionalised here to an unparalleled degree. For instance the emphasis on “a personally guaranteed connection to a model past; has for centuries remained the fundamental principle of validating the transmission of religious knowledge; it underlies genealogical claims to social understanding; it is at the heart of the Shi’i belief in the authority of the rightly guided and infallible Imams; and it is the basis on which institutionalised Sufism with its lineage of matters and disciples rests.”

Yet, while Graham shows how ‘traditionalism’ informs religious authority in Islam, he does not give much attention to the concept of tradition itself. For that, Zaman suggested we must turn to the moral philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre, whose conception of tradition, especially as mediate to Islamists by anthropologist Talal Asad, “offers a potentially fruitful way of approaching and understanding Muslim institutions and discourses in the complexities of their development, revamp and stability.”

Inspired by the work of moral philosopher MacIntyre, Tal Asad has underlined the rationale of the concept of tradition, as a ‘discursive tradition’ to the study of Islam systematically from past, present and future point of view about the transfer of knowledge to next generations about certain ongoing practices in the society.

Zaman stretches Asad’s explanation of tradition and elaborates that, ‘a discursive tradition’ is constituted and reconstituted not only by an ongoing interaction between the present and the past, however, but also by the manner in which relations of power and other forms of contestation and conflict intrude on any definition of what it is to be a Muslim. Asad here tries to elaborate the essential prerequisites to judge all Islamic thoughts, ideals and practices relates to Islam’s Foundational texts, no matter even if it lessens the temptation to reduce the variety of religious and cultural expression to different local ‘Islam.’

To elaborate the full view of traditions as a source of transmitting Islamic knowledge to the upcoming generations of Muslims, the Muslim Scholars gave the example of Shariah (the Islamic Law). Accordingly, they are unanimous that ‘the shariah is the vital example of a tradition and, indeed of a discursive tradition. Often the Shariah is translated as ‘Islamic Law’ the Shariah is more
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precisely identifies as set of institutions and practices that had dominant effect on the various aspects of people life in pre-Modern Muslim Societies. This view is also supported by the anthropologist Brinkley Messick and labelled it as ‘total discourse’.34

Seyyed Hossein Nasr, one of the renowned scholars of Islam elaborates different dimensions of Islamic teachings and focussed on Shariah, and calls it as basic to the Islamic tradition:

It is the ground upon which the religion is based. But he infers that the intellectual challenges posed by modernism in the form of secularism,35 evolutionism,36 rationalism,37 existentialism,38 agnosticism,39 relativism,40 nihilism,41 humanism42 and the like can only be answered intellectually and on the basis of authentic Islamic philosophical thought and not only judicially or by ignoring or disregarding the tenets of modern thought and expecting some kind of magical wedding between the Shariah and modern science and technology. The successful encounter of Islam with modern thought can only come about when modern thought, and the whole of the Islamic intellectual tradition, and in order to solve the problems that modernism and post modernism pose for Islam.43

Relation between Tradition and Ijtihad

Muslims all over the world believe that the Qur’an is the literal word of God as revealed by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) through the Angel Gabriel at the beginning of the seventh century. The Qur’an was revealed over the course of twenty–three years. As historians and religious scholars have put it that, most of its verses need re-interpretation to meet the ever changing needs of the society. “Its guiding principles were designed to protect the individual and the society, but it was not established as a set of fixed rules.” To respond to the changing needs of Muslim Societies, Muslim Jurists and scholars have relied on the well-established process of innovation, i.e., ijtihad. This process is based not only on the ‘Qur’an’ and ‘religious tradition’ (Sunnah) as the basic sources along with ‘reason,’ ‘logic,’ and ‘divergence.’44 When employing Ijtihad, Scholars and Ulema considered: “the time, place, norms, and prevailing conditions when they rendered their religious advice and opinions.”45
Accordingly the process of Ijtihad has enabled Muslims to be flexible and to learn from other cultures and civilizations. Islam teaches that no one owns the truth and that the true believer is always in search of the truth and wisdom/intelligence; and wisdom whenever he finds them, he follows. As it is usually said that, “Islam is based on intelligence” and “intelligence” is light as it is expressed in the hadith, inna’l aqla nurun (“verily Intelligence is light”). One of the prime benefit of the ongoing search for truth to get to the Islamic principles of justice has brought change in the mindset of the Muslims scholars belonging to different schools of thought in Islam to, respect one another’s opinions, and at the same time make them willing to change their own opinions if proven wrong.

Different forms of Tradition

Writers and historians gave the example of other facets of the intellectual and religious history of Islam, and also call history a ‘discursive traditions’ in their own right. Traditional Islamic historiography also has its own tale of continuity of conflicts regards the authenticity of the Islamic traditions and their sources. Even as it also reveals a broad consensus on how, say the earliest history of Islam is represented- a consensus that baffles and exasperates modern historians as they try to reconstruct Islam’s origins. This historiography, too, is a tradition, shaped by heated debates and arguments with in the earliest communities and simultaneously by disputation with the outsiders. One might similarly characterize institutionalized sufiism or the career of Hellenistic philosophy in Muslim societies as discursive traditions. The etiquette, styles of argumentation, and modes of transmitting knowledge that informed Islamic higher learning, and the institutions with which such learning was often associated, comprise another example of a multifaceted Islamic tradition.

Hadith is also a sound example of tradition, as discussed by Muslim and non-Muslims Scholars. Hadith is known as the traditions of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). The utility and significance of hadith as tradition cannot be overlooked as transmitter of Islamic knowledge from the time of the prophet (PBUH) up till now and in the future for all generation of Muslims all over the world. As for the history of is concerned these were accumulated by the beginning of the eighth century, the (hadith: ‘report’, plural Ahadith) usually short additions of remarks or actions of the Prophet (PBUH). The Hadith is both the individual tradition and the
sum of the tradition which makes up the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

The contents of the hadith are that these are authoritative statements about ritual, moral and religious issues. There is almost nothing important for the life of a Muslim for which there is not a saying of the prophet: “from questions of faith (the character traits of the Prophet and his descendents, the significance of the Quran and its exegesis or religious duties) and moral life (dealing in the family, the treatment of slaves and business relationships) to those relating to the just ordering of the state (characters traits of the ruler and criminal justice). Every day questions, for example about food and clothing, are also discussed.” In the hadith Muslims could now find specific examples and rules for everything on which the Qur’an had made no statements. They could take their guidance from them, since in them they heard unequivocally the voice of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

With accumulation of hadith there also started a quite different and very much more rigorous opposition movement, which was to complete the paradigm change in law: the movement of the ‘traditionists’ or preservers of the tradition. Soon they found their own groups in all great centres of the empire. “These ‘people of tradition’ (ahl-al-hadith) rejected the logical methods of the ‘people of opinion’ (Ahl-ar-r’ay), who in theological and legal questions concerned themselves with rationale clarification and systematization, the formation of free opinion (r’ay), analogous derivation (qiyyas) or argument (ijtihad). Such rational decision had been characteristic of Islamic legal science from the beginning, since they were practiced both by the qazis and by the pious specialists (for example, the analogy between the minimal value of stolen property and the minimal level of a dowry). In these circles, it was said that as long as a particular practice did not contradict an explicit instruction of the Quran, it should be tolerated. The very much stricter traditionists, who required the precepts of the Quran to be followed precisely, were different. Their basic intentions were less juristic than ethical and religious.

Whereas the ‘Sunnah of the school’ the living tradition of law schools which argued rationally, referred to the companions of the prophet for their authority, the traditionists referred quite simply and directly to the higher ‘Sunnah of the Prophet.’ They did so, not generally and vaguely to confirm their own teaching, as the old law schools did, but specifically, citing particular sayings and actions of
the prophet, the *hadith*. The real conflict was over the legitimacy of the law. The unconditional concern of the traditionists to follow the prophet led to the attribution to him of as many sayings and stories as possible, though not with any intent to deceive. These people acted in good faith, guided by the convictions that these words and stories expressed the authentic Islamic norm. They were convinced with the same problem.52

However, there are exceptions, but the overall tendency of the *hadith* was towards greater strictness and narrowness in disputed questions. The traditionists were not primarily interested in technical questions of law but in the strict subordination of the whole of the law to the religious and moral authority of the prophet. Thus, for example, they launched as a ‘tradition of the Prophet (PBUH), a prohibition against forcing prices up, in order to fight against the raising and lowering of prices.

What about the old law schools? After resistance, their only alternative was to accept the importance of these traditions, which were becoming increasingly popular. However, they did all they could to minimize their significance by interpretation and to confirm their attitudes and teachings by their own *hadith*. Thus, May old legal principles were now attributed to the Holy Prophet (PBUH). The result was that, although the old schools attempted to accept the prophetic traditions only as far as they corresponded with their own traditions, the traditionists won through. This led to contradictions between traditional Islamic law and the *hadith* tradition, so that a new synthesis was needed.

Zaman here deducts that tradition the concept of tradition is helpful not only in studying history of discursive practices but also in tracking and understanding the significance of the ruptures in that history. As Marshall Hodgson observed at the end of his magisterial history of Islamic civilization, modern Western societies have managed to retain a much deeper, more consistent, and more vital relationship with their traditions than have Muslim Societies:

The former are far more ‘traditional’ in this sense than the later. In the Western Philosophical traditions, for instance, ‘from the scholastics to Descartes from Hume to Kant to Hegel to Husseri to the Existentialists,’53 the philosophical dialogue has been continuous. By and large, the old books continue to be read, and some of the same terms continue to be
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used, even if in transformed contexts.54

This split of History55 has produced two types of classes, one of Ulemas and other of Muslims who received education in Western advance and modern institutions, both regard Islam with same sagacity but with different approach. Modern Muslim intellectuals have been endeavouring since the nineteenth century, to find ways of making Islam compatible with the challenges of the modern age. And their proposed reforms have encompassed almost the entire spectrum of life in Muslim Societies.56

So, in this respect very careful handling is needed in interpreting the meaning of tradition, its sources of accumulation, its Islamic dimensions, and implementations in madrassah system of education as primary component along with modern components of formal education to make students to compete with students of the secular educational institutions.

Definition and Evolution of Modernity

The term ‘modernity’ is an abstract term up till now, as Scholars from West and East are unable to come up with single concrete, universal definition of ‘modernity’, which could be taken as parameter to judge what modernity is and what is not? Even the western scholars have not designed any single definition for ‘western modernity.’ The term is variously used as ‘Multiple Modernity’s,’ ‘Entangled Modernity’s,’ ‘Cultural Modernity,’ ‘Political Modernity,’ ‘Economical Modernity’ and latest hot debate is ‘Islam and Modernity.’ There are certain factors, as discussed in the beginning part of this study. Globalization, mass education, urbanization, and evolution of the Muslim Societies, have triggered this debate and argumentation that Islam is a static religion, its principles are rigid, non-flexible, and as a result its followers are fundamentalists and extremists. Therefore, Islam is not compatible with enlightened principles of modernity. So, Islamic education which is imparted in madaris is responsible for producing ‘extremists,’ ‘fundamentalists,’ narrow minded person who do not respect individual/collective human rights and liberties.

The present study found out that, this is not the case, only few madaris holds that stance due to ideology, practices and political affiliations of their respective schools of thought, in home and abroad. While rest of the madaris have set an exemplary environment for the imparting of religious education, like they did in golden periods of Islamic rule. Its’ more a media hype rather
reality, due to the vested interests of the super powers of the West.

Now coming to the explanation of term ‘modernity’, the present study after consulting various sources and discussion with academicians, religious scholars, infers that, ‘modernity’ may be considered, “marked and defined by an obsession with facts, visuality and visibility.” There has been numerous ways to understand what modernity is? Modernity is often described by comparing modern societies to pre-modern ones, or post-modern ones. Modernity in madrassah education system means evolution of the knowledge that is from its primitive form to advance stages. The integration of tradition into modernity education means imparting religious education integrated with secular education. The need to modernize madrassahs mainly aims at developing better awareness on the basis of the requirement for religious education in society, and to meet the demands at the same time, for better integration of madrassah students into modern economy.

A great number of writers, historians and scholars have written extensively on the origin and evolution of the term ‘modernity.’ Among Western Scholars, Michael Allen Gillespie reveals in his land mark study that modernity is much less secular than the usual wisdom suggests. Starting from the collapse of medieval world, Gillespie argues that, from the very beginning, modernity supports a new view of religion and its place in human life, and it does not exclude religion from any type of matter. He goes on to explore the ideas of such figure, as ‘William of Ockham’, ‘Petrarch,’ ‘Erasmus,’ ‘Luther,’ ‘Descartes,’ and ‘Hobbes,’ showing that; “modernity is best understood as a series of attempts to formulate a new and coherent metaphysics or theology.”

In his work Michael gave the history of the origin of the term ‘modernity’ and defines the term ‘modern’ and its derivatives come from the Latin modus which means ‘measure’ and as a measure of time, ‘just now’ with the late Latin derivative modernus, gave rise to all other later derivatives that evolved afterwards. If we trace its history, then, we came to know that, Cassiodorus used the term in the sixth century to distinguish his time from that of the earlier Roman and Patristic authors. The term modernitas was used in the twelfth century to distinguish contemporary time from those of the past. Shortly thereafter, the term began to appear in lingua Franca. Dante used the Italian moderno around 1300, and in 1361, Nicholas of Oresme used the French modern.
So, here the writers also differs regards the exact origin of the term “modernity.” However, the term was used almost from 1460 to differentiate between ‘modern and ancient’ and to distinguish a particular historical period until sixteenth century. The English term ‘modern’ referring to modern times first appeared in 1585, and the term ‘modernity’ was not used until 1627. The concept of modernity as a historical epoch was originally and often since understood in opposition to the distant past. The term ‘middle ages’ does not appear in English until 1753, although the term ‘Gothic’ was used in the same sense in the sixteenth century and Latin equivalent even earlier.\footnote{58}

While the distinction of old and new was already present in the distant past, it was never use in its modern sense, “in large measure because the terms were deployed in the context of a cyclical view of time that was present in ancient mythological accounts of the nature and origin of the cosmos, which were later adopted by ancient philosophers and historians as well.” ‘New’ in this context was almost invariably equated with degeneration and decline, as in Aristophanes’ *clouds*, where the new fangled ways of the Athenians are contrasted with the superior mores of the generation that fought at Marathon.

There arises a debate, that what particular aspects of human life could be term as modernity? Either it is just a mode of thinking or set rules for perfect behaviour and interaction with the people? The humanistic value such as ‘piety’ was placed at higher pedestal than ‘courage’ or ‘wisdom.’ The concept of the ‘modern’ arose in the context of the twelfth century reform of church, although it had a different signification than it has to day. In the belief that they stood at the beginning of a new age, these reformers or moderni saw themselves, in the words of Bernhard of Chartres (1080-1167), “as dwarfs standing on the shoulders of giants, lesser men than their predecessor but able to see farther.” But what they had visualized was not bright future and incredible, but instead approaching end of time. This understanding was exemplified in the work of Joachim of Fiore (1130/35-1201/02) who preached the imminence of the final age in which the entire world would become a vast monastery.\footnote{59}

The idea of modernity therefore is attached to the distant past. The tenth century terms *via antique* and *via moderna*, gave rise to distinction between ‘ancient’ and ‘modern.’ The writer claims that originally it meant to distinguish two different positions...
on universals, in order to study two different readings of Aristotle.

This via antique was the older realist paths that saw universals as ultimately real, while the moderna was the newer nominalist path that saw individual things as real and universals as mere names. These logical distinctions provided the schema for a new understanding of time and being. While the concept of modernity was formulated in connection with the concept of the distant past, the two terms were initially used in a sense different than our own. Petrarch provided the foundation for the idea of a 'new' time when he described a dark time that separate the distant past from his own age.\textsuperscript{60}

The writers and scholars however did not celebrate this type of advancement and called it an extinction of humanistic values, and expressed grief over this type of makeover and wanted to jump to the golden past.

\ldots‘modern’ was actually not used in this its current sense until the sixteenth century, and then only to define an artistic style. In fact, it was really only in the seventeenth century that first George Horn (1666) and then more importantly Christopher Cellarius (1696) described a three part schema of world history, with antiquity lasting until the time of Constantine, the Middle Ages until the end of Eastern Roman Empire, and \textit{historia nova} beginning in the sixteenth century’s idea of a modern age or, it was later called modernity, as part of the self-understanding characterized European thought from the time of Bacon and Descartes. This idea differed decisively from that used earlier because it rested on a revolutionary notion of freedom and progress.\textsuperscript{61}

Fascinated by the discoveries of Columbus and Copernicus, Bacon opposed the earliest views and highlighted the fruits of modernity and as a result of which one could achieve greater heights than the distant past, and also laid out methodology for achieving those heights.\textsuperscript{32}

Mark A.Wood Ward in his work elaborates further the work of Michelle’s genealogy of modernity and in his work discuss
the ideas of various thinkers about modernity, in this respect the ideas represented by Bruce Lawrence in ‘In Defenders of God’ completely clear meaning of modernity in its true spirit in these words as:

The emergence of a new index of human life shaped, above all, by increasing bureaucratization and rationalization as well as technical capacities and global change unthinkable in the pre modern era. He describes modernity as the search for individual autonomy driven by a set of socially encoded values emphasizing change over continuity; quantity over quality; efficient production, power and profit over sympathy for traditional values or vocations, in both the public and private spheres. At its utopian extreme, it enthrones one economic strategy, consumer oriented capitalism, as the surest means to technological progress that will also eliminate social unrest and physical discomfort.63

After discussing the western concept of modernity, the study comes up with Islamic concept of modernity, and Islamic Societies encounter with it. Its western point of view that they are the originator of modernity and its application in all spheres of life, and introduced it in all branches of knowledge, but in fact, Islam is a modern, flexible and enlightened religion from the very beginning. The principles which are now presented by the West on the name of democracy, freedom of movement and expression, respect of each other’s liberty and rights, justice, dignity, tranquillity, fairness, humbleness, all are emphasised time and again in Quran, and Sunnah of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), and ordered all the believers to carry out these orders in individual and collective lives.

So, how come the Western can get the authority of describing what is modern and what is traditional? Muslim Educational Institutions were flourishing when Europe and whole of the West was plunged into dark ages. Then, it was irony of fate that Muslims could not carry well, and their administrative weaknesses, political manoeuvrings, intrigues, failures to consolidate their rule, failed economic policies and embezzlements at large scale resulted in the down fall of the Muslim rule all over the World.
The result was that, the Europeans and Westerns, who once followed the great civilization of Muslims, stepped into their boots, and with their shrewdness become master of the whole world. Now it’s irony of the time that, once ‘Masters’ looks towards their once lesser half for guidance and support.

Now question arises when Muslim began to encounter modernity, how they came to realize that they needed a change to compete with the contemporary world, or started thinking of reforms, rethinking and reconstruction of their traditional values, customs, knowledge, political, economical, social system, to sort out the factors which resulted in their down fall in all spheres of life.

It is said that, historically, Muslim’s encounter with modernity most often began with military defeat at the hands of European powers, as exemplified by Napoleon Bonaparte’s conquests of Egypt 1798-1800; the defeat of the Mogul Empire in India and its incorporation into the British Empire in 1857; Iran’s defeat in Russo-Iranian wars (1804-1813 and 1824-1828); and successive Ottoman reverses in their encounters with Russia and other European powers. Following these military defeats, Muslims became painfully conscious of their scientific, technological, and military shortcomings compared to the Europeans. This sudden awareness led to deep soul searching among Muslims regarding the causes of their decline and to a still continuing debate about how to reverse it. Depending on their specific geopolitical, social, and political conditions and structures, individual Muslim societies reacted differently to this challenge. Nevertheless, there were significant similarities in the range of their responses. Muslim’s first response was to try to obtain the know-how necessary to rectify the military imbalance with the European powers; hence the focus on military reform and instruction. The first modern educational institutions established in the Ottoman Empire consisted of military schools (naval engineering school-1773; military engineering-1793; and military science-1834).64

Some writers and researchers have called it a turn towards
secularism, instead of modernity. But, here again the same thing appears, as is discussed in the start of the study that the encounter with modernity produced three type of classes of Ulema/Scholars, the traditionalists, the reformers or synthesizers ,and secular. The response varied from one area to another, some countries and their political leadership/ intellectuals adopted European style of modernity, where religion is treated as personal matter between an individual and his Creator, while other societies are trying to stay stick to their basic sources of Divine Religion, i.e., Quran and Sunnah. They are not in favour of Ijma and Ijtihad, the two innovative methods of applying the teachings of Islam a fresh to contemporary problems. They have firm belief nothing is beyond the scope and breadth of Quran’s knowledge, it covers each and every aspect of life. We can call all know ledges, whether spiritual or worldly- branches of the same tree. Islam has specified each and everything some fourteen hundred years ago, of which the Westerns are championing now a days.

Hunter and Nast65 in their writings, has described the reformist trend in Islam and degree of the adoption of modernity in a Muslim Society by the rulers could not gain much success and common applause because it had somewhat clashed with their religious and native culture. As a result the scholars and Ulemas took the responsibility to find means and ways to reform the society in accordance with Islamic teachings at the same time make it compatible with modern world.

Islamic Concept of Tradition and Modernity

Islam and modernity is a topic of discussion in contemporary discourse about religion. Neither Islam nor modernity is simple or unified entities. They are abstract quantities which could not be reduced into simple categories. The history of Islam, like that of other religions, is a history of different interpretations and approaches. ‘There is not a historical Islam that is outside the process of historical development. Similarly, modernity is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon rather than a unified and coherent phenomenon. It has historically had different schools of thought moving in many directions. Modernity is a movement that has been described as the first Muslim ideological response 66 to the cultural changes which attempts to reconcile Islamic faith with modern values regarding ‘nationalism,’ ‘democracy,’ ‘civil rights,’ ‘rationality,’ ‘equality’ and ‘progress.’ “It featured a ‘critical re-examination of the classic conceptions and methods of
jurisprudence’ and a new approach to Islamic theology and Quran exegesis.

Islam is a complete code of life. Unity and multiplicity go hand in hand, and one aids the other. It gave multifaceted meanings to the universal teachings of Islam, give rise to different schools of thought, provided that the interpreters do not go beyond the basic framework of Islamic orthodoxy.

The most important elements among those that unite the vast spectrum of schools composing Islam in its orthodox manifestations, this term being understood in a metaphysical as well as theological and judicial manner, are the two testimonies (Shahadahs) themselves. By virtue of the first Shahadah, that is ‘there is no god but God,’ ‘all Muslims confirm the unity of the divine principle and the reliance of all things on Him.’ Through the second shahadah ‘Muhammad is the messenger of God’ they accept the prophethood of the prophet and there by become specifically Muslims. Likewise, all Muslims agree that the Quran is the exact revelation of God. They also agree about its text and content; “that is no variant texts are found among any of the schools, although the exegetical meaning can of course can differ from one school to another.” Muslims also agree concerning the reality of the afterlife, although again there are various types and levels of interpretation of the teachings of the Quran and the hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) concerning eschatological (end-time) matters. Muslims are also united in the main ritual performed, ranging from the daily prayers to fasting to making the pilgrimage, although here again there are certain small differences in ritual details among various schools of Islamic Law. It’s like that medical specialists of same field prescribing different medicine for the same disease.

As, the terms modernity and moderation have some ambiguity, and in this regard John Cooper have given comprehensive explanations for the purpose of clarity that:

Modernities and modernizations are words that are continuously contested in contemporary Islamic discourse. Modernization is the introduction into society of the artifacts of contemporary life, such as communications, technology, or household equipment, has permeated into virtually all societies including Muslims. But modernity, a way of thought and of living in the contemporary world and of accepting change, as part of political and cultural processes by integrating new ideas into society, may
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According to many liberal scholars like Lily Zakriya and Muhammad Khalid Masud, Jamal al-Din Al-Afghani (1838-1897) is the father of Islamic modernism. The way he propounds basic concepts of Islam with trends of modernity is a leading way for the reformists and modernists. Moreover, he was foremost a believer in the transcendence of God and in reason. According to him, independent judgment and interpretation, and the *ijtihad* are the necessity; and that the duty of man is to apply the principles of the Quran afresh to the problems of the time. In addition, he was extremely critical of traditional *ulemas* (religious scholars) that discouraged any new and creative thought and convinced that this type of medieval mentality was primarily responsible for the decline of the Muslim power and influence in the world. In words of Hunter, Afgahni is also the pioneer of Islamic unity of the *Ummah* and states that:

Afghani is indisputably the most ardent promoter of Islamic unity as a necessary element in any Islamic intellectual, economic, and political revival------for him the multidimensional revitalization of Muslim countries and their unity was the only chance for regaining their independence, and he worked for both tirelessly, although not always successfully.

Zohair Hussain has mentioned some reformers of Islamic thought and practices such as Al-Afghani, Abduh or the more contemporary like Mahmud Muhammad Taha of Sudan, Muhammad Abed Al-Jabri, Ali Shariati of Iran or Abdurrahman Wahid of Indonesia as knowledgeable not only about Islam but also about modern non-Islamic Western ideas. They struggled to bring harmony in the convergence of Islamic and universal ethics, and to introduce and implement ethics, and to introduce and implement them into their own societies. Hence, unlike the fundamentalists, modernists do not fear or dislike western ideas and practices.

In the Indian subcontinent, Sir Syed Ahmad khan was the first who defined his approach to Islamic theology of modernity and later provided the basis for Islamic modernism Khalid Masud describes in these words:

The concept of Islam and modernity has undergone changes and due to diverse experience of modernity objection of modernity changed from science and
nature in the nineteenth century to identity and autonomy of self in the twentieth century Iqbal’s approach to theology of modernity. 

Poet philosopher, political Activist and social reformer and ardent supporter of Islamic modernism, Muhammad Iqbal addressed certain issues of immense importance in the western conception of modernization, among the most important was the relation of the human individual with society. He discouraged the extreme forms of this relationship (individualism and collectivism) and held the view that the individual attains self-fulfilment in society. Such a view goes completely against the extreme individualism advocated by modernization theorists. He argues that the faster a society modernizes, the greater an individual separates and alienates himself/herself from other people, family, community, and society for various reasons. 

As for the two most important ideologies of the West, Socialism and Capitalism, Iqbal believed that both should be condemned in totality for their failure to recognize God and their deceptiveness. Thus, Iqbal assigned such ideologies no place in his scheme of modernization of the Muslim Ummah. For this reason, secularization, an essential ingredient of modernization, is rejected outright by Iqbal.

The Western conception of democracy, an important goal of political modernization and development, is also criticized by Iqbal. He argues that the intellect of two hundred asses may not equal the thought of a perfect man. For the principle of modernization as conceived from Islamic perspective is Ijtihad. He believed strongly that one of the main causes of the Muslim Ummah’s deterioration is the absence of Ijtihad as a dynamic principle; Ijtihad is instrumental for balanced development and modernization.

It is important to note that, as against West’s emphasis on reason and sense perception as the only source of knowledge for modernization, Iqbal asserted ardently the importance of revelation, intuition, and inspiration along with reason and sense perception. He argued that a complete vision of reality through reason and sense perception is impossible, for reason and sense perception must be guided by revelation.

In addition, he asserted that: “the empirical method recently developed in the West was borrowed from the Muslims of
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an earlier period. This Islamic empirical theory of knowledge was based on revelation, which, at a later date was cut off in the West by Kant’s theory of Knowledge, and which stressed experience and confined it to the world of phenomenon.” All of this illustrates Iqbal’s complete rejection of any revelation-reason and revelation-science conflicts, from which the theory of modernization emerged. As is evident from the various definitions of modernization, particularly by Black, Rostow, and Huntington, modernization is precisely the control of man over nature and his environment. Hence, starting from Fredrich Schiller and Weber

Very few researchers have analyzed the situation. The concepts and ideas have also been explained by Lily Zakyia Munir, and she had poses some basic questions in this regard as:

Is Islam compatible with modernity? How do Muslims respond to the continuous change of the world which has grown at a rapid and unprecedented rate in the last century? How do we resolve the problem of maintaining the legacy of the past in our religious tradition and integrate change into society and our lives.

The true theories, principles and laws of Islam have been faded so much so that it had become difficult to identify what the real Islam is? At the same time, it doesn’t mean that there are some deficiencies in Islam but only the scholars of Islam are deficient in thinking. In this respect, there are three groups of scholars of Islam without the discrimination of sects, as discussed in the beginning of the study.

The study found out that the scholars of the first group belong to the traditional Islam and have not ambiguity in their minds about the basic Theories, laws and principles but at the same time they believe that the shape of Islam which is given to us is the only true religion. According to them, no one has to be allowed to adjust or mould any theory, law. Principle of Islam according to the social needs in the modern period of science and technology, with the understanding that no matter the society has to suffer loss instead. Moreover, absorption of new theory, law and principle from outside cannot be discussed in the terms of religion. They termed the religion and the rest of world as two different things.

A few scholars are those who belong to the second group are secular in their thinking. They are influenced with the modern Western thoughts and want to change or mould the whole basic system of Islam including basic theories, laws and principles in the
name of modernity. This trend is that of total embrace of Western Style modernity and identified it with the new and expanding elites educated in the West and later also in Western style educational institutions.

The scholars of third group also do not want any change or mould the basic theories, laws and principles of Islam. According to them, Islamic basic theories, laws and principles have no shortcomings but it is the limited mental approach of the man which is deficient in its abilities. With scientific and technological advancements, mental approach of the man faces new truths and realities in the world. Therefore, with passage of time, Ulemas of Islam have been giving different explanations and meanings to some of the basic theories, laws and principles according to their social advancements. They argue that it is very need of the day to rethink and re-adjust some of the basic theories, laws, and principles according to their social needs in the modern period of science and technology. Moreover, a creative and innovative mind cannot see and listen, ‘the traditional out ridden Islam; suggested by Western Scholars. On the other hand, it is the reality that Islam is a complete code of life for all the ages; therefore, there is nothing outside the approach of Islam in the world. Resultantly, the moderate Ulemas want to rethink and re-adjust the tradition of Islam into modernity. They formulate new shape of Islamic principles with adjustments to guide the man living in this new era, without any change in the basic faith and ideology. They proved that all past, present and future scientific and technological advancements in the modern period have been guided by the Holy Quran. They also give us some direction to the future advancements according to the guidance of Holy Quran. They prove that Islam is not out-ridden religion, today but instead the most powerful and dynamic religion of world.

Writer and scholars like, Nasr, Javed Ahmed Ghamedi, Fazlur Rahman, Muhamamad Khalid Masud and many other famous scholars of the Arab World, 83 called this reaction as that of synthesis.

In fact, all religio-cultural reform movements fall within the category of synthesis, although the relative weight of modernity and tradition varies for different movements, at different times and places, and among key thinkers and leaders. It is inferred that historically, most efforts at synthesis have failed,
partly because they have tried to combine elements of native culture with manifestations of modernity rather than examining the native culture in light of modernity as a philosophical frame of reference. Moreover, the discourse of synthesis is complex and thus difficult to communicate at a mass level of comprehension and motivation. In particular, it lacks the ideological zeal of either committed modernizers or religious and cultural traditionalists and revivalists. Additionally, the proponent of synthesis historically have been mistrusted and opposed both by traditionalists and modernists. Today Muslims reformist thinkers, however, have sought a more nuanced approach to the relationship between modernity and indigenous cultures and systems of values.84

Similarly, Muhammad Mumtaz Ali, an eminent scholar of Islam has remarked about this trend in a very simple way and states that:

One of the defining attributes of the present-day Islamic thought, is giving particular emphasis on revivalism of knowledge movements, critical evaluation of ‘Islamic heritage’ and ‘western ideas’, ‘concepts’ and ‘theories.’ There arises a sort of tussle between the ‘rejectionists’ and ‘adoptionists,’ about the mode of absorption of western ideas after being critically evaluated from Islamic perspective.85

In order to sum up the above discussion, Islamic modernity may be redefined as acquiring of technological skills and knowledge in physical and social sciences to such an extent that, they control the resources of the natural world on the basis of Islamic Epistemology, which resultantly will regenerate a new Islamic civilization and also take effective measures for its sustainable developments.

It is imperative to conceptualize modernization from an Islamic perspective and to develop a clear conception of Islamic modernization. The main goal of this study is to analyze the concept of modernity as posed by contemporary Islamic thought with in tradition of these Islamic movements.So, one of the basic component of reconstruction and rethinking of tradition into

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modernity in madrassah system of education is to apply the concept afresh to conceptual, institutional, political, social, religious aspects of education in madaris.

In Pakistan, madaris are the institution which have main role in imparting the Islamic education; therefore, the concepts and ideas of traditions should be reviewed and it’s reshaping into modernity through reconstruction and *ijtihad* should be included in madrassah policy planning. But at the same time, most of the madaris have limited their scope only to the traditional Islamic education and they are established by hardliners who consider Western or modern education as something contradictory to Islam. While on the other hand madaris which are established by the liberals and moderate ulamas, impart religious as well as modern education in order to compete with the world of science and technology. They have tried to integrate the tradition and modernity to some extent in madrassah education system according to their vision and social demands. At the same time an important and complicated question is how much they have succeeded in their struggle, its answer is controversial. Moreover, what type of modern education to be integrated with the tradition of Islamic education? These and so many other questions remain unsolved till now. But, it is a fact that it is need of the day to integrate both the tradition and modernity in madrassah education system. such an integration of the modern and the traditional education in madrassah is necessary for the benefits of the Muslims to compete with other communities, which is possible only by acquiring modern knowledge of science and technology along with traditional knowledge within the boundaries of madaris.

Notes and References

2 “Conformity consists of model attitudes and behaviour which often defined as the strict expectations of society. It also represents society and the cornerstones of its common values.”
--- Like conformity, “customs also arrange, manage and supervise many social relations. Customs have an influence on society, encouraging good order and affecting the application of rules. For example, greetings and farewells, meals and table settings, celebrations and blessings, asking a family for their daughter’s hand in marriage, engagement ceremonies and weddings, relations
between the sexes, peer groups and professional colleagues, rules to be applied
during greeting and inquiring after someone's health, attitudes connected with
religious festivals, seasons and other important days, appropriate things to say
in expressing and accepting condolences are all evaluated within the framework
of customs. Customs originate and take shape from various origins, some of
which may be the way of life in the past, a range of visions, interesting
coincidences and events.”

--- “Compared to conformity, custom and tradition, conventions have less
sanctionary influence. Something should be done in conformity, had better be
done in custom and tradition and may be done in convention. Briefly, it means
to do something in a way which earlier generations also followed.” Accessed
from http://www.kultur.gov.tr/EN,35064/conformity--custom--tradition--convention.html on 0’0

3 “Globalization is a process of interaction and integration among the people,
companies, and governments of different nations, a process driven by
international trade and investment and aided by information technology. This
process has effects on the environment, on culture, on political systems, on
economic development and prosperity, and on human physical well-being in
societies around the world,” the term is also used as political globalization,
cultural globalization, economical globalization etc. accessed from

4 A historical phase and experience. The overall change in circumstances
accompanying a society's movement population and resources from farm
production to manufacturing production and associated services. Source:
Contexts: history , accessed from
http://www.econterms.com/glossary.cgi?query=industrialization

Debates/dp/0748637931 on 23 September, 2011.

6 Quran is Allah’s words that were brought by Angel Gabriel (Jihraeel) to
Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him), it was revealed in stages, it has
remained unchanged since its revelation. Quran provides a complete code of
life and guidance for preparing life hereafter. Quran's message has no
crookedness or contradictions. Quran is undoubtedly the word of Allah, and
there is no doubt about its divinity. This claim is made by Allah Himself, on
places in Quran, like for example in (Surah Baqarah –Verse 2), “This is the
book (the Quran), where there is no doubt, a guidance to those who are Al-
Muttazaam (the pious and the righteous person who fear Allah much (abstain
from all kinds of sins and evil deeds which He has forbidden ) and love Allah
much (perform all kinds of good deeds which He has ordained). Accessed from
http://www.iqrasense.com/quran/what-is-quran-allah-describes-the-quran-in-
the-quran.html on 17 February, 2011.

7 Sunnah is the way of life prescribed as normative for Muslims on the basis of
the teachings and practices of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and
interpretations of the Quran.

45
The Arabic word *Hadith* means ‘statement or ‘talk’. In the *Shariah*, the word *Hadith* means those things or actions, Which Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), said or did. Sometimes *Sunnah* is also used for *Hadith* but usually *Sunnah* is used to report ‘deed’, and *Hadith* is used for ‘talk.’

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There is difference between the terms, the *Sunnah* and the *Hadith*. *Sunnah* in principle can have two meanings: the *Sunnah* as a *Fiqahi* terminology and the *Sunnah* as a source of understanding Islam (*Usul al-Fiqah* terminology). *Sunnah*, literally meaning a path, method, way, contains those religious practices that are established by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) among his companions and have passed to us by the consensus of generations. These religious practices have mostly originated from the religion of Hazarat Ibrahim and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) has made revisions to them or some additions where appropriate. *Hadith* on the other hand, literally meaning something new that comes out, a saying, a statement, refers to narrations that are attributed to the companions of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) who narrate a statement or a story about the Holy Prophet (PBUH) or related to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The *Hadith* has reached us through individual or a few narrators in every generation.

The established *Sunnah* is as reliable as the Qur’an because it has been transmitted in the same way (i.e. general consensus of generations, i.e. *Tawatur*). Therefore the Qur’an and the *Sunnah* remain as our only primary sources of understanding Islam. *Hadith* is not as reliable as the Qur’an and the established *Sunnah* therefore it needs to be verified and understood under the light of the Qur’an and the established *Sunnah*. While the Qur’an and the established *Sunnah* are the primary sources of understanding Islam, *Hadith* is a very rich source of understanding the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his way of living (*Sirat*) and the history of Islam and the Qur’an. *Hadith* is also a good facilitator to study the Qur’an and the established *Sunnah* although understanding these two sources is not depending on *Hadith*, accessed from [http://www.exploring-ilm.com/difference-between-sunnah-and-hadith.html](http://www.exploring-ilm.com/difference-between-sunnah-and-hadith.html) on 23 June, 2011.

**Independent reasoning**, the process of deriving rules of Islamic law in new situations not covered by traditional rulings.

**Islamic Jurisprudence**


12 Deducted after consulting Encyclopaedia, Dictionary, Books, interviews and discussion with academicians, Scholars /Ulemas.


15 Detail of the tradition, origin and evolution of *madrassah* education system, its curriculum with special emphasis on Dars-i-Nizami, purpose /objectives of the *madaris*, is treated in second chapter of the thesis.

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---Armando Salvatore, The Public Sphere: Liberal Modernity, Catholicism, Islam (Culture and Religion in International Relations) (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).This is an original and sophisticated work that breaks new ground in several fields. Salvatore’s comparative analysis of traditions and civilizations places the whole debate on the public sphere and civil society in a broader context. The discussion of parallels and connections between European and Islamic traditions is particularly insightful. The multi traditional focus is underpinned by a distinctively hermeneutical approach that rescues the notion of genealogy from its postmodern practitioners and puts it to better uses/philosophical and sociological interpretation of the Axial Age are drawn into dialogue with main currents in contemporary social theory. Salvatore proposes a new reading of Giambattista Vico, an enigmatic but crucially important figure in the history of European Thought, and makes the most convincing case so far his relevance to current debates. Accessed from http://www.amazon.com/public-Sphere-Modernity-Catholicism-International/dp/0230622313, on 22 September, 2011.


20 Samira Haj, Reconfiguring Islamic Tradition: Reform, Rationality, and Modernity(Cultural Memory in the present)(California: Stanford University press, 2008),P.4-7

---Samira Haj conceptualizes Islam through a close reading of two Muslim Reformers-Muhammad Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhab (1703-1787) and Muhammad ‘Abduh (1849-1905) each representative of a distinct trend, chronological as well as philosophical, in modern Islam. Their works are examined primarily through the prism of two conceptual questions: the idea of the modern and the formation of a Muslim Subject. Approaching Islam through the works of these two Muslims, she illuminates aspects of Islamic Modernity, which have been obscured and problematizes assumptions founded on the oppositional dichotomies of modern/traditional, secular/sacred, and liberal/ fundamentalists. She explores the notions of the community—society and the subject’s location within it to demonstrate how Muslims in different historical contexts responded differently to theological and practical questions. Accessed from (http://www.amazon.com/Reconfiguring-Islamic-Tradition-Rationality-Modernity/dp/0804752508 on 5 October 2011.


22 Ibid,P.5

---for further elaboration of his concept of tradition, see Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 2nd ed. (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984), p. 204-25

Salvatore, *The Public Sphere*, p. 71

proceeding to a conclusion through reason rather than institution.

Zaman, p. 2-3

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Zaman, p. 5


Secularism is the principle of separation of government institutions and persons mandated to represent the state from religious institutions and religious dignitaries.

Evolution originally was used to refer to an orderly sequence of events with the outcome somehow contained at the start.

the practice or principle of basing opinions and actions on reason and knowledge rather than on religious belief or emotional response.

a philosophical theory or approach which emphasizes the existence of the individual person as a free and responsible agent determining their own development through acts of the will.

Agnosticism is the view that the truth values of certain claims—especially claims about the existence or non-existence of God, as well as other religious and metaphysical claims—is unknown or unknowable.

the doctrine that knowledge, truth, and morality exist in relation to culture, society, or historical context, and are not absolute.

the rejection of all religious and moral principles, often in the belief that life is meaningless.

A rationalist outlook or system of thought attaching prime importance to human rather than divine or super natural matters.

---a Renaissance cultural movement which turned away from medieval scholasticism and revived interest in ancient Greek and Roman thought (among some contemporary writers) a system of thought criticized as being centred on
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the notion of the rational, autonomous self and ignoring the conditioned nature of the individual.

Syyed Hossein Nasr, *Islamic Philosophy from its origin to the present: philosophy in the land of Prophecy* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2006), P.271


UNIP, *Ijtihad: Reinterpreting Islamic Principles for the Twenty-First Century*


--- for other works on legal Islamic thought and practice, and for discussion of Islamic Law, See


It is a comprehensive survey of Islamic History from its origin to modern times.

V.Danner, *The Islamic Tradition: An Introduction*, (New York: Amity House, 1988). A clear account of both the Islamic Religion and the Islamic Tradition from their origins to the present day written from the traditional point of view.


A clear account of Islam and its contemporary development by a sympathetic Western Scholar of Islam.


Ibid, P.264


Split of history, here means division among the Muslims, i.e., traditionalists, and liberals, who are educated in secular educational institutes.

A great part of the discussion on tradition, its origin and evolution and Islamic perspective is derived from the work of Muhammad Qasim Zaman’s historical work, *The Ulamas of Contemporary world: Custodians of change*. For a broad orientation to the varied and evolving facets of modernist thought, see

with special emphasis on clarifying misunderstandings currently prevalent in the West about Islam.

A young Muslim’s Guide to the Modern World, (Chicago: Kazi publications, 1993). A summary of the teachings of Islam and various schools of thought as well as various aspects of modern civilization and the manner in which younger Muslims have to face the challenges of modern World.


---Daniel Brown, Rethinking Tradition in Modern Islamic Thought (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,1996


59 Ibid

60 Ibid

61 Ibid

62 Ibid. A great part of the definition and evolution of the term ‘modernity’ is taken from work of Michael Allen Gillespie, The Theological Origins of Modernity.


--- In Iran, the first students sent abroad by the reformist Crown Prince Abbas Mirza Qajar studied military sciences and engineering. In Egypt, Muhammad Ali’s first attempts at reform were focused on transforming the Egyptian military according to the model European armies. Reforms soon extended to educational, administrative, and legal spheres. Intellectually, all three types of reaction to modernity described above have been observable in Muslim Societies since their earliest encounter with it until the present time.


67 Ibid
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69 Ibid
71 Munir, p.2-3., also see
72 Hunter, p.15.
76 Muhammad Khalid Masud, *Iqbal's Approach to Islamic Theology of Modernity, Al-Hikmat*, Vol.27 (Lahore: University of the Punjab, 2007),P.1
78 A .Anwer Beg, *Poet of the East*(Lahore:1940), P.257
79 Hunter, p.
82 Lily Zakia Munir, *Islam, Modernity and Justice for Women* (Atlanta: School of Law, Emory University,2003),p.2
---Ismail Al-Faruqi, Islamization of Knowledge (Herndon: International Institute of Islamic Thought,1982)
84 Hunter,p.12