

A New Islam... or Renewal in Islam?

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Summary

In this article, the author argues that these thinkers are essentially creating a "new Islam" rather than genuinely renewing traditional Islam. He focuses particularly on:

1. **The interconnectedness of Islamic concepts** - arguing that changing one fundamental concept (like the status of non-Muslims) necessarily changes others, creating a different religion altogether
2. **Specific case study of Muhammad Salim Al-Awa** - criticizing his academic background as being more focused on secular law than Islamic scholarship, and his positions on issues like women's blood money and the status of Coptic Christians
3. **Three root causes** for what he sees as deviation:
 - Defeat and defeatism before Western/secular attacks
 - Corrupted Islamic education mixed with philosophy and Western thought
 - Prioritizing personal desires over established religious evidence
4. **The end result** - claiming these thinkers are creating something closer to an "American version of Islam" that accommodates secular values rather than authentic Islamic principles

I also concluded by calling on traditional Sunni scholars to actively oppose these trends rather than remaining silent out of courtesy or personal relationships.

The piece maintains the same critical, traditionalist tone as the previous documents, representing a conservative Islamic perspective opposing modernist interpretations of Islamic law and theology.

A creed, any creed, is a collection of fundamental concepts that form its fixed foundations upon which its basic structure is built and through which its integrated edifice is constructed. These concepts are connected to each other, complement each other, and communicate in one system that does not allow for substitution or change.

In Islam, we find that the concept of divinity (uluhiyya) necessitates the concept of lordship (rububiyya) and occupies the position of result to cause - neither is valid without the other. Conversely, the position of hesitation regarding the disbelief of the pagan Copts, which

reflects, without the slightest doubt, hesitation and doubt about their disbelief, necessitates a different relationship between Islam and the religion of the Copts, which, from this perspective, is neither disbelief nor Islam (perhaps they are among the people of the heights then!). This establishes citizenship and harmonizes with the concept of equality of religions.

I was appalled by the repeated examination of the manifestations of substitution and distortion that original Islamic concepts are subjected to, in the articles I addressed in previous days, where I examined the concepts of moderation, renewal, and citizenship. What the image of Islam that "Islamic thinkers" seek to establish its principles and entrench its concepts looks like - they are closer to centrist secularism that adopts an Islam inoculated with secularism than they are to the Islam that was revealed to Muhammad, peace be upon him.

Reasons for This Deviation

But first, I would like to explore the reason that calls those known for belonging to Islam, and even Islamic thought, to twist Islamic concepts to the degree that Muhammad Salim Al-Awa fell into by denying the excommunication of Bishoy the Copt! That is, to the degree of hesitating to excommunicate the Trinitarians who claim a son - a statement for which its speaker should be asked to repent, and if he repents, well and good; otherwise, he should be killed for disbelief and not buried in Muslim cemeteries.

Then what they call for regarding the concept of citizenship - what a disappointment! They did not even elevate their Islam to what the Zionists of Israel called for when they called on the world to recognize its Jewishness as a state and imposed an oath of allegiance to Judaism on its individuals. At the same time, Fahmy Howeidy, Salim Al-Awa, and a number of emerging media generation advocates seek secular citizenship that equalizes religions and between Muslim and infidel, instead of the Islamization of the state!

I believe there is more than one reason behind this humiliating retreat from doctrinal constants by such people counted among Islamic thought, including:

1. Clear Defeat Before the Fierce Attack on Islam

Whether from the external Crusader-Zionist front or from the internal secular forces controlling governance and the Copts loyal to the Crusader West. This led these people to search for means of rapprochement with invading thought and adopting a coexistence strategy as a means to defuse the fear of confrontation.

2. Mistaken Islamic Background

Mixed with philosophy and Mu'tazila thought, and with the heritage of modern Western thought.

Case Study: Muhammad Salim Al-Awa

If we look at the biography of one of the heads of centrist secularism in Egypt, Muhammad Salim Al-Awa, we would find a huge array of experiences, scientific activities, published articles, and a number of printed books. However, this array results in a majority in the field of pure positive law or in the field of commerce and business. None of it is devoted purely to Islam except for a number of books, most of which research the topic of "renewing Islam and Islamic jurisprudence," and attempting to defend jurisprudential issues that do not appeal to Westerners.

Such as his opinion on equalizing women's blood money (diya) with men's blood money, which Sheikh Al-Qaradawi shared - that Islamic jurists throughout the ages did not realize that women's blood money equals men's blood money due to the lack of need to research it for all these centuries! Until Sheikh Al-Qaradawi and Salim Al-Awa came and extracted their treasure and discovered the correct legal ruling, citing ambiguous verses like Allah's saying: "The believing men and believing women are allies of one another. They enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and establish prayer and give zakah and obey Allah and His Messenger" - which does not establish equality in blood money!

Rather, it commands the duty of enjoining good and forbidding evil, prayer and zakah specifically, then obedience to Allah and His Messenger generally. Among the particulars of obedience is that women's blood money should be half of men's blood money. So they contradicted the Sunna of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, the Sunna of the Companions, and the consensus of scholars of the ages transmitted by Ibn Abd al-Barr and Ibn al-Mundhir, which was known to have no dissenter except Ibn Ulayya and Al-Asam, as

transmitted by Ibn Qudama in Al-Mughni, who said: "This is an anomalous opinion that contradicts the consensus of the Companions and the Sunna of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him" (Al-Mughni, Vol. 7, p. 535).

We can only remind here in this brief space that men's inheritance is double women's inheritance. Therefore, if a woman is killed, justice, interest, and reason require that the family pay half of a man's blood money since she had no share of inheritance except half. This is what justice requires if we adopt Al-Awa's and Al-Qaradawi's view that interest takes precedence over text when they conflict.

Then we must believe with amazement that such derivation contrary to Sunna and consensus has no connection whatsoever to weakness and defeat before the women's problem that the West created and transferred to the land of Islam!

If the place were suitable, we would expand in discussing such jurisprudential anomalies, but we will return to them in an expanded book, God willing.

But we wanted to show here that these jurisprudential anomalies they call renewal are nothing but defeat first, and confused thinking second.

3. Prioritizing Desire Over Legal Evidence

Creating what they called renewal to be a psychological and academic cover for changing what is established from Islam's givens, which do not align with the current of modernist thought supported by ruling secularism. There is nothing better than twisting evidence and nothing closer than tampering with jurisprudential constants to deceive the common people and make them fall into the illusion of renewal, so that the common people take them as heads and imams and attribute to them all the qualities of knowledge and wisdom!

The Result: A Different Islam

What these imams of centrist secularism and sages of false renewal did not realize, or what they realized and were satisfied with its result by choice and voluntarily, is that the Islamic building they construct on the ruins of constants and authentic Islamic concepts

has no connection to the Islamic building that Allah, glory be to Him, wanted for people and whose foundations were built and walls erected by Muhammad, peace be upon him.

Tampering with foundations and concepts must necessarily result in a structure and building different from the original - a truth that only a sinful doubter would argue against.

The Islam that these people want to establish its structure and construct its framework through this renewal and this moderation is closer to the American version of Islam that Obama and his Crusader followers adopt for Muslims, that Sufi charlatans believe in, and that the likes of Amr Khaled and his class of Muslim "preachers" promote - those they call new preachers, in reference to distorted "renewal"!

Yes, these people enjoy fame and receive medals and prizes, are invited to speak at every forum, and are celebrated by the common people on every occasion. But this is a matter that does not indicate correctness in thought or moderation in opinion. Rather, the opposite - we have not heard that Ibn Taymiyyah received prizes and medals; rather, he suffered prison and exile, like Ahmad ibn Hanbal and others who resisted waves of false renewal throughout the ages.

The Duty of Sunni Scholars

The point is that it is the duty of scholars from the people of Sunna and Jama'a, among those capable of refuting these claims, to stand against tampering with Islam's constants, to expose this trend, and not to put personal courtesies and individual relationships before what Allah obligated them to do when He said: "And when Allah took a covenant from those who were given the Scripture, [saying], 'You must make it clear to the people and not conceal it.'" And they should not be like those of whom the Almighty said: "But they threw it away behind their backs and exchanged it for a small price. And wretched is that which they purchased" (Quran 3:187).

They should not leave journalists and media people free to destroy truth and establish falsehood, or to elevate the status of the small and lower the status of the great, as this is not the role of journalists but the role of excellent, sincere scholars who do not belong to sultanistic institutions like Al-Azhar and Dar al-Ifta and others who sold their religion for a very cheap price.

We have seen the virtuous Dr. Zeinab Abdel Aziz stand watch against Christian fabrications through what she writes and expose Al-Azhar and its agent role. Perhaps we will see scholars who take such a position against these callers to the new Islam.

Conclusion

Finally and not lastly, I would like to remind that the catastrophe facing Muslims today in their doctrinal construction, legislative constants, and their entire existence no longer tolerates evasiveness, courtesy, and "soothing." Rather, this is the stage of speaking the truth and announcing falsehood and falsehood in all its forms and all its directions.

Everything that the people of evasiveness, courtesy, and "soothing" bring of logic that supports the trend of appeasement and soothing contains no good, neither legally nor rationally. It is an error in the basis of adorning oneself with gentleness and softness. How easy it is for many of those who wade into Muslim affairs today, who have no knowledge, to fall into such delusion.

And Allah is the guide to the path.

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