

**ABSTRACTS:**

**FEW TRANSLATIONS OF HOLLY QURAN BY  
THE FAMOUS ORIENTALISTS  
(A CRITICAL REVIEW)**

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The Quran was revealed in the Arabic language, and any translation, at best, is an interpretation of the meaning. Some translators are more faithful to the original, while others are looser with rendering into English. This paper is aimed at enumeration of some of the English translations of the Holly Quran by the orientalist using the examples. Many orientalists of different age are viewed and analyzed in this work. In addition each of the classical and modern translation are judged and viewed critically.

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Notes And References

- <sup>1</sup> Bernard Lewis, *The Revolt Of Islam: When did the conflict with the West begin, and how could it end?*, The New Yorker, November 19, 2001
- <sup>2</sup> Bernard Lewis, *The Crises of Islam*, Orion Books Ltd. London, 2003, p. 10
- <sup>3</sup> The corporation usually claims at inside title of the each release with; “The RAND Corporation is a nonprofit research organization providing objective analysis and effective solutions that address the challenges facing the public and private sectors around the world. RAND’s publications do not necessarily reflect the opinions of its research clients and sponsors.”
- <sup>4</sup> Cheryl Benard, *Civil Democratic Islam; Partners, Resources and Strategies*, Rand Corporation Santa Monica CA, 2003, pp. 25 – 33
- <sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 4
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid.,
- <sup>7</sup> Bernard Lewis, *The Crises of Islam*, p. 21
- <sup>8</sup> Mustapha Kamal Al-Seyyid, *Disaggregating the Islamist Movements*, Yale, New Haven, May 2004. p. 4
- <sup>9</sup> International Crises Group (ICG), 2004, I, 3
- <sup>10</sup> F. V. Der Mehden in Esposito, 1987, p. 184
- <sup>11</sup> R. Hrair Dekmejian, *Multiple faces of Islam*, in *Islam in a Changing World*, ed. A. Jerichow & J. Simonsen, Curzon Press, Uk, 1997, p. 3
- <sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 6
- <sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 11
- <sup>14</sup> Dr. Kamal , *Disaggregating the Islamic Movements*, p. 5
- <sup>15</sup> Bernard Lewis, *Islam; the religion and the people*, New Jersey USA 2009, p. 156
- <sup>16</sup> Bruce Vaughn, *Islam in South and Southeast Asia*, CRS (Congressional Research Service) report for Congress, Feb. 2005, p. 8

Although, an immense discussion over the definition, perspective and classification of Islamic movements has been rendered by Western intellectuals, yet, it looks evident that they are having perplexity in their thoughts. Positive or moderate Western thinkers dislike to attribute violent and '*isms*' to the Muslims, while others hold the view that leads demanding forceful eradication of these movements.

Since the catastrophe of 9/11/2001, the word "Islamist" has been increasingly used by pundits and by the media to refer to terrorists and/or extremists. The biggest mistake US policy-makers did is to lump all Islamists together and consider them all extremists, terrorists, and enemies of the US. This has pit the US against Islam and the Muslim world, and leads to more misunderstandings, violence, and extremism on both sides of the divide. Today, more than ever before, it is need to understand Islam and the Islamists (or Islamic movements) better in order to isolate the extremists and encourage and support the moderates and those who advocate peaceful change and reforms.

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activists and militants as they are seen as good Muslims sacrificing their efforts and even their lives for a noble cause.

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About the types of Islamic Movements, Bernard Lewis argued:

It is difficult adequately and accurately to define these Islamic movements in a language that for many centuries has been fashioned by Christian practice and usage. Some of them have been described, by outside rather than by Muslim observers, as “reformists.” But in their own perception, their aim was not to reform, in the sense of modernizing, their faith, but rather to restore it to its pristine purity. There have been many such movements in the course of Islamic history and over the vast extent of the Muslim world, differing considerably in their doctrines, their methods and the degree of success that they achieved. Some were gradualists, some radical; some were victorious, and were able to seize power and thus to confront, in time, the same challenges and the same problems as the rulers whom they had overthrown.<sup>15</sup>

In the perspective of contemporary Islamic revival, this fact is established that the decline of Islamic power in the wake of European colonial expansion provoked two key schools of thought within Islam that continue to have relevance today. The traditionalist school believed that the cause for the decline of Islam could be traced to “moral laxity and departure from the true path of Islam.” As a result, their response was to call for an Islamic revival. Others, known as reformers, felt that the decline was due to “a chronic failure to modernize their societies and institutions.” The path of the reformers presents the question of whether it is possible to modernize without Westernizing. At its core this is a struggle over values: “... how to protect a society’s cultural heritage and traditional practices in an age of globalization and how to develop a creative coexistence between modernization and traditionalism without Westernization.”<sup>16</sup>

Whereas, the Political Shi‘a movements are stated<sup>13</sup> as under:

Ideology	Group	Country
<i>Revolutionary Marji‘ist</i>	• Hizbullah	Lebanon
	• Hizb al-Da‘wa al-Islamiyyah	Iraq Gulf/ Lebanon
	• Jihad al-Islami	Lebanon
	• Jabha al-Islamiyyah li-Tahrir al-Bahrain	Bahrain
	• Munazzama al-Thawra al-Islamiyya lil-Jazira al-‘Arabiyya.	Saudi Arab
<i>Reformist Gradualist</i>	• I‘tilaf al-Islami al-Watani	Kuwait
	• Haraka al-Tahrir	Bahrain

Such classifications are not sufficient to depict the complexity of the Islamist movements; Dr. Kamal elaborates the objective to portray any movement:

They overlook the indirect contribution of two other strands in that movement, one coming from the ruling elites themselves, and the other is provided by apolitical Muslims. The first of these two groups help the Islamist movement by propagating through official media and institutional ideas glorifying a return to a “Golden Age of Islam,” thus unwittingly serving the cause of oppositional Islam by making some of the arguments of the later acceptable to the large masses. The second group provides sympathy to the

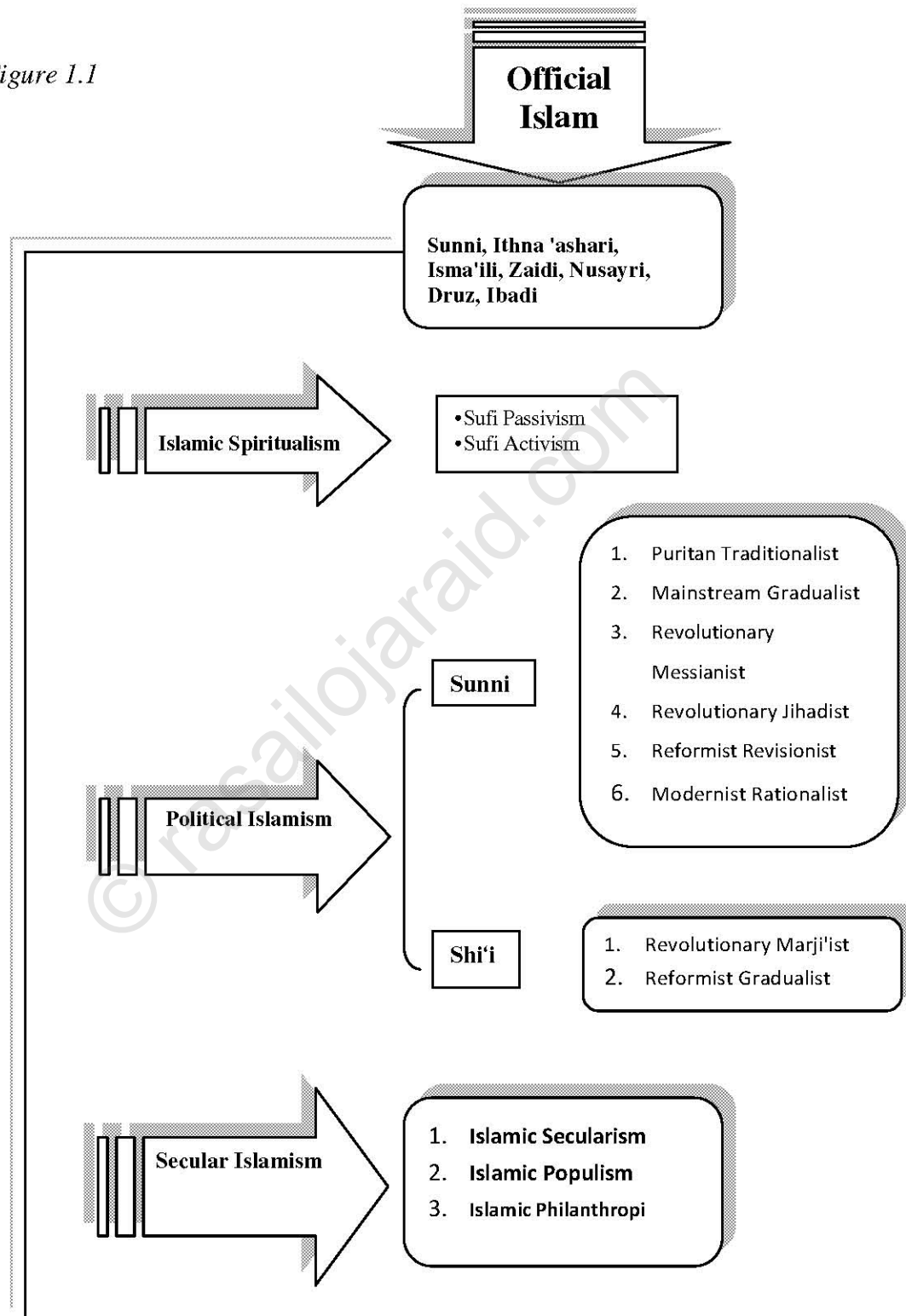
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Subsequently he categorized<sup>12</sup> the contemporary active Islamic movements under above mentioned classification:

*Table 1.3 Political Islamism – Sunni*

<i>Ideology type</i>	<i>Organization</i>	<i>Country</i>
Puritan Traditionalist (Salafiyya)	Ahl al-Hadith (Wahhabi)	Saudi Arabia Gulf
	Salafiyyun	Saudi Arabia
	Ansar al-Sunna al-Muhammadiyya	Egypt Sudan
Mainstream Gradualist	Ikhwan al-Muslimun	Egypt Arab World
	Islah al-Ijtima'i	Kuwait
	Harakat al-Nahda	Tunisia
	Jama'a al-Islamiyya	Lebanon
Revolutionary Messianist	Takfir wal-Hijra	Egypt
	Al-Ikhwan	Saudi Arabia
Revolutionary Jihadist	Tanzim al-Jihad	Egypt
	Jāma'a al-Islāmiyya	Egypt
	Hizb al-Tahrir	Arab World
	Hamas/Jihad al-Islami	Palestine
	Ikhwan al-Muslimun	Syria
	Jabha al-Islamiyya lil-Inqaz	Algeria
	Jabha al-Qawmiyya al-Islamiyya	Sudan
Reformist Revisionist	Ikhwan al-Jumhuriyyun	Sudan
	Hizb al-Umma	Sudan
Modernist Rationalist (‘Asriyyun ‘Aqlaniyyun)	Individual Thinkers, Scholars and Groups	

Figure 1.1



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1. *Salafiyyah Ilmiyyah* (Scientific Salafiyya) who are concerned with the re-establishment of the moral order that prevailed at the time of the Prophet Muhammed (ﷺ) and who do not engage in politics, but do not mind using violence in order to get other Muslims to observe truly Islamic practices.
2. *Salafiyya Jihadiyya* (Militant Salafists) who “attack Western targets in a campaign rationalized in traditional doctrinal terms as a conventional Jihad in defense of Islamic world against Western aggression”,
3. *Modernists* Political activists who are inclined towards peaceful action and who are willing to use modern ideas, techniques and organizations in order to reach their goal of an Islamist state.
4. *Militants* who believe that the only way to establish a truly Islamic society is through the use of armed struggle directed mostly against their own governments.
5. Finally, *Diaspora Muslim activists* who try to maintain an Islamic identity in non-Muslim countries to which Muslims have migrated in mostly Christian societies in Europe and North America.<sup>9</sup>

The authors of this classification used two criteria in classifying Islamist movements, mainly the substance of beliefs for adherents to these movements as well as their methods of action in pursuit of their specific goal. Fred Von Der Mehden, describing Islamists in Malaysia, he divided them into four categories: radicals, traditionalists, fundamentalists and facilitators.<sup>10</sup>

Another classification of contemporary Islam is sighted by R. Hrair Dekmejian, a professor of Political Science at the University of Southern California, who categorizes Islam under the title of ‘*Multiple faces of Islam*’<sup>11</sup>. His presented classification is given below in the shape of diagram: