

## SUNNISM AND "ORTHODOX" IN THE EYES OF MODERN SCHOLARS

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### Abstrak

Sesuai dengan judulnya, tulisan ini membahas secara historiografis penyebutan label "ortodoks" untuk menamai kelompok tertentu dalam wacana keislaman. Kaum orientalis sejak abad kedelapan belas telah secara rutin menggunakan istilah ortodoks ini untuk menyebut kelompok Sunni, sebagai lawan dari kelompok Syi'ah maupun Khawarij yang mereka sebut sebagai "heteredoks". Label "ortodoks" tersebut melekat kepada kelompok Sunni utamanya karena perolehan dukungan politik khalifah Umayyah maupun Abbasiyah, sementara istilah "heredoks" teraplikasikan kepada kelompok-kelompok sempalan politik yang berseberangan dengan kekuatan mayoritas, seperti kelompok Khawarij dan Syi'ah. Makalah ini lebih jauh lagi berusaha untuk menapaki penggunaan istilah ini oleh para orientalis sejak dari masa pra-modern, seperti Edward Gibbon (1772-1794), hingga masa modern yaitu Ignaz Goldziher (1850-1921), Duncan MacDonald (1863-1943), D.S. Margoliuth (1858-1940), Philip K. Hitti (lahir 1886), dan H.A.R. Gibb (1859-1940). Terlepas dari benar atau tidaknya penyebutan ini, istilah ortodoks untuk kaum Sunni Islam tersebut memang berangkat dari proposisi yang beragam dari para orientalis, di samping latar belakang sosio-politik dan kultur mereka yang berlainan pula.

Namun begitu, pelabelan ini tampaknya memang mengandung problem. Para orientalis modern seperti Marshall G.S. Hodgson (w. 1960) dan Montgomery Watt (l. 1905) dapat disebut sebagai kelompok revisionis dalam hal ini. Walaupun pemikiran Goldziher dalam hal ini masih mendominasi sebagian besar pemikir orientalis, namun kritik yang dilontarkan oleh Hodgson maupun Watt membuka jalan untuk pemikiran ulang dalam penggunaan istilah ini. Bagi penulis, istilah-istilah seperti "ortodoks" maupun "heresi" sesungguhnya tidak dapat dilepaskan dari fenomena sekularisme yang melanda wacana keagamaan. Oleh karenanya penggunaan istilah ini tidak boleh dilepaskan dari konteksnya, dan pelabelan yang semena-mena terhadap kelompok Sunni sebagai ortodoks justru akan mengaburkan penggambaran sejarah Islam itu sendiri.

## ملخص

تناقش هذه المقالة عن اسم التقليدية لتسمية جماعة معينة في الاسلام مستخدمة طريقة تاريخية. قد استعمل المستشرقون هذا الاسم معاشرين إلى أهل السنة منذ القرن الثامن عشر كمعارض للشيعية والخوارج المسمون بالابتداعية "Heterodox". وتسمية أهل السنة بالتقليدية تكون بأسباب، منها لأنهم نالوا تدعيم الخلافة الأموية والعباسية، بينما الابتداعية أعطيت للحركات السياسية ضد القوة الأغلبية أي الحكومة مثل الخوارج والشيعية. تسعى هذه المقالة البحث عن استعمال اسم التقليدية في أيدي المستشرقين من عصر قبل العصرية مثل ادوارد جيبون (١٧٩٤-١٧٧٢) إلى العصر الحديث مثل اجناز جولد زهر (١٩٢١ - ١٧٥٠) و دنكن مك دونالد (١٩٤٣ - ١٨٦٣)، ود.س. مرجوليو (١٩٤٠ - ١٨٥٨) وويلب ك. هتي (ولد ١٨٨٦) و ه.أ. رجب (١٩٤٠ - ١٨٥٩). بدون الاهتمام إلى صلاحية هذا الاسم، ان تسمية أهل السنة بالتقليديين واردة من القضايا المتنوعة بجانب اختلاف خلفياتهم الاجتماعية والسياسية والحضرية.

على رغم ذلك، هناك مشكلات في هذه التسمية فيعارض المستشرقان المعاصران مرشال ج.س. هصن (ت ١٩٦٠) ومون جوميري وات (و. ١٩٠٥) هذه التسمية. كان ونقدهما رغم سيطرة آراء جولد زهر في أفكار المستشرقين، قد فتح طريقا لتفكير هذه التسمية. وهنا يرى الباحث ان استعمال اسم التقليدية Orthodox او هرطقية heresy لا تبعد من الظاهرات الدينية التي دخلت عالم الدين. فلذلك لا يمكن فصل هذا الاسم من ظاهرتيه الأولى، وتسمية جماعة أهل السنة في أي مكان بالتقليديين تبهم تاريخ الاسلام نفسه.

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The word "orthodox" in English has the specific meaning of correct or accepted doctrine, "in harmony with what is authoritatively established". When applied to Judaism, it means "the strict retention of traditional observances".<sup>2</sup> The opposite of "orthodox" is "heterodox", or



"heretical", especially in reference to movements contrary to the Christian Church. Despite the fact that both the concept of "orthodox" and "heresy" originated in a Western environment, and no exactly parallel terms actually exist in Arabic, Orientalists have routinely used these terms to describe the Islamic environment since the 18th century. Only in the last 30 years have there been significant attempts at revisionism. Typically, Sunni Islam has been called "ortho-dox" while the various Shi'i and Khariji movements have been called "heterodox". The paradox is that nowhere in the Orientalist literature has it been possible to distill a specifically Sunni dogma except in broadest of terms such as al-Ash'ari theology and a general acceptance of the Caliphate. Lacking an official church, Islamic doctrine has been established rather informally for both Sunni and Shi'i Muslim by the 'ulama. The concept of "Sunna" or established path is common to all Muslims (the term God's Sunna is found several times in the Qur'an). Muslims have not always agreed as to who has the right to determine the correct Sunna, and some modernist Muslims would like to do away with the Sunna as it has traditionally been interpreted by Muslims.

Sunnism was labeled "orthodoxy" Islam by Orientalists primarily because it was taken as the version of Islam supported by the Umayyads and especially the 'Abbasid Caliphate. "Heterodoxy" was defined as those "sects" which opposed the Caliphate, such as the Shi'a and Khawarij. At times there appears in some Western writings the sense that somehow Sunnism is the more "correct" form of Islam, or more static form. It may be that Orientalists have absorbed Sunni ideas about themselves, but this is not a sufficient explanation. Sunnis have been viewed by Orientalists as those Muslims who have been willing to compromise with state rule for the sake of Islamic unity, while the "sectarians" are those who have been political outsiders. While these notions about Sunnism have prevailed for the most part in the West since the 18th century, the Sunni phenomenon has remained largely unanalyzed, and the applicability of the term "orthodoxy" to explain Sunnism as well as its usefulness in explaining Islamic history might well be questioned.

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Bernard Lewis writing in the 1950s distilled the Orientalist view of Sunnism and Islamic history in this way, "The Abbasids rode to power on the crest of one of these religious opposition movements, and their victory was a social as well as a political revolution ... the Abbasids strove to



formulate and inculcate a new 'orthodoxy', no longer the tribal cult of a race of alien conquerors, but the universal religion of the theologians, which in time became 'orthodox', Sunni Islam. 'Orthodoxy' was once more the religion of the state and the existing order, — and new heresies arose to meet the spiritual needs and material aspirations of the discontented."<sup>3</sup> He confirms that "Orthodoxy meant the acceptance of the existing order, heresy or apostasy, its criticism or rejection."<sup>4</sup>

This Orientalist vision of Islam then that "orthodox" Islam is the Sunni Islam promulgated and supported by the 'Abbāsids Caliphs in the "classical" period of Islamic history. The origins of this view can be traced at least to the 18th century writings of Edward Gibbon (1772-1794). He felt that Sunni "orthodoxy" was an official state dogma which unified the Arabs and allowed for the creation of an empire. For Gibbon, what destroyed the "Arabian sovereignty" was the extent and rapidity of the conquests. Pure Arab blood was mixed with that of converts.<sup>5</sup> Gibbon believed that after 12 centuries Islam had remained unchanged.<sup>6</sup> This was because the Caliphs had suppressed all religious innovation and there was no clergy in Islam to disrupt order.<sup>7</sup> If Sunni Islam was "orthodox" because of its presumed relationship to the state, Shi'ism was a Persian reaction to Arab rule.<sup>8</sup> Gibbon tried to fit the Islamic conquests and the formation of an Islamic empire into the pattern of history he felt existed in the decline and fall of the Romans. He had relatively few sources at his disposal, but his work is still readable today, even though not all his ideas are still acceptable.

It took Ignaz Goldziher (1850-1921) in the 19th century to illustrate the development of "orthodox" Sunni Islam in the century after the Islamic conquests. This influential scholar discussed in detail the development of *Hadīth*, the literary basis of the *Sunna* from the advent of Islam. *Sunna* was the normative principle in a Muslim's life. By the end of the first century, the principle was formed: *al-Sunna qāḍiya 'ala-'l-Qur'ān wa laysa al-Qur'ān bi qāḍin 'ala-al-Sunna*— the Sunna is the judge of the Qur'an and not vice versa. He also mentions Ibn 'Umar's advice that paying homage to an unjust ruler is better than to revolt,<sup>9</sup> and identified it as one of the characteristics of early Sunnism, i.e. paying homage to the 'Umayyads. Even under the 'Abbāsids the term *ijmā' al-umma* was introduced. In the teaching of Sunni Islam this *ijmā'* is a measure of the ruler's title to authority. The "*imām*" who is recognized by the will of the whole community is the rightful "*imām*"; this was the teaching particularly against those who wished to confine legitimacy to the 'Alid family.



Hence, being in harmony with given rulers is an important feature of Sunni "orthodoxy" according to Goldziher. The concept of *ijmā'* belonging to the majority of the *umma* (*jama'a*) symbolizes Sunnism in a broad sense from legal to political application. It is worthwhile to note that he refers to "orthodoxy" while mentioning the law schools and traditional theology. Consequently, the people involved in these activities constitute the "orthodox" community. Due to his specialization on Islamic tradition and law, it is understandable that he approached Sunnism more with regard to its connection with legal and *Hadith* evolution.

While Goldziher attempted to explain the legal development of Sunni "orthodoxy", scholars such as Duncan MacDonald (1863-1943) and D.S. Margoliuth (1858-1940) attempted to define theological aspects of "orthodoxy".

MacDonald was a professor of Semitic language at Hartford Theological Seminary and the author of *The Development of Muslim Theology, Jurisprudence and Constitutional Theory* (1903). He discussed Sunnism under the topic of "The Rise of Orthodox Kalam: al-Ash'ari." Not only did he polarize Sunnism and Shi'ism but also *Sunna* and *Bid'a* as well as *khalifa* and *shah*. His style seems to be affected by Christian terms such as rendering the term *salaf* as "the pattern of the early church".<sup>10</sup> His occasional use of the term "orthodox" and "heretical" is more evidence of this. For MacDonald, Sunnism is characterized by its sustainability against the "non-orthodox" community, especially within the battle of Islamic *kalām*. Al-Ash'ari and al-Ghazali were chosen as the most influential "orthodox" writers.

D.S. Margoliuth, a British scholar and author of *Mohammedanism* (1911) was concerned with defining Islamic sects in terms of theological disputes. He discusses Sunnism under the topic of "Islamic Sect".<sup>11</sup> While Sunnism is "orthodox" theology, those who opposed to it are regarded by Margoliuth as heretical. His tendency to use Jewish terms reminds one of his capacity as a Jewish scholar.

In the period following World War I, it became a popular Orientalists' theme to seek out the reasons for the apparent decline of Islamic civilization, just as "Sunni orthodoxy" was seen as reason for its relative "backwardness." The cultural sustainability and the "anti-rationalism" and static nature of "Sunni orthodoxy" are themes brought up by writers such as Philip K. Hitti (b. 1886), H.A.R. Gibb (1859-1940), and Gustav von Grunebaum (d. 1972).



Philip K. Hitti was professor of Semitic literature at the William and Annie S. Patton Foundation at Princeton University and the writer of *History of the Arabs* (1937). He refers only briefly to Sunnism. However, it is apparent that he regards Sunnism as a sect because he includes it under the topic "Muslim Sects" where he classifies some sectarian movements. His characterization of "orthodoxy" can be seen in formulations such as rationalism versus "orthodoxy". He presents Sunnism among the sectarian movements struggling for political power such as the Shi'ites, Mu'tazilites, Qarmatians, and others. Hitti makes Sunnism the winner in this struggle.

Hitti's treatment in this context was similar to how Gibb dealt with Sunnism in the 1930s -1940s as will be seen below. The Muslim countries in this period were mostly under French, British, and Dutch colonization. These two decades were critical, for the colonized countries were struggling for independence. The writers working for the colonists helped to establish colonial domination by negotiating with leaders of the people and by imposing ideas which were encouraging them not to revolt. Sunnism was considered the best means of strengthening "political silence". Hitti, Margoliuth, and Gibb had this provocative mission in the Middle Eastern countries, while Snouck Hurgronje had this same responsibility in Indonesia.

Hamilton A.R. Gibb defined Sunnis as the "followers of the Sunna". This applied to the general body of "orthodox" Muslims who adhered to the "usage of the community".<sup>12</sup> Gibb uses Sunnism and "orthodoxy" as synonyms. For him Sunnism was "orthodox" Islam identified by standing fast on the principle of its spiritual independence, its right and duty to assert Islamic ethical standards, and its rigidity in maintaining unity.<sup>13</sup> In order to maintain unity, "orthodoxy" tolerates a considerable degree of freedom of interpretation and even divergence in external institutions.

"Orthodoxy" was also defined by its supremacy in employing the science of Tradition to authenticate the whole structure by a system of formal criteria. Gibb adds that the foundations were underpinned by the principle that once agreement on any main issue of doctrine or law had been reached by responsible scholars, it was final and conclusive, and to reopen controversy on it was "heresy".<sup>14</sup>

It seems that Gibb considers Sunni Islam as the major trend in early Islam. In spite of having no formal organization, Sunnism was so important that it was largely institutionalized. Instead of regarding Sun-



nism as a sect, Gibb called it the "orthodox" institution in most of his writings. Gibb's view of the role of orthodoxy can be seen in the following passage:

The Orthodox revival in the fifth century of the Hijra (the eleventh of the Christian era) marks the turning point in the history of Islamic culture. It began as a systematic effort to remove or to counteract all the factors of instability and disunity, political, social, religious and moral, within the Muslim community, but led ultimately as will be seen, to a thoroughgoing revolution.<sup>15</sup>

For Gibb, Sunni "orthodoxy" was able to preserve the Muslim community after the fifth century. Some of the same ideas can be found in the writing of Gustave E. von Grunebaum.<sup>16</sup> To him there was no difference in using the terms Sunni Islam and Orthodox Islam. That he did not view Sunnism as a sect can be noticed from how he illustrated the development of *Hadith*, *Sunna* and law in early Islam. For him "orthodox" Islam was defined in medieval times as a striking cultural phenomenon stretching from the first century in the manifestation of a *Sunna* and *fiqh* oriented society up to Ghazālī (d. 1111). In this society disagreement was insignificant. Grunebaum takes the validity of *ra'y* or personal opinion in legal thinking as an example. It is worth noting that the later the date of a school of law, the more intolerant it proves itself toward *ra'y*.<sup>17</sup>

The Islamic power of transformation and acculturation depend upon the orthodox concept of *ijmā'*, consensus, the means by which Muslim law succeeded at once in preserving its foundations with the ever changing needs of different places and times.<sup>18</sup> Through this concept von Grunebaum judged that Sunni Islam often exhibits an unmistakable trend toward toleration when compared with Shi'ism.

Marshall G.S. Hodgson (d. 1968) was the first revisionist to use the term *jamā'ī sunni* instead of "orthodox" Islam. In his book *The Venture of Islam* (1961), he wrote in a footnote:

We may summarize three ways in which the term Sunni has been most used, as follows: to mean *Jamā'ī* as vs. *Shi'ī*; to mean *Hadithi* as vs. *Kalāmī* (including *Mu'tazilis* and *Ash'aris*); to mean *Shari'a* as vs. *Sufi*. Then it has been extended to those 'Alid loyalists, *kalām* men, and *Sufis* who accepted key positions of their respective opponents. Once one no longer assumes the old stereotypes which these usages embodied, they serve merely to confuse the issues.<sup>19</sup>



In general, Hodgson characterizes the *Jamā'ī* Sunni as the majority of the Muslims who accept the authority of the whole first generation of Muslims and the validity of historical community, in contrast to the Kharijites and Shi'ites.<sup>20</sup>

Hodgson offers more on the doctrines of the *Jamā'ī* Sunni in terms of political activities. He said that the *Jamā'ī* Sunni were willing to receive whomever the majority of the community, the *Jamā'a*, found it political to accept as ruler.<sup>21</sup> In other words, the oneness of the *umma* was a vital Sunni principle.

Although Hodgson is entitled to be called a revisionist in using the term "*Jamā'ī* Sunni", but it should be noted here that just a few years before, in 1958, Hodgson could not avoid using "the controversial term" i.e. "orthodox Islam" several times.<sup>22</sup>

Montgomery Watt (b. 1905) is another interesting revisionist in his understanding of Sunnism. His criticism of those applying the term "orthodoxy" is obvious. The term is out of place in an Islamic context. He argues that the strict meaning of the word is of sound or correct intellectual belief; but despite the inquisition begun by al-Ma'mun and apart from acceptance of the *Shahāda*, correctness of intellectual belief has never been a criterion of whether one was a Muslim or not.<sup>23</sup> He adds that Islam has had no machinery comparable to the Ecumenical Councils of the Christian Church which could say authoritatively what constitutes right doctrine. He concludes that it is more accurate to apply the term Sunnism than "orthodox Islam".

Watt reaffirms the refusal to use the term "orthodoxy" in his *Islamic Philosophy and Theology* (1962). However, he paradoxically uses the term "heresy" as a translation of the Arabic *bid'a*. Consequently he deems the *Khawārij*, the *Shi'a*, and the *Qadariya* as clearly "heretical sects".

Especially in his discussion of the *Shi'a* and *Khawārij*, Watt introduces Weberian terms such as "charismatic leader" and "charismatic community".<sup>25</sup> Moreover, he classifies the Muslim community in a Weberian way. When he elaborates the "triumph of Sunnism (850-945)", he analyzes aspects of Sunni consolidation as the formation of a canon of Tradition, the establishment of legal schools, the Qur'ānic sciences, and the contribution of sufis.<sup>26</sup> His method in associating elements results in making Sunnism the major and acceptable "normative form" of Islamic society. He also considers the political background of the Sunni victory in the bureaucracy. He produces very detailed material on Sunnism.<sup>27</sup>



The main feature of Sunnism according to Watt rests on the Sunni existence as a solid and adjustable ideology or belief adopted in widespread Sunni institutions. Watt successfully elucidates the development of the institutions from the beginning until they gradually attained a fuller and more precise formulation.

Fazlur Rahman (d. 1988) was a Muslim scholar who could be named a revisionist not so much because he attempted to revise Western historiography, but because he attempted to reform the Islamic understanding of Islam. He deliberately used various terms for Sunnism such as Sunni Islam, *al-Sunna wa 'l-Jamā'a*, Traditionalist, and mostly "orthodox". He defined the nature of Sunnism as being both majoritarian and middle-of-the road, therefore deserving to be called "orthodox".<sup>28</sup> Its purpose was to steer a middle course, especially between the Khariji and Shi'i political and theological extremes.<sup>29</sup> The idea of preserving unity is another feature of Sunnism. When political, theological, and legal differences threatened the community, Sunnism preserved the Islamic *umma*.<sup>30</sup> The most basic function of Muslim "orthodoxy" has been not to dictate or to define religious truth but to consolidate and formulate it: to stabilize and keep balance. "Orthodoxy" characterized large institutions including *Hadith*, *fiqh* oriented society, theology formulated by al-Ash'ari and al-Maturidi, and the Sufism of Junayd.<sup>31</sup>

Fazlur Rahman was a Muslim scholar striving for a fresh understanding of Islam and to divorce Islam from "traditionalism" and "orthodoxy" which perhaps he felt have "held back" Islamic society. This scholar was a prominent as well as controversial "reformer". He reached his intellectual freedom when he was away from his country, Pakistan, namely in London he finished his Ph.D. and at the University of Chicago, USA, he devoted himself to teaching and developing his thoughts. Fazlur Rahman induces sharp criticism of Sunnism, especially of the way in which Sunnis regard the Revelation of the Qur'an.<sup>32</sup> His criticism was in line with his plans for what he called "New Modernism" - an understanding of Islam based on historical context and social conditions. This means that the traditional approach toward Islam which proves to be "formalism" and "normative" must be avoided. His use of the terms "traditional" and "orthodox" in reference to Sunnism was to remind his Muslim audiences to reform Sunnism, which he believed to be quiescent and dominant but static.

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The central issue of this historiographical pursuit is indeed the application of the term "orthodoxy" to describe Sunnism. Why have so many writers from the advent of orientalism to the present day used this framework? It is only in 1960s and 1970s that some revisionism came from writers such as Hodgson and Watt. Since Sunnism was the major trend of Islamic history, any writer who uses the term "orthodoxy" for Sunnism must have a certain purpose. However, the "orthodoxy" they imagined was not singularly defined in terms of theology and ritual. Since the time of Edward Gibbon, Islam has been viewed by Orientalists as a necessary integrating factor in the Islamic conquests, and then the dogma of the 'Abbāsids empire. This Sunnism in the Orientalist view developed into "orthodox Islam" which was able to sustain the *umma* when the caliphate and universal Islamic empire began to disintegrate. This is the prevailing view of Islamic history, found even in writers such as Hodgson and Watt who are to be commended for their corrections of terms. The "orthodoxy" imagined by Orientalists varies and much depends on whoever writes about. Writers' socio-political and cultural background also plays an important role in defining "orthodoxy".

Although he was not the first scholar in using the term "orthodoxy", Goldziher was the most influential author in familiarizing such a controversial term. His works are always found here and there to be footnoted for so many modern scholars. Goldziher was inspired by the "orthodoxy" he found in Judaism. This correlation cannot be divorced from the fact that Reform Judaism developed in Germany in the 1840s. The Reform Jewish group (Goldziher was included though he was in Hungary) used the term "Orthodox Judaism" to characterize their more traditional conservative opponents. However, it must have been very painful to Goldziher that Jewish "orthodoxy" relentlessly rejected his reform experiments and declared him a "heretic" and a "menace to jewry".<sup>33</sup> Thus, as Goldziher disbelieve the authenticity of certain *Hadith* respected by Sunni Islam, it is reasonable that, at the same time, he indirectly criticizes "orthodox" Judaism.

More significant is Heller's suggestion that Goldziher was able to grasp the ideological development of Islam through the analogy of Judaism. Goldziher distinguished between *halakah* and *haqqadah* in the Jewish tradition just as he did between the standards of law and ethical narrative and eschatological tenets within the *Hadith*.<sup>34</sup>

The question, then, is why scholars could not stay away from Goldziher's framework for more than half a century. His great prestige



regarded by contemporary scholars abroad as the founder of a new branch of learning, the study of Islam,<sup>35</sup> can be taken as an answer.

Western scholars are, however, able to argue that what they have done is merely to legitimize what Muslim heresiographers have recorded. This discussion is ceaseless if there is no mutual understanding that "heresy" is inherent in every religion, though its form and connotation are unique. The uniqueness of "heresy" should be taken into account. Otherwise, misjudgment and prejudice will only aggravate historiographical works. The application of imported terms such as "orthodoxy" to Sunni Islam is within this context. People were not so critical of what they produced. Critiques from Hodgson and Watt which are mentioned above to those people are sufficient to reconsider here. Besides, the "orthodox" has often stood for value-judgment rather than a dogmatic mainstream.

While the terms "orthodox" and "heresy" were launched by scholars in the social science community in conjunction with the spread of secularism, they are, indeed, religious terminologies which have been much secularized.<sup>36</sup> In other words, "secularization" and "orthodox" are conceptually beyond the dictionary of the Muslim religion. Briefly defined, secularization is the process in which religious consciousness, activities, and institutions lose their social significance. While religion becomes marginal to the operation of the social system, functionalization and rationalization become dominant.<sup>37</sup> The other meaning of secularization namely the separation of church and state generally refers to Christian tradition.

In addition, secularization cannot be split from the side effect of the Industrial Revolution firstly initiated in France, and England in the 18th century. "God" is dead is a common expression among Western people in the early 20th century- The positive affects of the Revolutions are, of course, there but, they are not to be discussed here.

There is a question of vocabulary and a question as to the paradigm that the vocabulary implies. It is not the place here to question the Western view of Islamic history, but to point out the danger of a heedless application of a loaded term such as "orthodoxy" to describe Sunnism. Not only does such a term carry Western Christian and Jewish connotations which had been inappropriate to the Islamic scene, the term itself has been used to sustain the Orientalist vision of Islamic history. In short, the use of such terminology can only serve to confuse and obscure, rather than to clarify Islamic history. Studies on Sunnism available dichotomize Islam into Sunni and Shi'i sects, Traditionalism versus the Mu'tazilis,

etc. Although there has been a minor change in recent years in treating Sunnism among scholars, the change was superficial. Hodgson and Watt are confined to the correction of the terms. Basically they maintained the old tradition, namely, to be dichotomous and to be trapped in other new terms - Watt, for example, is absorbed in the term "heresy". Therefore, the essential feature in representing Sunnism by modern scholars remains the same color. They are tempted to employ some other new terms which are familiar to their imagination and audience but apart from the real picture of Islam in the early and Medieval periods. Due this unfair portrait, an academic pursuit to understand the continuation of the Sunni ideas should be made to place the Sunni historical context in a broader spectrum. This attempt will help understand how the Sunni ideas unmonolithically and uninstitutionalizedly grew and developed in the Muslim world throughout the centuries.

## Notes

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<sup>2</sup> *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*, 6th ed., "orthodox", p. 776.

<sup>3</sup> Bernard Lewis, "Some Observations on the Significance of Heresy in the History of Islam", in *Studia Islamica*, no. 1 (1956), p. 48.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 62.

<sup>5</sup> Edward Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, vol. VI, p. 281.

<sup>6</sup> Edward Gibbon, *Life of Mahomet*, p. 231.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 233.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 226.

<sup>9</sup> Ignaz Goldziher, *Muslim Studies* (Great Britain, 1971), vol. 2, p. 96.

<sup>10</sup> Duncan MacDonald, *Development of Muslim Theology, Jurisprudence and Constitutional Theory* (New York, 1903), p. 190.

<sup>11</sup> D.S. Margoliuth, *Muhammedanism* (London, 1911), pp. 155-159.

<sup>12</sup> H.A.R. Gibb, *Muhammedanism* (London, 1949), p. 50.

<sup>13</sup> See Gibb, *Studies on the Civilization of Islam* (Princeton, 1962), pp. 3-34.



- <sup>14</sup> Gibb, *op.cit.*, p. 16.
- <sup>15</sup> Gibb, *op.cit.*, p. 22.
- <sup>16</sup> His perception of Sunnism here is taken from his book, *Medieval Islam* (London, 1946).
- <sup>17</sup> Grunebaum, *Medieval Islam*, p. 147.
- <sup>18</sup> Grunebaum, *op.cit.*, p. 149.
- <sup>19</sup> Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam*, V. I. (Chicago, 1974), p. 278.
- <sup>20</sup> Hodgson, *op.cit.*, p. 517.
- <sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 345.
- <sup>22</sup> See Hodgson, *Introduction to Islamic Civilization* (Chicago, 1958), pp. 65, 66.
- <sup>23</sup> Montgomery Watt, *The Formative Period of Islam*, pp. 5-6.
- <sup>24</sup> Watt, *Islamic Philosophy*, pp. vii-21.
- <sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 3-5, 16, 17.
- <sup>26</sup> Watt, *The Formative Period*, pp. 256-65.
- <sup>27</sup> In *The Formative Period*, he uses almost 200 pages in clarifying Sunnism and elements related to and opposed to it.
- <sup>28</sup> Fazlur Rahman, *Islamic Methodology in History* (Karachi, Pakistan, 1965), p. 52.
- <sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 53-54.
- <sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 53.
- <sup>31</sup> Fazlur Rahman, *Islam* (Chicago, 1979), p. 43, 68, 85, 137.
- <sup>32</sup> Fazlur Rahman, *Islam*, p. 31.
- <sup>33</sup> See Robert Simon, *Ignaz Goldziher* (Leiden, 1986), p. 145.
- <sup>34</sup> Robert Simon *op.cit.*, p. 19-20.
- <sup>35</sup> Robert Simon, *op.cit.*, p. 11.
- <sup>36</sup> Michael G. Morony, "His Lecture on Historiography", UCLA, Winter, 1992.
- <sup>37</sup> See *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, Mircea Eliade, vol. 13, 1987, p. 160.