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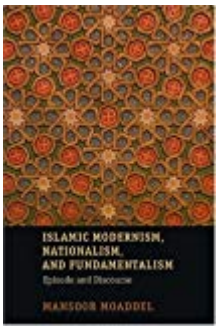

Mansoor Moaddel. *Islamic Modernism, Nationalism, and Fundamentalism: Episode and Discourse.* Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2005. x + 448 pp. $65.00, cloth, ISBN 978-0-226-53332-2.

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In his book *Islamic Modernism, Nationalism, and Fundamentalism*, Mansoor Moaddel offers an ambitious cross-national and historical comparative study of the production of Islamic modernism, liberal nationalism, and Islamic fundamentalism, while examining patterns of "stability and change" in the Islamic world from the seventeenth through the twentieth centuries (pp. ix, 24). Moaddel's main goal is to "advance the social-scientific understanding of the relationship between the production of ideas and broader social conditions" (p. 8). He points out that models drawn from the correspondence theory of ideology, the central assumption of which is "ideas and social structure correspond to each other," have largely guided research on the development of ideology (p. 12).

Within this context, he reviews what he calls the "classical tradition" of correspondence theory established by such thinkers as Émile Durkheim, Karl Marx, Max Weber, and their followers. Each of the aforementioned had a distinctive approach to the theory of ideology formation--Durkheim's was a mimetic conception, Marx's materialistic, and Weber's approach, which was "much more analytical and rich with detailed subtlety" than the former two, focused on "the metaphysical needs of the human mind" (pp. 9-12). Moaddel also discusses some newer theories put forward by Robert Wuthnow (an "alternative articulation model") and Randall Collins (an "amended Durkheimian two-step model of intellectual creativity") (pp. 9, 12-14). In the end, however, none of these models explains adequately *how* ideas are actually produced--i.e., the "specific mechanism that connects ideas to social structure" (p. 11).

Moaddel draws on his own case studies of Islamic countries to propose "an alternative *episodic discourse* model in order to explain the proximate conditions of ideological production" (emphasis added, p. 10). An "episode" is the interim period between specific "dramatic events" that often lead to a change in the social order or in how members of a certain society perceive the existing social arrangements. Some examples of episodes in the Islamic world are social and political upheaval (Sepoy Rebellion in India, pp. 60-74;

Babi movement in Iran, pp. 104-105; 'Urabi rebellion in Egypt, pp. 129-131); a military coup (1952 coup in Egypt, pp. 214-220; 1963 Ba'ath coup in Syria, pp. 228-239); and the outbreak of war or revolution (Iran's Constitutional Revolution of 1905-11, p. 20).

Each episode, in turn, eventually gives rise to a "target"--a set of discourses conveyed by "an active ideological group"--in opposition to which new ideas (ideologies) are formulated (pp. 15, 335). On this point, Moaddel differentiates between the formation of either ***political*** or ***social*** ideologies. He proposes that a target's proximity to state power, or the promotion by the ruling elite of a specific ideology by intervening extensively in cultural affairs, will lead to ideological production becoming politicized and, thus, increase its likelihood of developing a "political orientation"; on the other hand, if the target is further from state power, or the ruling elite is unconcerned about ideological debates, then the production of ideology "is confined to civil society" and its orientation tends to be social and nonpolitical (p. 17). The targets, whether political or social, "help ideological producers to stay focused" (p. 335). In this way, liberal, constitutional, and nationalist thought in Egypt, Syria, and Iran evolved in opposition to the three major discourses of monarchical absolutism, the orthodox 'ulama, and the ideology of colonial domination (pp. 123; 125-194).

To flesh out his arguments, Moaddel divides the body of his book into three parts, each with a helpful introduction. In part 1, he analyzes the origins and development of Islamic modernism in India, Egypt, and Iran, during the nineteenth to the early twentieth centuries. In part 2, he analyzes the origins and development of Egyptian liberalism and territorial nationalism, Syrian liberal Arabism and pan-Arab nationalism, and the movement from Iranian constitutionalism and anticlerical secularism to the development of Iranian economic nationalism--all of which occurred between the second half of the nineteenth and the middle of the twentieth centuries. Moaddel uses part three of the book to compare and contrast Egypt, Syria, Iran, Algeria, and Jordan in order to demonstrate how changes in state structure and policies, the formation of class, changes in demography, and the nature of the intellectual market contributed to the development of Islamic fundamentalism between the 1930s and the 1990s.

Moaddel points out that the ideological producers in the countries he covers were employed in the state bureaucracy (high-ranking officials, judges, school teachers, and professors of higher education) and religious institutions (most important for modernist and fundamentalist intellectual leaders). He concludes that what contributed to the rise of the several ideological movements in all the countries under purview were social classes, religious institutions, and the state. But of these three groups, he highlights the state as playing the most important role in the formation of communities of discourse, because it was the state that established bureaucratic administrative organization, employment opportunities for ideological producers, and an institutional framework that helped disseminate ideas (p. 321).

Pre- and post-revolutionary Iran offers an interesting example of the role of the state and the political-religious dynamics involved in ideological production. During the revolutionary period (1977-79), according to Moaddel, the Islamic revolutionary discourse was universalistic (i.e., it "transcended social differences among the participants in communitarian relations" [p. 329]). In this case, a "factor external to Islam" helped revolutionaries maintain a semblance of political unity: namely, the presence of the Shah as a common enemy (the "target" in Moaddel's parlance). This unity, however, "proved ephemeral and fleeting, and when concrete plans about the nature of the post-revolutionary regime emerged, disputes replaced harmony" (pp. 329-330). Taking this issue a step further, Moaddel restates his contention (of-

fered in chapters 9-12) that, whereas the secular, intrusive states in Algeria, Egypt, prerevolutionary Iran, and Syria were key in the development of Islamic fundamentalist discourse, post-revolutionary Iran demonstrated the flip side of this argument, "in that the fundamentalism of the Islamic Republic had a secularizing effect on the discourse of the opposition movement" (pp. 329, 333). And, within the context of this discourse, a strong reformist movement emerged by the 1990s.

Moaddel's main conclusions are that in the case of the correspondence theory he found no direct connection between the production of the diverse discourses mentioned above and "the actions of the members of the groups and social classes to expand their economic interests, political power, and cultural privileges" (p. 320). He did, however, find "a degree of association" between social classes and ideologies, with liberal nationalism having the closest class connection. Nevertheless, based on his own case studies, he contends that the episodic discourse model better explains "how ideas are produced and how their social or political orientations take shape" (p. 322). In fact, he states, the process of ideological production is discontinuous and "proceeds in an episodic fashion" (p. 322). Furthermore, the social transformations that occurred in the studied countries produced (in a broad sense) Islamic modernism, liberal and Arab nationalism, and Islamic fundamentalism; yet the "cultural" changes these transformations caused were not consistently or continuously connected to economic development, demographic expansion, social differentiation, and the formation of socioeconomic classes and groups. Instead, what effected cultural change were the "dramatic events or a conjuncture of historical events [i.e., episodes] that interrupted the continuity of social life," thus influencing the worldviews of culture producers and both raising new awareness and provoking alternative ways of thinking about sociopolitical issues (p. 322).

Moaddel ends his book with this interesting, albeit sweeping, assessment of the origins of Islamic fundamentalism:

"In sum, the sequence of historical events that gave rise to Islamic fundamentalism began with an Islamic-Western cultural encounter and continued through the establishment of Western hegemony, the formation of discursive pluralism, the rise of Islamic modernism, the development of liberal nationalism, the rise of the modern ideological state, the formation of a monolithic intellectual environment, and the rise of Islamic fundamentalism. In this sequence ... the main culprits in the genesis of religious extremism were the totalitarian despots who resided at the pinnacle of state power" (p. 343).

Moaddel successfully fulfills his purpose in writing this book through synthesizing significant primary sources (the writings of the many theologians and intellectuals he discusses) and the secondary literature on political, socioeconomic, intellectual/theological, and ideological developments in the several countries he covers, though some will no doubt disagree with or want to qualify some of his interpretations.[1] Whereas most of the existing literature focuses on specific countries and/or on the individual movements/ideologies (modernism, liberal nationalism, fundamentalism), Moaddel does the fields of Islamic and nationalist studies a great service by covering a broader geographic area (from Algeria in the west to India in the east) and by presenting a pattern of development over a longer historical period (from Islamic modernism to Islamic fundamentalism). This accomplishment is the greatest strength of his book.

I have two minor complaints about the book--one definitional, the other stylistic. First, Moaddel does not provide any explanation of his use of "fundamentalism," which, in the context of Islam, is misleading at best and incorrect at worst, be-

cause of its association with the Christian phenomenon in the United States. Although obviously not the only focus of his book, a short discussion of terminology, in this case, would have been helpful. Second, I found the author's repeated use of "we argue" and "we contend" an unwanted distraction from an otherwise compelling book. Apparently, this usage is tied up with Moaddel's belief that his approach is "disinterested" (p. 24).[2] Nevertheless, in a day when scholars are more aware of the relationship between their own worldviews and predilections and their research and writing, it is perfectly acceptable, at least in my opinion, to say "I argue" or "I contend."

Overall, Moaddel's book offers a stimulating and more comprehensive perspective on developments in modern Islam and on Islam's relationship with and responses to western modernity. In my opinion, the book is too advanced for use in introductory courses at most colleges and universities. I would certainly consider using it in upper division courses dealing with the Middle East or the Islamic world, as long as these courses had prerequisites requiring students to have some background in these fields. At the graduate level, it would work well as an introduction to courses on modern Islam, on nationalism in the Middle East, on modern religious movements, and the like.

Notes

[1]. I noticed in one case at least (Islamic ideologue Sayyid Qutb [1906-66] of Egypt), that Moaddel seems mostly to have drawn on secondary sources and on quotes by Qutb cited in other scholars' works, rather than on the primary sources themselves (see pp. 217-220 and accompanying footnotes 85-98 on pp. 384-385; p. 305 and accompanying footnote 61 on p. 399).

[2]. The pertinent passage reads: "Our approach is disinterested. We do not make any teleological assumption about the dynamic of historical change. Nor do we subscribe to the notion of evolutionary history and its offshoot in the twentieth-century modernization perspective. Nevertheless, the fact that these countries contemporaneously experienced Islamic modernism, then liberal nationalism, and finally Islamic fundamentalism may signify that what was at work was certainly more than the interactions among several historical variables sociologically constructed" (p. 24).

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