

A review on the thoughts of Nasr Haamid Abu Zayd

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ABSTRACT: Nasr Haamid Abu Zayd is one of the major and maybe of the greatest people developing a modern interpretation of religion. Abu Zayd is considered as one of the most scandalous Arab Muslim intellectuals that during the promotion of his mastery in 1993, almost two hundred articles about him appeared in the Egyptian press, in two months. He wanted to get a new interpretation of religious texts with a rational approach to them, considering the circumstances and needs of his time and to break the sanctity of religious discourse and to open the way to talk and discuss freely about it for Muslims to be able to find a right solution for the development of Islamic societies away from the superstitions and beliefs that sometimes are caused by incorrect, maybe, understanding of priests and prejudice of the governors and are injected in society in the name of religion. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to understand the thoughts of Nasr Haamid Abu Zayd and how to shape such a idea in a society like Egypt where the prevailing climate is the Ashary and fundamentalist opinions. The research method is descriptive – analytical and, we have studied on the basic elements of political thoughts of Nasr Haamid Abu Zayd through analyzing his opinions and ideas as well as the works written about him and criticizing his musings. Dr. Abu Zayd is impressed with modernism and its all various schools and tries to understand and interpret the religion in a way not to be in contrast with the elements of modernity. However, knowledge based Islam needs innovations and modernity of works like this to stand on its own and be stable and continue to its revival, apart from traditionalism and imitative modernity-orientation. So, the movement of some modernists like, Dr. Nasr Haamid Abu Zayd in confronting the fundamentalist and predecessor flows is appreciable and we can hope that these brave movements and acts like Mr. Dr. Nasr Haamid Abu Zayd exerts beneficial effects on Muslim societies so that the Muslims walk in the path of progress and development and don't trap themselves in sectarianism and ruinous wars.

Keywords: Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd, religious discourse, traditional discourse, meaning of the text.

INTRODUCTION

At the end of nineteenth century and the early twentieth century, most of the Arab and Muslim intellectuals affected by European enlightened thinkers of eighteenth century, walked into the intellectual and social arenas and supposed getting western civilization and culture as the only alternative for all internal and external problems. For this purpose and to facilitate the entry of modernity and new civilization, they prepared themselves to accept it, by interpreting their religion and traditional courses in accordance with a modern pattern and new western culture. By the advent of colonialism in Islamic societies and domination of colonial countries on the reserves and resources of the colonized countries, Muslims were suffering from some form of alienation. Muslim scholars sought to remedy and out of this crisis and its concluded effects which led to emergence of various thoughts and movements throughout the Muslim community in which each of these flows were claiming to offer solutions and exit the problem. Mr. Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd, the philosopher we have studied on, is one of the intellectuals whose ideas oversee the cultural, social, and political situation of the Islamic world. One factor in forming his thoughts was the defeat of Arabs against Israel in 1967 and the questions arise after that incident in his mind, for example, why Arabs with 1400 years of

Islamic identity and a population of over one hundred million people defeated against the Jews who were only three million people. He supposes the Misoneism or Salafism (predecessorism) approach as one of the causes of weakness and helplessness of Muslims, i.e., Muslims rise to conflict with the effects of modernity and modernism by which the fundamentalist and radical Islamic movements were caused whereas, Islam itself emerged in an ignorant society and disputed against the false traditions. Mr. Hamid Abu Zayd tried to embrace modernity and novelty seeking against such a range and to criticize Arabic intellectual trends particularly in Egypt that were generalizable to other Islamic countries, as well. Maybe seek on of the other causes of backwardness of Muslims in traditional discourses dominant in these communities known as religion discourse, and that the hyper sanctimony of such a discourse prevents them to handle its problems and also, in dealing between the traditional discourse with modern discourse, how these two take offensive mode against each other? Modern discourse takes into account the traditional discourse as the cause of backwardness of Muslim communities and sometimes goes beyond and considers Islam itself as the obstacle to growth and development and reciprocally, traditional discourse reacts and so this can lead to conflicts between these two discourses.

Backgrounds of research

There are many researches in the study of political thoughts of Abu Zayd and his works, such as:

- Hassan Hanafi and criticism of the book "Naghd al Khataab al Dini" : Hassan Hanafi in an essay named "tradition between interpretation and coloration", criticizes the first and second chapters of Abu Zayd's "Naghd al Khataab al Dini" and his critical notes are as follows:

Abu Zayd begins review of the program "tradition and renewal" from "faith to revolution" and attempted to differentiate between interpretation and coloration from the beginning, whereas Abu Zayd himself began to coloration before attempting to interpretation.

Introduction of Islamic left (the orientation of Hassan Hanafi) as biased self-interested by Abu Zayd doesn't exert fundamental problem in purposive interpretation and Islamic left.

The project of "tradition and modernization" is not backing to the past and ignoring the present time; but also it is analysis of the present and discovering the past and staying there. Tradition and modernization have historic structure based on understanding and knowledge, at the same time. These two are complementary and not separate.

- Saeed Edaalat Nejad and criticism of the book "Naghd al Khataab al Dini": in third chapter of the book "Naghd al Khataab al Dini" Abu Zayd focuses on the subjects of reading of religious texts, variety of religious texts, and the types of implies. The major points of his criticism are as follows:

The most important methodological problems of Abu Zayd is that, in interplay and influence of the religious texts from culture and social reality of his time, he doesn't specify what is the criterion and extent of this impact. Abu Zayd should have said clearly that if religion stands against some of cultural traditions of Arabs and reforms them, holds some of them in silence and accepts some others, so what is the reason for each one?

- Shaakir Lavaayi and criticism of the book "Al Atajaah al Aghli fi al Tafsir": Shaakir Lavayi by translation and summarizing the book "Al Atajaah al Aghli fi al Tafsir" (much of which is Abu Zaid's master's thesis) reviews it. He considers providing a historical-analysis research of the problem of interpretation in three system including, Mu'tazilah, Ash'arites and Zeidite, and analysis of the influence of theological ideas in the understanding of Holy Quran as some of the strengths of this book. Besides, in his point of view, confusion between the various sects of Shia and identifying them as the same, reference and assignment of Shia beliefs to Mu'tazilism, the charge of Shia in having beliefs in reincarnation and anthropomorphism are also some of the weaknesses of this book.
- Raf'at Fouzi Abd al Mutallib and criticizing the book "Al Imaam al Shaafi'ee": criticizes of Rafat Fouzi on the book "Al Imaam al Shaafi'ee" can be summarized in the following cases: attribution of this belief that "the text of Quran is only means and is not from God" to Abu Hanifah by Abu Zayd is a false attribution. Abu Zayd wants people to live away from the Quran and removing the rule of the Quran, to open the way for the unreligious principles. Abu Zayd considers independence of tradition in the canonization among scholars as controversial. Of the other efforts of Abu Zayd to eradicate the tradition is that he argues that Prophet (pbuh) is human and bobbles and therefore his tradition (sunnah) can not be considered as proof fully, whereas the scholars agree on the infallibility of the Prophet (pbuh). Abu Zayd expresses some subjects as "the levels of implication" that are almost Blasphemy if not explicitly.

Contemporary Mu'tazilism

Mutazilah is a familiar name in the field of Islamic sciences and refers to the theological cult whose major characteristic was applying wisdom in interpreting the word and theological doctrines and thus they privileged their own way of the thoughts of Sunni congregation who were quote oriented much. Mutazilism led by people such as

Hassan Basri and thinkers like Jaahiz and Qaazi Abd al Jabbaar and following the political and social events and new ideas that had emerged in the nascent Muslim community, rose in the history of Islam.

Applying the method of interpretation and the element of tropology in interpreting the texts and also utilizing wisdom in understanding of the Islamic education and sciences were their agenda. Backgrounds of the emergence of this cult can be summarized into two main factors: first, external factors that occurred as a result of raising and entry of non-Islamic thoughts into the Muslim communities and dealing between them with foreign elements; and second, internal factors that had emerged followed by internal conflict over the succession issue (Muhammad Subhi, 1405 AH, vol.1; pp. 30-35).

Nowadays, some contemporary new thinkers and modernists, mainly in Arab Muslim countries, with respect to that important aspect of Mu'tazilite's work i.e. providing a rational interpretation of Revelations and the law (shari'ah), try to find appropriate solutions and stances for these problems by regeneration of this school of thought in Islam and implementation of its decisions and instructions with the new issues that have emerged followed by developments in the modern era.

Sayyid Jamaaluddin AsadAabaadi (dead in 1936 AH) known as Afgaani can be considered as the head of these mainly modernist movements. After him, these movements have been led to today modernism of Egyptian intellectuals by his follower Muhammad Abdah (dead in 1944 AH) and the people like-minded to him. Of Course, Sayyid Jamaal should be considered as a political element in the separatism (Mu'tazilite) orientation. But, his student and perhaps disciple, Muhammad Abdah is much considered as an intellectual element and a theologian. (Abdah, 1406 AH; 18-20).

People like Amin al Khuli and Muhammad Ahmad Khalf Allah are some other thinkers of this flow who can be considered as the founders of the movement of new Mu'tazilite in Egypt and Islamic countries. This group opened the way of rationalistic interpretation for Quran by establishing a literary school for their special interpretation and view about Quran. Some other figures in contemporary Mu'tazilite are as follows:

Muhammed Aabid al Jaabiri (Morocco), Jaabir Asfour (Egypt), Taahaa Hussain (poet and scholar, Egypt), Hassan Hanafi (Egypt), Nasr Haamid Abu Zayd (Egypt, resident of Holland), Abdul Rahman Badvi (Egypt), Tahtaavi (the former head of Al-Azhar), Muhammad al Taalibi (Tunisia), Leila Ahmad (Arab Canadian)

Nasr Haamid Abu Zayd (contemporary):

In 1968, he attended at Cairo University with a degree in Arabic language and literature in faculty of letters. After receiving a bachelor's degree (1972), he began to teach in the same faculty. He received his master's degree in 1977 and Ph.D. in 1981 in the same field and at the same faculty. His graduate thesis was "the matter of implication in Quran and intellectual trends in interpretation of Quran in the view of Mu'tazilah" and his Ph.D. thesis was about "Interpretation of Quran from the point of view of Ibn Arabi". In addition to teaching at the faculty of literature of Cairo University, he engaged in teaching and research at the American universities of Cairo (1985-1988), Osaka, Japan (1985-1989), Khartoum, and Pennsylvania, America (1977-1980). Developing 13 books and essays in 1992, he himself, asked the Rank Promotion Committee of University to review and improve his position of assistant to professor. After 7 months, a member of this three member committee called these written works as a bunch of poorly written works full of eclectics and misleading, but the other two judges gave a positive assessment report. Finally, seven members of the Standing Committee of Promotion of the University voted to first and six others agreed with the second opinion and thus, Abu Zayd ultimately failed to achieve the rank of full professor. Two months later, a petition was presented to the court by seven scholars of Al-Azhar and Darul Uloom and after a time that the petition was rejected by the court, once again by the appeal on behalf of these people, finally, the appeals court sentenced that Abu Zayd is an apostate. Abu Zayd invited by University of Leiden, the Netherlands, began his work officially as a scholar and professor of Islamic Studies at the INIS Institute affiliated to that university and spent his life in this city (Edaalat Nejad, 2001:pp. 174-176).

Abu Zayd's works include 12 or 13 books, 74 articles in Arabic and 8 articles in English, 5 translations and many other written works. Among the most important of his works are: Al atjaah al aghli fi al tafsir, Al khataab al dini, falsafah al ta'vil, mafhoom ul nass, naghd al khataab al dini (Edaalat Nejaad, 2001: p. 170).

"It is time that we re-examine the issues once again and pass before the next step of release, not only from the absolute power of source but also, from power and domination of anything that prevents human progress. Before the flood, now and as soon as possible, we should walk in this path."

The flood which Nasr spoke by the beauty of it, undoubtedly, is the modernity flood - a horrific flow that has crisscrossed the earth for a few centuries and has taken the road in every corner of the world. In all these centuries of modernity of the world, living outside the modern atmosphere has become a difficult or even impossible matter and Modernity has become a common disease in the world. Nevertheless, the scrambling of people in Third World to develop or modernize is a mirage which its illusion has swiped the Third World intellectuals and therefore, the

layout of being modern-like is replaced in it so as the quasi-intellectuals be an alternative for the intellectuals of the Age of Enlightenment, too.

Zayd is a perfect example of pseudo-intellectuals that have desire of westernization and modernization and therefore, try to bring their conventions and traditions in a western tone and give them an icon friendly to the West; what all the Third World intellectuals are engaged in and take it in account to their duty and aspirations!

The project that Abu Zayd was following in the Arabic world is a version of the same thing that the Iranian intellectuals have followed in the past two decades in Iran. While Abu Zayd in the Arab world took the interpretation as an excuse for modern interpretation of Quran, in the Parsi world, Muhammad Mujtahid Shabistari has taken a way likewise Abu Zayd so that "Abd ul Karim Soroush also from another side can shake the throat of "systematic understanding of religious texts" and "religious jurisprudence" by developing "different versions of religion" and provide the context for entrance of modern interpretations.

Muslims' view to the Quran texts has always been in a range consisting of stark reality on one side and implication orientation –or what, affected by some cognitive foundations of new age, is called interpretation tendency- on the other side. Salafi ideology can be considered as a representative of the Islamic Verism.

From the point of view of Salafism, all verses of Quran are situated exactly for the same sense that is evident from the appearance and texts of Quran. The obvious and early detected result of this situation, however, is summarized in appearance idealism and absolute loyalty to the text and thus, closure of the inner messenger i.e. wisdom. But in contrast, the idea of justice can be named that discriminates implication in Quran. Accordingly, another meaning – which the text is seeking to deduce- may be withdrawn from the appearance of some Qur'an texts and what inferred from the words. As, some scholars of Justice have found this treatment as correct from the dialogue of God and the angels in the opening verses of Sura Baqara and the events of the time of companionship of Moses and Elias (PBUH) in Sura Kahf.

The new mu'tazilists like Nasr Haamid Abu Zayd , however, are set beyond this limit and have turned in interpretation of not only the whole Qur'anic texts but also of the religious texts. What is important in exact understanding of this viewpoint is to understand the soul of interpretation, because interpretation would have a new meaning in this structure. Interpreting in Qur'anic culture has the meaning of realizing the fact or occurrence of the events which have been promised since the past. As in Surah A'araaf, God refers to fulfillment of his promises as interpretation. And also, the objective parables of the dream of Joseph the Prophet, peace be upon him, has been interpreted in interpretation. In Surah Kahf, however, we are faced with another meaning of interpreting which can be referred as the divine wisdom and the divine aspect of an act. But, Nasr intends none of these meanings because, in his point of view, the interpretation itself, which have once had the meaning of interpretation and uncovering an ambiguous object in culture of the great narrative commentators such as Tabari, is in need of reinterpretation, now.

In Abu Zayd's reinterpretation, interpretation influenced by the meaning of words assumes a dialectical color; the dialectic which is in process between scripture and reality; the referral and re-referral which is recognizable only on condition of understanding the specific historical, social, cultural and political conditions and understanding the situation of an appropriate response to it.

Quran in point of view of Nasr is not the result of thought formed in a vacuum, but all the verses whether it is about minutiae or principles, about the stories and Mab'ases of prophets or the moral sermons and Masalb, is caused by taati with the existing reality. Hence, Quran, like the other human books, is the result of thought and reaction like secretions of a person who have called himself as apostle.

However, Nasr considers the possibility and of course the occurrence of a phenomenon called abrogation as the most important and obvious evidence of his theory- as he states in the book of 'Mafhum ul Nafs'. From the point of view of Nasr, although abrogation, in view of commentators, occurs only about jurisprudential minutiae and apparent ordinances of religion, but is clearly an indication of two issues: first, God who has unlimited knowledge and keeps Quran in his unseen treasure called Preserved Table, as claimed, can not be the main source of revelation. Because, changing the commandment about a subject reflects necessarily the author's ignorance and lack of mastery, and consequently, humanity and historicity of the written subject. Second, it can be concluded, according to the narrations we have reached from the history of collecting the Quran in the era of kulafaa Raashidin, that Quran has been made from frequent changes and adjustments. These narratives indicate that some verses containing commandment although have been abrogated in words but their commandment is still consequent among jurists.

Abu Zayd, according to these two conclusions, revives the Mutazilite theory of creating Quran by disproof of Ash'arite theory about Quran's dating back, so that he states: in such a specific historical condition we should no longer have the same Quran, as we have another man. Thus, Nasr does not deprive even the mutazilite creation theory from his interpretations. Whereas, the main evidence of Zayd and hid two hasty conclusions are flawed. The first result can be considered correct only if abrogation phenomenon does not accept the other explanations such as gradual promoting of difficult commandments and the step by step training principle Quran is a harbinger of which,

that seems undeniable due to the major texts in this regard. His second conclusion is justifiable only on the basis of a common tradition, too, because, these narratives can be addressed only in writings such as Sahih Bukhari and Sahih Muslim. Shi'ite tradition is entirely alien with this subject. Thus, Zayd's interpretation should be considered as an interpretation with no evidence as well as his evidences. The point that should not be ignored from sights is the humanistic approach of Zayd's Ijtihad. Because some people, thinking as he doesn't give religious orientation to his thoughts, seek to detract from its importance that seems to be not true. It should be mentioned that this act of Zayd itself is seeking to humanizing everything even divine texts.

Abu Zayd and linguistic analysis

Abu Zayd can be seen within the range of idea of Saussure. Saussure considers the rationality of understanding as a rationality of linguistic analysis. In Saussure's view, the external facts are not independent from mental contents. The objective categories have no choice other than to show themselves in the context of language; A language that has been developed in the context of culture and has created our intellectual regulations. The same language mind seeks to comprehend the fact. Words are not just a tool to convey the meaning, but it is the meanings that must synchronize themselves with word formats and show themselves to us.

The understanding of Abu Zayd is a comprehension of linguistic analysis, too. For this reason, he looks at all the fact of text only in the language of text and joins the language of text to the time of emergence of text. For example, Abu Zayd in dealing with indicating the truth of revelation, with reference to Arabic poetry of that time, has insisted that in Arabic language and culture of early Islam, revelation is a secret communicative truth and of this aspect is like inspiration; the inspiration that is the source of poetry. Therefore, the meaning of revelation, after exploring at the structure of language of the ignorant Arabs, is an esoteric communication that, as inspiration, comes from imagination. Although Nasr Haamid has repeatedly said that Quran is not poetry, but scrutiny to the structure of his thought and works reveals that he considers the mechanism of revelation as the same mechanism of poetry.

Abu Zayd and historicity

Within the circle of Abu Zayd's belief, there is an inextricably bound between language and the reality which he indicates it. It is the language that takes the truth to its dominance; the language that itself is a product of culture and was born and raised from history. For this, to understand the text of Quran, we should turn back to Arabic language and cultural, social, economic and political history of the early Islam. Abu Zayd, like Foucault, considers the understanding as lingual and historic. In Foucault's view, the facts born and live in the history and the context of discourses and myths and the philosophical or epistemological questions should be answered by viewing the history. According to this approach, Abu Zayd has emphasized on the revelation of the verses and extremely promotes the stylistics. In his own books, he escapes from interpretation of verses the revelation and the order of revelation of which is not clear, and holds the text quite cryptic and only emphasizes on its miracle of literature and art.

Abu Zayd and rationalism in interpretation of the Word of God

Doctor Nasr Haamid in his interpretation approach is indebted to Gadamer. But the delay is that whether Gadamer method can be used in interpretation of the book the text of which belongs to God? Gadamer is looking for methodological consciousness and concerns the need to understand rather than the author's purpose. In other words, what is important is what we understand not what the author's intention was. It is with this fundamental question that philosophical hermeneutics begins. But can we argue so about the text attributed to Creator, too? If the author of the text understands the needs of the text better than the audience, can we again in this case ignore the author's purpose?

In religious belief, the Creator who knows the necessities of my understanding better than me has laid the text of Quran before me. It is essential noticing in this point that the Creator of the text is the same Creator of messenger, Creator of me and my perceptual system, Creator of language, Creator of the date, and Creator of all the objects (khaalighi kulli Shay'e). so, the Lord of the universe has no problem in getting the message to me; and of course the Creator knows my necessities better than I.

Accordingly, any approach other than reaching the purpose of the author in God's book is detour; and the knowledge of principle that, throughout the history of the thoughts of Muslims, claims about making the meaning of text of religion as methodic, is closer to classical hermeneutics. The purpose of this discussion is not to call the new schools as useless and ineffective in inferring the intentions of God in Holy Quran. For, even now, the rationality of linguistic analysis has some notes that we may not pass them simply even if we are not in agreement with them; but any approach other than reaching the author's purpose is interpreted to vote. To give meaning to religious texts is one work and to figure out a meaning is another. The intellectual principles of Nasr Haamid lead finally to

implementation and enforcing and giving direction and do not walk in a path but relativism. That is why Nasr Haamid knows the understanding of God's book as relative and is quite opposite to absolute-oriented approach about it.

Most of what Nasr Haamid is influenced by which is significant in the paradigm of Christianity because there, the scriptures are written and assumed by human and his understanding and memory writing has laid the foundation of the Bible; the book that has placed hundreds of textual and historical contradictions among its prose. Revelation is meaningless there and the author is the man in the history and interpreter should go to the author.

Abu Zayd and method innovation

To be able to implement the modern approaches with Quran, Nasr Haamid has no choice but to humanize the Divine text. He says: 'from the first moment of its revelation, i.e. with reading of revelation by the Prophet at the time of revelation, the text is out of being divine source and becomes the humanistic text because reaches to interpretation from revelation.

It should be said that Nasr Haamid can change the way not the truth. To fill the distance between the text and audience, he lowers the text, whereas, he can raise the audience of Revelation. When revealing the Quran to the Prophet, the text didn't become humanistic but it was the audience of the text who became divinely.

Nasr Haamid is completely oblivious to the doubtful understanding of the text and human as well as the understanding of the full human. He is so attached to his method that does not examine the other possibilities. In addition, he ignores the wisdom and philosophical tradition of the Islamic World.

But Abu Zayd does not adhere to his own methodology everywhere and where the method goes to conflict with his citations, he transforms the approach easily. For example, to say that understanding of Quran is relative, he cites a narrative from Amir al Mu'minin Ali (pbuh) where he stated that: 'Quran carries various aspects'. He seeks help from that to complete his theory. As got here, Nasr Haamid forgets his style and even he does not cite before and after of the speech. Amir al-Mo'minin states this sentence to "Abdollah Ibn Abbas" who, is to argue Khawarij: "la takhasamahum bil-Quran fa innal-Quran u hammala zu vujoo u taghul u va yaghulun, va lakin hajajhum bi alsinah fa innahum lan yajidu anha mahisa". It is evident that the expression of this statement is at the time of facing with Khawarij; the Khawarij who interpret to vote and attempt to ljtihad against the text. Somewhere else, Nasr Haamid writes: "it is interesting that Imaam Ali, in response to the Kharijites, has established the basis for the legitimacy of multiple readings and this is where he has noted that popular sentence that: "Quran is hidden between two covers, does not mention any state and this is the people who speak with it". Abu Zayd considers this statement of Ali (pbuh) as a basis for the legitimacy of multiple readings, whereas, if you read before and after of the text, you can see how easily Nasr Haamid has set the stylistism aside. The complete sentence of Imaam is so: "we did not set the people to arbitrate, we chose only Quran for arbitration, but this Quran is the lines hidden in cover, doesn't speak by tongue, and needs translation, and only humans can speak about it". Here, Imaam wants to speak the speaker Quran that is he himself and close the way of multiplicity of readings and Imaam's purpose is completely contrary to Abu Zayd's understanding. The historical narration and the dignity of this statement is also an indicative of this fact.

Nasr Haamid's approach to the interpretation of texts is an introduction to interpret to vote, whereas, for centuries scholars of the knowledge of principles have studied on principles to be barriers on interpreting to vote.

CONCLUSION

Nearly two centuries have passed since the advent of the flow of new Mu'tazilism in the Islamic World. The advent of new Mu'tazilism occurred following many challenges that were accompanied by the end of the Ottoman Empire and presence of the west in the east. This idea is formed following a comprehensive question called the reason of backwardness of the Islamic societies. To answer these questions, three movements were formed: the first group believes that the Islamic heritage hampers the development of these communities and considers the solution to out of this crisis is to abandon Islam. The second group known as Salafism believes that what maintains the identity specific to Muslims and leads to revival of Islamic civilization against the onslaught of the West and Modernity is to preserve and operate the Islamic heritage.

And the third group follows the approach of religious renewal i.e. strives to begin to modernize the Islamic heritage by providing a new interpretation Islam which is consistent with the time and show those two compatible with modernity. This movement is known as the New Mu'tazilism and the initiator of which was Sayyid Jamaal al-Din Asad Abadi. The main concern of this movement is to find the elements of development and reconstruction of the Islamic world. According to this group, the element responsible for the backwardness of Muslims, is not Islam but is the interpretations and wrong understanding about Islam and ignoring the rationality.

In response to the reason of Muslims' backwardness, doctor Nasr Haamid Abu Zayd one of the followers of this movement and our studied scientist writes: <the traditional discourse puts the responsibility of backwardness of the

Muslim world on the shoulders of European colonialism and ignores this fact that it was the backwardness of the Islamic world that helped the colonialists in achieving their goals and setting the retardation.

In addition, they have great emphasis on analysis-orientation and believe that the Islamic Arabic culture was dynamic only until its main concern was rationalism. According to them, the traditional discourse does not negate the work of ratiōn.

And makes human as devoted to an authority-oriented sovereign. Of course, it should be added that there is no doubt in the necessity of enjoying from ratiōn to recognition and Monotheism in Islam is to free the human mind from the domination of illusions and myths. But it should be noted that ratiōn itself alone is not enough in order to understand and to reach the knowledge. For example, as ratiōn does not have any experience about the world hereafter, it may not have any cognition about it. Therefore, we must turn to the religious instructions which are said by Allah and the Prophet. Doctor Abu Zayd then deals with criticizing traditional discourse and even has a book of the same name. He also argued that the religious discourses promote their accepted interpretation about religion to legitimize themselves in any era and period of Islamic history. For instance (Muawiyah intended to forge the Hadiths to legitimize his Caliphate).

Such a discourse, doesn't pose its idea as an Ijtihad but knows them the same as Islam; and according to it, the fundamental mistake among new and old Sunni is that they consider the path of history and intellectual developments as a move for the worse, from every aspects and hence, they try to connect the meanings of verses with the Golden Age of the time of Messenger: and the traditional discourse consider the comments and diligences of predecessors the same as religion.

Perhaps another reason for the success of religious discourse is the Muslims going astray. As Hamid Abu Zayd considers the cause of the backwardness of Muslims against West due to themselves, it is perhaps not far from the reality to say that popularity of unreal Hadiths and narrations by the Muslims themselves due to unconsciousness and also wrong understanding and interpretation of the religious texts and identifying these understandings and interpretations the same as religion and sanctifying them has led them to aberration and has aided this discourse in achieving its goals.

Doctor Nasr Haamid Abu Zayd is one of the scholars who try to understand and interpret religion in a way that does not conflict with elements of Modernity. Although this solution is not perfect and without any mistake, but the knowledge based Islam requires innovation and new thinking of such these works to stand on its own and be stable apart from traditionalism and modernity-orientation. The time we are in is a risky time because Islam and Islamic sects are involved in intrigues and ruinous wars in Muslim countries, however, the attempts of modern thinkers such as Nasr Haamid Abu Zayd against Salafi and fundamentalist movements despite the sentence to his apostasy and separation from his wife is worth to appreciate and thank and I hope these courageous movements and attempts may have beneficial effects on Muslim societies so that the world may walk in a way of development and progression and not to lead itself involved in sectarianism and religious wars.

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