

Task: Define Islamic reform movements in the given time period.

Topic: Islamic Reform Movements in the 18th and 19th Century

Type: Exploratory Essay

Length: 3 pages

Formatting: N/A

Requirements: Describe the Islamic political movements with the timeframe between 18th and 19th centuries. What were their characteristics?

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Course:

Date:

Islamic Reform Movements in the 18th and 19th Century

Islam came into existence about 1400 years ago. Since then, it has undergone various reforms. Western armies successfully invaded the Muslim society and imposed their governance methods, ways of life, and value systems. Consequently, they started marginalizing the religion of Islam. Several thinkers started to have a closer look at Islam. They questioned the assumptions and values of the Islamic religion. After this scrutiny of the Islamic society, these thinkers concluded that there existed some kind of misinterpretation regarding the true values of Islam, and Islam itself. There had been the defeat and an increase in the alienation of the values of Islam solely because there was a misinterpretation of Islam, and of its fundamental reality.

All these happened in early nineteenth century, when Napoleon carried out an invasion of Egypt. As such, there was need for Islamic reforms to correct these misconceptions about Islam and the true values of Islam. These reforms peaked towards the end of the nineteenth century, which is when most of its pioneers lived. Ottoman Khalifate was Europe's "sick man." Several nationalist movements sprang up in Arab, Turkey, Armenia and other places to fill up this void in ideology about Islam. According to the thinkers of Islam, the ideological void came about due to a deviation from the fundamental reality of Islam, and not from the shortcomings or an intrinsic drawback of Islam as a religion. Following this historical series of events, it is safe to infer that external factors carried more significance in the diversity and rise of Islamic reform movements during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The western nations had legal, technological, and legal achievements, which they brought into the Muslim society. This caused a decline in the Muslim political powers. Islamic modernists acknowledged these achievements with varying degrees of emulation or criticism, but aimed to overcome the perceived impasses regarding the developments in the Islamic societies. What is more, Islamic revivalists had an objection to the colonial exploitation of the west in Muslim nations. They also objected their imposition of secular values of the west. Their aim was to reassert the “original” Islamic values. The way to carry out this reassertion of the “original” Islamic values was to come up with ideas that would promote an Islam re-interpretation, so that it finds a place and fits in the modern world. The late nineteenth century saw the sprouting of these ideas, which would be n acknowledgement that Islam had lost its footing in the world. Most modernists felt that this loss stemmed from a lack of dynamic and modern understanding of science. It was not that Islam or its values had any problems. In fact, they would comfortably have continued living as they had always lived, were it not for the fact that the rest of the world has lost its regard for Islam. It was the external forces that pushed them to embark on a process of reforms in the Islamic beliefs.

Countries like Egypt, Persia, Indonesia, Turkey, and India had the influence of Islamic modernist ideas. Egypt, for instance, had scholars like Muhammad ‘Abduh (d.1905) and al-Tahtawi (d.1873). They re-discovered the role that Islamic philosophical principles had in their society. Following this rediscovery, they affirmed that personally sought rational knowledge and revealed knowledge could co-exist. For this reason, they sanctioned studying Western science as being acceptable to Islamic education. After all, they did claim that Islamic medieval knowledge, which facilitated the transfer of classical science to the Western nations, had a part to play in the development of science and technology in modern Europe.

There was the young Ottoman's movement in Turkey, in the 1860s. The movement discussed political and constitutional principles along the lines of the west. Jamal al-din I-Afghani (d.1897) condemned Europe's colonial aggression and opposed the political domination it had over Muslim countries. However, he also pointed out the necessity in acquiring Western science tools in order to combat the West. India had the British abolishing the Muslim Mughal dynasty in 1857. As such, there was an emphasis on reforms in the field of education. The Dutch rule in Indonesia actively implemented modern curricula, which combined modern sciences with religion. Other reforms that were implemented in these nations were in the areas of the economy and politics.

The aim of these reforms was to help Muslim nations to be on the same levels as the Western nations. Being at similar levels would bar the Western nations from taking over the Muslim nations, and imposing their rule over Muslims. It is worth noting that much as the Muslims reformist noted that Europeans had advancements in terms of their quality of life, they did not agree with their way of life, which they considered secular. The Muslim society was corrupted by the introduction and spread of this secular way of life. The reformists had to restore the Islamic religion to its place in the Muslim society. There was no deformity in the Islamic faith; it only had misconceptions from the West. These misconceptions made it to lose its place in the world. By adopting some of the achievements of the West (which they believe developed due to their medieval knowledge and classical science), Islam would get rid of the misconceptions, and slowly by slowly it would regain its footing in the society. The major problem was external and not internal.

Overall Impression

I am rather sure this paper was written by a child. I don't know, maybe the author should set a password on their computer, or watch their kids more attentively... Some sentences were so tiny, I could barely see them. Hilarious vagueness and generalizations make the paper laughable. My advice: go to school and learn to write.