

## The Illusion of Reforming Islam

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Ali Sina

Since, thanks to Islamic terrorism the interest to know Islam has picked and Islam has come under scrutiny, the westerners began asking where are the moderate Muslims. Well, there is none. The concept is absurd. Muslims view this issue differently. You are either a 'good' practicing Muslim or a bad wishy-washy Muslim. It's the latter group that the westerners have misnamed moderate Muslims. As far as Muslims are concerned they are 'hypocrites.' Not surprisingly, the 'moderates' also confess of being hypocrites. They will tell you they believe in Islam but they are not good Muslims. In the back of their minds however, they plan to become 'good' Muslims once they have done all the 'sins' and enjoyed life enough.

Islam is really a bad religion. The problem with Islam is with its sacred book and not just with its followers. Taking advantage of this confusion, a breed of Muslims has come up with the idea of "reforming Islam." A few of these "reformers" have also gained some recognition among the unwary westerners who have placed their hopes on them, even though they are ignored and derided by fellow Muslims at large.

In this article I would like to discuss whether Islam can be reformed.

Let us consider the etymology and meaning of 're-form.' Reform derives from Latin *refōrmāre*, which means to redeem, to reclaim, to renew. All these imply restoring something to its original shape.

Before talking about reform in Islam let us first take a look at reform in Christianity.

### The Christian Reformation

The Christian Reformation began as an attempt to reform, not the Christianity, but the Catholic Church. Many believers were troubled by the Church and its practices, such as the sale of indulgences (tickets to paradise) and simony (buying and selling church positions). They considered these as false doctrines and malpractices within the Church.

Martin Luther, Ulrich Zwingli, John Calvin and other reformers protested these and other practices and beliefs of the Church such as Purgatory, devotion to Mary (Marina veneration), the intercession of and devotion to the saints, most of the sacraments, the mandatory celibacy for the clergy (including monasticism), and the authority of the Pope.

None of these are doctrines of Christianity. These were practices of the Church. The reformers protested against the Church. They did not defy the authority of the

Bible. They suggested that the Bible should be read literally. They rejected the allegorical interpretations of the Scriptures and took the texts of the Old and New Testaments as something like statute law. The words meant what they said; any difficulty, contradiction, or obscure meaning was the fault of the reader and not the text.

Anything not contained explicitly and literally in the scriptures was to be rejected, and anything that is contained explicitly and literally in the scriptures was to be followed unwaveringly. source

This is the essence of Protestant Reformation

The Islamic Reformation

An analogous reformation also took place in Islam. This reformation was Salafism.

Many westerners, erroneously believe that Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab, (1703-1792) is the founder of an extremist sect of Islam. This is not true. Abdul Wahhab did not found a new sect. He was merely a reformer of Islam in the same way that Luther was of Christianity.

The core of Abdul Wahhab's thinking is that Islam was perfect and complete during the days of Muhammad and his companions and its decline is the result of religious innovations (bid'ah) and that an Islamic revival will result through the emulation of the three early generations and the purging of foreign influences from the religion.

The concept that Islam was perfect in its early stages is asserted in the Quran.5:3

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيْتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا

Today have I perfected your religious law for you, and have bestowed upon you the full measure of My blessings, and willed that self-surrender unto Me shall be your religion.

Abdul Wahhab, proposed that Muslims should refrain from any innovation and follow the examples of the salaf, ("predecessors" or "early generations) hence the name Salafis.

Salafi: سلفي, takes the pious ancestors of the patristic period of early Islam as exemplary models.

This belief is not an invention of Abdul Wahhab but is based on a hadith that reports Muhammad's saying:

The people of my generation are the best, then those who follow them, and then those who follow the latter (i.e. the first three generations of Muslims).[Bukhari

3:48:819 and 820 and Muslim 31:6150 and 6151.] (Tabi'in and the Tabā' at-Tabi'in,)

In another hadith Muhammad, noted:

In order to demolish the western myth that Abdul Wahhab was the founder of Salafism, it is import to note that ibn Taymiyyah (1263 - 1328) was also a Salafi. Ibn Taymiyyah opposed the celebration of Muhammad's birthday and the construction of shrines around the tombs of Sufi 'saints' saying: "Many of them [the Muslims] do not even know of the Christian [Catholic] origins of these practices. Accursed be Christianity and its adherents."

Early usage of the term Salaf appears in the book Al-Ansab by Abu Sa'd Abd al-Kareem al-Sama'ni, who died in the year 1166 (562 of the Islamic calendar). Defining the term al-Salafi he stated, "This is an ascription to the salaf, or the predecessors, and the adaptation of their school of thought based upon what I have heard." He then mentions examples of more scholars who were utilizing this ascription.

The desire to reform Islam and go back to its original pristine state is actually an old thought. Abdul Wahhab, however, succeeded to give shape to this concept, which took ground thanks to the Saudi kings who are his descendants through one of his daughters.

### The Similarities between Christian Reformation and Islamic Reformation

There are many similarities between Protestantism and Salafism. The former rejects devotion to Mary and saints and their intercession. The latter rejects devotion to Muhammad, his intercession and the interception of Islamic holy men (such as practiced in Shiism). Both these reform movements want to take their respective faiths to their original purity and eschew the innovations that have been added to the religion after the death of their founders.

Dr. Ingrid Mattson, the woman who was invited by Hussein Obowma to represent Muslims in the interfaith prayer of the Democrats Presidential convention, and who is the president of the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA), when asked whether Wahhabism is an extreme right wing sect of Islam, responded:

No it's not true to characterize 'Wahhabism' that way. This is not a sect. It is the name of a reform movement that began 200 years ago to rid Islamic societies of cultural practices and rigid interpretation that had acquired over the centuries. It really was analogous to the European protestant reformation.

### The Outcome of Reform in Christianity

Although Christian Reformation and Islamic Reformation are almost identical in their

scope and methodology, the outcome has been very different. The literal reading of the Bible became the underpinning of the social theories and organization of Protestant societies and the foundation of social organization of the English colonies in America.

These reformers literally transformed the philosophical, political, religious, and social landscape of Europe. We still live in a society dominated by protestant theory of social organization.

American political discourse is essentially Calvinistic. In other words its social organization is based on the literal meaning of Christian scriptures.

According to Calvin and Zwingli, not only should all religious belief be founded on the literal reading of Scriptures, but Church organization, political organization, and society itself should be founded on this literal reading.

Luther wrote a letter to Pope Leo, (which resulted his excommunication from the Church) in which he explained the substance of his ideas. The letter is entitled "On the Freedom of the Christian." This letter explains the core of Luther's thinking. According to Luther, the essence of Christianity is "freedom," or "liberty."

It is this concept that eventually gave rise to the notion of individual freedom, political freedom, and economic freedom.

Most of the European Enlightenment revolves around freedom and the project of "liberating" people: liberating them from false beliefs, false religion, arbitrary authority, etc.-this is, what is called "liberation discourse." Westerners still participate in this Enlightenment project today.

That is why America invaded Iraq, to prevent a dictator taking control of most of the world's oil reservers, to liberate Kuwaitis and a decade later, to liberate the Iraqis. That is why America has fought nearly forty wars abroad, from Japan to Germany, to Italy, to Panama to Nicaragua, to Kosovo, to Vietnam, to Korea, to Angola, to Somalia. Whether these wars were right or wrong, the motivation has been always the same, to liberate people, to stop dictators, to export democracy and freedom. This idea of "liberating" people, of democracy, so entrenched in America's international politics, comes out of Luther's idea of "freedom."

(For those who attack me because I speak of Luther, let me make it clear that I am not defending his anti Jewish sentiment. I am merely defining the concept of Protestant Reformation. Let us learn to separate the issues.)

Other factors have also played a role in these wars, such as protecting the economical and political interests of America. However, the underlying denominator has generally been liberating people from tyranny. Liberating people and defending American interest are not mutually exclusive.

There have been exceptions where America has acted purely out of self interest, disregarding the wellbeing of the people. One example is the ousting of the democratic Dr. Mossadq, the Prime Minister of Iran, in 1953 and reinstating an inept puppet king who turned a dictator.

This is not the discourse of the liberals. The liberals have no desire to liberate anyone. They are happy to deal with the most oppressive regimes with no concern about how they brutalize their people.

### The Outcome of Reform in Islam

What is the essence of the reformation in Islam? The essence of the Wahhabi belief is that man is not free but a slave of Allah. People are Ibad. (slaves)

This is diametrically a different discourse from the discourse of Protestantism and here is the essential difference between Christianity and Islam.

On the surface, there are many similarities between Christianity and Islam. Both believe in a God, both rely on an intermediary between man and God, both faiths are eschatological - have a hell, a heaven and an afterlife, etc. However, in their core, they are very different, in fact opposite to one another. Both reforms took the same road, but seeking the origin of their faith, they went opposite directions. Islam is not a continuation of Christianity, as Muhammad and Muhammadns claim, but it is an anti Christian belief in its core. Christianity advocates freedom of man, Islam, his slavery. One brings the message of liberation, the other, of submission.

The discourse of freedom, so essential to Christianity is contrary what Islam stands for. When Muslims carry placards that read “democracy is hypocrisy,” and “freedom go to hell,” during their laud demonstrations, they are expressing the true essence of Islam, which is anti freedom, anti democracy, pro slavery and pro subjugation.



Muslims are not free to choose, but they should obey Allah and His Messenger. The Quran.33:36 says:

وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ وَلَا مُؤْمِنَةٍ إِذَا قَضَى اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَمْرًا أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ وَمَنْ يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا مُبِينًا

“And it behoves not a believing man and a believing woman that they should have any choice in their matter when Allah and His Messenger have decided a matter; and whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger, he surely strays off a manifest straying.”

It is not up to Muslims to decide what is good for them. This decision is already made for them and all they have to do is to obey, even when they don't like it.

كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِتَالُ وَهُوَ كُرْهُ لَكُمْ وَعَسَى أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ وَعَسَى أَنْ تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

Fighting is ordained for you, even though it be hateful to you; but it may well be that you hate a thing the while it is good for you, and it may well be that you love a thing the while it is bad for you: and God knows, whereas you do not know. (Q. 2:216)

Islam can be distilled in its name: ‘Submission.’ Allah knows best. Therefore man must accept His command, blindly and unwaiveringly.

Democracy means the government of people by the people. In Democracy men make the law. In Islam the law comes from God. Man must obey even if those laws appear contrary to reason and are oppressive.

This is the reason why “moderate” Muslims cannot oppose stoning adulterers, killing the apostates or other abuses of their fellow practicing Muslims, and their protests do not go beyond a lip service, and that too is only for the consumption of the western media.

Both Christianity and Islam underwent through reformation. They took similar paths, but they ended up in two opposite poles. While Christian reformation brought freedom, Enlightenment and democracy, Islamic reformation bore terrorism.

Ibn Taymiyyah and Ibn Abdul Wahhab were reformers of Islam. Among the contemporary Islamic reformers we can name Maududi (1903 – 1979) who wrote an interpretation of the Quran and Sayyid Qutb, (1906-1966) the leading intellectual of Muslim Brotherhood in the 50s and 60s, who was the inspiration to all Muslim terrorists including Ayatollah Khomeini and Bin Laden.

Reformation vs. Transformation

What today's so called Islamic reformers are proposing is not reformation but transformation of Islam. Unlike the above mentioned reformers, these new reformer wannabes do not want to go to the origin of Islam, but rather they want to eschew part of the Quran and the entire Sharia and invent an entirely different religion, still calling it Islam.

This is delusional thinking, and impractical both logically and logistically. It is also strictly prohibited in the Quran.

These neoreformers want to change Islam to something different. They want to bring bid'a to Islam. Is that possible? Can believers have an opinion contrary to what the Quran says? We already saw that the Quran 33:36, prohibits the believers to have any choice in their OWN matter when Allah and His Messenger have made their choice. How can they decide what is good for the RELIGION?

When the Quran says, "Fighting is ordained for you, even if you don't like it," the message is clear. This is God speaking. That is what you have accepted a priori. So how can you dispute with God? Once you accept the Quran as the word of God you cannot pick and choose and discard what you don't like. This is strictly prohibited, not once but repeatedly.

أَفْتُونُونِ بَعْضَ الْكِتَابِ وَتَكْفُرُونَ بَعْضَ مَا جَزَاءَ مَنْ يَفْعَلُ ذَلِكَ مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا خِزْيٌ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ أَشَدِّ الْعَذَابِ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِعَاقِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ

Do you, then, believe in some parts of the divine writ and deny the truth of other parts? What, then, could be the reward of those among you who do such things but ignominy in the life of this world and, on the Day of Resurrection, they will be consigned to most grievous suffering? For God is not unmindful of what you do. (Q.2:85)

أَفَتَعْبِرَ اللَّهُ أُمَّتِي حَكْمًا وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكُمُ الْكِتَابَ مُفَصَّلًا

6:114 "Am I, then, to look unto anyone but God for judgment [as to what is right and wrong], when it is He who has bestowed upon you from on high this divine writ, clearly spelling out the truth?"

وَإِنْ تُطِيعْ أَكْثَرَ مَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ يُضِلُّوكَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ إِنْ يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَإِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَخْرُصُونَ

6:116 Wert thou to follow the common run of those on earth, they will lead thee away from the way of Allah. They follow nothing but conjecture: they do nothing but guess.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْتُمُونَ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَيَشْتُرُونَ بِهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا أُولَٰئِكَ مَا يَأْكُلُونَ فِي بُطُونِهِمْ إِلَّا النَّارَ وَلَا يُكَلِّمُهُمُ اللَّهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَلَا يُزَكِّيهِمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

2:174 Verily, as for those who suppress aught of the revelation which God has

bestowed from on high, and barter it away for a trifling gain - they but fill their bellies with fire. And God will not speak unto them on the Day of Resurrection, nor will He cleanse them [of their sins]; and grievous suffering awaits them.

See also 16:89 39:23,

كَمَا أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَى الْمُقْتَسِمِينَ الَّذِينَ جَعَلُوا الْقُرْآنَ عِضِينَ قَوْرِكَ لِنَسْأَلَهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ:

Q.15: 90-92 Such as We send down for those who make division, Those who break the Quran into parts. Therefore, by the Lord, We will, of a surety, call them to account,

وَلَا تُبَدِّلْ لِكَلِمَاتِ اللَّهِ

Q. 6:34 there is none that can alter the words of Allah.

لَا تُبَدِّلْ لِكَلِمَاتِ اللَّهِ ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْقَوْرُ الْعَظِيمُ

Q.10:64 There is no changing the Words of Allah that is the Supreme Triumph.

وَأَنْزَلْ مَا أَوْحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ كِتَابِ رَبِّكَ لَا تُبَدِّلْ لِكَلِمَاتِهِ وَلَنْ تَجِدَ مِنْ دُونِهِ مُتَحَدًّا

18:27 And recite that which hath been revealed unto you of the scripture of your Lord. There is none who can change His words, and you will find no refuge beside Him.

How can one claim to believe in the Quran and disregard all these warnings?

The so called reformers of Islam are misguided at best and deceptive at worst. Their efforts should not be welcomed. Whatever their intention, whether genuine or malicious, they are pulling wool over the eyes of non-Muslims and as the result giving legitimacy to a very evil and dangerous creed.

Only truth can set us free. By sugarcoating Islam you cannot change its nature. You can purify filthy water and drink it. You can even purify urine into drinking water. But can you purify gasoline enough to make it drinkable? The essence of Islam is evil. It is not a contaminated good faith. You cannot reform it enough to make it a humane faith. Can you reform Nazism? This whole notion is misguided and absurd.

What is the point of reforming a religion founded by a mentally deranged man who committed so much evil on Earth, who lied, deceived, raped, tortured, raided, looted, massacred and committed the most despicable crimes? Why keep his cult alive and his memory honored? That man deserves scorn, not recognition?

Reforming Islam is impossible. It is either a dilution or a ruse. Jihad is based on two pillars, war and deception. I don't want anyone to be fooled by the soothing

promises of Muslim reformers. Moderate Islam does not exist. It's a myth.

I prefer jihadi Muslims to these "Muslims against Sharia," fellows. With the jihadis I know my enemy. I do not trust Muslims who are against Sharia. I do not understand them. What they say does not add up. I don't know what they are up to. I do not trust people who say, I am a follower of Muhammad, but I do not follow Muhammad. There is something fishy, something dishonest and hypocritical about their claim.

If you are a Muslims, be a Muslim. I do not agree with you but at least I know where you stand and where I should stand to be safe from you. But if you are a Muslim and against Islam and the Sharia, I don't trust you. You are either a fool or a crook. "You are neither hot nor cold. I will spit you out."

Some of these so called reformers hide their identity and face claiming to 'fear Muslims.' Why should they? They are not saying anything that CAIR does not say when it wants to Con Americans with Islamic Ruse. This is all sham.

Reforming Islam is impossible, but to transform it you need divine authority. Only God can change his words. Where is that divine authority? If you are allowed to pick and choose from the Quran, why Osama Bin Laden should not have the same right? Which Islam is the right Islam? Wouldn't this lead to more division and fight among Muslims?

The only serious reformer of Islam was Baha'u'llah. He realized Islam cannot be reformed. So he founded a new religion and announced that he was vested with authority by God to annul all His previous mandates in the Quran.

He told Muslims, whereas before you were told to slay the unbelievers, now God wants you to love all the people irrespective of their faith. Whereas before He told you women are deficient in intelligence, beat them if you fear they may disobey you, now He says men and women are equal and give preference to the education of your daughters, because they will be the mothers and the primary educators of future generations. Whereas in the previous dispensation God told you all non-believers will go to hell, now He says it's your deeds that matter and your faith without good deeds is worthless and that He is not going to discriminate against anyone because of his belief. It's the purity of heart that matters not what you profess with your tongues. Whereas before He had built a huge rotisserie to burn humans, He has actually shut it down. He wants you to obey him for the love of Him alone and not because you fear him. Just act as mature people. There is no threat. Whereas before He said "fighting is good for you," now He is tired of all that fighting and says fighting behoove the ferocious beasts and choiced deeds behooves humans. Whereas before you were promised virgins, there are no virgins. Your body will rot here. The rewards are all spiritual in nature, like joy and love. There is no hanky panky in paradise. Also there is no punishment, except the regret that you'd feel for losing the chance to develop spiritual limbs in this world.

That requires courage. Now this was in 19th century in the middle of Shiite Persia. Of course Baha'u'llah was put in a dungeon and spent the rest of his life in exile. Many of his followers were executed. However, there is a logic in that argument. The logic is that only God has the authority to abrogate His laws. This logic remains valid, until you ask, what was God smoking when he sent Muhammad? Baha'u'llah is the only credible transformer of Islam. But again, Baha'i Faith is not Islam. It's entirely a different religion.

You cannot reform Islam and you cannot transform it. All you can and should do, is dump it. Please, let us stop this charade. Either be a Muslim and do as Muhammad said or leave Islam and don't become a shield for the terrorists. Don't muddy the waters. Don't mix among the enemy and pose as a friend. This is the same tactic that Palestinians use in war. They mix among civilians and innocent children to make it difficult for their enemy to target them. You are causing confusion. You provide a protective shield for the enemy. I am not writing this for you. I know you are not going to change. You are a deceiver. I am writing this for the non-Muslims so they do not fall into your trap and don't provide for you free podium to deceive them.

Islam cannot be reformed. They tried it in every imaginable way. The Mu'tazelis tried it, the Sufis tried it, hundreds of old and new schools tried it and they all failed. If you cannot stomach the Sharia, why do you want to keep Islam at all? Islam belongs to the toilet of history. Dump it and flush. Get rid of it and don't fool yourself with this nonsense. Accept the truth. Yes truth matters. Islam is a lie. Muhammad was a mentally sick conman. Get over with it and stop this ridiculous farce of reformation.

“I am the best Salaf for you.” [Sahih Muslim: no. 2450]

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