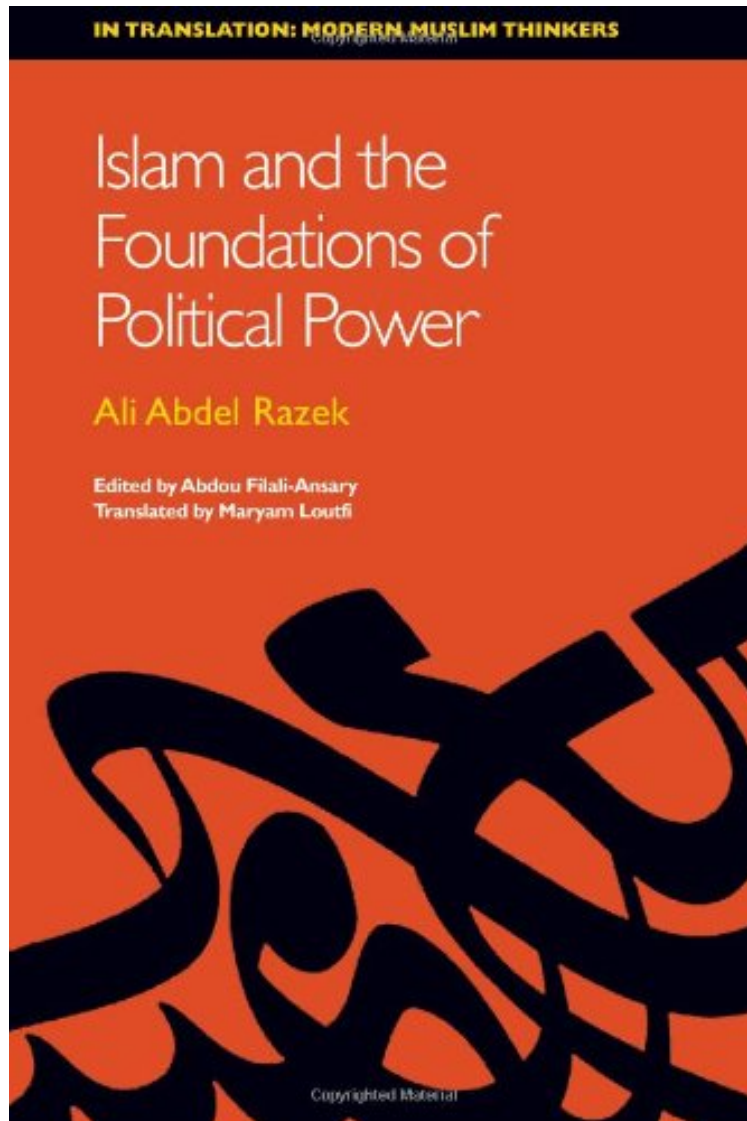


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## Islam and the Foundations of Political Power: (In Translation: Modern Muslim Thinkers) (In Translation Modern Muslim Thinkers EUP)

*Ali Abdel Razek*

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**Ali Abdel Razek : Islam and the Foundations of Political Power: (In Translation: Modern Muslim Thinkers) (In Translation Modern Muslim Thinkers EUP)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Islam and the Foundations of Political Power: (In Translation: Modern Muslim

Thinkers) (In Translation Modern Muslim Thinkers EUP):

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Worth every dollar -- and that's saying something  
By Gregory R. Weiher  
I am interested in Islamic Modernism, the political thinking produced by Muslim Scholars from about 1840 to 1940. Much of the writing from this period has not been translated. I looked for a long time for Abdel Razeq's classic in English to no avail. Thank goodness, the University of Edinburgh has recently published it. On the other hand, it costs \$72. As Filali-Ansary notes in his excellent introduction, Abdel Razeq is in many ways more a modernist than is Muhammad Abduh, the name that comes to mind almost reflexively when Islamic Modernism is mentioned. Abduh was quite traditional in the way he regarded science and rationality, accepting in essence the boundaries that Ghazzali placed upon knowledge and science in the eleventh century. Also, he was not a democrat, and probably accepted the absolute right of the sultan to rule, subject to the advice of a representative assembly. Abdel Razeq, on the other hand, used rationality to critique accepted interpretations of the relationship between Islam and government. That is, as Filali-Ansary points out, he did not use reason to construct Islamic apologetics, but as a genuine hermeneutic tool. That is, he used reason analytically to critique religious dogma. It is not surprising that the Egyptian religious and political authorities of his day (1925) ostracized him and stripped him of his offices as a religious scholar and a public official. Moreover, Abdel Razeq comes to the conclusion that governance is not a religious matter. In his analysis of the histories of the prophet and his times, of the Qur'an, and of the hadith, he finds no evidence for the idea that there is any such thing as an Islamically mandated form of government, or that governing is a religious obligation. As a rational hermeneuticist and a secularist, Abdel Razeq is in many ways much more the modernist than Abduh. Also, the work of Abdel Razeq demonstrates that there is a progressive, modernist tradition in Islam, contrary to the impression one gets from the modern mass media. This book is expensive. At \$72 and 119 pages of actual text (excluding notes and other minutiae), it comes in at over 50 cents a page. But if you are interested in modern Islamic political thought and Islamic Modernism like I am, it's worth every dollar.  
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars  
By Hala S. Arafa  
For those who want to know what "real Islam" is, this book is essential reading.  
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars  
By M. Powell  
Great read, very thorough and educational

Egypt, 1925: the Muslim world is in turmoil over Mustapha Kamal Atatürk's proposal to abolish the caliphate in Turkey. The debate over Islam and politics re-ignites as traditional political systems dissolve under pressure from European powers and most Muslim countries lose their sovereignty. Into this debate enters Ali Abdel Razek, a religious cleric trained at Al-Azhar University, arguing in favour of secularism in his essay 'Islam and the Foundations of Political Power', translated here and published in paperback for the first time. Scholarly features include a substantial introduction that places the essay in its context and explains its impact, an appendix of Razek's sources with full publication details, explanatory notes beside Razek's original footnotes, and additional notes about particular people, events or vocabulary that may be unfamiliar to modern readers.

'It is somewhat astonishing that Ali Abdel Raziq's *Al-Islam Wa Usul Al-Hukm*, one of the most discussed and most significant books of early twentieth-century Egyptian, Arab, and Islamic intellectual history, should have gone so long without a translation into English. Its appearance, in Edinburgh's 'In Translation: Modern Muslim Thinkers' series, is therefore especially welcome ... Filali-Ansari's introduction situates the work in its own context, particularly stressing its importance in sparking what might be seen as the first major 'public-opinion' controversy of modern Middle Eastern history.' -- James McDougall, Trinity College, Oxford, *Journal of Islamic Studies*  
About the Author  
Abdou Filali-Ansary is Director of the Aga Khan University Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilizations. Maryam Loutfi formally worked in the Ministry of Finance and Economy and is presently working in the area of Education.