The study deals with roots of (a) rise of political tensions and (b) roots of rise of political Islam (from Muslim Brotherhood and Turkish AKP up to militant Islamic organizations) in the Middle East in the second half of the 20th century. So it deals with conflict between corrupt and highly unpopular political and economical elite and its challengers recruiting from Islamic movements. The basic roots of this conflict and rise of political Islam are seen in highly uneven modernization process: (1) very rapid social and demographic change (urbanization, media expansion, demographic transition, and educational system expansion), (2) slow going and unstable economic development and (3) unchanging political subsystem. This uneven and deformed Middle Eastern modernization pattern is in detail documented by empirical macro-indicators. It is systematically compared with the modernization process in other post-colonial world macro-regions as well as with early European modernization which was accompanied by sharp social conflict, however dominated by rival secular ideologies. The Middle Eastern highly uneven pattern of modernization is under way in the context of discredited secular ideologies and in the context of Islamic religion with its political relevant imaginary, concepts and symbolism as well as in the broader specific international context. Growing political conflict and the rise of Islamism is seen as a consequence of multiple and highly complex interaction among various aspects of uneven modernization process, Islamic social and political imagination and the unfavorable international context.