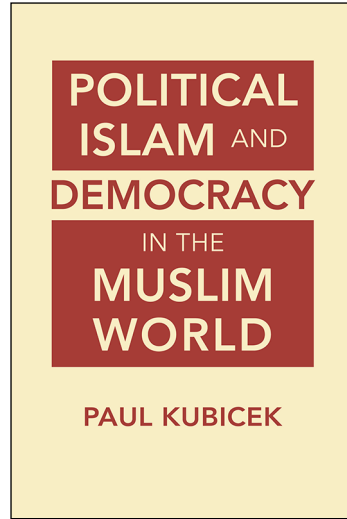


EXCERPTED FROM

Political Islam
and Democracy
in the Muslim World

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ISBN: 978-1-62637-252-8 hc



LYNNE RIENNER PUBLISHERS

1800 30th Street, Suite 314
Boulder, CO 80301 USA
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fax 303.444.0824

This excerpt was downloaded from the
Lynne Rienner Publishers website
www.rienner.com

Contents

<i>List of Tables and Figures</i>	vii
<i>Preface</i>	ix
1 Islam and Democracy: Exploring the Relationship	1
2 Turkey: Democracy and the Dynamics of Secularism	35
3 Malaysia: Islam and Nationalism in a Semidemocratic State	83
4 Pakistan: Democracy After Islamization?	117
5 Bangladesh: Politicized Islam in a Debilitated Democracy	151
6 Mali: A Least-Likely Case of Democratization	179
7 Indonesia: Democratization amid Competing Visions of Islam	205
8 Senegal: Sufi Brotherhoods, Secularism, and Gradual Democratization	245
9 The Arab Spring and Muslim Democracy: Looking Back, Looking Forward	275
<i>List of Acronyms</i>	299
<i>References</i>	301
<i>Index</i>	327
<i>About the Book</i>	349

1

Islam and Democracy: Exploring the Relationship

In November 2013, Turkish prime minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, leader of the Islamic-oriented¹ Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, AKP), caused a stir by suggesting that as leader of a “conservative and democratic government” he was obligated to act against privately owned coed student housing and that the government has “certain duties” to distinguish between “legitimate living and illegitimate living.”² This brought back memories of an earlier claim when he was mayor of Istanbul that he was the city’s “imam” and that “preventing sin” was among his duties. His position was supported by self-described “fatwas” by pro-government religious scholars who argued that the government had no obligation to protect practices with which the majority disapproves and that minorities must “voluntarily” refrain from exercising some freedoms.³ This came after the government’s harsh crackdown on protesters in Istanbul’s Gezi Park the previous spring and it was followed in March 2014 by bans on Twitter and YouTube as the government was engulfed in a major corruption scandal. Previous talk of Turkey as a democratic “model” for other Muslim countries, which was in vogue after the Arab Spring, ended.⁴ This action, in addition to a host of developments in the Muslim world in 2012–2014—including a military coup in Mali, sectarian violence and continued use of blasphemy laws against minorities in Pakistan, calls by Islamists in Bangladesh for bans on men and women mixing in public, the ouster of an elected government and (re)creation of a police state in Egypt, instability pushing post–Arab Spring Libya to the brink of civil war, and, not least, the long-running civil war in Syria—rekindled skepticism about prospects for democracy in the Muslim world.

Debates about the alleged incompatibility between Islam and democracy, of course, are long-standing. The fact that few Muslim countries are

democratic leads some to the conclusion that Islam is to blame. Derrida claims Islam is “the other of democracy” (Derrida 2005); Lewis (2005: 36) argues the basic modern notion of democracy is “alien” in most Islamic societies; Huntington (1993: 40), in his “Clash of Civilizations,” posited that fundamental Western ideas of individualism, liberalism, democracy, and rule of law have “little resonance” in Islamic cultures; Lakoff (2004: 136) paints his critique of Islam with a broad brush, maintaining that “Muslim thinking, Arab and non-Arab, is in principle against the individualism, pluralism, and secularism characteristic of modern democracies.” These positions, which play upon fears of politicized Islam and often are derided as “Orientalist,”⁵ are bolstered by more rigorous, quantitative studies that find that even when other variables are taken into account, a statistically significant negative relationship between Islam and democracy still holds (Barro 1999; Fish 2002; Rowley and Smith 2009; Potrafke 2012). While the data do not allow one to identify a causal relationship, Rowley and Smith (2009: 298) nonetheless feel confident enough to state that democratic deficits in the Muslim world “appear to have something to do with the nature of Islam itself.”

Many would dispute this claim, and the question of whether there is “something” about Islam—or, perhaps, Arab or Persian culture, as democracy is more conspicuously absent in the Middle East than in the wider Muslim world (Stepan and Robertson 2003; Diamond 2010; Chaney 2012)—is a scholarly minefield. Some (Brumberg 2002; Masoud 2008) view these debates as sterile and useless. More importantly, perhaps, arguments over the “compatibility” of Islam and democracy, as Bayat (2007: 4) suggests, are fundamentally off-target. They essentialize Islam into a single variable (often labeled “Islamism”), thereby failing to recognize that Islam can manifest itself politically in a number of different ways, or even not manifest itself at all. Islam and Islamic-oriented actors will vary over time and space; the antidemocratic interpretation of Islam by the ruling clerics in Iran is not the same “Islam” as that found in countries such as Turkey, Indonesia, and Senegal or even among “post-Islamist” thinkers in Iran itself.⁶ Large-N quantitative studies cannot easily capture this, and they also fail to recognize that the causal arrow may run in the opposite direction, namely, that authoritarian governments contribute to authoritarian manifestations of Islam.

This volume has a different focus with a different research question. Rather than blaming Islam for the lack of democracy in the Muslim world, it examines the role of Islam and Islamic-oriented actors in several cases—identified below—of relatively successful democratization. It purposefully avoids essentializing Islam as inherently antidemocratic or democratic. Indeed, it will explore what Ayoub (2007) described as the “many faces of

political Islam.” The primary research question, however, is directed to uncovering relationships between political manifestations of Islam and competitive, democratic politics and explaining how interpretations more amenable to democracy arise and take root. It aspires, with due modesty, to take up the call posed by Stepan and Robertson (2003: 40) for an “enormously significant research project” to determine how actors in Muslim-majority states may draw upon democratic concepts within Islam.

There are, to be sure, numerous studies of political Islam in the countries that will be examined here, and this study will draw upon them. This volume, however, aims to be broadly, even ambitiously, comparative in nature, examining countries in Africa, South and Southeast Asia, and the Middle East. Such comparative studies that focus on Muslim-majority democracies,⁷ as opposed to Islam and democracy in general or on the role of Islam in nondemocratic states, are uncommon.⁸ While the individual chapters that compose much of this book may lack the depth of monographic studies, the advantage of comparative analysis is that it provides a means to control for alternative explanations and develop generalizations that reveal what features of Islam, historical experiences, and institutional arrangements create conditions more amenable for democratic development. Finally, as seen in the final chapter, the study will apply its findings to countries in the post-Arab Spring Middle East, where, in Tunisia at any rate, prospects for democracy remain strong.

Of course, Islam, however it is conceptualized, is not the only factor that may contribute to or work against democratization. There is a vast literature that points to other variables—economic development, relative power of different political groups, class structure, political culture beyond a connection to Islam, international factors—that might also have importance. However, this study rests on the assumption that Islam often politically matters. This may not be problematic when discussing a country such as Malaysia or Pakistan, where Islam is the official religion and is used in various ways by political actors, but Islam may not occupy center stage or, at times, even be listed on the program in some countries. In these cases, Islam may be repressed or simply be politically benign; it does not actively work *for* democracy but by the same token does not work against it. This “dog that does not bark,” however, may nonetheless turn out to be an important part of the story.

This opening chapter is composed of four parts. First, it will briefly identify and classify the cases for comparison, namely, Muslim-majority countries with an extended and relatively successful democratic record. Second, it will lay out the main arguments of the book, elaborating on the above-mentioned interpretative approach and elucidating the main factors that appear to contribute to democratically inclined manifestations of polit-

ical Islam. Third, taking into account some of the literature that discusses inconsistencies or conflicts between some interpretations of Islam and modern democratic practices, it will suggest various “sticking points” or “fault lines” with respect to Islam and democracy, issues that may emerge to compromise or weaken a country’s adherence to at least some elements of democracy. Finally, it will describe the plan of the book and preview the country-level case studies.

In Search of Democracy in the Muslim World

Although examples of Muslim-majority democracies exist, they are, admittedly, relatively few. Table 1.1 displays data from the Polity IV data set, Freedom House (FH), and the World Bank’s Voice and Accountability (VA) Index, all of which are widely employed in comparative analyses of democracy or levels of political freedom. Although the data sets measure different concepts—Polity, for example, takes a more minimalist definition of democracy, focusing on openness and competitiveness of competition for political office,⁹ whereas FH embraces a more “liberal” or “good governance” approach as its measures take into account items such as freedom of speech, minority and women’s rights, and corruption and rule of law—the scores do highly correlate with each other.¹⁰ As one can see from the table, Muslim-majority states score much lower with respect to level of democracy (note a higher score on FH’s scale is associated with less freedom) than other countries. Few qualify as “democratic” or “free” under the standards of the given data set.¹¹ As noted above, some have taken this “democratic deficit” as evidence that Islam is a cause for nondemocratic outcomes; in statistical studies, even when other factors such as level of economic development, ethnic heterogeneity, oil and gas rents, and levels of globalization are taken into account, Islam still emerges as statistically significant and negatively related to democracy.¹²

While aspects of the “democratic deficit” in the Muslim world can certainly be debated, focus on the lack of democracy among these countries draws attention away from the fact that several do qualify as democracies. These are the primary focus of this study. Where (and when) are they? A complete list of Muslim-majority countries since 1945 that qualified as “democratic” by Polity’s definition (none qualified as “democratic” prior to this) and since 1972 (when FH first began publishing its report) as “free” with an average 3.5 or better FH score—a substantially more generous definition of “free” than FH itself employs¹³—and the years of such standing, through 2012, are presented in Table 1.2.¹⁴ As one can see, numerous states have experience with “democracy” or at least a more liberalized political system. Some of these experiences are brief, and there are differences

Table 1.1 The Democratic Deficit in the Muslim World, 2012

Source	Average Score of Muslim-Majority States ^a	Average Score of All Other States	Muslim "Democracies" ^{b/} All Muslim States	Other "Democracies"/ All Other States
Polity IV ± 10	-.36	5.55	12/39	82/114
Freedom House (FH) (1-7, 1 = "most free")	5.11	2.77	3/46	85/149
World Bank Voice and Accountability Index (VA) ± 2.5	-.89	.18	3/46	91/146

Sources: Polity IV data set (www.systemicpeace.org/polity/polity4.htm), FH Freedom in World Reports (www.freedomhouse.org); World Bank Governance Indicators (<http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.aspx#home>), and Pew Research Center, www.pewforum.org/2011/01/27/table-muslim-population-by-country/, accessed 27 February 2015.

Notes: a. These include Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Brunei, Burkina Faso, Chad, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Gambia, Guinea, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tajikistan, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, and Yemen. This comes from estimates reported by Pew Forum.

b. "Democracy" defined as 6 or higher on Polity, 2.5 or lower on FH, or 0 or above for VA. The data sets do not cover exactly the same set of countries, and in the Polity data set, states undergoing transitions or experiencing instability are often not rated. The twelve "democracies" as judged by Polity are Turkey, Albania, Sierra Leone, Senegal, Indonesia, Comoros, Kyrgyzstan, Niger, Kosovo, Malaysia, Pakistan, and Lebanon. For FH, they are Indonesia, Mali, and Sierra Leone. For VA, they are Senegal, Albania, and Indonesia.

across the data sets. However, there is also significant overlap, especially if one singles out the countries that have a record of being "democratic" or "free" for at least ten consecutive years. These countries and years appear in italics in Table 1.2. Nine countries meet this criterion in Polity; eight do in FH. The outlier is Pakistan, which experiences several ups and downs but manages to be "democratic" by Polity's criterion for ten years, during which time it also scores 4.5 or lower on FH criteria, "partly free" by FH's standard. Malaysia is also a bit of an exception as there is no overlap between the two data sets in the years it can be considered "democratic" or "free."

Based upon the available data, these nine countries can be considered, at least for a certain period of time and perhaps in a loose sense, democracies,¹⁵ although none garner a 10 signifying "full democracy" under Polity's rubric or a 1 that is the best possible score from FH. Of course, the inconsistent record of several countries—Pakistan stands out in this regard—is reflective of the fact that not all of these cases can be considered secure or fully consolidated.

Table 1.2 Muslim-Majority Democracies

Muslim-Majority Democracies as Measured by Polity (1945–2012)	“Free” Muslim-Majority States as Measured by FH (1972–2012)
<i>Albania</i> (2002–2012)	<i>Albania</i> (1992–1995) (2001–2012)
<i>Bangladesh</i> (1972–1973) (1992–2006)	<i>Bangladesh</i> (1972) (1979–1980) (1991–2001) (2010–2012)
Comoros (2004–2012)	Burkina Faso (1972–1973) (1978–1979)
<i>Gambia</i> (1965–1993)	Comoros (1975) (1991–1992) (2006) (2008–2012)
<i>Indonesia</i> (1999–2012)	Djibouti (1977)
Kosovo (2008–2012)	<i>Gambia</i> (1972–1993)
Kyrgyzstan (2010) (2012)	<i>Indonesia</i> (2000–2012)
Lebanon (2005–2012)	Jordan (1992)
<i>Malaysia</i> (1957–1968) (2008–2012)	Kuwait (1973–1975)
<i>Mali</i> (1992–2011)	Kyrgyzstan (1992) (1994)
Niger (1992–1995) (2004–2008) (2011–2012)	Lebanon (1972–1974)
<i>Pakistan</i> (1956–1957) (1973–1976) (1988–1998) (2010–2012)	<i>Malaysia</i> (1972–1983)
<i>Senegal</i> (2000–2012)	Maldives (1972–1974) (2009–2011)
Sierra Leone (1961–1966) (2007–2012)	<i>Mali</i> (1992–2011)
Somalia (1960–1968)	Niger (1993) (2004–2008) (2011–2012)
Sudan (1956–1957) (1965–1968) (1986–1988)	Pakistan (1988–1989)
Syria (1954–1957)	<i>Senegal</i> (1984–1992) (2000–2012)
<i>Turkey</i> (1946–1953) (1961–1970) (1973–1979) (1983–2012)	Sierra Leone (2003–2012)
	Tunisia (2011–2012)
	<i>Turkey</i> (1972–1979) (1986–1992) (2002–2012)

Sources: See Table 1.1 sources.

Notes: Democracies are defined here as countries that rate 6 or better on Polity IV or average 3.5 or better on FH’s measures of political rights and civil liberties. Countries that have a record of being “democratic” or “free” for at least ten consecutive years appear in *italics*.

Of these nine cases, seven—Turkey, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Indonesia, Senegal, and Mali—are most useful for comparative analysis. Albania and Gambia will not receive chapters of their own.¹⁶ Of these seven, one can further differentiate them, based upon closer consideration of their Polity and FH scores and their more recent experience with democracy, into countries with “more success” and those with “limited success.” Table 1.3 displays data (recall that a lower FH score is more “free”) that justify placing into the first category Turkey, the country with the most extensive experience with democracy, as well as Senegal, Indonesia, and Mali, all of which had well-established democracies in the first decade of the millennium (the coup in Mali in 2012 interrupted twenty years of democracy). This distinction allows for some variance in the dependent variable, fostering comparative analysis.

Table 1.3 Comparison of Muslim-Majority Democracies on Quantitative Indexes

Country	Years Rated “Democratic” (>6) by Polity, 1980–2013	Top Polity Score Since 1980 (Years)	Top FH Score Since 1980 (Years)	Average Polity Score, 2000–2013	Average FH Score, 2000–2013	Average VA Score ± 2.5 , 2000–2013
More Success						
Turkey	31	9 (1989–1992; 2011–2013)	3.0 (2004–2011)	7.33	3.36	-1.17
Mali	20	7 (2002–2011)	2.0 (2003–2006)	6.29	2.75	0.09
Indonesia	15	8 (2004–2013)	2.5 (2005–2012)	7.40	2.89	-1.15
Senegal	14	8 (2000–2006)	2.5 (2002–2007)	7.53	2.75	-0.04
Limited Success						
Bangladesh	15	6 (1992–2006)	2.5 (1991–1992)	3.85	3.81	-4.47
Pakistan	14	8 (1988–1996)	3.0 (1988–1989)	-0.52	5.09	-1.00
Malaysia	6	6 (2008–2013)	3.5 (1980–1983)	4.18	4.25	-4.41

Sources: See Table 1.1 sources.

The Argument of the Book

The focus of this study is on these countries, and rather than mostly asking if and how Islam undermines democracy (e.g., what is “wrong” with Islam?), its objective is to uncover how democracy has taken root in Muslim-majority countries and, in particular, what role (if any) Islam played in this process. It does not understand Islam as a structural variable, one whose nature is “fixed” and whose meaning or role is self-evident and can therefore be willy-nilly plugged into a statistical equation. Rather, this study adopts a more nuanced, constructivist or agency-oriented perspective on democratization, seeking to uncover how one possibly significant variable, Islam, is (or is not) inserted into the political process and how it affects democratization. It assumes that Islam, like all religions, is “multivocal,” with concepts that could be both harmful and beneficial to democracy (Stepan and Robertson 2003: 40). Put differently, it is “living and flexible,” “(re-)interpreted by each generation” (Akbarzadeh and MacQueen 2008: 11). This approach, which rejects a monolithic or deterministic conception of Islam, makes particular sense if one keeps in mind both the political diversity in the Muslim world and the fact that “Islam” does not specify a particular form of government. As Esposito and Voll (1996: 7) attest, “Like all the major worldviews and religious traditions, Islam has a full spectrum of potential symbols and concepts for the support of absolutism and hierarchy, as well as foundations for liberty and equality.” The obvious question, one this volume explores, is under what circumstances do the latter prevail over the former?

There is, to be sure, a vast literature examining theoretically and/or theologically what Islam does or does not prescribe. However, in the spirit of Akbarzadeh and MacQueen’s observation that “the conceptual realignment to reconcile Islam and human rights tends to lag behind empirical cases” (2008: 7), this study literally seeks to bring these debates back down to earth with stronger grounding in actual developments and practices. It finds less utility in talking about Islam and democracy in general—although this topic remains unavoidable—and more value in discussing “Muslims living and theorizing under specific historical circumstances” (Krämer 1993: 3).

One should note that not all would embrace this type of perspective. Often Islamist groups embrace a literalist or immutable view of the Quran and other holy texts. In this perspective, Islam is complete unto itself and thus need not and indeed should not be reinterpreted in different historical or cultural contexts by fallible human beings. This fundamentalist interpretation often constitutes a counterdiscourse to more reformist or liberal views of Islam, which are at times portrayed by more fundamentalist actors

as heretical. Kamrava (2011a: 1–6) points out that *bid'a*, the Arabic word often translated as “innovation,” often takes on a pejorative meaning, with Muslims enjoined in one hadith to “avoid novelties, for every novelty is an innovation, and every innovation is an error.”

Furthermore, not everything is subject to change or interpretation. Islam will not be reinterpreted to become polytheistic or move the hajj to Jakarta or Istanbul. Many tenets and obligations of Islam, including prayer, fasting, and *zakat* have been observed since its founding and are recognized by most Muslims as important markers of faith. The Quran, sunna, and hadiths remain seminal sources for pious Muslims. However, as Ramadan notes, the task is not “modification of the sources, but a transformation of the mind and eyes that read them, which are indeed naturally influenced by the new social, political and scientific environment in which they live” (2006: 4).

Thus, while on an ontological or metaphysical level there may be a one true Islam, history shows that human beings have in fact argued over what it requires or commands. Some scholars point to contradictory or vague verses in the Quran, belying claims of certainty by literalists (Saeed 2006: 153). Others redirect the focus away from specific injunctions in canonical texts and toward basic values or higher objectives (*maqasid*)—justice, mercy, compassion, and human dignity (El Fadl 2004; Hunter 2009; Ramadan 2009). Some call for widespread application of the ideas of *tajdid* (renewal), *islah* (reform), and *ijtihad* (human reasoning) (An-Na'im 2008; Ramadan 2006, 2011). One should note that the (re)construction of Islam can be subtractive—ridding Islam of the “barnacles it has accumulated throughout history” (Kamrava 2011b: 60)—or additive through *bid'a*, whose reception will be conditioned by the local context. One, however, should also be aware that *tajdid* or *ijtihad* need not be exclusively oriented in a “liberal” direction; Lakoff (2004: 136) notes that various Islamist groups have employed *ijtihad* in their calls for *jihad* and violence.

This discussion has obvious political import, particularly given that there is no prescribed “Islamic” form of government. How various strands of Islamic thinking are woven together and mixed with other perspectives or ideologies will inevitably vary. Feldman (2003: 34) expresses this notion very well.

When mobile ideas [such as “Islam” and “democracy”] meet, they can conflict, but that is hardly the only possibility. People can take on different paths of disparate ideas for themselves, mixing and matching to come up with arrangements that work for them, even if they are not perfectly coherent.

“Islam” and “democracy,” depending on a particular context, thus may overlap in various ways, although, to be sure this need not mean “Islamic

democracy”—Feldman’s preferred term—would be a carbon copy of modern, Western, liberal democracy. This is an issue we’ll encounter throughout the case studies and explore more in the final chapter.

One should also not assume, however, that (re)construction of a concept is sufficient for it to assume a politically meaningful form. In other words, any constructionist interpretation needs to acknowledge that the likelihood of a given idea or concept to really take hold—to assume importance in “real life”—will be conditioned on factors beyond its purely intellectual appeal. Indeed, as several volumes that document the emergence of “liberal” or “reformist” Muslim actors can attest, their appearance, alone, do not necessarily lead to democracy (Esposito and Voll 1996, 2001; Kurzman 1998a; Hunter 2009). Nasr (2005: 14) makes the provocative and useful point that the emergence and fate of “Muslim democracy” (his term) are conditioned less on “the promise of intellectual reform and ideological change” and more on political calculations and dynamics. The analytical focus of this volume is thus built less around the cataloging of various positions, and more on assessing why some notions become more important or accepted than others.

This book argues that five historical and institutional variables help shape Islam and push Islamic-oriented actors in a more “democratic” or “liberal” direction, which *can*—it does not *have to*—foster democratization. Some of these, it is true, are hard to measure precisely, although qualitative historical analysis can help establish their relative strength or weakness and how they change over time. Moreover, by comparing the “more successful” to the “less successful” cases (see Table 1.3), one can get more purchase on how these variables matter.

The first factor concerns the predominant nature of Islam as it emerges and develops within a given polity. In short, there is no one single “Islam” across the Muslim world; instead, in Yavuz’s terms (2004), there are various “zones” that reflect history and local conditions. In particular, one can make a distinction between cases in which Islam arrives largely through force and eliminates much of what preceded it, and thereby assumes a more monolithic form, and cases in which Islam, usually over the course of time, blends in with preexisting traditions and becomes more syncretic and pluralist. Chaney’s (2012) study of the lack of democracy in what Rowley and Smith (2009) call the “Islamic heartland” invokes this type of argument, noting how early Arab military conquest imposed on many lands a rather uniform military-religious order. In these cases, pre-Islamic traditions are either forgotten or delegitimized.¹⁷ To be sure, “folk” versions of Islam may continue to exist at the margins and various movements may arise to challenge or alter “official” Islam, but over time (particularly given processes of modernization and development of state bureaucracies), in many cases, particularly in the Arab world, the “high” and more formal Islam of the

elites is imposed on the masses, displacing more mystical or syncretic versions (Gellner 1983). On this score, the vernacular language may also matter, as familiarity with Arabic facilitates the spread of what is defined as orthodox Islam. Note that this argument is not intended to essentialize Islam or suggest that would-be Islamic-oriented democrats, particularly in the Middle East, cannot find anything in the Quran or traditional sources to advance more liberal or more pluralistic traditions. However, because they are relying on the same textual sources as those who might deny such traditions, they are at a relative disadvantage in having their ideas take root compared to those who can draw upon a broader range of sources and traditions, including pre-Islamic ones.

The latter are more likely to be found on the periphery of today's Islamic world, where Islam arrived later and not through outright military conquest. Here Islam blended in more with preexisting traditions. Islam, at least what would later be called the "traditional" Islam in countries such as Bangladesh, Senegal, and Indonesia, thus became more syncretic and tolerant of diverse interpretations. This is not to say that there were not later efforts to change or "purify" this Islam. Often these efforts came via intellectual developments in the Middle East. In response, local figures on the Islamic periphery could draw upon their own traditions to construct an alternative, local or national-oriented Islam that they could argue better reflected their own needs and culture. Yavuz (2004: 218) notes that disagreement is not over Islamic doctrines per se but "Islamicate," which he defines as being about how to put the "universal principles of Islam to work in terms of building institutions, ideas, practices, arts, and a vernacularized morality." In other words, Muslim "democrats" could argue—and as we'll see many did so—that "their Islam" was different from Arab or Persian Islam that had, over the centuries, been associated with authoritarian governance and could be portrayed as not compatible with the local context. This is particularly true insofar as Islamic revival becomes linked to nationalism, which is true in several of our cases. In any event, the argument is that more syncretic traditions facilitate pluralism and tolerance, which could then become building blocks for democratic practices as would-be democrats would be less constrained by a rigid, dogmatic Islam and thus have more material to make Islam "compatible" with democracy.

The second factor concerns the degree of centralization of religious authorities. Although related to the belief system itself, as discussed above, this factor is less ideational and more focused on the institutional form Islam takes. Although at present there is no overarching, pan-Islamic hierarchy (as there is for the Catholic Church), there have been and are more hierarchical local structures in which there is a vertical "chain of command" or a "state ulama" that may impose one interpretation of Islam as well as attach itself to state power. A prime example of this is Iran, where

the Shia ulama, although independent of the state, claimed the right to exercise *ijtihad* and thus define what Islam allows. This right was based on their learning, and the doctrine of *marja-e taqlid* (source of emulation), which privileged the most learned and respected ayatollah at the top of the religious hierarchy, was adapted by Ayatollah Ruholla Khomeini in the 1970s into the *velayat-e faqih* (rule of the supreme jurist), which became the basis for the postrevolutionary Iranian Islamic Republic.¹⁸

On the other hand, there may be more decentralized systems that are amenable to both dispersal of power and the emergence of new interpretations of Islam “from below.” These may arise organically in a given society or be imposed or constructed by rulers or colonial powers. Chaney (2012) is again relevant here, making a historical-institutional argument about how particular structures in much of the Muslim world ended up working against democratic development. His contention is that the concentration of military-religious power not only eliminated potential rivals that might contribute to democratization (e.g., a landed aristocracy or merchant guilds) but also created hierarchies that imposed Islamic law (sharia), which was used to maintain a “classical political equilibrium” in favor of the rulers (Chaney 2012: 383; see also Kuran 2011). This was not, however, the model throughout the entirety of the Muslim world, and, as we’ll see in several cases in this volume, where there has been space or opportunity for independent, nonhierarchical forms of Islam to emerge, they have often argued for a more “modern,” “flexible,” or “liberal” form of Islam that is more compatible with democracy.

Not all, of course, are convinced by such deeply rooted historical arguments. Sadowski (1993: 19), reviewing works in this genre, finds them too deterministic, assuming Islam is “a kind of family curse that lives on, crippling the lives of innocent generations after the original sin that created it” and excluding a wide range of intervening variables (e.g., imperialism, manner of economic development) that may do better to explain contemporary dynamics. In this respect, one can and should move beyond “deep history” and explore how under the colonial experience and establishment of independent statehood—relevant to most of the countries examined in this volume—religious institutions were set up and whom they empowered. The overarching point, however, remains the same: hierarchical religious institutions create, *ceretis paribus*, greater potential for centralization of political power and/or the ability to use religion to augment state authority.

The third factor concerns the strength of secularism, particularly as it applies to the legal and political system. In most of the cases in this volume, secularism (or some secular practices) was introduced by colonial powers; Turkey, which adopted secularism on its own, is the exception. Secularism, however, did not “stick” in all cases; in Pakistan, Malaysia, and Bangladesh, Islam became the sole state religion, and in Indonesia belief in

God is part of Pancasila, the official ideology, with Islam as one of several recognized faiths. Some scholars (as well as many pious Muslims) have suggested a fundamental incompatibility between Islam and secularism, that the former is “unsecularisable” (Gellner 1994: 15), and the latter an “impiety” (Lewis 1988: 3). Lack of secularism, however, especially with respect to adoption of sharia or in how adherents of nonrecognized faiths are treated, can be, as developed more below, a real problem for democracy (An-Na’im 2008; Tibi 2012; Cesari 2014), although, as Stepan (2000) notes, countries (including established Western democracies) can be non-secular in different ways, and this need not, by itself, preclude democracy.

However, one should bear in mind that many Muslim-majority countries *are* secular.¹⁹ Reviewing the constitutional role of religion across fifty-four predominantly Muslim states, Stahnke and Blitt (2005) find that eleven (e.g., Indonesia, Albania, Lebanon) make no constitutional declaration with respect to Islam, and the same number (e.g., Turkey, Senegal, Mali) are declared secular states. These last three, all among our “more successful” democracies, adopted or inherited French-style *laïcité*, a more “assertive” form of secularism (Kuru 2009) that significantly limits the political space for Islamic-oriented actors (e.g., explicitly religiously defined parties are prohibited). This does not mean all expression of religion is repressed, although in some cases, most clearly Turkey, authoritarian secularism—*not* Islamism—has historically been the chief obstacle to democracy. However, it does mean that certain things (e.g., adoption of sharia) are constitutionally off the table. While some groups may advocate this, they have not found much political traction. Consequently, in the more secular countries in this volume the impact of political Islam on policy is much more limited (e.g., there is no Islamization by the state, as in Pakistan and Malaysia [Nasr 2001]) and, as one will see, this tends to be associated with more democratic outcomes.

The fourth factor is one of timing, namely, that successful democratization is more likely if democratization precedes significant Islamic-oriented popular mobilization. This argument rests on a couple of grounds. First, democratization in many successful democracies, including most Western countries, was not immediate and total. Basic rights, including that of franchise, expanded over time, and in many cases democracy emerges more as a compact between elites than as a result of popular pressure. Indeed, the “transitology” perspective in the democratization literature plays down the importance of political mobilization, suggesting that too much of it can undermine elite bargaining and the formation of democratic “pacts.”²⁰ In the Muslim world, popular mobilization of Islam—meaning primarily mass-based parties or social movements—may alarm existing elites and those who oppose or are fearful of Islamization. Moreover, if these movements emerge in a nondemocratic environment or one with a weak or

young democracy, they may not have developed steadfast democratic principles. In such an environment, they may be forcibly put down by existing authorities as too threatening or their power may destabilize democracy; in Huntington's (1968) terms, mobilization exceeds institutionalization. Or, if they gain power, as in the Iranian case, they may seek to define "democracy" in such a way that Islam predominates, subordinating key democratic rights (e.g., right to dissent) to their interpretations of the demands of the faith. In contrast, in most of the cases in this volume, one sees that gradual democratization or political liberalization absent Islamic-oriented popular mobilization is connected to (eventually) more secure democracy than in cases that attempt to construct democracy "from scratch" amid significant Islamic-oriented mobilization.

The final factor concerns how extensively Islamic-oriented actors, once they do appear, are incorporated into the political system; this is the oft-studied inclusion-moderation hypothesis.²¹ Its core argument is that giving Islamic-oriented actors a chance to participate in politics tends to moderate them (meaning they abandon violence as a means to produce change and/or agree to respect some basic democratic principles) by giving them a stake in the system, an ability to pursue their goals through peaceful means, an opportunity to work with other political actors and broaden their constituencies, and/or (in a more open or democratic system) a chance to grow accustomed to democratic norms and practices. Following Driessen (2012), however, one should emphasize that inclusion need not be exclusively through democratic or electoral politics; Islamic-oriented actors can be incorporated by various means into the state machinery (e.g., establishment of religious affairs departments) and have a say in policymaking or be given oversight in areas that are, for them, a high priority (e.g., religious education, family law).

This hypothesis, however, remains debated in the broader literature. One problem is determining if Islamic-oriented actors have truly moderated or only feign doing so. Cesari (2014: 239–240) adds that another problem is that while they may "moderate" with respect to electoral politics (which, of course, they might believe they could use to gain power), they may be less likely to "moderate" on issues such as minority or women's rights and thus still embrace what she calls "unsecular politics" that can compromise democracy. A further complication is that in some cases "moderation" appears to occur via other means (e.g., repression), meaning that Islamic-oriented actors may then strategically embrace democracy as a means for them to (re)emerge in the political arena (Hamid 2014). Of course, the question then becomes whether observed "moderation" is based on principled change or instrumental calculations. In this study, interestingly, this theory is only partially supported; while "moderate" Islamic-oriented actors

are an important part of the story, *how* they moderate and *how extensively* they moderate differ.

Three caveats are in order. First, no claim is made that any of these factors in isolation is necessary or sufficient for democratization. They are thus best understood as probabilistic features rather than “causes,” although in some cases they are all present and form a rather cohesive narrative. This leads to the second caveat, insofar as one could argue that these factors are not completely independent. Indeed, one could suggest they feed upon and build on each other, perhaps even in a chronological manner in that a “positive score” on one variable leads to a “positive score” on the next one in sequence, generating a “model” for democratization in an Islamic country. If so, of course, this gives coherence to the historical argument and narrative, as in a more modular case like Senegal. However, it does not have to work this way; the factors that help shape “democratic” manifestations of political Islam do not necessarily evolve in a linear or historically deterministic manner. For example, as we’ll see in Chapter 4, Pakistan possessed pluralist and syncretic traditions of Islam and had, at independence, no powerful hierarchical authority to “speak” for Islam but became nonsecular, and subsequent efforts to incorporate Islamic-oriented actors into the political system had mixed results. In the case of Malaysia, discussed in Chapter 2, British policy helped bolster the hierarchical religious role of sultans in a region that possessed syncretic Islamic traditions. Furthermore, there may be tensions between the factors as well. For example, it does not “naturally” follow that Islamic-oriented actors are incorporated into a secular state, but this has, in fact, been a common practice in the Muslim world, although one that has generated some difficulties for governance as well as for certain attributes of democracy (e.g., respect for minority rights) (Cesari 2014). Lastly, as we’ll see in several of the case studies, practices and policies may vary over time (e.g., Bangladesh initially adopts secularism and then abandons it), meaning that there may not be a consistent, linear narrative.

Third, this exposition neglects to mention a host of other possible variables that could affect the development of both Islam and democracy. Of course, many other factors might matter, although, as data in Table 1.4 suggest, some of the variables commonly associated with democratization do not, *prima facie*, appear convincing. For example, economic development is often taken to be an important factor in contributing to democracy. However, as seen in Table 1.4, there is no such positive relationship in our cases. Indeed, statistical analysis of all Muslim-majority countries using World Bank and Polity data from 2012 find there is actually a *negative* relationship between gross domestic product (GDP) per capita and level of democracy as measured by Polity.²² Oil wealth no doubt plays a role here. This is

Table 1.4 Profiles of Muslim-Majority Democracies

	Turkey	Mali	Indonesia	Senegal	Bangladesh	Pakistan	Malaysia
Democracy in 2013? (Polity and/or FH) ^a	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Mixed	Mixed	Mixed
GDP per capita in 2012 (current US\$, PPP)	18,190	1,140	4,730	1,880	2,030	2,880	16,270
Percentage Muslim/percentage largest ethnic group	98.6/70	92.4/50	88.1/41	95.9/43	90.4/98	96.4/45	61.4/50
Colonial power	None	French	Dutch	French	UK	UK	UK
Violent struggle at foundation	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
Form of government	Semipresidential ^b	Semipresidential ^c	Presidential	Semipresidential ^c	Parliamentary	Parliamentary ^d	Parliamentary
Military coups since 1960	Several	Several	One	None	Several	Several	None

Sources: World Bank; Pew Research Center (from Table 1.1); Central Intelligence Agency World Factbook.

Notes: GDP is gross domestic product; PPP is purchasing power parity.

a. Threshold is 6 or above for Polity, 3.5 or below for FH, as in Table 1.2.

b. President is not popularly elected but retains important powers.

c. President has traditionally played dominant role.

d. Role of president has varied over time.

not, of course, to reject economic development as wholly unimportant. Indeed, the creation of middle classes, increasing literacy, and greater exposure to the wider world are an important part of the story in explaining the emergence of various political actors, including Islamic-oriented ones, and their economic or class-based interests (Nasr 2005). These variables are discussed in all cases in this volume. However, the evidence simply does not allow us to posit, among our cases, a relationship between relative level of economic development and democratic success.

A similar conclusion can be reached with respect to other variables. While factors such as the role of the military, how the country extricated itself from colonialism, or the form of government might be an interesting or important part of the story in a particular case, there is no strong general pattern. Indeed, to the extent that one might argue there is a pattern from these (limited) data, such as less successful democratic experience, relatively speaking, among countries with British colonial experience or those adopting a parliamentary system, this cuts against the grain of many studies of democratization that find a positive connection between British colonial rule and democratic survival or argue that democratic parliamentary systems are more stable and secure than presidential ones (Weiner 1987; Linz 1990a, 1990b; Bernhard, Reenock, and Nordstrom 2004). While potentially interesting, this study, drawing upon limited cases, does not pursue this as a generalizable argument.

International variables are absent from this table. These might include sources and scope of foreign assistance as well as various aspects of globalization and interdependence, giving outside actors “leverage” or “linkage” (Levitsky and Way 2010). One might also mention diffusion effects, including the spread of democratic ideas and more “progressive” interpretations of Islam. This study takes note of them in the case studies, but they do not stand out as essential elements. Part of the issue is that these countries have been subjected to multiple influences, both from the West and from the broader Muslim world. For example, one finds, especially since the 1980s, significant Iranian and Saudi interest in cultivating their forms of Islam in other Muslim countries. By the same token, as noted above, some local actors resisted this by noting that their countries must adhere to their own form of Islam. Breaking through this thicket to disentangle the various international influences that might matter is not a major concern of this study.

Finally, no explicit mention is made of political culture as an explanatory variable. Again, this is not to say this is unimportant or should be wholly ignored. Indeed, survey evidence will be used in several places in this study to compare and contrast countries. The problem, however, is isolating political culture as a cause as opposed to an effect of state policy or demonstrating that it does in fact matter. As Rowley and Smith (2009) note,

Muslims claim they value and want democracy, yet they have little. As with international factors, untangling the practical data and conceptual methodological concerns with respect to this variable is not the focus of this study.

Possible Fault Lines Between Islam and Democracy

To this point, we have been purposefully agnostic with respect to any general relationship between “Islam” and “democracy,” both broadly defined. In particular, while noting the relative lack of democracy in the Muslim world, we have downplayed suggestions that Islam might, somehow, be the cause of this phenomenon. There is, however, a literature on this topic, which can be useful insofar as it suggests what the fault lines between Islam and democracy might be, helping one see if and how interpretations of Islam in a given context may work against or weaken democracy.

At this point it may be useful to define terms, particularly *democracy*. Democracy, in a most basic sense, can be understood as a system of government in which holders of political authority are chosen through free and competitive election based on universal suffrage. This definition assumes that citizens enjoy basic political and civil freedoms (e.g., freedom of speech and assembly, freedom to organize alternative political parties) so that elections are truly free and competitive. It also assumes that there are no significant unelected political actors such as the military or religious hierarchies that exercise political power. However, there are many conceptualizations of democracy. One might for example, distinguish among “majoritarian democracy,” in which there are few constraints on the powers of elected authorities; “consensus democracy,” in which institutions are designed to disperse power away from majorities and make political actors exercise power cooperatively; and “liberal democracy,” which emphasizes limited powers for the state and individual rights, both in the political or public sphere and in private life. All of these are, of course, ideal types; there is no “perfect” variety of any of these.

Islam, it bears emphasizing, arose before many of the principles of modern representative democracy, not to mention more liberal components of democracy such as gender equality, were firmly ensconced in Western countries. One therefore is not going to find a direct statement with respect to democracy, as currently understood, and the foundations of what might be considered Islam’s relationship with the political realm—the Quran, sunna, hadiths, core tenets of sharia, and Islam’s historical role in medieval empires. El Fadl (2004: 18) makes the point that although Islamic traditions may suggest ideas of representation, consultation, and a legal process, the content of these ideas is contested and thus they provide “no direct link between Islam and democracy.” The Quran makes no explicit endorsement

of a form of government. Some elements of Islam may thus be “compatible” with democracy, or at least some types of democracy; other elements, or, perhaps better stated, other interpretations of Islam, will have problems with some elements of democracy, if not the entire concept.

Survey evidence suggests that Muslims across the world value and want democracy, although, to be sure, the evidence is often unclear about what they understand democracy to mean (Jamal and Tessler 2008; Rowley and Smith 2009; Ciftci 2010; Fish 2011). No doubt some, perhaps many, would object to some elements of democracy found in the West—or, more broadly, aspects of Western culture—and they might therefore want to put an “Islamic” face to their democratic institutions. In this regard, the prominent Egyptian scholar Yusuf al-Qaradawi’s (1926–) admonition is an important one. While he maintains that “the essence of democracy” accords with the “essence of Islam,” when seeking to borrow from the experience of others he suggests that Muslims should “adopt the procedures of democracy, its mechanisms and its guarantees as they suit us, retaining the right to make alterations and modifications.” In other words, Islam and democracy will have to be (re)constructed and interpreted by Muslims themselves with, as he puts it, the details depending on “independent reasoning (*ijtihād*) and evolving circumstances of their lives in terms of time and place” (al-Qaradawi 2009: 232, 237, 236).

Religious-oriented actors can and do play a role in modern democracies. Stepan (2000) rightly reminds us that democracy does not rest upon dogmatic secularism but instead “twin tolerations”: the tolerance of the religious to respect elected authorities and the tolerance of the latter to give religious communities both the freedom to worship and the right to organize for political ends. The key, he suggests, is that neither fundamentally violates basic political and civil rights. Hashemi (2009), building upon Stepan, makes an argument for the compatibility of Islam with more liberal forms of democracy, noting that liberal democracy arose in deeply religious societies in the West. The key, he suggests, is that Muslims need to create an “indigenous secularism” that is compatible with democratic and personal freedoms. Tibi (2012: 119), while adamant that Islamism—an ideology that seeks to establish a certain vision of Islam as the basis of the state—is not fundamentally compatible with liberal democracy, nonetheless concedes that a “reformed Islam” may be.

Whether any countries have successfully implemented this vision is debatable. No Muslim-majority state, for example, has a “perfect” score on FH’s index, which is oriented toward a “liberal” conception of democracy.²³ Some of their shortcomings, perhaps, derive from applying a particular interpretation of Islam that, while not wholly denying democracy, nonetheless is restrictive or discriminatory with respect to individual rights. These issues will be explored in the country-level case studies.

Keeping this in mind—we’ll return to it in the final chapter in a discussion contrasting “liberal” and what might be called (provocatively, to be sure) “Muslim” democracy—where might the suggested fault lines between “Islam” and “democracy” (especially its more liberal variants) lie? Put somewhat differently, what does a “liberal” or “democratic” Islam have to, potentially, overcome? Let us examine four areas, each of which arises not only as a conflict “in theory” between Islam and democracy but also in practice, not only in clearly nondemocratic countries such as Iran or Saudi Arabia but also, albeit usually to a lesser degree, in many of the country-level case studies in this volume.

Extent of Popular Sovereignty

The first tenet of Islam is a profession of monotheism (*tahwid*)—there is no God but God. In addition, in Islamic teaching God’s will is imperative, revealed to humanity, and a guide for people’s lives. He is also sovereign, with dominion over the universe and humanity. Lewis (2010: 66) draws out one possible implication with respect to democracy, as “for believing Muslims, legitimate authority comes from God alone, and the ruler derives his power not from the people, not from his ancestors, but from God and the holy law.” Hallaq (2013: 50) affirms, “God is the sovereign because He literally owns everything. . . . It is God who is the sole Legislator, and it is with Him *and Him alone* that sovereignty and the sovereign will lies” (emphasis in original).

This does not, however, mean that God can rule over humans directly, thereby obviating the need for government. To be sure, the purpose of the modern state and the ultimate goal of many Islamists are different (Hallaq 2013), and most of the latter, including, for example, the late Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran, do not want to do away with the state, only Islamize it to serve the will of God. A truly just political order, from this perspective, needs to uphold this. Democracy, however, is based on a different logic, the will of the people, who are sovereign and accountable to themselves. Notwithstanding the rhetoric of some, nothing in a democracy is truly “God-given,” or, if it is, the people can still take it away. This is anathema to many Muslims. Abu’l A’la-Mawdudi (1903–1979), the founder of Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) in Pakistan, contended that a truly Islamic state must recognize God’s ultimate sovereignty and that no one should have the power to contravene anything laid down by God. In this respect, he notes, “Islam, speaking from the view-point of political philosophy, is the very antithesis of secular Western democracy” (Mawdudi 2007: 264). Abid Ullah Jan (1965–), a more contemporary Pakistani Islamist, suggests that while Islam has “no quarrel with democracy . . . the idea of sovereign people flouting Quranic injunctions and the Sunnah is a matter of concern” to most

Muslims (Jan 2007: 326). Cutting to the chase, the Egyptian Islamist Sayyid Qutb (1906–1966) asked, “Who knows better, you or God?” (Qutb 1981: 86). For many people—not just Muslims—the obvious answer would be the latter. That being the case, certain things that are Known or are True should be, perhaps, taken off the table.

This is a big and important issue, and how much is “off the table” may determine just how democratic a particular interpretation of Islam is. For some Muslims, citing Quranic verses such as “there is no compulsion in religion,” religion is not a matter for the state; individuals are largely free to make choices, sin if they wish, and (perhaps) suffer Divine punishment. For others, however, the ability to be a good Muslim depends upon creation of a particular social order, which presupposes state power and imposition of at least some Islamic norms and principles. This can be codified as sharia and enforced by rulers who, as Erdoğan asserted at one time, have a responsibility to ensure their constituents do not sin. What sharia constitutes or should constitute, as we’ll see later, is contested. The point here, however, is that its very existence can be problematic with respect to democracy, which is oriented toward giving people the power to decide. It may be hypothetically true, as Feldman (2003) maintains in arguments for an “Islamic democracy,” that sharia or individual elements of sharia can be voted upon by the people; in other words, they could agree to limit their liberties. However, Hasan al-Turabi, a Sudanese scholar and one-time prominent Islamist political figure, contends that the net result would be less government “by the people” than “government of the *Shari’a*” (quoted in Esposito 1983: 244). Furthermore, as An-Na’im (2008) argues, mandating sharia as the source of law empowers and privileges, most likely based upon religious knowledge, those who know, as Qutb asked, “what God wants.” This too takes power out of the hands of the people, and, unlike judges who interpret secular laws, it would be difficult for the people to change laws that have been judged to conform to the will of God. Muhammad Khalid Masud (1939–), an Islamic scholar who served as head of Pakistan’s Council of Islamic Ideology (CII), reviewed various arguments with respect to Islam and democracy. He notes that a major problem is that Islamic figures often give little credence to the common individual and therefore assume that something (e.g., sharia) or someone (those entitled to define or interpret sharia) must be present to ensure that the popular will does not undermine or harm Islam (Masud 2004).

One should note that the idea that Islam contradicts popular sovereignty is contested, although El Fadl, an advocate of a “democratic Islam,” concedes it is a “formidable challenge” (2004: 4). He counters, however, that God does not seek to regulate all of human affairs; one can differentiate between *‘ibadat* (a person’s relationship to God) and *mu’amalat* (temporal concerns covering economic, family, and political life), the latter of

which are more subjective and, in the words of Tariq Ramadan, “relative, at a given moment in human history” (Ramadan 2004: 35). Secondly, in order to assess what Islam might support or require in a given context, El Fadl invokes the necessity of applying the Islamic ideas of *ijtihad* and *maqasid*, independent reasoning and focus on the higher objectives. Not only literal scriptural demands, these can be utilized by all people and thus be congruent with democracy. Third, he notes the compatibility between democracy and Islamic ideas such as *shura* (consultation), accountability, and rule of law. In other words, some basic precepts of democracy have Islamic analogues and Islam in no way sanctions unchecked, tyrannical authority. Islam, in this view, can become—and, as we’ll see, has been used—as a discourse of opposition to authoritarian rule. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, he maintains that at present democracy offers the best chance to fulfill the goals of justice and maintenance of human dignity as mandated by Islam (El Fadl 2004: 6). Kamrava (2011b: 63) reaches a similar conclusion: Islam mandates no form of government, only that the government allow people to pursue their material and spiritual needs; the ideal form of government will vary based on circumstances; in today’s world, democracy represents the best option; and Islam contains “several built-in features and mechanisms that are consistent with and supportive of democracy.”

Sharia and Restrictions on Political and Personal Freedoms

Everything, however, need not be subject to interpretation or democratic debate. Islam has a well-developed system of law—more accurately, various schools of jurisprudence (*fiqh*)—that derive from the Quran and other holy texts as well as the judgments of Islamic scholars. Many Muslims, as seen in Table 1.5, believe that sharia (literally, “the way”) is not only divinely revealed but that it should be adopted as the official law. Much of sharia deals with family law (e.g., divorce, inheritance), and many Muslims—including those living in Muslim-majority democracies—want these spheres to be administered by religious judges. In some cases, such as Pakistan, Indonesia, and Malaysia, they are.

Beyond the already mentioned concerns about limitations on popular sovereignty, there are issues with what sharia requires and whether it would be compatible with most understandings of democracy. Hallaq (2013) makes a compelling case that sharia is a moral project that serves the social good, not the state. It is focused on social justice and binds authorities to the law, thereby preventing tyranny. However, in contemporary times sharia has been defined and abused by state authorities and has become so distorted that its original conception has been lost. Ramadan (2006: 3) concedes that sharia “conjures up the darkest images of Islam” and the subsequent connection between religion and state—the “shariatization of the state”

Table 1.5 Comparative Support by Muslims for Sharia and Powers for Religious Judges (in percentages)

Country	Support Making Sharia Official Law	Believe Sharia Is Divinely Revealed	Think Religious Judges Should Decide Family Law and Property Disputes
Turkey	12	49	14
Malaysia	86	41	84
Pakistan	84	81	84
Bangladesh	82	65	71
Mali	63	n/a	n/a
Indonesia	72	54	66
Senegal	55	n/a	n/a
Tunisia	56	66	42
Egypt	74	75	94

Source: Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life 2013.

Note: n/a is not available.

in Tibi's terms (2012: 122)—is often cited as the reason why Islam is incompatible with democracy. However, as is the case with “Islam” writ large, not all versions of sharia (or, to be sure, secularism) are the same.

There are, clearly, some interpretations or issues that do compromise democracy. One issue is the legitimacy of political dissent. Some cite Quranic verses (21:92–93 and 49:9–10) that uphold the unity of the *umma* (community) and are critical of factionalism. For these thinkers, the ideals of unity (*wahda*) and consensus (*ijma*) derive from the concept of *tahwid*. In this vein, Hasan al-Banna (1906–1949), the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, condemned party politics, demanded obedience, and enforced limited use of *shura* within the Brotherhood. He envisioned an ideal Islamic society as one without parties, classes, or other divisions and with very circumscribed political opposition (Lia 2006: 10–11).

Many, however, would contend that Islam does not deny pluralism or diversity. One can, for example, point to the Quran's acknowledgment of human diversity to defend pluralism, as well as Muhammad's “Constitution of Medina” that recognized a diverse population as well as numerous jurisprudential and ideological schools that mostly peacefully coexist within Islam. Moreover, no human is infallible, thus necessitating tolerance of different viewpoints. Al-Qaradawi (2009) cites this to argue that Islam and democracy can be perfectly compatible. Sharia, in his view, should be the source of law, but since no one person can know the whole truth, collective human judgment and voting (which suggests possibility of dissent) are necessary to implement its principles. Muhammed Salim al-Awa (1943–),

an Egyptian lawyer, concludes that Islamic jurisprudence and the logic of history attest to the fact that “as far as Islam is concerned political pluralism is a necessity” (quoted in Donohue and Esposito 2007: 287).

However, this is not to suggest that everything would be allowed. Islam distinguishes between *ikhtilaf* (permissible disagreement) and *fitnah* (chaos, discord). Anything that promotes the latter and could be construed as an attack on the faith or the faithful could therefore be prohibited. Examples of *fitnah* that have caught the attention of authorities in some states include forms of speech (e.g., attacks on political or religious leaders, proselytizing other faiths, anything construed as blasphemous) as well as lifestyle choices and behaviors (e.g., dress, consumption of alcohol, premarital sex, homosexuality). For example, the Universal Islamic Declaration of Human Rights (Article XII) makes a distinction between allowed and disallowed speech, noting that one is not entitled to disseminate falsehoods, outrage public decency, or hold in contempt or ridicule the religious beliefs of others.²⁴ Hence one has seen, including in some of the democratic countries in this volume, bans on certain books and newspapers (e.g., *The Satanic Verses*, papers with cartoons mocking Islam). Moreover, the Quranic verse to “enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong” (3:104) can be used to give the state wide powers to enforce what it views as the good. In some interpretations, the state has the right to mete out harsh punishments (e.g., stoning for adultery) and should defend Islam to the point of sentencing those who renounce their Islamic faith (apostates) to death, a position supported in several Muslim countries.²⁵

The implications for democracy should be clear. One could easily imagine concern for *fitnah* might lead to repressions on political rights and civil liberties (e.g., rights to protest or demonstrate) or bans on political parties. Krämer (1993: 5) maintains that a review of Muslim authors on this subject reveals a “bottom line” that “there can be no toleration of, and no freedom for, the enemies of Islam.” Gellner goes even further, suggesting that Islam, by providing a complete moral blueprint for society, delegitimizes the particularism necessary for a vibrant civil society. In his words, Islam “exemplifies a social order which seems to lack much to provide political countervailing institutions or associations, which is atomized without much individualism, and which operates effectively without intellectual pluralism” (1994: 29). Islam, in this schema, is a totalizing social force, one that inhibits independent social organization and mobilization to resist despotism and thereby ultimately works against democratization. Cesari (2014) presents a similar position, noting that in modern times Islam has been combined with state power to become a “hegemonic religion,” and even if Islam is not officially recognized or sharia is not enshrined as a basis for law, the result, at best, is “unsecular democracy” that often compromises the rights of non-Muslims and women. Whether this holds across all coun-

tries and, more interestingly perhaps, how some Islamic-oriented actors might proffer different interpretations to overcome these alleged difficulties are examined in this study.

Rights of Religious Minorities

There is no basis in Islam for racial, ethnic, or class-based discrimination. Islam is a universal idea, open to all who accept its core tenets. All members of the umma are equal, and God will distinguish among them only on the basis of piety (*taqwa*). However, what of non-Muslims? How should they be treated under Islam, particularly in a state that adopts sharia?

There are some ways of interpreting Islam that are clearly problematic, especially in relation to the stress in liberal democracy of protecting minority rights. Some passages in the Quran (2:190–196, 4:89, 8:39, 8:65, 9:5), for example, enjoin Muslims to fight against unbelievers until they submit to their rule. Once peace is established, many interpretations of Islam have commanded a separate, lower status for non-Muslims. Christians, Jews, and Zoroastrians (“People of the Book”) may live in an Islamic state but they must pay *jizyah* (a tax on non-Muslims, suggested in the Quran verse 9:29) and accept second-class status, including restrictions on proselytizing their faith or criticizing Islam (Kadivar 2006: 125). Mawdudi recommends that non-Muslims (*dhimma*) in an Islamic state be denied the ability to play any political role (Mawdudi 2007: 267). Finally, as noted above, many Muslim-majority states declare Islam the state religion and proscribe sharia as a source of law. These arrangements would seem to favor one group over another—including one type of Muslims over others—and at minimum lead to favoritism, including in areas such as education and state support for religious institutions.

Is this, however, an inherent problem? Many argue that treatment of religious minorities is a nonissue, as the Quran (2:256) is explicit that there should be no compulsion in religion (*la ikrah fi al-din*) and therefore all people (not just Muslims) are free to practice a faith of their choosing. Faith is a gift from God, one that may be accepted or rejected (Talbi 2006: 109). God may ultimately render a judgment against the nonfaithful, but it is not for humans to make this call. The Quranic verse “The Unbelievers” (109:1–5) perhaps makes the strongest point, as it recognizes religious differences but concludes, “to you your religion, and to me my religion.” Shah-Kazemi (2012: 97–98) goes even further, suggesting that all faiths can be seen as “Islamic” in that they may be divinely inspired and can be appreciated as being a form of or based on “submission to God.” The Universal Islamic Declaration of Human Rights cites the above-mentioned Quranic verse prohibiting compulsion in religion (Article X) and extends freedom of worship and conscience to all (Article XIII), although no provision is

made for atheism or agnosticism.²⁶ Others argue that injunctions such as collection of *jizyah*—both mentioned in the Quran and practiced in Islamic societies—may be best understood as a time-specific policy. Indeed, it has even been abandoned in contemporary Iran (Kadivar 2006: 141).

As for more explicit political questions, one might suggest that a democratic compromise of sorts would be adoption of something akin to Muhammad’s Constitution for Medina or the Ottoman *millet* system that gives non-Muslims self-government on issues such as family law (Bulaç 1998). Another issue that comes up in various countries is whether the head of state in an Islamic country could be a non-Muslim. If prohibited (as in Pakistan), this and other restrictions (e.g., limits on building new houses of worship, prohibitions of certain types of personal behavior), while perhaps not enough to make a state “undemocratic” on Polity or even FH indexes, would nonetheless compromise at least some elements of liberal democracy predicated on equal rights for all and freedom of self (Cesari 2014).

Gender Equality—The “True Clash of Civilizations”?

Aside from debates over the connection between Islam and terrorism, no other issue has sparked as much divisiveness and controversy as the treatment of women under Islam. Inglehart and Norris (2003: 68) suggest that this issue constitutes the “true clash of civilizations,” and in their larger study of survey data they conclude that Muslims are by far the most traditional group in their attitudes toward gender roles. “Traditional religious values and religious laws,” they write, “have played an important role in reinforcing social norms of a separate and subordinate role for women as homemakers and mothers, and a role for men as patriarchs within the family and primary breadwinners in the paid workforce” (see also Fish 2011: 181–194).

Beyond public attitudes, one can also find a “gender gap” with respect to political and economic outcomes. The World Economic Forum has created a “Global Gender Gap” index, which measures the “gap” between men and women in numerous countries on issues such as participation in the workforce, pay and advancement in work, literacy and educational achievement, presence in parliament and cabinet-level positions, and health. Variables measure the “gap” between the sexes, not absolute achievement, and some poorer countries such as the Philippines, Nicaragua, and Lesotho rank highly among countries surveyed.²⁷ The top-ranked Muslim-majority country in 2013 was the very secular-oriented Kazakhstan (32nd); the best among countries in this volume was Senegal (67th); and the highest ranking Arab state was the United Arab Emirates (109th). A regression analysis finds a strong statistical relationship ($p < .001$) between the gender gap and percentage of Muslim population, even controlling for wealth (which is

also statistically significant) and percentage of GDP accounted for by oil rents (which is not significant).²⁸

While this, as in the earlier arguments about Islam and democracy, does not “prove” Islam as the cause, it is often assumed to be the culprit. One can cite texts and traditions to this effect. One hadith recalls Mohammed remarking that women have a “deficiency of intelligence” (Fish 2011: 203), and verses in the Quran discriminate against women on issues of inheritance (4:11) or claim that men “have authority over” or are “in charge of women” and that righteous women are obedient to their husbands (4:34). If they are not, this verse continues, men are allowed to beat them, which, as Fish (2011: 205) notes, is a particularly “challenging (and chilling) passage.” The Pakistani Islamist Mawdudi, whom we have already encountered, upheld ideas such as female seclusion and purdah, man’s guardianship over women (Mawdudi 2007: 265). Lamia Shehadeh, in a review of a number of “Islamist” political thinkers, including Mawdudi, al-Banna, and Qutb, as well as more “liberal” figures such as Tunisia’s Rachid al-Ghannoushi, claims that they all use the concept of *fitnah* to justify gender segregation—lest a man’s lust for women lead him to sin. “Their ideal order of freedom, lawfulness, social equality, economic justice, affluence, unity, and victory,” she suggests, “is constructed on the basis of patriarchy where women are veiled and excluded from the public sphere” (Shehadeh 2003: 218–219).

Gender equality, one might add, is a relatively “new” concept in Western democracies; various forms of discrimination (which, of course, still exist) were commonplace and tolerated just a few decades ago. This shows that “democracy,” not just “Islam,” is subject to evolution, (re)interpretation, and different manifestations. Muslim countries—Saudi Arabia being the chief exception—have given women the right to vote; some (Turkey, Bangladesh, Indonesia, and Pakistan) have elected female leaders; and some (Pakistan and Bangladesh) have gender quotas to assure a female parliamentary presence. Many have constitutions that establish legal gender equality. Many of the problems faced by Muslim women (e.g., domestic violence, a husband’s refusal to allow his wife to work—problems not unique to Islam by any means) are not the consequence of government policy. However, one can argue that a cultural milieu exists in many Muslim states that subordinates women and that this has negative political and economic outcomes—a point made most famously in the inaugural 2002 *Arab Human Development Report* issued by the UN Development Programme.²⁹

Whether Islam inherently has something to do with this is a highly charged question. Certainly, Islam has been invoked in some countries to put significant restrictions on personal autonomy (e.g., forced veiling or seclusion) or adopt legislation that gives women fewer rights than men (e.g., ability to divorce or inherit property). Mayer (2008: 19) notes that

“when Islamists have gained control of governments, one of their central goals has been curbing women’s freedoms, often in the name of enforcing Islamic rules and morality.” Some Islamic-oriented actors justify this by claiming that human equality—which Islam affirms—does not mean men and women have to be treated identically; Islam, in this interpretation, does a better job of “protecting” women from sexual and economic exploitation (Mutahhari 1998). Other scholars, however, argue the Quran and other Islamic sources have been systematically misinterpreted and patriarchal elements need to be “reread” or even “unread” (Ahmed 1992; Mernissi 1991; Wadud 1999; Barlas 2002). From this perspective, one needs to pay attention to context and Islam’s overarching ethical vision and realize that, for its time, Islam was progressive on gender issues, recognizing females as fully moral beings and giving them rights (e.g., to property) that previously were not consistently recognized. Some uphold Aisha, Mohammed’s second wife who played a major spiritual and military role in the early Islamic community, as a model and precursor to the numerous “Islamic feminists” in the Muslim world (Wadud 2006).

As with the discussions of sharia and minorities, this review is not intended to be definitive or resolve vigorously debated issues. As one might imagine, the position of women in the Muslim world varies, and interpretations of what Islam means for women differ. In many cases, women’s rights are a relatively new issue, not given primary consideration in initial debates over political liberalization. However, as we shall see, they are an important issue in much of the Muslim world.

Plan of the Book

The bulk of this book is composed of the country case studies of the previously identified Muslim-majority democracies. These could be organized in various ways: geographically, hierarchically in terms of how “democratic” each is, even simply alphabetically. I have chosen to organize them chronologically, based upon the year in which the country began to have its first substantial and sustained democratic experience, measured either by Polity (the only index prior to 1972) or FH. This is presented in Table 1.6. I do this in part because the experiences of some of the “early democratizers” are cited in later cases.³⁰ One can find, for example, invocations of the so-called Turkish model in numerous settings, in large part because Turkey was the first Muslim-majority state to have a substantial and successful democratic experience.

While democracy “starts” in different years in the various cases, the country-level studies will have a significant historical component that pre-dates their democratization. This is suggested by the discussion of the vari-

Table 1.6 Year of First Sustained Democratic Experience

Country	Year
Turkey	1946
Malaysia	1957
Pakistan	1988
Bangladesh	1991
Mali	1992
Indonesia	1999
Senegal	2000

ables deemed to be important to explain the emergence of more democratic or liberal interpretations of Islam. In other words, the back story is often important, and history matters not just objectively speaking but also in how it is invoked and (re)imagined by more contemporary actors. However, the chapters do not aspire to be complete political histories. Focus will be on identifying the factors discussed above as well as “critical junctures” in which political Islam emerged and/or democracy was established or failed. They shall examine a wide range of Islamic-oriented actors, including, depending on the time and country, government officials, leaders of opposition parties and movements, religious figures and activists, and prominent intellectuals who made important contributions to the country’s Islamic and political discourse. Like the existing literature with which it is most similar (Esposito and Voll 1996; Ayooob 2007) it has a significant synthetic component, utilizing numerous secondary sources by Western and local authors. Primary sources—speeches or writings of important political figures, party and organizational platforms, news reports for the key periods under investigation, and, when available, public opinion data sets—are also important to the narrative and analysis.

The chronological ordering of the cases, as noted, puts Turkey first, as it established at least the rudiments of modern democracy in the 1940s. Given Turkey’s more extensive experience with democracy, this chapter is also the longest in the book. The first steps toward democracy in Turkey occurred when the state was more assertively secular, creating a “paradigm” of democratization that afforded a marginal role to political Islam. However, this is hardly the most interesting part of the Turkish case, let alone the end of the story. Most of the chapter will therefore examine how Islam reenters the picture, tentatively at first but gradually more openly, and how the secular paradigm in Turkey has subsequently been challenged and modified. This has occurred most recently under the AKP, whose leaders assert that they have given up their Islamist past and adhere to “conser-

vative democratic” principles. However, as suggested at the opening of this chapter, many would question the AKP’s commitment to democracy, which has reanimated, at least for some observers, questions about the compatibility of Islam and democracy.

The next chapter is on Malaysia, which inherited democracy from the British in 1957 when it became independent. Polity rated this country as democratic throughout the 1960s, and FH gave it relatively high marks for the 1970s, even though the ruling party never lost national power. Malaysia is a multiethnic and multiconfessional state, and Islam is wrapped up with Malay identity. Although political Islam did not play a pronounced role in the country’s first years of independence, since the mid-1970s Malaysia has witnessed state-sponsored Islamization while becoming, in many accounts, a “semidemocratic” state. The relationship between Islam and democracy, as well as prospects for change as opposition parties have more assertively challenged the long-ruling party, will be the focus of Chapter 3.

Chapter 4 is on Pakistan, which was arguably the first country to self-consciously attempt to “invent a model” of “Muslim democracy” (Khan 2006b: 156). While it became independent a decade before Malaysia, it did not have national-level elections until 1970 and its most sustained experience with democracy began only in 1988, after it had experienced a decade of non-democratic, state-sponsored Islamization. Political Islam has played a more assertive role in Pakistan than in any other country in this volume, and Pakistan has also had a more inconsistent democratic record than any of the other cases. By the 2010s, there were again signs of democratic progress, but whether democracy can be consolidated remains very debatable.

Bangladesh, the subject of Chapter 5, shares much of its political history with Pakistan, from which it separated a year after Pakistan’s first elections. For its first two decades of independence, it experienced, like Pakistan, several military coups and state-sponsored Islamization. In 1991, power was returned to civilians, and Bangladesh had a relatively strong democratic record until the early 2000s, when it began to experience political violence, instability, and, eventually, another military coup. Bangladesh, like Pakistan, has several Islamic-oriented parties, and what role Islam plays in the ups and downs of its democratic record will be subject to analysis.

Chapter 6 examines Mali, which became a democracy in 1992, a year after a military coup. It had no prior experience with democracy, is ethnically and linguistically diverse, and is one of the poorest countries in the world. Yet, it sustained a democratic government for twenty years, until another military coup in 2012, which was launched after terrorist and separatist groups defeated government forces and seized control of large amounts of territory in the northern part of the country. Mali had new elections in 2013 and seems poised to redemocratize. It is, in many respects, a

remarkable case, for, if democracy is somewhat exceptional in the Muslim world, Mali is the exceptional exception, a country “that virtually all of political science theory predicated had no chance of democratization” (Villalón 2009: 43). What role Islam plays in this story will be the focus of the chapter.

Indonesia, the world’s largest Muslim country, is examined in Chapter 7. Even though Islam has long been politically important, the state did not make it the sole official religion. After independence, the country was ruled for over forty years by two authoritarian leaders, the latter one forced from office in 1998 due to widespread support for political change, including from Islamic-oriented actors. Despite problems such as corruption and tensions among sectarian groups, it has ranked among the “most democratic” of any Muslim-majority country since the 2000s.

The last country study is Senegal, which ended its period of semi-democracy in 2000 when the party that had ruled the country for four decades finally lost power. Most Senegalese Muslims belong to a Sufi order, which has long been involved in the country’s political, economic, and social life, even though Senegal is officially a secular state. Most Islamic-oriented groups have supported democratic change. The country oversaw yet another change in leadership in 2012, and by the 2010s one could conclude that Senegalese democracy was well-established.

No Arab state is included among our cases, although the Arab Spring in 2011 offered some hope for democratization in the Middle East. One goal of this study is to speak to issues that arose in the wake of the Arab Spring, since political Islam, broadly defined, seems destined to play a role throughout the Arab world. Thus, the concluding chapter, in addition to synthesizing the main findings from the case studies, will also suggest if the factors found in other Muslim countries that may have created a connection between political Islam and democracy are present in the post-Arab Spring cases of Tunisia and Egypt. In this regard, this study hopes to not only speak to historical or purely academic concerns but also address more contemporary and policy-relevant issues facing decisionmakers and publics both in and outside the Muslim world. Finally, it examines whether one can identify a unique species, “Muslim democracy,” that fundamentally differs from the contemporary Western liberal understanding of democracy.

Notes

1. Some might dispute this appellation. More details on the AKP are in Chapter 2.
2. “Erdoğan Sets National Agenda with Remarks on Students’ Houses,” *Today’s Zaman*, 6 November 2013.
3. See report, “1994’ten 2012’ye Erdoğan,” *Taraf*, 2 June 2012; and Hayrettin Karaman, “Çoğunluğu kale almamak,” *Yeni Şafak*, 8 November 2013.

4. See Torelli 2012 and Kubicek 2013, as well as Kilinç 2014 and Kuru 2014b.

5. Schwedler (2011a), for example, notes how studies of political Islam de rigueur have to cite authors such as Lewis and Huntington, even though most writers on Islamic-oriented topics quickly dismiss their positions.

6. The distinction between *Islamist* and *post-Islamist* is most associated with Bayat. See, in particular, Bayat 2007: 8–11. *Islamism*, as he defines it, is an ideology committed to establishing an Islamic state and/or Islamic laws. *Post-Islamism* does not conceive of Islam as an ideology and seeks to “fuse religiosity and rights, faith and freedom, Islam and liberty” (11). This distinction is not without critics, but it is useful for it reminds us that not every “Islamic-oriented actor” (my own preferred term, as well as that of Nasr [2005]) is an “Islamist.”

7. I employ this admittedly cumbersome phrase as opposed to “Muslim democracy” (see Nasr 2005; Cesari 2014), which prejudges the situation by implying that the government possesses some sort of Islamic or Muslim content.

8. Notable exceptions are Esposito and Voll 1996; Hefner 2004; Ayooob 2007; Hwang 2009; Bayat 2013a; and Cesari 2014, although many of these also examine nondemocratic countries and are not as inclusive as this work.

9. Specifically, Polity IV measures openness, competitiveness, and regulation of executive recruitment, constraints on executive authority, and the regulation and competitiveness of participation. See the home page of the Polity IV project, www.systemicpeace.org/polity/polity4.htm, accessed 27 February 2015.

10. The correlation coefficient between Polity and FH is .857; between Polity and VA, .818; and between VA and FH, .956. Some object to FH on conceptual and methodological issues. For example, see Foweraker and Krznaric 2000 and Munck and Verkuilen 2002. While recognizing concerns, I find value in FH insofar as it adopts a more “liberal” notion of democracy, and there may be, as discussed later in this chapter, more pronounced tension between Islam and liberal democracy, as opposed to democracy per se.

11. A six or higher establishes a country as “democratic” according to the designers of Polity. FH, which claims to be measuring “freedom” as opposed to “democracy,” rates a country with a score of 2.5 or lower as “Free.” There is no such threshold for the VA index; in Table 1.1 I have used a score of 0 on the ± 2.5 scale as the marker.

12. Level of economic development is commonly cited as affecting democratic success (Przeworski and Limongi 1997; Geddes 1999) and dependence on rents from oil, gas, and minerals has been found to hamper democracy (Ross 2012; Kuru 2014a). Of the statistical studies, Potrafke (2012) may be the most impressive as he examines a longer time period, not just a year’s snapshot of data. Using World Bank data on national income and revenue from oil as well as the KOF Globalization Index (<http://globalization.kof.ethz.ch>), the data from 2012 also reveal this relationship.

13. If one defined “free” as FH does, very few Muslim-majority countries would qualify. The 3.5 threshold, while more generous, more accurately reflects what Polity is capturing in its more minimalist conception of “democracy.”

14. The VA Index was first published in 1996 and is therefore less useful for comparisons over a longer time frame.

15. No doubt, one could contest this classification for many countries. However, use of Polity and FH gives one a consistent standard to define “democracy” or “free,” and this study will abide by these standards in case selection.

16. Neither country would shed much light on possible connections between Islam and democracy. The majority of Albanians are nominally Muslim, but religious belief among Albanians is lower than that of any Muslim-majority country

(49.7 percent in a World Values Survey in 1998 claimed to be nonreligious) and Islam played a small role in the democratization of the country in the 1990s. Albania also has strong diffusion effects from the collapse of communism as well as strong external incentives to democratize in the form of European Union (EU) conditionality. Gambia is the smallest country, by area, on mainland Africa and is surrounded by Senegal. It did have competitive elections for nearly three decades after gaining independence, but during this time it had only one leader, Dawada Jawara, and his party controlled roughly 80 percent of the seats in parliament for most of this period. He also had more of a pan-African than an Islamic orientation.

17. This assertion may not hold, at least in some parts of the non-Arab world. In Uzbekistan, a cult of Tamerlane is associated with Uzbek nationalism (although this hardly bodes well for democracy) and in Iran pre-Islamic identity and traditions are preserved in the reverence held for works such as Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh*.

18. There is, of course, a rich literature on the Iranian case, and although many figures agreed on the need for an Islamic state, Khomeini's interpretation was disputed by many. For more on various strands of Islamist thought in postrevolutionary Iran, see Dabashi 1993; for more on Khomeini, see Khomeini 1981; Akhavi 1988; and Calder 1982.

19. Schwedler (2011a) and Cesari (2014) make an important point that secularism is an ideal type insofar as ostensibly "secular" regimes employ Islamic-oriented rhetoric and symbols. This is seen throughout the case studies in this volume.

20. The classic source for this literature is Schmitter, O'Donnell, and Whitehead 1986.

21. For a review of several works that examine this issue, see Schwedler 2011b.

22. The R square for a regression including Muslim-majority countries ($n = 39$) is .25, with the standardized beta coefficient for logGDP $-.497$ ($p < .001$), meaning as income goes up, Polity scores decline. The effect using FH is present but not statistically significant.

23. I am aware of charges of "Western bias" against FH as well as shortcomings in numerous areas in developed Western societies. Nonetheless, I would uphold advancing individual freedoms as well as minority rights and gender equality as universal principles.

24. Universal Islamic Declaration of Human Rights, available at www.alhewar.com/ISLAMDECL.html, accessed 27 February 2015.

25. Surveys by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life (2013) found majority support for the death penalty for apostasy in a diverse array of states, including Malaysia (62 percent) and Pakistan (76 percent). Many dispute the legitimacy of the hadith ostensibly commanding this punishment or view it as contextually bound by conditions of war. See Talbi 2006: 113–114.

26. See note 24.

27. The 2013 Global Gender Gap Index, available at www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GenderGap_Report_2013.pdf, accessed 27 February 2015.

28. The R square for the regression including all three dependent variables is .54; R square for Islamic population alone is .36. Ross (2008) finds a relationship between oil and women in the workforce and in parliament, but he uses different variables.

29. *Arab Human Development Report 2002: Creating Opportunities for Future Generations*, available at www.arab-hdr.org/contents/index.aspx?rid=1, accessed 26 February 2015.

30. One could also argue in favor of a chronological presentation if there was a diffusion effect among the cases. Given the ups and downs of the democratic experience in many states, however, it is very hard to identify such influence.