

Chapter 1 : The Reality of Secular Liberal Democracy, and the Islamic worldview (part 2) – Abdullah al A

Islam's relationship to liberal-democratic politics has emerged as one of the most pressing and contentious issues in international affairs. In Islam, Secularism, and Liberal Democracy, Nader Hashemi challenges the widely held belief among social scientists that religious politics and liberal-democratic development are structurally incompatible.

Comments Nineteenth-century French thinker Alexis de Tocqueville wrote that the relationship between religion and democracy in the West was the "great problem of our time. His relatively short work - a revised doctoral dissertation - argues boldly for a fundamental rethinking of the relationship that de Tocqueville presciently identified as problematic. Islam, Secularism and Liberal Democracy: He begins his deconstruction through a historical examination of the role played by religion in Western democratization. Contrary to conventional wisdom, he argues, many of our ideals evolved out of clashes and bargaining. We should not expect otherwise from the Muslim world. Story continues below advertisement Many thinkers, including Islamists such as Rachid al Ghanoushi, have advanced such arguments. He provides convincing evidence that the appearance of "saints" and religious zealots during societal upheavals are historical and sociological facts. For instance, the bloody takeover by Anabaptists of the German town of Munster eerily echoes - in words and deeds - the Taliban and extremists at similar junctures in the Muslim world. Hashemi weaves a narrative about the parallels and argues that this kind of analysis makes it possible to see links and contributions made to democratization by radical religious protest movements. Essentially, he concludes that zealots serve as midwives to the process of modernization, by acting as catalysts to unwittingly force change cycles of regression, renewal and reform. Today, secularists as well as pro- and anti-democracy Islamists in the Muslim world all rely on interpretations of religious sources what Hashemi calls "duelling scriptures". Indeed, it is illustrative that conservatives and reformists alike in Iran, for instance, employ Islamic rhetoric. Chapter three contends that some form of secularism is assumed to be a sine quo non of liberal democracy and herein lays the most difficult tension. Hashemi does not challenge this, but he notes that secularism in the West is associated with positive developments. What needs to be defined, Hashemi asserts, is the precise relationship between secularism and liberal democracy. He suggests, echoing others, that there is considerable latitude in the form of secularism. Hashemi maintains that this form of mutual accommodation a more tolerable secularism may be more palatable. The case studies from Iran, Turkey and Indonesia reveal that there is robust debate on reformulating religious political thought from within, in a manner preserving doctrinal legitimacy. Story continues below advertisement Story continues below advertisement Obviously, any book - particularly one advancing controversial arguments - is open to criticism. Indeed, both liberals and Islamists may have a field day with it. For some liberals, Hashemi may concede too much ground to religion. Moreover, some may see the "twin tolerations" as mere rhetorical obfuscation or even a Trojan horse. Hashemi, who teaches at the University of Denver, may also attract criticism for too readily conceding to arguments regarding the alleged inherent doctrinal irreconcilability between Sharia and liberal democracy. Ironically, consistent with his calls for reform, there is a growing body of work advancing the view that the doctrines of shura consultation , ijma consensus , millet community system , maslaha public interest , ijtihad independent reasoning and maqasid al sharia higher purposes , among others, may all be employable in democratization as well as the pursuit of the rule of law and other such ideals. In all fairness, Hashemi did not set out to grapple with these issues. The fresh ideas and possibilities for debate make this book a must read for anyone interested in global politics. Though at times they are highly theoretical, Hashemi makes his views accessible by setting out a road map of what he proposes to argue, then summarizing his arguments and conclusions at the end of each chapter.

Chapter 2 : Full text of "Islam Secularism and Liberal Democracy"

The central issue is: liberal democracy requires a form of secularism, yet simultaneously the main cultural and intellectual resources that Muslim democrats can draw upon are religious. A paradox, therefore, confronts the democratic theorist.

His relatively short work "a revised doctoral dissertation" argues boldly for a fundamental rethinking of the relationship that de Tocqueville presciently identified as problematic. In the first of four chapters, Hashemi challenges the widely held beliefs that have been used to argue the incompatibility of religion and liberal democracy. He begins his deconstruction through a historical examination of the role played by religion in Western democratization. Contrary to conventional wisdom, he argues, many of our ideals evolved out of clashes and bargaining. We should not expect otherwise from the Muslim world. Many thinkers, including Islamists such as Rachid al Ghanoushi, have advanced such arguments. For instance, the bloody takeover by Anabaptists of the German town of Munster eerily echoes "in words and deeds" the Taliban and extremists at similar junctures in the Muslim world. Hashemi weaves a narrative about the parallels and argues that this kind of analysis makes it possible to see links and contributions made to democratization by radical religious protest movements. Essentially, he concludes that zealots serve as midwives to the process of modernization, by acting as catalysts to unwittingly force change cycles of regression, renewal and reform. Indeed, it is illustrative that conservatives and reformists alike in Iran, for instance, employ Islamic rhetoric. Chapter three contends that some form of secularism is assumed to be a sine quo non of liberal democracy and herein lays the most difficult tension. Hashemi does not challenge this, but he notes that secularism in the West is associated with positive developments. What needs to be defined, Hashemi asserts, is the precise relationship between secularism and liberal democracy. He suggests, echoing others, that there is considerable latitude in the form of secularism. Hashemi maintains that this form of mutual accommodation a more tolerable secularism may be more palatable. The case studies from Iran, Turkey and Indonesia reveal that there is robust debate on reformulating religious political thought from within, in a manner preserving doctrinal legitimacy. Obviously, any book "particularly one advancing controversial arguments" is open to criticism. Indeed, both liberals and Islamists may have a field day with it. For some liberals, Hashemi may concede too much ground to religion. Hashemi, who teaches at the University of Denver, may also attract criticism for too readily conceding to arguments regarding the alleged inherent doctrinal irreconcilability between Sharia and liberal democracy. Ironically, consistent with his calls for reform, there is a growing body of work advancing the view that the doctrines of shura consultation , ijma consensus , millet community system , maslaha public interest , ijihad independent reasoning and maqasid al sharia higher purposes , among others, may all be employable in democratization as well as the pursuit of the rule of law and other such ideals. In all fairness, Hashemi did not set out to grapple with these issues. The fresh ideas and possibilities for debate make this book a must read for anyone interested in global politics. Though at times they are highly theoretical, Hashemi makes his views accessible by setting out a road map of what he proposes to argue, then summarizing his arguments and conclusions at the end of each chapter.

Chapter 3 : ILN | Islam, Secularism and Liberal Democracy

What needs to be defined, Hashemi asserts, is the precise relationship between secularism and liberal democracy. He suggests, echoing others, that there is considerable latitude in the form of.

In addition, we looked at the contemporary critics of Ancient Greek Democracy and the arguments they brought forth for why they considered Democracy a unsuitable system for government, from Socrates, Plato, Aristotle and Thucydides. In order to understand the reality and meaning behind the modern use of Democracy, we must understand what gave rise to its resurrection, the significances behind this, and the purpose of it relative to the ideology of Secular Liberalism. The cause of this state was not Christianity, as many Secularists anachronistically like to portray, but actually due to the fall of the Western Roman Empire. The Roman Empire was the most technologically advanced state of its time, and embraced Christianity during the last two hundred years of its life, with the Western part collapsing in AD due to barbarian invasions. The collapse of the Western Roman Empire left Europe occupied by migrating barbarian tribes, uneducated and unable to repair the decaying Roman technology or architecture. Christianity had nothing to do with the lowering the intellectual life of the Europeans, as for example, St. Augustine, a revered Christian theologian and philosopher during the time of the Roman Empire, is described by many historians as the last great philosopher of the Classical age. If anything, the understanding of Christianity itself would be negatively affected by the new converts from these uneducated tribes who bring in their own traditions and customs, not the other way round. These new ideas from the Ancients and the Muslims re-stimulated Christian thinking causing a rebirth of thought, development and technological improvement, this was called the Renaissance. The Renaissance was led by the Catholic Church, who built the first non-Muslim European universities, and commissioned the copying, studying and preservation of all ancient books obtained from the Muslims. Admittedly, the European intellectual Renaissance owes much to Catholic Church patronage – virtually all of the first European scientists were Catholic Clergy or devout Catholics. For just under years 12th centuries, Europe technologically progressed, eventually surpassing the Islamic and Chinese civilisations by the 17th century, while they began to intellectually and technologically stagnate due to a decadence brought on by their both very long time enjoying a high degree of prosperity. During these years of technological progress, there were no Secular, Liberal regimes, or even Democracies amongst the major powers. This is because technological progress is mainly linked to the level of thinking of a people, not necessarily their political system. Genoa, San Marino and Venice were Italian examples of types of Republic, with Aristocratic councils who elected a Doge, and members of the public allowed to form lesser councils. There was no specific Catholic doctrine that demanded Kingship instead of rule by Nobility Aristocracy or elections of officials by the people Republic. In all case, all these forms of government were viewed as the most suitable vehicles in their respective political and social circumstances to maintain order, preserve the culture and protect the state. This led to the rise of protestantism, and the political battle to win over monarchs to their causes led to bitter wars. The Protestants believed the Catholic Church did not have any political or theological authority over Christians, including Christian European kings, which led to many wars between Catholics and Protestant factions. These religious wars were resolved ultimately by the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, where all states agreed to respect their borders and leave the religion of each state up to the leader to decide – Cuius regio, eius religio Translation: By the beginning of the 17th century, European thinkers began to apply science upon the study of politics, nations, the mind and human nature. Despite the fact these things are intangible, and therefore outside the remit of science – the belief that science could teach humans how to live and to what purpose they should act, caused the birth of materialism. This was nothing new, many civil wars and rebellions had occurred between nobles and kings, but the changed intellectual circumstances in European thought, and the existence of materialist philosophers, would see a new reaction to this event. While many Protestants also subscribed to that theory, as a result of the English Civil war, many Protestant thinkers in England, began to question the stability of a government based upon theological authority – i. Out of this position, rose some thinkers who were influenced by materialism, that sought to re-found the authority of

kings and rulers, and the relationship between states, upon a materialistic basis in the hope that this would be more stable [3]. The most seminal and prominent thinker of these was Thomas Hobbes, who is considered today to be the father of modern Western political philosophy. In 1651 he published the book *Leviathan*, which summed a lot of his previous thought. The book was highly influential and controversial and changed the nature of European thinking. Hobbes took the approach from science, which starts by breaking down the subject of study to its component parts, and studying the properties of each component, in order to come to a general conclusion about how they work in sum. However, in this original state of Nature, individuals would constantly fight each other and would need to come together and form an agreement to unify themselves under an arbiter who would possess the authority to provide protection for them all. Hobbes posited that kings and rulers get their power to rule from the compact or agreement between the majority of the sum of individuals, who appoint a ruler they will obey in return for protection and security. In essence, Hobbes claimed all societies started with the tacit consent by the governed with their government, when the state was first formed. As a reaction to Thomas Hobbes, many protestants and Catholics wrote counter-refutations of his premises, one such thinker was Sir Robert Filmer: Since a natural freedom of mankind cannot be supposed without the denial of the creation of Adam [i]. Although John Locke was a devout Christian, he was also a materialist in terms of his basis for moral knowledge. Needless to say, there is a significant philosophical problem with this [9]. Locke considered that since no one had the right to commit suicide [10], and they cannot give to another a power they do not have themselves; the power to take life arbitrarily as one can dispose of property any way one likes – which is his definition of enslavement. Theft could be punished by death, if it sets an example to deter others, Locke argued. Humans are social creatures, born into families and living in reciprocal and responsibly limited relationships with others. This is the key fundamental flaw of Individualism, but is the central and key doctrine of a political ideology that defines most of the intellectual discourse of the world today. The Second Pillar of Liberalism: After a government has been elected, it is considered to have permission from the people to increase taxes [14]. B Laws cannot be applied Arbitrarily Locke argued that laws must not be arbitrary – in that, laws are applied to some, but not to others. Any law which is made, no matter how restrictive, must at least be applied consistently upon all citizens [15]. In essence, Locke advocated that laws be made according to a Secular basis although he believed that the morals that religion teaches, were of secular value, and could be advocated by government. The Third Pillar of Liberalism: According to Locke, and Hobbes, government became instituted upon the covenant and agreement of the Individuals forming together to establish it. That is to say: Although modern elections do not give people the choice to decide the form of government whether monarchy, oligarchy or democracy, voting to appoint people into an existing power structure would signify formal consent to the structure and form and direct authorisation to make laws on their behalf. Therefore, to understand the full significance of the action of Voting, we must investigate the intentions and meanings intended in the act of Voting under a Secular Liberal system, by the founders of the Liberal system. Voting was considered by Hobbes to be the act of unification of a people. A multitude can only become one through appointing a leader who will be their representative. This is because, by voting, Hobbes and Locke considered that this includes a tacit acceptance of the whoever wins the election: For unless the votes are all understood to be included in the majority of votes, they have come together in vain, and contrary to the end that each proposed for himself, namely the peace and protection of them all. In fact, Locke argued, politicians would be guilty of corruption for promising anything to the people, in order to get votes for candidates that will support a party or be prejudiced under a higher controller [25]. But still it must be with his own consent – i. For what property have I in that which another may by right take when he pleases to himself? While Hobbes said that those not voting should consent to the results of the majority vote or face being destroyed [29], Locke rejected that position and instead put forward an intermediate type of citizenship for non-Voters. This means that a hereditary monarchy like the UK is legitimate in Liberal theory, as long as it started at by popular consent. This brings us to the next section – forms of government structure. The Athenians therefore allowed all citizens to propose and vote on any law, and officials to execute the law were appointed by random lottery. Both Hobbes and Locke held the same understanding as the Greeks as to what a Democratic structure actually means [31]. Hobbes and Locke held no special preference for a type of

government structure, and both posited that Liberal government can be in the form of a monarchy, aristocracy or Democracy [32]. The next article will discuss the history and development of the ideas of Hobbes and Locke into what we call Modern Secular Democracy, and the reality of current power structures they were given. Instead there is nothing in the world that is not subject to contradiction and dispute, nothing that is not rejected, not just by one nation, but by many; equally, there is nothing that is strange and in the opinion of many unnatural that is not approved in many countries, and authorized by their customs. Of course, the problem with this, is that materialistic ideas do not grant a guarantee that people would agree either, but to 17th century thinkers, materialism was something new and gave naive hope of an improvement on the status quo. This article will not delve into the specifics of this new ideology, except with its relationship and significance to modern Western Democracy. John Locke, without realising, helped usher in a new materialism as a basis for knowledge, which ultimately led to the significant rise of Atheism and materialist ideologies that completely ignore God or deny Him. The 18th century English Philosopher David Hume noticed this and the problem is described in the formula: This change is imperceptible; but is however, of the last consequence. For a man, not having the power of his own life, cannot by compact or his own consent enslave himself to any one, nor put himself under the absolute, arbitrary power of another to take away his life when he pleases. Some people still wonder whether they were both considered the same back then. It could not deviate from this formula. The liberty of man in society is to be under no other legislative power but that established by consent in the commonwealth, nor under the dominion of any will, or restraint of any law, but what that legislative shall enact according to the trust put in it. Freedom, then, is not what Sir Robert Filmer tells us: But this is all wrong. Itself is the preservation of the society and as far as will consist with the public good of every person in it. This legislative is not only the supreme power of the commonwealth, but sacred and unalterable in the hands where the community have once placed it. What makes the person one is the unity of the representer, not the unity of the represented. It is the representer who bears the person's "only one person" and this is the only way to make sense of unity as applied to a multitude. He acts also contrary to his trust when he employs the force, treasure, and offices of the society to corrupt the representatives and gain them to his purposes, when he openly pre-engages the electors, and prescribes, to their choice, such whom he has, by solicitation, threats, promises, or otherwise, won to his designs, and employs them to bring in such who have promised beforehand what to vote and what to enact. Thus to regulate candidates and electors, and new model the ways of election, what is it but to cut up the government by the roots, and poison the very fountain of public security? For the people having reserved to themselves the choice of their representatives as the fence to their properties, could do it for no other end but that they might always be freely chosen, and so chosen, freely act and advise as the necessity of the commonwealth and the public good should, upon examination and mature debate, be judged to require. This, those who give their votes before they hear the debate, and have weighed the reasons on all sides, are not capable of doing. To prepare such an assembly as this, and endeavour to set up the declared abettors of his own will, for the true representatives of the people, and the law-makers of the society, is certainly as great a breach of trust, and as perfect a declaration of a design to subvert the government, as is possible to be met with. For the flame of the passions dazzles the understanding, but never enlightens it. Their wishes ought to have great weight with him; their opinion, high respect; their business, unremitting attention. It is his duty to sacrifice his repose, his pleasures, his satisfactions, to theirs; and above all, ever, and in all cases, to prefer their interest to his own. But his unbiassed opinion, his mature judgment, his enlightened conscience, he ought not to sacrifice to you, to any man, or to any set of men living. These he does not derive from your pleasure; no, nor from the law and the constitution. They are a trust from Providence, for the abuse of which he is deeply answerable. Your representative owes you, not his industry only, but his judgment; and he betrays, instead of serving you, if he sacrifices it to your opinion. To deliver an opinion, is the right of all men; that of constituents is a weighty and respectable opinion, which a representative ought always to rejoice to hear; and which he ought always most seriously to consider. But authoritative instructions; mandates issued, which the member is bound blindly and implicitly to obey, to vote, and to argue for, though contrary to the clearest conviction of his judgment and conscience, these are things utterly unknown to the laws of this land, and which arise from a fundamental

mistake of the whole order and tenor of our constitutionâ€”Parliament is not a congress of ambassadors from different and hostile interests; which interests each must maintain, as an agent and advocate, against other agents and advocates; but parliament is a deliberative assembly of one nation, with one interest, that of the whole; where, not local purposes, not local prejudices, ought to guide, but the general good, resulting from the general reason of the whole. You choose a member indeed; but when you have chosen him, he is not member of Bristol, but he is a member of parliament. But if they have set limits to the duration of their legislative, and made this supreme power in any person or assembly only temporary; or else when, by the miscarriages of those in authority, it is forfeited; upon the forfeiture of their rulers, or at the determination of the time set, it reverts to the society, and the people have a right to act as supreme, and continue the legislative in themselves or place it in a new form, or new hands, as they think good. But this no more makes a man a member of that society, a perpetual subject of that commonwealth, than it would make a man a subject to another in whose family he found it convenient to abide for some time, though, whilst he continued in it, he were obliged to comply with the laws and submit to the government he found there. And thus we see that foreigners, by living all their lives under another government, and enjoying the privileges and protection of it, though they are bound, even in conscience, to submit to its administration as far forth as any denizen, yet do not thereby come to be subjects or members of that commonwealth. Nothing can make any man so but his actually entering into it by positive engagement and express promise and compact. So, clearly, there can be only three kinds of commonwealth.

Chapter 4 : Liberalism and progressivism within Islam - Wikipedia

Islam, Secularism, and Liberal Democracy argues for a rethinking of democratic theory so that it incorporates the variable of religion in the development of liberal democracy. In the process, it proves that an indigenous theory of Muslim secularism is not only possible, but is a necessary requirement for the advancement of liberal democracy in.

Early Islamic philosophy emphasized an inexorable link between science and religion, and the process of *ijtihad* to find truth – in effect all philosophy was "political" as it had real implications for governance. This view was challenged by the "rationalist" Mutazilite philosophers, who held a more Hellenic view, reason above revelation, and as such are known to modern scholars as the first speculative theologians of Islam; they were supported by a secular aristocracy who sought freedom of action independent of the Caliphate. By the late ancient period, however, the "traditionalist" Asharite view of Islam had in general triumphed. According to the Asharites, reason must be subordinate to the Quran and the Sunna. His other works were the *Fasl al-Maqal* and the *Kitab al-Kashf*. Ibn Rushd became something of a symbolic figure in the debate over the decline and proposed revitalization of Islamic thought and Islamic society in the later 20th century. They introduced his Egyptian audience to Enlightenment ideas such as secular authority and political rights and liberty; his ideas regarding how a modern civilized society ought to be and what constituted by extension a civilized or "good Egyptian"; and his ideas on public interest and public good. Islamic Modernists attempted to integrate Islamic principles with European social theories. Tahtawi studied at an educational mission for five years, returning in Tahtawi was appointed director of the School of Languages. At the school, he worked translating European books into Arabic. Tahtawi was instrumental in translating military manuals, geography, and European history. Al-Tahtawi even made favorable comments about French society in some of his books. In his piece, *The Extraction of Gold or an Overview of Paris*, Tahtawi discusses the patriotic responsibility of citizenship. Tahtawi uses Roman civilization as an example for what could become of Islamic civilizations. At one point all Romans are united under one Caesar but split into East and West. Tahtawi stresses the importance of citizens defending the patriotic duty of their country. He said that in Islam man was not created to be led by a bridle, man was given intelligence so that he could be guided by knowledge. He believed that Islam encouraged men to detach from the world of their ancestors and that Islam reproved the slavish imitation of tradition. He said that the two greatest possessions relating to religion that man was graced with were independence of will and independence of thought and opinion. It was with the help of these tools that he could attain happiness. He believed that the growth of western civilization in Europe was based on these two principles. He thought that Europeans were roused to act after a large number of them were able to exercise their choice and to seek out facts with their minds. According to him, Islam is the only religion whose dogmas can be proven by reasoning. He was against polygamy and thought that it was an archaic custom. He argued that the Caliph did not represent religious authority, because he was not infallible nor was the Caliph the person whom the revelation was given to; therefore, according to Abduh, the Caliph and other Muslims are equal. Broadly speaking, he preached brotherhood between all schools of thought in Islam. As Christianity was the second biggest religion in Egypt, he devoted special efforts towards friendship between Muslims and Christians. He had many Christian friends and many a time he stood up to defend Copts. But this type of controversy led both conservatives and liberals to produce authoritative hermeneutics. This liberal interpretation of Islam should open space for new perspectives on the religion and social change in Muslim societies.

Chapter 5 : Islam, Secularism and Liberal Democracy, by Nader Hashemi - The Globe and Mail

Toward a Democratic Theory for Muslim Societies. Reviewed by Faisal Kutty Nineteenth-century French thinker Alexis de Tocqueville wrote that the relationship between religion and democracy in the West was the "great problem of our time."*

Islam is the most recent of the Abrahamic religions to emerge on the world stage. Monotheism in general, and specifically as it developed in the Dark and Middle Ages, in principle reflects extremely authoritarian regimes. Theologically, it posits a cosmic or heavenly hierarchy with absolute authority in God, angels in go-between positions, and a fallen humanity in need of salvation at the base of the pyramidal power structure. It is no surprise then that in the centuries wherein the Catholic Church was at its zenith of influence in the West, political power was held by kings, popes, emperors, and powerful nepotistic and despotic elite with huge economic chasms between the people and their rulers. Obviously, these structures were not compatible with democracy. Christianity and Judaism, being monotheistic, are no less inheritors of this stratified and centralized power paradigm, but unlike Islam these religions were effectively secularized and toned down during the century of the European Enlightenment. Thinkers like Descartes, Locke, Spinoza, Kant, Voltaire, Rousseau, Hume, and Hegel paved the way for Marx, Schopenhauer, Buber, and Sartre to challenge conventional approaches to religious ideologies and political formations. Traditional monotheism, with its highly categorized view of man and God, may not in itself be wholly compatible with democracy, but modern Western monotheism gradually molded itself to new ways of thinking during the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, and was certainly forced to do so amid rapid scientific and technological advances. The Islamic world enjoyed its own renaissance during the Islamic Golden Age mid-8th to mid-10th century with advances in the sciences, mathematics, and literature, yet the period declined and has never been restored to its former glory. In the Arab world today, the majority of its intellectuals are clerics, imams, and thinkers emerging from the core of Islamic values. Radical Islam simply does not routinely nurture free thinkers willing to brave the fires of what might otherwise become an Islamic Inquisition. Is it even possible to transition from hierarchical religious authoritarianism to a modernized and even secularized form of Islamic democracy -- one that accepts the separation of church and state? While the possibility and harsh eventuality remains, this is a tall order since Islam, perhaps more than other monotheistic religions, invites itself into every aspect of social life. More specifically, Islam is inherently and by definition inconsistent with the separation of church and state. In all these instances, the authoritarianism seen in the rule of the Islamist Morsi was still there. The Middle East is not the only place where religious ideology might compel people to vote against their own social, economic, and political interests. But history teaches that if there is any prospect in wedding Islam to democratic ideals, efforts to do so must concurrently work on religious, economic, and political levels. Religiously, the concept of the separation of church and state has practically no hold in Islamic thinking. The idea is entirely foreign to most Islamic orthodoxy, and even if a political party were secular in name, they dare not forsake the basic tenets of Islam. The strong religious identity currently imposed on the average citizen would effect a transposition of Islamic views on political affairs, thus nullifying this vital separation of powers and coloring political discourse. Turkey provides us with a perfect example of the failure to wed Islam to democracy. While Erdogan was supporting economic advances and paying lip service to liberty, he was imprisoning journalists and drawing to himself more and more power, leading the country increasingly by Islamic ethos rather than democratic principles. Citizens of the Arab world first require a change from the ground up in the way their religion is approached and instituted socially, politically, and economically. With the rise of free-thinking youth and exposure to new ways of interpreting Islam, a secularized and modernized Islam adapted to modern democratic principles must emerge. Second, the Arab world needs egalitarian economic development that distances itself from tribal, clannish, and centralizing hegemonic models and seeks to build a strong middle class provided with basic social support in education and health care. Third, the Arab world needs, perhaps more than anything, time. We must bear in mind that it took centuries for the Western world to free itself from the bondages of religious ignorance and the divine

right of kings. The Arab youth are already exposed to new technologies, thus accelerating their ascent to democracy and the supremacy of reason, not revelation, in political discourse. But that acceleration comes with its own pitfalls, making the current situation doubly serious and potentially calamitous for millions of innocent men, women, and children who are already suffering heavy fallout. Hence, it is not enough, in the long term, for a country to have just economic development, like Saudi Arabia, or just elections, like Egypt and Iraq. Without balanced development, extremism in even one of the three social institutions will, left unchecked, color the other two. Even if elected democratically, radical Islamic parties invariably presume upon themselves forms of power reminiscent of tyrannical kings. They simply have few other models for their political might or personal manliness other than monarchical rule. I disagree with the notion that the ouster of the freely-elected Morsi will encourage opposition Islamic parties throughout the Arab world to dismiss democratic forms of governing and violently pursue their socio-political agenda in the streets as they lose faith in a free electoral system. On the contrary, Islamic parties that seek power will do well to learn from the Egyptian experience. Being elected democratically does not bestow authoritarian powers, and governing must be inclusive, representing all the people while equally caring about their welfare, regardless of any political affiliations. Morsi was not ousted because he is a devout Muslim; everyone who voted for him knew that only too well. Rather, by acting from a radical Islamic bent, he betrayed the premise of a freely-elected leader, which requires accountability, inclusiveness, and the responsibility to live up to the spirit of the revolution. Moreover, Morsi failed to separate between his Islamic instincts and the democratic principles by which he was empowered to govern. Morsi repeatedly rejected appeals from the military, the U. Intellectuals as well as ordinary Egyptians want their country to be modern, pluralistic, and outward-looking, and do not wish to replace one dictator with another, albeit elected. He worked tirelessly to consolidate his powers while doing next to nothing to save the economy from pending collapse. He placed himself above judicial review and largely appointed fellow Brothers into key posts while allowing Brotherhood hooligans to beat up liberal opponents. If this was not enough, he undermined the core of freedom of speech by intimidating the media and failing to build democratic institutions. Moreover, he pushed for a new constitution fully reliant on Sharia law, expanded blasphemy prosecutions, and supported discrimination against women. To be sure, Morsi surrendered to Islamic siege mentality and authoritarianism in a time when the nation was demanding inclusiveness and political freedom, which was the essence of the revolution against his predecessor in the first place. Yes, political Islam and democracy can work, but not by pushing for early elections. A transitional government, led by a respected leader who is not shackled by a strong ideology and who can cultivate consensus and has wide public appeal, must take at least two years to allow secular and Islamic parties to develop their political platforms and make the public fully aware of their socio-economic policy and other urgent issues facing their nation. In the interim, a new constitution should be written based on freedom, democracy and equality with separation of church and state constitutionally enshrined. Any new constitution written in Egypt that does not clearly separate church and state will be doomed to fail, potentially ushering in yet another revolution. Those who seek to lead will do well to remember that. This point will be expanded in a following article, which will model a separation of church and state in Egypt that still provides a prominent role for religion in daily life.

Chapter 6 : Ruminations 2: Islam and Democracy – Ruminations of a Muslim Skeptic

Islam, Secularism, and Liberal Democracy argues for a rethinking of democratic theory so that it incorporates the variable of religion in the development of liberal democracy. In the process, it proves that an indigenous theory of Muslim secularism is not only possible, but is a necessary requirement for the advancement of liberal democracy in.

Buy in bulk and save Product Description Islam's relationship to liberal-democratic politics has emerged as one of the most pressing and contentious issues in international affairs. Nader Hashemi challenges the widely held belief among social scientists that religious politics and liberal-democratic development are structurally incompatible. While there are certainly tensions between religion and democracy, the two are not irreconcilable. Liberal democracy requires a form of secularism to sustain itself, yet the main, political, cultural and intellectual resources that Muslim democrats can draw upon are religious. How can this paradox be reconciled? Hashemi makes three principal arguments. First, in societies where religion is a key marker of identity, the road to liberal democracy must pass through the gates of religious politics. The process of democratization, therefore, cannot be artificially de-linked from debates about the normative role of religion in government. Secondly, while liberal democracy requires secularism, religious traditions are not born with an inherent secular and democratic conception of politics. These ideas must be developed, and in an emerging democracy, how they are developed is critical. Finally, Hashemi argues that there is an intimate relationship between religious reformation and political development. While the first often precedes the second, these processes are deeply interlinked. Democratization does not require a privatization of religion, but it does require a reinterpretation of religious ideas that are conducive to liberal democracy. By engaging in this reinterpretation, religious groups can play a central role in the development and consolidation of democracy.. *Islam, Secularism, and Liberal Democracy* argues for a rethinking of democratic theory so that it incorporates the variable of religion in the development of liberal democracy. In the process, it proves that an indigenous theory of Muslim secularism is not only possible, but is a necessary requirement for the advancement of liberal democracy in Muslim societies. In his serious and deeply researched book, Nader Hashemi draws both on historical political thought and modern comparative social science to show that such arguments are both ahistorical and oblivious to the ways in which secularism is actually socially constructed and earned in Western societies. With examples from Turkey, Indonesia and elsewhere, he demonstrates that Islam can accommodate democracy with no greater or lesser difficulty than Christianity has done. This is an important book that challenges too narrowly Western conceptions of democracy and too historically opaque views of Islam, thereby helping to heal the unnecessary schism that has too often defined the relationship between Islam and democracy. Barber, author of *Jihad vs. It* offers a rich reflection on the proper definition of secularism for our time; and an insightful discussion of Islamic responses to secularism, both negative and positive. This book is a contribution to the global debate. It should be read from Vancouver to Vladivostock, from Djakarta to Rabat. Deploying political theory and comparative politics, Hashemi sensitively argues that this is possible, indeed even, necessary. In this well-written, accessible and tightly reasoned book, Hashemi succeeds in overturning conceptual frameworks and models that, although superficial and misleading, have far too long tended to dominate mainstream scholarly discourses in the field. In this profound and inspired, and very often inspirational work, Hashemi has succeeded in raising the bar and in setting a new standard of critical analysis in the field, and for this reason alone, this will prove to be a controversial book. In all cases, this masterful contribution is destined to receive a very wide readership. Bubbling with smart questions, pointed remarks and fresh ways of thinking, it presents a compelling case for taking seriously the elective affinities between religion and democracy.

Chapter 7 : Islam, Secularism, and Liberal Democracy - Paperback - Nader Hashemi - Oxford University P

Islam and Liberal Democracy. secular states and established churches, and a wide range of electoral systemsâ€”but all of them share certain basic assumptions and practices that mark the.

Political aspects of Islam , Islamism , and Shura Deliberations of the Caliphates , most notably the Rashidun Caliphate, were not democratic in the modern sense rather, decision-making power lay with a council of notable and trusted companions of Muhammad and representatives of different tribes most of them selected or elected within their tribes. It can be viewed similar to how the prime minister is chosen in many nations. After the Rashidun Caliphs, later Caliphates during the Islamic Golden Age had a much lesser degree of democratic participation, but since "no one was superior to anyone else except on the basis of piety and virtue" in Islam, and following the example of Muhammad, later Islamic rulers often held public consultations with the people in their affairs. Since the law came from the legal scholars, this prevented the Caliph from dictating legal results. Laws were decided based on the ijma consensus of the Ummah community , which was most often represented by the legal scholars. Ali Khan argues that Islam is fully compatible with democracy. In his book, *A Theory of Universal Democracy*, Khan provides a critique of liberal democracy and secularism. He presents the concept of "fusion state" in which religion and state are fused. Contradictions represent the limited knowledge that human beings have. According to the Quran and the Sunnah , Muslims are fully capable of preserving spirituality and self-rule. Muslim democrats, including Ahmad Moussalli professor of political science at the American University of Beirut , argue that concepts in the Quran point towards some form of democracy, or at least away from despotism. For example, shura Al Imran â€” Quran 3: Government by the people is not therefore necessarily incompatible with the rule of Islam, whilst it has also been argued that rule by a religious authority is not the same as rule by a representative of God. This viewpoint, however, is disputed by more traditional Muslims. Moussalli argues that despotic Islamic governments have abused the Quranic concepts for their own ends: Much debate occurs on the subject of which Islamic traditions are fixed principles, and which are subject to democratic change, or other forms of modification in view of changing circumstances. Some Muslims allude to an "Islamic" style of democracy which would recognize such distinctions. Shia viewpoint[edit] According to the Shia understanding, Muhammad named as his successor as leader, with Muhammad being the final prophet , his son-in-law and cousin Ali. Therefore, the first three of the four elected "Rightly Guided" Caliphs recognized by Sunnis Ali being the fourth , are considered usurpers, notwithstanding their having been "elected" through some sort of conciliar deliberation which the Shia do not accept as a representative of the Muslim society of that time. The largest Shia groupingâ€”the Twelvers branchâ€”recognizes a series of Twelve Imams , the last of which Muhammad al-Mahdi , the Hidden Imam is still alive and the Shia are waiting for his reappearance. Since the revolution in Iran , the largest Shia country, Twelver Shia political thought has been dominated by that of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini , the founder and leader of the revolution. Khomeini argued that in the absence of the Hidden Imam and other divinely-appointed figures in whom ultimate political authority rests , Muslims have not only the right, but also the obligation to establish an " Islamic state ". Khomeini distinguishes between Conventional Fiqh and Dynamic Fiqh, which he believes to also be necessary. Khomeini divided the Islamic commandments or Ahkam into three branches: This list includes all commandments which relate to public affairs, such as constitutions, social security , insurance , bank , labour law , taxation, elections, congress , etc. Some of these codes may not strictly or implicitly pointed out in the Quran and generally in the Sunnah, but should not violate any of the two, unless there is a collision of rules in which the more important one is given preference an apparent, but not inherent, violation of a rule. Were the powers of government to lie only within the framework of secondary divine decrees, the designation of the divine government and absolute deputed guardianship wilayat-i mutlaqa-yi mufawwada to the Prophet of Islam peace be upon him and his progeny would have been in practice entirely without meaning and content. I must point out, the government which is a branch of the absolute governance of the Prophet of God is among the primary ordinances of Islam, and has precedence over all secondary ordinances such as prayer salat , fasting sawm , and pilgrimage hajj. Other

deviations from strict sharia law have been noted in the largest Shia-majority state: Insurance is maintained even though chance, the very basis for insurance should theoretically be excluded from all contracts. The contracts signed with foreigners all accept the matter of interest. Al-Farabi argued that the ideal state was the city-state of Medina when it was governed by Muhammad, as its head of state, as he was in direct communion with God whose law was revealed to him. In the absence of the prophet, Al-Farabi considered democracy as the closest to the ideal state, regarding the republican order of the Rashidun Caliphate as an example within early Muslim history. However, he also maintained that it was from democracy that imperfect states emerged, noting how the republican order of the early Islamic Caliphate of the Rashidun caliphs was later replaced by a form of government resembling a monarchy under the Umayyad and Abbasid dynasties. He "welcomed the formation of popularly elected legislative assemblies" in the Muslim world as a "return to the original purity of Islam. Democracy in the Middle East There are several ideas on the relationship between Islam in the Middle East and democracy. Waltz writes that transformations to democracy seemed on the whole to pass by the Islamic Middle East at a time when such transformations were a central theme in other parts of the world, although she does note that, of late, the increasing number of elections being held in the region indicates some form of adoption of democratic traditions. They argue that the compatibility is simply not there between secular democracy and Arab-Islamic culture in the Middle East which has a strong history of undemocratic beliefs and authoritarian power structures. The confusion is, however, understandable since the idea of democracy is quite alien to the mind-set of Islam. However, within Islam there are ideas held by some that believe Islam and democracy in some form are indeed compatible due to the existence of the concept of shura meaning consultation in the Quran. Views such as this have been expressed by various thinkers and political activists in the Middle East. The imperial legacy includes the borders of the modern states themselves and the existence of significant minorities within the states. Acknowledgment of these differences is frequently suppressed usually in the cause of "national unity" and sometimes to obscure the fact that minority elite is controlling the country. Brian Whitaker argues that this leads to the formation of political parties on ethnic, religious or regional divisions, rather than over policy differences. Brian Whitaker argues that as there is no need for taxation there is less pressure for representation. Furthermore, Western governments require a stable source of oil and are therefore more prone to maintain the status quo, rather than push for reforms which may lead to periods of instability. This can be linked into political economy explanations for the occurrence of authoritarian regimes and lack of democracy in the Middle East, particularly the prevalence of rentier states in the Middle East. As civil society is seen to be an integral part of democracy it raises doubts over the feasibility of democracy developing in the Middle East in such situations. The West, especially the US, is also seen as a supporter of Israel, and so it and its institutions, including democracy, are seen by many Muslims as suspect. Khaled Abou El Fadl, a lecturer in Islamic law at the University of California comments "modernity, despite its much scientific advancement, reached Muslims packaged in the ugliness of disempowerment and alienation. Unfortunately, these groups tend to be very intolerant of alternative views, including the ideas of democracy. Many Muslims who argue that Islam and democracy are compatible live in the West, and are therefore seen as "contaminated" by non-Islamic ideas. List of Islamic democratic political parties The Green Algeria Alliance is an Islamist coalition of political parties, created for the legislative election, in Algeria. The Bangladesh Nationalist Party is the second largest party in the Parliament of Bangladesh and the main opposition party. The BNP promotes a center-right policy combining elements of conservatism, Islamism, nationalism and anti-communism. The party believes that Islam is an integral part of the socio-cultural life of Bangladesh, and favors Islamic principles and cultural views. It has also been called the "dominant group" or "dominant force" in the Arab Spring uprising in Syria. Since then it has become the biggest and most well-organized party in Tunisia, so far outdistancing its more secular competitors. Sovereignty belongs to Allah alone but He has delegated it to the State of Pakistan through its people for being exercised within the limits prescribed by Him as a sacred trust. The State shall exercise its powers and authority through the elected representatives of the people. The principles of democracy, freedom, equality, tolerance and social justice, as enunciated by Islam, shall be fully observed. Muslims shall be enabled to order their lives in the individual and collective spheres in accordance with the teachings of Islam as set out in the Quran and Sunnah. Provision

shall be made for the religious minorities to freely profess and practice their religions and develop their cultures. This resolution was included in the constitution as preamble and in [70] it was inserted in the constitution itself as Article 2 and Schedule item 53 [71] but with the word "freely" in Provision shall be made for the religious minorities to freely profess and practice their religions and develop their cultures, removed. The resolution was inserted again in the constitution in , [73] with the word "freely" reinstated. Theory[edit] The idea and concept of Islamic democracy has been accepted by many Iranian clerics, scholars and intellectuals. There are also other Iranian scholars who oppose or at least criticise the concept of Islamic democracy. Among the most popular of them are Ayatollah Naser Makarem Shirazi [79] who have written: Practice[edit] Some Iranians, including Mohammad Khatami , categorize the Islamic republic of Iran as a kind of religious democracy. Others maintain that not only is the Islamic Republic of Iran undemocratic see Politics of Iran but that Khomeini himself opposed the principle of democracy in his book Hokumat-e Islami: Wilayat al-Faqih , where he denied the need for any legislative body saying, "no one has the right to legislate. It is a subject of lively debate among pro-Islamic Iranian intelligentsia. Iranians have ratified the constitution in which the principle rules are explicitly mentioned as the rules of Islam to which other rules should conform. Mohaghegh, Behnam Indices of democracy in Muslim countries[edit] There are several non-governmental organizations that publish and maintain indices of freedom in the world, according to their own various definitions of the term, and rank countries as being free , partly free, or unfree using various measures of freedom, including political rights , economic rights , freedom of the press and civil liberties. The following lists Muslim-majority countries and shows the scores given by two frequently used indices: These indices are frequently used in Western media, but have attracted some criticism and may not reflect recent changes.

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The situation becomes such that the term becomes useless. If it means everything, it means nothing. Professor Gordon Graham argues democracy cannot be indefinitely malleable and identifies 3 elements he considers making up the essential meaning of democracy: I will proceed with this definition, as I think it covers the essential three pillars of modern democracy. Huntington proceeded to explain why Islam, as culture, is so hostile to democracy. Between Religion and Deen. The latter is more accurate to what Islam is. Islam as Deen, not religion, makes such a distinction silly. The history of Europe is distinct from that of Islam, but both civilizations are not unfamiliar with each other. Until they started to become entangled in the 19th and 20th century in an uneven power dynamic, Islam maintained a strong tradition separate from the humanist and materialist worldviews and ideologies of Europe that began to develop from the Renaissance onward. Hence, secularism, the notion of religion and science and its purpose are not the same. This leads to a more fundamental point. In Islam, the purpose of life is to worship God through submission, of which there are various means, in order to succeed in the afterlife. The five pillars of Islam highlight the core aspects of this submission. God legislated all worldly life in light of the afterlife. The world of the material and seen had to ultimately serve the world of the immaterial and unseen. Hence, the purpose of the Caliphate was to create conditions to allow Muslims to pursue this purpose, which invariably required a public presence because this purpose was for all mankind and was holistic and encompassed all aspects of Muslim life. It is the Sovereignty of Allah, not the people that is supreme. His Shariah could not be overturned by majority rule via voting due to universal suffrage. Historically this has not been the case as the guardians of the law were the ulema and they were certainly not the majority of the Muslims. Nor was voting by the average Joe the case when it came to choosing the caliph this has multiple layers and nuances. A fundamental question then must be asked: In Islam, one submits to the will of God to his Sovereignty, of which the Caliphate is a mechanism in terms of broadly running society and providing security the Ulema also play a vital balancing role here, but this is too extensive to get into in this condensed rumination. In liberal society, in theory, it is the will of the people that one submits to Sovereignty of the people, of which Democracy is a mechanism one may argue the power of corporations and lobbies undermine this, but I digress. It is this fundamental difference that makes Western liberal societies more conducive to Democracy, and Muslim societies resistant. Democracy at its core is contradictory to Islam. Huntington put it best when he wrote: Colonialism tried to do this and failed but did have its successes and left enough successes for others to pick up and continue the work. However, recent developments in the Muslim world show this change taking place, although not neatly. Huntington seems to be spot on. But if a society, as the colonial project aimed to do, adopted enough of the concepts and vocabulary of modernity then democracy can potentially flourish. Only time will tell how complete this process will be. There are many more problems that exist when comparing Islam as deen and civilization to the definition presented here of democracy and the gem of separation required to be democratic. However, as ruminations go, I will close here. Islam in Liberalism p. University of Chicago Press.

Chapter 9 : Nader hashemi islam secularism and liberal democracy essays

AND LIBERAL DEMOCRACY democracy in the West. especially when commenting on Muslim politics. reconciling Islamic political thought with secularism is a critical precondition for the construction of a liberal-democratic theory for Muslim societies This relationship between religion and liberal democracy is especially important in societies.