

## Islam and Democracy in Asia: Friends or Foes?

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### Introduction

“This bill is about one thing and one thing only, and that is to protect the fundamental rights that are guaranteed to our citizens under our founding documents” stated Missouri House Representative Paul Curtman (R-Pacific) as he attempted to gain approval for a bill that would bar state courts from utilizing *Sharia* Law in judicial proceedings.<sup>1</sup> Bigotry aside, the parade of anti-*Sharia* bills being proposed in state legislatures brings up an interesting question: is Islam or *Sharia* law in fact antithetical to democratic principles embodied in the US Constitution? Views regarding this issue range from sympathetic voices that emphasize common ground between Islam and democracy to hostile articulations that stress incompatibility. What is lacking on this subject in the realm of academia and popular media however, is quantitative work. In the limited instances where such work is present it focuses mainly on the Middle East, and fails to account for the relationship between Islam and the state. The parochial nature of the available literature reduces the generality of its findings. Therefore this study intends to address this theoretical gap through a thorough assessment of the determinants of democracy in Asia. This cross-national, time-series research from the years 2000-2005 is intended to analyze the question—whether Islamic countries in Asia have more or less of a tendency to be free—through multivariate regression analysis.

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<sup>1</sup> Jason Hancock, “Missouri House Votes to Ban Sharia Law,” *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, April 20, 2011, [http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/govt-and-politics/political-fix/article\\_e30151d6-6b9b-11e0-8dd3-001a4bcf6878.html](http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/govt-and-politics/political-fix/article_e30151d6-6b9b-11e0-8dd3-001a4bcf6878.html) (accessed April 28, 2011).

### Literature Review

In order to develop a sound theory regarding the role/impact/effect? of Islam on democracy in the Asian continent, it is imperative to evaluate the literature about the structural variables that influence democracy. The traditional literature delineates a set of endogenous variables that are viewed as the sufficient and necessary prerequisites for the emergence of democracy.<sup>2</sup> Such structural variables link modernization to democratization, considering democracy as the inevitable product of cultural and socioeconomic conditions.<sup>3</sup> Most recent scholarship, by contrast, is focused on the transition and consolidation of democratic political systems through considerations such as elite pacts and authoritarian regime type.<sup>4</sup> This paper is concerned with the factors that impact the level of democracy, *not* the transition or consolidation of democratic regimes per se. The investigation will commence with an evaluation of traditional structural variables such as Economic Development, Resource Reliance and Stability, and then discuss the relevant cultural factors such as Protestantism, Arab culture, and Islam. It will conclude with a discussion of exogenous factors.

Democracy is defined as a system that “holds free elections on a regular basis and” determines “who governs on the basis of these results.”<sup>5</sup> The respect for “political and civil rights” of the citizenry is equally important.<sup>6</sup> It is interesting to evaluate the connection between Islam and democracy outside of the Middle Eastern context in order to assess the validity of the Islam impedes democracy hypothesis. The Asian continent is chosen for study due to the unique process of interaction that Islam has had with

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<sup>2</sup> Doh Chul Shin, “On the Third Wave of Democratization: A Synthesis and Evaluation of Recent Theory and Research,” *World Politics* 47, no. 1 (October, 1994): p.138.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p.140.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 141. See also: Barbara Geddes, “What Do We Know About Democratization After 20 Years?,” *Annual Review of Political Science* 2 (June, 1994): pp.115-144.

<sup>5</sup> Shin, “On the Third Wave”, p.142.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

Hinduism, Buddhism, Animism, and local mystical traditions in the area.

### **Economic Development and Democracy**

Aside from Islam there are several factors that influence the level of democracy in a country. The most important of these, because it has withstood the test of time, is economic prosperity. One of the few iron laws of Political Science is that economic development and democracy (or democracy and economic development) are linked, although the path of causation is debated. Extending the theoretical explanations provided by Seymour Lipset and Samuel Huntington, Robert Barro establishes that there is an empirical association between economic development and democracy. Brukhart and Lewis-Beck state that economic advancement *causes* democracy, while Adam Przeworski and Fernando Limongi dispute these ideas, elucidating that the relationship between economic development and democracy is a statistical anomaly.

Structural theorists such as Lipset and Huntington consider economic development as the antecedent to democracy. Lipset states that “only in a wealthy society in which relatively few citizens live in real poverty could ... the mass of the population intelligently participate in politics and ... avoid succumbing to the appeals of demagogues.”<sup>7</sup> Industrialization promotes such as wealthy society. “As the middle class” increases relative to the industrial working class, it becomes “increasingly confident” in its “ability to advance” its interests through electoral politics.<sup>8</sup> Hence conflict is moderated through a system of rewards for democratic parties and penalties for extremist groups. In addition, middle class institutions serve as “sources of countervailing power” to the state.<sup>9</sup> “Economic development creates new sources of wealth and power outside the

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<sup>7</sup> Seymour Lipset, “Some Social Requisites of Democracy,” *The American Political Science Review* 53, no. 1 (March, 1959): p.75.

<sup>8</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), p.67.

<sup>9</sup> Lipset, “Some Social Requisites”, p.84.

state and a functional need to devolve decision making.”<sup>10</sup> The larger the “multitude of organizations relatively independent of the central state power,” the better the probability of democratic transition or survival.<sup>11</sup>

With such theoretical justifications in mind, Robert Barro executes a panel study of 100 countries from 1960 to 1995 to measure the impact of economic development on democracy. He operationalizes economic development as the GDP Per Capita of a country. Democracy is calculated through the Freedom House indicator of Political Rights.<sup>12</sup> Freedom House defines *political rights* as “the right of all adults to vote and compete for public office, and for elected representatives to have a decisive vote on public policies.”<sup>13</sup> Barro arrives at the denouement that the LOG of Real GDP Per Capita is positively and significantly correlated with the expansion of political freedom.<sup>14</sup> Although this study posits significant results based upon an extensive sample, it does not capture the “principle” aspect of democracy – the *civil rights* component. By limiting the scope of democracy Barro cannot judiciously conclude that economic development and democracy are linked.

Burkhart and Lewis-Beck carry out Granger analysis on 131 nations from the period 1972-1989. They employ the sum of Political and Civil Rights from Freedom House for democracy. Meanwhile economic development is assessed through the LOG of Per Capita Energy Consumption.<sup>15</sup> The authors include two main alternative variables. The first is a control for the World System Position of the

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<sup>10</sup> Huntington, *The Third Wave*, p.65.

<sup>11</sup> Lipset, “Some Social Requisites”, p.84.

<sup>12</sup> Robert J Barro, “Determinants of Democracy,” *Journal of Political Economy* 107 (1999): p.S160.

<sup>13</sup> Raymond Gastil, *Freedom in the World* (Westport: Greenwood Inc., 1986-1987), p.7.

<sup>14</sup> Barro, “Determinants of Democracy”, p.S161.

<sup>15</sup> Ross E Burkhart and Michael S. Lewis-Beck, “Comparative Democracy: The Economic Development Thesis,” *American Political Science Review* 88, no. 4 (1994): p.905.

country, which labels a state as a member of the core, the semi-periphery or the periphery based upon wage levels, profits and capital intensive industries. The second control attempts to eliminate the spurious impact of structural processes such as “public control of the economy, Protestant population, [and] historical events” through a lag variable of the previous year’s democracy score.<sup>16</sup> According to the Granger causality examination “if X causes Y, then past values of X should aid in the prediction of Y (even after controlling for past values of Y).”<sup>17</sup> The lagged economic development variable is found to be a significant predictor of democracy; every tenfold increase in Per Capita Energy Consumption leads to a 2.5 point increase in democracy. Through the use of this statistical tool the scholars proclaim that “economic development *causes*...democracy.”<sup>18</sup> Although this analysis is quite robust, the authors fail to test for multicollinearity. The likelihood of covariation between Energy Consumption and the World Systems Position is quite high given that countries in the core utilize a greater amount of energy than those in the periphery. Therefore, it is probable that the significance of the respective variables is understated.

Adam Przeworski and Fernando Limongi offer a different interpretation of this connection. Modernization theorists assert that democracy is likely to emerge through economic development. Przeworski and Limongi articulate that the power of economic development in eradicating dictatorial regimes is severely limited. Rather democracy appears exogenously through political actors — independent of industrialization — but it is “more likely to” be consolidated in countries with higher GDPs Per Capita.<sup>19</sup> In countries with a GDP Per Capita of \$ 1000, democratic regimes tend to last eight years on average. In the income range of \$ 1000 to \$ 2000, democratic regimes endure for eighteen years, and above

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p.904.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p.907.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p.907.

<sup>19</sup> Adam Przeworski and Fernando Limongi, “Modernization: Theories and Facts,” *World Politics* 49, no. 2 (January, 1997): p.157.

\$ 6055 democracies survive ad infinitum.<sup>20</sup> Hence the relationship between democratic consolidation and economic growth is reflected mathematically as a correlation between economic development and democracy, and often misinterpreted as causation. With regards to the great fervor over the causal path of economic development and democracy (or democracy and economic development) Geddes points out that “we can be reasonably certain that a positive relationship between development and democracy exists, through we do not know why.”<sup>21</sup> The varying perspectives further necessitate the inclusion of economic development as a control variable for democracy.

### **Oil, Minerals and Democracy**

Another important variable to consider is natural resources. Although the general consensus in political science is that economic growth leads to higher rates of democratization, there is an exception in the case of opulent natural resources. Michael Ross tests the relationship between oil and mineral abundance, and democracy in 113 countries from the years 1971 to 1997.<sup>22</sup> He offers three explanations as to why oil or minerals might prevent the emergence of democracy. The first explanation lies with the concept of the rentier state, which suggests that governments with vast natural resources can employ extensive social welfare expenditure to decrease pressure for accountability. The second elucidation rests on the high repressive capacity of the state, which decreases the chances of a revolution or rebellion. The third explication is rooted in modernization theory. In resource rich countries social and cultural changes, such as an autonomous middle class, do not emerge. Hence demands for democratization are absent. Ross operationalizes oil exports through the World Bank Indices of Oil and Mineral Reliance: the value of petro and mineral exports divided by GDP. Regime type is assessed through rescaled Polity IV scores. The anti-democratic properties of oil and mineral exports are significant; “a single standard deviation rise in the *Oil* variable

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p.165.

<sup>21</sup> Geddes, “What Do We Know”, p.119.

<sup>22</sup> Michael Ross, “Does Oil Hinder Democracy?” *World Politics* 53, no. 3 (April, 2001): p.325.

produces a 0.49 drop in the democracy index....while a standard deviation rise in the *Minerals* variable leads to a 0.27 drop.”<sup>23</sup>

Robert Barro introduces a control for oil to assess the imprint it might have on the level of freedom in a country. He codes a nation as oil-exporting if petroleum constitutes greater than two-thirds of its exports.<sup>24</sup> Oil exporters score 0.32 points lower on Political Rights than non-oil exporters.<sup>25</sup> The problem with this design is that a two thirds threshold for oil exports is too high as petroleum represents as low as 40 percent of exports for certain OPEC members.<sup>26</sup>

### **Stability and Democracy**

Stability is used as an important control by Barro. It is operationalized through the Rule of Law Index which describes the “effectiveness of law enforcement, the sanctity of contracts, and ... the security of property rights.”<sup>27</sup> For every one unit increase in the Rule of Law Index there is a corresponding 0.031 unit increase in the Level of Electoral Rights significant at the 0.10 level.<sup>28</sup> This study is irresolute because it does not measure the association between stability and civil rights. There are theoretical grounds to believe that the rule of law can offer better civil rights protection to citizens. Hence Barro could be missing an important part of the stability-democracy connection.

### **Protestantism and Democracy**

The structural variables traditionally associated with democracy have been thoroughly analyzed. It is now apropos to discuss the advent of cultural influences. Huntington and Lipset insist that Protestantism is conducive to democracy. The first explanation concerns the internal

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p.342.

<sup>24</sup> Barro, “Determinants of Democracy”, p.S164.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p.S167.

<sup>26</sup> Ross, “Does Oil Hinder Democracy”, p.326.

<sup>27</sup> Barro, “Determinants of Democracy”, p.S173.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

structure of Protestant churches, which are “more democratically organized” and “participatory.”<sup>29</sup> “Non-state-related” Protestant sects hence serve as a foundation for autonomous civic organizations that further “democratic values.”<sup>30</sup> The second reason is conceptualized through the Protestant ethic. In the early nineteenth century, the religious emphasis on hard work led to the accumulation of mass wealth. These savings facilitated the capital so crucial for the emergence of large scale enterprises. Consequently the “development of the bourgeoisie” and industrialization (both spurred by the Protestant work ethic) were the protagonists for democratic institutions.<sup>31</sup>

Barro conducts a bivariate test between a state’s religious composition and the Electoral Rights Index on a sample of 100 countries. He assigns each state the following religious categories: Catholic, Muslim, Protestant, Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish and Non-religious.<sup>32</sup> He finds that Protestant countries display the highest correlation with Electoral Rights, out of all the religious categories in the model, at a Beta value of 0.80. By contrast Catholic countries show a correlation of 0.60.<sup>33</sup>

### **“Arab Islam” and Democracy**

Qualitative analysis of Islam and democracy is widespread among pundits, policy makers and scholars. Perceptions regarding the compatibility of Islam and democracy vary quite dramatically. Fareed Zakaria argues that Islam and democracy are not contradictory ideas. The problem emerges due to the regressive interpretations of “Arab Islam.”<sup>34</sup> Islam and democracy are companions in many parts of Asia.

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<sup>29</sup> Huntington, *The Third Wave* 1991, 73. See also: Lipset, “Some Social Requisites” 1959, p.6.

<sup>30</sup> Lipset, “Some Social Requisites”, p.86.

<sup>31</sup> Huntington, *The Third Wave*, p.76.

<sup>32</sup> Barro, “Determinants of Democracy”, p.S176.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., p.S174.

<sup>34</sup> Fareed Zakaria, “Islam, Democracy and Constitutional Liberalism,” *Political Science Quarterly* 119, no. 1 (Spring, 2004): p.7.



Pakistan, Bangladesh, Indonesia and India all serve as examples of states with significant Muslim populations that are readily absorbing democratic values and institutions. However the Arab world exhibits either secular autocracy or Islamic theocracy. Of the twenty-two countries in the Arab League none are considered an Electoral democracy by Freedom House.<sup>35</sup> Zakaria cites/contends that a “deeply authoritarian social structure” is behind this relationship.<sup>36</sup> “The same patriarchal relations and values that prevail in the Arab family seem also to prevail at work, at school, and in religious, political and social organizations.”<sup>37</sup> Hence democracy fails to emerge in a society where power is embodied in male personalities rather than in impartial institutions.

### **Islam and Democracy**

The literature on the Middle East begs the question whether Islam is *empirically* compatible with democracy in non-Arab states. Theoretical elaboration on this topic is provided by Lipset and Huntington. Lipset declares that Islam inherently exhibits an aversion to democracy because the mosque and the state are held in common terms. Islamic theology establishes a doctrine where political, economic and judicial execution is inextricably tied to moral beliefs.<sup>38</sup> Huntington (1991) concurs, stating that “Islam...rejects any distinction between the religious and the political community.”<sup>39</sup> Since *ulema* (religious scholars) are credited with a “decisive vote in articulating, or at least reviewing” public decisions, policy becomes the outcome of religious doctrine rather than legislatures.<sup>40</sup> In

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p.3.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p.7.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., p.7.

<sup>38</sup> Seymour Lipset, “The Social Requisites of Democracy Revisited: 1993 Presidential Address,” *American Sociological Review* 59, no. 1 (February 1994): p.6.

<sup>39</sup> Huntington, *The Third Wave*, p.307.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

addition Islamic societies lack core political values such as pluralism and individual rights.<sup>41</sup>

Given that Huntington offers little empirical evidence for his contentions, Inglehart and Norris attempt to rectify this gap by testing his hypothesis. They utilize data from the World Values Survey during the years 1995-96 and 2000-2002.<sup>42</sup> Although the citizens of Western and Muslim nations support the idea of a democratic regime at rates exceeding 80 percent, the discrepancy materializes when issues such as gender equality, abortion, divorce and homosexuality surface. On these topics Muslim countries tend to disapprove of democratic principles 25 percent more often than Western states.<sup>43</sup> Hence Huntington is partially correct; although electoral democracy may appear in Muslim states, the emergence of civil rights is less likely. Consequently the consolidation of democracy in such an “illiberal” polity may be unsustainable for it would simply devolve into a tyranny of the majority.<sup>44</sup>

Multivariate quantitative studies on this subject are performed by Robert Barro, Ahmed Mobarak and M. Steven Fish. Barro detects that the average score of Muslim countries on the Electoral Rights Index is extremely low (0.26) when compared with all other religions. For example, Catholic states display a mean Index score of 0.60.<sup>45</sup> Based upon such preliminary analysis Barro decides to include each religion in his linear regression design as dummy variable. He observes that the only negatively significant relationship is the one concerning Islamic countries. In fact Muslim countries decrease the level of Electoral Rights by 0.32 units.<sup>46</sup> The defect of this study lies in its assignment of Islam as a dummy variable. A dummy presupposes that there is an arbitrary 50 percent threshold that has to

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<sup>41</sup> Ronald Inglehart and Pippa Norris, “The True Clash of Civilizations,” *Foreign Policy*, no. 135 (March, 2003): p.63.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p.65.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p.64.

<sup>44</sup> Zakaria, “Islam, Democracy and Constitutional Liberalism”, p.282.

<sup>45</sup> Barro, “Determinants of Democracy”, p.S174.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p.S176.

be passed before the impacts of Islam on democracy become evident.<sup>47</sup>

Mobarak (2005) attempts to judge the influence of economic volatility on the level of freedom in a “large n design.” In order to control for Islam, he places a dummy variable for Muslim majority states. Democracy is operationalized through a Combined Index of Freedom House scores, Polity IV data, and the Henisz scale of political constraints.<sup>48</sup> Mobarak illustrates that if a country is Islamic, the level of freedom declines by 0.280 units on the Combined Index.<sup>49</sup> In theoretical terms Mobarak postulates explanations about patriarchy and *Sharia* law. Many Islamic countries were traditionally populated by tribes, particularly in the Middle East and North Africa. Tribal customs and hereditary male rule are still exhibited these societies today. These cultural practices are extended into the official structure of the state, which is ruled by autocratic monarchs. The discordant tendency between Islam and democracy is also explained by the doctrine of [the] religion. Traditional Islamic law is based on *Sharia*, which includes injunctions regarding proper behavior as derived from the Quran and *Hadith*. Thus Islamic law, which is supposedly divine, supersedes the man-made laws of parliament. Legitimacy in such a state is ordained through religious doctrine rather than through democratic consensus.<sup>50</sup> Although this study is a good starting point for empirical work on the subject, its shortfalls include the inability to differentiate between the Middle East and the broader Islamic world, and the exclusion of measures for *Sharia* law.

M. Steven Fish (2002) conducted a study to evaluate the relationship between Islam and authoritarianism from 1990-2000.<sup>51</sup> Islamic religious tradition is coded as a dummy variable for Muslim

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<sup>47</sup> Ross, “Does Oil Hinder Democracy?”, p.331.

<sup>48</sup> Ahmed Mushfiq Mobarak, “Democracy, Volatility and Economic Development,” *Review of Economics and Statistics* 87, no. 2 (May, 2005): p.352.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p.357.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p.355.

<sup>51</sup> Steven M. Fish, “Islam and Authoritarianism,” *World Politics* 55, no. 1 (October, 2002): p.13.

majority states. Statistical examinations show that Islamic countries experience a 1.24 and 5.28 unit decline in democracy on the Freedom House and Polity IV Index respectively.<sup>52</sup> The theoretical link between Islam and authoritarianism is conservative interpretations of the Quran and *Hadith* that erode the rights of women.<sup>53</sup> Such discourse removes women from the realm of the public sphere, and contributes to male aggression and anomie. The social exclusion of women eradicates distinctive “voices and influence from politics.”<sup>54</sup> Since women are often “less comfortable with hierarchy and inequality,” their marginalization from power is conducive to conditions for authoritarianism.<sup>55</sup> Furthermore, patriarchal cultures produce highly unequal male to female sex ratios. Whether it is the neglect of female health care and nutrition or sex-selective abortion, the relative aggregation of males generates a demographic time bomb. As males find it difficult to locate a spouse, aggression and frustration become the norm for male youth. Hence anomie and militancy, behavior that does not align with democratic norms, enables for official repression as the state seeks a grip over this dilemma.<sup>56</sup> Although this study displays statistical significance, Fish does not evaluate the contention that the causality between women’s rights and democracy could be reversed — that is authoritarian regimes could be more inclined to suppress women’s rights than democratic regimes. In this case the lack of female empowerment may not serve as the link between Islam and democratic aversion. As a cautionary note, gender inequality is not included in this study because aspects of it are already contained in the democracy and economic development measures.

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid., pp.13, 15.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., p.24.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., p.30.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., p.31.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., p.31.

### Region and Democracy

A prominent criticism of endogenous democratization theory is that it ignores the influence of exogenous shocks. The Third “democratization wave” demonstrates that exogenous effects can have important consequences for domestic regimes.<sup>57</sup> Contagion refers to the phenomenon where “successful democratization ... in one country...encourages democratization in other countries.”<sup>58</sup> This is because “demonstration effects” show “how it” – the replacement of dictators – can “be done.”<sup>59</sup> Democracy activists in the follower states learn the best means and the dangers to avoid when targeting the regime. Often times “learning” is a “result of direct consultation between democratizers.... As occurred between Hungarian democratizers and their Spanish predecessors.”<sup>60</sup>

In addition to contagion, regions can also explain the geostrategic significance of a particular state. For example Eva Bellin accounts/contends that “multiple Western security concerns” in the Middle East “guarantee continuous international support to authoritarian regimes” in the region “even after the Cold War” (152).<sup>61</sup> Consequently an alternative variable for regional democracy can capture contagion effects and strategically located proxy states.

Ross controls for two prominent regional dummies in his study: Sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East. He classifies states as part of the region based upon the World Bank definition. The regional measure is based on the premise that it will take “the region’s history” into consideration.<sup>62</sup> The regional dummies implicitly consider factors such as culture and foreign relations. The

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<sup>57</sup> Huntington, *The Third Wave*, p.104.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., p.100.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., p.101.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., p.101.

<sup>61</sup> Eva Bellin, “The Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Exceptionalism in Comparative Perspective.” *Comparative Politics* 36, no. 2 (January, 2004): p.152.

<sup>62</sup> Ross, “Does Oil Hinder Democracy?”, p.345.

coefficients for both of the dummies are “large...highly significant” and negatively related to the Adjusted Polity IV democracy scores.<sup>63</sup>

### **Theoretical Considerations: Islamic Scripture and Democracy**

Islam is a broad and complex body of philosophical, legal and political thought. Despite the perceptions of the scholars noted in the literature review, the Quran and *Sunnah* do not offer consistent prescriptions on governance. Islamic scholars in Asia such as Abul Mawdudi and Ayatollah Khomeini indicate that democracy stands in violation of *Hakijamat Allah* (the sovereignty of God).<sup>64</sup> On the other hand, Egyptian intellectual Abbas Al Aqqad and Pakistani Supreme Court Justice Tassaduq Jilani emanate that Islamic concepts such as *shura*, *ijma* and *baya* provide a firm foundation for *procedural* democracy. However the advent of *principle* democracy is a more difficult task.

The philosophy of Islam stands in diametrical opposition to the Western notion of democracy. The promulgation of laws via legislatures is an usurpation of the divine authority of Allah (God) for the Quran explicitly states that “Indeed judgment is only for Allah.”<sup>65</sup> Hence the construction of legal and political structures by the *ummah* (the Muslim citizens) subordinates individuals to the will of society, rather than the will of God.<sup>66</sup> Furthermore *Sharia* contains rules regarding *all possible* social problems. This conception is exemplified in the Quranic verse “And we have sent down to you the book as an *exposition of everything*, a guidance, a mercy and glad tidings to those who have submitted themselves to Allah.”<sup>67</sup> In a clever maneuver,

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> For a definition of democracy see Shin, “On the Third Wave” 1994, 142. For elaboration on the notion of God’s sovereignty see Hugh Goddard, “Islam and Democracy,” *The Political Science Quarterly* 73, no. 1 (December, 2002): p.4.

<sup>65</sup> *The Quran*, trans. Abdullah Ali Yusuf (Elmhurst: Tahrike Tarsile Quran, 2001), p.80, Verse 6: 57.

<sup>66</sup> Ahmed Vaezi, *Shia Political Thought*, (London: Islamic Centre of England, 2004), p.186.

<sup>67</sup> *The Quran*, p.173, Verse 16: 89.

both Mawdudi and Khomeini recommend that in an Islamic political system religious scholars should examine the conformity of public policies with *Sharia*.<sup>68</sup>

In contrast Jilani thinks that the notion of *shura* (consultation) aligns with democracy. The Quran states that “those who believe” should “conduct their [public] affairs by mutual consultation.”<sup>69</sup> *Shura* necessitates that political structures charged with policy deliberation and administration provide a systematic role for consultation with the representatives of the public (members of the *shura* body).<sup>70</sup> However the mechanism or duration of consultation is at the discretion of the particular state.<sup>71</sup> *Ijma* also parallels democracy. It is resolution of issues through “consensus or collective judgment of the community.”<sup>72</sup> If the Islamic community agrees on a particular point of view this becomes legally binding on all Muslims. Consequently *ijma* can serve as a precedent for elective democracy in Islam – “the community decides who is to be its ruler by consensus.”<sup>73</sup> The limitation of *ijma* is that it is traditionally utilized by *ulema* to arrive at norms regarding permissible behavior rather than as a tool for political leadership.<sup>74</sup>

Lastly *baya*, an oath of allegiance to the ruler, gives impetus to the claim of intrinsic democratic tendencies within Islam. Al Aqqad states that *baya* was practiced to select the four rightly guided Caliphs as successors to the Prophet Muhammad. Each Caliph “needed to

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<sup>68</sup> Goddard, “Islam and Democracy”, p.7.

<sup>69</sup> *The Quran*, pp.323-324, Verse 42: 36-38.

<sup>70</sup> Vaezi, *Shia Political Thought*, p.177.

<sup>71</sup> Tassaduq Hussain Jilani, “Democracy and Islam: An Odyssey Braving the Twenty First Century,” *Brigham Young University Law Review* 2006, no. 3 (June, 2006): p.737.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., p.738.

<sup>74</sup> Goddard, “Islam and Democracy”, p.7.

secure the allegiance of his subjects via an oath.”<sup>75</sup> In a technical form the *baya* is a contractual agreement between the electors and the ruler.<sup>76</sup> At a philosophical level it can serve the same purpose as the social contract whereby the rights and duties of the citizens and the government are agreed upon. However an element that restricts democratic predisposition is that after the oath is sealed, obligatory obedience to the authority becomes a religious duty ad infinitum.<sup>77</sup>

The basis for *procedural democracy* in Islam is provided by the selection of the political elite via *ijma*, and the production of public policy through *shura*.<sup>78</sup> However Islam’s affiliation with *principle democracy* is more disconcerting. Principle democracy includes notions of civil liberties such as the freedom of religion and speech, and gender equality.<sup>79</sup> Democracy is often strained in Muslim societies due to the status accorded to non-Muslim minorities and women. Yet again there are varying inclinations on civil liberties within the Quran and *Hadith*. Hamid Paydar argues that Islam stands in opposition to man’s freedom of choice. Quranic verses present Islam as a unique and true religion, while establishing severe consequences for those that reject it.<sup>80</sup> “If anyone desires a religion other than Islam ... never will it be accepted from him.”<sup>81</sup> However Jillani demonstrates that the Quran and the life of Muhammad reflect a rich tradition of pluralism. There is ample space for man’s freedom of choice in religious matters. The Quranic verses 18: 29 and 2: 256 illustrate this point:

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid. See also: Vaezi, *Shia Political Thought*, p.178.

<sup>77</sup> Vaezi, *Shia Political Thought*, p.178.

<sup>78</sup> Jillani, “Democracy and Islam”, p.738.

<sup>79</sup> Shin, “On the Third Wave”, p.142. See also: Barro, “Determinants of Democracy”, p.S177.

<sup>80</sup> Vaezi, *Shia Political Thought*, p.183.

<sup>81</sup> *The Quran*, p.36, Verse 3: 85.



“Say, ‘the truth is from your Lord’: let him who will, believe, and let him who will, reject”<sup>82</sup>

“Let there be no compulsion in religion”<sup>83</sup>

Furthermore Jilani argues that Muhammad was a prime example of pluralism, tolerance and equality in terms of social, religious and economic matters. In the Charter of Privileges to the monks of the St. Catherine Monastery in Mt. Sinai, the Prophet grants absolute freedom of religion to the Christians. The Charter reads “No compulsion is to be on them. Neither are their judges to be removed from their jobs nor their monks from their monasteries. No one is to destroy a house of their religion, to damage it or to carry anything from it.”<sup>84</sup> However the real issue emerges with respect to the status of religious traditions external to—Judaism, Christianity, Sabianism or Zoroastrianism—the *Ahle Kitab*.<sup>85</sup> Specifically scriptural inquiries indicate that notable minorities in South and Southeast Asia; Buddhists, Hindus, and Animists are unlikely to receive the favorable treatment of *Ahle Kitab* in Muslim states.

The connection between Islam and gender equality is a complex topic. Johnson (2011) describes Islam as “a culmination of two distinct discourses.”<sup>86</sup> The first discourse “purports the role of women as legal minors dependent upon husbands and/or male relations.”<sup>87</sup> Hence the Quran stipulates that men are the “maintainers of women” and males inherit “a portion equal to that of two females.”<sup>88</sup> However the second discourse – “an egalitarian

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid., p.186, Verse 18: 29.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., p.25, Verse 2: 256.

<sup>84</sup> Jilani, “Democracy and Islam”, p.753.

<sup>85</sup> *Ahle Kitab* is an Arabic term used to designate “the people of the book.” Religions within this category are accorded a special status in Islam. For elaboration see: *The Quran*, p.5, Verse 2: 62.

<sup>86</sup> Jenny Johnson, “Political Islam and Gender Inequality,” *Critique: A world wide journal of politics* (Spring, 2011): p.4.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., p.3.

<sup>88</sup> *The Quran*, p.50, Verse 4: 34. See also: *The Quran*, p.47, Verse 4: 11.

conception of gender in an ethical framework”— insists on equal standing between the sexes.<sup>89</sup> Thus the Quran also states that “Men and women are protectors; one of another.”<sup>90</sup> Nevertheless the latter formation is constrained to philosophical conventions rather than legal ones. The vague and competing perceptions within Islam have made its interpretations vulnerable to those in power.<sup>91</sup> Consequently some Muslim states stand in stark opposition to “many underlying values of liberal democracy, including secularism, pluralism...radical individualism” and gender equality.<sup>92</sup>

### **Hypothesis**

The independent variable for this study is Islam. The dependant variable is the level of authoritarianism. The control variables are Economic Development, Resource Reliance, Stability, Protestantism, Arab culture, and Regional Authoritarianism.

The hypothesis is that countries with Islam will have elevated levels of political and civil rights suppression. Specifically,

H1: The greater the percentage of Muslims in a state the higher the level of authoritarianism.

H2: The greater the constitutional role accorded to Islam in a state the higher the level of authoritarianism.

### **Operationalization: Spatial-Temporal Domain**

The time period under consideration for the models is 2000-2005. Data for all, except four, of the variables will be obtained for each country, in each year, from 2000 to 2005. Then the data will be averaged over this time period for each country. The final cross national chart with the averaged values will be utilized for statistical analysis. Islam, Protestant, Resource Reliance, and Arab culture will be excluded from this process. The two operationalizations of Islam

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<sup>89</sup> Johnson, “Political Islam and Gender Inequality”, p.4.

<sup>90</sup> *The Quran*, p.120, 9: 71. Also note the verse “Never will I suffer to be lost the work of any of you, be he male or female: you are members, one of another” from *The Quran*, p.45, Verse 3: 195.

<sup>91</sup> Johnson, “Political Islam and Gender Inequality”, 5.

<sup>92</sup> Vaezi, *Shia Political Thought*, p.185.

(as population and constitutional status) can only be generated for one year (2000 and 2005), as is the case for Protestant population, and the Indexes of Oil and Mineral Reliance. The Arab culture variable will be measured through a dummy so it cannot be “averaged” over the time period.

The spatial domain of this study is all nation-states in Asia with a population greater than 500,000. An effective sample of countries to include can be drawn from the UN list of member states. The continental boundaries of Asia exclude Russia and Oceania, but include Turkey, Central Asia, and the Middle East. The countries selected are listed in Appendix I.

### Equation 1

This study will attempt to operationalize Islam through two different measures. The first component, which measures Islam as the population of Muslim adherents, is a new method because unlike the literature cited it goes beyond simply dichotomizing a country as Muslim or non-Muslim. The second computation of Islam will evaluate the constitutional status of the religion in Muslim majority countries.

At this stage, the following OLS Regression equation, containing the first operationalization of Islam and excluding the second, will be used:

$$Y = A + B1(X1) + B2(X2) + B3(X3) + B4(X4) + B5(X5) + B6(X6) + B7(X7)$$

where Y is the predicted level of authoritarianism, A is the constant, X1 is the percentage of the population that is Muslim, X2 is Economic Development, X3 is Oil and Mineral exports, X4 is Stability, X5 is the proportion of Protestant population, X6 is Arab culture, and X7 is the regional level of authoritarianism.

In this equation, the independent variable is operationalized as the percentage of the population in a country that is Muslim, in 2000. It will be coded as *PercentMuslim*. This can be obtained for all of the sample countries from the *World Christian Encyclopedia*.<sup>93</sup>

The dependant variable is the level of authoritarianism in a country. It will be assessed using the Political/Electoral Rights and

<sup>93</sup> David B Barrett, George T Kurian, and Todd M Johnson, *World Christian Encyclopedia 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition 1: The world by countries* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).

Civil Liberties Scores from Freedom House. The scores are based on a scale from one to seven, where one indicates a high level of rights and seven implies severe restrictions (Freedom House, 2010).<sup>94</sup> Political Freedom entails the ability to vote freely in legitimate elections, whereas Civil Liberties encompass the “freedom of speech, press ... religion ... and a variety of legal protections.”<sup>95</sup> The Political and Civil Rights Scores will be obtained for each year from 2000-2005, for each country. Then the Political and Civil Rights Scores will be combined through an average to indicate the level of restrictions on Civil and Political Rights in one numerical measure with the encryption *Author1*.

There are six control variables, namely Economic Development, Resource Reliance, Stability, Protestant population, Arab culture and Regional Authoritarianism. The control variable of Economic Development will be operationalized through the NATURAL LOG of Real GDP Per Capita.  $Ln(GDPperCapita)$  will be accessed from *Penn World Tables* for the years 2000-2005 for each country, and then averaged.<sup>96</sup>

The rival variable of Resources will be operationalized through the Index of Oil and Mineral Reliant States. The Index of Oil Reliance is the value of fuel based exports divided by GDP. The Index of Mineral Reliance is the ratio of mineral exports over GDP. These figures are only available for each country in the year 2000 from Ross’ study.<sup>97</sup> For each state, the two Indexes will be combined and averaged to produce *ResourceReliance*.

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<sup>94</sup> Freedom House. “Map of Freedom in the World,” *Freedom House, Inc.* (2010), <http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=363&year=2010> (accessed March 31, 2011).

<sup>95</sup> Barro, “Determinants of Democracy”, p.S177.

<sup>96</sup> Alan Heston, Robert Summers and Bettina Aten, “Penn World Table Version 7.0, Center for International Comparisons of Production, Income and Prices,” *University of Pennsylvania* (2011), [http://pwt.econ.upenn.edu/php\\_site/pwt70/pwt70\\_form.php](http://pwt.econ.upenn.edu/php_site/pwt70/pwt70_form.php) (accessed April 28, 2011).

<sup>97</sup> Ross, “Does Oil Hinder Democracy?”, p.326.

The control variable of stability will be operationalized through civil wars. *Stability* will be calculated as the percentage of years a state has been in civil war from 2000-2005. Information on civil wars can be obtained through the Correlates of War Dataset (COW) on Intra-state war. The COW defines an intra-state war as those involving state or non-state entities, which take place within the recognized territory of a state.<sup>98</sup>

The control variable of Protestantism will be measured through the percentage of population within a state that is Protestant in the year 2000. *ProtestantPercent* is available through the *World Christian Encyclopedia*.<sup>99</sup>

Arab culture is utilized as a control as well. It will be operationalized as a dummy variable for Arab League membership during the period 2000-2005. *Arab* can be obtained for all sample countries from the CIA World Factbook Website.<sup>100</sup>

Regional Authoritarianism can account for exogenous shocks. Freedom House places states into six regional categories: Sub-Saharan Africa, Americas, Asia-Pacific, Central and Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union, Western and Southern Europe, and Middle East and North Africa. For each year from 2000 to 2005, *AuthorRegion* can indicate the Freedom House score for the region.<sup>101</sup>

## Equation 2

This second equation aims to retain the previous operationalizations of the dependent and the other variables, while changing the

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<sup>98</sup> Meredith Reid Sarkees and Frank Wayman, *Resort to War: A Data Guide to Inter-State, Extra State, Intra-state, and Non-State Wars, 1816 – 2007* (Washington: CQ Press, 2010).

<sup>99</sup> David B Barrett, George T Kurian and Todd M Johnson, *World Christian Encyclopedia 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition 1: The world by countries* 2001.

<sup>100</sup> Central Intelligence Agency. *The World Factbook* (2000), <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html> (accessed April 24, 2011).

<sup>101</sup> Freedom House. “Map of Freedom in the World,” *Freedom House, Inc.* (2010), <http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=21&year=2002&display=region> (accessed March 31, 2011).

measures utilized for the key independent variable. Tad Stahnke and Robert Blitt assert that the population of Islamic adherents is not an adequate measure of the 'level of Islam' in a country. Since Islam can "combine with autocratic ... political environments to suppress development," a thorough analysis needs to account for the relationship between the political manifestation of Islam and its character within the state.<sup>102</sup> Thus the constitutional-legal status of Islam may serve as a better gauge for the independent variable. Stahnke and Blitt divide Muslim majority states into four categories based upon the constitutional role of Islam: Declared Islamic States, Declared Islam as a State Religion, No Constitutional Declaration and Declared Secular States. Declared Islamic States are distinguished through constitutional calls for the promotion of a "more significant role for Islam within that country."<sup>103</sup> In such states Islamic law (*Sharia*), principles, or jurisprudence are the primary source of legislation.<sup>104</sup> An example would be the current Afghani constitution which articulates that "no law can be contrary to the sacred religion of Islam."<sup>105</sup> In states where Islam is a State Religion, Islamic principles are "constitutionally recognized" but limited in terms of execution.<sup>106</sup> In the Bangladeshi constitution, for instance, "Absolute trust and faith in the Almighty Allah" is assumed to be the "basis of all actions," yet this principle "shall not be judicially enforceable."<sup>107</sup> Countries which provide No Constitutional Declaration on Islam

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<sup>102</sup> Heather Deegan, "Culture and Development," in *Modernization, Democracy and Islam* ed. Shireen T Hunter and Huma Malik (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2005), p.31.

<sup>103</sup> Tad Stahnke and Robert C. Blitt, "The Religion-State Relationship and the Right to Freedom of Religion or Belief: A Comparative Textual Analysis of the Constitutions of Predominantly Muslim Countries," *Georgetown Journal of International Law* 36 (2005), p.7, <http://ssrn.com/abstract=761746> (accessed March 31, 2011).

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, p.10.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, p.11.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, p.11.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, p.11.

such as Indonesia and Syria are ambivalent as to the legal function of Islam. For the No Constitutional Declaration category, I supplement the taxonomy of Stahnke and Blitt with the *Report on International Religious Freedom*.<sup>108</sup> States are included in the No Constitutional Declaration classification if the constitution does not mention the role of Islam or if it patronizes a non-Islamic faith.<sup>109</sup> Declared Secular States such as Turkey (with slight exception to the AKP) and Kyrgyzstan prohibit expressly political demonstrations of Islam.<sup>110</sup>

Utilizing this assortment, Islam can be operationalized through 3 indicator variables. It can be measured through a dummy variable for *DeclaredIslamicState*, with 1 indicating an Islamic State and a 0 indicating its absence. The second indicator can evaluate the status of Islam as a State Religion, with 1 displaying that Islam is a State Religion and 0 showing that it is not. This will appear as *IslamStateReligion* in the model. Finally a dummy for *DeclaredSecularState* can be added, where 1 designates a Declared Secular State, and 0 indicates otherwise.

One would expect the first two dummies (*DeclaredIslamicState* and *IslamStateReligion*) to be positively correlated with the level of restrictions on political and civil rights. Conversely *DeclaredSecularState* should be negatively associated with the dependent variable. In this case the regression equation is:

$$Y = A + \alpha_1(X_1) + \alpha_2(X_2) + \alpha_3(X_3) + B_2(X_4) + B_3(X_5) + B_4(X_6) + B_5(X_7) + B_6(X_8) + B_7(X_9)$$

where Y is the level of authoritarianism, A is the constant, X1 is the dummy for Declared Islamic States, X2 is the dummy for Islam as a State Religion, X3 is a dummy for Declared Secular States, X4 is Economic Development, X5 is Resource Reliance, X6 is Stability, X7 is Protestantism, X8 is Arab culture and X9 is Regional Authoritarianism. The B1(X1) variable, the percentage of Muslim

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<sup>108</sup> US Department of State, *Report on International Religious Freedom* (Washington: Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, 2005), <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2005/51383.htm> (accessed April 2, 2011).

<sup>109</sup> For example, Bhutan is officially a Buddhist State while Nepal is technically a Hindu Kingdom.

<sup>110</sup> Stahnke and Blitt, "The Religion-State Relationship", p.8.

population, is excluded from this analysis because it would be collinear with the constitutional status dummies. All of the alternative variables retain their previous operationalizations from equation 1.

### Statistical Results

Model 1.1 outlines the following regression equation:

$$\text{Author1} = 7.85 + 0.0103(\text{MuslimPercent}) - 0.614(\text{Ln}(\text{GDPperCapita})) \\ + 0.0307(\text{ResourceReliance}) - 0.0181(\text{Stability}) - \\ 0.0139(\text{ProtestantPercent}) - 0.215(\text{Arab}) + 0.370(\text{AuthorRegion})$$

#### (Model 1.1)

A first glance at Table 1 demonstrates that H1 may be correct: namely the greater the percentage of Muslims in a state the higher the level of authoritarianism. However there is a 16.7 percent probability that this is due to chance, which is problematic. All of the control variables are correlated in the correct direction (with the exception of Arab culture and Stability). Nonetheless the lack of significance attributed to five of the independent variables weakens the theories posited by the literature.

In order to correct for this flaw, I generate a new model that excludes highly insignificant variables such as Protestantism, Arab culture, and Regional Authoritarianism. Model 1.2 includes the percentage of Muslims, Economic Development, Oil and Mineral Reliance, and State Stability (see Appendix 2 for the hypothesis test of the full Model 1.1) The new regression equation from Table 1 is:

$$\text{Author1} = 9.50 + 0.0180(\text{MuslimPercent}) - 0.673(\text{Ln}(\text{GDPperCapita})) \\ + 0.0298(\text{ResourceReliance}) - 0.0204(\text{Stability})$$

#### (Model 1.2)

Seventy-eight percent of the variation in this model can be explained by the independent variables. H1 is conclusively affirmed: a 1 percent increase in the number of Muslims amplifies authoritarianism by 0.018 units on the Freedom House scale significant at the 0.01 level. However correlation does not imply causation; Islam does not *cause* authoritarianism, it is simply associated with it. A detailed investigation on the alternative specification of Islam will show whether Islam is the actual culprit. The other independent variables are associated with authoritarianism in accordance with the literature. The only exception is Stability. Economic Development, as measured through  $\text{Ln}(\text{GDPperCapita})$ , varies negatively with the level of



authoritarianism. An increase in the Index of Oil and Mineral Reliance leads to a 0.0298 increase in restrictions on political and civil rights. A greater number of civil wars in the period, however, seemingly decreases authoritarian restrictions by 0.0204 units, as evinced by the *Stability* variable. This divergence with theory attests that civil war involvement is an inaccurate conceptualization of State Stability. Better indices such as the Rule of Law utilized by Barro however involve substantial monetary expenditure.<sup>111</sup> The VIF scores for all of the independent variables in Model 1.2 are lower than 4.74. Therefore none of the independent variables are correlated with one another, which would decrease their statistical significance.

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<sup>111</sup> Barro, "Determinants of Democracy", p.S173.

**Table 1: Linear Regression on *Author1* as Dependent Variable**

|                                      | Model 1.1                             |                                        | Model 1.2                     |                    |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| Independent Variable(s)              | Beta Value (Standard Error)           | VIF Score                              | Beta Value (Standard Error)   | VIF Score          |
| Constant                             | 7.853<br>(1.901)                      |                                        | 9.504<br>(1.436)              |                    |
| MuslimPercent                        | 0.010320<br>(0.007327)                | 2.787                                  | 0.017970**<br>*<br>(0.005681) | 1.637              |
| Ln(GDPperCapita)                     | -0.6137***<br>(0.1717)                | 1.995                                  | -0.6725***<br>(0.1561)        | 1.611              |
| ResourceReliance                     | 0.030723**<br>*<br>(0.007618)         | 3.815                                  | 0.029808**<br>*<br>(0.006199) | 2.469              |
| Stability                            | -0.01811<br>(0.01104)                 | 1.993                                  | -0.02041**<br>(0.01104)       | 1.946              |
| ProtestantPercent                    | -0.013908<br>(0.009453)               | 1.307                                  |                               |                    |
| Arab                                 | -0.2150<br>(0.6932)                   | 2.210                                  |                               |                    |
| AuthorRegion                         | 0.3698<br>(0.2917)                    | 3.089                                  |                               |                    |
| R-Sq                                 | 80.6 %                                | 1/(1-0.806) = 5.15                     | 78.6 %                        | 1/(1-0.789) = 4.74 |
| * indicates significance at p < 0.10 | ** indicates significance at p < 0.05 | *** indicates significance at p < 0.01 |                               |                    |

Model 2.1 outlines the following regression equation:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Author1} &= 8.11 + 0.057(\text{DeclaredIslamicState}) - \\ &0.883(\text{IslamStateReligion}) - 1.15(\text{DeclaredSecularState}) - \\ &0.602(\text{Ln}(\text{GDPperCapita})) + 0.0332(\text{ResourceReliance}) - \\ &0.0222(\text{Stability}) - 0.0131(\text{ProtestantPercent}) - 0.432(\text{Arab}) + \\ &0.558(\text{AuthorRegion}) \end{aligned}$$

### (Model 2.1)

H2 is not completely accepted. A greater constitutional role for Islam does not necessarily lead to higher levels of authoritarianism. In fact the Declared Islamic State and the Islam as State Religion indicators are statistically insignificant. A Declared Islamic State is positively correlated with political and civil rights constraints, while countries with Islam as a State Religion are negatively associated with authoritarianism. However theoretical inclinations informed us that both should vary positively with authoritarianism. One element of H2 that is accurate is that Declared Secular States, those that prohibit political expressions of Islam or other religions, are negatively correlated with authoritarianism at the 0.05 level. All control variables point in the appropriate direction insinuated by theory with the exception of *Stability* and *Arab* (See Appendix 3 for explanation of the exclusion of certain variables)

Model 2.2 yields the following regression equation:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Author1} &= 8.51 - 0.975(\text{DeclaredSecularState}) - \\ &0.716(\text{Ln}(\text{GDPperCapita})) + 0.0264(\text{ResourceReliance}) - \\ &0.0208(\text{Stability}) + 0.605(\text{AuthorRegion}) \end{aligned}$$

### (Model 2.2)

Eighty percent of the variation in the dependent variable can be explained by the independent variables. H1 is in partial accordance with the model as Declared Secular States exhibit an aversion towards authoritarian regimes. States with secular constitutions score 0.975 units lower on the Freedom House ranking than Declared Islamic States, countries espousing Islam as a State Religion or those with No Constitutional Declaration. All of the control variables are associated in the manner presented by literature, with the sole exemption of *Stability*. Economic Development is conducive to democracy, while Resource Reliance and Regional Authoritarianism materialize as

obstructions. If Oil and Mineral Exports are increased by 1 unit then authoritarianism increases by 0.0264 points on the Freedom House scale at the 0.01 level. Regional Authoritarianism explains state authoritarianism at a 0.01 significance level. For every addition in the Freedom House score for the region, there is a corresponding enhancement in authoritarianism by 0.6046 units in a state within that region.

**Table 2: Linear Regression on *Author1* as Dependent Variable**

|                                | <b>Model 2.1</b>                   |                  | <b>Model 2.2</b>                   |                  |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Independent Variable(s)</b> | <b>Beta Value (Standard Error)</b> | <b>VIF Score</b> | <b>Beta Value (Standard Error)</b> | <b>VIF Score</b> |
| Constant                       | 8.107<br>(1.884)                   |                  | 8.513<br>(1.691)                   |                  |
| DeclaredIslamicState           | 0.0566<br>(0.7288)                 | 2.096            |                                    |                  |
| IslamStateReligion             | -0.8833<br>(0.7922)                | 2.025            |                                    |                  |
| DeclaredSecularState           | -1.1534**<br>(0.5929)              | 2.272            | -0.9750***<br>(0.4241)             | 1.147            |
| LN(GDPperCapita)               | -0.6016***<br>(0.1724)             | 2.123            | -0.7160***<br>(0.1506)             | 1.597            |
| ResourceReliance               | 0.033157***<br>(0.007897)          | 4.329            | 0.026430***<br>(0.006553)          | 2.940            |
| Stability                      | -0.02220**<br>(0.01085)            | 2.031            | -0.02081**<br>(0.01080)            | 1.988            |
| ProtestantPercent              | -0.013091<br>(0.009358)            | 1.352            |                                    |                  |
| Arab                           | -0.4324<br>(0.7938)                | 3.060            |                                    |                  |

|                                           |                                            |                                                |                       |                     |
|-------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| AuthorRegion                              | 0.5576**<br>(0.2643)                       | 2.678                                          | 0.6046***<br>(0.2245) | 1.906               |
| R-Sq                                      | 82.5 %                                     | $1/(1-0.825)$<br>= 5.71                        | 80.4 %                | $1/(1-0.804)$ = 5.1 |
| * indicates<br>significance at $p < 0.10$ | ** indicates<br>significance at $p < 0.05$ | *** indicates<br>significance<br>at $p < 0.01$ |                       |                     |

## Conclusion

The results from the four models demonstrate that Islam may not necessarily impede democracy in Asia. Statistical inquiries regarding this matter have led to the acceptance of H1, and the partial rejection of H2. When Islam is quantified through a measure of population it is negatively correlated with democracy. However when Islam is evaluated through its constitutional role in the state, then this adverse relationship is no longer statistically significant. Yet at the same time secular states in Asia are more likely to be democratic than those which adopt religious preferences of any sort, including Islam. This may be the most significant finding of this study: official religious orientations have an inconclusive impact on democracy in Asia whereas secularism has a positive effect. The control variables that account for democracy in Asia are Economic Development, Resource Reliance, Stability, and Regional Authoritarianism.

A large segment of the literature conjectures that Islam hampers democracy, however an evaluation of the Quran and *Hadith* reveal that the two are not mutually exclusive. Evidence for procedural democracy may be attained from the traditions of *shura*, *ijma*, and *baya*. Nevertheless there is a scriptural deficit in support of pluralism, freedom of religion, and gender equality. Consequently the status of civil rights in polities that exhibit Islamic values in the realm of governance should be called into question. The disaggregation of the Political and Civil Rights Freedom House Index should reveal if this is the case.

In terms of new research, there are three main avenues worthy of exploring. The first is greater theories regarding modernization and democracy based upon scriptural injunctions of the Quran and *Hadith*, and articulations of Islamic *ulema* (religious scholars). The second is the proper quantification of “Islam,” “Political Islam” or “Islams” (liable to multiple interpretations) when analyzing democracy. It may be a conceptual error to assume that there is a monolithic (or dichotomous Asian versus Arab) variant of Islam for “its capacity as a faith, a local culture and cross-cultural civilization, is characterized by diversity and change.”<sup>112</sup> Hence Islam

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<sup>112</sup> Bassam Tibi, “Islamism and Democracy: On the Compatibility of Institutional Islamism and the Political Culture of Democracy,” *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 10, no. 2 (June, 2009): p.154.

needs to be considered in relation to the constitution, ideologies, political parties, and laws of a state. Third, area studies research in the Middle East has overlooked the rich and creative mechanism in which Islam has been adopted in South and Southeast Asia, as well as Africa. This narrow level of analysis needs to be broadened to a global context.



## Appendix 1

|                |                      |
|----------------|----------------------|
| 1. Afghanistan | 29. Pakistan         |
| 2. Armenia     | 30. Papua New Guinea |
| 3. Azerbaijan  | 31. Philippines      |
| 4. Bahrain     | 32. Saudi Arabia     |
| 5. Bangladesh  | 33. Singapore        |
| 6. Bhutan      | 34. South Korea      |
| 7. Brunei      | 35. Sri Lanka        |
| 8. Cambodia    | 36. Syria            |
| 9. China       | 37. Taiwan           |
| 10. Georgia    | 38. Tajikistan       |
| 11. India      | 39. Thailand         |
| 12. Indonesia  | 40. Turkey           |
| 13. Iran       | 41. Turkmenistan     |
| 14. Iraq       | 42. Uzbekistan       |
| 15. Israel     | 43. Vietnam          |
| 16. Hong Kong  | 44. Yemen            |
| 17. Jordan     | 45. Qatar            |
| 18. Japan      |                      |
| 19. Kazakhstan |                      |
| 20. Kyrgyzstan |                      |
| 21. Kuwait     |                      |
| 22. Laos       |                      |
| 23. Lebanon    |                      |
| 24. Malaysia   |                      |
| 25. Mongolia   |                      |
| 26. Myanmar    |                      |
| 27. Nepal      |                      |
| 28. Oman       |                      |

**Appendix 2**

A hypothesis test of the full Model 1.1 can designate whether the construction of Model 1.2 is justified.

Null Hypothesis  $H_0$ :  $\beta_6$  (ProtestantPercent) =  $\beta_7$  (Arab) =  $\beta_8$  (AuthorRegion) = 0

Alternative Hypothesis  $H_a$ : At least one of the following;  $\beta_6$ ,  $\beta_7$ , or  $\beta_8$  does not = 0

$$F = \frac{[(Rsq\ Full - Rsq\ Restricted)/m]}{[(1 - Rsq\ Full)/(n - k)]}$$

m = number of Betas in Ho = 3, n - k = (sample size) - (number of variables) = 45 - 7 = 38

$$F_t = \frac{[(0.806 - 0.786)/3]}{[(1 - 0.806)/38]} = \frac{[0.00667]}{[0.00510]} = 1.3058$$

$$F_{\alpha, m, n-k} = F_{0.05, 3, 38} = 2.84$$

$F_t < F_{\alpha, m, n-k}$  so do not reject the Null Hypothesis

This procedure supplies evidence that ProtestantPercent, Arab and AuthorRegion can be suspended from the model.

### Appendix 3

In order to construct a more precise depiction of the determinants of democracy it is necessary to assemble Model 2.2. The basis for the exclusion of certain variables is provided through the F hypothesis test.

Null Hypothesis Ho: Beta 6 (ProtestantPercent) = Beta 7 (Arab) = 0

Alternative Hypothesis Ha: At least one of the following; Beta 6 or Beta 7 does not = 0

$$F = \frac{[(Rsq\ Full - Rsq\ Restricted)/m]}{[(1 - Rsq\ Full)/(n - k)]}$$

m = number of Betas in Ho = 2, n - k = (sample size) - (number of variables) = 45 - 9 = 36

$$F_t = \frac{[(0.825 - 0.804)/2]}{[(1 - 0.825)/36]} = \frac{[0.0049]}{[0.0105]} = 2.16$$

$$F_{\alpha, m, n-k} = F_{0.05, 2, 36} = 3.23$$

$F_t < F_{\alpha, m, n-k}$  so do not reject the Null Hypothesis

Due to the high probability that ProtestantPercent and Arab are irrelevant to democracy in Asia according to the F test, the removal of these two variables is mathematically warranted.