Introduction

The Islamic Quest for Democracy, Pluralism, and Human Rights deals with the substantive basic doctrines of government and politics that were developed during the history of classical and medieval Islam. It aims to elaborate and develop those basic doctrines that are not contradictory to, and include the seeds of, modern liberal Western democracy, pluralism, and human rights, although they have followed in the Islamic world different historical paths. These doctrines include the notions of political contract and consensus; tolerance of differences, pluralism, and opposition; and human rights and rights of minorities.

This book is a sequel to my earlier *Moderate and Radical Islamic Fundamentalism: The Quest for Modernity, Legitimacy, and the Islamic State,* also published by the University Press of Florida. There I showed the diversified and multiple discourses of Islamic fundamentalism, or Islamism, which range from advocating complete radical totalitarianism to inclusive pluralistic ideologies. Here I aim to highlight—and, when necessary, to construct—the important ideological and religious arguments on democracy, pluralism, and human rights that have been under development in modern Islamic political discourses.

This study is not historical and does not attempt to account for all historical periods, or even one. However, it extensively uses historically developed religious and political formations, especially those of the period of the governments of the Prophet and the rightly guided caliphate. This period is seen as formative and constitutive in the making of Islamic thought because of its distinctive religious and political impact on the minds of Muslims. All Muslim thinkers, philosophers, jurists, ideologists, and historians refer to it to justify one ideology and understanding or another. Because of the importance of that period in validating any Islamic notion or system or, more important, in making a notion or system Islamic, this study also uses examples from different historical periods under, for example, the Umayyads, the ʿAbbasids, and the Fatimids to pinpoint and show how some basic changes and reinterpretations have overtaken many main Islamic doctrines of government and politics. These

dynasties represent moments of historical practices and interpretations that moved closer to or further from the original ideals developed from the first model of the Prophet and the rightly guided caliphate. The book aims at providing the historical and ideological formations that made the period of the governments of the Prophet and the rightly guided caliphate the model that almost all Muslims refer to in order to sanction their ideological and political models.

First, I will show how basic views on major political doctrines relating to *shura, ikhtilaf,* human rights, and minorities originally developed and will shed light on the negative and positive changes effected on their perception under the Umayyads, the ʿAbbasids, and the Fatimids. Second, the Islamic system of government will be theoretically explained in the light of the major doctrines to be discussed in the first part of each chapter: *shura* (consultation) and democracy, along with *bayʿa* (the oath of allegiance), *ikhtiyar* (choice), and *ijmaʿ* (consensus) in chapter 1; *ikhtilaf* (difference) and pluralism in philosophy, theology, and jurisprudence as well as the ideological and religious justifications for opposition and revolution in chapter 2; and the Islamic categories and philosophy of legal rights along with general and public rights that include those of minorities or, traditionally, *ahl al-dhimma,* women, and family in chapter 3.

Further, this study introduces the framework and points of reference that modern Islamic thinkers and movements use to justify the adoption of democracy, pluralism, and human rights into the main body of modern Islamic thought. It is the argument of this book that the notions of democracy, pluralism, and human rights are not only in harmony with Islamic thought, but their seeds are embedded in many notions of government and politics found in Islamic religious thought. Building upon classical and medieval thought, the book will show that Islamic philosophy, jurisprudence, and theology are very rich with comparable notions that postulate and protect individual and communal rights, that legitimize political, social, economic, intellectual, and religious differences, and that view the people as the source of ultimate political sovereignty on earth.

The discussion of democracy, pluralism, and human rights is undertaken in the spirit of the Enlightenment as well as of classical liberalism as advocated in writings like John Locke's *Two Treatises on Government,* Jean Jacques Rousseau's *The Social Contract,* Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America,* and John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty.* While moderate Islamism indirectly employs its most important doctrines to reinterpret Islam, the Enlightenment grounded its doctrines in natural reason, whereas Islamism ultimately grounds these doctrines in a novel interpreta-

tion of the fundamental Islamic texts, the Qurʾan and the Sunna. Thus the moderate Islamists adapt and adopt into Islam such Enlightenment principles as the distinction between state and society; the need for civil government; the necessity of a social contract that can be dissolved; the centrality of civil society, the general will, political representation, and a body of standing law or a constitution; the importance of limiting political power, rejecting arbitrary power, and the right of opposition to governments; the significant value of equality, liberty, and individual rights; and the inviolability of property.

By linking classical and medieval Islamic thought with present political and religious debates, this book argues that modern Islamic thought in general, and today's moderate Islamism in particular, has absorbed and "Islamized" the notions of democracy, pluralism, and human rights. At the religious and ideological level, Islamicly developed doctrines on democracy, pluralism, and human rights constitute a theology of liberation and an epistemological break with the past. At the political level, they widen the individual, social, political, and philosophical space in the Arab world. At the international level, they provide the Arab world with common ground with the West. At the cultural level, they serve as a general context and a political language of dialogue between different civilizations, religions, and political orders.

The basic argument of this book is thus both simple and grand. While the history of the highest Islamic political institution, the caliphate, is mostly a history of authoritarian governments, the economic, social, political, and intellectual history of Islam abounds with liberal doctrines and institutions. In classical and medieval Islamic political thought, there are comparable doctrines of equality, freedom, and justice, older and much more universal than those subsequently developed by traditional Islamic thought.

Because the book is planned for maximum topical usage, it is structured so that the relevant notions of classical and medieval Islamic government and politics are developed and analyzed in the first part of each chapter. Chapter 1, "The Classical and Medieval Dialectics of *Shura* and Its Modern Islamist Constructions As Democracy," examines the doctrines of *shura* based on the choice (*ikhtiyar*) of the people, the contract between the ruler and the ruled based on an oath of allegiance (*bayʿa*), and consensus (*ijmaʿ*) of the community, and shows that these are the theoretical methods that should govern in political rule. Chapter 2, "The Classical and Medieval Interpretations of *Ikhtilaf* and Its Modern Islamist Expressions As Pluralism," shows that Islamic thought was historically and theo-

retically based on the notion of tolerating differences (*ikhtilaf*), manifested in the adoption and tolerance of pluralistic exegeses, philosophies, theologies, jurisprudence, politics, and public opinions. Yet on a higher level, political opposition and revolution had theoretical and religious justifications that center on numerous religious and political doctrines. Chapter 3, "The Classical and Medieval Roots of *al-Huquq al-Shar'iyya* and Its Modern Islamist Conceptions As Human Rights," shows the categories and philosophy of Islamic human rights, which include general and public rights as well as the rights of women, families, and minorities (*ahl al-dhimma*).

The second part of each chapter shows how Islamists developed the topics discussed in the first part to become the substantive theoretical foundations of modern democracy, pluralism, and human rights. The moderate and pluralist discourses of modern Islamic movements and theoreticians are first structured and then compared and contrasted with the discourses of radical and rejectionist movements and theoreticians. Here I have selectively borrowed from my previous book, greatly developing some of the arguments and then grounding them in classical, medieval, and modern Islamic political thought, something that has not been done in any Islamic discipline of knowledge.[1]

What emerges from this study is a tentative classical and medieval development, and a preliminary theoretical taxonomy, of modern Islamism on the very important topics of democracy, pluralism, and human rights as well as relationships with other religions, specifically Judaism and Christianity. The concluding chapter provides a theoretical assessment of the prospects of the ongoing Islamic dialectics on democracy, pluralism, and human rights.

Views on Islam in the Modern World

In recent times, modernist Islamic thinkers and, now, moderate Islamist thinkers are making medieval doctrines comparable to modern Western notions of democracy, pluralism, and human rights. This assumption about comparability is neither defensive nor apologetic. I show that Islamic thought has long viewed itself as more equitable, less racial, and more humane than Western political thought. Equality, freedom, and justice, for example, are cardinal Islamic doctrines, which throughout history have received various formulations and suffered various abuses. The different chapters of this book show the development, the uses and abuses, the perfection and imperfection of these and similar doctrines, stretching

from the Prophet Muhammad's era to modern times. While most political studies by Islamic scholars have focused their consideration on the rise and fall of Islamic dynasties and on the historical developments of "traditional" Islamic law (*shariʿa*) in order to construct possible Islamic views on democracy, pluralism, and human rights, they miss the fact that neither the study of dynasties nor the authentication of "traditional" *shariʿa* is more formative to Muslims than the ideological developments brought about by opposition movements or reformist attitudes. A "view from the edge,"[2] and not only from the traditional centers of power, is necessary in order to comprehend the true nature of the Islamic system of government and the doctrines of democracy, pluralism, and human rights. While Richard Bulliet argues correctly that "the story of Islam has always privileged the view from the center,"[3] I show that such a view is mostly a political construct and, consequently, can be politically deconstructed. I also show that other constructs that were more liberal have been disregarded either under pressure from governments, for political expediency, or in preference for the official discourses of religious and political institutions.

Ann Mayer, for example, argues in her *Islam and Human Rights: Traditions and Politics* that the different conservative interpretations of Islam that developed during the Middle Ages and are enshrined in authoritative books of jurisprudence are responsible for Muslims' dealings with human rights issues. While she is emphatic in not attributing repression to Islam and recognizes the multiplicity of ideas and trends within the Islamic world, she feels that Islam has not specified a proper scheme of human rights from an international viewpoint. However, had she looked at the original texts of the Qurʾan and the Prophetic Traditions (Sunna) as well as the early experience of Muslims, she could have developed a scheme of rights and could have found, even in medieval Islamic literature, schemes of rights, though they might not be exactly what she would like to label schemes of human rights.[4]

Mayer builds her analysis on her belief in "the normative character of the human rights principles set forth in international law and in their universality." She has no hesitation in looking on these rights as universally valid. Other observers have seen that diverse cultures produce diverse rights, and that the nonconformity of a particular culture to Western models of rights does not necessarily preclude the existence of different schemes of rights. However, because Mayer looks in a nonhistorical manner at the international schemes of human rights, which were developed within the context of Western conflicts, she feels able to position them in an absolute manner.[5] She could have been more helpful had she looked at

the categories of rights rather than specific rights. For instance, when dealing with the right of belief and while acknowledging that Islam provides that right, she nonetheless insists on the Western origin of that right. She rejects any allusion to any historical Islamic influence, though hundreds of books are today published in the West on the diverse impacts of Islam on Western civilization.

Thus, one of my objectives in writing this book is to show how certain doctrines have come into existence or have gone into suspension—or, to put it differently, how we can understand or read them in their respective contexts. For instance, the Islamic right of belief cannot be treated like the Western in all of its aspects. The main Islamic texts, the Qurʾan and the Sunna, assert the people's freedom of belief. However, apostasy is distinguished from freedom of (un)belief, since it also implies treason against an Islamic state. The Prophet himself treated the hypocrites as Muslims insofar as they did not work against the state, while the first caliph treated a group of Muslims who refused to pay their financial dues as apostates and fought them. Thus, unbelief and apostasy are treated differently in an Islamic context where an Islamic state exists. However, in later periods, the two merged, giving rise to current confusion about the meaning of each doctrine.

This is why I attempt to make sharp distinctions between Islam as a divine belief system and the Islamic state as a humanly developed political system. Such a distinction between the human and the divine opens unlimited possibilities of interpretation and reinterpretation as well as deconstruction and construction. As a belief system, Islam should be compared to other religions, but not to modern Western states. The rise and fall of Islamic states should be historically compared to the rise and fall of Western states. Thus a specific Islamic law like that of apostasy should first be treated in the context of an Islamic state and then be compared to treason in Western states. This is not to deny that many Islamic states and societies have historically misused what Muslims consider even to be Qurʾanic duties—the complete individuality of women, the rights of minorities, and similar issues that will be treated later.

Again, while Mayer acknowledges the existence of Islamic support for democratization and human rights, she does not review adequately the current Islamist literature of mainstream Islamist movements. Instead she adverts to state Islamization programs in Iran, Pakistan, and Sudan—which are controversial to Muslims and even to Islamists—in order to compare them with international human rights. Because she considers such state programs to be a "middle-ground position," she becomes pes-

simistic about the future of human rights schemes in the Islamic world and reflexively defensive of the record of Western states. She treats most critiques of the West as obstacles to any comparison. For instance, many scholars and politicians regard Western critiques of human rights in the Middle East as tainted by Western hypocrisy and double standards, given the West's history of colonialism, genocide, racism, and sexism. However, Mayer dismisses this argument as rhetoric employed by regimes like Iran to maintain their grip over their societies.

It is true that violations by Western regimes of their own philosophies do not negate the validity of human rights in principle; still, such violations deprive those regimes and their institutions of the right to judge the moral standing of other, non-Western regimes. The West reacted to modern Western moral and political problems by developing its philosophy of "universal" human rights against the background of Western genocide and world wars, not against the background of the West's relations with the colonized world. More important, it is not only the regimes but also the peoples of the Middle East, both Christians and Muslims, that accuse the West of double standards. While most Middle Eastern regimes misuse this feeling and oppress their people, Western hypocrisy is nonetheless a glaring fact for people who have just seen what happened to the Bosnians in Europe and the Palestinians in the Middle East.

On yet another level, modern Islamist political thought postulates human rights, pluralism, and democracy as religious rights and, consequently, views their normative character as categorical. However, modern Islamic understanding of democracy, pluralism, and human rights depends on the possibility of modern interpretations of the sources of religion and major extensions of the meanings of some basic doctrines. These include consultation (*shura*), consensus (*ijmaʿ*), difference (*ikhtilaf*), minorities (*ahl al-dhimma*), enjoining the good and forbidding evil (*hisba*), and similar doctrines that are elaborated later. However, one finds that some scholars and thinkers attempt to show that the historical *shariʿa* is not capable of coping with doctrines like human rights, pluralism, and democracy.

For instance, Abullahi An-Naʿim argues in his *Toward an Islamic Reformation: Civil Liberties, Human Rights, and International Law* that it is not possible to expand the meaning of the historical *shariʿa*'s major doctrines like *shura* and *ijmaʿ* to modernize major concepts like freedom and equality. Instead he opts for a minor concept, abrogation (*al-naskh*) of certain verses of the Qurʾan, and transforms it into a methodology of change. While he gives himself the right to abrogate and reactivate

Qurʾanic verses as needed to accompany modernity, he denies to other Muslims, whether traditionalists, modernists, or Islamists, the right to expand the already existing major methodology of change, whether interpretation, reasoning (*ijtihad*), *shura,* or *ijmaʿ.* He justifies that on the grounds that the historical *shariʿa* is not capable of change.[6] In fact, as will be shown in chapter 1, the historical *shariʿa,* the compendium of medieval Islamic literature, is capable of development if the Islamic centers of learning so decide. At times, they did, as was the case under the grand mufti of Egypt Muhammad ʿAbdu (1849–1905) and, later, Shaykh al-Azhar Mahmud Shaltut (1893–1963).[7]

When Shaykh Shaltut, for instance, deals with the status of women as regards female testimony, he argues that the socioeconomic conditions of earlier Islam made two female witnesses equivalent to one male witness because women were not accustomed to financial transactions. However, women are now routinely involved in such transactions and their testimony should be equal to that of men. Thus, he rejects the argument based on female emotional volatility or male superior intellect. Again, Shaltut equates the rights and duties of minorities with those of the majority and maintains that the testimony of non-Muslims is valid in a *shariʿa* court.[8] The point of this discussion is that if the authoritative and traditional centers of Islamic learning wish to effect modern changes in "traditional" and long-standing doctrines, they have the means and the *shariʿa* provides the flexibility to do so. The traditional *shariʿa* in itself is capable of internal modern development. But so far this development has not occurred.

Another example of the possibility of change from within the traditional centers of learning is the thought of Ayatollah Muhammad Mahdi Shams al-Din. Through a revisionist view of the role of the Islamic government, he brings into Shiʿite thought, in opposition to Ayatollah al-Khumayni's rule of the jurist, the necessity of democratic rule. Shams al-Din, the head of the Supreme Shiʿite Council in Lebanon, argues that the government's legitimacy is not derived from a Qurʾanic text but depends on human interactions. There is no divine rule or representation on earth today. Reason calls on people to set up a political rule. Legislation is made to organize human interactions and socialization, and the state should be a natural outcome of society. Therefore, a Muslim society produces an Islamic state, and not vice versa. However, the nation as a whole is addressed in the Qurʾan, and the basis of an Islamic government should be *shura* rather than the rule of the jurist. Thus, as opposed to the historical apathy of the Shiʿites toward governments and political involvement or the

current dependence of the individual on the imam, Shams al-Din views the rule of the nation over itself as the appropriate modern Islamic doctrine of government. In *shura* the nation unifies its decisions and outlooks.[9]

Here I do not, then, aim to provide a defense of or apologia for Islamic political thought, for I recognize the negative aspects of classical, medieval, and modern Islamic political thought. I do attempt to show that Islamic political thought has initiated and developed throughout the ages doctrines compatible with Western doctrines of human rights, pluralism, and democracy. Their uses or abuses, while related to intellectual and philosophical understanding, are also tightly webbed into various socioeconomic and political contexts. Their proper application today not only requires their intellectual development, which is moving nowadays at a great speed especially by moderate Islamism, but requires, above all, liberal socioeconomic contexts that are mostly lacking in the Islamic world.

In contrast to Johannes Jansen's *The Dual Nature of Islamic Fundamentalism*, which first misleads the reader on modern Islamic thought and then obliterates differences between fundamentalism and reformism, I aim to clarify the differences. Jansen willfully associates both trends with violence and tries to prove the common platitude "Islamic fundamentalism is both politics and religion."[10] He assumes that—for Muslims alone—politics cannot exist without violence. Hence, "Islamic fundamentalism fuses politics, religion, and violence."[11] Jansen attempts to show that violence does not arise solely from the contemporary contexts of Islamic movements but has roots that go back to reformers like Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (1838–1897), Muhammad ʿAbdu (1849–1905), and Muhammad Rashid Rida (1865–1935) and further back to Ibn Taymiyya—that is, to the essence of Islam.

More important, Jansen's logic is reductionist. For instance, he argues that "power in the perception of Islamic fundamentalism is not something that can be divided or shared with other groups, persons, or institutions."[12] He can make this argument only because his portrayal of fundamentalist views on political participation and government as well as political life is based on a few radical ideologists, who are condemned by the majority of the fundamentalists, and on a twisting of the writings of major fundamentalists like Hasan al-Banna. One might ask, is the Muslim Brotherhood's demand for "an Islamic form of the nation-state" a call for not sharing power—or, as Jansen puts it, indivisibility of power?[13] What then of the Muslim Brotherhood's long history, in Egypt and elsewhere, of attempts to share power by participating in elections? Examples of exclud-

ing the fundamentalists from participating and of their attempts to be included in political life abound in Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, Algeria, and Turkey.

Another reductionist point in Jansen's logic is his claim that to understand fundamentalism we need "a theologian's outlook" and that Islamic fundamentalism "even wants to enforce the advent of the Kingdom of God itself. In such a Kingdom the literal truth of the revealed book will be a minor self-evident detail." Thus, Islamic fundamentalism is "the creation of an Islamic religious imagination." My argument goes squarely against his. While it is true that fundamentalism aims at establishing the Islamic state, to identify the Islamic state with the Kingdom of God is the result of the author's confusion of Islam with Judaism or Christianity. Islam started as a polity, and Muslims, including the Prophet, never thought that they were setting up God's kingdom on earth. Muslims' belief in the afterlife—including heaven and hell—made them view this world as transitional and ephemeral, not a permanent abode. Also, while imagination is involved in all forms and types of thinking, the harsh contexts and realities that Muslims have found themselves thrust into, whether because of colonialism, imperialism, or the modern nation-states, have had a major impact on the politicization of religious thought.

Jansen does not stop at imposing the doctrine of God's Kingdom. He also, and more dangerously, imputes to all Muslims another unheard-of belief: according to him, Islamic fundamentalism "classifies individuals as human or subhuman as Islam does."[14] Now, we all know that, like most other religions, Islam classifies people as believers or nonbelievers and saved or condemned—but never as human or subhuman. As an example of this classification, Jansen mentions the recent history of Algeria and Egypt—but never mentions the colonialist, imperialist, and Israeli human and subhuman treatment of the Third World's peoples. As another example, Jansen characterizes the command to "enjoin the good and forbid evil" as an Islamic justification to use violence—a conclusion he reaches by twisting Fahmi al-Huwaidi's views on the subject. I argue in this book that, while a few radical groups and thinkers use the command to justify violence, Jansen has no idea that major fundamentalist theoreticians like Hasan al-Turabi, Rashid al-Ghannushi, Hasan al-Banna, and even al-Huwaidi himself use the command to justify political participation, elections, pluralism, public opinion, and even democracy.

Nor is the fact-twisting restricted to contemporary issues. Jansen argues that the history of Islamic fundamentalism started in the nineteenth century with Jamal al-Din al-Afghani. Against all accumulated and well-

documented and -researched studies—or even a simple analytical reading—Jansen makes al-Afghani, Muhammad ʿAbdu, and Muhammad Rashid Rida "the founding fathers of Islamic fundamentalism." He denies the possibility that these thinkers were reformist, modernist, or liberal. Jansen's rejection of the existence of a modernizing liberal trend in Islam is due to his intellectual poverty, for instance, in defining and distinguishing between fundamentalism, modernism, and reformism, or in confusing the *shariʿa* with *hudud* (deterrents). Deterrents are only a small fraction of the *shariʿa*, which is a way of life that covers all aspects of life. Fundamentalism is the outcome of believing that Islam should be not only the center of politics but also the means for developing philosophy, morality, ethics, sciences, and technology. This is why I argue that the fundamentalists try to Islamize all aspects of Western civilization in order to bring them into conformity with Islamic texts. For fundamentalism, the Qurʾanic text is the highest authority of interpretation, understanding, and action.

I show below that the modernists, including al-Afghani and ʿAbdu, tried to interpret the text in terms of Western science, rationality, and modernity. In fact, they subjected long-standing Islamic traditions and texts to the discoveries of Western science. Thus, for instance, *shura* became equivalent to constitutional rule. They reinterpreted Islam to suit the modern age—at least, from their perspective. They made science the highest authority of interpretation, understanding, and action; they made Islam a force for civilization and morality. However, Jansen seems to suggest that to be reformist, modernist, or liberal amounts to rejecting Islam and its political understanding.

Here I briefly analyze comparatively the general political principles that have been developed by both Islamism and Islamic modernism, in order to provide the general background on political and intellectual issues and Muslims' interests during the last two centuries. I outline the various political views that help in understanding the newly developed Islamic discourses on democracy, pluralism, and human rights.

The latter part of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century witnessed the birth of two intellectual and political responses aimed at reforming both the Ottoman Empire and the Qajjar Empire. The first response, liberal and secular, called for an epistemological and political break with the Islamic past and a rejection of all forms of sultanic rule as well as the wholesale adoption of Westernization. Thinkers like ʿAbbas Mahmud al-ʿAqqad, Taha Husayn, Muhammad Husayn Haykal, and Lutfi al-Zayyat represented that response. The second response, Islamic modernism, called for the absorption of Western civilization into the Is-

lamic heritage. Some reformers like al-Afghani called for revolutions, others like Rida called for establishment of a constitutional state, yet others like ʿAbdu believed that the necessary prelude to political reform was the reformation of educational systems and social institutions.[15]

World War II constituted a turning point in the history of the imperial powers that sought domination of worldwide markets and cheap raw materials. Oppression by the imperial powers led to nationalist and socialist tendencies that weakened the liberal Islamic response and strengthened the secular but authoritarian response. Egypt, which was under the British mandate, is a good example to use here because of its political and intellectual influence all over the Arab world. During that period, Egyptians were focusing on liberating their country from British colonialism and were advocating democracy, both secular and religious. However, the rise of Arab nationalism under Jamal ʿAbd al-Nasir brought about secular and socialist authoritarian nationalism. The secular response was adopted but democracy was rejected.[16] And while ʿAbd al-Nasir accepted Islam as one of the three pillars of Egyptian foreign policy, in reality it did not amount to more than rhetoric. In this fashion, both the secular democratic response and the modernist Islamic response were aborted.

In recent decades, numerous movements that call for a return to the fundamentals of religion have flourished throughout the Muslim world. They pushed further for and developed a new Islamic response. Leaders of such movements believe that a modern development of Islamic spirituality, morality, and politics will definitely condemn moral corruption, glorify idealism, and lead to true representative governments. Such a development will mobilize Muslims to establish a modern Islamic civilization that reconstructs Muslim identity and consolidates Islamic power.

The genesis of Islamism, as of any other intellectual and political product, must be sought within a complex web of educational, political, economic, and intellectual crises and reactions. The mixing of the religious and the political is not new and was upheld even by the Seceders (*al-Khawarij*) at the beginning of Islam in the seventh century. They were the first to postulate the doctrine of divine rule or *hukm* and the ultimate authority of the Qurʾan as the sole point of reference for Muslims. They denied as well the legitimacy of human judgment unless supported by religious texts. Because of this, they did not submit to the community, but instead removed themselves from social life and fought those who did not adhere to Qurʾanic textual rulings. Moreover, they thought they had acquired the right to judge others' beliefs and behaviors, since every human action had a religious connotation. Such a view made them rigid in both

principles and actions, so the general Muslim public viewed them as renegades to be fought.

In the eighteenth century, the Wahabiyya movement, following the well-known medieval thinker Ibn Taymiyya, called for the purification of Islam by a return to the fundamentals of religion, the Qurʾan and the Sunna. It followed a strict line of thinking in its attempts to reconstruct society and government on the basis of divine oneness (*tawhid*) and the doctrine of good ancestors (*al-salaf al-salih*). However, the significance of the ancestors is their reluctance to engage in philosophical or intellectual argumentation and their adherence to the basic texts without any major attempt at reinterpreting or reworking the principles of Islam. They focused more on the spiritual and ethical aspects of Islam, while leaving political matters to politicians and traditional elites. Other important movements in modern times are al-Sanusiyya and al-Mahdiyya, which started basically as Sufi orders but were later transformed into political movements that struggled against Western intervention in Libya and the Sudan, respectively. The two movements were puritan, aiming at the restoration of genuine Islam through political activities. Again, fundamentals were entertained as the road to the Islamic community's salvation.

At a higher and more substantive level, Jamal al-Din al-Afghani has had a massive influence in drawing the modern political agenda that is still more or less the backbone of intellectual and political reform. He was ready to think over and adopt into Islamic thought any new intellectual, political, or scientific knowledge that might trigger the advancement of the Islamic people. On the political level, he was ready to adopt those institutions and systems that could serve the Islamic world and save it from its crises. His follower and colleague Muhammad ʿAbdu and Rashid Rida, the inspirer of Hasan al-Banna (1906–1949), adopted different aspects of al-Afghani's intellectual and political thought. While ʿAbdu tended more toward the modernist European aspect of al-Afghani's thought, Rida picked up the necessity of returning to the fundamentals of religion. Rida wanted to induce an intellectual revival and to develop new Islamic institutions for the establishment of an Islamic state, thus facilitating the renaissance of the *umma* (community) and guaranteeing the ethical foundations of society.

Muhammad Iqbal (1875–1938), the modernist, and Abu al-Aʿla al-Mawdudi (1903–1979), the Islamist, manifested similar differences. Both tried to reargue Islamic traditions dealing with knowledge and politics through attempts to reconceptualize *ijtihad*. But al-Mawdudi, the founder of al-Jamaʿa al-Islamiyya in Pakistan, was puritanical in his call for the

reestablishment of Islam. He aimed at setting the Islamic state on purified Islamic roots and focused his efforts on establishing such a state, which would shoulder the implementation of Islam as both a comprehensive way of life and a complete system. Iqbal, on the other hand, showed liberal tendencies in reworking the Islamic traditions within Western modernity in order to renew Islamic systems of knowledge and politics. In his view an Islamic state was of only secondary importance when measured against the fundamental intellectual task that Muslims must first confront. The development of just and modern ideologies must precede just and modern politics.

Very much along al-Mawdudi's line of thinking, the Egyptian Muslim Brothers, also greatly affected by Rida and al-Afghani, centered their thought and actions on the political aspect of Islam to promote a modern renaissance. Thus, the Brotherhood urgently advocated the importance of establishing an Islamic state as the first step in implementing the *shariʿa.* While focusing its intellectual reinterpretation on returning to Islamic fundamentals, the Brotherhood selectively filtered into modern Islamic thought a few major Western political doctrines like constitutional rule and democracy. These doctrines were seen as necessary tools for modernizing the Islamic concept of the state. Meanwhile, the Brotherhood's antagonistic dealings with the Egyptian government led some of its members to splinter off under the leadership of Sayyid Qutb. Qutb continued to uphold the need for establishing an Islamic state while rejecting any dealings or intellectual openness with the West. For him, the Islamic state was not a tool but a fundamental principle of creed. It signaled the community's submission to God on the basis of the *shariʿa* and represented political and ideological obedience to God. Without such submission and obedience, he held, any constitution is illegitimate, and the state loses any shred of legitimacy and enters into paganism, or *jahiliyya.* Ayatollah al-Khumayni limited further the confines of a legitimate Islamic government: While the *shariʿa* theoretically legitimizes a government, only the rule of the jurist actualizes its legitimacy. Within the Islamic world today, the demands of the mainstream Islamist movements in Algeria, Tunisia, Jordan, and Egypt are derived from al-Banna's discourse on the Islamic state, constitutional rule, and multiparty politics; radical Sunni movements follow the discourse of Sayyid Qutb, while Shiʿite political movements follow that of al-Khumayni.

The Islamists employ the doctrine of *tawhid* as the thread that stitches together all disciplines of knowledge and walks of life. Without this doc-

trine the pursuit of politics, economics, ethics, theology, and all other aspects of life is defective. God, as the fountain of every material and spiritual thing, is the ultimate authority and requires people's theoretical, theological, economic, and political submission. Complete submission is due only to God. Most Islamists thereby go beyond the traditional theological submission as understood in the classical, medieval, and modern history of Islam. They imbue *tawhid* with ultimate political and social significance. This subordinating of political life to the highest level of religious legitimacy has led many Islamists to equate, first, religiosity with proper political behavior and, second, the Islamic state with political legitimacy.

It should be noted, however, that denying the legitimacy of modernist and secularist endeavors does not turn Islamist thought into traditional thinking. In reality, the Islamists level their attacks on traditional religious and political establishments and ways of conducting religious and political affairs. For instance, Qutb argued that traditional religious scholars (*ʿulamaʾ*) do not understand the true spirit of Islam. Instead, they imitate an obsolete jurisprudence that throws Islamic thought into the realm of irrelevance, and they comply with any ruling political power that throws Islam into the realm of alienation. Islamists also criticize secular elites for their marginalization of Islam from the administration of the affairs of society and state. Rejecting both secular and religious elites forces the Islamists to develop a new Islamic model that harmoniously takes into account religion and modernity. Thus, even when emphasizing the fragility of Islamic civilization, Islamist thinkers insist that an untraditional Islamic revival is the only instrument for political and social mobilization. To recapture scientific and political supremacy, Muslims must develop new ideologies, sciences, and philosophies from within Islam.[17]

Islamist political projects are based, then, at both the theoretical and the practical levels, on renewing old doctrines and ideas and on authenticating new doctrines and ideas. Viewing themselves as synthesizers between traditional Islamic thought and modern Western thought, the modernists adopted Western political theories and ideologies and introduced Western political doctrines like democracy and republicanism into traditional Islamic thinking. Lacking a coherent theory, their political thought was oriented toward the survival of traditional thought and institutions and for immediate political goals. They tried to reinterpret and upgrade traditional doctrines and concepts to enable them to support Western notions of government and politics. They wanted to harmonize religion and science to keep the former alive and to bring together, scientifically

and religiously, the West and the East. The modernists thus pioneered in Islamizing central notions like democracy and pluralism and in believing in a possible congruence between Islam and the West.

Modernists' interpretations did not invalidate the normative status of Islamic theological and jurisprudential schools. ʿAbdu's rejection of man's complete understanding of divine things is theoretically and practically traditional. His argument is an unsophisticated reinterpretation of medieval theological doctrines and concepts without elaborate developments or explanations. Modernist arguments on the congruence of science with religion and on the negative and positive divine attributes are mainly adopted and reworded from al-Ghazali's numerous writings. These modernists were following in the footsteps of philosophers like al-Kindi, Ibn Sina (Avicenna), and Ibn Rushd (Averroës) in ushering sciences into intellectual circles and in encouraging the closed intellectual circles to rethink traditional interpretations of philosophical, political, social, economic, and religious doctrines and concepts.[18]

In opposition to the modernists, the Islamist rejection of both Islamic and Western past and present is total. The Islamists view philosophy, science, jurisprudence, and theology as historical constructs without universal values. They ground these disciplines in their historical social and political contexts and deny any universal validity for classical, medieval, and modern interpretations. Because these interpretations are only tentative readings of the religious text and the truth, the argument goes, they lack the power of the religious text. The Author, or God, can only entertain a final interpretation of the text. Humans can only read within a complex set of conditions that superimpose meaning on the text or the truth. The divergence of theological, jurisprudential, philosophical, and political interpretations indicates the variety of ways of living. Hence, the logic of a reading as well as its formal truth is derived from its utility to the reader. Most Islamists convert their rejection of historical readings into adopting new legitimate readings that are relevant to them here and now. However, this discourse on the reading and meaning of texts has given rise to multiple readings that call for religious, intellectual, ideological, political, social, and economic transformation. Both the discourse and the transformation manifest themselves in moderate and radical ideologies and behaviors.

Democracy, pluralism, and human rights, the basic ideological doctrines in the ever more globalized world, are not only fundamental doctrines of modern Western political philosophy but are now emerging as primary concerns of modern Islamic political thought. While the process

of blending modern Islamic thought with democracy, pluralism, and human rights appears to astonish many politicians, intellectuals, and ordinary people, it is currently under way and is one of the main occupations of intellectuals and political parties in the Islamic world. Furthermore, the awareness of the need for democracy goes beyond the theoretical to become a demand of Muslims themselves, especially vis-à-vis their governments. Numerous political and intellectual conferences have been held to investigate ways and means to begin or enhance the process of political democratization and intellectual, social, and economic liberalization of the Islamic world. A majority view in Islamic intellectual circles, including even major Islamist theoreticians, with various expressions that adopt emergent Islamic doctrines on democracy, pluralism, and human rights, is now becoming vocal and central in Islamic studies.[19] All justifications for tyrannical thought and authoritarian politics are collapsing, since they are now perceived to have been major historical impediments to the development and freedom of Muslim communities as well as good religious life.

The disintegration of the Soviet Union has hastened the focus on the political legitimacy of democracy, the social necessity of human rights, and the intellectual suitability of pluralism to both the Middle East and the Islamic world. Secular and religious thinkers alike attribute the miserable conditions of economic, social, and political life to the absence of democracy and pluralism in the Arab world. A new political process that stresses the importance of political democratization and liberalization is on the rise and is entertained within a whole range of political and social strata, including the media and academia. For instance, the widely read London-based Arabic newspaper *Al-Hayat* ran an extensive series for many days on the issues of civil society, pluralism, and democracy in Egypt and the Arab world. A few meetings, like "The Democratic Experience in the Arab World" in Morocco, "The Crisis of Democracy in the Arab World" in Cyprus, and "Political Pluralism and Democracy in the Arab World" in Amman, show clearly the emerging interest in democracy and pluralism. The Beirut Center for Arab Unity Studies also convened a conference, in Cairo, to discuss democracy in the Arab world.[20]

However, the West at large has focused on Islamic threats to Western interests and orders while according no real attention or sympathy to the oppression of the peoples of the Islamic world or to the dialogues and debates that have been going on among diverse groups over political theories and rights of people. Scare titles in magazines and newspapers, such as "One Man, One Vote, One Time," "The Challenge of Radical Islam," "Will Democracy Survive in Egypt?" "The Arab World Where Troubles

for the U.S. Never End," and "The Clash of Civilizations," have further pushed the West away from the East.[21] While quite a few Western academics concerned with the Middle East deal with people's real concerns, the West in general regards these concerns as negligible because their impact is localized and does not affect Western interests.

Current circumstances in the Arab world, especially in Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, Sudan, and Tunisia, have led to ideological, political, and religious inquiries and debates on the compatibility of Islamic discourses, especially the doctrines of an Islamic state, with democracy, pluralism, and human rights, and indeed with Western ideas in general. However, a majority of Western media and scholars along with a majority of their Middle Eastern counterparts have directly viewed Islamist political thought, and indirectly Islam, as unfit for democracy because it is exclusivist by its nature and definition. There is no doubt that there are a few religious groups that are truly exclusivist and believe in the necessity of radical ideological, religious, and political transformation. They believe that only through radical coups and education can they achieve any meaningful victory. However, most popular and influential Islamic political groups adhere to new interpretations of inclusion that embrace pluralism and democracy. Ideological, religious, and political radicalism is not based on the main Islamic doctrines on the world, religions, knowledge, and salvation. More important, radicalism is a worldwide manifestation and is not restricted to a few Islamic groups. To make radicalism an essential part of Islamic doctrines or modern Islamic thought is only to miss the point on the need for inclusivist liberal contexts.

However, Professor Bassam Tibi's analysis of Islamic fundamentalism, which is close to Jansen's perspective, misses all distinctions between ideologies and behaviors of moderate and radical Islamists. One might start discussing his analysis by asking whether it is true that "the study of fundamentalism thus becomes an inquiry into the obstacles confronting the search for peace among civilizations and their religions"! And are Islam, Christianity, and Judaism the obstacles to achieving a world peace? It is well known that most, if not all, of the twentieth century's major wars as well as most civil wars were not conducted under the banner of or for the benefit of religions or fundamentalisms. The two world wars, and the wars of liberation that spread all over the Third World, stemmed from the naked self-interest of secular nation-states and empires—England, France, Germany, Russia, the U.S., and others—and not from any fundamentalist empire that fought secular states. Such unfounded remarks permeate and drive Tibi's theses, analyses, and conclusions.

Tibi starts well by not identifying Islam with terrorism or extremism. "Islam as a religion is definitely not a threat, but Islamic fundamentalism is and is replacing communism as a global enemy."[22] However, after an initial attempt to dissociate Islam from Islamic fundamentalism, and then Islamic fundamentalism from terrorism, his book ends up identifying Muslims with Islamic fundamentalists and then Islamic fundamentalists with terrorists. Most of his analysis is spent associating Islamic fundamentalism with terrorism or extremism. Tibi never stops to ask why religion is on the rise all over the world and why Muslims in particular are so frustrated.

Furthermore, Tibi's theoretical weakness leads him to define fundamentalism as a "political phenomenon [that] is an aggressive politicization of religion undertaken in the pursuit of non-religion."[23] In this statement, "political phenomenon" distorts fundamentalism and restricts it to politics. I argue here that while fundamentalism is much associated with politics, it goes beyond that to become a new interpretation of religion. Where Tibi takes the case of Professor Nasr Hamid Abu-Zaid, for instance, as evidence of the politicization of Islam, the fact of the matter is that the Egyptian (secular) government tried and convicted Abu-Zaid.

Moreover, all scholars of the Middle East know that it is not true that Islamic fundamentalists refer to their movement as *usuliyya* (fundamentalism).[24] In fact, they reject that term and instead use *Islamiyya* (Islamism). More important, Tibi's representation of Islamic fundamentalism is, like Jansen's, reductionist. For instance, most fundamentalists do not believe that democracy is unbelief (*kufr*); ʿAli bil Haj's dismissal of democracy as *kufr* cannot be generalized as the fundamentalist view on this issue,[25] and Hasan al-Turabi's reinterpretation of democracy is completely glossed over. Tibi's views on Islamic fundamentalism are built basically around the most radical fundamentalist thinkers, who have been attacked by moderate fundamentalists. Why did he not choose Rashid al-Ghannushi, or Tariq al-Bishri? Even when he uses the ideas of moderate fundamentalists like Muhammad Salim al-ʿAwwa, Tibi seems intent on distorting their views.

I will show that God's governance (*hakimiyyat Allah*), which Tibi wrongly translates as Allah's rule (*hukm Allah*), need not necessarily lead to totalitarian rule. Governance is not political rule or a system of government but is a doctrine used to empower people through divine texts to counter the naked force, despotism, and totalitarianism of rulers. It is an empowering doctrine that can be understood only in its context. However, Tibi seems to force fundamentalist arguments to fit his dichotomy be-

tween Islam and the West. For instance, Sayyid Qutb's Islamic system (*al-nizam al-Islami*) and paganism (*jahiliyya*) are made responsible for the Gulf War that engaged Islam to a degree unprecedented in modern history. The linkage between Qutb and the Gulf War is strange, given the fact that Qutb was executed in 1966 in Egypt. Again, *shura*, which for Tibi reflects the tribal tradition of pre-Islamic history that was adopted into Islamic thought during its formative years, cannot be turned into democracy. It is either *shura* or democracy. He declares this while most fundamentalist theoreticians interpret *shura* in terms of democracy.

This is why Tibi takes issue with John Esposito, who finds valid possibilities of reinterpretation of Islam in terms of democracy and who sees no inherent contradiction between Islamism and democracy. While Esposito correctly bases his argument on historical grounds and studies in comparative religion and sees no global threat coming from the Islamic world and makes a distinction between moderates and radicals, Tibi generalizes his observation on Algeria, whose failure to democratize is blamed on the fundamentalists.

On yet another level, I argue that it is true that Islamic fundamentalism presents "a worldview that seeks to establish its own order" but I dispute Tibi's assertion that it seeks "to separate the peoples of Islamic civilization from the rest of humanity."[26] Tibi believes that if the fundamentalists cannot impose their order on the world, they "can create disorder, on a vast scale."[27] He believes that Islamic fundamentalism has become a world challenge to current standards of politics, though he acknowledges that Islamic fundamentalism is not the cause of the current crisis of our world, but both an expression of and a response to it.[28] Islamic fundamentalism is not an intra-Islamic affair, but rather one of the pillars of an emerging new world *disorder.* Thus, there is a world *order* that is dominated and structured by the West and a world *disorder* that is dominated and structured by Islam.

Tibi innocently describes the existing world order as a process of "peaceful international interaction among sovereign states," then twists the logic of conflicts in the world, reducing war to "irregular wars in the Balkans, the Caucasus, Central Asia, and Somalia, in all of which Islam is involved" and pronouncing them "more an indication of unfolding disorder [read, fundamentalist world order] than of any new world order."[29] He views the activities of Hamas and Islamic Jihad in the Palestinian Zones as directed at obstructing the peace process through "terrorist activities justified as Jihad."[30] There is no criticism of the activities of Israel or the Palestinian Authority or the major world powers. While the West,

in Tibi's opinion, did not aim to enlighten Muslims but to subject them to Western rule, this is not enough to explain the tension between contemporary Islam and Western cultural modernity. For him, the world is going through a clash between the divine (Islamic) and the rational (Western) views.[31] Even at a theoretical level, he avoids criticizing offensive Western doctrines and policies: it is not Samuel Huntington, for instance, but the Islamic fundamentalists who draw these fault lines of conflict between civilizations.[32] Western powers and intellectuals are exonerated en masse, while Islam stands firm on the ground that contradicts other options for a world order—other options being multicultural world orders.[33]

For Tibi, Western and Islamic civilizations must learn to live with each other on a footing of equality, refraining from their explicit or implicit claims to moral superiority and universality.[34] However, he soon rescinds his evenhandedness by pronouncing that Islamic fundamentalism must forgo its religious views and opt for an alternative international cross-cultural morality made up of human rights and secular democracy. Maybe this reflects Tibi's view that fundamentalism does not address religious belief but is "rather a sociopolitical worldview"[35] and expresses a practical preference.

Tibi acknowledges the existence of a basic division within the Islamic fundamentalist camp, but does not see that division as spelling differences over interpretation, or moderation versus radicalism. He is mainly happy that the disorganization will forestall control of the world. Thus, structural globalization is countered by national and international cultural fragmentation.[36] However, fundamentalism is a challenge to the nation-state. "Islam has become the West's leading challenger for one simple reason[:] Islamic perspectives are not restricted to national or regional boundaries. In this respect, Islam resembles Western civilization. The fundamentalists revolt against Western hegemony and compete with Western universalism. Fundamentalism is an ideology contributing to the war of civilizations."[37] But who is leading it? The strange answer Tibi gives is Islamic universalism, which might be capable of taking over the West. What makes the clash of civilizations sharper is the migration of Muslims to the West. Tibi talks repeatedly about globalization and compares it to Islamic universalism, although globalization, for him, is basically technological and economic, and universalism is religious and moral. If Islamic fundamentalists are universalists in their attitude, and if, as Tibi says, globalization is rampant in economics, politics, communication, transportation, and technology but is lacking in culture or civilization,[38] the fundamentalists may be able to employ globalization to the advantage of univer-

salism. Tibi thinks that the fundamentalist revolt against the nation-state is a revolt against imported solutions, because the nation-states have failed in bringing about economic development and political participation.[39]

Unlike Tibi, I do not argue that the only way for Islam to become part of the new emerging global system is to be secularized. I argue that an international morality of democracy and human rights could be based on religions as well as secular thought.[40] Although the origins of human rights and democracy in the West are to be found in the making of Protestantism and its breaking away from Catholicism, and although Islamic thought is undergoing a similar process, Tibi denies Muslims the right to reinterpret Islam in the light of modernity and democracy. For him the condition for democratization is secularization, and the "goal is, rather, how to get us Muslims to speak the language of secular human rights in our own tongues."[41] But could not the Muslims be Muslims and find the necessary common ground with other civilizations and religions to build a universal framework for human rights and democracy based on their strong divine beliefs? Tibi's final surrender comes out in this West-bound ingratiating statement: "Despite my being a Muslim, my understanding of human rights is inexorably linked to the basic rights promulgated by the French and American revolutions."[42] Is this the choice for Muslims all over the globe whose understanding of human rights is not linked to the French and American revolutions but emerges from colonialist and imperialist experiences with the secular West and the tyranny and exploitation of their nation-states!

Tibi takes his stand against fundamentalism on Islamic grounds: the Sufi love of God, and the Islamic rationalism of Ibn Rushd and *Al-Madina al-Fadila* of al-Farabi.[43] He forgets that the Sufis and the rationalists in medieval Islam, especially al-Farabi and Ibn Rushd, were not democratic but elitist and against popular sentiments. Tibi's sad story is that while he claims to push forward Islamic liberalism as an alternative to Islamic fundamentalism, what one is left with is his urgent need to destroy any Islamic trend that is an ideology, a philosophy, or even a way of life. For him, Islam should be replaced wholesale with a globalized Western civilization.

Unlike Tibi's book, Emad Shahin's *Political Ascent: Contemporary Islamic Movements in North Africa* places Islamic resurgence in North Africa in its historical and cultural context. Shahin compares and contrasts the organizations, contexts, and developments of Islamic movements within both pre- and post-independence experiences. Furthermore, he provides essential information on Islamic movements, thinkers, and leaders as well as their ideas and discourses. He places emphasis on major

Islamic movements in the Arab West: al-Nahda, the Progressive Islamic Tendency movement, and the Islamic Liberation Party in Tunisia; the Islamic Salvation Front, Hamas, and al-Nahda Party in Algeria; and the Association of Justice and Benevolence and the Movement of Reform and Renewal in Morocco. His study of these movements based on extensive field research situates them within local conditions and follows their emergence as social movements that adopt Islam as a political alternative to Western models and as an instrument of social protest. The three countries, Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco, share many characteristics. For instance, the states' control of the institutions of official Islam is used to affirm the political elites' legitimacy, while they are in fact committed to foreign models. Thus, the political elites expropriated Islamic institutions to cultivate bases of support for their modernization campaigns and to maintain the legitimacy and stability of their regimes.

Shahin argues that a few factors complicate the development of an objective and comprehensive theory of Islamic renewal: (1) the revival is still in a transitional phase, in flux; (2) Islamic movements operate in diverse environments and conditions; (3) they are still developing ideologically; (4) the revival is too often seen as only political in nature; (5) the secular framework of analysis leads to the marginalization of religion; and (6) Western intellectual and political responses to these movements reveal a confusion of political interests with ideological orientations. On reexamining the role of Islam and postindependence Islamic movements in Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco, he concludes that the Islamic movements within these countries are forces for political change. Shahin tries to distinguish preindependence Islamic forces from and to juxtapose them with postcolonial movements, but while his main objective is to go beyond the conventional classification of these movements as being political, economic, or social, he himself falls victim to the same classification. He continuously refers to the Islamic movement as *political Islam*—never strongly as theological, intellectual, or economic.

On a higher theoretical level, while Shahin makes the argument that these movements are not new phenomena but are the expressions and continuation of a reform-protest trend that had appeared earlier, his main intellectual argument is that "contemporary political Islam is a widespread response to the determination of the post-independence state to relegate Islam to a subordinate political and social position and to the perceived inadequacy of the secular-oriented Western models of development in addressing the indigenous problems of society."[44] These movements are challenging the legitimacy of their rulers and seeking to recon-

struct the religiopolitical base of society in response to the secular policies of the postcolonial incumbent elites.

While this argument does not make political Islam in North Africa any different from Islamic movements in the Arab East or the Gulf, Shahin insists that political Islam in the Arab West is unique, and is significant for the region as a whole, because political Islam in North Africa has shown a marked willingness to work within the system right from the beginning. This willingness has led to "some important contributions from various Maghribi thinkers about the relations between Islam and the state and Islam and democracy as well as the feasibility of non-violent struggle." Shahin then concludes incorrectly that in many ways "the Islamist intellectual center of gravity has moved away from the Mashriq to North Africa," a development he relates to the "particular role Islam has played and to its proximity to Europe and French culture." Furthermore, in North Africa, Islamic groups have actually at times been officially recognized and allowed to compete in elections.

In fact, there is nothing unique about North African "political Islam" that distinguishes it from other geographic areas of the Arab world. Shahin himself tells us, for instance, that the Islamic dimension of reform that asserted Islamic identity in Tunisia was advocated by Shaykh ʿAbd al-ʿAziz al-Thaʿalibi, who was influenced by "the reformist ideas of Muhammad ʿAbduh and the Salafiyya movement."[45] In Algeria too, Islamic reforms were "exposed to the ideas of the Salafiyya movement, either directly through its protagonists, such as Muhammad ʿAbduh and Muhammad Rashid Rida, or while studying at religious institutions in the Arab East."[46] We are also told that even Shaykh ʿAbd al-Hamid ben Badis, the great Algerian thinker and founder of the Association of Algerian Scholars, was "influenced by the teachings of Jamal al-Din al-Afghani and Muhammad ʿAbdu and introduced Ben Badis to the reformist ideas of the *Salafiyya* movements."[47] Nor did Morocco escape the influence of the Arab East, for a major development by the end of the nineteenth century was, according to Shahin, "the emergence of an Islamic reform movement, the Salafiyya, influenced by the ideas of Islamic modernism propagated by Afghani, ʿAbduh and the *Manar* group in Egypt."[48]

There is no value in denying the intellectual influence of the Arab East over the Arab West: even today, the ideological and political discourses of North Africa's major fundamentalist movements are still chiefly shaped by theoreticians from the Arab East such as Hasan al-Banna and Sayyid Qutb as well as Hasan al-Turabi. Also, the main fundamentalist move-

ment in the Arab East, the Muslim Brotherhood, did not start as an underground movement but participated in public and political life, including parliamentary elections. This is likewise true of the Brotherhood's branches in Jordan, Kuwait, and other countries. Furthermore, the major work in constructing Islamic *shura* as democracy has been done by theoreticians from the Arab East such as Tawfiq al-Shawi, Muhammad Salim al-ʿAwwa, and Fahmi al-Huwaidi. Of course, every country of the Arab West has some distinguishing characteristics—a remark that can just as easily apply to the countries of the Arab East and elsewhere. These characteristics do not amount to any unique theoretical development that is unheard of or particularly North African.[49]

The general conclusion that the author makes is that while the nature of political Islam is complex, its connection to social change and development maintains its longevity. Its expansion is related to the marginalization of Islam in state and society and the importation of Western models that have failed to resolve socioeconomic and political problems. New intellectual elites are confronting Westernized elites as well as the elites of official Islam. While it is true that pluralism affects the level of cohesion and behavior of the Islamic opposition, Shahin makes no real efforts to differentiate between radical or revolutionary and moderate or tolerant movements. His main line of argument is that "when an Islamic movement is perceived as radical and dogmatic, the movement is likely to resort to a strategy of violence and dissent."[50] However, we all know that violence is not a *perception* but a reality—examples include the Armed Islamic Group and the Islamic Youth Association. I argue in this book that there are basic differences between moderate and radical Islamists that relate to philosophy, ideology, sociology, and politics.

In line with Bruce Lawrence's *Shattering the Myth: Islam beyond Violence,* I show that the deconstruction of the myth of Islamic violence requires a complex process of deconstructing stereotypes and constructing pluralistic images of Muslim lives. Lawrence's excellent analysis of Islam today brings together a great array of socioeconomic, historical, political, and religious elements and examines the resulting blend in a global context of transcapitalism and high technology. He provides insightful studies of the local, national, and international contexts of the rise of Islamic fundamentalism and the nation-states within the Islamic world. Looking not only at the theoretical and political discourses of Islamic fundamentalism but also at the larger economic and political orders, Lawrence argues that Islam cannot be understood except as a major and complex system

shaped as much by its own metaphysical postulates and ethical demands as by the circumstances of Muslim polities in the modern world.

Addressing well-known stereotypes of Muslims, he shows that the longer view of Muslim societies offers hope rather than despair about Islam in the next century. He shatters the myth that Islam emanates from a hostile, "Arab" Middle East. Arab Islam is only one manifestation, which is itself diversified; there are other interpretations—Iranian, Bosnian, Malaysian. Equally important, he shows how the reality of Muslim women's active participation in their societies is glossed over and covered by a stereotype that projects the violence of male "Arab" Muslims everywhere: Muslim males hate the West and abuse their women. Against this background, Lawrence shows that women in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh are forced to represent the cultural norms and that court cases involving women's legal rights not only reflect boundary markings between Muslims and other communities, they also heighten tensions about their maintenance, even as they complicate notions of what it is to be both Asian and Muslim at the start of the new millennium.

At another level, Lawrence gives due credit—or blame—for one of the defining events of the Islamic world in modern times: the imperialist intrusion of the West, which led to distortion of economic development and subordination to global—Western—economic interests. Even the rise of the local bureaucratic elites in the name of independence replicated the nationalist ideological superstructure of the colonizers. Counterelites returned to "authenticity" to contest the power and legitimacy of the nation-state. While Lawrence shows that Muslims have been subjected to structural violence, it is remarkable that they have not lost control over their destinies. The reason behind this is the diversity of the Muslim world. Although it uses similar symbols and values that influence conduct, its politics are reshaped by interacting with the world of the postcolonial or, generally, non-Muslim "others." It is structural violence that reduces the range of choice for European, African, and Asian Muslims. It is structural violence that restricts the options for Muslim nation-states in the post–Cold War world. Lawrence argues that it victimizes Muslim intellectuals by imposing limits on their discourses about Islam at the turn of the century.

While Muslims' politics may suggest uniformity of intent and practice, Lawrence shows—through analytical socioeconomic studies of Egypt, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Tunisia as well as, later, of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Malaysia—that the source of this uniformity is the ma-

nipulation of symbolic resources and the permeability of boundaries. And because authority in the Muslim world is fragmented, negotiations take the form of protest against the colonial and neocolonial power, the dominant state apparatus, the religious establishment, and the prevailing economic system.

However, Lawrence places protest in time and sequence when distinguishing different types of protest: thus, (1) revivalists are seen as a preindustrial response to European intervention, disruption to traditional trade, demographic shift, and agricultural decline, leading to reaffirmation of Islamic identity and values; (2) reformers are products of the colonial presence, who adapted to the nationalist and ideological legacies of the West and saw them as compatible with Islam; and (3) fundamentalists are a response to the imbalance with the West, who seek to empower themselves through control of "authenticity." All these responses have taken place within the context of structural realignments of global economic, political, and military powers.

To disconnect the equation of Islam with violence, or to shatter the myth, Lawrence draws attention to (1) blurring of the distinction between Islam as religion and as a political ideology that is competing with and dominated by nationalism, and (2) the colonialist European powers' use of religion to divide and control major segments of world population, from West Africa to Southeast Asia. According to Lawrence, not all fundamentalists employ direct confrontation with the nation-state that they see as a creature of the neoimperialist West. And there are other voices, like Malaysia and Bosnia, which are moving toward pluralism. Thus Islam's compatibility with democracy falls under the broader question of whether Islam is evolving and flexible or definitive and unyielding. Yet because of Muslim societies' underdevelopment and global marginalization resulting from advances in science and technology, the future seems to be centered upon economic dependence.

Some Muslims may choose jihad as a holy war to confront the hegemonic powers, but they risk further marginalization: in this case the narrative of jihad is not related to contemporary history and global politics or economics. Other Muslims, in Malaysia for instance, can reinterpret jihad as neocapitalist corporate culture—today's dominant world force—that leads to economic responsibility and social justice. Lawrence correctly argues that a reinterpretation of jihad within a modern global context, which takes into account the realities of economic and technical, structural changes, and whose terms of engagement shift to economic jihad,

can lead to an Islamic religious discourse that is moderate, pluralistic, and democratic. This discourse creates an open public space that increases tolerance between Muslims and non-Muslims and among Muslims themselves. Along this line, I argue that Islam, like other religions, is shaped by its world context; Muslims are now victimized by the international power structure and economic disparity leading to despair and often violence where the have-nots drift to the margins of global exchange. Transcapitalism, high technology, and religion are shaping and are being reshaped by humankind.