Toleration, Political Liberalism, and Peaceful Coexistence in the Muslim World

Bican Şahin

Abstract

How can Muslim societies marked by religious, cultural, and ethnic diversity secure peace and stability? I argue that the principle of toleration provides the most appropriate environment for the peaceful coexistence of these differences, for individuals living in a polity can adopt different moral views and experience their cultural, ethnic, and other differences peacefully.

Toleration is mainly a characteristic of liberal democratic regimes. However, different traditions of liberalism lead to different versions of liberal democracy. Also, not all versions of liberalism value toleration to the same degree. I argue that a liberal democracy based on "political" rather than "comprehensive" liberalism provides the broadest space for the existence of differences, for it does not present a shared way of life, but only a political framework within which individuals and groups with different worldviews can solve their common political problems. However, a liberal democracy based on comprehensive liberalism requires cultural groups and/ or individuals to subscribe to fundamental liberal values (e.g., autonomy), and this stance limits its room for toleration. Thus, if liberal democracy is going to

Bican Şahin has a B.Sc. in public administration (1993) and his M.A. ("The Relations of Aristotle's Understanding of Justice with Contemporary Views of Justice," 1997) from Hacettepe University, Ankara. He received his Ph.D. ("An Investigation of the Contributions of Plato and Aristotle to the Development of the Concept of Toleration," 2003) from the University of Maryland, College Park, where he specialized in political theory and comparative politics. He teaches in Hacettepe University's Department of Political Science and Public Administration. He would like to thank Professor Charles E. Butterworth, Professor Mustafa Erdogan, and the anynmymous referees for the valuable comments on this article, as well as Nevio Christante for the intital proof-read.

be introduced into the Muslim world to bring about peace and
stability, it must be a liberal democracy based on political, rather
than comprehensive, liberalism.

Introduction

The statement that we live in a world marked by religious, political, cultural,
and moral diversity cannot be disputed. What can be disputed are the answers
given to the following question: "How can all of these diverse religious, cul-
tural, and moral experiences coexist peacefully?"

Muslim societies in general, particularly those in the Middle East, are
marked by diversity. The example of Iraq, which is a mosaic of Arab,
Kurdish, and Turkoman ethnic groups as well as Sunni, Shi`ah, and other reli-
gious groups, suffices to prove this point. Therefore, Muslim societies have a
stake in the answers to the above question. Thus, one of the most urgent tasks
for all political thinkers is to address this question, because history shows
repeatedly that diversity is not always welcomed. In fact, one does not need
to go too far back in history to recognize this fact. What happened at the dawn
of the twenty-first century in Bosnia, as well as and what is happening now
in Iraq, bear witness to this unfortunate phenomenon.

This article attempts to answer this question, especially in the case of
Muslim societies. I argue that the principle of toleration provides us with an
environment that is most conducive for the peaceful coexistence of these dif-
ferences. Thanks to this principle, individuals in a polity can adopt different
moral views and experience their cultural, ethnic, and other differences in
the best possible way.

Toleration is mostly a characteristic of liberal democratic regimes. How-
ever, liberal democracy is a broad concept, given that different traditions of
liberalism lead to different versions of liberal democracy. For example, some
versions of liberalism do not value toleration to the same degree as others. In
what follows, I argue that a liberal democracy based on "political liberalism,"
rather than "comprehensive liberalism," provides the broadest space for the
existence of differences. Basically, such a liberal democracy does not present
a shared way of life, but only a political mechanism by which individuals and
groups with different worldviews can find solutions to their common politi-
cal problems. Since a liberal democracy based on comprehensive liberalism
requires cultural groups and/or individuals to subscribe to fundamental liber-
al values (e.g., autonomy), it has limited space for differences. Thus, if lib-
eral democracy is going to be introduced into the Muslim world to bring

about peace and stability through toleration, it should be a liberal democracy based on political, rather than comprehensive, liberalism.

My argument is presented in the following order: a brief analysis of the concept of toleration, two different versions of liberalism with their differing emphases on toleration, and different views concerning the compatibility of Islam and liberal democracy to see how they harmonize with the type of liberal democracy defended here.

The Principle of Toleration

The etymological root of *toleration* goes back to the Latin word *tolerantia*. In its early history, this concept denoted the general idea of enduring and putting up with various items.[1] Two nouns derived from this word exist in contemporary English: *tolerance* and *toleration*. Generally, tolerance depicts an attitude and toleration depicts an action. More specifically, tolerance corresponds to a willingness or an ability to tolerate, whereas toleration corresponds to the practice of tolerating.[2] Toleration involves "a deliberate decision to refrain from prohibiting, hindering or otherwise coercively interfering with conduct of which one disapproves, although one has power to do so."[3] This attitude can be summarized as follows: "I disagree with your position on this matter which I care about, but I will not attempt to coerce your behavior."[4]

Toleration comprises four main components. The first component is concerned with the subject of toleration. In fact, there are two subjects of toleration: a tolerating subject and a tolerated subject, each of which can be an individual, a group, an organization, or an institution. In order to qualify as a tolerating subject, a subject needs to exhibit *agency*. Stated differently, being able to tolerate requires that an entity be capable of doing something, of acting. If a subject does not have the capacity to act, then it cannot act *against* an object. However, in order to be tolerated, an entity does not need to be capable of exhibiting agency. For example, in the sense of being tolerated, gays and lesbians as a group can be a subject of toleration. That is, they can be a subject of intolerance by those who disapprove of their way of life. Nevertheless, since they lack the necessary structure to act as a group against a subject of toleration who/that is in the position of being tolerated, they cannot be tolerating subjects.[5]

The "object" of toleration forms the second component. An action, a belief, or a practice can be an object of toleration. It is possible to ascertain at least two different understandings of toleration by looking at what is considered a proper object: a narrow understanding and a broad understanding. According to a narrow understanding, in order to be tolerant one needs to

prevent herself /himself from acting against something that really matters to her/him. In this perspective, the differences that form the object of toleration should involve important moral matters.[6] Differences in religious beliefs and practices, sexual preferences, and political ideologies can qualify as the object of toleration. From this perspective, such trivial things as differences of taste cannot be a proper object of toleration. In Peter Nicholson's words, if toleration is going to be a "moral ideal," the objects of toleration must involve moral matters.[7]

According to the broad perspective, on the other hand, objects that cause simple dislike, distaste, disgust, or disapproval can be objects of toleration. Mary Warnock provides us with an example of this perspective.[8] First, she rejects the claim that a clear line between the moral (i.e., amenable to rational argumentation) and the non-moral (i.e., not amenable to rational argumentation) can be drawn. On the contrary, she thinks that strong feelings may give a basis to moral judgments. Traveling on David Hume's path, Warnock claims that "morality is more properly felt than judged of, and moral distinctions are not grounded in reason."[9] However, she does not argue that all cases of toleration have equal value. Knowing that some of the feelings are unimportant, Warnock distinguishes between strong toleration, which involves cases of moral disapproval, and weak toleration, which involves cases of simple distaste and dislike.[10] Thus, from this perspective, such "trivial" things as different ways of dressing and cooking can be proper objects of toleration.

The third component is concerned with the existence of a negative attitude toward the object of toleration in the forms of dislike and/or disapproval. Accordingly, we cannot be said to show tolerance toward differences about which we are simply "indifferent." If we allow the different practices of others without objecting to or disapproving of them, or finding them disgusting, we are not tolerating but simply favoring liberty.[11]

The fourth component requires that there be a significant degree of restraint on the part of the tolerating subject from acting against the object of toleration. This also implies that the tolerating subject has the capability to impose his/her/its will on the tolerated subject.[12] For example, if a person/group/institution refrains from acting against a religious belief or practice, despite the fact that this person/group/institution has the power to stop it, only then can we say that this person/group/institution exercised toleration.[13] In Albert Weale's words, "those who are tolerant could get their way if they chose. This is the distinction between acquiescence and toleration."[14] In this sense, tolerance is not resigning oneself to what one disapproves of out of a sense of helplessness. Thus, the tolerating subject believes, perhaps falsely, that he/she/it could interfere in some way with the object of toleration.[15]

Toleration that has these features can be seen as a method of managing conflict.[16] The conflict that is the subject matter of toleration is caused by differences. According to Hans Oberdiek, wherever there is difference, especially deep difference, there is a potential object for toleration. And, as we know, deep differences exist everywhere.[17] Some of the ones that cause bitter conflict are concerned with religion, ethnicity, culture, and morality. Not everybody is welcoming toward all sorts of differences. While some people are disturbed by their neighbors' sexual preferences, others disapprove of some of their fellow citizens' religious beliefs. Destructive conflict emerges when people who disapprove of or dislike certain beliefs and/or behaviors attempt to suppress them. When this happens, the peaceful coexistence of differences in society becomes impossible.

Thus, unharnessed legitimate conflict can assume destructive forms. In this sense, conflict among individuals with different aspirations poses the most fundamental challenge to the modern philosopher/thinker in keeping society intact for as long as possible. If the political philosopher/thinker is going to succeed, she/he must find a way to prevent legitimate conflict from being elevated to the level of destructive conflict. As an instrument of accommodating conflict, toleration provides the modern philosopher/thinker with a solution.

Toleration does not eradicate either the conflict or the differences that cause it; rather, toleration only prevents it from taking a destructive twist. In other words, the differences that cause conflict remain even after the act of toleration. Toleration does not require a person to welcome and/or celebrate the object of toleration that causes dislike, disgust, or disapproval. All that it requires is that the person refrain from prohibiting, hindering, or coercively interfering with the conduct of the object of toleration. In this regard, the principle of toleration provides at least two things: a private sphere for individuals and groups in which they can experience their differences, and a window of opportunity through which the differences may come to be respected by all parties in the long run.

However, the emergence of toleration requires a mind-set that accepts the view that differences among human beings are natural and, consequently, that any ensuing conflict is inevitable and legitimate. This is based on the simple reason that if one does not think that differences, and therefore conflict, are natural, then one attempts to eradicate that conflict by eradicating the differences causing it in the first place. When one looks at the history of political thought, she/he can realize that the mind-set that makes toleration possible has not always been there.[18]

With its emphasis on society's instrumentality, the paradigm of modern political theory has legitimized conflict. According to this paradigm, seeking

personal interest rather than pursuing the universal ideal is what causes human beings to create a society. For the moderns, individual interests, be they related to security, wealth, comfort, or tranquility, are better served in a society. In this sense, modern philosophers do not see society as a natural entity in which individuals are made virtuous citizens, but rather as an instrumental entity by which both individual and common interests can be satisfied in the best way.

The conflict that gave modern philosophers the hardest time in the early modern period was religious conflict. The full-blown concept of toleration is believed to have first developed during the attempts to solve this conflict.[19] Indicating this common view about the connection between the emergence of toleration and religious dissent, Susan Mendus states: "[I]ndeed, the story of toleration is predominantly the story of the battle against religious intolerance and persecution, and it is in this context that many important conceptual points about the nature and justification of toleration were first formulated."[20]

Tolerance and liberalism are closely related. In fact, the history of toleration can be read as the history of the development of liberalism.[21] Drawing attention to this close relationship, Will Kymlicka states that "[l]iberalism and toleration are closely related, both historically and conceptually. The development of religious tolerance was one of the historical roots of liberalism."[22] Likewise, John Rawls thinks that liberalism extends toleration, which first emerged as a response to religious conflict, to other differences in contemporary societies.[23]

Toleration requires that the political system's rules be neutral toward its members' different moral, cultural, and religious beliefs and practices. In short, politics should not concern itself with morality. In general, a liberal democracy seems to be the least involved with issues of morality. However, liberal democracy is a broad concept. As David Held states: "[T]he 'liberal' component of liberal democracy cannot be treated simply as a unity. There are distinctive liberal traditions which embody quite different conceptions from each other of the individual agent, of autonomy, of the rights and duties of subjects, and of the proper nature and form of community."[24] Different understandings of liberalism lead to different versions of liberal democracy, and some versions of liberalism value toleration more than others.

Accordingly, a liberal democracy based on "political liberalism," rather than "comprehensive liberalism," is the least involved with issues of morality. Basically, such a liberal democracy does not present a way of life, but only a political mechanism that provides a ground on which different worldviews can coexist. Due to the fact that a liberal democracy based on comprehensive liberalism expects its members to endorse fundamental liberal

values (e.g., autonomy), it does not have much scope for toleration. In this direction, the next task is to present two main lines of interpretation in contemporary liberalism with their different emphasis on tolerance.

Two Versions of Liberalism and Their Positions on Toleration

One can make a distinction between the general principles and the ideals that shape a liberal social order's political framework and the deeper commitments and values that give meaning to the lives of human beings who reside within that framework. With regard to this distinction, a political liberal argues that the former set of principles should not be based on the latter set of values. Stated differently, "[t]he political liberal insists that the articulation and defence of a given set of liberal commitments for a society should not depend on any particular theory of what gives value or meaning to a human life."[25] For a political liberal, "the task liberalism sets itself [is] providing an account of political order that could command the acceptance of all, irrespective of their moral commitments or ideals of the good life."[26] As Rawls puts it, the problem of political liberalism is: "How is it possible that deeply opposed though reasonable comprehensive doctrines may live together and all affirm the political conception of a constitutional regime?"[27]

On the other hand, a comprehensive liberal opines that we cannot possibly build a liberal social order without a commitment to deeper values. According to a comprehensive liberal, "[l]iberalism ... is a robust position in political philosophy, a position whose moral partisanship reaches deep into the foundations of our conceptions of person, freedom, and value."[28] Thus, for a comprehensive liberal, the former set of principles cannot be separated from the latter set of values in a liberal social order. However, it must be noted that political liberalism is not totally devoid of any moral content, for no political theory can have any normative appeal if it has no moral assumptions: "The distinction between 'comprehensive' and 'political' liberalism therefore cannot plausibly be one between moral and non-moral theories. ... What distinguishes 'political' liberalism from 'comprehensive' doctrines ... is that it tries to establish liberalism as a *minimal moral conception*."[29]

One example of comprehensive liberalism can be found in liberal theories based on the concept of "autonomy." Similar to Aristotle, liberals who use autonomy as the basis of their understanding of liberalism believe that happiness forms the primary aim of life and that happiness comes from leading a good life: "Our essential interest is in leading a good life, in having those things that a good life contains."[30] But unlike Aristotle, who has a cer-

tain idea of what a good life looks like and sees the *polis* (city) as a school
where this particular understanding is inculcated in citizens, these liberals,
even though they may have *personal* views of what a good life looks like,
refrain from identifying its content and having the state shape its citizens
accordingly: "... government must be neutral on what might be called the
question of the good life."[31]

There are different and, in a sense, competing understandings of the good
life, and it is up to individuals to "choose" among them. Hence, these liber-
als emphasize "freedom of choice."[32] Furthermore, in order for a chosen good
life to lead to happiness, it needs to be chosen by the individual himself/
herself. As Ronald Dworkin puts it, "no component of [a persons' life] may
even so much as contribute to the value of a person's life without his endorse-
ment ... no event or achievement can make a person's life better against his
opinion that it does not."[33] Shortly stated, a person can be coerced to lead an
understanding of the good life. However, it does not necessarily make that
person happy, "because a life only goes better if led from the inside."[34]

Finally, given that human beings are fallible creatures, this freedom also
involves the right to examine, revise, and even drop the previously held
understanding of the good life. Thus, subscribing to the Socratic motto that
"the unexamined life is not worth living," these liberals make a distinction
between "leading a good life" and "leading the life we *currently believe* to be
good."[35] They concede that we may be mistaken about what makes our life
valuable and that we should have not only the possibility but also the *oppor-
tunity* to revise and change our understanding of the good life. In this sense,
"autonomy is a second-order capacity of persons to reflect critically upon
their first-order preferences, desires, wishes, and so forth, and the capacity to
accept or attempt to change these in light of higher-order preferences."[36]

Up to this point, it seems that the presentation of a liberalism based on
autonomy, especially with its emphasis on the state's neutrality toward dif-
ferent understandings of the good life, is not that different from political lib-
eralism. Nevertheless, it begins to approach comprehensive liberalism when
we consider the social conditions of achieving individual autonomy. As indi-
cated above, according to this view it is not enough to leave the individual
alone for her/him to lead a good life. She/he must also be provided with "the
cultural conditions conducive to acquiring an awareness of different views
about the good life, and to acquiring an ability to intelligently examine and
re-examine these views."[37] This condition involves requiring all individuals
and groups to respect the individual's autonomy. In fact, in a sense, a life
based on autonomy becomes "a distinctively liberal conception of the good
life: the good life is a freely chosen life, and so the good life is a free life."[38]

Thus, in this view, the liberal state can extend tolerance only to those individuals and groups that respect individual autonomy.

An example of this mode of thinking can be found in Kymlicka's *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights*. In this work, he argues that the formation of a good life does not take place in a vacuum, for human beings live in what he calls *societal cultures*, defined as

> … a culture which provides its members with meaningful ways of life across the full range of human activities, including social, educational, religious, recreational, and economic life, encompassing both public and private spheres. These cultures tend to be territorially concentrated, and based on a shared language.[39]

Our formation of the good life occurs in a societal culture. Our choices are shaped and informed by our culture. We can exercise our autonomy in a meaningful way only in a cultural milieu, for "freedom is intimately linked with and dependent on culture."[40] Thus, culture's existence and continuity is fundamental for our pursuit of happiness.

However, culture is not homogenous in most societies. Contemporary societies are marked by religious, cultural, and ethnic diversity. Kymlicka distinguishes between two forms of cultural diversity: multination states and polyethnic states. In the case of multination states, cultural diversity emerges from the act of incorporating into a larger state various cultures that were previously self-governing and territorially concentrated. In the case of polyethnic states, the cause of cultural diversity is found in individual and familial immigration.[41] Thus, "a state is multicultural if its members either belong to different nations (a multination state), or have emigrated from different nations (a polyethnic state), and if this fact is an important aspect of personal identity and political life."[42]

Even though the nation-state has sought to create homogenous societies since its inception by eroding these differences, it has, according to Kymlicka, failed to do so.[43] The liberal nation-state must acknowledge the reality of diversity and take the necessary steps to create not only an economically – but also a culturally – just society.[44] Kymlicka's solution to this problem is "group rights," of which there are three: the right of self-government, polyethnic rights, and representation rights.[45]

The right of self-government, which is often achieved through federalism, involves devolving as much power to national minorities as possible. Redrawing a country's internal borders guarantees that they will be the majority population in their traditional homelands.[46] On the other hand, polyethnic rights are concerned with claims of financial support and/or legal

exemptions for certain ethno-cultural practices. The most well-known examples of the latter sort are the claims of Sikh men to be exempt from wearing a helmet while driving a motorcycle and the demand by Jewish men to wear a yarmulka, as well as the similar demand by Muslim women to wear the hijab, in public spaces. On the other hand, claims of financial support are justified by arguing that the state must preserve cultural diversity by providing material support as a source of social richness. After all, through their subsidization of artistic and cultural events, liberal democracies are already supporting one culture: western culture. Thus, the argument continues, giving material support to minority cultures establishes fairness by treating all cultures equally.[47]

Finally, representation rights involve the guaranteed representation of minority cultures in the country's central representative institutions. This is also thought to be a corollary to the right of self-government. Accordingly, the right of regional self-government may not mean much if the central legislative assembly can make a contrary decisions and make it binding for the whole country. Thus, guaranteed representation and veto rights at the central government level help ensure that the right of regional self-government is not a sham.[48]

For Kymlicka, cultural groups may make two demands on the liberal state/society at large: non-intervention when the group suppresses *internal dissent* (internal restrictions) and protection from outside intervention in its cultural affairs (external protections). He states that "[t]he first kind is intended to protect the group from the destabilizing impact of internal dissent (e.g., the decision of individual members not to follow traditional practices or customs), whereas the second is intended to protect the group from the impact of *external decisions*."[49] While he accepts the second demand readily, he cannot reconcile the first demand with the fundamental liberal value of autonomy: "... liberals can and should endorse certain external protections, where they promote fairness between groups, but should reject internal restrictions which limit the right of group members to question and revise traditional authorities and practices."[50] Now, the fact that this view is willing to tolerate only those cultural groups that value autonomy transforms it into a comprehensive program. In such a society, there is no room for other comprehensive programs that clash with the fundamental liberal value of autonomy.[51]

In fact, Rawls, who had placed *rational autonomy* (defined as "the capacity to form, to revise, and rationally pursue a conception of the good"[52] in the foundations of his *A Theory of Justice*[53]), accepts in his latter work that this was a comprehensive program.[54] In *Political Liberalism*, he makes a distinction between political autonomy and moral autonomy. While the first form of

autonomy is "the legal independence and assured political integrity of citizens and their sharing with other citizens equally in the exercise of political power," the second form is "expressed in a certain mode of life and reflection that critically examines our deepest ends and ideals."[55] Such a distinction is unknown to *A Theory of Justice* and takes moral autonomy as the only form of autonomy.[56] However, according to him, there are different understandings of the good life and not all understandings value moral autonomy: "Many citizens of faith reject moral autonomy as part of their way of life."[57] In order to be fair to those groups that do not value individual moral autonomy, in *Political Liberalism* Rawls takes political autonomy as the foundation on which a political consensus would be built. In this understanding, autonomy is a political principle employed to determine our public rights and responsibilities. Thus, he no longer sees autonomy as a concept that defines the relationship between the self and its ends in all areas of human life.

Kymlicka thinks that Rawls is a "communitarian" in the private realm, because he does not think that individuals can step back from their understanding of the good life and revise it if necessary; but in the political realm, he considers Rawls a "liberal" to the extent that he thinks individuals can determine their public rights and duties on the basis of autonomy. However, Kymlicka criticizes Rawls by arguing that it is hard to see how individuals who are "communitarians" in the private sphere can be "liberals" in the political sphere. According to him, if a communitarian accepts Rawls' position and takes part in determining political principles on the basis of autonomy, these principles will, in turn, necessarily interfere with his/her private sphere as well, thus rendering it impossible to remain a communitarian. Thus, Kymlicka opines that Rawls' solution will not work.[58]

A more consistent example of political liberalism is provided by Chandran Kukathas' recent work, *The Liberal Archipelago: A Theory of Diversity and Freedom*. Unlike Kymlicka, who advances his defense of liberalism on the basis of autonomy, Kukathas bases his model on the assumption that the fundamental value is not freedom of choice based on autonomy, but rather that of conscience: "The most important feature of human conduct is its attachment to the claims of conscience. It is this aspect of human nature that reveals what is preeminent among human interests: an interest in not being forced to act against conscience."[59] Accordingly, "*[l]iberty* of conscience is enjoyed when the individual can indeed live his life under the guidance of conscience (which identifies right and wrong conduct) and is not impeded by others from doing so."[60]

The second freedom that logically follows from the freedom of conscience is that of association.[61] Thus, for Kukathas, free individuals must be

able to freely associate with their like-minded fellows. In this sense, cultural
groups are analogous to civil society's voluntary associations. Their existence
depends on their members' continuous support. Kukathas accepts that mem-
bership in cultural groups is often involuntary, since we are born into them.
In fact, many cultural groups refuse to let those who are not natural members
become members. However, the adjective *voluntary* here points to the fact
that "… members recognize as legitimate the terms of association and the
authority that upholds them."[62] This brings about another fundamental free-
dom that goes with the freedom association: the freedom of dissociation. As
Kukathas points out, "a society is a liberal one if individuals are at liberty to
reject the authority of one association in order to place themselves under the
authority of another; and to the extent that individuals are at liberty to repu-
diate the authority of the wider society in placing themselves under the
authority of some other association."[63] In short, the individual is free to exit
the cultural group whose practices and/or values do not appeal to her/him.[64]

The difference of such a view from Kymlicka's theory is that it provides
space in the larger liberal society not only for those cultural groups that are
in tune with fundamental liberal values, but also for those that are not. In
other words, "a liberal society can tolerate illiberal groups and individuals."[65]
Thanks to the freedom of association, cultural groups that do not value such
liberal values as freedom of choice and autonomy are permitted to exist
alongside groups that respect those values. As long as they do not force indi-
viduals to become and remain members, such groups can continue with their
illiberal ways. Using Kymlicka's twofold distinction about the claims of
minority cultures, Kukathas opines that the larger society should tolerate the
claims of internal restrictions. In this sense, Kymlicka's refusal to grant tol-
eration to illiberal groups takes him down the path of intervention, which
severely restricts diversity.

On the other hand, Kukathas cannot endorse some of the external protec-
tion claims for minority groups that Kymlicka supports.[66] For example,
Kymlicka asserts that for the sake of fairness and/or diversity, the state should
provide financial support to cultural groups. One negative aspect of provid-
ing such support is that it creates incentives for the formation and continua-
tion of groups that would not normally exist.[67] When left alone, groups con-
tinue to exist only as long as they satisfy their members' material and/or
moral needs. If individual members think that they are not benefiting from
their membership, then they will leave the group. Second, cultural groups are
not fixed and homogenous entities, for there may be minorities within the
minority groups. Thus, state support may lead to preserving the status quo at
the expense of oppressing the minority view within the group.[68] For these and

other similar reasons, Kukathas opposes Kymlicka's view that the larger society has a duty to provide the resources and opportunities to preserve cultural groups. Thus, for Kukathas, society has neither the right to interfere with a cultural minority's illiberal way of life nor the duty to promote any culture.[69]

Kukathas uses the metaphor of an archipelago to describe the social order that emerges from following these principles. In such a social order, there is more than one authority and none of them have the right or the duty to interfere with the affairs of another. In this sense, political society is only one of many different authorities.[70] All of these different groups float in a sea of toleration: "[L]iberalism is a doctrine of toleration rooted in a respect for freedom of association and, ultimately, liberty of conscience."[71] Thus, he criticizes Kymlicka for attempting to create a moral unity within the nation-state around "comprehensive liberalism." For him, liberalism is a minimal moral order that he calls "political liberalism."[72] In addition, he writes that illiberal as well as liberal elements have a right to exist in a system based on political liberalism, for liberalism

> … advocates mutual toleration and thus peaceful coexistence. A liberal regime is a regime of toleration. It upholds norms of toleration not because it values autonomy but because it recognizes the importance of the fact that people think differently, see the world differently, and are inclined to live – or even think they must live – differently from the ways others believe they should. It upholds toleration because it respects liberty of conscience.[73]

Thus, according to this understanding, the state's role is limited to providing citizens with a legal framework within which they can pursue their personal dreams freely. The state does not have a duty to make its citizens virtuous human beings or to create a just social system. Its sole duty is to keep the peace and order.[74] In this sense, the legal framework's rules do not consist of any comprehensive moral view. Using Friedrich A. Hayek's expression, they are "the rules of just conduct."[75] In other words, they are the rules that require individuals to respect the property rights of others and prohibit force and fraud when making contracts among individuals. They do not seek to order individuals' lives in accordance with an all-comprehensive moral view. Employing Isaiah Berlin's distinction between negative and positive liberty, the rules of just conduct seek to protect the negative liberty of individuals in the sense of not being limited in one's actions that do not harm others.[76]

In this respect, a liberal democracy based on political liberalism provides a more tolerant framework within which there is more room for diversity, both liberal and illiberal, than a liberal democracy based on comprehensive liberalism. The toleration provided by comprehensive liberalism is extended

only to those cultural groups and/or individuals who accept such comprehensive values as autonomy. As will be remembered, while Kymlicka was ready to grant "external protections" to cultural groups, he was unwilling to grant "internal restrictions" to them. In fact, he thinks that his position is the natural result of "liberal" toleration properly understood. Accordingly, "liberal tolerance protects the right of individuals to dissent from their group, as well as the right of groups not to be persecuted by the state."[77] Thus, Kymlicka thinks that those liberals according to whom toleration and autonomy are "two sides of the same coin" cannot tolerate illiberal groups and/or individuals.[78]

However, this view is based on a misunderstanding. Accordingly, to preserve the right of dissent from one's group, liberalism does not need to demand that all cultural groups respect individual autonomy. Granting the freedom of dissociation (i.e., an individual's right to leave her/his group) is enough to secure the individual's right of dissent. If a person cannot reconcile the practices and beliefs of the group of which she/he is a member with his/her conscience, then she/he can stop being a part of that group. As Kukathas emphasizes, this right is not based on individual autonomy but on the freedom of conscience. In this sense, it is not misleading to say that a liberal democracy based on political liberalism is truly "a regime of toleration."

The Compatibility of Islam and a Liberal Democracy Based on Political Liberalism

Two broad perspectives as regards the compatibility of Islam and liberal democracy can be identified within Muslim political thought.[79] One claims that Islam and liberal democracy are incompatible; the other advances just the opposite view. The purpose of this section is not to side with and then defend one of these views, but rather to state them and try to see which one is compatible with the type of liberal democracy defended here.

Among the proponents of the view that Islam and liberal democracy are incompatible are the Pakistani scholar Sayyid Abul A`la Maududi (1903-79) and the Egyptian scholar Sayyid Qutb (1906-66). At the core of their argument lies the view that liberal democracy, with its concept of popular sovereignty, clashes with the Islamic belief of God's sovereignty.[80] As Maududi puts it: "Islam has no trace of Western democracy. ... Islam ... altogether repudiates the philosophy of popular sovereignty and rears its polity on the foundations of the sovereignty of God and the vicegerency (*khilafah*) of man."[81] Islam states that sovereignty belongs to God and that individuals obey the political system's rules not because they gave their consent to them, but because God ordered them to do so.

This approach can be depicted as an Islamist view or ideology. As Vali Nasr argues: "Islamist ideology ... calls for the creation of a utopian Islamic state that notionally vests all sovereignty in God. This call is based on a narrow interpretation of Islamic law, and promotes an illiberal, authoritarian politics that leaves little room for civil liberties, cultural pluralism, the rights of women and minorities, and democracy."[82] This understanding does not leave much space in which individuals can determine their own understanding of the good life (i.e., moral autonomy). This is evident in Maududi's following words: "In [an Islamic] state no one can regard any field of his affairs as personal and private."[83] In a similar vein, Qutb states that: "[I]f it is asked 'Should not the interest of individuals shape their existence?', then we must refer once again to the question and answer at the heart of Islam: 'Do you know, or does God know?' 'God knows, and you do not know.'"[84] Thus, Islamism is a comprehensive ideology, and any state based on this ideology covers every aspect of life.[85]

On the other hand, the view that Islam and liberal democracy are compatible is generally labeled as "Islamic liberalism" or "liberal Islam." Such a liberal Islam is grounded in two different ways.[86] For the first version, it is possible to have a liberal democratic political system in a Muslim society for two reasons: such a system accords with the spirit of Islam, which is tolerant of diversity, as suggested by Prophet Mohamed's statement that "[d]ifference of opinion within my community is a sign of God's mercy"; and Islam has few or no specific prescriptions regarding the institutional arrangements of an Islamic society's political system. As Ömer Çaha puts it:

> The Quran[87] only mentions about a number of moral principles, which are relevant to political governance, and not about its fundamental principles and organizational structure. The Quran often makes reference to past societies and rulers, but its principal focus is on the moral behaviour of societies and the extent of justice observed by rulers rather than on the format of politics and its structure. ... Likewise the Sunnah of the Prophet of Islam does not touch upon the organizational structure of political governance, but contains advices geared to the rulers on principles of justice, compassion, mercy and obedience to God.[88]

Thus, in the absence of specific rules regarding political matters, except for the institution of *shūrā* (consultation), the first group of Islamic liberals argues that Muslims can adopt liberal democratic political arrangements.

The second version of Islamic liberalism justifies liberal democratic arrangements through specific references to Islam. Those who employ this line of justification refer to "explicit legislation such as the Qur'anic provi-

sion for taking counsel, or the denial of the sovereign authority of man over man, or the *shar`ī* provisions for "electing" the caliph, or the hadith concerning the equality of believers."[89] One can add to this list the Islamic institutions of *ijmā`* (consensus) and *ijtihād* (rational interpretation).

We can identify Abdul Karim Soroush, a Persian Shi`i Muslim from Iran, and Sheikh Rachid al-Ghannouchi, an Arab Sunni Muslim from Tunisia, as examples of this second approach. Wright indicates that their goal is to modernize and democratize economic and political systems in an "Islamic" context, in the belief that the "human understanding of Islam is flexible, and that Islam's tenets can be interpreted to accommodate and even encourage pluralism."[90] Unlike Maududi or Qutb, Soroush sees no incompatibility between Islam and the freedoms that form the basis of democracy: "Islam and democracy are not only compatible, their association is inevitable. In a Muslim society, one without the other is not perfect."[91] His defense of democracy in the Islamic world rises on two pillars: First, Soroush thinks that

> … [f]aith is a matter of exclusively personal and private experience. We embrace a faith individually just as we confront our death individually. … Faith and love are of the same grain. … There is no such thing as collective adoration, love, and testimony, just as there is no such thing as forced adoration, love, and testimony. True faith is contingent upon individuality and liberty.[92]

Wright thinks that this freedom of conscience and religion is also the basis of democracy.[93] Furthermore, Soroush believes that the beliefs and will of the majority lie at the foundations of the ideal Islamic state: "An Islamic democracy cannot be imposed from the top; without being chosen by the majority, including nonbelievers as well as believers, an Islamic democracy would not be legitimate."[94] Thus, for Soroush, a government becomes not only democratic, but also religious (i.e., Islamic) by observing the freedoms and rights lying at the heart of democracy.[95]

Ghannouchi argues for an Islamic system based on majority rule, free elections, a free press, protection of minorities, equality of all secular and religious parties, and full women's rights. In his view, Islam provides the system with moral values.[96] According to him, the right of *ijtihād* gives individual believers the right to interpret the Qur'an for themselves. In Islam, no one particular authority has the exclusive right of interpreting the Qur'an. Also, through the process of *shūrā*, the majority provides its views that will be the basis of decisions in an Islamic society. In his own words:

> While on the one hand Islam recognizes the right of its adherents to *ijtihād* in interpreting the Koranic text, it does not recognize a church or an institution or a person as a sole authority speaking in its name or claiming to represent it. Decision making, through the process of *shūrā*, belongs to the community as a whole. Thus the democratic values of political pluralism and tolerance are perfectly compatible with Islam.[97]

Thus, against the view that Islam and liberal democracy are incompatible are two versions of liberal Islam arguing, albeit for different reasons, that Islam is not an obstacle to establishing liberal democracies in the Muslim world.

Being a religion, Islam has a comprehensive moral view, a body of rules that tells individuals how to order their lives to qualify as faithful Muslims and deserving of eternal happiness. As a comprehensive moral view, it is justified in demanding obedience from its believers. But since a political system's rules are general and binding for everyone, basing them upon Islam amounts to demanding obedience to Islam from both Muslims and non-Muslims. Clearly, this is unjust in the case of non-Muslims, for doing so violates one's freedom of conscience, a fundamental human right.[98]

Imposing Islam on an individual also violates a basic Islamic principle: "There can be no compulsion in religion" (Qur'an 2:256). As Radwan Masmoudi puts it, "forcing religion on people contradicts a basic requirement of religion: that human beings are supposed to come to God of their own free will."[99] We also know that Islam has no place for forced conversion. In this sense, Islam is tolerant toward non-Muslims. Thus, as long as Islam, as any other comprehensive moral view, is not imposed on others as the basis of the political system but remains no more than one of the different moral views in civil society, it can tolerate other comprehensive moral views.

In the Muslim world, religion is a particularly sensitive issue because it is one of the main sources of identity. Therefore, as Mohamed Hamdi indicates, for many, the political system's rules would not be legitimate unless they were based on the Shari`ah.[100] However, Islamic law can be interpreted in different ways, depending upon the historical context in which certain understandings developed. Thus, any choice would ultimately be arbitrary. In addition, Muslim societies contain people who refer to different religions and those who do not refer to any religion at all when defining their identities. As trying to bind them with rules based on certain interpretations of Islam would be unjust, a secular political realm is a necessity and the political system's general rules, which will bind everybody, must be secular and value-free. This point is very crucial because, as Kukathas indicates:

> [I]n a world in which different gods are worshipped, but in which adher-
> ents of different faiths interact in a global arena, anything but a secular
> public realm could be a disaster. Social intercourse with those who differ
> from us in profound ways requires that we prescind from our deepest
> commitments. Otherwise the most likely outcome is conflict.[101]

On the other hand, if the general framework (viz., liberal democracy) demands things from individuals that are against their moral views, then both Islam and other moral views jeopardized by the system's demands will clash with the political system. This can happen in liberal democracies based on such comprehensive values as autonomy. As indicated above, in this version of liberal democracy, a liberal state shows no tolerance to groups that do not value autonomy. In such a liberal democracy, Islamic groups that believe that no part of an individual's life can be determined by individual will (i.e., autonomy) would have no right to exist. Only religious groups that respect the individual's autonomy would have a chance to exist in this system.

Given that the Islamist perspective portrayed above by Maududi and Qutb rejects liberal democracy as incompatible with Islam, we now focus on two variants of liberal Islam to see how they align themselves with the type of liberal democracy defended here. It seems that the type of liberal Islam that emphasizes the Islamic sources' silence on certain political issues is more compatible with a liberal democracy based on toleration than a liberal Islam that emphasizes Islamic sources to justify liberal democracy. Let's begin by clarifying why the second version is less compatible than the first.

To the extent that this second approach refers to Islamic sources in justifying liberal democratic arrangements, the result is an anomaly,[102] since any attempt to justify liberal democracy with a specific reference to Islam would amount to imposing Islam on individuals. This would be, so to speak, a "comprehensive liberal Islam." On the other hand, the view that Islam, except for the principle of *shūrā*, is virtually silent on political issues enables Muslims to adopt liberal democratic principles as they wish. To the extent that this approach does not require that liberalism be justified via specific references to Islam, it is free of the anomaly mentioned above. Thus, this interpretation of Islam provides us with a better chance of establishing a liberal democracy that respects differences in the Muslim world.

Unlike a liberal democracy based on autonomy, a liberal democracy based on freedom of conscience would accommodate not only Islamic

groups that subscribe to one of these two types of liberal Islam, but also illiberal Islamists. As long as the latter groups respect the right of exit of their individual members and tolerate other groups, both Islamic and non-Islamic, a liberal democracy based on toleration can accommodate them.

Conclusion

In this paper, I argued that societies marked by religious, ethnic, and cultural differences could enjoy peace through the principle of toleration, which is possible in a system that is neutral toward its constituent members' moral, cultural, and ethnic differences. Toleration is mostly a characteristic of liberal democratic regimes. However, different types of liberalism lead to different types of liberal democracy. Moreover, not all types of liberalism value toleration equally. In what precedes, I argued that a liberal democracy based on "political liberalism" rather than "comprehensive liberalism" provides the broadest space for the existence of differences. In essence, such a liberal democracy does not present a comprehensive view of life, but only a political mechanism by which individuals and groups with different conceptions of the good life can search for solutions to their common political problems.

A liberal democracy based on comprehensive liberalism demands that cultural groups and/or individuals internalize such comprehensive liberal values as autonomy. In this sense, it cannot extend tolerance to worldviews that cannot reconcile themselves to those liberal values. On the other hand, a liberal democracy based on political liberalism builds its case on such minimal values as freedom of conscience and, as a result, has far more room for toleration toward differences. Thus, I argued that if liberal democracy is going to be introduced into the Muslim world to bring about peace and stability, one based on political, rather than comprehensive, liberalism would have a better chance of success.

At the threshold of a new era in terms of introducing democratic political systems in the Arab world in particular, and in the Muslim world in general, a liberal democracy based on the principle of toleration provides a viable alternative. As indicated, the Muslim world is also marked by religious, cultural, ethnic, and ideological differences. The peaceful coexistence of these differences requires the non-imposition of a particular group's values upon the rest of society. Thus, the rules that regulate public relationships must stand at an equal distance to all groups in society.

Endnotes

1.   Preston King, *Toleration* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1976), 12.
2.   *The Oxford American Dictionary of Current English* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999); *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2000). Since *tolerance* and *toleration* share the same verb (to tolerate) and there is only one adjective that describes the person who either has the attitude or performs the action (tolerant), they are used interchangeably in this article.
3.   John Horton, "Toleration," in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. E. Craig (London: Routledge, 1998), 9:429-33.
4.   Edward Langerak, "Disagreement: Appreciating the Dark Side of Tolerance," in *Philosophy, Religion, and the Question of Intolerance*, eds. M. A. Razavi and D. Ambuel (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997), 111-24, 116.
5.   Hans Oberdiek, *Tolerance: Between Forbearance and Acceptance* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Pub., 2001), 40-41.
6.   Albert Weale, "Toleration, Individual Differences, and Respect for Persons," in *Aspects of Toleration*, eds. John Horton and Susan Mendus (London: Methuen, 1985), 16-35, 18.
7.   Peter P. Nicholson, "Toleration as a Moral Ideal," in ibid., 158-73, 160-61.
8.   Mary Warnock, "The Limits of Toleration," in *On Toleration*, eds. S. Mendus and D. Edwards (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987). Cited in Susan Mendus, *Toleration and the Limits of Liberalism* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press International, Inc., 1989).
9.   Mendus, *Toleration*, 11.
10. Ibid., 11-12.
11. Ibid., 8.
12. Ibid., 9.
13. Ibid.
14. Weale, "Toleration, Individual Differences, and Respect for Persons," 18.
15. Langerak, "Disagreement," 117.
16. As used here, *conflict* broadly means the clash of interests as well as religious and political beliefs and/or ways of life.
17. Oberdiek, *Tolerance: Between Forbearance and Acceptance*, 46-47.
18. The pioneer of the line of thinking that takes differences, and hence conflict, as unnatural is Plato. On the other hand, Aristotle paved the way for the state of mind suitable for toleration's emergence. Even though he also philosophized within the classical paradigm as did his master Plato, he reached conclusions that are radically different from Plato's in important respects. In fact, it can be argued that Aristotle's principle of political friendship within the context of the regime that he calls "polity" comes very close to toleration in terms of function, namely, ameliorating the conflict caused by differences in a society. In that regard, Aristotle provided not only the state of mind necessary for

toleration's emergence, but also the seeds of toleration for the moderns. See Bican Şahin, "An Investigation of the Contributions of Plato and Aristotle to the Development of the Concept of Toleration" (Ph.D. diss., University of Maryland, College Park, 2003). For a discussion of the perception of self-interest and toleration as a remedy to conflicts caused by clashing self-interests in the Arab world, see, Kanan Makiya, "Toleration and the New Arab Politics," *Journal of Democracy* 6, no. 1 (January 1995): 90-103.

19. Henry Kamen, *The Rise of Toleration* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967); John Rawls, *Political Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996); Alan Levine, ed. *Early Modern Skepticism and the Origins of Toleration* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 1999).

20. Mendus, *Toleration and the Limits of Liberalism*, 6.

21. Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, xxvi; Mendus, *Toleration and the Limits of Liberalism*.

22. Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 155.

23. Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, "Introduction."

24. David Held, *Democracy and the Global Order* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), 4.

25. Jeremy Waldron, "Liberalism, Political and Comprehensive," in *Handbook of Political Theory*, eds. Gerald F. Gaus and Chandran Kukathas (London: Sage Publications, 2005), 88-99, 91.

26. Chandran Kukathas, *The Liberal Archipelago* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 16.

27. Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, xx.

28. Waldron, "Liberalism, Political and Comprehensive," 91.

29. Kukathas, *The Liberal Archipelago*, 17. Emphasis in the original.

30. Will Kymlicka, *Liberalism, Community, and Culture* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 10.

31. Ronald Dworkin, "Liberalism" in *Public and Private Morality*, ed. Stuart Hampshire (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978). Reprinted in M. Sandel, ed., *Liberalism and Its Critics* (New York: New York University Press, 1984), 60-79, 64.

32. Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship*, 75.

33. Ronald Dworkin, "Foundations of Liberal Equality," in *Tanner Lectures on Human Values* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1991), 50. Quoted in Greald Dworkin, "Autonomy," in *A Companion to Contemporary Political Philosophy*, eds. Robert E. Goodin and Philip Pettit (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), 359-65, 363.

34. Kymlicka, *Liberalism, Community, and Culture*, 12; see also Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship*, 80-82.

35. Kymlicka, *Liberalism, Community, and Culture*, 10.

36. G. Dworkin, "Autonomy," 360.

37. Kymlicka, *Liberalism, Community, and Culture*, 13; see also Kymlicka, *Multi-cultural Citizenship*, 81.

38. Gerald F. Gaus, "The Diversity of Comprehensive Liberalisms," in *Handbook of Political Theory*, eds. Gerald F. Gaus and Chandran Kukathas (London: Sage Publications, 2005), 100-14, 104.

39. Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship*, 76.

40. Ibid., 75.

41. Ibid., 6.

42. Ibid., 18.

43. Will Kymlicka, *Contemporary Political Philosophy: An Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 343-47.

44. Ibid., 362.

45. Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship*, chapter 2.

46. Ibid., 30.

47. Ibid., 30-31.

48. Ibid., 31-33.

49. Ibid., 35.

50. Ibid., 37; See also Kymlicka, *Contemporary Political Philosophy*, 340-43.

51. In practice, Kymlicka is unwilling to make the liberal state coerce the illiberal cultural groups to submit to liberal values. Except for such extreme conditions as torture or enslavement, the larger liberal society tolerates illiberal groups. However, as Kukathas (*The Liberal Archipelago*, 83-86) also indicates, this is an inconsistency in Kymlicka's theory. If we are going to tolerate the illiberal practices of cultural groups anyway, then what is the point of arguing that claims for "internal restrictions" cannot be reconciled with liberal principles? In this sense, the tolerance that Kymlicka extends to the illiberal groups does not depend on his principles, but on an inconsistency.

52. John Rawls, "Kantian Constructivism in Moral Theory," *Journal of Philosophy*, no 77 (1980): 515-72, 525, quoted in Dworkin, "Autonomy," 359-65, 361.

53. John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, rev. ed. (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999).

54. Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, xviii.

55. Ibid., xliv-xlv.

56. Ibid., xliii, footnote 8.

57. Ibid., xlv.

58. Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship*, 158-163.

59. Kukathas, *The Liberal Archipelago*, 17.

60. Ibid., 114.

61. Ibid., 115.

62. Chandran Kukathas, "Are There Any Cultural Rights?" *Political Theory*, no. 20 (1992): 105-39. Reprinted in Will Kymlicka, ed., *The Rights of Minority Cultures* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 228-56, 238.

63. Kukathas, *The Liberal Archipelago*, 25.

64. Ibid., 96. In another place, Kukathas claims that "[i]f there are any fundamental rights, then there is at least one right which is of crucial importance: the right of [the] individual to leave a community by the terms of which he or she no longer wishes to live." See, Kukathas, "Are There Any Cultural Rights?," 238.

65. Chandran Kukathas, "Can a Liberal Society Tolerate Illiberal Elements?," *Policy* 17, no. 2 (winter 2001): 39-44.

66. Kukathas, *The Liberal Archipelago*, 5, 77.

67. Kukathas, "Are There Any Cultural Rights?," 234.

68. Ibid., 236.

69. Kukathas, *The Liberal Archipelago*, 85-89, 252.

70. Ibid., 174-75, 213.

71. Ibid., 17.

72. Ibid.

73. Ibid., 39.

74. Ibid., 213.

75. F. A. Hayek, *Law, Legislation and Liberty* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993), vol. 3.

76. Isaiah Berlin, "Two Concepts of Liberty," in *Four Essays on Liberty*, Isaiah Berlin, (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 118-72.

77. Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship*, 158.

78. Ibid.

79. The views presented here with regard to the compatibility of Islam and liberal democracy draw on Bican Şahin, "Is Islam an Obstacle to Democratization in the Muslim World? The Debate of the Compatibility of Islam and Democracy Revisited," *Bilig*, no. 37 (spring 2006):189-206.

80. Abdelwahab El-Affendi, "What is Liberal Islam? The Elusive Reformation," *Journal of Democracy* 14, no. 2 (April 2003); 34-39, 37. As a matter of fact, the issue of the sovereignty in Islam is disputed. In opposition to the Islamist view that vests all sovereignty in God, there is another argument that makes a distinction between ontological and temporal sovereignty: Although God is the Creator of the universe and thus ontologically sovereign over it, He is not in charge of political affairs directly. That is to say, He did not spell out the specific political rules by which human beings have to order their relationships in this world. Thus, political sovereignty is left to human beings. See Mustafa Erdoğan, *Islam ve Liberalizm* (Islam and Liberalism) (Ankara: Liberte, 1999), 33-34. A similar distinction is made by Muqtedar Khan between sovereignty *in principle* and sovereignty *in fact*. Khan implies that sovereignty belongs to God in principle. However, it is used by human beings in fact. In this respect, popular sovereignty (i.e., democracy) does not necessarily mean the rejection of God's sovereignty. In fact, it is a mechanism for limiting humanity's *de facto* power. See Muqtedar Khan, "Islam's Compatibility with Democracy," 2001. Online at www.ijtihad.org/isladem.htm.

81. Sayyid Abul A`la Maududi, *Political Theory of Islam* (Lahore: Islamic Pub-
     lications Ltd., 1985), 21.
82. Vali Nasr, "The Rise of 'Muslim Democracy,'" *Journal of Democracy* 16, no.
     2 (April 2005): 13-27, 16.
83. Maududi, *Political Theory of Islam*, 30.
84. Sayyid Qutb, *Ma`ālim fī al-Ṭarīq* (Cairo: Dar al-Shuruq, 1988). Quoted by C.
     Tripp, "Sayyid Qutb: The Political Vision," in *Pioneers of Islamic Revival*, ed.
     Ali Rahnema (London: Zed Books Ltd., 1994), 154-83, 169.
85. Sayyid Kotb [Qutb], *Social Justice in Islam*, tr. John B. Hardie (Washington,
     DC: American Council of Learned Societies, 1953), 8; Maududi, *Political
     Theory of Islam*, 30.
86. Leonard Binder, *Islamic Liberalism: A Critique of Development Ideologies*
     (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1988), 243-44.
87. Except for direct quotations in which it is spelled differently, the name of
     Islam's holy text will be spelled as "Qur'an."
88. Ömer Çaha, "Islam and Democracy: A Theoretical Discussion on the
     Compatibility of Islam and Democracy," *Alternatives: Turkish Journal of
     International Relations* 2, nos. 3-4 (fall-winter 2003), 106-34, 108. Online at
     www.alternativesjournal.net/volume2/number3and4/caha2.pdf.
89. Binder, *Islamic Liberalism*, 244.
90. Robin Wright, "Islam and Liberal Democracy: Two Visions of Reformation,"
     Journal of Democracy 7, no. 2 (April 1996): 64-75, 67.
91. Abdul Karim Soroush. Interviewed by Robin Wright (1995). Quoted in ibid.,
     64-75, 68.
92. Abdul Karim Soroush, *Reason, Freedom, & Democracy in Islam*, tr., ed., and
     with a "Critical Introduction" by Mahmoud Sadri and Ahmad Sadri (Oxford:
     Oxford University Press, 2000), 140-41.
93. Wright, "Islam and Liberal Democracy," 68.
94. Ibid., 68.
95. Soroush, *Reason, Freedom, & Democracy*, 129.
96. Wright, "Islam and Liberal Democracy," 73
97. Excerpts from a lecture by Sheikh Rachid al-Ghannouchi (1995). Quoted in
     Wright, "Islam and Liberal Democracy," 64-75, 72.
98. Kukathas, *The Liberal Archipelago*.
99. Radwan A. Masmoudi, "What is Liberal Islam? The Silenced Majority,"
     Journal of Democracy 14, no. 2 (April 2003), 40-44, 40.
100. Mohamed E. Hamdi, "Islam and Liberal Democracy: The Limits of the
     Western Model," *Journal of Democracy* 7, no. 2 (April 1996): 81-85, 84.
101. Chandran Kukathas, "Islam, Democracy, and Civil Society," in *Islam, Civil
     Society, and Market Economy*, ed. Atilla Yayla (Ankara: Liberte Books, 1999),
     23-45, 35.
102. Binder, *Islamic Liberalism*, 244.