

**Democratizing Islam: Indonesia to Egypt in the Arab Spring**  
**NYU Wagner School of Public Service Undergraduate Course UPADM-GP246**

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Office Hours: Wed., 2-3:30 PM or by appointment  
Draft Syllabus

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**Description:** What is the role of Islam in the fight for democracy? This course will look at four Muslim-majority countries - Indonesia, Turkey, Iran and Egypt - and create a frame for trying to understand the uprisings roiling the Middle East. The class will discuss the work and ideas of democratic activists from the Islamic world, place those activists in the narrative of democracy and religion-state relations, and examine their opponents from both the secular side and the religious side.

In Indonesia, a student-led uprising in 1998 ended Suharto's 32 years of jackboot rule, and the nation's rocky decade of democratization would not have been successful without the crucial contribution of Muslims with conceptions of Islam that are compatible with democratic values. In Turkey, the Justice and Development Party has evolved from its Islamist roots to championing democracy as the ruling party, despite a backlash from Turkey's wary secularists. From our look at the role of Islam in furthering democracy in Indonesia and Turkey, the class will examine why the opposite has been true in Iran. We will look at the crushing of the Green Movement in the name of a theocratic Islamic state. These successes and failures will lead us to the ongoing drama in Egypt, where pro-democracy activists triggered Hosni Mubarak's ouster despite his years of insisting that without him Egypt would fall to hardline Islamists intent on creating an Islamic state. We will chart Egypt's new politics with an eye on Islam and democracy.

**Goals** of the course include: providing students with a theoretical and real-time understanding of the contested interplay between democracy and Islam, and a context for understanding the importance of the role of religion in politics and world affairs as one of the most complex and crucial issues of our time.

**Requirements:** Attendance and avid participation in *every* seminar is essential. Careful and analytical reading of assigned texts in advance of each class is crucial in order to benefit from and contribute to discussions. The course will emphasize guest speakers and student-led discussions.

**Grading** will be as follows: participation (10%); leading one class discussion (15%); journal entries of 500 words on reading assignments (5 entries over the semester 15%); midterm exam (20%), and a final project (40%).

**Readings:** All readings, blogs, podcasts will be available on the course Blackboard site. The syllabus will be topical and updated.

**Late Assignment Policy:** Extensions will be granted *only in case of emergency*, out of respect to those who abide by deadlines despite equally hectic schedules. Late submissions without extensions will be penalized 1/2 letter grade per day (B+ to B, e.g.).

**Students with Disabilities:** Any students requiring accommodations should contact me to make proper arrangements. Please be prepared to share your documentation from the NYU disabilities office regarding appropriate accommodations.

**Plagiarism:** As a student enrolled in a NYU Wagner School undergraduate course, you are required to abide by Wagner's Academic Code, at the URL below. All incidences of plagiarism and related violations will result in penalties ranging from course failure to expulsion. To read the code, see <http://wagner.nyu.edu/current/policies/>.

## **CLASS SCHEDULE AND READINGS**

### **(1) January 25 Prologue and overview**

#### **(2) February 1 Some basics on democracy**

R. Dahl, *Democracy and its Critics* (1989), pp. 218- 222 and pp. 311-321.

A. Stepan, "Religion, Democracy and the 'Twin Tolerations'" (2000).

#### **(3) February 8 Some basics on Islam**

M. Cook, *The Koran: A Very Short Introduction* (2000), "The Koran in the Modern World," pp. 23- 48.

A. Bayat, *Making Islam Democratic: Social Movements and the Post-Islamist Turn* (2007), "Islam and Democracy: the Perverse Charm of an Irrelevant Question," pp. 2-15.

C. Kurzman, ed. *Liberal Islam: A Sourcebook* (1998), Introduction, pp. 3-26.

I. Manji, *Allah, Liberty and Love: The Courage to Reconcile Faith and Freedom* (2011), pp. 169-203.

#### **(4) February 15 Indonesia topples a dictator and a stereotype**

F. Zakaria, *The Future of Freedom* (2003), "The Islamic Exception" pp. 119-159.

M. Scott, "Indonesia Reborn?" (1999).

M. Kunkler, [pending].

#### **(5) February 22 Indonesia's rocky transition**

M. Scott, "A Tale of two Indonesians" (2007).

G. Fealy, *Zealous Democrats* (2008), pp. 49-74.

#### **(6) February 29 Indonesia: model or cautionary tale?**

M. Mietzner, "Indonesia's Democratic Stagnation: Anti-reformist Elites and Resilient Civil Society" (2011).

#### **(7) March 7 Turkey: Islamists and the secular state**

M. Akyol, *Islam without Extremes: A Muslim Case Without for Liberty* (2011), pp. 203-244.

K. Dalacoura, *Islamist Terrorism and Democracy in the Middle East* (2011), pp. 148-161.

\*\*\* March 14 NO CLASS \*\*\*

**(8) March 21 Turkey: Islamists in power**

C. de Bellaigue, "Turkey at the Turning Point?" (2007).

A. Shadid, NYT, Sept. 27, 2011.

S. Ulgan, "From Inspiration to Aspiration: Turkey in the New Middle East," (2011).

**(9) March 28 Turkey: another model or another cautionary tale?**

A. Smith Albion, "Countries at the Crossroads 2011: Turkey," Freedom House.

D. Bifsky, NYT, Jan. 4, 2012.

**(10) April 4 Iran: theocracy or republic?**

K. Ehsani, A. Keshavarzian and N. Moruzzi, "Teheran, June 2009" Middle East Report.

A. Bayat, "Green Movement" (2009).

N. Fathi "Iran: the Deadly Game" (2010).

**(11) April 11 Iran: the green movement**

W. Posch, "A Last Chance for Iran's Reformists? The 'Green Struggle' Reconsidered" (2010), excerpts.

InsideIRAN.org, "Green Movement In Iran Issues New Manifesto in Wake of Arab Uprising" (2011).

H. Mojd, "Christmas is No Time for an Iranian Revolution" (2012).

**(12) April 18 Iran to Egypt**

T. Parsi and R. Marashi, "Arab Spring Seen From Tehran" (2011).

M. Posusney and M. Penner, eds., *Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Regimes and Resistance* (2005), excerpts.

M. el-Ghobashy, "Politics by Other Means: In Egypt, Street Protests Set the Agenda," (2011).

O. Abdel-Latif, "In the Shadow of the Brothers: the Women of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood," (2008).

**(13) April 25 Egypt: the uprising**

M. Ross, "Will Oil Drown the Arab Spring?" (2011).

H. Agha and R. Malley, "The Arab Counterrevolution," (2011).

Y. El Rashidi, "Egypt: the Mayhem," (2012).

**(14) May 2 Egypt's prospects: democracy or new authoritarianism?**

I. El Amrani, "Sightings of the Egyptian Deep State," (2012), Middle East Report Online.

O. Roy, "Breakthroughs in Faith," World Policy Journal, Winter 2011/2012.