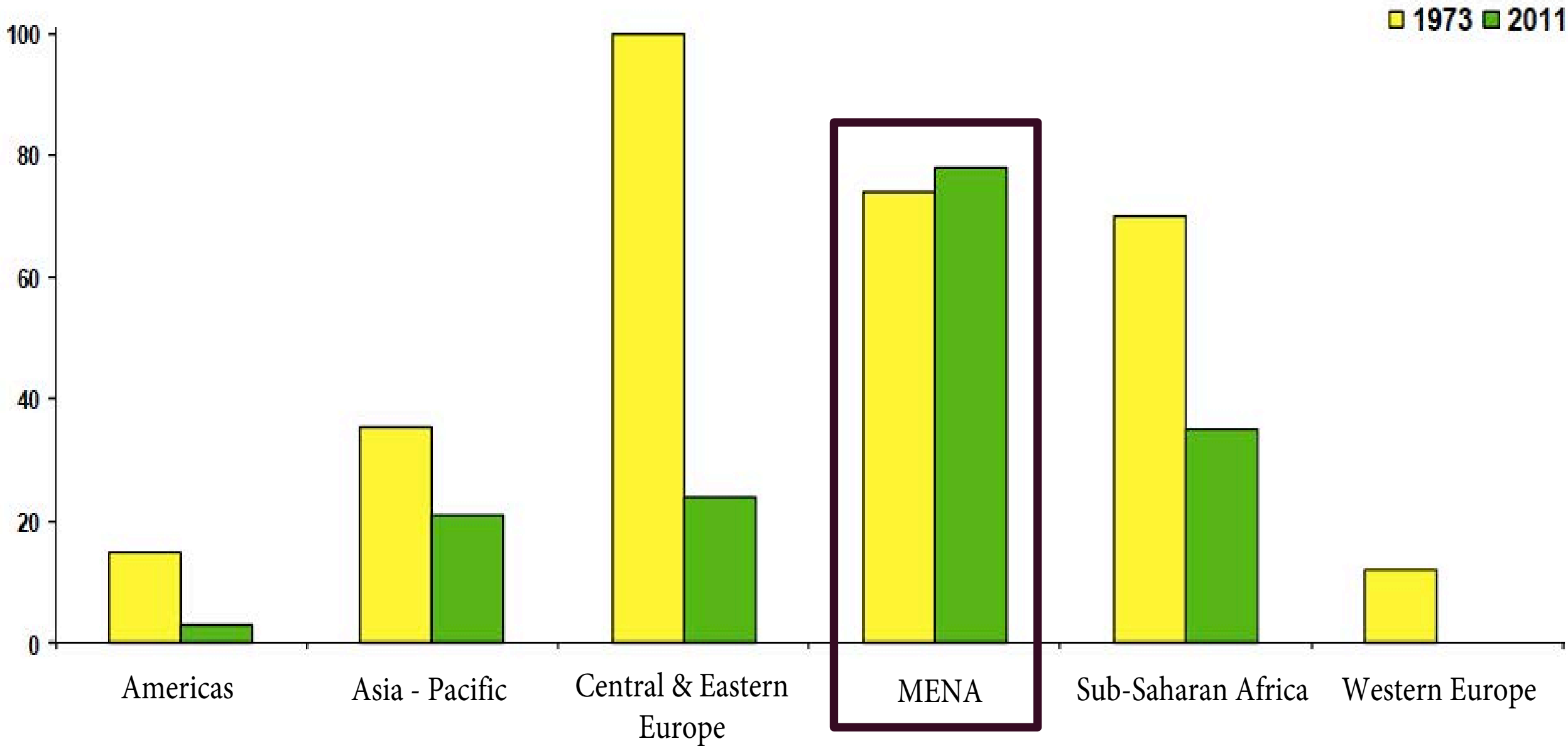


POLS 395

ISLAM & DEMOCRACY





Source: Freedom House, 2011

Percentage of "Not Free" countries, by region

ISLAM AND AUTHORITARIANISM - LINK

Fish, *Islam and Authoritarianism* (2002):

- First article to empirically test the relationship
- Not looking to test the effect of *Muslims* on democracy

about such a question. I do not wish to test whether Muslims per se are good or bad for democracy but rather am asking whether *polities whose populations are predominantly Muslim*—crudely put, “Muslim countries”—are more or less hospitable for democracy. My working assumption, therefore, is that the tipping point, if there is one, at which Islam matters for democracy is predominance, meaning that Islam is the country’s main religious tradition.

REGRESSIONS OF FREEDOM HOUSE SCORES ON
HYPOTHESIZED DETERMINANTS²

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Model 1</i>	<i>Model 2</i>	<i>Model 3</i>	<i>Model 4</i>	<i>Model 5</i>
Constant	0.17 (0.84)	-0.15 (0.70)	0.27 (0.81)	-0.15 (0.60)	0.19 (0.62)
Islamic religious tradition	-1.24*** (0.27)	-1.27*** (0.27)	-1.26*** (0.27)	-1.34*** (0.27)	-1.68*** (0.27)
Economic development	1.40*** (0.21)	1.48*** (0.19)	1.40*** (0.20)	1.50*** (0.17)	1.39*** (0.17)
Sociocultural division	-0.32 (0.43)		-0.30 (0.42)		
Economic performance	0.07 (0.05)	0.06 (0.04)	0.06 (0.04)		
British colonial heritage	0.25 (0.30)	0.18 (0.30)			
Communist heritage	0.20 (0.27)				
OPEC membership	-1.36** (0.46)	-1.46** (0.45)	-1.42** (0.46)	-1.53** (0.48)	
Adj. R ²	.55	.55	.55	.55	.51
<i>N</i>	149	149	149	149	149

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

RESOURCE WEALTH AND DEMOCRACY^a
(DEPENDENT VARIABLE IS REGIME)

	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
Regime	.253*** (.0203)	.894*** (.00846)	.25*** (.0203)	.246*** (.0204)
Oil	-.0346*** (.0051)	-.0078*** (.0024)	-.0339*** (.00506)	-.0393*** (.00543)
Minerals	-.0459*** (.00778)	-.00718* (.00317)	-.0438*** (.0081)	-.0455*** (.00804)
Income (log)	.922*** (.105)	.119*** (.0342)	.935*** (.106)	.965*** (.107)
Islam	-.018*** (.00208)	-.0031*** (.000665)	-.0178*** (.0021)	-.0173*** (.00211)
OECD	1.47*** (.308)	.176* (.0781)	1.42*** (.305)	1.44*** (.308)
Food	—	—	.0244* (.0102)	—
Agriculture	—	—	—	.042 (.0239)
Observations	2183	2498	2182	2178
States	113	115	113	113
Log likelihood	-3133	-3283	-3129	-3123

* significant at the 0.05 level; ** significant at the 0.01 level; *** significant at the 0.001 level

^aAll independent and control variables are entered with five-year lags, except in column 2, where they are entered with a one-year lag. Standard errors are in parentheses below the coefficients. Feasible Generalized Least Squares regressions run with Stata 6.0; corrected for first-order autocorrelation using a panel-specific process. Each regression is run with dummy variables for every year (but one) covered by the data.

ISLAM AND AUTHORITARIANISM - MECHANICS

ARGUMENT: Islam is *essentially* anti-democratic

- Pushback: often summarily dismissed for not taking into account the varied interpretations of Islam and the diverse histories & realities of Muslims

TABLE 1—STRENGTH OF DEMOCRATIC ATTITUDES IN WESTERN AND MUSLIM SOCIETIES (MEAN OF 100-POINT SCALE)

	Western (n=19)		Muslim (n=11)	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Democratic Government	80.0	4.90	79.6	7.46
Democracy's Performance	58.0	6.59	58.3	7.24

ISLAM AND AUTHORITARIANISM - MECHANICS

ARGUMENT: Muslim countries are less secular

- Clearly, there's something to this: the legitimacy of certain monarchs (e.g., Jordan & Morocco) is directly linked to their claims to Prophetic lineage while other leaders (monarchical and otherwise) leverage religion in various ways



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MIKE NELSON

TABLE 5.1

Religion and State in the Middle East

<i>Country</i>	<i>GIR index</i>	<i>Rank by GIR</i>	<i>Official religion</i>	<i>Largest religious group</i>	<i>% Largest religious group(s)</i>	<i>Largest religious minority</i>	<i>% Largest religious minority</i>	<i># Minority groups with 5% of population</i>
Saudi Arabia	77.56	1	Yes	Sunni	82–87	Shiite	10–15	1
Iran	66.59	2	Yes	Shiite	90–95	Sunni	4–9	1
Egypt	62.92	3	Yes	Sunni	90–95	Christian	5–10	1
Jordan	60.51	4	Yes	Sunni	92*	Christian	6*	1
UAE	54.70	5	Yes	Sunni	65	Shiite	11	3
Tunisia	53.73	6	Yes	Sunni	99	Christian	1	0
Iraq	53.66	7	Yes	Shiite	65–70	Sunni	30–35	1
Algeria	53.35	8	Yes	Sunni	98	Christian	<1	0
Qatar	52.90	9	Yes	Sunni	78	Shiite	10	0
Morocco	51.86	10	Yes	Sunni	99.0	Christian	<1	0
Western Sahara	49.36	11	Yes	Sunni	99	—	—	0
Yemen	48.41	12	Yes	Sunni	54–59	Shiite	35–40	1
Libya	48.13	13	Yes	Sunni	90.0	Ibadi	7.0	1
Turkey	47.21	14	No	Sunni	83–88	Alevi	10–15	1
Oman	46.23	15	Yes	Ibadi	48–53**	Sunni	45–50**	1
Kuwait	46.82	16	Yes	Sunni	70–75	Shiite	20–25	1
Syria	43.69	17	No	Sunni	72–77	Alawi	15–20	2
Bahrain	39.89	18	Yes	Shiite	65–75	Sunni	6–16	2
Israel	36.84	19	No	Jewish	76*	Muslim	17	1
Lebanon	22.17	20	No	Sunni	27.0***	Shiite	27.0***	4

ISLAM AND AUTHORITARIANISM - MECHANICS

ARGUMENT: Not less inclined toward democracy, but *liberal* democracy

TABLE 3—EFFECTS OF INDIVIDUAL-LEVEL VARIABLES ON SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRACY IN WESTERN AND MUSLIM SOCIETIES

	Democratic Government	Democracy's Performance	Elected Leadership	Secular Leadership	Democratic Values	Political Activity	Gender Equality
Western	77.56**	56.71*	61.82**	59.01**	50.10**	36.52**	70.49**
Muslim	-	-	-	-23.49*	-17.32**	-21.23**	-27.11**

The Cultural Divide

Approval of Political and Social Values in Western and Islamic Societies



Source: World Values Survey, pooled sample 1995–2001

4 Ways Tunisia Is Now More Progressive Than The United States

BY [HAYES BROWN](#) [T](#) JAN 27, 2014 11:18 AM



CREDIT: AP PHOTO/AIMEN ZINE



New Tunisian law takes long stride toward gender equality

Conor McCormick-Cavanagh July 28, 2017



ARTICLE SUMMARY

Tunisia's parliament passed landmark legislation to fight violence against women in the country.

Laws that allow rapists to marry their victims come from colonialism, not Islam

That there has been such appreciable change in public attitudes towards these laws in the Middle East demonstrates that such discrimination is not inherent to the societies in which we currently find them

ISLAM AND AUTHORITARIANISM – VERDICT?

- Statistically speaking, Muslim-majority countries differ from all others in their levels of democracy (this finding is fairly robust)
- The *reason(s)* for this association are not entirely clear (although some explanations are not particularly useful, while others cannot be altogether dismissed)
- It could be that Muslim-majority states have a particular disadvantage when it comes to *liberal* democracy
 - Under what conditions (or pre-suppositions) would this matter?
- More convincing *political* explanations abound

ISLAM AND AUTHORITARIANISM - VERDICT?

“**Islam** attempts to control so many aspects of life, to encourage so much fixity of status and submission to authority, and to remain so independent of secular authority that it invariably clashes with the liberalism, individualism, freedom, mobility and sovereignty of the democratic nation.” (Kingsley Davis, 1942)

“The linkage between democratic instability and **Islam** may also be accounted for by elements inherent in **Islam** as a religious system. Democracy requires a universalistic political belief system in the sense that it legitimates different ideologies. And it might be assumed that religious value systems which are more universalistic...will be more compatible with democracy than those which assume that they have the only truth.” (Seymour Lipset, 1959)

ISLAM AND AUTHORITARIANISM - VERDICT?

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