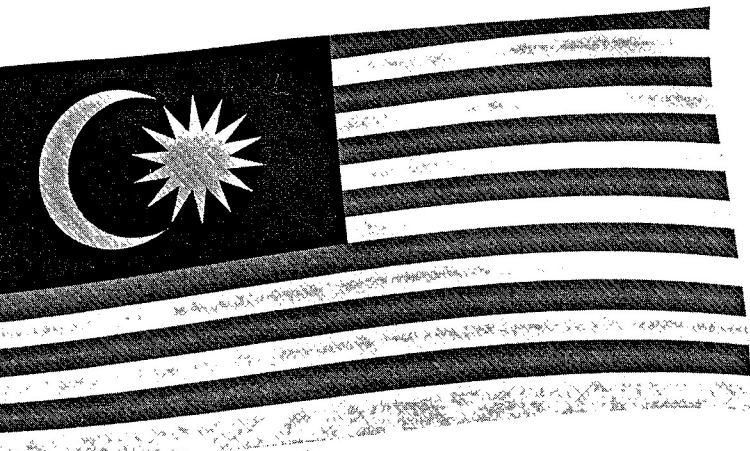


# ISLAM **AND** DEMOCRACY

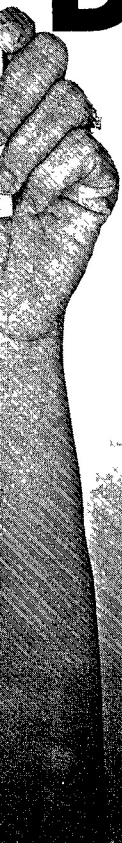
*How does Islamic politics hold  
up amidst the growing call for  
democratisation*






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# ISLAM AND DEMOCRACY



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# ISLAM AND DEMOCRACY

By:  
Abdul Hadi Awang

Translated by:  
Maziah Hasan

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# Publisher's Note

**P**raise be to Allah the Almighty, the Lord of the Worlds. Peace and blessings be upon Prophet Muhammad PBUH who was sent as a blessing to the entire world. Peace and blessings be upon his Households, his Companions and those who follow His instructions and guidance.

Pustaka Permata Ummah is pleased to present to the reader the translation of 'Islam Dan Demokrasi', one of the highly acclaimed works of Abdul Hadi Awang and considered by many to be his magnum opus. The successful publication of this translated work is a huge milestone in the history of Pustaka Permata Ummah as a publisher.

Actually, 'Islam & Democracy' was the first translation project that we started back in 2020, but the production was pushed back so that we can upgrade and improve the quality of our manuscript. It is our hope that this brief foray will inspire us to publish more translated works in the future.

Thus, we would like to express our deep appreciation and gratitude to the translator, our editorial team and proofreaders for their unrelenting endeavour in fulfilling our aspiration, as well as the author, to see this work reaching more people and warmly received by a larger audience.

We ask Allah to add this work to the scale of our good deeds, and that it becomes a source of benefit for mankind, the author and all those involved in its publication. Amin.

*Pustaka Permata Ummah*

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# Foreword

**A**lhamdulillah, I am extremely grateful and honoured to have the opportunity to write the foreword for YB Dato' Seri Tuan Guru Haji Abdul Hadi Awang's work titled 'Islam & Democracy'. I commend the publisher for their efforts in publishing this high-quality work, especially given the current diverse political situation. In my opinion, this book is one of the author's best works.

Through this work, the author provides a clear explanation of the concept and principles of Islamic politics and its relationship with religion. It is crucial to distinguish the Islamic political worldview from its Western counterpart, which separates political affairs from religion. This is known as secularism, whose principle is fundamental in Western political philosophy.

This book offers a thorough comparison of the various aspects of the Islamic political system and Western democracy, as well as a factual and in-depth analysis that make it an insightful read. In addition, the author also presents arguments from the Quran, Hadith and Seerah Nabawiyah, and accompanied them with a fair and objective analysis that further refines the author's argument.

The author has made an effort to be as objective as possible by dispelling misconceptions about the concept of democracy that is universally practiced today by taking a middle ground between the two streams: The lenient stream and the fundamentalist stream that views modern democracy as enemy that must be eradicated.

The author's general stance toward the system and concept of democracy clearly reflects his long-standing involvement in the Islamic movement. He insists that PAS is not merely all talk when it comes to exploring opportunities and taking advantage of the opening provided by democracy, but has been directly involved in the political arena year after year. PAS has also experienced various ups and downs in overcoming its political obstacles.

Therefore, it is essential that this work be studied by everyone, whether they are Muslims or the general public who hold prejudices against the practical and unchanging principles of PAS's struggle in the field of democracy. The author's idea should serve as research material to develop a form of political education for all citizens.

Islamic politics is based on knowledge and sound arguments, not assumptions or emotions. Thus, it is my fervent hope that the author's work becomes a guide for all Muslims, especially those who are directly involved in politics, academia and anybody who are seeking for knowledge.

I hope that all of us can gain as much wisdom as possible from this book while also being able to resolve any misunderstandings that may arise. Eventually, all parties will realize their political responsibility and duty to fulfil the trust commanded by Islam.

**YB Datuk Seri Takiyuddin Haji Hassan**

Former Minister in the Prime Minister's Department,  
(Parliament & Law)

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# Preface

Islam is garnering attention worldwide due to two key factors:

## First

### **The shortcomings of other religions**

These failures stem from either straying from the foundation of Abrahamic religion or neglecting to comprehensively consider the natural aspect of humanity.

## Second

### **The collapse of man-made ideologies and theories**

The collapse of man-made ideologies and theories, both in the physical and spiritual aspects, at individual, familial, societal, national, and international levels. This has become apparent as a result of their detachment from religion.

Islam is treated, either as an alternative that must be reinstated or as a contender that must be fought. In the former situation, the Islamic movement's followers worldwide can breathe a sigh of relief after enduring prolonged oppression. At the same time, it is an opportunity to introduce Islam as a fundamental aspect of *dawah* that should be known and as a saviour for a genuine truth seeker.

However, the challenge is immense because the adversaries are always searching for opportunities to destroy Islam and its supporters through various methods and taking advantage of various avenues that can be exploited. In another situation, even the Muslims are perplexed in their quest because of their ignorance and confusion.

This is primarily due to the vast gap between the golden age of Islam and its implementation during the time of Prophet Muhammad PBUH and the Rashidun Caliph (such as the reign of Abu Bakr al-Siddiq, Umar Ibn al-Khattab, Uthman Ibn Affan, Ali Ibn Abi Talib, and Umar Abdul Aziz), compounded by the aftermath of psychological warfare during the colonial era that persists to this day.

Unfortunately, although foreign colonialists had departed and the country is said to have achieved independence, its effects continue to afflict Islam, Muslims as well as the scholars.

The campaign to assimilate Western values has succeeded in influencing our way of life. Western culture has also succeeded in influencing and altering the writing style of religious texts in some Muslim countries.

One example is the shift from Arabic alphabets to Latin alphabets, which can impact pronunciation and diminish religious knowledge, such as the knowledge of *fard al-ayn* (legal obligations that must be carried out by individuals). This situation has led some Islamic scholars to concede and become susceptible to manipulation by the enemy. At the same time, political leaders continue to pursue the instigator's agenda.

The instigators' primary objective is to target Islamic rulings related to politics, fearing the return of the Islamic Caliphate to enforce comprehensive Islamic teaching. The enemies of Islam ignore all of Islam's contributions to human civilisations worldwide.

Islam has demonstrated its success in creating a righteous individual who follow the commandments of Allah SWT and promote goodness in this world and the Hereafter, as well as in creating a civilised society. On the other hand, man-made ideologies have failed to achieve this and it remains an empty dream. However, their enmity towards Islam overrides their high moral values, and thus they forget the major contributions of Islam.

The strength of Islamic teachings and their consistency in policy and legal matters will not change. This prevents Islam from deviating due to human weaknesses that are often provoked by uncontrollable desires. Additionally, Islam is flexible in accepting good things, regardless of the source, time or place.

Allah SWT made Islam appropriate for all times and capable of facing changes that occur in the world that He has created. Indeed, He is the All-Knowing, All-Wise, Just, Holy and Free from all defects.

Despite the fact that democracy has undergone numerous changes and faced many humanitarian issues, it has become a widely accepted ideology worldwide. Every believer in this ideology, whether from the East or West, supports it because they cannot find any other alternative.

Islam, however, which predates democracy, has its own considerations for protecting humans from conflicts caused by historical changes. Islam does not reject any good thing, regardless of where or when it is found. Islam is also against evil and wrongdoing, wherever it occurs, whether within Muslims themselves as a result of their negligence or elsewhere.

Unfortunately, throughout history, the role of Islam has been obscured by the actions of those who were not sincere due to their religious fanaticism or those who pursued worldly development to fulfil their desires.

It is essential that we take the time to illuminate our world with the book of Allah and the Prophet's sunnah, which serve as guidance for mankind. We should also seek the views of Islamic scholars who are practising and making *jihad* to uphold Islam with sincerity.

Among those who had fulfilled their promise in front of Allah SWT and inherited beneficial knowledge, some had passed away and missed the dawn of Islam, while some others are still waiting consistently for their turn to receive the promise of Allah SWT.

*“O those who are not among the scholars or those who consistently practise their knowledge, take heed!”*

It is hoped that this brief explanation will encourage Muslims to broaden their minds and evaluate every progress. As a result, they will be inclined to fulfil their obligations as Muslims, so that Allah SWT will be pleased with them, by utilizing the legacy left by Prophet Muhammad PBUH, the last messenger, which must be preserved, continued, and executed with honesty.

We need Allah SWT's guidance so that we can be among those who receive His blessings, rather than those who incur His wrath or those who are lost.

**ABDUL HADI AWANG**

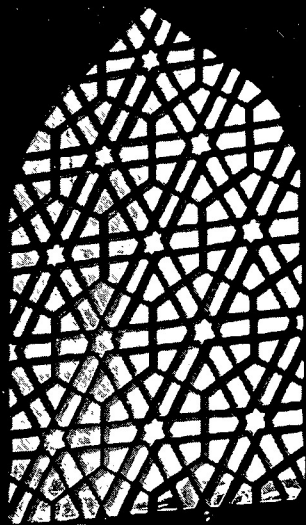
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“Then think of the Day We shall  
summon every community with its  
leader. Those who are given their  
Record in their right hand shall read  
the Record of their deeds and shall not  
be wronged a whit.”

(Al-Isra': 71)

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# Islamic Political System

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# The Universality of Islam

**M**any verses in the Quran confirm that Islam is a comprehensive religion that encompasses all aspects of nature and humanity, including the needs of human beings and their relationship with Allah SWT and the universe. It also highlights the true role of human beings in this world.

Allah SWT says:

*“There is not an animal (that lives) on the Earth, or a being that flies on its wings, but (forms part of) communities like you. Nothing has We omitted from the Book, and they (all) shall be gathered to their Lord in the end. Those who reject our signs are deaf and dumb in the midst of darkness profound: whom Allah will, He leave to wander; whom He will, He places on the straight path.”* (al-An‘am: 38–39)

According to *mufasssirun* (writer of a commentary on the Quran), these verses can be interpreted in two different ways:

**First:** Every creature that is created and engaged in any activity on earth will have its deeds recorded in *al-Lawh al-Mahfooz* (preserved tablet containing Allah’s SWT vast and limitless knowledge).

**Second:** Every affair of His creatures is stated in the Quran - the words of Allah SWT containing the right and complete guidance to fulfil His servants’ needs.

The commandment is directed to men who are entrusted to be the caliphs on Earth after the Prophet and the Book were sent to them. In return, they are required to submit, perform worship and reflect upon it. Those are the biggest obligations and most important *amanah* (trust) that will be questioned during the large gathering in *Mahsyar*.

Allah says:

*“O you who believe! Enter into Islam whole-heartedly, and follow not the footsteps of the evil one; for he is to you an avowed enemy. If you backslide after the clear (Signs) have come to you, then know that Allah is Exalted in Power, Wise. Will they wait until Allah SWT comes to them in canopies of clouds, with angels (in His train), and the question is (thus) settled? But to Allah SWT do all questions go back (for decision).”* (al-Baqarah: 208–210)

The Quran contains complete teachings and a set of rules concerning all aspects of human life and the creation, which Prophet Muhammad PBUH conveyed with clarity and precision. He delivered the *amanah* with wisdom based on Allah SWT’s guidance, addressing both worldly affairs and the afterlife.

Prophet Muhammad’s PBUH prophethood duration lasted for 23 years, which began with inculcating Islamic teaching in every worldly affair and the affairs after death. In terms of worldly affairs, Islamic teaching focuses on the relation between man and God as his creator, the relation between spiritual and physical aspects, and relations on individual, family, and community levels.

In addition, Prophet Muhammad PBUH also integrated Islamic principles into political affairs as well as men’s relation with other beings to facilitate their role as caliph in this world. These are the *amanah* and duty that they will be held accountable for after death.

After passing into the realm of *barzakh*, men will be resurrected and questioned about every deed he had performed in this world before facing judgement on the Day of Judgement.

Islam encompasses all aspects of life and the Quran clarifies the roles of messengers in political affairs. They are called upon to confront or lead the government of their time.

---

# Integration Of Politics And Religion

Islam is a religion that contains the teachings of Allah SWT and His guidance for all of humanity. It recognizes the importance of living in a society where politics is necessary and acknowledges the need for certain things that are necessary for humans to function in such a society. Democracy is born out of the pressing need to fulfil all of these necessities, especially in the case of a tyrannical government.

It is a noble trait for humans with a sound mind to despise such government, whether they are Muslims or not, and this has been the case for a long time. In the face of such tyranny, it is believed that people should have the right to be involved in governmental affairs. Western philosophers, beginning with ancient Greek history in the era of BC, have referred to the birth of democracy as the introduction of a political doctrine in which people have power in the government. However, this right has historically been limited to certain people from certain circles, with many people being denied their rights, such as slaves, women, poor peasants, and others.

Islam as a religion that is made up of divine guidance does not only provide guidance on matters of principle and law, but also on spiritual matters. The Quran also contains comprehensive teachings that cover politics and are conveyed through engaging historical stories and scenarios of human life throughout different periods. Allah SWT appoints prophets to combat deviations in all aspects of human affairs, starting with matters of faith and extending to ways of life, involving government and politics, where deviations have been led by governments and leaders for many centuries. According to a report by Ibn Abbas, the greatest corruption occurred 10 centuries after the death of Prophet Adam. Allah SWT says:

*“Mankind was one single nation and God sent Messengers with glad tidings and warnings, and with them, He sent the Book in truth to judge between people in matters, wherein they differed, but the People of the Book after the clear signs came to them did not differ amongst themselves except through selfish contumacy. God by His Grace guided the believers to the truth concerning that wherein they differed. For God guides whom He will to a straight path.”* (al-Baqarah: 213)

For example, Prophet Nuh was sent by Allah SWT to be the first prophet to fight against a group of people called *al-Mala'* among his people. Prophet Ibrahim confronted King Nimrod who ruled over the Babylonian empire, a major power at that time. Prophet Musa confronted Pharaoh, who was the ruler of Egypt and wielded great power during his reign. Although these kingdoms had great materialistic civilisations, they had transgressed and acted cruelly. In the time of the last prophet nearing the end-times, Prophet Muhammad PBUH also had to face the leaders of Mecca and superpowers of that time, such as the Romans and Persians who committed mischief and injustice.

In modern political terms, the governments that the prophets fought against were dictatorships, as they were given absolute authority by claiming to be gods. They were assisted by leaders and troops of armies who carried out their orders, as well as the people who were deceived by them. Allah SWT mentioned that all these people were cursed and will be thrown into hell.

Allah SWT records the speech of King Nimrod:

*“I give life and death.”* (al-Baqarah: 258)

As well as the speech of Pharaoh:

*“I am your Lord, Most High.”* (al-Naziat: 24)

He also describes the example of those who conspired with the dictators:

*“Of old We sent Musa, with Our signs and an authority manifest. To Pharaoh, Haman, and Qarun; but they called (him) a sorcerer telling lies!”* (al-Mu'minun: 23–24)

This verse describes the three groups involved in tyranny:

- The head of state with absolute power (Pharaoh)
- A cunning governor who manages the government's affair (Haman)
- Millionaires who conspire with the government (Qarun)

Allah SWT emphasises the existence of an army that carried out the government's tyrannical order:

*"So, We seized him and his hosts, and We flung them into the sea: Now behold what was the end of those who did wrong!"* (al-Qasas: 40)

This verse includes the troops following the tyrant's order, who will similarly receive severe punishment.

Allah SWT warns against following the footsteps of those who supported Pharaoh:

*"Thus, did he make fools of his people, and they obeyed him. Truly were they a people rebellious (against God)."* (al-Zukhruf: 54)

Allah also says that men will be with those whom they used to follow on the Day of Judgement:

*"Unto Pharaoh and his Chiefs: But they followed the command of Pharaoh, and the command of Pharaoh was no right (guide). He will go before his people on the Day of Judgement, and lead them into the fire (as cattle are led to water): But woeful indeed will be the place to which they are led!"* (Hud: 97-98)

The Quran, with its narratives and accounts, serves as a guidance for life until the Day of Judgement. The ongoing conflict between truth and falsehood will persist until the end of time. Allah SWT says:

*"And did not God check one set of people by means of another the earth would indeed be full of mischief but God is full of bounty to all the worlds."* (al-Baqarah: 251)

Allah SWT also says:

*“Did not God check one set of people by means of another, there would surely have been pulled down monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques, in which the name of God is commemorated in abundant measure. God will certainly aid those who aid His (cause); —for verily God is full of strength, Exalted in Might, (Able to enforce His Will). (They are) those who, if We establish them in the land, establish regular prayer and give regular charity, enjoin the right and forbid wrong: With God rests the end (and decision) of (all) affairs.” (al-Hajj: 40–41)*

Throughout history, some prophets were able to establish just governments, such as Prophet Daud, Prophet Sulaiman, Prophet Muhammad PBUH, and non-prophets, such as Zulqarnain, and Saba, as mentioned in the Quran. However, some prophets were unable to witness the fruit of their struggle to establish a just government. In the case of Prophet Musa, Prophet Harun and several other prophets, they passed away before realizing their goal while some became martyrs, such as Prophet Zakaria and Prophet Yahya.

Islam asserts that all deviations start with shirk, which is a misconception of belief in the one true God. This deviation is the root of all evils. Humans are in a state of transgression when they associate anything with Allah. The same is true if they do not practise Islamic law and morals, even more so if it involves dictatorship.

Dictators treat their subjects as if they were Gods to this people, engage in economic misconduct, moral collapse, and other forms of worship. The people were fooled and enslaved, power and wealth were abused just as Nimrod and Pharaoh did with the assistance of Haman and Qarun. As for economic misconduct, such as the use of unfair measures and scales, it was committed by the people of Shuayb while moral misconduct happened among the people of Lut who committed sodomy.

All these governments used political and economic power to mislead, oppress people and defend evil. These afflictions were carried out by dictators, such as Nimrod, Pharaoh or groups of dictators called *al-Mala'* who abuse religion in the name of theocracy. Certain religious leaders from the people of the Book used God's name to gain absolute authority and deceive people.

Defending the people, giving them their rights, and fighting against the abuse of power are shared values between Islam and man-made democracy. The only differences between them lie in certain principles, concepts, boundaries, and approaches that require further discussion. Democracy was created during a time when the period of prophethood had ended, and leaders and intellectuals had to develop a man-made system without guidance from prophets.

Islam is a universal religion that emerge alongside the universe that Allah SWT has created. Humans are a part of this universe, and are given the role of leading other humans. Although humans possess sound intellects, they still have weaknesses. Therefore, they must receive guidance from Allah SWT. However, Islam also recognizes and respects the human intellect which has developed various forms of knowledge and wisdom.

---

# Politics and Religion

The term “politics”, derived from Latin, had a significant impact on other languages. It has been adopted, often with minor variations in spelling and pronunciation, even in languages spoken by colonized nations. The Malay language, for example, has been heavily influenced by Latin and thus has been widely used until today. On the other hand, in Arabic, the word for politics is “*siyasah*”, which means to rule, govern, or lead.

Politics in Islamic context is regarded as a commandment of Allah to humanity, given its crucial role in the social lives of human beings and other social creatures that live in packs or communities, such as bees and ants. In the Quran, the term “caliph” is mentioned, emphasizing the importance of leadership and governance.

Allah SWT says:

*“(Remember) when your Lord said to the angels, “I am going to create a deputy on the earth!” (al-Baqarah: 30)*

In this verse, Muslim scholars associate the term “caliph” with the terms “*siyasah*” and “*imamah*”. Within this context, the role of the caliph is to lead and govern all affairs according to the teachings of Islam.

Prophet Muhammad PBUH said:

*“As for Banu Isra’iil, they were led by the prophets. When a prophet died, another will succeed him; but after me, there is no prophet and there will be caliphs and they will be quite large in number. His companions said: What do you order us to do (in case we come to have more than one caliph)? He said: The one to whom allegiance is sworn first has supremacy over the others. Concede to them their due rights. God (Himself) will question them about the subjects which He had entrusted to them.” (Bukhari 3455 and Muslim 1842)*

In a hadith, Prophet Muhammad PBUH used the word (تسوس) which originated from the root word of *siyasah* (ساس), or politics if translated to English. This indicates that political affair is a part of Prophets’ duties as commanded by Allah SWT.

Another hadith uses the terms “*imamah*” or “*ra’ie*”, which have political connotations.

The Prophet PBUH said:

*“Caliph is a shepherd, over people and shall be questioned about his subjects (as to how he conducted their affairs).” (Bukhari 2409, Muslim 1829, and Ibn Hibban 4490)*

The Quran recounts true stories of messengers who not only had to preach and face the common people, but also confront governments, kings as well as elites of their time. Amongst them, some succeeded in establishing Islamic governments, such as Prophet Daud, Prophet Sulaiman, and Prophet Muhammad PBUH. However, some passed away before they could establish such a government; their cause was henceforth taken up by other prophets or the loyal companions who succeeded them.

After Prophet Muhammad PBUH passed away, some companions from the people of *Muhajir* and *Ansar* gathered to decide on a successor who would handle Muslims’ political affairs. Most of them were absent from Prophet Muhammad’s PBUH funeral, indicating that Islamic teachings regard politics as essential for establishing and governing a country’s state affairs.

It is the consensus (*ijma'*) amongst all Muslim scholars, including the companions of Prophet Muhammad PBUH, the succeeding generations (*tabi'un*) as well as various *mujtahidin*, that politics is an integral part of Islam. Although some hold opinions that deny the existence of politics in Islam, these opinions are seen as deviant and misguided from the teachings of the Quran and hadith of Prophet Muhammad PBUH.

Many Islamic laws require the establishment of a political government as a prerequisite for their implementation, such as the law of enjoining the good and forbidding evil, the law that regulate various aspects of human life, including trade, agriculture, land ownership, criminal law enforcement, and others. Therefore, Muslim scholars have established a well-known legal maxim which is,

مَا لَا يَتِمُّ الْوَاجِبُ إِلَّا بِهِ فَهُوَ وَاجِبٌ

*"When an obligation cannot be fulfilled without a means, then the means become obligatory."*

Although politics is considered one of the branches of Islamic laws, some Muslim scholars, such as Imam al-Ghazali included its discussion in the book of Islamic faith. This is because everything in Islam is closely linked to faith. Islamic faith is a prerequisite for attaining perfection in worship and ensuring the validity of all worships, including non-obligatory worships.

Therefore, every teaching of Islam cannot be disputed by the believers. This applies not only to matters related to Islamic faith, but also to matters related to Islamic law and ethics. Every aspect of politics in Islam cannot be excluded irrespective of its level of obligation.

Nowadays, politics, which is an important element of Islam is considered burdensome by some parts of the Muslim communities due to the Western colonisers' indoctrination. Westernisation aimed at launching a psychological war against the Muslim communities after colonising their homeland so that the Muslims would surrender control of their political affairs to Western superpowers without resistance.

As a parting gift, the coloniser had left in peace to grant them independence. Before that, they had trained the natives to uphold their legacy by putting in place a well-organised plan that would ensure the natives' submission to and adherence to the rules that they had created based on their ideologies.

Separation of religion from politics was advocated by Western colonisers who were devout Christians. In the past, they had modified the teachings of God's religion brought by Prophet Isa AS by manipulating the Bible to suit their own preferences.

---

# Islamic Political Concept

Islam has established several concepts to explain the implementation of Islamic politics in accordance with the principle and guided wisdom. These concepts can serve as guidelines for political leaders to rule based upon true and sound principles. Leaders must adhere to the method and rules prescribed and apply necessary changes according to new developments and current situations in human life. In Islamic *syariah*, several things must be understood.

## Consistency

*Istiqamah* is to adhere to credible principles and their correct implementation. *Istiqamah* or consistency is a commitment and obedience to the commandments of Allah SWT without being influenced by negative elements, such as corruption, cronyism, and nepotism, as well as any form of pressure and privilege.

Consistency is required in adhering to the principles of Allah SWT and His messenger. This is stated by Allah SWT to Prophet Muhammad PBUH who is the role model for all mankind. Allah SWT says:

*“So be steadfast as you are commanded (O Prophet), along with those who turn (in submission to Allah) with you. And do not transgress. Surely, He is All-Seeing of what you (believers) do. And do not incline towards the wrong-doers lest the Fire might seize you and you will have none as your protector against Allah; and then you will not be helped from anywhere. And establish the Prayer at the two ends of the day and in the first hours of the night. Indeed the good deeds drive away the evil deeds. This is a Reminder to those who are mindful of Allah. And be patient; for indeed Allah never lets the reward of those who do good go to waste.” (Hud: 112–115)*

These verses instruct Muslims to be consistent and avoid being influenced by those who transgressed and committed abominable acts. As such, leaders should strengthen themselves through prayer. Praying on specified time is a means to establish a relationship with Allah SWT to be worthy of His assistance and forgiveness. Furthermore, leaders should also consistently display patience in enduring obstacles in their tasks. All of these factors demonstrate that consistency is very important, especially for leaders who bear the weightiest burdens.

Allah SWT says:

*“He has prescribed for you the religion which He enjoined upon Nuh and which We revealed to you (O Muhammad), and which We enjoined upon Ibrahim and Musa and Isa, commanding: Establish this religion and do not split up regarding it. What you are calling to is very hard upon those who associate others with Allah in His Divinity. Allah chooses for Himself whomsoever He pleases and guides to Himself whoever penitently turns to Him. They did not split up except after knowledge had come to them, and then only because they wished to commit excesses against each other. Had your Lord not already decreed that judgement would be made later at an appointed time, the matter between them would surely have been decided once and for all. Indeed those who were later made the heirs of the Book are in disquieting doubt about it.” (Asy-Syura: 13–15)*

These verses emphasise the importance of being consistent with Islam as it is the religion of the prophets. This includes Prophet Ibrahim who is acknowledged as the father of the prophets, Prophet Musa who is revered by the Jews and Prophet Isa who is worshipped by the Christians. Despite this, all of them are held in high regard by Muslims. All of the prophets engaged in politics which proved that secularism as practised by the Jews and Christians deviates from the true religions that the prophets fought for.

In fact, the prophets consistently abided by the comprehensive principles of faith, *syariah*, morals, and way of life. They continued to bring people from all walks of life to Islam despite being confronted by governments and facing immense pressure. Some of them like Prophet Daud, Prophet Sulaiman, and Prophet Muhammad PBUH managed to become rulers while others like Prophet Musa and Prophet Haron passed away when they were still a step away from completing their mission. Several prophets were imprisoned like Prophet Yusuf, while others were exiled or became martyrs. All of them serve as examples of the importance of being steadfast with Islam.

Allah SWT said to Prophet Daud:

*“O Daud, We have made you a vicegerent on earth, so judge between people with truth, and do not follow the selfish desire, lest it should lead you astray from Allah’s path. Surely those who go astray from Allah’s path will have a severe punishment, because they had forgotten the Day of Reckoning.”* (Sad: 26)

Allah SWT recounts the story of Prophet Sulaiman:

*“And he who had some knowledge of the Book said: ‘I will bring it before the twinkling of your eye.’ When Sulaiman saw the throne placed firmly beside him, he cried out: ‘This is by the grace of my Lord so that He may test me whether I give thanks for (His Bounty) or act with ingratitude. Whoever is grateful is so to his own good; and whoever is ungrateful, let him know that my Lord is Immensely Resourceful, Most Bountiful.”* (An-Naml: 40)

Sufyan bin Abdullah questioned Prophet Muhammad PBUH:

*“Tell me something of Islam which I will not ask anyone else about it.”*

Prophet Muhammad PBUH replied:

*“Say, ‘I believe in Allah’ and then be consistent.”* (Muslim 38 and Ibn Hibban 942)

Prophet Muhammad PBUH embodies the essence of consistency from his time in Mecca to his migration to Medina. Despite facing persuasion and coercion from his loved ones, threats from his most dangerous enemies, offers a high social standing, and tempting bribes, he remained steadfast on the path that Allah SWT had laid out for him.

Overall, consistency entails a firm commitment to the straight path in matters of faith, *syariah*, and morals. It must be practiced in moderation, without going to extremes in either direction. Prophet Muhammad PBUH highly emphasised the importance of verses related to consistency to his companions.

He said:

*“Surah Hud and other similar surahs have made my hair white.”*  
(Tirmidhi 3297 and al-Bazzar 92)

This is why we make dua to be among those who are consistent and steadfast in each *raka'ah* of our prayer as prayer is a fundamental aspect of Islamic politics. Allah SWT says:

*“(Allah will certainly help) those who, were We to bestow authority on them in the land, will establish Prayers, render Zakah, enjoin good, and forbid evil. The end of all matters rests with Allah.”* (Al-Hajj: 41)

*Surah Al-Fatihah* must be recited in every *raka'ah* of prayer, which contains a prayer taught by Allah to the believers. In the surah, Allah says:

*“You alone do we worship, and from You alone do we seek help. Take us on the straight path. The path of those on whom You have bestowed Your Grace, not of those who have incurred Your wrath, nor of those who have gone astray.”* (Al-Fatihah: 5-7)

Consistency in staying on the straight path is equivalent to following in the footsteps of the Prophet, the truthfults, the martyrs, and the virtuous. They are the ones who remain on the right path, unlike those who have knowledge of the truth but deviate from it for worldly gains, practising the way of *jahiliyyah*.

*Ijtihad* refers to the rigorous endeavour to derive Islamic law from the Quran and *hadith* in cases where the sources are unclear or do not provide explicit guidance. This process is undertaken by Islamic scholars and intellectuals who possess extensive knowledge of the Quran, *hadith*, and legal theory methodologies. These individuals must be characterized by fairness, good conduct, and a reputation for trustworthy dissemination of knowledge.

The permission to perform *ijtihad* is mentioned in the Quran and *hadith*.

Allah SWT says:

*“(O Messenger!) We have revealed to you this Book with the Truth so that you may judge between people in accordance with what Allah has shown you. So do not dispute on behalf of the dishonest.”* (An-Nisa: 105)

The scholars of Islam take this verse as evidence permitting *ijtihad* in matters where the evidence is not clear or ambiguous.

The *hadith* that allows *ijtihad* is as follows:

*“Prophet Muhammad PBUH asked Mu’adh bin Jabal who was sent to Yemen, “How will you judge?”*

*Mu’adh replied: “I will judge according to the Book of Allah SWT.”*

*Prophet Muhammad PBUH asked: “What if it is not in the Book of Allah SWT?”*

*Mu’adh said: “Then, with the sunnah of the messengers of Allah SWT.”*

*The Prophet asked again: “What if it is not in the sunnah of the messengers of Allah SWT?”*



# ISLAM AND DEMOCRACY

## About the Author

Tan Sri Dato' Seri Abdul Hadi bin Awang is the current President of the Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party or PAS. He was the Special Envoy of the Prime Minister to the Middle East from 2021 – 2020, former Vice-President of the International Union of Muslim Scholars, Chief Minister of the state of Terengganu from 2004 – 1999, and former state assemblyman for Rhu Rendang. He is currently serving as the Member of Parliament for Marang.

He received his early education in Terengganu before furthering his studies at the Islamic University of Madinah in Shariah, and later in Siyasa Syar'iyah (Political Science) at Al-Azhar University. In 1983, he received a certification from Syaikh Muhammad Yasin Al-Fadani RH. Since then, he has written several books and articles on various branches of Islamic knowledge, including democracy and politics in Islam. His Friday morning lectures at Rusila Mosque usually draw thousands of people.

## Book Synopsis

The author presents this book to explore the comparison between Islamic political concepts and principles and the modern democratic system. The comparison aims to elucidate the distinctions between Islamic and Western political ideologies in terms of historical and ideological perspectives on modern democracy's implementation. The author emphasizes a balanced approach to democracy, reconciling extreme and liberal trends. The book also draws on the decades-long experience of Parti Islam Se-Malaysia (PAS) in advancing Islamic agendas through democratic channels, providing practical guidance for readers.

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