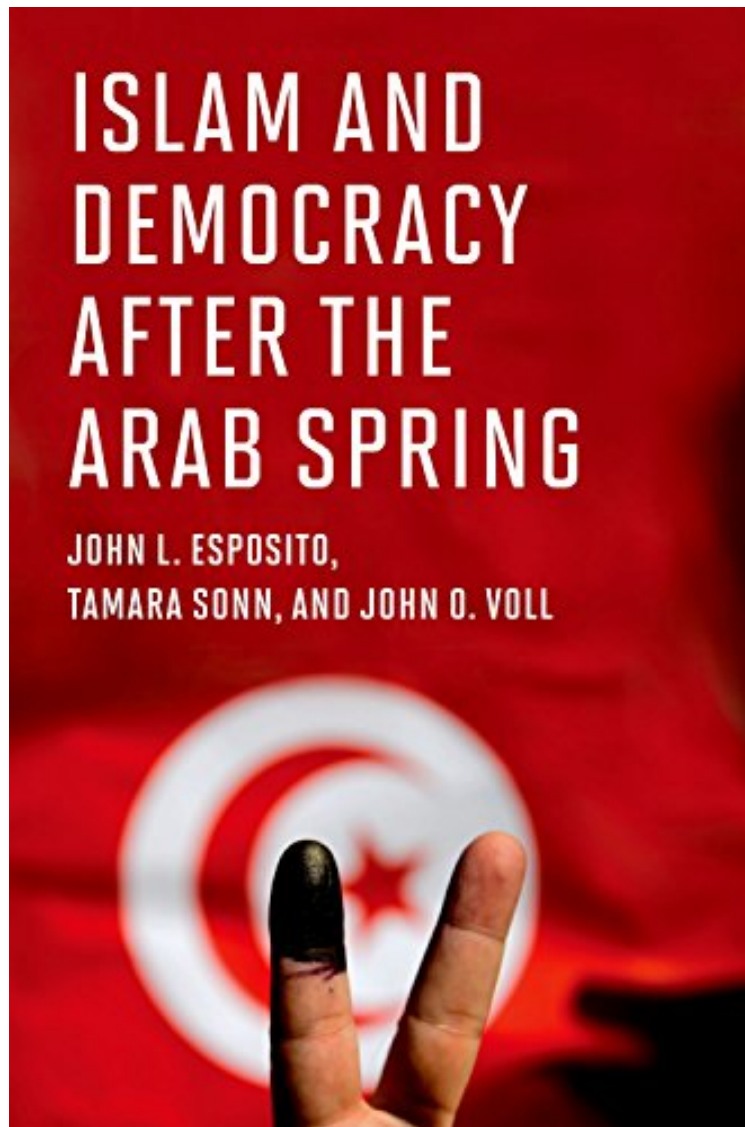


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## Islam and Democracy after the Arab Spring

*John L. Esposito, Tamara Sonn, John O. Voll*  
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**John L. Esposito, Tamara Sonn, John O. Voll : Islam and Democracy after the Arab Spring** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Islam and Democracy after the Arab Spring:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Siraj I. MuftiAn excellent book on the subject.0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. This book is a disappointment. Instead of taking the issue of Arab Islamist ...By arlingtonianMany have awaited Esposito's response to the retreat and end of Islamist democracies after the Arab Spring, his being a prominent voice for decades advocating that Islamists need to be understood and respected as

democrats instead of hunted down as an enemy of democracy. This book is a disappointment. Instead of taking the issue of Arab Islamist failures head on, he and his co-authors claim democracy is alive and well in the Islamic world, moving from Turkey to Iran (!) to Pakistan (!! ) to Indonesia to Senegal before getting around to Tunisia and last Egypt. Leaving out Syria, Yemen, Libya and the rest of the Arab world altogether. He could have done much better. When he does get around to the Islamists he has been writing about since 1996, the core from al-Afghani through al-Banna into Khomeini's Iran, Turabi, and the various offshoots of the Muslim Brotherhood, Esposito lapses into apologetics instead of analysis. It was the "Deep State" and "faux liberals," that brought down Egyptian democracy, the book says, not possibly that few in Egypt wanted democracy unless they were running it, that large numbers of Egyptians flocked to the most illiberal al-Nour party, and that Egypt's liberals proved too lazy, too incompetent, and too unpopular to compete in democratic elections. Tunisia to date has turned out much better for democracy, partly because Ghannouchi made courageous decisions to allow democratic transfers of power to opponents, and partly because Tunisia is easily the most European of Arab countries. Esposito et al avoid Syria like the plague, as it is clear to all Syrians that their Islamists are the main opposition to Assad, and that Islamist in the Syrian context means little more than Sunni supremacist. The pro-democracy aspect dropped out so soon there and in Libya that it makes one wonder whether Islamist ideals are compatible with democracy. Precisely the conclusion the authors seek to refute, but they could have done a much better job if they had dealt with the post-Arab Spring evidence head on instead of wandering about the Islamic world looking for anything they could call democracy.

The landscape of the Middle East has changed dramatically since 2011, as have the political arena and the discourse around democracy. In *Islam and Democracy after the Arab Spring*, John L. Esposito, John Voll, and Tamara Sonn examine the state of democracy in Muslim-majority societies today. Applying a twenty-first century perspective to the question of whether Islam is "compatible" with democracy, they redirect the conversation toward a new politics of democracy that transcends both secular authoritarianism and Political Islam. While the opposition movements of the Arab Spring vary from country to country, each has raised questions regarding equality, economic justice, democratic participation, and the relationship between Islam and democracy in their respective countries. Does democracy require a secular political regime? Are religious movements the most effective opponents of authoritarian secularist regimes? Esposito, Voll, and Sonn examine these questions and shed light on how these opposition movements reflect the new global realities of media communication and sources of influence and power. Positioned for a broad readership of scholars and students, policy-makers, and media experts, *Islam and Democracy after the Arab Spring* will quickly become a go-to for all who watch the Middle East, inside and outside of academia.

"Islam and Democracy after the Arab Spring is a book of exceptional resolve..."--Journal of Church and State "This is a very timely book. At a time where many observers are questioning the possibility of a true democratic process within Muslim majority countries, this series of essays shows, from Turkey to Iran, Senegal to Indonesia, that the political experiences are multiple and the way toward democratization is complex, yet open. The authors invite the reader to avoid simplistic conclusions about Islam and democracy. A critical achievement." --Tariq Ramadan, Professor of Contemporary Islamic Studies at the University of Oxford "Democracy can take many forms, and the struggle of Muslim majority countries to find a democracy suited to their distinct cultural and political experiences is, as outlined in *Islam and Democracy after the Arab Spring*, an epoch-making experiment. Countering the 'clash of civilizations' and 'end of history' prophecies, Esposito, Sonn, and Voll show how pre- and post-Arab spring political developments in Muslim majority countries are marathon battles to end authoritarian practices in politics, religion, culture and statecraft. A must-read for those wishing to gain a nuanced understanding of the volatile and complex developments tied to Muslim efforts to make democracy a reality." --Ebrahim Moosa, Professor of Islamic Studies, Keough School of Global Affairs, University of Notre Dame "For those who see in the apparent failure of the 'Arab spring' proof of the incompatibility of Islam and democratization, Esposito, Sonn, and Voll's new book offers a nuanced and brilliant rejoinder. No work that I know succeeds better at explaining the logic of the political struggles underway in the modern Muslim world. None more fully deserves to be read by scholars and the general reader alike." --Robert W. Hefner, author of *Civil Islam: Muslims and Democratization in Indonesia* "Excellent historical background EL they present many facets of Islam with balance and insight. This is a detailed picture of democracy as alive and well in majority-Muslim countries, and an excellent text for considering what the future holds for international Islam." - Publishers Weekly About the Author John L. Esposito is University Professor, Professor of Religion International Affairs and of Islamic Studies, and Founding Director of the Alwaleed Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding at the Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University. Tamara Sonn is the Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani Professor in the History of Islam in the Alwaleed Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding at the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University. John O. Voll is Professor Emeritus of Islamic History and past Associate Director of the Alwaleed bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding at Georgetown University.