

Title:

Democratic Ideals in Islam

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Abstract

With the war in Iraq an important question arises, is Islam compatible with democracy? This paper argues that Islamic beliefs and practices support democratic ideals. Five democratic ideals, which can be found in Islam, are liberty, consensus, consultation, equality, and supremacy of law. Liberty is found throughout the Qur'an. There is counter evidence that Muslims are not free because the term 'Muslim' means that the person is submissive to God and therefore not free. Despite these claims it will be shown that the Qur'an promotes freedom. Islam also supports the idea of consensus or ijma. However, some argue that Islam does not support the belief for widespread consensus. Another democratic ideal supported throughout the Qur'an is consultation. Islam also promotes equality despite claims that argue otherwise. Finally, the democratic ideal of the supremacy of law, or that nothing is above the law, can be found in Islam. However, a counter argument is that God is above the law in Islam. These claims and counter claims will be addressed in the paper and will demonstrate that Islamic beliefs and practices support democratic ideals.