

The Egalitarian Face of Islamic Orthodoxy: Support for Islamic Law and Economic Justice in Seven Muslim-Majority Nations

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The authors test two theories linking religion and economic beliefs in predominantly Muslim nations using data from national surveys of Algeria, Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Jordan, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia. Moral Cosmology theory posits that because the religiously orthodox are theologically communitarian in viewing individuals as subsumed by a larger community of believers subject to timeless laws and God's greater plan, they are disposed toward economic communitarianism, whereby the state should provide for the poor, reduce inequality, and meet community needs via economic intervention. Modernists are theologically individualistic in seeing individuals as having to make moral decisions in a temporal context and as responsible for their own destinies. As such, modernists are inclined to economic individualism, whereby the poor are responsible for their fates, wider income differences promote individual initiative, and government should not interfere in the economy. An alternate hypothesis, based on Islamic scripture's discussion of economic matters, limits the effect of orthodoxy versus modernism to the one clear economic directive of Islam: the state's responsibility to care for the poor. The authors find that Islamic orthodoxy—measured as the desire to implement Islamic law (the shari'a)—is associated with the broad economic communitarianism expected by Moral Cosmology theory.

The role that Islam plays in the economic circumstances and development of Muslim nations has been the subject of intense debate among Muslims and non-Muslims alike. Western critics of Islam or "Islamic civilization," such as Bernard Lewis (1990) and Samuel Huntington (1993), have decried its economic irrationality, incompatibility with democracy, and failure to separate religion and state; while scholars such as Edward Said (2001:11) have denounced such thinking as Orientalist essentialism that ignores "the internal dynamics and

plurality" of Muslim nations. The debate is not just academic. Today, there are over 1.3 billion Muslims in the world and more than 50 predominantly Muslim nations. Some of the governments of these nations are meeting their citizens' economic needs, while many others are unable or unwilling to address them. The United Nations (2001) ranks countries on a Human Development Index (HDI), based on their life expectancy, literacy rate, school enrollments, and per capita gross domestic product (GDP). Five Muslim-majority nations are rated

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as having “high” human development, 27 as “medium,” and 21 as “low.” Even in Muslim nations with medium standards of living, many citizens live in poverty: one-fifth to one-quarter of the populations of Algeria, Indonesia, and Egypt are poor, as defined by local standards. In the poorest Muslim nations, the bulk of the population suffers from economic deprivation, the gap between rich and poor is wide, unemployment and underemployment are high, educational opportunities are limited, and life expectancies are low (United Nations 2001; Banuri 1994:36).

What to do about the depressed economic conditions in which many Muslims live is the subject of much private concern, public discussion, and movement activism throughout the Muslim world. Since the mid-nineteenth century, the debate and mobilization on economic issues often centered on whether socialism or nationalism was the solution. Islamist (or Islamic fundamentalist) movements seeking the implementation of Islamic law (the *shari'a*) in an Islamic state as the solution to economic problems began to form in the late 1920s, but public interest in such movements did not take off until most secular, putatively socialist, and/or nationalist regimes failed to solve these problems during the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. Today, Islamists vie with Islamic modernists (or reformists), who see the best hope for economic progress in keeping Islam out of legal codes and maintaining strict separation of mosque and state (Kepel 1994:13–23).

In this article, we move away from the public discourse and skirmishes of movement leaders, academics, and media pundits to explore how moral cosmology—Islamic orthodoxy versus modernism—affects the economic beliefs of ordinary Muslims. Most scholarly accounts of religion and politics in predominantly Muslim countries have been historical or observational, relying on careful analyses of the speeches and writings of leaders of Islamist and modernist movements, of archival materials on the formation, political activities, and platforms of movement organizations, and, in many cases, on the author's direct experience with the Muslim world. While much has been learned from this work, it is often not based on analyses of interviews with representative samples of Muslims, and we therefore know relatively little about how ordinary Muslim citizens make linkages

between their faith and economic preferences (but see, e.g., Hassan 2002; Inglehart and Norris 2003; Moaddel 2004, forthcoming).

Throughout the world, religious traditionalists are commonly characterized as being to the political right of modernists. Yet, despite the conventional wisdom, our research in the United States, 21 European countries, and Israel has uncovered a surprising relationship: in many countries where Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, Judaism, or Protestantism predominate, the religiously orthodox are to the right of modernists on cultural issues of abortion, sexuality, family, and gender, but to the left of modernists on issues of economic justice (Davis and Robinson 1996a, 1997, 1999a, 1999b, 2001). In this article, we examine whether the less recognized element of this pattern—the tendency for the religiously orthodox to be more economically progressive than modernists—holds in countries where Islam, another Abrahamic faith tradition, predominates.

We analyze newly available national surveys of seven Muslim-majority nations (Algeria, Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Jordan, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia) to test two alternate arguments to explain how orthodoxy versus modernism affects attitudes toward economic justice among Muslims. Our own Moral Cosmology theory (Davis and Robinson 1999b, 2001, 2005), which, we argue, applies to all of the Abrahamic faith traditions, regardless of their specific theological tenets, posits that because the religiously orthodox are theologically communitarian in seeing individuals as subsumed by a larger community of believers and as subject to the timeless laws and greater plan of God, they are disposed toward economic communitarianism, whereby it is the society's responsibility to provide for those in need, reduce inequality, and intervene in the economy to meet community needs. Modernists, because they are theologically individualistic in that they see individuals themselves as responsible for their destinies and as having to make moral decisions in the context of the times, are inclined toward laissez-faire economic individualism, which sees the poor as responsible for their fates, supports wider income differences to promote individual initiative, and wants government to keep out of the economy. We test this theory, which does not depend on the specific content of faith traditions, against a logical

counter-thesis, based on what Islamic scripture says about economic matters, that limits the effect of Islamic orthodoxy versus modernism only to government responsibility for the poor. We find that Islamic orthodoxy—measured as the desire to establish Islamic law—is associated in these countries with the broad economic communitarianism expected by Moral Cosmology theory.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

MORAL COSMOLOGY THEORY

In *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* and his other works on religion, Weber was primarily concerned with differences among faith traditions (e.g. Catholicism, Protestantism, ancient Judaism) and their effects on economic beliefs and practices. Our Moral Cosmology theory, with its emphasis on differences within faith traditions among individuals holding different moral cosmologies, complements Weber's. Our argument is that cosmological differences between the religiously orthodox and modernists that had only just begun to appear when Weber wrote *The Protestant Ethic* (1904–05) exist today within all of the Abrahamic traditions and have similar effects, regardless of the specific tenets of these traditions, on economic and cultural beliefs. Because differentiation between the orthodox and modernist cosmologies is required for these cosmologies to affect political beliefs, our argument should hold only since modernist and orthodox theological strands became separate within each of the religions of the Book—that is, the development of Reform Judaism, which grew out of Enlightenment ideas and was formalized in documents like the Pittsburgh Platform of 1885; the rise of Islamic “modernism” in the late-nineteenth century; the appearance at the turn of the twentieth century of the “modernist” movement in Catholicism that nearly caused a schism in the Church; and the split between mainline and fundamentalist churches in U.S. and British Protestantism in the early twentieth century.

In discussing the effect of moral cosmology on cultural and economic attitudes, we begin with Hunter's (1991:49) distinction between two “fundamentally different conceptions of moral authority.” The *religiously orthodox* impulse views God as the ultimate judge of good and evil, regards

sacred texts as divinely revealed and hence inerrant and timeless, and sees the deity as playing an active role in people's everyday lives. In contrast, the *modernist*¹ impulse views individuals as having to make moral decisions in the context of the times, sees religious texts and teachings as human creations that should be considered in cultural context along with other moral precepts, and regards individuals as largely determining their own fates. Note that the modernist impulse encompasses both believers and nonbelievers or secularists.

Drawing out the theological and political orientations of these ideal-typical visions of moral authority—or what we prefer to call moral cosmologies, we argue that the religiously orthodox cosmology is theologically communitarian in that it regards individuals as subsumed by a larger community of like-minded believers who are all subject to the laws and greater plan of God (Davis and Robinson 1999b, 2001). In the orthodox cosmology, timeless religious truths, standards, and laws are seen as having been laid down once and for all by God—laws that the community must uphold and that everyone is obliged to obey. The theological communitarianism of the orthodox, we argue, inclines them to an authoritarian strand of cultural communitarianism, in which the community must enforce divinely mandated moral standards on abortion, sexuality, family, and gender. Theological communitarianism, however, also inclines the orthodox to economic communitarianism or egalitarianism, whereby it is the state's responsibility to provide for those in need, reduce the gap between rich and poor, and intervene in the economy so that community needs are met. The communitarianism of orthodoxy entails watching over community members, giving it both a strict side and a caring one, and inclining its adherents toward cultural authoritarianism and economic egalitarianism.²

¹ We use “modernist” for this ideal type because it avoids the political connotation attached to Hunter's term “progressive,” a connotation that we have shown to be incorrect for economic issues.

² Ryle and Robinson's (2006) study of Americans corroborates the communitarianism of the orthodox. Their study finds that orthodoxy is the most important factor in promoting feelings of community. This applies across a range of communal sources (neigh-

Orthodoxy, as we conceive it, does not refer to “doctrinal” orthodoxy or belief in the specific tenets of a faith tradition (e.g., the existence of heaven and hell, the divinity of Jesus), but to a broad theological orientation toward the locus of moral authority with which the orthodox of all of the Abrahamic faith traditions would agree. In other words, orthodox Catholics, Jews (with a small “o” to distinguish their cosmology from formal membership in the Orthodox branch of Judaism), Muslims, and Protestants adhere to different religious tenets, but they share the broad worldview that the locus of moral authority is God and that legal codes should reflect absolute and timeless divine law.

We argue that modernists, in contrast to the orthodox, are theologically individualistic in that they see individuals as largely responsible for their own moral decisions and fates (Davis and Robinson 1999b, 2001). The modernist cosmology combines support for individual choice and freedom with an expectation of individual responsibility,³ inclining its adherents to cultural individualism or libertarianism, whereby the resolution of a pregnancy is seen as a woman’s private decision, individual freedom in sexual expression is allowed, and husbands and wives should decide for themselves how to divide their labor or structure their partnership. The theological individualism of modernists also inclines them to *laissez-faire* economic individualism or inegalitarianism, whereby individuals are held responsible for their economic fortunes—good or bad—and the solution to poverty and inequality is greater effort and initiative by the poor themselves rather than government efforts to improve their lot, equalize incomes, or redistribute economic resources by nationalizing businesses. Our argument is, of course, probabilistic, not deterministic, and some modernists hold communitarian economic beliefs, such as socialism or communism. We argue and will show that the individualism that characterizes both the modernist moral cosmology and *laissez-faire* economics inclines

modernists toward such economic individualism more than toward economic communitarianism (see also Jelen 1990; Regnerus, Smith, and Sikkink 1998; Tamney, Burton, and Johnson 1989).

While orthodoxy and modernism are ideal types, representing polar extremes, our Moral Cosmology theory treats cosmology as a matter of degree, with people’s cultural and economic attitudes tending to reflect where they are on the continuum of orthodoxy/modernism (Davis and Robinson 1996a, 1996b, 1996c, 1997, 1999a, 1999b, 2001). In this article, we focus on the economic consequences of the continuum of moral cosmology for Muslims—the tendency for the Islamic orthodox to be more economically egalitarian than Islamic modernists.

APPLYING MORAL COSMOLOGY THEORY TO ISLAM

Islam, a religion of the Book along with Judaism and Christianity, has a sacred text that is taken by Muslims as divine revelation. The vast majority of Muslims—some scholars would say all—regard the Qur’an as divinely revealed, inerrant, and to be taken literally (Marty and Appleby 1992:138). In this sense, (nearly) all Muslims are “orthodox,” and a question about the literal truth of the Qur’an, such as that which we used (Davis and Robinson 1996a, 1996b, 1997, 1999b, 2001) to help distinguish the orthodox from modernists among Catholics, Jews, and Protestants based on their beliefs about the Bible, probably would not distinguish among Muslims. Yet one dimension of orthodoxy/modernism that does differentiate among Muslims is the extent to which they believe that the Qur’an and other sacred texts of Islam should be the sole basis of the legal system and the state. The establishment of Islamic law, which is based on sacred Islamic texts, would be the fulfillment of the orthodox belief that it is the responsibility of the community to uphold timeless divine law. Orthodox Muslims differ from modernist Muslims in wanting Islamic law to constitute the sole legal foundation of the state, and it is this distinction and its consequences for economic attitudes that is our focus here.

The distinction between Muslims who would apply Islamic law in all realms of life and those who would not is central both to divisions with-

bors, friends, coworkers, fellow congregants, fellow students, and ethnic group members).

³ Starks and Robinson’s (forthcoming) study corroborates the individualism of modernists. They find that modernists in the United States are more likely than the orthodox to prefer that children “think for themselves” rather than “obey.”

in Muslim publics at large and to the agendas of many of the major political and intellectual movements of Muslims of the last century and a quarter. Since the Egyptian Hasan al-Banna founded the Society of Muslim Brothers in 1928, the goal of *Islamists* has been the implementation of the *shari'a* in all realms of life as the sine qua non of an Islamic state (Ghaddbian 2000:78; Husain 2003:13). The primacy of this goal reflects the fact that religion and state were once one in the first Islamic state of the seventh century, where the Prophet Muhammad was both the religious and political leader. While orthodox Muslims are not monolithic in their interpretation of the *shari'a* (Murphy 2003:51), they share the desire to implement Islamic law as the sole legal foundation, rather than allow legal codes to emerge through pluralistic political negotiation and compromise between competing interests, including secular ones.

The economic communitarianism that Moral Cosmology theory expects among the orthodox of all of the Abrahamic faith traditions manifested itself historically and still does today in many Muslim countries in practices of patrimonialism, whereby the clan or tribal leaders were/are responsible for the well-being of the community's needy. It can also be seen in "Islamic economics," which was developed in late-colonial India of the 1940s by Sayyid Abul A'la Mawdudi (1903–79), the Islamist founder of *Jamaat-i-Islami* (Party of Islam; Esposito 2003:142). Apart from prohibiting *riba* (excessive interest) and collecting and distributing *zakat* (an obligatory charitable contribution to the poor), the details of Islamic economics are vague, although it appears that this would not involve as extensive control of the economy by the state as in socialist command economies, but would require a greater commitment—much of it voluntary on the part of believers—to looking out for the poor and to maintaining more equitable economic dealings than is true in *laissez-faire* capitalism (Ibrahim 1982:122–23; Fuller 2003:26).

Islamic "modernism," as the movement came to be called, emerged during the late nineteenth century, especially in India and Egypt (Moaddel and Talattof 2000:1). The theological individualism that Moral Cosmology theory assumes of modernists in all Abrahamic traditions can be seen in an important theological distinction made by early Islamic modernists. Moulavi

Chiragh Ali (1844–95), a noted Indian modernist, distinguished between the *revealed* law of the Qur'an, which is immutable and timeless, and the *common* law, which is the product of Muslim history and reflects the circumstances of each age. He argued that since Islamic law was, in part, a product of the times, it could not constitute a timeless moral code for Muslims, thus necessitating a new legal frame in accord with the standards of modernity (Chiragh Ali 1883; Moaddel and Talattof 2000:8–9; Ahmad 1967:54–58). A distinction with similar implications was made by the Egyptian modernist, Muhammad Abduh (1849–1905), between *ibadat* (acts of worship) and *mu-amalat* (commercial or civil acts related to the affairs of the world). According to Abduh, while Islamic texts mandated specific rules regarding the worship of Allah, they included only broad principles on how humans should relate to each other, thus leaving it up to humans to apply these in specific circumstances. This not only allowed but also required the application of *ijtihad* (independent reasoning) in the development of legal codes (Hourani 1983:148; Moaddel 2005:90).

The distinction made by Chiragh Ali and Abduh allows humans much discretion in organizing their affairs, including their economic structures and individual economic behavior. An essay by an anonymous Indian modernist, originally published in 1877–80 and included in Moaddel and Talattof's (2000:123–35) anthology, argued that Islamic laws prohibiting the taking of interest and limiting individual discretion in passing on estates were breeding "listlessness and inactivity" among Muslims in India, throwing many into poverty. The solution was not for government to provide free education, which only "lower[s] our character by rendering weaker the motives for the exercise of our energies and by diminishing our prudence or responsibility to ourselves," but to understand that "there is no connection whatsoever, either necessary or even contingent, between Religion in its pure sense and civil and juridical laws." Only the separation of mosque and state would result in "wider diffusion of habits of energy and patience, self-exertion and self-dependence." The essay concludes with an homage to the Indian modernist leader, Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan (1817–98), who sought to reconcile Enlightenment values and natural law with Islamic belief through the application of *ijtihad*

to sacred texts, and who was a strong advocate of laissez-faire capitalism and a limited role of government (Malik 1980).⁴

Muslim modernists today seek a strict separation of mosque and state and resist the implementation of Islamic law. Kurzman (1998:19, 1999) notes that such Muslims object to the implementation of the *shari'a* on several grounds, including that "divine revelation has left the form of government for human construction," that political power would corrupt religious rulers, and that "the Qur'an refers to the *shari'a* as a path, not as a ready-made system of law, waiting to be put in practice."

While the writings of orthodox and modernist thinkers and the political positions of the movements they inspired seem to be in accord with Moral Cosmology theory, whether these movements represent the sentiments of ordinary Muslims is an empirical question that can be resolved only with data for individuals. We have found, for example, that in the United States, where the most visible movements and leaders appearing to represent the religiously orthodox have a conservative, laissez-faire economic agenda, the orthodox are to the left of modernists on economic issues in a General Social Survey (GSS) of Americans (Davis and Robinson 1996a, 1996b, 1997). Thus, in accord with Moral Cosmology theory, which expects similar effects of orthodoxy/modernism on economic attitudes in all of the Abrahamic faith traditions, we test the following hypothesis on nationally representative samples of Muslims:

Hypothesis 1: Religiously orthodox Muslims, as indicated by their desire to implement Islamic law as the sole law of the land in their country, will be more economically communitarian or egalitarian than their modernist counterparts in supporting (1) government efforts to improve the lot of the poor and needy, (2) greater equality of incomes, and (3) government nationalization of private business and industry.

⁴ Consistent with our expectation that modernism is also associated with cultural individualism or freedom of expression, the modernist/reformist activism of Islamic feminists in the Muslim world often involves application of *ijtihad* to sacred texts in order to challenge patriarchal interpretations offered by orthodox Muslims (Moghadam 2002:1144).

AN ALTERNATE HYPOTHESIS: ISLAMIC SCRIPTURAL DIRECTIVES ON ECONOMIC MATTERS

Moral Cosmology theory is not denomination-specific in that it does not depend on the content of religious texts. It assumes that the orthodox of all of the Abrahamic faith traditions differ from modernists in their economic orientations, regardless of the specific doctrinal positions on economic matters in their religious texts. In our earlier analyses of Judeo-Christian traditions, we argued that the Torah and the Bible are ambiguous regarding economic matters (Davis and Robinson 1996a, 1999b). Yet are there clear economic messages in Islam that might impel those who seek to build a state around it to endorse communitarian economic relations? We test Moral Cosmology theory against the logical counter-thesis that the tenets of Islam on economic matters can explain any tendency for the more text-bound Islamic orthodox to be more communitarian than Islamic modernists.

In contrast to the sacred texts of Judaism and Christianity, the Qur'an is very specific about the obligation of every Muslim to give to the poor, orphaned, and widowed, "so that wealth may not merely make a circuit among the wealthy" (Qur'an 59:7). The third of five pillars of the faith, *zakat* (purification), requires Muslims with the financial means to give at least 2.5 percent of their net assets (not just their income) annually to the needy (Husain 2003:10, Kuran 2004:19). The institution of *zakat* changed during Muhammad's lifetime from voluntary private charity in Mecca, where he and his followers were in a minority and powerless, to a compulsory obligation of the faith, with specific rates, collected and distributed by state-run institutions, once Muhammad and his followers migrated to Medina in 622 and established the first Islamic state (al-Shiekh 1995:366-67). The *Hadith* (2:24:537), the sacred text that records the sayings of the Prophet, reports Muhammad as saying, "Allah has made it *obligatory* for them to pay *zakat* from their property; it is to be *taken* from the wealthy among them and given to the poor" (emphasis added). Among the countries considered here, *zakat* is collected and distributed by the state in Pakistan and Saudi Arabia; in the other countries, because they are largely secular states, it is left to individuals to make con-

tributions directly to the needy or to organizations serving them (al-Shiekh 1995:366–67).

While the Qur'an is clear in requiring those with financial means to give to the poor and in providing mechanisms whereby the state will look out for the needy, it neither enjoins economic equality nor questions the right of individuals to hold private property (Kamali 2002:136–38). State ownership of property is not directly addressed; contemporary proponents and opponents of government ownership alike cite scripture to support their stances, suggesting that Islam takes no clear position on this (Kuran 2004:33, 111). In the Qur'an (20:131), differences in wealth and property are viewed as a test by Allah of the charitable-ness of the wealthy but as unimportant after death. While there is a spiritual equality of believers before Allah, there is no assumption that such equality does or should hold in human societies (Kamali 2002; Marlow 1997). A well-known proverb attributed to the Prophet states, "Men are equals like the teeth of a comb; one has precedence over another only in well-being" (quoted in Marlow 1997:18).

We conclude that while Islamic texts mandate efforts to provide for those in need, they do not enjoin equality of income or wealth, nor sanction violation of the private property of others, nor take a clear position on government ownership of industry as a means of meeting community needs. Thus, we test Moral Cosmology theory (H_1), which posits broad egalitarian/communitarian effects of orthodoxy in all religions of the Book, against a hypothesis based strictly on the economic directives of Islamic texts, which limits the effect of orthodoxy vs. modernism to the one clear economic directive of Islam, which is the state's responsibility to care for the needy:

Hypothesis 2: Religiously orthodox Muslims, as indicated by their desire to implement Islamic law as the sole law of the land in their country, will be more supportive than their modernist counterparts of government efforts to care for the needy, but will not differ from modernists in their desire for more equal incomes or their willingness to nationalize private property or businesses.

STANDARD OF LIVING AND ECONOMIC BELIEFS

Governments of Muslim-majority nations differ in their ability or willingness to meet the economic needs of their citizens. We expect that failure to meet material, educational, and health needs will increase popular demand for economic reform, while maintenance of a high standard of living will reduce the desire for such reform. Hashmi (2004), for example, has shown that the failure of Bangladesh's "socialist-secular-Bengali-nationalist" government during the 1970s to bring about the promised socialist utopia increased the popularity of Islamist groups calling for social justice and economic reform. Thus we hypothesize,

Hypothesis 3: The lower a country's standard of living (life expectancy, literacy, school enrollments, and per capita GDP), the greater will be support for government efforts to improve the lot of the poor and needy, reduce inequality of incomes, and nationalize private business and industry.

How strong an effect that support for implementation of Islamic law has on the desire for egalitarian economic reforms should depend on the country's standard of living. In countries where people's basic needs are not being met by the state, the desire to implement the *shari'a* will be more strongly associated with egalitarian positions than in countries where these needs are being met; the general condition of the population in the former countries more seriously fails to meet communitarian economic norms. Thus we hypothesize,

Hypothesis 4: In countries with low standards of living (life expectancy, literacy, school enrollments, and per capita GDP), support for implementing Islamic law will be more strongly associated with support for government efforts to improve the lot of the poor and needy, reduce inequality of incomes, and nationalize private business and industry than in countries with higher standards of living.

RATIONALISM AND "ISLAMIC ECONOMICS"

Contrasting the economic rationality or self-interest assumed by free market economists with the voluntary communitarianism on the

part of Muslims of all classes assumed by Islamic economics, Kuran (2004:42) describes the task of Islamic economics as “to transform selfish and acquisitive *Homo economicus* into a paragon of virtue, *Homo Islamicus*.” Kuran’s argument is that Islamic economics, not Islamic theology, assumes this communitarianism on everyone’s part; a classic study of the terms used in the Qur’an argued that Islamic theology is couched in the language of commerce, trade, and economic rationalism: “The mutual relations between God and man are of a strictly commercial nature. Allah is the ideal merchant. . . . Life is a business, for gain or loss. He who does a good or an evil work (“earns” good or evil), receives his pay for it, even in this life” (Torrey 1892:48).

We contrast the assumption in Islamic economics of voluntary communitarianism by all classes with a rational choice, “underdog principle” that posits that the advantaged will be less economically communitarian than the disadvantaged, each class reflecting its economic self-interest (Robinson and Bell 1978). Since we see the assumption of Islamic economics that advantaged Muslims will voluntarily support egalitarian economic arrangements as ignoring the effect of class on communitarianism, we hypothesize,

Hypothesis 5: Muslims with more education, higher income, or who are in the middle or upper class will be less supportive of government efforts to care for the needy, of efforts to equalize incomes, and of government nationalization of businesses and industry than those who are less educated, poorly paid, and in the working class or unemployed.

If, however, there are no class differences in Muslims’ economic attitudes and if these attitudes are communitarian, this would support the assumption of Islamic economics that the advantaged can be counted on in the establishment of a more just Islamic state.

THE SETTING: SEVEN MUSLIM-MAJORITY NATIONS

The seven countries examined here are among the most populous and influential Muslim nations in the world. They include Indonesia, with the world’s largest Muslim population,

Pakistan with the second largest, and Bangladesh, Egypt, and Algeria, with the fourth, fifth and ninth largest Muslim populations. Including Jordan and Saudi Arabia, just under half of the world’s 1.3 billion Muslims lives in these countries. While there are religious minorities of Coptic Christians in Egypt, Hindus in Bangladesh, and Christians, Hindus, and Buddhists in Indonesia, these nations are overwhelmingly Muslim, ranging from 88 percent in Bangladesh to 99 percent in Algeria and Saudi Arabia (see Appendix Table A1). Most of these populations are predominantly Sunni, with Shi’a making up about 20 percent of Pakistanis and 15 percent of Saudi citizens (CIA World Factbook [online] 2004; SBS World Guide 2003:644).

Standards of living in these countries range from low to moderate. The United Nations’ (2001) HDI ranges from .47 in Bangladesh (the same as Haiti, the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere) to .75 in Saudi Arabia (the same as Brazil; see Appendix Table A1). Four of these countries—Algeria, Egypt, Indonesia, and Saudi Arabia—are what Mahdavi (1970) calls “*rentier* states,” whose government and economy depend on substantial rents from oil and hydrocarbon sales (Saudi Arabia and Algeria), transit charges (Egypt, from the Suez Canal), or revenue from tourism (Bali in Indonesia, and, to a lesser extent, Egypt). In *rentier* states, only a small proportion of the population is involved in the enterprises creating most of the nation’s wealth, making most people’s income less dependent on their own efforts and skills than on who they know (personal relationships and crony capitalism), their ethnicity, or their citizenship (Moaddel 2002:376–78).

Islam is the state religion of Saudi Arabia, and this is nominally the case in Algeria, Bangladesh, Jordan, and Pakistan. The legal systems of these countries generally incorporate Islamic law in some form; the only exception is Bangladesh, which has no *shari’a* courts. Saudi Arabia has had the *shari’a* as the sole basis of its legal code and the Qur’an as its constitution since its founding in 1932. In the remaining five nations, the *shari’a* is applied only to family matters (e.g., divorce, marriage, child custody, inheritance); criminal and civil law are based on non-Islamic legal codes (CIA World Factbook [online] 2004; SBS World Guide 2003).



Whether the *shari'a* should be the sole basis of all law, should apply to specific realms of life, or should not apply at all is a matter of intense discussion and activism in all seven countries. Islamist movements seeking to implement Islamic law in all realms of life and condemning the current, more limited applications of this—ranging from those endorsing violence to those working within the political system to effect gradual change—exist in each of the seven nations considered here. Among the more prominent Islamist movements are the Society of Muslim Brothers in Egypt and Jordan, the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) in Algeria, *Laksar Jihad* (Holy War Brigade) in Indonesia, and *Jamaat-i-Islami* in Bangladesh and Pakistan. Islamists in Saudi Arabia challenge both the monarchy and the religious establishment that supports it, seeking to rid the kingdom's laws of anything that they consider to be inconsistent with the *shari'a* and thus establish a truly Islamic state (Fandy 1999:50–60). Modernist thinkers and movements, including *Muhammadiyah* in Indonesia, resist the agenda of the Islamists in each of these societies (Fuad 2002; Hatina 2000; Kurzman 1998; Nash 1991).

Political democracies do not exist or are highly compromised in these countries. Freedom House (2001, Table 1), which rates the political climate of countries,⁵ reports that in 2000–01, denial of political freedoms and civil liberties varied from moderate in countries like Bangladesh and Indonesia (3.5 on a scale of 1 to 7, where 7 represents few political rights and freedoms) to extremely high (7.0) in Saudi Arabia (see Appendix Table A1).

DATA AND METHODS

DATA

The data with which we test our hypotheses are from the fourth wave of the World Values Surveys (WVS), conducted from 1999 to 2003, which surveyed 81 societies. Our sample consists of Muslims living in seven Muslim-majority countries: Algeria (surveyed by Mark Tessler and Ronald Inglehart), Bangladesh (surveyed by

Q. K. Ahmad and Nilufar Banu), Egypt (surveyed by Mansoor Moaddel), Indonesia (surveyed by Nadra Muhamad Hosen), Jordan (surveyed by Mansoor Moaddel and Mustafa Hamarneh), Pakistan (surveyed by Farooq Tanwir), and Saudi Arabia (surveyed by Mansoor Moaddel). The years and sample sizes of the surveys are in the Appendix Table A1. The surveys of six other Muslim-majority nations in the WVS (Albania, Azerbaijan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Iran, Morocco, and Turkey) did not include our key independent variable—support for Islamic law. Analyses are limited to respondents ages 18 years and older who self-identify as Muslim. In Algeria, which is 99 percent Muslim, the respondent's religion was not asked; thus we include every respondent. In some of our analyses, we pool the samples for all seven countries into a single sample, weighting each sample proportional to the size of the country's Muslim population.

The surveys of the seven nations considered here are among the first to assess public opinion in predominantly Muslim countries. Some of the surveys were conducted under difficult circumstances, including the temporary firing of Mustafa Hamarneh by the University of Jordan (personal communication from Mansoor Moaddel, 9/12/04). Did the politically repressive climate in some of these countries affect the candor with which respondents answered questions? While it undoubtedly did affect some respondents, Inglehart and Norris (2003) found that respondents in Muslim nations surveyed in the WVS were no different from respondents in Western nations in their willingness to express support for democracy. To partly take into account the possibility that political repression in a country affected respondents' willingness to voice opinions on the establishment of Islamic law and economic matters, we control for "repression" (described in the next section) in analyses of the pooled sample.

MEASURES

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

SUPPORT FOR IMPLEMENTING THE SHARI'A. To measure the orthodoxy/modernism continuum among Muslims we use a question on support for establishing Islamic law as the sole basis of jurisprudence:

⁵ The index combines scores on 10 political rights and 15 civil liberties (www.freedomhouse.org).

I would like to know your views about a good government. Which of these traits is (1) very important, (2) important, (3) somewhat important, (4) least important, or (5) not important for a good government to have?

It should implement only the laws of the *shari'a*.

We recode responses so that high values indicate support for implementing the *shari'a* while low values indicate opposition to this (1 = 5, 2 = 4, 4 = 2, 5 = 1). The response categories, because they differ from the standard Likert scale (i.e., strongly agree, somewhat agree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat disagree, strongly disagree), may have resulted in some acquiescence bias, although other surveys of some of the same countries, using Likert scales, found similar high levels of support for implementing Islamic law as we find (Hassan 2002; Pew Research Center for the People and the Press 2003). Because popular discourse and Islamist movements in each of these countries center on whether the *shari'a* should be the sole basis of all law, should be limited to family matters, or should have no influence on legal codes, the question should be easily interpretable as referring to the application of Islamic law in *all* realms of life.

Using the degree of support for implementing the *shari'a* to measure Islamic orthodoxy/modernism is consistent with the orthodox desire to establish and uphold what they see as divinely ordained eternal laws that apply to all members of the community, and with the contrary modernist belief that legal codes should reflect the times and draw upon multiple sources, including secular ones. In our research on Judeo-Christian nations, we used agreement with the statement "Right and wrong should be based on God's laws," among other items, to distinguish the orthodox from modernists (Davis and Robinson 1996a, 1996b, 1997, 1999a, 1999b, 2001). While implementation of the *shari'a* has both religious and political implications, this is not surprising in the case of Islam since Muhammad unified religion and the state in the first Islamic state of the seventh century. Nonetheless, under the possibility that the most politicized Muslims might be both more supportive of establishing Islamic law solely for political motives (Woltering 2002:1134) and more favorable toward economically progressive policies, we control for *discusses politics*, based on the question: "When

you get together with your friends, would you say you discuss political matters (3) frequently, (2) occasionally, or (1) never?" We use this to indicate the most rudimentary level of politicization—debating political issues with others—in the absence of measures of higher levels of political involvement (e.g., membership in political organizations, participation in protest). If support for implementing the *shari'a* is merely capturing politicization, then inclusion of this variable should reduce its effects on economic attitudes.

It could also be argued that any effect of support for implementing the *shari'a* on economic attitudes may be due to an underlying nationalism or rejection of the West (including Western jurisprudence, foreign domination of the economy, debt dependency on the West, neoliberal economic restructuring required by the IMF or World Bank, and globalization), which could produce egalitarian economic stances. Thus, we control for *national pride*, the best indicator of nationalistic values in the WVS, and strongly linked, in a recent survey of nationalism in Iraq, to oppositional attitudes toward foreign occupation (Moaddel, Inglehart, and Tessler 2005). Respondents were asked, "How proud are you to be [nationality]," and responses are coded (1) not at all proud, (2) not very proud, (3) quite proud, or (4) very proud.

SOCIOECONOMIC VARIABLES. We also test whether advantaged Muslims are less egalitarian than disadvantaged Muslims, as (H₅) posits following the underdog principle, or whether Muslims of all classes are equally willing to support egalitarian economic arrangements, as the voluntary communitarianism assumed by Islamic economics implies. In our models, *education* is in eight ordered categories ranging from (1) no formal education to (8) university-level education, with degree. *Household income* before taxes, counting all wages, salaries, pensions, and other income, is coded in deciles by the local investigators in each country—with (1) as the lowest decile and (10) as the highest. *Occupation/employment* status is a dummy variable series identifying owner/manager, professional, white collar, blue collar, army, student, housewife/retired, and unemployed (reference category).

CONTROL VARIABLES. *Mosque attendance* is how often, apart from weddings and funerals, the respondent attends religious services, and ranges from (1) never or practically never to (7) more than once a week. We make no prediction for the effect of mosque attendance since it is an indicator of *orthopraxy* (engaging in the rituals and practices of a faith tradition) rather than of *orthodoxy*, the focus of our theory. While for Muslims, *orthopraxy* is at least as important as *orthodoxy* (Halliday 2003:58; Kuran 1997), we later show that it is generally not contact with fellow worshipers in itself but whether the individual holds the orthodox moral cosmology that leads to communitarian economic stances. Nonetheless, following Brooks (2002), we test with an interaction term whether support for Islamic law, coupled with frequent mosque attendance, leads to exceptionally high economic communitarianism because exposure to clergy, sacred texts, and fellow worshipers may intensify the effects of the respondent's moral cosmology (see also Starks and Robinson 2005). The highest correlation between support for the *shari'a* and mosque attendance is .261 in Algeria, but to reduce multicollinearity in analyses including the interaction of these, we centered each of them on its country mean (or the pooled mean for analyses of the pooled sample) before creating the interactions (Aiken and West 1991:35). We also control for *age* coded in years; *gender*, coded as (1) male and (0) female; *marital status*, coded as (1) single and (0) married, widowed, or divorced; and *urban*, measured as size of town in eight categories from (1) under 2,000 to (8) 500,000 or more.

In analyses of the pooled sample of seven countries, we test for the additive effect of *standard of living* (under H_3) and the interactive effect of this with *support for Islamic law* (under H_4). The United Nation's (2001) HDI is used as a measure of standard of living. We also control for *repression*, measured as the country's 2000–01 rating by Freedom House. To test for the interactive effects of support for Islamic law with HDI and repression, we include interactions of these variables, computed after centering each variable. While the Gini coefficient, a measure of economic inequality, might also be expected to affect economic attitudes, this is unavailable for Saudi Arabia and has far less effect on economic attitudes than HDI in the remaining countries.

DEPENDENT VARIABLES: ECONOMIC ATTITUDES

We analyze the effect of moral cosmology and socioeconomic characteristics on three economic attitudes that contrast communitarian/egalitarian economic policies with individualistic policies. Both our Moral Cosmology theory (H_1), which applies to all of the Abrahamic traditions, and the alternate hypothesis (H_2), which is based specifically on the tenets of Islam, lead us to expect an association between cosmology and support for government efforts to care for the needy. *Everyone provided for* is the respondent's self-placement on a 1 to 10 scale, where (1) indicates complete agreement that "people should take more responsibility to provide for themselves" and (10) complete agreement that "the government should take more responsibility to ensure that everyone is provided for."

Moral Cosmology theory (H_1) posits that support for the *shari'a* should also be positively associated with a desire for greater income equality. Because Islamic texts do not enjoin economic equality, the alternate hypothesis, (H_2), posits no effect of support for the *shari'a* on the belief that incomes should be equalized. We test these hypotheses using the variable *more equal incomes*, where (1) is complete agreement that "we need larger income differences as incentives for individual effort" and (10) that "incomes should be made more equal."

Finally, while Moral Cosmology theory expects support for Islamic law also to be positively associated with a desire for government nationalization of businesses as a means to meet community needs (H_1), Islamic sacred texts appear to regard private property as inviolable and take no clear position on government ownership, leading us to hypothesize under the alternate hypothesis, (H_2), that orthodox Muslims will not differ from modernist Muslims on nationalization of businesses. We test these hypotheses using *more government ownership*, where (1) indicates complete agreement that "private ownership of business and industry should be increased" and (10) that "government ownership of business and industry should be increased." Because Moral Cosmology theory and the alternate hypothesis differ on which economic attitudes are linked with support for Islamic law, we analyze these attitudes separately.

Table 1. Attitudes Toward Implementation of the *Shari'a* among Muslims in Seven Muslim-Majority Countries

Country (HDI)	A good government "should implement only the laws of the <i>shari'a</i> ."					Total	
	Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Least Important	Not Important	%	N
Bangladesh (.47)	21.7	23.6	23.8	21.8	9.2	100.1	1,120
Pakistan (.49)	36.4	25.1	30.9	6.3	1.2	99.9	1,949
Egypt (.64)	48.0	34.0	9.4	7.8	0.9	100.1	2,800
Indonesia (.68)	15.0	37.6	25.8	12.3	9.3	100.0	875
Algeria (.69)	36.7	34.9	15.5	7.3	5.5	99.9	1,177
Jordan (.71)	53.7	26.2	13.2	3.3	3.6	100.0	1,121
Saudi Arabia (.75)	73.8	14.7	7.3	2.6	1.7	100.0	880
Pooled Sample	29.1	30.5	23.5	11.2	5.6	99.9	9,847

Note: HDI = Human Development Index; N = number of cases. Source: World Values Surveys, 2000–2003.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

We use ordinary least squares (OLS) regression to estimate the effect of support for Islamic law, socioeconomic characteristics, and control variables on economic attitudes in each country. Since direction is predicted for most independent variables (positive for *shari'a* and negative for socioeconomic variables and HDI), we use one-tailed tests of significance for these variables and two-tailed tests when direction is not predicted (mosque attendance, age, gender, marital status, and urban). In our analyses of the pooled sample of all countries, we cannot use hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) to estimate the effects of individual-level vs. country-level variables on economic attitudes, because the small number of countries precludes this. In our OLS analyses of the pooled samples, we include the additive effects of HDI and repression and the interactive effects of each of these with support for the *shari'a*.

RESULTS

SUPPORT FOR IMPLEMENTING THE SHARI'A AND ECONOMIC ATTITUDES

Table 1 shows the distribution by country of support for implementing Islamic law. We order the countries from low to high on the HDI since we expect this to be the key country-level variable affecting support for egalitarian economic policies (H_3) and how this support relates to support for Islamic law (H_4). Note that because we limit our analyses to self-identified Muslims and in no country do more than 0.7 percent of respondents report that they do *not* believe in God,

there are almost no secularists or nonbelievers in the samples.

The desire to implement Islamic law is widely held among Muslims in the seven Muslim-majority nations considered here.⁶ There is, however, considerable variation across countries, with Saudi Arabians showing the strongest support and Indonesians the least. Popular support for implementing Islamic law in all realms of life is loosely connected to which domains the *shari'a* currently covers in each country. In Saudi Arabia, where the *shari'a* is the sole basis of the legal code, nearly three-fourths of the population (73.8 percent) regards implementation of this as "very important" to good government. In countries where Islamic law applies only to family matters, lower levels of support are found for instituting the *shari'a* as a total system of law (53.7 percent in Jordan, 48.0 percent in Egypt, 36.7 percent in Algeria, 36.4 percent in Pakistan, and 15.0 percent in Indonesia). In Bangladesh, where Islamic law has no role in the legal system, 21.7 percent regard establishing the *shari'a* in all realms of life as "very important." The strong popular support in Saudi

⁶ In Hassan's (2002) surveys of Pakistan, Egypt, and Indonesia, most respondents agreed that "Muslim society must be based on the Qur'an and *Shariah* law" (93 percent in each), and few agreed that "It is not practical or realistic to base a complex modern society on the *Shariah* law" (17 percent, 10 percent, and 21 percent, respectively). In a survey by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press (2003), many Jordanians (73 percent), Bangladeshis (74 percent), Indonesians (82 percent), and Pakistanis (86 percent) believed that Islam should play a "very" or "fairly" large role in political life.

Arabia, Jordan, and Egypt for implementing the *shari'a* suggests that were these countries to become less repressive, the democracies established might not resemble what Western promoters of democracy in the Muslim world would envision. While very few respondents say that implementation of the *shari'a* is "not important," disinterest in implementing this is highest in Bangladesh and Indonesia (9.2 and 9.3 percent, respectively), perhaps due to the presence and influence of Hindus in the former and of Christians, Hindus, and Buddhists in the latter, and the resulting syncretic nature of Islam in these countries (Nash 1991:715; SBS World Guide 2003:64, 347).

The distinction among Muslims in these nations is not between equal-sized groups of the religiously orthodox and modernists. As we found in our analyses of predominantly Christian and Jewish nations, populations rarely fall into polarized camps along cosmological lines. Instead, there is a continuum of belief, and in some countries the distribution is skewed toward the orthodox pole, in others it is approximately normal, while in still others it is skewed toward the modernist pole (Davis and Robinson 1996a, 1996b, 1996c, 1997, 1999a, 1999b, 2001). Moral cosmology is a matter of degree, and we will show that the strongest advocates of the *shari'a* are more communitarian in their economic positions than those who are less enthusiastic, or not at all, about implementing this.

In Table 2, we show the means by country on the three economic attitudes considered here. Recall that responses range from (1) economi-

cally individualistic to (10) economically communitarian, making the midpoint 5.5. Among Muslims in these countries, popular support is greatest for government taking more responsibility to ensure that everyone is provided for, as opposed to individuals taking more responsibility for themselves (6.06 in the pooled sample). Preferences between making incomes more equal and increasing income differences as an incentive to individual effort lean toward the latter (4.24 in the pooled sample). The relative disinterest in equalizing incomes may be because the Qur'an does not enjoin economic equality but does mandate *zakat* to care for those in need. Yet surprisingly, since the Qur'an also appears to hold private property as inviolable and takes no clear position on nationalization of businesses, Muslims support increasing government ownership of economic resources (5.64) almost as much as they support increasing government efforts to care for the needy. Muslims living in countries with higher living standards tend to be less supportive of increasing government efforts to care for the poor (the correlation is $-.21$) and equalizing incomes ($-.45$), as expected under (H_3), but more supportive of increasing government ownership (.34). We explore these relationships through multivariate analyses of the pooled sample.

To put the economic stances of Muslims in a global context, Norris and Inglehart (2004:171, Table 7.4) report that residents of predominantly Muslim nations surveyed in the WVS are more likely than residents of predominantly Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, or

Table 2. Means and Standard Deviations of Economic Attitudes among Muslims in Seven Muslim-Majority Countries

Country (HDI)	Everyone Provided For			More Equal Incomes			More Government Ownership		
	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N
Bangladesh (.47)	5.55	3.45	1,294	3.40	2.82	1,293	5.28	3.38	1,291
Pakistan (.49)	7.13	1.92	1,647	7.17	2.15	1,461	5.11	1.65	1,259
Egypt (.64)	6.61	2.76	2,830	2.77	2.06	2,830	6.70	2.86	2,830
Indonesia (.68)	5.97	3.13	895	3.84	2.34	883	5.86	2.66	885
Algeria (.69)	6.11	3.01	1,252	2.91	2.57	1,261	5.06	3.19	1,192
Jordan (.71)	6.96	2.87	1,099	3.56	2.72	1,107	5.83	2.98	1,040
Saudi Arabia (.75)	5.19	2.58	999	4.19	2.37	999	5.58	2.48	983
Pooled Sample	6.06	2.98	9,854	4.24	2.83	9,566	5.64	2.79	9,268

Note: HDI = Human Development Index; SD = standard deviation; N = number of cases. Source: World Values Surveys, 2000–2003.

Eastern (Asian) nations, but not Protestant nations, to favor increased government responsibility for everyone, more likely to support greater government ownership than the residents of all except Eastern Orthodox and Eastern nations, but less likely to favor equalizing incomes than residents of all except Eastern Orthodox nations.

EXPLAINING ECONOMIC ATTITUDES

We begin our analyses of the determinants of economic attitudes by showing the zero-order associations between support for implementing Islamic law and economic egalitarianism in Table 3, Model 1. From our Moral Cosmology theory (H_1), we expect support for implementing the *shari'a*, as an indicator of religious orthodoxy among Muslims, to be associated with communitarian economic attitudes, including support for the government taking more responsibility to provide for everyone, for a more equal income distribution, and for greater government ownership of businesses and industries. The alternate hypothesis (H_2), based on the specific economic tenets of Islam, posits a narrower effect of orthodoxy, only on support for increased government responsibility for everyone. We find strong confirmation in the bivariate associations for the broad communitarian effects expected under Moral Cosmology theory. The desire to implement Islamic law as the sole legal foundation of the state is positively and significantly associated with support for greater government effort to provide for everyone in six of the seven countries (the exception being Saudi Arabia), with wanting to equalize incomes in three countries (Pakistan, Indonesia, and Algeria), and with support for increased government ownership in six countries (the exception being Indonesia). The effects of orthodoxy on support for greater government effort to care for the needy could be explained by both hypotheses, but the totality of effects, including those on support for equalizing incomes and greater government ownership of businesses, can be explained only by Moral Cosmology theory.

The effects of support for Islamic law on economic attitudes are remarkably robust as successive sets of controls are added in Models 2 through 4. In Model 2, we add controls for gender, age, marital status, urban residence,

and mosque attendance; only three of the 15 effects of support for Islamic law become non-significant. Adding further controls for education, income, and occupation in Model 3 reduces none of the effects of support for Islamic law to nonsignificance, indicating that not much of the economic communitarianism of supporters of the *shari'a* is due to a tendency for them to be less economically advantaged. The addition of politicization and national pride in Model 4 also has no effect on the significance of support for Islamic law, suggesting that any tendency for such supporters to be more politicized or nationalistic is not responsible for their progressive stances on economic justice.

Effects of support for Islamic law on the desire for increased government responsibility for all and nationalization of businesses are stronger in countries with low standards of living (especially Bangladesh) than in those with higher living standards (Saudi Arabia and Jordan); the correlations of HDI with these coefficients across countries are $-.49$ and $-.32$, respectively. HDI has little effect on the strength of the relationship between support for the *shari'a* and equalizing incomes (.13). We explore these relationships further in analyses of the pooled sample.

The proportions of variance explained (R^2 s) in the three economic attitudes by the independent variables in Model 4 are modest, as earlier analyses of similar economic beliefs in the United States, Europe, and Israel have found (e.g., Davis and Robinson 1996a, 1999b; Form and Hanson 1985; Knoke, Raffalovich, and Erskine 1987). Nonetheless, the overall F-tests for Model 4 are significant in every case except for *everyone provided for* in Saudi Arabia and *more government ownership* in Indonesia, and the pattern of positive effects of religious orthodoxy on communitarian economic attitudes is clear. With all controls, 12 out of the 21 possible associations of support for Islamic law as the sole legal basis of the state with egalitarian economic attitudes are significant. We estimate the probability of obtaining this number of significant coefficients by chance very conservatively at .0000176.⁷ Had we posited an opposite

⁷ We assume the three dependent variables (economic attitudes) are perfectly correlated (1.000) and estimate the probability of obtaining 12 of 21 (or 4

Table 3. OLS Regression Coefficients of Support for Implementing the Shari'a in Models Explaining Economic Attitudes among Muslims in Seven Muslim-Majority Countries

Country and Model (HDI)	Everyone Provided For	More Equal Incomes	More Government Ownership
Bangladesh (.47)			
1. No Controls	.648*	-.012	.512*
2. +Male, Age, Single, Urban, Mosque Attendance	.683*	.059	.591*
3. +Education, Income, Occupation	.641*	.006	.574*
4. +Discusses Politics, National Pride	.635*	.029	.628*
R ²	.150	.128	.125
N	1040	1047	1042
Pakistan (.49)			
1. No Controls	.302*	.230*	.082*
2. +Male, Age, Single, Urban, Mosque Attendance	.182*	.067	.038
3. +Education, Income, Occupation	.180*	.065	.039
4. +Discusses Politics, National Pride	.193*	.075	.047
R ²	.216	.205	.096
N	1610	1425	1229
Egypt (.64)			
1. No Controls	.249*	-.013	.155*
2. +Male, Age, Single, Urban, Mosque Attendance	.235*	-.016	.141*
3. +Education, Income, Occupation	.188*	-.023	.098*
4. +Discusses Politics, National Pride	.206*	-.029	.103*
R ²	.072	.018	.054
N	2678	2678	2678
Indonesia (.68)			
1. No Controls	.549*	.146*	.048
2. +Male, Age, Single, Urban, Mosque Attendance	.536*	.211*	.037
3. +Education, Income, Occupation	.524*	.198*	.016
4. +Discusses Politics, National Pride	.453*	.192*	.010
R ²	.086	.085	.031
N	834	826	823
Algeria (.69)			
1. No Controls	.238*	.176*	.228*
2. +Male, Age, Single, Urban, Mosque Attendance	.262*	.190*	.221*
3. +Education, Income, Occupation	.224*	.152*	.226*
4. +Discusses Politics, National Pride	.222*	.152*	.221*
R ²	.062	.071	.040
N	1098	1105	1056
Jordan (.71)			
1. No Controls	.161*	.104	.277*
2. +Male, Age, Single, Urban, Mosque Attendance	.138	.121	.313*
3. +Education, Income, Occupation	.116	.072	.278*
4. +Discusses Politics, National Pride	.113	.074	.281*
R ²	.026	.050	.051
N	1072	1072	1020
Saudi Arabia (.75)			
1. No Controls	.134	-.005	.271*
2. +Male, Age, Single, Urban, Mosque Attendance	.139	-.001	.281*
3. +Education, Income, Occupation	.152	-.003	.299*
4. +Discusses Politics, National Pride	.164	-.007	.278*
R ²	.015	.021	.089
N	868	866	853

Note: OLS = ordinary least square; HDI = Human Development Index; N = number of cases. Source: World Values Surveys, 2000–2003. * $p < .05$.

effect of orthodoxy among Muslims, we would have found no support for this in any of the seven nations. We conclude from these analyses of each country that there is strong support for the broad effects of religious orthodoxy on egalitarian economic beliefs that our Moral Cosmology theory posits.

To examine further the economic effects of support for Islamic law and how these vary depending on country-level factors (e.g., standard of living, political repression), we conduct OLS analyses on the pooled sample for the seven countries. These analyses are shown in Table 4.

Support for establishing the *shari'a* is positively associated in the pooled sample with wanting greater government responsibility for everyone, more equal incomes, and increased government ownership of businesses and industries. The effects of support for Islamic law on greater government responsibility and greater government ownership are robust when successive sets of controls are added in Models 2 through 5. While the effect of support for the *shari'a* on equalizing incomes disappears when controls for HDI, repression, and the interactions with support for the *shari'a* are added in Model 5, the interaction of support for Islamic law with mosque attendance is significant. Thus, supporters of Islamic law who go to the mosque frequently are especially likely to favor equalizing incomes, perhaps because they are receiving reinforcement for their communitarian beliefs from like-minded clergy and fellow worshipers (see Brooks 2002; Starks and Robinson 2005). With all controls added (Model 5), the standardized coefficients (not shown) indicate that support for establishing Islamic law is the single-most important factor in support for greater government responsibility to care for everyone and the third-most important factor (after education and HDI) in support for increased government ownership of businesses.

We made no prediction as to the effect of mosque attendance on economic communitar-

ianism. The inconsistent effects of mosque attendance—positive on equalizing incomes but negative on greater government ownership (Model 5)—may arise for a number of reasons. Mosques differ in type from government-controlled to independent, in theological orientation, in whether a political message is delivered, and in the content of that message. Attendance may occur for nonreligious reasons (e.g., out of a desire to appear faithful or socially acceptable to others, to make business or political contacts, or for purely social reasons). Nonattendance need not indicate a lack of religious commitment; it can arise from distrust of the religious leadership, for example, because this is appointed by, accommodates to, or colludes with a largely secular and/or corrupt regime. Most important, while the communitarianism of orthodoxy is a broad worldview that is not limited in its implications to the narrow community of fellow worshipers, the sense of community created through mosque attendance may be limited to the specific congregation. In a U.S. study, Ryle and Robinson (2006) found that the orthodox cosmology was the strongest predictor of a sense of community with neighbors, friends, fellow congregants, co-workers/fellow students, and ethnic group members, while frequent attendance at religious services had no effect in promoting such feelings beyond attachment to fellow congregants.

The Islamist economic program of “Islamic economics” assumes that even advantaged Muslims will voluntarily opt for more egalitarian economic relations (Kuran 1997, 2004). From the underdog principle (Robinson and Bell 1978), we hypothesized (H_5) to the contrary, that class matters in economic attitudes; advantaged Muslims will be less supportive of government efforts to care for the needy, equalize incomes, and nationalize businesses. The economic self-interest expected by the underdog principle is evident in these models, with highly educated people and those with high household incomes being less supportive of progressive economic reforms, with one exception, which we later discuss. Contrary to this principle, unemployed people are less supportive of increasing government responsibility for everyone and equalizing incomes than almost any other occupational category, although otherwise there is no systematic effect of occupation (e.g., between owners/managers and

of 7 since the three items are assumed to be perfectly correlated) outcomes with .05 probability as $7!/(4!3!) \times (.05)^4(.95)^3 = 1.76 \times 10^{-5}$. Yet, the highest correlation between any two economic attitudes is only .123. If we instead assume that these are independent (i.e., their correlation is 0), the probability is $21!/(12!9!) \times (.05)^{12}(.95)^9 = 4.52 \times 10^{-11}$.

Table 4. OLS Regression Models Explaining Economic Attitudes, Pooled Sample of Muslims in Seven Muslim-Majority Countries

Variables and Models	Models				
	1	2	3	4	5
Everyone Provided for (N = 9,006)					
Model 1					
<i>Shari'a</i>	.558*	.548*	.486*	.489*	.421*
Model 2					
Mosque attendance	—	.021*	.032*	.030	-.003
Model 3					
Education	—	—	-.156*	-.172*	-.121*
Household income	—	—	-.112*	-.113*	-.083*
Owner/manager	—	—	.532	.519	.455
Professional	—	—	.208	.219	.164
White collar	—	—	.536	.524	.552
Blue collar	—	—	.448	.467	.457
Army	—	—	.884	.894	.740
Student	—	—	.129	.122	.084
Housewife/retired	—	—	.534	.562	.458
Model 4					
Discusses politics	—	—	—	-.191*	-.230*
National pride	—	—	—	-.252*	-.367*
Model 5					
HDI	—	—	—	—	-1.971*
Repression	—	—	—	—	.325*
<i>Shari'a</i> x attendance	—	—	—	—	.017
<i>Shari'a</i> x HDI	—	—	—	—	-1.380*
<i>Shari'a</i> x repression	—	—	—	—	-.210*
Constant	4.021	3.987	4.732	6.119	6.534
R ²	.050	.051	.082	.086	.106
More Equal Incomes (N = 8,746)					
Model 1					
<i>Shari'a</i>	.166*	.146*	.064*	.065*	.029
Model 2					
Mosque attendance	—	.193*	.213*	.216*	.148*
Model 3					
Education	—	—	-.194*	-.186*	-.052*
Household income	—	—	-.190*	-.188*	-.126*
Owner/manager	—	—	.561	.552	.555
Professional	—	—	.290	.272	.339
White collar	—	—	.805	.799	1.068
Blue collar	—	—	.453	.429	.663
Army	—	—	1.456	1.447	1.441
Student	—	—	.670	.659	.696
Housewife/retired	—	—	.966	.946	.759
Model 4					
Discusses politics	—	—	—	.212*	.171*
National pride	—	—	—	.021	-.283*
Model 5					
HDI	—	—	—	—	-7.994*
Repression	—	—	—	—	.568*
<i>Shari'a</i> x attendance	—	—	—	—	.055*
<i>Shari'a</i> x HDI	—	—	—	—	-1.505*
<i>Shari'a</i> x repression	—	—	—	—	-.065*
Constant	3.705	2.923	3.813	3.232	5.848
R ²	.005	.021	.089	.091	.181

(Continued on next page)

Table 4. (continued)

Variables and Models	Models				
	1	2	3	4	5
More Government Ownership (N = 8,442)					
Model 1					
<i>Shari'a</i>	.201*	.230*	.216*	.217*	.204*
Model 2					
Mosque attendance	—	-.125*	-.121*	-.124*	-.108*
Model 3					
Education	—	—	-.105*	-.116*	-.163*
Household income	—	—	.073	.072	.060
Owner/manager	—	—	-.045	-.051	-.126
Professional	—	—	.274	.284	.119
White collar	—	—	.640	.634	.417
Blue collar	—	—	.214	.229	.013
Army	—	—	.285	.292	.114
Student	—	—	.451	.445	.374
Housewife/retired	—	—	.215	.232	.256
Model 4					
Discusses politics	—	—	—	-.163*	-.181*
National pride	—	—	—	-.155*	-.078
Model 5					
HDI	—	—	—	—	4.006*
Repression	—	—	—	—	-.006
<i>Shari'a</i> x attendance	—	—	—	—	.000
<i>Shari'a</i> x HDI	—	—	—	—	-1.332*
<i>Shari'a</i> x repression	—	—	—	—	-.022
Constant	4.971	6.049	5.933	6.896	5.247
R ²	.008	.024	.035	.037	.056

Note: Model 2 also includes age, gender, marital status, and urban residence. OLS = ordinary least square; HDI = Human Development Index; N = number of cases. Source: World Values Surveys, 2000–2003

* $p < .05$, one-tailed test (two-tailed for mosque attendance, repression, and *shari'a* x repression).

blue-collar workers) on economic attitudes. Overall, there is more support for the rational choice, underdog principle than for the assumption of Islamic economics that advantaged Muslims can be counted on to support communitarian economic arrangements.

Discussing politics frequently or having a strong sense of national pride, when added in Model 4, do not diminish the effects of support for Islamic law on economic attitudes. Muslims who discuss politics frequently are less likely to want greater government responsibility for the needy and greater government ownership but more likely to want incomes to be equalized. An interaction term, testing the possibility that supporters of Islamic law who are politicized are exceptionally egalitarian, is not significant for any of the economic attitudes (details available on request). Nor are the effects of orthodoxy due to any tendency for nationalistic Muslims to be both more supportive of Islamic law out of an

anti-West sentiment, and more egalitarian or anti-capitalist in their economic views. Muslims with strong pride in their country are actually less favorable toward increasing government responsibility for everyone and equalizing incomes.

As we hypothesized under (H₃), high standards of living (HDI) are negatively related to support for government taking more responsibility for everyone and for equalizing incomes, apparently reflecting the feeling that when the country as a whole is doing reasonably well economically, there are fewer needy to take care of (or that they are less deserving of help) and less necessity for government to support the poor or equalize incomes. Interestingly, with a two-tailed test, HDI is *positively* related to support for increased government ownership of businesses, suggesting that Muslims in high-HDI countries may feel that state ownership ensures prosperity. High income and white-

collar occupation are also positively associated with support for government ownership (had we used two-tailed tests). This may indicate support among high-status groups for the crony capitalism and family patronage systems that characterize the *rentier* economies of some of the nations (Algeria, Egypt, Indonesia, and Saudi Arabia) in our study. Those who are better off in such states are likely to benefit directly from state control of productive resources through their association with government elites (Fandy 1999:34–36; Moaddel 2002:377).

To test whether support for Islamic law has a stronger effect on economic egalitarianism in countries with lower standards of living, as we hypothesized under (H₄), we include interactions of support for the *shari'a* with HDI in Model 5. The significant negative effects of these interactions indicate that, as expected, the lower the country's standard of living, the greater the effect that support for Islamic law has on all three economic attitudes. Failing to meet the needs of the citizenry strengthens effects of Islamic orthodoxy on the desire for egalitarian economic reform.

Political repression, which is only modestly correlated with HDI (–.079), is associated with a desire for greater government responsibility for everyone and more equal incomes, possibly because repressive governments are less likely to look out for those in need. Interestingly, the more repressive the government, the less effect that support for the *shari'a* has on wanting greater government responsibility for everyone and more equal incomes. In politically repressive regimes, orthodox Muslims, who are the objects of government repression in some of these countries, may prefer that Islamic non-governmental organizations (NGOs), rather than the state, provide for the poor and needy. As we later discuss, this is the strategy that most Islamist movements have adopted when faced with government repression and corruption (Carapico 2000).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Through analyses of seven Muslim-majority nations, we tested two alternate hypotheses linking orthodoxy vs. modernism in Islam with economic attitudes. Our Moral Cosmology theory assumes similar effects of moral cosmology on economic (and cultural) attitudes within

all of the Abrahamic faith traditions. Specifically, we argue that the theological communitarianism of the religiously orthodox inclines them to favor communitarian/egalitarian economic arrangements (and communitarian/authoritarian cultural policies that seek to impose what they see as divinely ordained standards on abortion, sexuality, family, and gender). In contrast, the theological individualism of modernists disposes them toward individualistic, laissez-faire economic arrangements (and individualistic/libertarian cultural policies). While Moral Cosmology theory does not depend on the specific content of Islam, the alternate hypothesis, based on tenets of Islam with regard to economic matters, limits the effect of orthodoxy only to government aid to the needy, which is supported by the Islamic pillar of *zakat*, and posits no effects on equalizing incomes or government ownership of businesses.

We found that in all seven nations, orthodoxy—measured as support for the implementation of Islamic law (the *shari'a*) as the sole legal foundation of the state—is associated with support for one or more of the following economic reforms: greater government responsibility to provide for everyone, equalization of incomes, or increased government ownership of business. That orthodoxy is linked in these countries, not only with support for government provision for those in need, but with support for other progressive economic policies that are not enjoined by Islamic texts, supports our Moral Cosmology theory linking orthodoxy to communitarian economic policies in all of the Abrahamic traditions. In additional analyses not reported in this article but available on request, we tested the argument of Moral Cosmology theory that orthodoxy is associated with cultural communitarianism or authoritarianism, and found that support for the implementation of Islamic law is significantly related in each of the seven countries to two or more of the following: (1) agreement that “men make better political leaders than women do,” (2) agreement that abortion is never justifiable, (3) agreement that homosexuality is never justifiable, and (4) agreement that divorce is never justifiable.

Thus, the link between religious orthodoxy and economic communitarianism that we found earlier in societies that are predominantly

Protestant (Norway, United States), mixed Protestant and Catholic (West Germany), Catholic (Austria, Ireland, Italy, Poland, Portugal), Eastern Orthodox (Bulgaria, Romania), and Jewish (Israel; Davis and Robinson 1996a, 1997, 1999a, 1999b, 2001) holds in seven predominantly Muslim societies as well—18 societies in all. We caution, however, that economic conditions or unique historical circumstances may affect whether Moral Cosmology theory holds in a specific context. As we found for the seven Muslim-majority nations considered here, depressed economic conditions may strengthen the link between orthodoxy and economic communitarianism, while better economic conditions weaken this. Historical contingencies may also matter. In our earlier analyses of European countries, we found that modernists in France are actually to the left of the orthodox on economic issues—the reverse of the expected pattern (Davis and Robinson 1999b:1647). In explaining this, we noted Percheron's (1982:8) observation that "left and right in France today coincide in large part with the 'red' and 'white' of the Revolution," the red referring to anticlerical revolutionary Republicans and the white to Catholic loyalists.

While we found evidence of economic communitarianism among ordinary orthodox Muslims, is there also evidence of this in Islamist movements in Muslim-majority nations? We noted above that in politically repressive societies, support for Islamic law is less strongly related to a desire for greater government responsibility for everyone and equalizing incomes, and we suggested that orthodox Muslims may, in such states, prefer that economic needs of the citizenry be addressed by Islamic NGOs rather than the secular state (Carapico 2000). In highly repressive Egypt of the 1930s, the Muslim Brotherhood began to establish a broad network of welfare agencies, clinics, factories offering good wages and benefits, daycare centers, youth clubs, unemployment agencies, and so forth. After the 1992 Cairo earthquake, it was the Brotherhood, not the government, that stepped in to provide medical assistance, shelter, food, and clothing for the victims (Walsh 2003:34). This "state within a state" (Esposito 2003:71), while not the first choice of Islamists seeking to establish an Islamic state, became a model for "re-

Islamization from below" (Kepel 1994:33) that has been widely adopted throughout the Muslim world. Eschewing government funds and drawing on *zakat* contributions (as would an Islamic state), these welfare networks demonstrate that Islamist organizations can outperform secular governments in providing social services to citizens (Fuller 2003:27; Ghadbian 2000:80; Marty and Appleby 1992:150; Woltering 2002:1134).⁸

The cosmological and class differences that we found among Muslims in support for communitarian economic measures suggest that an Islamist call for progressive economic change would draw support from orthodox Muslims and from those at the bottom of educational and income hierarchies. One of the attractions of Islamist movements arguably is their emphasis on economic reform (Husain 2003:42) and their efforts to address, with varying degrees of success,⁹ human needs that established governments have been unwilling or unable to meet (Fuller 2003:27).

The landslide victory in the 2005 Iranian presidential election of Islamist Mahmoud Ahmadinejad over Akbar Hasmeni Rafsanjani, a reformist/modernist, stunned Western observers, who had assumed that cultural liberties initiated by outgoing reformist president, Muhammad Khatami, would continue. In a country where the official jobless rate is 11 percent and inflation 14 percent, Ahmadinejad promised to put the poor at the top of his agenda, pledged to renationalize the oil industry and redistribute its wealth, and condemned the reformists' reintroduction of private banks and privatization of state-owned industries for increasing the gap between rich and poor (Reed

⁸ Not all "welfare Islam" has been initiated by orthodox movements. The *Muhammadiyah* movement in Indonesia, though it scrupulously avoids politics, is modernist in its opposition to the implementation of the *shari'a*. Yet, it established a welfare network and school system that serves needs unmet by the state (Nash 1991; Fuad 2002).

⁹ An ethnography of Islamic NGOs in Egypt, Jordan, and Yemen found them to be more effective in providing employment for the many unemployed and underemployed professionals (doctors, nurses, social workers) and building ties among middle-class service providers and clients than in addressing the needs of the poor (Clark 2004).

and Pirouz 2005, *Economist* 2005). The *New York Times* (Slackman 2005) reported that, "while [Ahmadinejad] often invoked God and his faith, he has usually done so in the context of populist proposals to lower prices, raise salaries, and create jobs." Ahmadinejad's critique of corruption and cronyism in Iran's *rentier* economy and his social conservatism contrasted sharply with Rafsanjani's neoliberalism (ending subsidies for bread, gas, and utilities; accelerating privatization; and encouraging foreign investment) and cultural progressivism (Pirouz and Reed 2005). While some might view Ahmadinejad's populism as strictly instrumental, he garnered 62 percent of the vote, drawing especially on the orthodox Muslim poor and unemployed (*Economist* 2005). Yet encouraging as Ahmadinejad's victory may be for Islamists throughout the Muslim world, the weaker commitment to economic communitarianism that we found among well-educated and highly paid Muslims suggests a problem for proponents of "Islamic economics," who assume that an Islamic state could rely on advantaged classes to willingly build an economically just society.

We conclude that while *zakat*, the pillar of Islam requiring Muslims to provide for those in need, may reinforce the tendency for Muslims who support implementation of the *shari'a* in all realms of life to be more economically egalitarian, the tendency for such Muslims to go beyond the tenets of their faith in supporting equalization of incomes or nationalization of businesses and industries cannot be attributed

to Islam per se, but rather to the economic communitarianism that we have argued characterizes the orthodox of all of the Abrahamic faith traditions. The culturally authoritarian impulse of orthodox Islam regarding the position of women, abortion, sexuality, and family has been well documented by other scholars (e.g., Hassani 2002; Inglehart and Norris 2003; Moaddel 1998), but as we have shown, among Muslims who want religion to be at the core of the state, there is an economically egalitarian face as well.

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Robert V. Robinson is Chancellor's Professor and Chair of the Department of Sociology at Indiana University. He recently completed studies of the effect of moral cosmology on Americans' sense of community (in City & Community with Robyn Ryle) and values for children (in Social Forces with Brian Starks). He is continuing work with Nancy Davis on religiously orthodox communitarian movements in Egypt, Italy, Israel, and the United States, on President Bush's democracy doctrine for the Muslim world, and on moral cosmology and political activism among Muslims.

APPENDIX

Table A1. Characteristics of the Surveys and Populations of Seven Muslim-Majority Nations

Country	Survey Characteristics		Population Characteristics		
	Year	N	Muslim, %	HDI	Political Repression
Bangladesh	2000	1,499	88	.47	3.5
Pakistan	2002	2,000	97	.49	5.5
Egypt	2001	3,000	94	.64	5.5
Indonesia	2001	1,004	92	.68	3.5
Algeria	2002	1,282	99	.69	5.5
Jordan	2001	1,233	96	.71	4.0
Saudi Arabia	2003	1,014*	99	.75	7.0

Note: Percent Muslim is from CIA World Factbook (2004). HDI is from United Nations (2001). Political repression in points, which ranges from 1 (low) to 7 (high), is from Freedom House (2001, Table 1). HDI = Human Development Index; N = number of cases.

*For Saudi citizens only.

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