Ennahda's Democratic Islam: Between Pragmatism AND Neo-Political Islam

Thesis

EIUC GC DE.MA

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<u>Declaration</u>

I, Yasmine Hajar, declare that this thesis is a result of my research, investigations, and findings. Sources of information other than my own have been acknowledged and a reference list has been added to the appendix. This work has not been previously submitted to any other university for award of any type of academic degree.

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Abstract

Recently, the Tunisian Islamist party Ennahda has announced a break up with Political Islam and the start of new phase of Democratic Islam *(al-Islām al-dimuqrāṭī)*. This study is questioning the emerged concept of Democratic Islam. Making use of primary and secondary materials, the author will indulge in the history of Ennahda with focus on the political shifts the party has undertaken since its initiation in the early seventies. The author will also analyze the political attitude of the party in the context of post-revolution. This study could be described as a comparative one as it will include a comparison of Ennahda's ideological thoughts with the authentic thoughts of the Ikhwani ideologues, Hasan Al-Banna and Sayyed Qutb, to analyze the changes that have been conducted by the party under its new claimed ideology. The purpose of this study is to show whether the step undertaken by Ennahda through adopting the so-called Democratic Islam is a sign of neo-political Islam or it is just a pragmatic step taken by Ennahda to yield itself to realpolitik, aiming at consolidating itself in power and not to repeat the years of political exclusion under Bourguiba and Bin Ali.

Keywords: Ennahda, Tunisia, Pragmatism, Political Islam, Islam, Democracy, Democratic Islam, Ikhwan, Realpolitik.

Acknowledgement

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A Note for The Reader

The citations in this research that are taken from references which have either an Arabic title written in English letters or French titles, in addition to all the interviews conducted have been translated into English word for word with care given to try to convey the intended meaning of the text or the interviewer.

Hypothesis:

Democratic Islam *(al-Islām al-dimuqrāṭī)* is Ennahda's pretense to subjugate its Islamic identity, mostly influenced by the Ikhwani (Muslim Brotherhood) ideology, to realpolitik.

Research Question:

Why could not the so-called Democratic Islam claimed by Ennahda be considered as step towards a neo-political Islam?

Research Statements:

I will be addressing the following statements throughout the paper;

i. Maneuvering is not new for Ennahda as Ennahda's history is a history of political pragmatism.

ii. Ennahda has historically seemed to prioritize realpolitik over ideology. The *Ikhwani* thoughts could be considered as the only permanent base for the party movement Ennahda *(Hizb Harakat Ennahda)*.

iii. Political pragmatism continued with Ennahda after the revolution of 2010 leading to the emergence of Democratic Islam, allowing Ennahda to act politically in a balanced attitude between protecting its Islamic *Ikhwani* identity while adapting to realpolitik.

iv. The political crisis after the 2011 elections has forced Ennahda to act a pragmatically in politics.

v. Democratic Islam *(al-Islām al-dimuqrāṭī)* is not an in-process neo-political Islam as claimed by Ennahda. Democratic Islam is Ennahda's reasoning to maintain a seat in power until it proves its political ability to lead the transition period and be democratically accepted by the people on a local, national and international scale.

Definitions

▪ **Ennahda**, the Islamic Tendency Movement previously, is a Tunisian Islamic party movement *(Hizb Hārakāt Ennahda)* that dates back to the seventies. After the revolution of 2010, this movement declared itself as a party and won the majority in the elections of the constitutional assembly in 2011. From then on, it stayed in power.

- **Democratic Islam is** Ennahda's new adopted ideology through which it affirms its acceptance of democracy and asserts the compatibility of Islam and democracy. Democratic Islam was put in contrast with political Islam which is known as the traditional contemporary understanding of politics in Islam as to establish the *khilāfah* (Islamic state) based on *sharī'ah* Islamic law. The Muslim brotherhood political Islam is the most prominent political Islam established by the thoughts of Ḥasan Al-Bannā, and Sayyid Quṭb and inspired by al-Mawdūdī and others. Throughout this research, I will be mostly referring to the *Ikhwani* ideology when I mention Political Islam.

- **Islamist**: It is the term employed to refer to the category of phenomena deemed influenced by Islam (broadly defined). These phenomena are directly related to the domain of politics.

- **Islamic**: It is the term employed to refer to the category of phenomena deemed influenced by Islam. These phenomena are largely considered as religious.

- **Pragmatism** is the agreement between the concepts and the world as Delaney raises it.[1] As to define beliefs and values in what is compatible with reality. Ideas will be defined according to their workable and useful criteria in a sense of prioritizing the actions and practices over doctrines and principles. Pragmatism turns fixed principles into instruments and tools to attain certain interests and practical goals. Pragmatism is driven by realpolitik. **Realpolitik** means adaptation to politics while disregarding ethical considerations. Realpolitik can be described as a solid ground. Ideas need to be flexible and malleable to adjust to that solid ground by meeting the required criteria of politics. As defined by Encyclopedia Britannica, realpolitik is "a politics of adaptation to things as they are. Realpolitik thus suggests a pragmatic, no-nonsense view and a disregard for ethical considerations."[2]

Introduction

Understanding the rise of political Islamist parties after the Arab uprisings is a milestone in understanding the throe of democracy in the Arab World and in expecting the future of

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[1] C. F. Delaney, 'Pragmatism and the Meaning of Truth', *Oxford University Press*, Vol. 68, No. 4, 1985, p. 525.

[2] *Encyclopedia Britannica,* [website], 2017, https://www.britannica.com/topic/realpolitik, (accessed 1 June 2017)

democracy in this region. The Islamist parties in the Arab World lack the political practicality by the fact that the post-independence regimes in the Arab world have been always excluding the Isalmists from the political life of their countries. Murad states that "the Islamists for a long time have been excluded from power, in exile or in jail. We are better of saying that they are inexperienced in governance instead of saying that they are incompetent."[3] As a result, the Islamist movements have never gotten the chance to practice politics while they wrote and theorize on what concerns political ruling. Before the Arab Uprisings, the Islamists struggled to be politically recognized. Although they sometimes had the chance to run for elections, they however found themselves persecuted in several ways by the authoritarian regimes in their countries; Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria, etc. These parties found themselves after the uprisings, started in 2010, in the midst of the political game, ruling after a revolution and chosen by a democratic election. At this moment, the Islamist parties started to hold the responsibility of the democratic transition of their countries. Islamists were faced with tremendous challenges; the power of the opposition, fired up population, economic and social crisis, and Islamists' traditional literature; which previously served as a back up to fight colonial rulers and, in post-independence, served to fight the Arab authoritarian regimes, yet lacks enough practical knowledge to build a state and nationally rule in decision-making positions. After the revolutions, they found themselves in the position where they are chosen to implement a real democracy in their countries after years of dictatorship. The Islamist parties then had to work intelligently and flexibly, otherwise they would be out of the game. Some were smart enough. Others, who were in power, are now in jail. Ennahda party was the former. It has been able to adapt quickly to the changes and demonstrate its flexibility. The shifts repetitively happening in Ennahda's political discourse have led it to be accused of being two-faced. Along these lines, Bedig argued that "in public representatives articulate moderate positions, but they sometimes reverse those positions quite unexpectedly. And in private, Ennahda leaders are thought to advocate much more conservative views to supporters."[4] Moreover, the Lebanese writer and

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[3] H. Murad, *Revolutions Arabes et Jihadism*, Tunis, Etablessement Boujmil d'edition et de Publicite, 2017, p. 33.

[4] A. Bedig, 'Ennahda's Split Personality: Identity crises in Tunisian Politics", *Web Highlights,* vol. 36, no.2, 2012, p. 117.

philosopher Dr. Ali Harb stated "Al-Ghannouchi is not with Islam unless it satisfies its political authority. As a result, we see Al-Ghannouchi wearing the cloak of Islam when he wishes to."[5]

After the elections of 2011, Ennahda adopted a pragmatic attitude fluctuating between traditional thoughts and modern stances. Democratic Islam *(al-Islām al-dimuqrāṭī)* currently emerged as a new ideology for Ennahda. Democratic Islam was put by the party in an opposition to the known traditional political Islam. My research will study the pragmatic attitude of Ennahda historically as well as in the context of post-revolution. In particular, I will be questioning the emerging concept of Democratic Islam pioneered by the party. This study could be described as a comparative one as it will include a comparison of Ennahda's ideological thoughts with the authentic thoughts of the Ikhwani ideologues, Hasan Al-Banna and Sayyed Qutb, to analyze the changes that have been conducted by the party under its new claimed ideology. The purpose of this study is to show whether the step undertaken by Ennahda through adopting the so-called Democratic Islam is a sign of neo-political Islam or it is just a pragmatic step taken to yield the religious identity to realpolitik, aiming at power consolidation and prevention of the repetition of the years of political exclusion under Bourguiba and Bin Ali.

I argue that the current shifts in the political discourse undertaken by Ennahda do not form a phase of metamorphosing into a civil party where Islam is considered as a non-binding moral or value system, whereas adopting Democratic Islam is not a sign of a neo-political Islam. Thus, Ennahda's pragmatism is only a political tactic that allows the party to balance its Islamic identity with the political circumstances of post-revolution.

Although Ennahda claims that the rupture with the Muslim Brotherhood's political Islam occurred, throughout my research I will try to show how this rapture is just an act taken by Ennahda to change its face from a face of political Islam to wear another face called Democratic Islam, without a serious intention of conducting new interpretations in political Islam. Moreover, as argued by Marks, because Ennahda lacks "expertise in governance and constitution writing to tension over exactly where it stands regarding core issues of principle and ideology. Such

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5 A. Harb, 'Rached Al-Ghannouchi: Mounkez am Mousha'wez', *Annahar Newspaper*, 11 June 2016, https://newspaper.annahar.com/article/403177- راشد-الغنوشي-منقذ-ام-مشعوذ (accessed 23 May 2017)

challenges of adaptation have made it difficult for Ennahda to develop coherent strategies"[6]. These two factors have made Ennahda pragmatic. No doubt that this attitude proves the political intelligence of Ennahda, making it different than other Islamist movements.

Determining what Ennahda's Democratic Islam could lead and produce in the far future is a separate question. Here, I am only investigating the basis of this pragmatism and how it is being presented. However, I will draw a speculation outside the scope of this research to where this pragmatism could lead Ennahda. Since analyzing the future of Ennahda's pragmatism is challenging because it dictates knowing the intentions of the party which cannot be known. I believe that this pragmatism could lead to one of two results; Ennahda would find itself in a state where it is forced by the fact of realpolitik to totally decry political Islam declaring itself as a secular party with non-binding Islamic identity and references, which means the failure of the claimed compatibility of Islam and democracy, or to produce a neo-political Islam formulated by new intellectual writings and new religious interpretations, *Ijtihādāt*, to prove that Islam and democracy are compatible.

Importance of The Topic

After my extensive research, I have found that almost all arguments made by media personnel, national and international academics, as well as politicians, on Ennahda's political attitude were based particularly but not exclusively on two main views. After the elections of 2011, many have antagonized the party by a conspiratist assumption, claiming that Ennahda has a hidden agenda behind its pragmatism.[7] Others have put faith in the political performance of

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[6] M. Marks, 'Convince, coerce, or compromise? Ennahda's approach to Tunisia's constitution', *Brookings*, no. 10, 2014, p. 3.

[7] Among the scholars who adopt or have a stance similar or closer to this view particularly but not exclusively are: Mounzer Bel-diyafi who has published in 2016 his second book on Ennahda under the title "Ennahda; Al-Hurub Min Al-Ma'bad Al-Ikhwani." Hatem Murad also shares similar view in his book *Revolutions Arabes et Jihadism*. Yadh Bin Achour in his recent publication titled *Tunisie une Revolution en pays d'islam has adopted similar view*. Amal Moussa and Zaghal in their 2015 publication titled *Harakat Al-Nahda bayna Al-Ikhwan wa AL-Tawnasa* studied Ennahda's ideology on the basis of the Ikhwani thoughts. Fathi Lisiri's recent publication titled *Dawlat AL-Huwat* also shares the similar view.

Ennahda, believing in the compatibility of Islam and democracy through the new theory of Democratic Islam.[8]

I am distancing my research from the two assumptions, by studying the political performance of the party as influenced by realpolitik. Realpolitik has forced Ennahda to be pragmatic as a way to find a balance between its religious Islamic identity and its political ambitions and interests. I base my observations on the proofs and arguments addressed in previous literature.

The backbone of my research is the interviews conducted with members of Ennahda as well as Tunisian national academic scholars and professionals. I have chosen my interviewers carefully and in a manner that could insure my objectivity.

The most important event in the research phase of this thesis is the interview that I had with Sheikh Rached Al-Ghannouchi, the current head of Ennahda party. Not only did this provide me with a deep insight into Ennahda from its one of the most important founders, but also towards the master mind of the pragmatism of Ennahda.

To cross check the history of Ennahda, I have met three important figures who were among the very first members of the Isalmists movement in Tunisia and who in the mid-seventies have left the movement to establish what they called Islamist left (*al Yasār al-islāmī*) or the progressive Islamists (*al-Islamiyyīn al-taqadumiyyīn*). Mr. Ziad Krishan is a journalist in Al-Maghreb newspaper. Mr. Hamida Al-Nayfar is a professor at Al-Zaytouna university. Mr. Salah Al-Din Al-Gourchi is a journalist and the vice president of the Tunisian Human Rights League.

I have also met some of the current members of Ennahda party. Starting with Sheikh Habib Al-Laouz, who is one of the traditional and conservative members of Ennahda, and who was the talk of the town in the last couple of months, however, due to his quick rise to fame he was barred from the elections, with accusations of misrepresenting Ennahda's modern ideology. On the other side, Mr. Loutfi Zaytoun was among the figures I have met. He is known by his very

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[8] Among the scholars who adopt or have a stance similar or closer to this view particularly but not exclusively are: Tania Abbiate in her article 'The revival of Political Islam in the MENA region: the case of Ennahda in Tunisia' argue in favor of this view. Rachel Tonta in from 'Theory to Practice – the Concept of an Islamic State by Ennahda in the Context of Political Transition in Tunisia' shares similar opinion. Monica Marks has also written a similar view in her article 'Tunisia 's Islamists and the Turkish Model'.

moderate statements. The last breakthrough statement was about the consideration of homosexuality and drugs as personal freedom, in which the state should not intervene.[9] Mr. Ajmi Lourimi is the third Ennahda member that I have interviewed. Lourimi is member of the executive bureau as well as the spokesman of the movement. Moreover, I have interviewed the Minister of health under both Hamadi Jebali and Ali Al-Erayed's governments Abd Al-Latif Al-Makki.

Moreover, interviewing Tunisian academics is taken also as a base for my research. Tunisia is well-known for its academic elite, which is highly involved in the public affairs of the country. I have met more than ten well-known professors, who have closely experienced the political performance of Ennahda. The information presented by those academics is an analytical one, which helped me formulate my arguments. The backgrounds of these professors vary, which was deliberate to preserve diversity in the research. For instance, Mohammed Kerrou is specialized in sociology, Abd El-Salam Fitnassi and Asmaa Nouyra both are professors of Political Science, Mona Krayem is a professor of law and a consultant in the Tunisian parliament, Kayss Said is a legal expert, Hatem Murad is a professor of Political Science and the head of the Tunisian Association of Political Studies, Abd Al-Majid Al-Sharfi is a professor of literature and the former dean of the faculty of humanities and social sciences at the University of Tunisia, Mohammed Al-Haddad is a Tunisian scholar teaching at La Manouba University in Tunisia, Mariam Bin Salem is a political scientist, Fadel Moussa is a politician, a representative of the Social Democratic Path in the national constitutional assembly, and Ikbal Moussa is a professor at the Faculty of Law, Political and Social Sciences, Tunisia, as well as a former member in the National Constitutional Assembly.

I will present an overview of the questions I have prepared for the interviews conducted:

- What do you say about the duality in the discourse of Ennahda party?
- What is Islamist democracy and why it's a cut with Political Islam?
- What is civility to Ennahda and what is the stance of Ennahda regarding secularism?
- What is the stance of the party from personal freedoms and rights?
- How do you describe the coalition with Nida' Tunis (Tunisia Call) Party?

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[9] 'Loutfi Zaytoun: Al-Mthliya Al-Jensiya wa Al-Zalta Hourriyat Fardiya', *Al-Sabah News*, Monday 27 February 2017, لطفي-زيتون-المثلية-الجنسية-والزطلة-حريات-فردية (accessed 06/05/2017)

- What is the expected future of the coalition of Ennahda with Nida' Tunis?
- What is the "Islamic Program" (*al-mashrū' al-islāmī*) of Ennahda?
- What is the relation of Ennahda with the Muslim Brotherhood?
- What are the red lines of Ennahda that will never be negotiated or compensated?
- What are the reasons behind the separation (*fāsl*) of the *da'awī* (preaching) and *siyāsī* (political)? Why did this separation transform to be called specialization (*tākhāsos*) by Ennahda?
- What was the objective of Ennahda from including the *sharī'ah* close in the constitution? Why did Ennahda accept to reconcile this demand later on?
- What are the red lines of Ennahda that could not be compensated over the coming years?

In addition to interviews, I have attended two lectures, a conference, and a workshop to further my understating of the topic at hand. The lectures attended took place at Ennahda's headquarter in Tunisia. The first one was given by Ahmed Al-Mashrigy, who is a philosopher affiliated with Ennahda party. Al-Mashrigy will soon publish his book on Ennahda's Democratic Islam. Al-Mashargy's lecture was about Islam and the state, tackling Democratic Islam in particular. The second one was held on the occasion of the Tunisian independence day of 20th of March. The lecture was given on the 25th of March. Among the lecturer was Sheikh Rached Al-Ghannouchi. I have also attended the "Religion and the state" conference organized by the Arab Association of Constitutional Law on the 24th and 25th March 2017, in Gammarth, Tunisia, where I have met many scholars and academics who have worked on some of the issues covered in my research. Finally, I was present at a three-day trainings given by the Center for The Study of Islam and Democracy titled "Islam and Democracy: towards an active citizenship." This center is openly known as affiliated with Ennahda.

I will divide my research into three main parts. The first one will focus on the history of Ennahda by shedding the light on the realpolitik that extensively shifted the intellectual and ideological understanding of Ennahda. My second part will show how Democratic Islam is the product of Ennahda's political pragmatism through the study of the political performance of Ennahda during the election of 2011, during the reformulation of the constitution, and afterwards. My third part will detect and analyze the reasons that made Ennahda create and later on adhere to Democratic Islam. My conclusion will be a space to predict what the future of Democratic Islam.

A Historical Glance Over Ennahda's Ideological Shifts

This part is based particularly but not exclusively on the biography of Rached Al-Ghannouchi as he presented it in two interviews one with Azam Tamimi in 2012[10] and the other with Khaled al-Ghrably in 2016.[11] I will also use the information gathered during the interviews I conducted with Mr. Salah Al-din Al Gourchi, Mr. Hamadi Al-Nayfar, and Mr. Ziad Krishan each independently. I have spoken extensively with the three respected men on the history of Ennahda especially that they were among the very first core members of the Islamist movement back in the seventies and who, in the mid-seventies, have left the movement to establish what they called Islamist left (al yasār al-Islāmī) or the progressive Islamists (al-Islamiyyīn al-taqadumiyyīn).

After he was politically influenced by the Arab nationalistic ideology of Nasser in the sixties when he was in Egypt, Al-Ghannouchi's move to Syria was a turning point in his life, especially after he was introduced to the Muslim Brotherhood ideology. As Al-Ghannouchi stated during an interview[12] with Azam Tmimi that he found in the *Ikhwani* thoughts what was missing in the Nasserist thoughts; the political, social, and religious spectrum all gathered to form an Islamic way of life. This awareness has led him to adopt the *Ikhwani* ideology. It was the night of 25 June 1966 when Al-Ghannouchi decided to open a new life chapter, following the *Ikhwani ṭarīqah* (methodology); he performed ablution and prayed as if he is re-interring Islam afresh.[13] Al-Ghannouchi's decision followed what was described by Sayed Qutb as *Ikhwani ṭarīqah*; "it was that at the moment a man becomes a Muslim, he disrobes and let go of his past life in ignorance. As if he is starting a new chapter in his life disconnecting completely from his previous life. Furthermore, he would consider his previous life to be one of doubt, apostasy, ignorance, and all of which do not coincide with Islam."[14] Thus we can conclude that Al-

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[10] *Mouraja'at: Part II*, [Online Video], Al-Jazeera YouTube video, 2011,

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=81QUO-252i0&t=1452s, (accessed 6 April 2017).

[11] *Fi Riwayaton Oukhra: Part I*, [Online Video], Alaraby TV, 2017,

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vobn7YhlC1Q, (accessed 6 April 2017)

[12] *Mouraja'at: Part II*, [Online Video], Al-Jazeera YouTube video, 2011,

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=81QUO-252i0&t=1452s, (accessed 6 April 2017).

[13] Ibid.

[14] S. Qutb, *Ma'alem Fi Al-Tarik*, Qatar, the Arab Center for Studies and Research, 2009, p.32.

Ghannouchi absorbed the *Ikhwani* ideology to the point where this ideology returned him to what he called in the same interview[15] as "the true Islam" (*al-Islam al-hak*).

As Nayfar said that in the early seventies (from 1969 to 1975), the movement started as a partially secret organization, because it was mainly a *da'awī* movement, which cannot be totally secret; the members of the movement used to give religious sermons and lessons to people in mosques, used to distributes booklets, pamphlets, and books to the public tackling religious issues, and used to give open lectures in public spaces.[16] Back then, the movement focused on returning the Tunisians to their Islamic moral and practices. The political practices were not in any way one of the objectives of the members of the movement. However, some organization's leaders had political ambitions, Rached Al-Ghannouchi was among them, as Nayfar asserts.[17] Al-Ghannouchi's absorbance of the *Ikhwani* ideology made him keen to follow political ambitions as the *Ikhwani* ideology do not separate its religious practices from the political: Islam is a religion and a state *(al-Islām din wā dāwlāh)*. Al-Banna claims that:

> Islam as understood by the Muslim brotherhood makes the government an important pillar in its framework. it also depends on the execution as it depends on guidance. This was also the understanding in past ages when the third *khālifā* said "god places in the sultan what he doesn't place in the Quran", and the prophet has made government ruling a mantle among the mantles of Islam. In addition, ruling in our judiciary books is considered from the creeds and origins, and not from the *fiqh* and branches. So that Islam contains ruling and execution, as it is legislation and education, as well as law and jurisprudence, all of which are intertwined together.[18]

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[15] *Mouraja'at: Part II,* [Online Video], Al-Jazeera YouTube video, 2011,

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=81QUO-252i0&t=1452s, (accessed 6 April 2017).

[16] Dr. Hamida Al-Nayfar, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunis, Tunisia, 2017.

[17] Ibid.

[18] H. Al Banna, *Majmou'at Rasa'l Al-Imam Al-Shahid Hasan Al-Banna*, Beirut, Dar Al-Hadara Al-Islamiya, 1999 p. 136.

Al-Banna also states that "a Muslim's Islam cannot be considered wholesome unless he becomes involved in politics by revising the conditions of his nation and feel interested in its future and continuity."[19] As a result, according to Nayfar, when the power of Bourguiba's regime started to decline mainly in the 1975, some of these leaders decided to make their ways to the ruling party; Rached Al-Ghannouchi and Abd Al-Fatah Moro were among them. They wanted to create a pressure group to be able to cease state positions. This step was not welcomed by many other members of the movement. The state turned it down. Afterwards, all members got back to the normal *da'awī* (preaching) activities, neglecting any political objectives.[20] However, during the same year, three main factors re-strengthened the political ambitions of Al-Ghannouchi and other members. The first factor was the *Ikhwani* writings and books which started to reach Tunisia on broader scale and to influence the Islamists after the release of some of the Muslim Brotherhood leaders by the Egyptian state in 1975. The second factor was an extension to the first by the huge number of the movement's members who were in 1975 going through their first years at the university. These members were faced by the spark of the Tunisian student movement. To encounter the wave of the non-religious ideologies active in the student movement, such as the liberals and communists, the Islamist students were in need for a political ideological and organizational structure. As a result, the Tunisian Islamists, led by Al-Ghannouchi who is already influenced by the *Ikhwan*, found out that the *Ikhwani* political thoughts were the most established and ready political ideology to be followed by the Islamist students.[21]

As a result, in the late seventies (from 1975 to 1980), the political ambitions of some of the movement's members, headed by Al-Ghannouchi, re-appeared. Islamists had several attempts to emerge on the political scene. Although the Isalmists have had little knowledge of what was happening on the political stage in the country as Al-Qusayr stated that "during the 1978 events the movement started to take stances concerning some political issues, although it had never affected these events and even the movement had no syndicate members. The awareness of the syndicate issue was embryonic […] the movement was exposed to the events through the press only […] the stance taken showed that the movement did not follow up with the incidences of

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[19] Ibid, p. 159

[20] Dr. Hamida Al-Nayfar, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunis, Tunisia, 2017.

[21] *Mouraja'at: Part II*, [Online Video], Al-Jazeera YouTube video, 2011, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=81QUO-252i0&t=1452s, (accessed 6 April 2017).

the events"[22], they decided to make a step in politics and issue a statement concerning the clashes between the UGTT (Union Générale des Travailleurs Tunisiens) and the state in the 1978. This step was the first indicator of the intention of the movement to be political. During the same year, another event pushed the political ambitions of the movement forward as well as adjusted it political activities; the students' movement at the Tunisian universities which reached its peak during this period. Actually, the political practices of the secular groups which took part in the student movements of the 1978 events, had a huge influence on the shaping of Isalmist movement's political understanding. According to Bin Salem, "conflicts in universities between Islamic and communist students, have rapidly transformed the first ones into political and union activists […] we can talk about the beginning of the politicization process of the movement […] Being a movement of the well-read youth, the Islamic students, who represent the most part of Ennahda members, has been well-versed in the rules of the political game thanks to interactions with communist students."[23] Moreover, the rise of the liberal movement had influenced the Islamist movement as well as leading it to undertake changes in their political agenda. Ghannouchi stated in an interview with Dr. Azzam Tamimi that "at the end of the seventies, the liberal movement started to rise in Tunisia. This movement called for democracy, pluralism […] We benefited from this steam. We can also say we learned from them; we adopted the democratic discourse."[24]

Moreover, the 1979's Iranian revolution had had big influence on the Islamist movements in Lebanon, Egypt, Syria, and Palestine. Equally, this revolution had a great influence on the Tunisian Islamists leading to a total and definitive adoption of the political path.[25] Al-Ghannouchi considered the revolution as an inspirational sign needed to prove his belief that Islamists are able to establish their power and rule. As a way to emphasis how much the Islamist

[22] A. Al-Qusayr, 'Harakat Al-Itijah Al-Islami Fi Tunis Mawkif Al-Khitab Al-Ilmi wa Al-Khitab Al Sahafi', Master Thesis, University of Tunis, 1982, p.35.

[23] M. Ben Salem, '. Jihad as A Progressive Concept: The Case of the Tunisian Islamic Movement Al-Nahda', in La Violence Politique en Tunisie, les VI emes Conference De L'Atep, *Association Tunisienne D'etudes Politiques*, 2013, p. 60-61.

[24] *Mouraja'at: Part II*, [Al-Jazeera YouTube video], 2011, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=81QUO-252i0&t=1452s, (accessed 6 April 2017).

[25] This point was highlighted by many Ennahda members such as Habib Louz and Ziad Krishan, including Al-Ghannouchi

movement's members were affected by the Iranian revolution, during my interview with him, Habib Louz said that he has named his son Ayatu-Allah after the name of the Khomeini of Iran.[26] As a result, and after almost 10 years of *da'awī* work, from 1970 to 1980, during which several attempts at gaining power took place, the Tunisian Islamist movement declared itself to the public as a political movement with political objectives in 1981. Analyzing the 6 June 1981's speech shows that although it was a political act taken by the Islamists, the religious aspect has been given a great weight, when the political aspect has been tackled embryonically. The 1981 speech tackled the Islamic doctrine on a large scale, while very few political. Krishan argued that in the speech of 1981, the term "democracy" was used for the first time in an official statement issued by the movement. However, the term was used pragmatically.[27]

Afterwards, the Islamic Tendency Movement (ITM) started a phase of struggle for an official recognition by the Bourguiba's regime through which the Islamists can officially integrate into the Tunisian political life. However, the ITM's political initiative was faced by the state's blockage and some ITM's members, including Al-Ghannouchi, were arrested and jailed. The state's reaction made the veteran ideologue of the Islamist movement Al-Ghannouchi aware of the need to rethink some of the *Ikhwani* thoughts, taking the oppression the *Ikhwan* were facing in Egypt as a lesson to learn from. In jail, Al-Ghannouchi started to educate himself about Tunisia and the Tunisian National independence movement in depth.[28] As a result, after the release of members in 1983/4, the Islamists discourse was reformulated to become 'Tunisian' to fit the secular tendency of the society and the secular political system.

Here it should be noted that since the initiation of the Isalmist movement in Tunisia, Al-Ghannouchi and his associates were influenced by several diverse religious ideologies that represented; along with the traditional Muslim Brotherhood movement (when Al-Ghannouchi was studying in Syria and also the *Ikhwan* in Egypt), there were: *Hārākat Al-Tābligh* (back when Al-Ghannouchi was in Paris), Salafism (which raised in the 70s), Sufism, Malik Bin Nabbi's writing (Which criticized some of Sayyed Qutb thoughts), add to them a "Tunisian" movement

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[26] Mr. Habib Louz Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, 2017, Tunis, Tunisia.

[27] Mr. Ziad Krishan, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, 2017, Tunis, Tunisia.

[28] *Mouraja'at: Part III*, [Al-Jazeera YouTube video], 2011, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=81QUO-252i0&t=1452s, (accessed 6 April 2017).

pioneered by Abdalfatah Muru.[29] From 1983/4 on, the Islamists' discourse started to be conscience about the ways of dealing with the Tunisian public and state, as a result the discourse has become tessellated, formulated through the use of thoughts from all the mentioned ideologies and schools. It should be also noted that the Muslim Brotherhood has had the strongest influence on the base of the Islamist movement, especially that the *Ikhwani* thoughts were the only well-established political thoughts. Salah Al-Din Al-Gourchi stated that the foundation of Ennahda are rooted in *Ikhwani* thoughts and practices, despite the reformulation of the discourse. Ennahda's discourse is tessellated and is based on several references.[30] Not to mention the influence of several secular political actors on the public stage, back in the late 70s, such as; the left, the Tunisian coalition for Human rights, the syndicates movement, etc. The seculars' thoughts were also utilized by the Islamist after 1983/4. For instance, the socio-economic dimension was added to the agenda of the Isalmist movement after being inspired by the communist' ideology, Al-Ghannouchi asserts.[31] Another example could be raised here regarding the interest of Ennahda in democracy in late seventies, after their encounter with the liberals. Back then, the Muslim Brotherhood, which has served as a structural base reference for the Islamist movement, considered democracy as a western concept that should be strongly resisted and opposed. As a result, one can sense the questionable faced of Ennahda and the uncertainty regarding how to Islamize democracy, with lack of references to back this up. Despite this, the use of the term democracy in almost all of the official statements and reports of Ennahda was frequent. However, the party's understanding of this term is obviously unclear. When the movement decided to expose itself to the public, the confusion in the political ideology that should be chosen was clear. Al-Qusayr states that "the Isalmist movements did not possess a clear program or structure. This makes them fall into improvisation and pragmatism, contrary to other movements, such as the communist movement, which has always had clear programs."[32]

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[29] Dr. Mohammed Al-Haddad, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, 2017, Tunisia, Tunis.

[30] Mr. Salah Al-Din Al-Gourchi, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, 2017, Tunisia, Tunis.

[31] *Mouraja'at: Part II*, [Al-Jazeera YouTube video], 2011, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=81QUO-252i0&t=1452s, (accessed 6 April 2017).

[32] A. Al-Qusayr, Harakat Al-Itijah Al-Islami Fi Tunis Mawkif Al-Khitab Al-Ilmi wa Al-Khitab Al Sahafi, Master Thesis, University of Tunis, 1982, p. 55.

The tessellated discourse of the movement started to be clear after the release of the members in 1983/4. For example, during a press conference held by the movement after the release of the members, around 13 August 1984, which is a date of the anniversary of the issuing of the Tunisian personal status code, a journalist asked Sheikh Moro and Al-Ghannouchi regarding the stance of the movement towards the personal status code of Tunisia. Moro answered that the code is human made and could be questioned. This statement had caused countless reactions by the civil society against the movement back then. After this incident, Islamists started to be in a position, where they should defend themselves against the accusation of the public opinion, by presenting themselves as a democratic movement, as democratic as other political actors in Tunisia. However, they found themselves in a dilemma of how to accept certain issues such as personal freedoms and rights, especially those issued in the Personal Status Code, which are in contradiction or precarious to the traditional and conservative religious *Ikhwani* thoughts followed by the Islamist movement. As a result, the movement's discourse started to take a pragmatic turn, in a sense that the movement avoided giving clear stances and direct response to what is considered to be problematic to its Islamic ideology; *khitāb faḍfāḍ* (a baggy discourse) as described by Krishan. The latter added: "Ennahda from 1984 on has been rephrasing its discourse without actually building it.[33]

Moving to 1987, the core event was the National Pact which was initiated by Bin Ali to shape the political life in Tunisia to be plural and inclusive. The Islamist movement did not participate officially, because it has not been authorized to participate in the political life. However, it took part through its representative Nour Al Din Al-Bhairy.[34] Although this pact stated clearly the total acceptance of the personal status code, secularity, rights, and freedoms, pragmatically, Al-Bhairy, on the behalf of the Islamist movement and its members, affirmed the total acceptance of the code. Add to that, Islamists subjugated to the National Pact under Bin Ali and changes the name of the movement from the Islamist Tendency Movement into Ennahda, to adopt a secular face, hiding any public religious identity. This was done for the sake of being allowed to take part in the political life. Krishan argues that the duality of the discourse means that the original or authentic discourse of the party is no longer able to be promoted publicly. It stays valid inside the

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[33] Mr. Ziad Krishan Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, 2017, Al-Maghreb Newspaper, Tunis, Tunisia.

[34] The head of the Ennahda bloc in the parliament.

party itself but would not find audiences externally, because the party is not able to bear the negative consequences that the original discourse might cause.[35] Krishan added: The party was in a position where it did not want to dismiss its original discourse, yet simultaneously it was not able to defend it. Ennahda found itself in a position where it should modernize and refine its discourse to an extent that it loses ties with the original discourse.[36] Krishan continued: The Islamist movement back then was between an internal identity ruled by *al-ru'yā al-fikriyyah wa-manhaj al-usūlī li-ḥarakat Ennahda* (the intellectual vision and the fundamentalist methodology of Ennahda) released in 1986, which closely resembles to the writings of Ibn Taymiya as highlighted by Krishan, and an external secular identity of accepting the personal status code, freedoms, and human rights after ratifying the National Pact.[37]

After meeting all state's requirements under the National Pact, hoping that it will be official legalized which never happened until March 2011, Ennahda has run for elections through some of its independent members in 1989 to prove its popular base and political capability. However, this achievement was encountered by a huge opposition from the Bin Ali state, leading to persecution and arrest resulted by Al-Ghannouchi along with other members to be exiled and other members to be imprisoned for more than ten years. The exile has not prevented Ennahda, especially Al-Ghannouchi, to keep seeking their political ambitions. The 18th October's movement of 2005 was an act of resistance to the restrictions of freedoms under Bin Ali initiated by the political opposition, including the Islamists. This movement tackled through its publications in 2007 the same issue, such as secularism, civil state, equality between men and women, etc., addressed in the National Pact of Bin Al but in a developed and wider manner. Ennahda approved and ratified the 18th October pact, always on the bases of making its way to the political scene and being recognized among the political actors in the country.

Add to this, during all the moves between the phases and the intellectual shifts of the movement, the divisions and confrontations inside the movement, between the reformists' and the revolutionists' members, were taking place. These divisions and phases, will, after the revolution of 2010, produce a party with no clear ideological stance, where the reformist will become

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[35] Mr. Ziad Krishan Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, 2017, Al-Maghreb Newspaper, Tunis, Tunisia.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Ibid.

pragmatics and the revolutionist will become doctrinal, and which the clash between both do not seem to end until today.

After presenting the history of the Islamist movement, while pointing out the realpolitik that subjugated the political discourse of the movement several times, it is now easier for the reader to expect the realpolitik behind the political shifts and changes undergone by Ennahda after the revolution of 2010. In its 10th conference of 2015, Ennahda declared the separation between the political activities (*al-siyāsī*) and the religious preaching (*al-da'awī*) considering Ennahda as a party. However, the separation claimed turned to be categorized as "specialization", as expressed by Al-Ghannouchi and other members of Ennahda after the party's 10th conference held in 2015. Not to mention that, after discussions, Ennahda later on re-called itself to be a party movement (*hizbharakat Ennahda),* no only a party. According to Abbiate,

> "one example of *Ennahda*'s internal dynamism is the debate on whether to define the group as a *hizb* (party) or a *hārākā* (movement). As of now, *Ennahda* has bypassed the issue, referring to itself as *hizbhārākāt Ennahda* (Party of the *Ennahda* Movement). This label obviously represents nothing more than a ruse designed to put aside a futile dispute, thus allowing *Ennahda* to function *de facto* as a political party, with a nation-wide infrastructure of local and regional offices, and at the same time to behave as a social movement, through a wide network of charities activities."[38]

Few months later, Loutfi Zaytoun in *Al-Shūrūk* Newspaper announced the separation of Ennahda from the Muslim Brotherhood. [39] All these changes ended today by the adoption of the so-called Democratic Islam as a neo-ideology for Ennahda substituting the traditional Political Islam. This tactic made by the party to look modern as to differentiate between itself from other Islamist party in the Arab world.

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[38] T. Abbiate, 'The revival of Political Islam in the MENA region: the case of Ennahda in Tunisia', *Revista Ballot*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 2015, p. 69.

[39] L. Zaytoun, 'Ennahda Al-Laty Nourid', *Al-Shuruk Newspaper*, 1 March 2016, http://www.alchourouk.com/-لطفي-زيتون-يكتب-لـ«الشروق»: النهضة-التي-نريد (1) .html, (accessed 5 April 2017).

Democratic Islam: Islamization of Pragmatism

Presenting Ennahda's history shows the tendency of this party to be pragmatic in politics. This tendency presented earlier has led the party to pioneer Democratic Islam. In the following paragraphs I will analyze Ennahda's pragmatism after the uprising as well as showing the rooted political Islam's thoughts, especially the Ikhwani thoughts, in the current political discourse of the party. My aim is to show the realpolitik that has led Ennahda to establish Democratic Islam as a way of Islamizing its pragmatic attitude in politics, without having to undertake ideological reform or reformulation.

I-   Ennahda's Plurality of Discourses

Abd Al-Majid Al-Sharfi shed the light on two types of discourse adopted by Ennahda: internal and external. The Internal discourse is subdivided into two according to the audience addressed. For instance, Al-Sharfi explained that Ennahda considers the members of Ennahda as one group of audience, and the broader Tunisian society as another group. Within the broader society, Ennahda endorses two distinguished discourses: one when addressing the broader Muslim community, and the other when addressing the Islamist community.

On the level of the speech, Al-Ghannouchi's speeches have evolved over the past six years from a speech heavily filled with Islamic and Islamist terminology to almost "secular" speeches, if we do not consider *basmālāh*[40] in the beginning of his speeches.

After a long history of western opposition, Al-Ghannouchi is nowadays maintaining a parallel unofficial diplomacy[41] with some western countries. Through these diplomatic activities Al-Ghannouchi is trying to gain international attention and acceptance. This observation was illustrated by Hatem Mourad is his article "La Diplomatie Informelle de Ghannouchi" (The Informal Diplomacy of Al-Ghannouchi).[42] Further, apart from meeting politicians and heads of states, since the mid-2012, Al-Ghannouchi has been invited to attend global conferences and

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[40] It is the Arabic word that stand for "In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful"

[41] The parallel diplomacy is unofficial and not related or influenced by the official state diplomacy which is usually practiced by the head of the state or other official state figures.

[42] H. Murad, "La diplomatie informelle de Ghannouchi", *Le Courrier de L'atlas*, 8 February 2017, http://www.lecourrierdelatlas.com/point-de-vue-tunisie-la-diplomatie-informelle-de-ghannouchi-7402, (accessed 3 March 2017).

meetings and has been cherished by the international actors that played major role in resolving the Tunisian constitutional and political crisis of 2013. The international presence in the formulation of the constitution was evident, especially with the involvement of the Venice committee. In fact, both Dr. Abd Al Salam Fitnasi and Dr. Mohammed Al Haddad have pointed to the international acceptance of the rise of Ennahda to power after the Tunisian revolution. They also raised the issue of foreign funds received by Ennahda during the elections of 2011. Concerning this point, Logan wrote: "Businessmen associated with Ben Ali are returning to Tunisia after having financed the electoral campaign of Ennahda, which in return has given them a kind of immunity from prosecution by the new government."[43] Actually, these two factors explain Ennahda's ability to congregate its members in a very short time and very quickly in 2011. Some of which were in the exile and others in jail.

Before I start exploring Ennahda's scope of being accepted and supported by the west after the revolution, I will shed the light on the 2006 report issued by Carnegie research institute regarding the relation of the US with the Islamist movements in the Arab World.[44] This report considers the Islamists movements to be the political movement that is able to establish a democracy in the region because these movements do cherish democracy and popular elections given their broad popular support. However, the only principle that the Islamist movement need to be committed to is the renunciation of violence, Al-Haddad adds.[45] The problematic of the application of *sharī'ah*, according to Al-Haddad, can be solved in a progressive pragmatic way. This means that these movements will not be forced to openly declare very obviously to the public that they abandon all of what the west considers a contradiction to Human Rights in *sharī'ah*.[46]

Tackling the same point raised by Al-Haddad, Wargy wrote that after the 9/11 Washington was convinced that the Turkish model must be presented and encouraged in the Arab world […] It is considered a Muslim democratic secular state that was successful in presenting an accepted experience in Washington perspective. Since this state was successful in balancing Islam and

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[43] T.P. Logan, 'When Authoritarianism Failed in Tunisia: An Investigation of The ben Ali Regime and The Factors that Led to Its Down Fall', Master Thesis, Georgetown University, 2012, p. 184.

[44] M. Al Haddad, *Al-Tanwir wa Al-Thawra, Damakratat Al-Hadatha am Akhwanat Al-Moujtama'?* Lebanon, Dar Al-Tanwir, 2013, p. 97-68.

[45] Ibid, p. 97-68.

[46] Ibid.

western values such as democracy and secularism. In addition to being non anti-western and does not threaten American interests, but rather protect it and support it. [47] Wargy added: "After the success of the Turkish AKP with worldwide acceptance and welcoming, there was no issue with Isalmist participation in politics, with the condition that they abandon their religious agenda and completely accept a secular system along with its practical democratic rule."[48] Krishan highlighted a similar point during the interview I conducted with him. He stated that the west, USA in particular, believed that the only movements that are able to encounter the spread of terrorist jihadist groups and re-promote a kind of order and stability in the region after the failure of the dictatorship in the Arab world to do so, are the *Ikhwani* movements. He added: I am not saying that the west has put them in power, because they reached power through democratic elections, but the west has cherished and supported these movements on a large scale.[49]

Two examples were mentioned by Dr. Fitnassi[50] during the interview I conducted with him through which he asserts the point mentioned above. Privatization, which was one of the taboos at the time of Bin Ali, was accepted and actually practiced, during the rule of Ennahda. Secondly, the former president Bourguiba who was a secular and a francophone, did not mentioned freedom of conscious in the constitution. This was also the case under Bin Ali. However, the freedom of conscience was stated explicitly in the constitution of 2014. Fitnassi said that this can only be explained through the scope of the western influence.[51] He added, one could not deny the international interference in the formulation of the 2014 constitution, especially with the commission of Venice, which was established for this purpose. How could somebody truly believe that Ennahda could ever accept freedom of conscience into a constitution that states "Islam is the religion of the state", especially that this acceptance was not supported by any religious or intellectual framework. Not to mention that after Ennahda reached power, Al-Ghannouchi has pointed out in some of his speeches the distinction between "us", the Muslims, and "them", the seculars or leftists, Fitnassi affirms.[52]

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[47] J. Warghy, *Al-Haraka Al Islamiya A-Turkiya*, Qatar, Al-Jazeera Center for Studies, 2010, p. 79.

[48] Ibid, p. 89

[49] Mr. Ziad Krishan, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, 2017, Tunis, Tunisia.

[50] Dr. Abd Al-Salam Fitnassi, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, 2017, Tunisia, Kayrawan.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Ibid.

The reconciliation attitudes of Ennahda today, which resolved the crisis of 2013, was adopted after the meeting of Al-Ghannouchi with the Tunisian president Essebsi in Paris. The privacy of the meeting raised major questions on the true intentions of both parties, the secularists and the Islamists, to go for a real coalition. "For me, Essibsi states, it [the coalition with Ennahda] is a cohabitation, not an alliance/coalition."[53] President Essebsi co-opted Ennahda, and pragmatically accepted the coalition; Essebsi added: "An Isalmist opposition is more dangerous than other opposition, because the majority of people are Muslim. That could be used for dangerous purposes."[54] Actually, Al-Ghannouchi has always been able to take advantage of the 2013 circumstances, especially that the resignation of his party from ruling and its acceptance to go into concessions with other parties, have presented Ennahda as the savior of the country from entering into turmoil.

When addressing the international community, Al-Ghannouchi tends to use the 2013 crisis to point out the compatibility of Islam and democracy. He also tends to emphasis on the Islamists' ability to get into agreements with any party and with any ideology even if it opposes Ennahda's ideology. On one hand, the discourse of Ennahda outside Tunisia is a *khītab Tatmīni* (a discourse of assurance) as described by Dr. Abd Al-Majid Al-Sharfi.[55] On the other hand, the speeches given in Tunisia by Al-Ghannouchi in what concerns the 2013 crisis in particular have a different scope of focus. In other words, Al-Ghannouchi acknowledges the contribution of other parties in the settlement of the crisis of 2013 in his speeches given inside Tunisia, unlike his other speeches outside of Tunisia in which he presents Ennahda as the sole actor and savior of the transitional period crisis in Tunisia. For instance, in a speech given during the conference held on the anniversary of the establishment of the Nida' Party, Al-Ghannouchi stated that "we [Ennahda] see Tunisia as a bird flying high above with two wings Ennahda and Nidaa." [56] He also added "I came here to stress our full support to the policy of consensus led by the president Essebsi. This policy saved Tunisia from the fate of other Arab spring revolutions."[57] In contrast, in a

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[53] B.C. Essibsi and A. Chabot, *Tunisie: la démocratie en terre d'islam*, France, Paris, 2016, p. 48.

[54] Ibid.

[55] Dr. Abd Al-Majid Al-Sharfi, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunis, Tunisia, 2017.

[56] *Rached Ghannouchi's speech at Nidaa Tounes Congress,* [online video], 2016,

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cusEEd1YO0k, (accessed 5/26/2017).

[57] Ibid.

conference held at Colombia University, Al-Ghannouchi said that "the success of the Tunisian revolution is not a coincidence but it is a fruit of the conceptual process led by Ennahda party."[58] Not to mention the noticed repetitive mentioning of "we" [Ennahda party] throughout the same speech.[59]

On another scope, in 1976, Al-Ghannouchi wrote a book called *Naḥwa waʿī Islāmī: mā huwa al-gharb?*[60] (Towards an Islamic Awareness: what is the west?) in which he emphasized the differences between the west and the Muslim World. Al-Ghannouchi points to the civilizational gap between the two and proposes that the Muslim world and the West are polar opposites. He concluded his book by stating that one can distinguish between a doctrine which believes in God and human beings as worshipers of that God and a doctrine which believes in human beings only. The latter is the western world. This statement emphasizes the materialistic nature of western values while asserting the superiority of the Islamic moral values. His views disrupt any possible convergence that could happen between these two worldviews. However, in 2014, during the same lecture at Columbia University mentioned in the previous paragraph, Al-Ghannouchi described the adverse attitudes of Islamist movements towards the west as "stereotypes", pointing out that Ennahda should not be considered among these movements.[61] A contradiction is evident between this statement in 2014 and his thoughts back in the seventies which was the same as the movements he was criticizing.

Salah Al-Din Al-Gourchi is one of those who accompanied Rached Al-Ghannouchi through the first years of the establishment of the Islamist movement in Tunisia. When asked about the pragmatic attitude of Ennahda, especially Al-Ghannouchi's pragmatic discourse, he said that "Al-Ghannouchi has always tried to crystallize more than one discourse to deliver it to different parties because he has always wanted to get the largest number of supporters possible to his side. As a result, he found himself conceding on some of his beliefs and/or making several statements on just one topic […]. Through this he was able to formulate a pragmatic discourse for his party.

[58] *Rached Ghannouchi: Islam, Democracy, and the Future of the Muslim World,* [online video], 2014, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X0-D78jMEyA, (accessed 5/26/2017).

[59] Ibid.

[60] R. Al-Ghannouchi, *Naḥwa waʿī Islāmī: mā huwa al-gharb?*, Tunis, Manshourat Al-Ma'rifa, 1976, p.52.

[61] *Rached Ghannouchi: Islam, Democracy, and the Future of the Muslim World,* [online video], 2014, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X0-D78jMEyA, (accessed 5/26/2017)

He was able to prioritize politics and interests over his beliefs. This is one of the traits of a good politician: Adaptability."[62] This remark was also raised by Hamida Al-Nayfar[63], who was also among the first members of the Islamist Movement.

The reason behind the maintenance of several discourses by Ennahda was clarified by Ziad Krishan. The latter concluded his answer when I asked him about the objective of Ennahda behind its changing discourse, that Ennahda is trying to secure this current period by finding a local, national, and international umbrella under which they can protect their continuity in power. Krishan explains: The first umbrella is local: Esebssi and Nida' Tunis. This is analyzed through the speech of Al-Ghannouchi especially that he keeps repeating that Ennahda today is in need of a strong partner *(hālif qāwī)*. Ennahda today is in a great risk because Nida' Tunis is fragmented and Esebssi is old. The national umbrella is Algeria embodied by President Bouteflika. This is explained through the extensive visit of Al-Ghannouchi to Algeria under the concept of "parallel diplomacy" already mentioned above. The third umbrella is international including France, UK, USA, etc.,[64]

II-   <u>Definitions</u>

Defining is to clarify terms in accordance with a certain ideology. As definitions are mandatory in the shaping of one's ideas and formulation of thoughts, any change or update of an ideology should be accompanied with changing or updating of terms. I focused my research on the definitions of some core 'western' terms frequently used by Ennahda members, such as; democracy (al-dīmūqrāṭiyyah), civility (al-madaniyyah), and secularism (al-ʿilmāniyyah) to study whether Ennahda has updated terms in accordance with its Democratic Islam.

1) *Al-Dīmūqrāṭiyyah*

Looking at Al-Ghannouchi's writings, we find that the terms are loosely defined. It is to an extent that many terms are used arbitrarily. Many others are put together in a random manner. After I closely studied Al-Ghannouchi's books, especially *Al-dīmūqrāṭiyyah wā Hoūkoūk Al-*

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[62] Mr. Salah Al-Din Al-Gourchi, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, 2017, Tunisia, Tunis.

[63] Mr. Hamida Al-Nayfar, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, 2017, Tunisia, Tunis.

[64] Mr. Ziad Krishan, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, 2017, Tunisia, Tunis.

Insān (Democracy and Human Rights) I found that the word democracy is one of most used terms. However, it seems to be left undefined. Sometimes the term *shūrá* is used by Al-Ghannouchi as an equivalent to democracy. Al-Ghannouchi, who is a philosopher, a religious thinker, and a politician, ignores the different historical contexts of both terms and the circumstances of their foundation. He seems to use them interchangeably, as synonyms. Al-Rbayyi asserts in his book *Al-Islām al-siyāsī wa-al-ḥadāthah* (Islam and modernity) that "An aspect of frequent confusion in Al-Ghannouchi's books is the projection of new terminologies on old ones, as if the former is the latter."[65] To investigate the current understanding of democracy under the so-called Democratic Islam one should tackle the concept of Islamic democracy (*al-dīmūqrāṭiyyah al-Islamiya)* claimed by Ennahda.

Al-Ghannouchi refers to democracy as procedural (*āliyat al-hūkūm*): Elections, delegation of power, accountability, etc.[66] I could deduce from the conversation I had with both Ajmi Lourimi and Loutfi Zytoun that Ennahda relies on the understating of democracy as procedural. Zytoun responded to my question on the current movement made by more than 60 organizations[67] regarding the change of the law concerning the prevention of Muslim women from marrying a non-Muslim: "The people have the rights to call for change. The parliament has the power to decide what to change and what to keep, the constitution guarantees the freedom of speech and freedom of demonstrations, however, the decision of making an amendment to any laws is in the hands of parliament not in the hands of those who are demonstrating."[68] This shows that Ennahda's commitment to the technical side of democracy and not the value and moral side of it. This means that Ennahda does not believe in the power of a social popular call to be influential as to amend a law. Ama'a Nouwyra stated that "Ennahda believes in the procedural democracy. However, democracy has two sides. Along with the technical and procedural, democracy is cultural and moral because it is not merely about elections and institutions as it is equally about

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[65] J. Al-Rabʿī, *al-Islām al-siyāsī wa-al-ḥadāthaḥ: Sayyid Quṭb wa-Rāshid al-Ghannūshī*, Ṣafāqis: Maktabat ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn, 2015, p. 45.

[66] R. Al-Ghannouchi, *Al-dīmūqrāṭiyyah wa Houkouk Al-Insan*, Tunis, Al-Mujtahed Publisher, 2011.

[67] Da'awat Li Itahat zawaj al Tunisiyat Bi Ghayr Al Muslim. *Sky news Arabia*. 2017,
http://www.skynewsarabia.com/web/article/935361/دعوات-لإتاحة-زواج-التونسيات-بغير-المسلمين

[68] Mr. Loutfi Zaytoun, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunis, Tunisia, 2017.

equality, freedom, acceptance of other, and civil and personal rights. For Ennahda winning the elections is what matters. For this reason, it claims of accepting democracy."[69]

Not to mention that although Al-Ghannouchi has long used the term democracy,[70] Democratic Islam started to emerge only in 2014 after the dilemma of the reformulation of the constitution caused by the disagreement of Ennahda over many articles, especially the *sharī'ah* article. Despite the initiation of this new concept, we can observe that the old traditional understanding of democracy as only procedural, seems still the same. Furthermore, this understanding of democracy seems to resemble Al-Banna's thoughts. Al-Banna claims that "an observer can easily notice that the principles for a constitutional government summarized by; preservation of individual freedom, *shūrá*, *umma* sanctioned ruling, responsibility and accountability of the rulers to the people, clarity of power limitations, agree with Islamic teachings regarding government formulation. That's why the *Ikhwan* believe that constitutional rule is the closest system to Islam."[71] Hence, Ennahda's Democratic Islam could be seen as an act of Islamizing democracy no more. "Al-Ghannouchi tends to Islamize terms without clearly specifying what makes these terms truly Islamic, according to his conception of authentic Islam", Mariam Bin Salem stated.[72] She called this practice as "l'islamization de la modernité" (the Islamization of modernity).[73]

Al-Mashargy, who is a philosopher strongly affiliated with Ennahda, summed up his view of the new phase Ennahda is currently undertaking. He stated that "now we are in total break with the political Islam and we are starting a new phase which is the democratic Islam."[74] Following up on his statement I asked him during his lecture about his view on the difference between political Islam and democratic Islam, as well as the definition of Democratic Islam, the question remained unanswered.

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[69] Dr. Asmaa Nouwyra, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunis, Tunisia, 2017.

[70] Democracy was first used in 1981's speech as already mentioned in the above paragraphs

[71] H. Al Banna, *Majmou'at Rasa'l Al-Imam Al-Shahid Hasan Al-Banna*, Beirut, Dar Al-Hadara Al-Islamiya, 1999 p. 138.

[72] Dr. Myriam Bin Salem, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunisia, Tunis, 2017.

[73] Ibid.

[74] Ahmed Al-Mashrigy, *Lecture on Democratic Islam*, Ennahda headquarter, Mont-Plaisir, 2017.

Trying to find references on Democratic Islam issued by Ennahda, I was unfortunate to find limited or no writings about this subject. Instead I opted to attend a training that discusses a subject close to my research. It was a three-day training titled "Islam and Democracy; towards an active citizenship" organized by the Center for The Study of Islam and Democracy. This center is considered among the organizations affiliated with Ennahda through its head Dr. Radwan Masmoudi who has openly supported Al-Ghannouchi in many instances after his return to Tunisia in 2011. The training aims at promoting Democratic Islam and increase people's understanding regarding this topic. Thus, my main purpose of attending this training was to cross check what kind of new understating of Islam and democracy is being initiated and promoted. I found that most of the included activities mainly focused on the procedural aspect of democracy, such as elections, constitution, laws, political campaigns, etc. Furthermore, there was a part where the participants had to be divided into two groups: some should take a stance with the secular state and some should take a stance with the Islamic state. At the end, each group should convince the other of their political system. The two groups were put in total opposition, in which the trainers took for granted "an intrinsic" opposition between a secular and Islamic system.

2) *Al-Madaniyyah wa Al-ʿIlmāniyyah*

Al-Ghannouchi stated that "since the nineties we [the Islamists] announced explicitly that it is a civic party that believes in democracy, citizenship, and civic values."[75] However, Ennahda has established itself as a political movement on the basis of the Islamic doctrine.[76] This basis did not change after 2011, especially that the statement of 1986 was printed and published in 2010 after the re-establishment of Ennahda during the Tunisian revolution. Basing itself on the Islamic doctrine which emphasis believing in God, the holy book, the angels, and the prophets renounce the civil identity Al-Ghannouchi is claiming. As a result, the so-called civility of Ennahda party could not open the door for all citizens. However, it allows only those who 'believe' in this doctrine to be able to join the party. Ben Achour pointed this out in his recently published book:

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[75] *Ashab al soulta* [online video], 2017, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sEG3bfc495s (accessed in 20/5/2017).

[76] It was the 1986 statement of Al Rou'ya Al Fekriya wa Manhaj Al-Ousouli Li Harakat Ennahda (the intellectual vision and the fundamentalist methodology of Ennahda).

> "Claiming that the state in Islam is a civil state constitutes a contradiction of terms. The absence of "d'église d'état" (a state's church) is not enough for a state to be a civil state. In fact, Isalmists confuse between "état civil" (civil state) and "religion civile" (civil religion). All theories and practices prove that Islam is actually a civil religion. The Islamic state is a state that gathers the believers. It's true that there is no 'church' in Islam [meaning there is no religious state or theocratic state in Islam], however, each of those believers constitutes a 'church' on its own in direct relation with God, hence the constantly politicized character of the Islamic religion throughout history."[77]

Al-Gourchi emphasized this point by stating that Ennahda should equip itself by the knowledge to understand the modern function of a political party that consists of directing its interests towards the managements of the public affairs according to the common good […] The religious realm should neither be monopolized by Ennahda nor should it be a specialization. it should be managed by the state that gives the religious sphere independency to have its own particularity without any outside influence."[78] However, Moussa explains why Ennahda seems not willing to accept civility fully. The latter states that Ennahda's strength comes from its Islamic identity which distinguishes Ennahda from other parties in the country. If Ennahda chooses to become a civil party and join other civil parties in the country, it will lose not only its strength but it will also fail because other "civil" parties are stronger than Ennahda in practicing politics secularly.[79]

Moreover, many terms that are being used by Ennahda's political figures in their writings and official statements seem to lack a clear declaration of the party's stance regarding these terms. For example, secularism is one of the terms frequently used by the party. However, there is no official declaration that defines the stance of the party towards secularism. For instance, when asked about secularism, Lourimi responded that "the leftist elite, the liberal ones and others do not believe in the separation between the state and religion. However, they believe in the

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[77] R. Bin Ashour, *Tunisie une Revolution en pays d'Islam*, Tunis, Ceres editions, 2016, p. 325.

[78] Mr. Salah Al-Din Al-Gourchi, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunisia, Tunis, 2017.

[79] Dr. Fadel Moussa, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunisia, Tunis, 2017.

separation between religion and politics. They believe that religion should not be used for political ends. We all agree on this […] They do not believe in the separation between state and religion. They do not want this to happen. We all believe that the state should have control over the religious institution. This means that the state should supervise mosques, funds them, and trains the Imams. If the state does not do this, the mosques will be divided among different parties, leading to social disintegration."[80] This statement neither provide an understanding of secularism nor a stance from it. It keeps the door open for interpretations and explanations. I believe this is one of the pragmatic tactics of the party given that defining terms would limit the ability of the party to change and transform according to what ensures its political continuation and adaptation. For instance, not defining secularism would make it easier for Ennahda to undertake some policies in the public sphere of the secular state without making the public aware of its secularity.

3) Updating concepts

An interesting number of questions were raised by Abd Al-Majid Al-Sharfi[81] regarding the writings of Al-Ghannouchi among which: Has Al-Ghannouchi, in his books, expressed any sort of evolution in his thoughts, his conceptualization of core terms or principles such as democracy and freedom? Or has he at least made an acknowledgment to the reader that these writings were made in a context different than the current one? Al-Sharfi[82] expects and asks Al-Ghannouchi to make a clear stance regarding the changes of his understanding of political Islam and its beliefs. He also added that Al-Ghannouchi's books are being published and distributed all over the world in the same seventies and eighties editions.

Moreover, Trokila believes that Ennahda's use of Islamic terminologies makes the move to a laic state, as they call it, difficult. He explained: "the term *shūrá* is a Quran-derived word indicating the consultation of believers within the Islamic community regarding the temporal affairs of their society. In contemporary Islamic thought, it is a kind of "Muslim version" of a parliamentary

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[80] Mr. Ajami Al-Warimi, Interviwed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunis, Tunisia, 2017.

[81] Dr. Abd Al-Majid Al-Sharfi, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunisia, Tunis, 2017.

[82] Ibid.

assembly."[83] The use of the term *umma,* which means the Muslim community, is also another example, because the term *umma* by the Islamic definition of the term de-facto includes Muslims and excludes non-Muslims. Not to mention that non-Muslims in Islamic traditions are called the either people of the book *(ahl Al-Kitāb)* or non-believers *(kufār).*

Abd Al-Majid Al-Sharfi says during the interview that:

> Although Ennahda wants to appear in a secular fashion, it remains, according to its statements a movement of an Islamist reference which in turn means that this Isalmist reference is the only true representative of the idealistic Islam. According to him, Ennahda's Isalmists background is a religious one rather than cultural one. Meaning that, it is the religious commitment of Ennahda that makes the engagement of Ennahda in civil accord difficult if not impossible. Al-Sharfi further explained: as long as Ennahda has not denied that it represents the Islam of the riotous companions (*al-salaf al-ṣaliḥ*) and the people of the Sunna and the community (*al-sunnah wa-al-jamā'ah*) mainly the *ḥanbalī* understanding of Islam and not the rational school would deprive Ennahda from any civic appearance. As such, this evolution that we have noticed is a result of the intensification of calls that reject these Hanbali understanding. However, it does not mean that there is a fundamental change in the strategic far goals of the movement. Although the leaders of Ennahda deny having guardianship over the understanding of Islam, their actions show that they believe in this guardianship. For example, the rejection of equal inheritance proves this guardianship, meaning that they speak in the name of Islam neither in the name of human rights, nor the universal values, nor the name of public good. In fact, this Islamist reference is conservative. This means that Ennahda's members represent the

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[83] S. M. Torelli, 'The "AKP Model" and Tunisia's al-Nahda: From Convergence to Competition?' *Insight Turkey,* Vol. 14, No. 3, 2012 p. 75.

conservative class of society. For this reason, the model that they follow is traditionalist model.[84]

Here it should be noted that Al-Ghannouchi's understanding of many terminologies is close to the *Ikhwani* understanding. One principle echoed by Al-Ghannouchi following Sayyed Qutb is that of civil state. When I asked Al-Ghannouchi on this issue "what did Ennahda add to the understating of a civil state?" He responded: "The civil state is the state that opposes the state of religious men. We have been trying to deny the theocracy stigma that has always characterized Islam."[85] This response could be found in one of Qutb's books. Qutb stated that "the removal of power held by the priests, tribal leaders, princes, and rulers should be done and this power must be returned to God."[86]

I will elaborate more on the *Ikhwani* concepts that emerged in the post-revolution Ennahda's political discourse in the following paragraphs.

III-   <u>Muslim Brotherhood: Is It a Real Break up*?*</u>

In his article written for *Al-Shourouk* newspaper, Loutfi Zaytoun argues that Ennahda is neither strategically nor politically associated with the Muslim Brotherhood despite the common reference that they share: Islamic culture and values.[87] Loutfi Zaytoun asserts that Ennahda is a political "party" and Islam serves only as a reference from which the party inspires its political practices.[88] Al-Ghannouchi emphasizes the cut and the differences between his "democratic Islam" and "political Islam" by describing the latter as both violent and against the "nation state". [89] Al-Mashrgy stated that "the revolution forced the Islamist movement to radically cut its ties with Political Islam and move to a new phase, that is democratic Islam."[90] Actually, cutting the ties with Political Islam means that Ennahda would inevitably cut its ties with its history and

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[84] Dr. Abd Al-Majid Al-Sharfi, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunisia, Tunis, 2017.

[85] Mr. Rached Al-Ghannouchi, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunisia, Tunis, 2017.

[86] S. Qutb, *Ma'alem Fi Al-Tarik*, Qatar, the Arab Center for Studies and Research, 2009, p.23.

[87] L. Zaytoun, 'Ennahda Al-Laty Nourid', Al-Shourouk Newspaper, 1 March 2016,
http://www.alchourouk.com/«الشروق»-لـ-يكتب-زيتون لطفي : نريد-التي-النهضة(1)-.html, (accessed 5 April 2017).

[88] Mr. Loutfi Zaytoun, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunis, Tunisia, 2017.

[89] Mr. Rached Al-Ghannouchi, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunisia, Tunis, 2017.

[90] Ahmed Al-Mashrigy, *Lecture on Democratic Islam*, Ennahda headquarter, Mont-Plaisir, 2017.

the ideological and intellectual references Al-Ghannouchi based his writings and political understanding on, as well as the structural basis the movement was established on. In other words, Ennahda today seems to neither be a movement backed by its traditional reference nor a party with a well-established base. The aim of the intellects of political Islam, such as Hasan Al Banna, Mohammed Abdu, etc., was explicitly declared the establishment of the *khilāfah* (Islamic State) and the *sharī‘ah* law. If Ennahda, which is declaring itself to be an Islamic practicing politics through a new set of rules and strategies, different from that of the Traditional political Islam, the *Ikhwan* in particular, it is better for the party to well-defined itself to the public: locally, regionally and internationally. This new presentation could be best exemplified through the production of intellectual writings tackling the new pioneered concepts in depth, not just in random statements given in speeches or conferences. Cutting the ties with the traditional interpretations of the Muslim Brotherhood requires Ennahda to release new interpretations (*ijtihādāt*) in order to avoid the confusion and prevent accusations. However, the case seems to be more complex and less dichotomous as it appears. When asked about the duality in the discourse of Ennahda and its uncertain political references, almost all of Ennahda's members interviewed justified this duality by claiming that since its initiation the movement has continually been reviewing, analyzing, and revising its references.[91] However, after forty-seven years, since the seventies, this constant state of revision has not been materialized by intellectual productions or academic writings. In order to ascertain this idea, one of the questions I raised during my interview with Al-Ghannouchi was about the references that Ennahda was basing its political practices and Islamic understanding on after its separation from traditional political Islam. Al-Ghannouchi said "our reference is the Holy Book and the Holy Sunnah (the sayings of the prophet)."[92] This is broad and unclear because these two references cannot be taken as they are, but they require interpretation and explanation. When I re-asked for clarification emphasizing: "so is Ennahda currently conducting new interpretations to assure the cut with the old interpretations attributed to political Islam?" Al-Ghannouchi explicitly said "no, we still use the known ones"[93] Furthermore, Al-Haddad stated that "Ennahda does not issue official reports

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[91] This point was mentioned by Habib Louz, Ajmi Lourimi, and Hmida Al-Nayfar.

[92] Mr. Rached Al-Ghannouchi, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunisia, Tunis, 2017.

[93] Ibid.

stating the new declarations. All these transformations are still on the level of political speeches, press interviews, and personal opinions made by Ennahda's members."[94]

From 1971 until 1980, the Islamist movement followed an organizational work for nearly ten years. Not one of those whom I interviewed and who were part of the movement denied the fact that the structure and values of the movement were all inspired by the work of the Muslim Brotherhood. Actually, one of the reasons behind the split inside the movement in the seventies was the criticism of the Muslim Brotherhood made by some of the members. A. Moussa and A. Al-Ghazal explained that "Al-Ghannouchi was the most resistant to the call of the revisions and he manifested his fears of the intellectual and structural risks that could (the movement) face because of it."[95]

I will focus on the main principles cherished by the Muslim Brotherhood legacy that have influenced and still influence the thought and practice of Ennahda until today. These principles include: *Al-fikr al-shumūlī* (the comprehensiveness of Islam), *al-ummah al-islāmiyyah* (the Muslim community), *mabda' al-shūrá* (the council of consultation), and *al-fikr al-tanẓīmī* (the organizational principle).

   a) *Al-Shūmūliyyah*

One of the core beliefs of the *Ikhawan* is the comprehensiveness of Islam. This conviction means that all life aspects are included and should be involved in the strategies and practices of any Islamist movement/party. In the fifth conference of the Muslim Brotherhood, Hasan Al-Banna stated that "the teachings of Islam are comprehensive and by extension Isalmist movements are able to organize people's affairs in life and the afterlife following these teachings. Those who think that these teachings only address the worship and spiritual aspects are mistaken. Islam is an ideology and worship, country and nation, religion as well as government, action as well as spirituality and Holy Qur'an as well as sword"[96]

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[94] Dr. Mohammed Al-Haddad, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunisia, Tunis, 2017.

[95] A. Moussa and A. Al-Ghazal, *Harakat Al-Nahda bayna Al-Ikhwan was AL-Tawnasa*, Tunis, Tunisia, 2014, p. 31-32.

[96] H. Al Banna, *Majmou'at Rasa'l Al-Imam Al-Shahid Hasan Al-Banna*, Beirut, Dar Al-Hadara Al-Islamiya, 1999 p. 119.

The fact that Ennahda did not substitute the concept of "preaching" from its agenda is a proof that the party still refer to the Muslim Brotherhood's political Islam as a guideline for its practices. The party's pragmatic attitude has led it to reconcile between its both wings: *al-da'awī* (proselytizing) and *al-siyāsī* (political). Dr. Mohammed Al-Haddad explained the idea of preaching in the understanding of the Muslim Brotherhood. He stated that preaching is always directed to non-Muslims. The Muslim Brotherhood adopted the "preaching" activities because the founders of this movement aimed at inviting non-Muslims to Islam: like Sayyed Qutb who tried to invite the Coptic Christians, and al-Mawdūdī who wanted to invite Hindus. These types of activities continued to be a core practice to the Muslim Brotherhood's political Islam. In a country like Tunisia, where all people are Muslims, preaching activities supported by or affiliated with a political party make no-sense. He concluded by stating that the refusal of Ennahda to dispense "preaching" would make the claimed cut with the Muslim Brotherhood fake."[97]

When asked about the reasons behind this separation, Al-Ghannouchi justified: *li ib'ād tūhmat tāwzif al din fi khidmat al siyāsa* (to remove the stigma of using religion as a political tool).[98] The separation of *da'awī* and *siyāsī*, or what was later on explained as *tākhāssos* "specialization"[99], is one of the pragmatic strategies followed by Ennahda as a way to distance itself from the possibility of being accused of politicizing religion or using religion for political purposes. It is also used as a way of strengthening both wings of *da'awī* and *siyāsī* by the division of tasks and responsibilities. Actually, the separation between the *da'awī* and *siyāsī* was not far from the *Ikhwani* thoughts, especially that of Al-Banna. In fact, this tactic had been previously done under the leadership of Hasan Al-Banna. As Al-Abdin states: "Al-Banna ingeniously divided his organization into two: the societies for charity and social service to be registered as an autonomous body with the Ministry of Social affairs, and the General Association of the Muslim Brothers *(Hāy'at al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin al-Ammāh)* to be concerned

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[97] Dr. Mohammed Al-Hddad, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunis, Tunisia, 2017.

[98] *Noktat Hiwar with Rached Al-Ghanno*uchi [online video], https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g_9f3jfPLmY (accessed 1-4-2017).

[99] In Ennahda's 10th conference held in 2015, Al-Ghannouchi declared the separation between Da'awi and Siyasi. After it was understood by the media and scholars as a serious step taken by Ennahda towards civil/secular party, this separation turned to be expressed as specialization.

with *da'awah*, economic, and political matters."[100] Al-Abdin added that the division done by Al-Banna "allowed greater involvement in politics."[101] We can say that this "modernizing" action claimed by Ennahda is not taken for the sake of making a breakthrough in Islamist political ruling but as a tactic to give itself a wide space to act freely in the *siyāsī* without necessarily being in accordance with the orthodox Islamic framework. On the other hand, Ennahda acts in accordance with this framework in the *da'awī* realm.

Al-Mawlidi Al-Ahmar, who is a well-known Tunisian sociologist and a professor at the University of Tunis, elaborated in one of his articles on the idea of preaching and its strong connection to the political ruling in traditional thoughts of political Islam. Al-Ahmar contends that:

> Since religious call can only be comprehensive it must take one of two pathways. Either it includes a non-disclosed political dimension that could be exploited from a powerful second party that isn't necessarily religious. Or the religious call itself would be the basis for political action. The latter can only happen when the preacher assumes that political power is one of the main conditions for achieving the goals of the religious call or it is among the indicator of its success.[102] In fact, Ennahda's popular base was the core support for the party to reach power and the only guarantee for it to stay in power.

Fitnassi explains that "Ennahda and the dismantled Democratic Constitutional Rally are both the only two parties which are enrooted in the Tunisian society and have immense popular acceptance."[103] Ennahda gained its popular base by means of its Islamic identity strengthened by

[100] A. Z. Al-Abdin, The Political Thoughts of Hassan Al-Banna, *Islamic Research Institute*, Vol. 28, No. 3, 1989, p. 229.

[101] Ibid, p. 229.

[102] A. Al-Ahmar, 'Hal Tastati' Harakat Al-Da'wa Al-Diniya Al Ta'sis Lil Dimokratiya?', in Les Islamistes et la conquete democratique du pouvoir, Les VI emes Conference de L'Atep. *Association Tunisienne D'etudes Politiques*, Association Tunisienne D'etude Politique, 2012, p. 25.

[103] Dr. Abd Al-Salam Fitnassi, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunisia, Kayrawan, 2017.

the *da'awī* practices of the movement which was practiced over almost ten years. Abbiate states that "Ennahda has obtained an unexpected success in the election of 23 October 2011 [..] Its ability to carry on charity activity in the most underdeveloped areas."[104]

In *Ma'ālem Fi AlTārīk* (Sings on the Road), Sayyed Qutb explains how the strengthening of the creed (*'aqīdah)* in the minds and hearts of the people is mandatory. Qutb considers that it is not necessary to establish an Islamic state or system during this stage because once a society has absorbed this *'aqīdah*, the Islamic system and state would be established and formulized automatically. Qutb explains: "when society begins to act upon Islamic traditions, only then the basis of an Islamic system is offered to this society. Then this society itself will begin to formulate laws that reality has imposed, in the framework of the general principles of an Islamic system. This is the correct arrangement of the steps dictated by an Islamic methodology."[105] During a TV program, Al Ghannouchi's response to the interviewer's question echoed Qutb's belief already mentioned: When asked about why Ennahda approved the law of decreasing taxes on alcoholic drinks, Al-Ghannouchi responded that "in Islam forbidding alcohol came gradually. Re-applying Islam again in the country must take into account people's readiness."[106] Al-Ghannouchi emphasized the importance of changing the society before legislating laws.

Likewise, "L'islamization par le bas" (Islamization from below) is a similar concept raised by Dr. Mariam Bin Salem to explain how Ennahda is now working through the organizations and institutions and also through its *da'awī* bodies on the Islamization of the society.[107] Abd Al-Latif Al-Makki who served as the Minister of Public Health under Prime Minister Hamadi Jebali and later on Prime Minister Ali Arayed, said that "the party will derive from its Islamic reference a system for the public life that includes everyone in the organization of the whole society starting from the family"[108]

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[104] T. Abbiate, 'The revival of Political Islam in the MENA region: the case of Ennahda in Tunisia', *Revista Ballot,* vol. 1, no. 1, 2015, p. 80

[105] Qutb, S., *Ma'alem Fi Al-Tarik, Qatar,* the Arab Center for Studies and Research, 2009.

[106] *Ashab al soulta* [online video], 2017, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sEG3bfc495s (accessed in 20/5/2017).

[107] Dr. Mariam Bin Salem, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunisia, Tunis, 2017.

[108] Mr. Abd-Latif Al-Makki, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunis, Tunisia, 2017.

b) *Al-ummah al-Islāmiyyah wā Al-shūrá*

The second principle of the Muslim Brotherhood is focused on the Muslim community, *Al-Umma Al-Islāmiya*. One of the main political ambitions of Ennahda is "to promote the spirit of Arabic and Islamic unity and awareness of the fundamental issues of the umma, so as to put an end to hostilities, divisions and secession; to concentrate our efforts on our most decisive issues; to strive to bring about comprehensive unity and to support all serious steps toward this; and to give supreme importance to the unity of the countries of the Arab Maghreb."[109] The long struggle for the promotion of the Arab and Islamic identity throughout Ennahda's history shows the importance of the *umma* as a core pillar in Ennahda's political vision. According to Torelli,

> "At the same time the message of MTI first, and of al-Nahda subsequently, as evidenced by the foundation manifesto of the Harakat Al-Ittijah al-Islami (1981) and the Al-Nahda's statute (1988), is not directed to Tunisia alone. The reference to the Arabic language and to the Arab-Islamic identity requires an almost natural extension of the revival ideals espoused by Rashid Al-Ghannouchi to the entire Muslim community and especially to the Maghreb countries, which are united by a common history of colonial occupation and "cultural infiltration" from the west."[110]

During the interview I conducted with him, Al-Ghannouchi distinguishes his democratic Islam from political Islam by describing the latter as anti-nation state. However, the traditional "*umma* thinking" occasionally reemerge in Al-Ghannouchi's current discourse. This was affirmed by Al-Ghannouchi's response to the question raised during a TV program: Do you aim at regaining the caliphate in Tunisia? Al-Ghannouchi answered: We live in a nation-state called Tunisia and our correctional work is within this state. However, we definitely wish that the Tunisian state opens

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[109] Ennahda Party, *Al-bayan al-ta'sisi li Harakat al-Ittijah al-Islami*, 2012, http://www.nahdha.info/arabe/Sections-artid-98.html, (Accessed on 2 April 2017).

[110] S. M. Torelli, The "AKP Model" and Tunisia's al-Nahda: From Convergence to Competition? *Insight Turkey*, Vol. 14, No. 3, 2012 p. 71.

up to the Maghreb surrounding to establish a Maghrebi state, that opens up to its Arab and Islamic surrounding."[111]

The *umma* is essential in Al-Ghannouchi's thoughts. He believes that the *umma* as a whole is responsible for the formulation of the interpretation of the *sharī'ah*. This was explained by Tonta: The *umma* delivers this task to the *dawla* (state), by transferring some of its powers to the *hūkūmah* (government)." [112] She added: Monitoring the actions of the *hūkūmah* is among the responsibility of the *umma* and could dismantle the work of the *hūkama* (rulers) in case they abused their powers.[113]

Talking about the concept of *umma* will lead me to talk about the importance of the 'state' in Al-Ghannouchi's thought. The naming of the state system, as *khilāfah* state or nation-state, or as presidential or parliamentary, does not matter in the view of Al-Ghannouchi. What really matters for him is the "Islamic" role the state plays. Al-Ghannouchi believes that in order for the rule to be Islamic it should be just, deliberative, and to have laws based on the Quran, Sunna, and the Islamic *maqāsed* (aims of Islam).[114] He added: the choice between a presidential or parliamentary system is dictated by the events and the public good at that specific time.[115] Deducted from Al-Ghannouchi's thoughts I called the state's role in Al-Ghannouchi's thoughts as "a prophetic role" whose main duty is to ensure that the *umma* is on the right Islamic path. Pointing this view out, in his article *Mabāde' Al Sūlta wa Al Hūkm Fi L-Islam* (the principles of ruling and authority in Islam) Al-Ghannouchi states that:

> There is almost no debate between different Islamic movements
> that the establishment of authority above people is a religious duty
> to uphold *sharī'ah* and a humanitarian social necessity for the
> continuation of *Al-Jamā'a* (the Muslim community) […] Since the
> government is only a necessity that grows or diminishes based

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[111] *Ashab al soulta* [online video], 2017, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sEG3bfc495s (accessed in 20/5/2017)

[112]R. Tonta, 'From Theory to Practice – the Concept of an Islamic State by Ennahda in the Context of Political Transition in Tunisia', *HEMISPHERES,* No. 27, 2012, p. 181.

[113] Ibid, p.181.

[114] R. Al-Ghannouchi, *Al Menbar,* Tunis, Al-Mujtahed publishing House, 2016, p. 15.

[115] Ibid, p. 15.

upon the good nature of the people within the society. Then, the more righteous the people are the less there is need for a government and vice versa. It is known that goodness is the true nature of human kind. This is confirmed by many prophetic sayings in the face of hedonism pushed forth by the devils of *jinn* and *ins* (human beings). The dependence of Islam for the betterment of life on the good tendencies of people, what their conscience receives as divine guidance, along with disciplinary education create a natural affinity towards good action. This mission is the reason why people would adhere to good actions and repel against evil without any need for external pressure or guide. The more effective education is, the less there is need for a government. However, since shortfall is a constant companion of people's nature, there is always need for a government to maintain justice.[116]

Not only a prophetic role, the state for Al-Ghannouchi is also responsible for the unification of the Muslim *Umma*. Abd Al-Latif Al-Makki shared the same view. Al-Makki answers my question on the Islamic program Ennahda is willing to formulate. He explains that "being preoccupied by the issues of our country Tunisia will not make us forget our responsibility towards other Arab Muslim countries. However, it is a period where every country is taken by its own problems. A day will come where all parties from all Arab countries will coordinate and cooperate with one another."[117] This was highlighted in al-Banna's thoughts: "Al-Banna believed that the Muslims should re-establish the Islamic caliphate because it is the symbol of their unity and it is, at the same time, a religious duty. Thus, the Muslim Brotherhood put the setting-up of the caliphate at the top of its program. However, al-Banna admitted that some preliminary steps

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[116] R. Al-Ghannouchi, *Irhasat Al Thawra*, Tunis, Al-Mujtahed publishing House, 2016, p. 22.

[117] Mr. Abd Al-Latif Makki, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunis, Tunisa, 2017.

should be take first, such as cultural and economic cooperation among the Muslim peoples, followed by military treaties and agreements in various fields."[118]

c) *Al-Tanzīm*

Mona Kraim emphasizes the idea that Ennahda is the strongest and most disciplined party in Tunisia because Ennahda is based on the idea of *tanzim* (the hierarchical organization).[119] Al-Ghannouchi, who was chosen by *harakat al-tabligh* back when he was in Paris as an *imam* (prayer leader), kept his role throughout the history of the Islamist movement, as assured by the very first members of the movement which I have met. Habib Louz highlighted this point by stating that Al-Ghannouchi kept his leadership role since the initiation of the Islamist movement because he was the only one able to balance between the ideology and realpolitik.[120] Louz added: No one proved a similar ability throughout Ennahda's history except Al-Ghannouchi, that is why he was and still is the leader of the movement.[121] In addition, the leadership of Al-Ghannouchi was crucial for the re-unification and re-strengthening of Ennahda during the uprising. In Islamic tradition it is known that the leader of a specific body whether it is military, social, or religious is always the *Imam* of prayer. Proof of this is the fact that prophet Mohammed has always been the *imam* in prayer and only given this position at the end of his life to Abu Bakr which was a primary reason why Abu Bakr was voted to be the first *khalifa* of Muslims. Following this *sunnah,* which includes strong authoritative role, Al-Ghannouchi kept being the Imam of *joumou'a* prayer for his party until today.[122] All speeches given by Al-Ghannouchi during these prayers over the period of two years (2011-2013) were gathered in one book published in 2015.[123] Al-Ghannouchi is keeping this role until today.

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[118] A. Z. Al-Abdin, The Political Thoughts of Hassan Al-Banna, *Islamic Research Institute*, Vol. 28, No. 3, 1989, p. 222.

[119] Dr. Mona Krayem, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunisia, Tunis, 2017.

[120] Mr. Habib Louz, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunisia, Tunis, 2017.

[121] Ibid.

[122] I was told during a recent visit to Ennahda's headquarter that Al-Ghannouchi still leads the *joumou'a* prayer for his party.

[123] Al-Ghannouchi. R., *Al Menbar*, Tunis, Al-Mujtahed publishing House, 2016.

Al-Gourchi said that the Islamist movement of the seventies was created on the basis of the *Ikhwani tanzim* with a leader, *emirs (scholars)*, *shūrá* council, community (*al-Jama'a*), and is always combined with a sort of discipline and commitment which makes leaving this *tanzim* (organization) difficult.[124] The countless clashes among the members of the Ennahda party over the problematic issues raised throughout the formulation of the 2014 constitution were also settled down by the "Banna"[125] Al-Ghannouchi himself. Those who opposed or disagreed, have left the party quietly and peacefully, like the former Prime Minister Hamadi Al-Jebali.[126] In fact, the core problem of an organization or a movement declaring itself to be Islamic is that it combines itself with the sacred and the holy. As a result, the holiness of the religion elevates the organization or the movement to the level of the "holy". Leaving or opposing this kind of organization generates a similar moral dilemma of that quitting or opposing Islam itself. Al-Ahmar writes:

> The Islamist movements are diverse. This diversity did not change their conservation of the doctrinal perceptive mentality, where beliefs join in with politics and the relationship to God joins in with the relationship with the society. Thus the Isalmist movements' representatives, within their modern party institutions, public sphere, and their place of worship, continuously confuse between their religious identity occupied with worship and religious teachings and their political identity that always drives them towards obtaining power as the primary condition to construct a social religious entity. In this entity the relationship with God is the scale used to evaluate relationships within the society.[127]

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[124] Mr. Salah Al-Din Al-Gourchi, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunisia, Tunis, 2017.

[125] I'm using "Banna" as an adjective to describe the attitude of Al-Ghannouchi which are similar to Hassan Al-Banna's leadership

[126] I tried to call Mr. Jebali several times until my call was answered by his previous assistant who informed me that Mr. Hamadi has left the party and does not to speak about anything related to the party.

[127] Ibid, p.26.

This is what the Muslim Brotherhood tends to cultivate in the collective mind of the members. Al-Anani emphasized this idea by calling it the "*jama'a* paradigm". Al-Anani states that "for Al-Banna, it was essential to create an identity-movement that could embody Islamic values and ideals in everyday life […] to infuse his vision and conception of Islamic identity into the MB's ideology and structure, Al-Banna created […] the *jama'a* paradigm […] this paradigm created a pattern of identity for the Muslim Brotherhood based on a sense of commitment and solidarity among the Muslim Brotherhood members who act not as individuals but as a collective unit; as brothers."[128] Sheikh Habib Louz considers Ennahda as his daughter and "nobody can leave his daughter", Louz explains.[129]

Lately Ennahda has been giving special attention to youth on a large scale. Ennahda is initiating conferences, activities, and lectures addressing the youth in diverse cultural fields. The party is also working on involving youth in politics and decision-making, Lourimi asserts.[130] Similarly, Al-Banna has given special attention to youth in his thoughts and recommendations. He believes that "the *umma* is in immense need to construct spirits, ethics, and place an imprint of right manhood upon its sons. So that they can face whatever trials and tribulations on their paths. Man is the secret to the survivability of a nation and the source of its renaissance. The history of nations is written by the strong willed intellectual men. The strength of a nation is measured by the availability of man who possess the correct values of manhood. I believe, and history agrees with me, that one man can build a nation if he possesses the correct ethics and notions of manhood, and he can demolish it should he wish it be."

IV-   The 2014 constitution: From Islamization to Pragmatism

The new constitution has been agreed on only four years after the revolution. During the formulation of the constitution the country was at verge of a civil war. Many procedural and ideological clashes have come in the way between the secularist parties and the Islamist parties. The latter was headed by Ennahda. By following the discussions and the debates over the formulation of the articles, one can notice the evolution and the progressive development of

[128] K. Al-Anani, 'The Power of the Jama'a: The Role of Hasan Al-Banna in Constructing the Muslim Brotherhood's Collective Identity', *Sociology of Islam*, 2013, p. 53.

[129] Mr. Habib Louz, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunisia, Tunis, 2017.

[130] Mr. Ajmi Lourimi, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunisian, Tunis, 2017.

Ennahda's pragmatism. From *sharīʻah* to a "civil" state is how Ennahda started its political governing to end up today being the pioneer of "Democratic Islam". Marks states that "scholars Francesco Cavatorta and Rikke Hostrup Haugbolle argued, for instance, that pragmatism plays a greater role that fixed ideological positions in shaping Ennahda's approach to constitutional debates."[131]

The constitutional course was a "concessions" course. Asma'a Nouyara a called the agreement between both Nida' and Ennahda as "compromises" and "bargains" because she used to view them as a matter of a political give-and-take, in which neither Ennahda nor Nida' gave up any of their ideological convictions.[132] Critical issues have long been on the negotiation table of the *shūrá* council of Ennahda before being settled in the Constitutional Assembly. Kays Saied who is a professor of law and a prominent legal analyst criticized the issued draft of the 2014 constitution for its pragmatic compromised articles.[133] Saied added as to confirm the statement he made: For instance, Article 1 defined Islam as the religion of the state, followed by Article 2 which affirms the civil nature of this state. Article 6 of the constitution asserts that the state is the guardian of religion and the protective of the sacred. In the same article, freedom of belief and conscious are granted. Here it is interesting to cast a light on the broad meaning of the term sacred, which can be easily manipulated to surpass the importance of freedom of conscious and expression.[134]

The negotiations over the constitution's articles show Ennahda's pragmatism not only exemplified by its compromises regarding some critical issues but also the issues raised themselves. Considering the *Ikhwani* legacy we find that the issues, such as; the complementary between men and women, the Arabic and Islamic identity of the country, the universality of the Islamic Value, the *sharīʻah* as the source of legislation, and blasphemy, have always been controversial to the Muslim Brotherhood. Likewise, Ennahda followed the same understanding when formulating the constitution.

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[131] M. Marks, 'Convince, coerce, or compromise? Ennahda's approach to Tunisia's constitution', *Brookings*, no. 10, 2014, p. 6.

[132] Dr. Asma'a Nouyara, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunisia, Tunis, 2017.

[133] Dr. Kayss Said, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunisia, Tunis, 2017.

[134] Ibid.

For instance, one can wonder how, in a very short period, Ennahda turned from adopting a conservative belief that women are complimentary to men into a call for a fifty-fifty (men and women) quota in the parliament.[135] This progress was made on the basis of pragmatism because although there was a progress in terms of including women in politics and decision making, Ennahda's belief in what concerns women's issues and freedoms is still conservative. This point is further explained through the same question which was raised to Loutfi Zitoun already mentioned in the previous paragraphs regarding the repealing of law that bans the marriage of Muslim women to a non-Muslim was raised during my interview with Al-Ghannouchi. "This call should be rejected, because the ban is for the protection of the family from any rupture and preventing the children from being dispersed between the religion of the mother and that of the father. Such rupture only happens when a woman marries a non-Muslim because a Muslim man will definitely respect the religion of his non-Muslim wife, but the opposite is not true."[136] Prioritizing the family over women's freedoms and rights is still the norm for Ennahda. This is similar to Al-Banna's belief in the importance of the family which consists of the second phase in the reform process arranged by the *Ikhwan* to revive the Islamic faith and values in the society.[137] As mentioned in Bary's article, Marks states that "the victory of Ennahda cannot be considered as opening the doors for women but rather that it could wage an Iranian-style fight for women rights and finally returning feminist women to their kitchens."[138]As already explained, Ennahda's aim is to get accepted nationally and internationally. This is why the inclusion of women not only in the political process but also in critical leadership positions is mandatory to pave the way for such acceptance. However, when it comes to women's empowerment on the scale of society, the traditional conservative gender roles of women reemerge to the surface. Awatef Nabilia, who is a member of the Tunisian women's organization, which is considered as an organization affiliated with Ennahda, explained the disagreement with the Democratic

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[135] This call was raised by Imad Al Hammami Ennahda's member in the constitutional assembly

[136] Mr. Rached Al Ghannouchi, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunis, Tunisia, 2017.

[137] H. Al Banna, *Majmou'at Rasa'l Al-Imam Al-Shahid Hasan Al-Banna*, Beirut, Dar Al-Hadara Al-Islamiya, 1999 p. 177.

[138] I. Bary, 'Women's Political Participation in Muslim Brotherhood between the Hammer of Ambiguity and the Anvil of Inclusion-Moderation: The Case of Egypt and Tunisia', Master Thesis, Norwegian University of Life Sciences Faculty of Social Sciences Department of International, Environmental and Development Studies, 2015, p. 15.

Women organization because the latter advocates for ultimate equality between men and women ignoring the importance of the family and the biological differences between both.[139]

The complementary role of women to men suggested by Ennahda is traditionally understood as a division between private sphere and public sphere, where women are the core part of the former and men have the primary role in the latter. Al-Banna recommends in one of his letters on women: "Teach the woman what match her main mission and employment that God created her for, which is to be a mother and manage her home.[140] Mariam Bin Salem asked some of Ennahda's members: If you understand the statement of "complementary roles" as to infer equality between men and women, how could you formulate a law that protects and guarantees equal rights and freedoms of women and men in a "complementary" manner without any kind of discrimination against women?[141] "It is impossible to materialize the "complementary" role of women to men in laws", Bin Salem affirms.[142]

Moreover, the *sharī'ah* close was substituted by "Tunis is an Arab state; Islam is its religion" in the article 1 of the constitution. Concerning the first part of the close; "Tunis is an Arab state", the emphasis on the "Arab" identity of the country echoed the *Ikhwani* understanding. Al-Banna describes the importance the Arab identity for two reasons: Firstly, "Islam originated in the Arab World and was delivered to all nations by Arabs, its holy book is Arabic and all nations were united under this Arabic tongue when Muslims were truly Muslims."[143] Secondly, "it is necessary for the restoration of the Islamic glory and its state that Arabs unite. Thus it is the duty of every Muslim to facilitate, encourage, and work towards Arabic unity."[144] Hasan al-Banna gave great importance to the Arab countries and the Arab people thinking that the first step towards the establishment of an Arab state is working on the unification of the Arab Muslim

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[139] Ms. Awatef Nabilia, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunisia, Tunis, 2017.

[140] H. Al Banna, *Majmou'at Rasa'l Al-Imam Al-Shahid Hasan Al-Banna*, Beirut, Dar Al-Hadara Al-Islamiya, 1999 p. 371.

[141] Dr. Maryam Bin Salem, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunisia, Tunis, 2017.

[142] Ibid.

[143] H. Al Banna, *Majmou'at Rasa'l Al-Imam Al-Shahid Hasan Al-Banna*, Beirut, Dar Al-Hadara Al-Islamiya, 1999 p. 142.

[144] Ibid, p. 142.

world. He asserts: Our [the Muslim Brothers] aim is to achieve our goals in Egypt, in all the Arab countries, and in every ground that God has blessed with the Islamic creed."[145]

Regarding the "Islam is its religion" statement, several constitutional professors and legal experts which I have met, such as Mona Kraym, Kays Said, Fadel Moussa and Ikbal Moussa, have stated that this article could be used to consider any infringement of *sharī'ah* as unconstitutional. Ikbal Moussa affirmed this point by saying that "the judges usually stand with the strongest party in power. This could lead us to witness provisions in accordance with the first article of the constitution, ignoring the second article which states the civility of the state."[146] Zegal argues that

> "He (Al-Ghannouchi) also understood that Article 1 of the 1959 constitution was sufficient to make Islam the foundation of a way of life in Tunisia. Indeed, since *sharī'ah* was to be defined through parliamentary legislation for him, its marked presence in the constitution was not necessary, perhaps without any effect, and therefore only symbolic. After all, since 1959, Islam was explicitly mentioned in the constitution and this did not prevent the repression of the Isalmist movement. In the end, he thought Islam had to be embodied and practiced rather than theorized and mentioned in the constitutional narrative."[147]

Furthermore, one of the researchers on Ennahda told me that instead of having the *sharī'ah* mentioned in the constitution, it is enough for any law to pass through the parliament where members of Ennahda cross-check these laws with the Islamic *sharī'ah* to check compatibility and accept passing these laws or not.[148]

Among the issues which Ennahda considered as equally problematic is the mentioning of the universal values of Human Rights in the constitution instead of the Islamic values for the fact

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[145] Ibid, p.107.

[146] Ms. Ikbal Moussa, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunis, Tunisia, 2017.

[147] M. Zegal, 'Competing Ways of Life: Islamism, Secularism, and Public Order in The Tunisian Transition', *John Wiley & Sons Ltd.,* vol. 20, no. 2, 2013.

[148] Mr. Ahmed Abdou, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunis, Tuisia, 2017.

that Ennahda believes in the universality of the Islamic values. Such understanding is found in Qutb's thoughts. Qutb believes that the Islamic system is universal, thus the commitment to it originates from the necessity of achieving consistency between human life and the movement of the universe that one lives in.[149] Ennahda, after negotiations, ignored its reservations and accepted the referencing of the Human Rights values in the constitution. What makes this action pragmatic is the definitions of *hurriyyat* (freedoms) in the understanding of the party. A human being is only free when he/she practices Islam; worshiping God and obeying the *sharī'ah*: This idea was highlighted in a 2016 published booklet by Ennahda under the title *Al-Huriya; Nahwa Ta'sil Li Mafahim Moua'sira* (Freedoms, a direction of enrooting of modern understandings). In this publication, freedom was described as such: "The freedom of man is proportional to his obedience."[150] It was also mentioned in the same booklet that "if we observe the Islamic rituals, we find that these rituals are a clear expression of will power, as well as an empowering factor of it. Therefore, these rituals are a mode of liberation and a witness of it. For example, fasting is a voluntary abstention on food even though it is instinctual. These rituals are a glorious manifestation of freedom."[151] Similarly, Qutb states that "Islamic society is the only society that is dominated by a monotheistic God in which people do not worship each other instead they worship only God with that they are completely and truly liberated."[152] The traditional definition raised by Ennahda, especially that it was written in a recent publication issued by the party, asserts that accepting human rights was not made on a clear understanding and/or commitment to the protection and/or promotion of these rights but on the basis of pragmatism.

V-   Co-opting Salafists

After the revolution of 2011, the Salafi-jihadist activism started to reemerge quickly in Tunisia. This rise was and still is one of the major challenges encountering the political life of Ennahda. The salafi-jihadists, which are considered the right-wing Islamist fundamentalists, have often used violence when dealing with what they consider as infringements of Islam and

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[149] S. Qutb, *Ma'alem Fi Al-Tarik*, Qatar, the Arab Center for Studies and Research, 2009, p. 115.

[150] R. Al-Ghannouchi, *Al-Huriya; Nahwa Ta'sil Li Mafahim Moua'sira*, Tunisia, Al-Nahda Party Publications, 2016, p. 24.

[151] Ibid, p.29.

[152] S. Qutb, *Ma'alem Fi Al-Tarik*, Qatar, the Arab Center for Studies and Research, 2009, p. 105.

sharī'ah. Here, it should be highlighted that there are two categories of Salafism in Tunisia: "Scientific" and "Jihadi", as classified by Laura Guazzone.[153] The first type was easy to be contained by Ennahda, because *Jabhat Al-Islah's*[154] Jihadists are from the same generation of Al-Ghannouchi, like Mohammad Ali Hurath and Mohammad Khouja who shared the same experience of prison and exile. They thus preferred directly after the revolution to stay within the camp of scientific Salafism and to perform under institutions despite their major reservations and disagreements over democracy, liberalism, civility, etc., rather than working in street politics. According to Guazzone, "the problem, however, for future developments in Tunisia is that many of today's Tunisian Jihadists and Salafists do not really recognize *Jabhat al-Islah* as their natural home because they draw their ideological and political inspiration from other events and political or military experiences."[155] The Salafi-Jihadism is the real danger and the true threat to Tunisia, and to Ennahda's pragmatism in particular, not just because of their commitment to violent physical jihad but also because of the relations they have with international jihadist networks.[156] Despite this, Ennahda pragmatically proved its ability to absorb the violent attitude of these groups. Under Hamadi Jebali's government[157], many Salafist parties were recognized by the state, including the most radical *Hizb Al Tahrir*. This act should be considered normal, especially that the Salafists have experienced the exclusion from the political game for so long, and have shared the same years in prison under terrible experience, like most of Ennahda's members. However, after the attack on Nessma TV in 2011, the attack on the American Embassy in 2012, and the assassination of both Tunisian political figures Shokra Beleed and Mohammed Librahmi in 2013, which were all proven done by Salafists, the Islamist government of Jebali had a timid reaction as to antagonize or criminalize the Salafists. Lusardi wrote that "prime Minister Hamadi Jebali, Ennahda's secretary general, denounced these attacks, but no concrete actions were taken

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[153] L, Guazzone., 'Ennahda Islamists and the Test of Government in Tunisia', *The International Spectator*, vol. 48, no. 4, 2013, p. 34.

[154] Jabhat Al-Islah was one of the Jihadist party who were established and legalized under Hamadi Al-Jebali's government after the 2010 revolution.

[155] L, Guazzone., 'Ennahda Islamists and the Test of Government in Tunisia', *The International Spectator*, vol. 48, no. 4, 2013, p. 34.

[156] Ibid, p. 34.

[157] It was the first government leaded by Ennahda member Hamadi Jebali after the elections of 2011

to punish the radicals."[158] Nowadays, although these groups still oppose democracy and institutionalization, they have adopted a non-violent political behavior and many have focused their work on institutional social, charitable, and preaching activities.

The attitude towards the Salafist groups is a part of the pragmatic discourse of Ennahda. In the words of Al-Ghannouchi as mentioned in Merone and Cavatorta's article:

> "The Salafist youth reminds me [Al-Ghannouchi talking about himself] of my youth and the relationship we had with the extremism [secular, in this case] that Bourguiba displayed in the 1970s. The 1990s produced a second generation of angry young men because of the absence of Islam in society. The 1990s were catastrophic for religion: the mosques, having become centers of praise for Ben Ali, were deserted; theology books disappeared from libraries. There were no girls with their heads covered...The children of a number of Islamist activists have become Salafists! This is a generation that was born with their fathers being absent and has grown up listening, like a litany, to stories of torture and suffering. The only references that unfortunately they found were religious channels from the Gulf, with a strong Salafist message. However, I am convinced that in ten to fifteen years Tunisia will be able to welcome back the Salafists just like it did with the Islamists of my generation who have been reconciled with moderate indigenous Islam. The ability of this country to tame the toughest plants is quite incredible. (La Presse, 31 July, 2012)[159]",

Add to this, absorbing the Salafist groups is among the coalition and inclusiveness policy followed by Ennahda after the elections of 2014. Along with Ennahda's aim at extending its

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[158] R. Lusardi, 'Tunisia's Islamists: Ennahda and the Salafists Is a Divorce Underway?', *Middle East Policy Council*, http://www.mepc.org/commentary/tunisias-islamists-ennahda-and-salafis, (accessed 3/6/2017).

[159] F. Merone and F. Cavatorta, 'The Emergence of Salafism in Tunisia', *Jadaliyya*, August 2012, http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/6934/the-emergence-of-salafism-in-tunisia (accessed 10 May 2017).

popular base as much as possible, Ennahda wants to keep the Salafists groups under its wings for several reasons.

First, the *Ikhwani* movement would always look a peaceful and moderate movement when compared to the Salafist movement. For instance, the Egyptian Muslim Brothers when compared to the Egyptian Salafist party *Al-Nour*, the former would be considered as moderate Isalmists, although both of them are persecuted and oppressed by the Egyptian state. The same case exists in Tunisia. Actually, for the purpose of extending its popular base, the existence of a Salafist group in the country seems to have a great benefit for Ennahda. if compared to the Salafists and their extremist attitude and fundamental understanding of Islam, Ennahda would look the moderate, democratic, temporarily Islamic party. As a result, Ennahda seems to convince the public opinion that it should stay in power in order to confront the threat of the Salafists' extremism and terrorism which has spread in the country. Ennahda is also chosen as to break the stereotyped extremist image of Islam promoted by the Salafist groups through their peaceful and moderate Islamic attitude.

Second, the struggle for defending religious symbols, criminalizing blasphemy, advocating for gender segregation, encouraging preaching in social activity and mosques, and pushing forward for *sharīʿah* and Islamic state, *khilāfah*; while Ennahda has been trying to remove these critical issues from the spotlight, the Salafist groups have been working hard to frequently bring these issues on the center stage. On the 12th of April, Hizb Al-Tahrir held its annual conference under the title The Islamic State is the savior of humanity from the degradation of democracy *(al-khilāfah muḥarirat al-bashariyyah min iṭṭihāḍ al-dimuqrāṭiyyah))*. Absorbing the Salafists' congestion is the safest attitude Ennahda could maintain towards these groups. According to Rached Al-Ghannouchi, "inclusion of these groups into the democratic political process will have a positive effect, as they will lose pretext to act against the state, but also will ease their rhetoric and force them to look for compromise."[160]

Third, the Salafist groups have huge preaching activities, as well as the ability of their radical ideology to attract Muslim youth, especially with the huge economic crisis leading to the rise of

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[160] R. Tonta, 'From Theory to Practice – the Concept of an Islamic State by Ennahda in the Context of Political Transition in Tunisia', *HEMISPHERES,* No. 27, 2012, p. 191.

unemployment "from 14.9 percent to 18.9 percent nationally, with peaks of more than 30 percent among graduates and of more than 50 percent in the most deprived interior region."[161] Tonta claims that "Ennahda has already sensed the threat of Salafist preachers of Islam, who gradually take control of the subsequent mosques […] According to estimates, in about 500 mosques (from 2500) the Friday prayers are in line with the Salafi ideology."[162]

Thus Jihadi Salafism is one of the major threats to the security and stability of Tunisia, which are the responsibility of the parties in power. That's why it is of Ennahda's interests to keep the country as much stable as possible. The success of the democratic transitional period in Tunisia is strongly tied to the success of the party in politics. This means the success of Ennahda's strategy in proving the claimed compatibility of Islam with democracy. The failure of the transitional justice in the country will definitely lead to the failure of Ennahda, which might result in the exclusion and persecution of the party again. Ann Wolf states that

> "The mixing of criminal elements with Salafist jihadists provides for a dangerous cocktail threatening the stability of the country. As the most important political force after the revolution, Ennahda is now facing the difficult task of proving that it can render political Islam compatible with democracy, with Tunisia becoming in that respect a model for the region. Ennahda's 'pragmatists', dominating the leadership, have indeed promoted a moderate interpretation of Islam. Yet the party's base and particularly its youth seem to be moving closer to its 'dogmatic' wing, indicating that the latter might eventually be able to pressure the movement into more conservative and less democratic policies."[163]

The threat of the spread of the Salafist jihadi ideology is its ability to touch the youth. Youth is the age where the sentiments always follow the radical ideologies and the revolutionist social

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[161] L. Guazzone., 'Ennahda Islamists and the Test of Government in Tunisia', The International Spectator, vol. 48, no. 4, 2013, p. 33.

[162] R. Tonta, 'From Theory to Practice – the Concept of an Islamic State by Ennahda in the Context of Political Transition in Tunisia', *HEMISPHERES,* No. 27, 2012, p. 191.

[163] A. Wolf, 'An Islamist 'renaissance'? Religion and politics in post-revolutionary Tunisia', *The Journal of North African Studies, Vol.18, No.4, 2013, p. 570.*

change. This factor combined with the socio-economic crisis, in addition to the low intellectual cultural cultivation (despite the high educational cultivation, especially in Tunisia) will definitely echo with the youth in the society. Marks states that "Jihadi Salafism offers an inspirational opportunity for Tunisian youths to fight for something larger than themselves and inject a sense of higher purpose into their lives."[164]

Al-Ghannouchi's statement that the Salafist youth reminds him of his own youth, as already mentioned in above paragraphs, would give an idea of what kind of intellect and religious understanding Al-Ghannouchi has acquired during his youth, that had an influence over his behavior and beliefs. As pointed out before, Ennahda didn't deny its acceptance or, at least, its understanding of the extremist and violent behavior of the Jihadi Salafist during the first years after the revolution. Even after the attacks on the American Embassy in Tunis in October 2012, we have seen the video leaked in September 2012 of Al-Ghannouchi trying to absorb the anger of the Salafists by giving them hopes and rising their motives regarding the possibility of establishing the Islamic society and state in the country.[165]

Ennahda's Pragmatism: The Stick and the Carrot

Ennahda's pragmatism was not adopted by a free choice made by the party. Realpolitik has forced Ennahda to undertake a pragmatic attitude in politics after the 2010 Tunisian uprising. Murad states that Ennahda was put under national and international pressure to enter into a reconciliation and to hand over the government.[166]

According to Murad, "even if Ennahda has got 89 of seats in the national constitutional assembly, all secular parties together make up to 107 seats, which means that the secularist together exceeded Ennahda's share of seats in the assembly." [167] He added that "the assumption claimed regarding the possibility of Ennahda to rule alone is inappropriate and impossible to

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[164] M. Marks, 'Youth Politics and Tunisian Salafism', *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 18, No. 1, 2013, p. 111.

[165] Video Al-Ghannouchi Ma'a Al-Salafiyyin Mousarrab, [online video], 2012,

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m5vqhT8TxRw

[166] Dr. Hatem Murad, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunisia, Tunis, 2017.

[167]H. Murad, 'Analyse des Resultats des Elections du 23 October de la Constituante', in L'election de L'assemle constituante: lectures politique, in L'election de L'assemle constituante: lectures politique, Les IIemes Conferences de L'atep, *Association Tunisienne D'etudes Politiques*, 2011, p.16.

happen because the secular parties have got more seats than Ennahda." [168] Thus turning towards coalitions was a must for Islamists as well as other secular parties. Despite having the majority of votes in the elections, the inclusive attitude claimed by Ennahda towards secular parties were not kind of privilege offered by the party. It was however the only way to maintain a seat in power and survive in the decision-making process.

The fear of a secular hegemony also plays a role in the pragmatic discourse of Ennahda. Being the only Islamist party in the country facing a secular opposition might shake the power of Ennahda. Although the secular parties in Tunisia are fragmented and divided, Nida' party proved the ability of the secular political power to encounter the power of Ennahda, especially in 2014's presidential elections. Not to mention that the secular opposition is supported by a strong secular civil society. Marks argues that

> "civil society often found itself in frequent alliance with an anti-Isalmist coalition of leftists, trade Unionists, and old regime elites. This constellation of soft and hard-power anti-Isalmists actors narrowed Ennahda's margin of maneuver, further impressing upon party leaders the importance of canny compromise to log-term survival. Intense pushback from local, Tunisian critics – including media, civil society groups, the labor union (UGTT) and old regime elites – during 2012 and early 2013 often served to remind Ennahda that minimalist pragmatism, with a heavy helping of consensus and compromise making, offered the path of least resistance."[169]

Add to this, the anti-Isalmist attitude of the Tunisian media outlets, which have put Ennahda under the light of accusation. According to Marks, "Ennahda has often come off as defensive and

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[168] Ibid, p.16.

[169] M. Marks, 'Did Egypt's coup teach Ennahda to cede power?' *Project on Middle East Political Science,* June 2016, https://pomeps.org/2016/07/22/did-egypts-coup-teach-ennahda-to-cede-power/, (Accessed on 2 April 2017).

ill-at-ease in Tunisian media, especially in comparison to its critics, many of whom hold influential positions in the country's top media outlets."[170]

Ziad Krishan has described the history of Ennahda after the political move of 1981, as a "call to recognition" (*hāk al i'tirāf*).[171] This means the right of Ennahda to be officially recognized by the state and the society as a political entity. Although the revolution freed Ennahda from the call to recognition, giving it a political power and decision-making weight, it has found itself extensively attacked by the secular opposition, including the civil society and the media. Thus Ennahda has moved from a state of "call to recognition" to a state of defining itself by acting "modern" and democratic. Krayem states that "Ennahda has become more modernistic than the modernistic movement itself."[172] Krishan explains that "the years of victimhood and marginalization in prison and exile made it inescapable for Ennahda to retain in a constant state of defensiveness and reconciliation, unable to maintain a constructive governance attitude and confident political engagement, but always under a continuous yielding to realpolitik using pragmatic tactics."[173]

Faced by major political and economic challenges after the elections of 2011, Ennahda started to buy time. For instance, Ennahda has directed all attention towards the inclusion of *sharī'ah* in the constitution. Moussa highlighted: "*sharī'ah* was not among Ennahda's political agenda. However, it was raised by the party as a tool to threat the opposition and to gain time to consolidate itself in power."[174] Actually, "rather than working on developmental strategies and socio-economic programs for the country, the first years of the revolution revolved around ideological debates and fights between secularists and Isalmists over controversial issues concerning some personal thoughts and individual ways of life", Krayem explains.[175] Krayem also added, "instead of focusing on enhancing the present rights and granting more rights to the Tunisians, the national debate was on whether the personal rights granted in the Bourguibian

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[170] M. Marks, 'Convince, coerce, or compromise? Ennahda's approach to Tunisia's constitution', *Brookings*, no. 10, 2014, p. 13.

[171] Mr. Ziad Krishan, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunisia, Tunis, 2017.

[172] Dr. Mona Krayem, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunisia, Tunis, 2017.

[173] Mr. Ziad Krishan, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunisia, Tunis, 2017.

[174] Ms. Ikbal Moussa, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunis, Tunisia, 2017.

[175] Dr. Mona Krayem, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunisia, Tunis, 2017.

personal status code are "Islamic" or not."[176] She explains: "The power of the civil society, already fueled by the spark of the revolution, was wasted on following up the dubious discourse of Ennahda, instead of working on social development and empowerment."[177] Ennahda came to power at an economically challenging moment where the economic conditions in Tunisia, especially in the last years of Bin Ali's regime, were already deteriorated. El-Katiri states that Ennahda's "the lack of governing experience, often tied to (1) their first time in office; (2) their typically high focus on religious-ideological topics rather than core themes such as economic reform beyond broad welfarist rhetoric; and in many cases an election result that surprised their political leaders themselves. Simply put, they were not prepared to govern."[178] Hence, Ennahda seemed to buy time.

However, it seems that Ennahda's expectations failed. After the elections, enforcing its traditional political ideology was the norm, like going by the *sharīʿah* and questioning rights and freedoms. By pushing forward its traditional understandings, Ennahda paralyzed the process of the formulation of the constitution, which has led to a tremendous debate among the factions of the national assembly. A counter-revolution emerged in protest of the transitional justice paralysis, that risked the country to inter into a civil war. In such very critical circumstances, Ennahda found itself in crossroads, having no choice but to either lose what it has starving for all over its history, or to protect it. Faced by a huge opposition gathered in Bardo, apart from a huge number of Ennahda supporters gathered in Al-Qasba city, Ennahda had had to take a life-or-death decision. Ennahda was recalling the Islamic Salvation Front in Algeria's experience during the 1990 and 1991 elections as well as the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood which were undergoing harsh moments of popular opposition and coups d'état in the making. Through its veteran leader Al-Ghannouchi, Ennahda took the decision of handing over power to technocratic government headed by Prime Minister Mehdi Joma'a. As Marks has put it, "the Egypt coups d'état updated rather than created Ennahda's existing posture of pragmatism, because it

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[176] Ibid.

[177] Ibid.

[178] M. El-Katiri., 'Revival of Political Islam in The Aftermath of the Arab Uprisings: Implications for The Region and Beyond', *Strategic Studies Institute,* 2014, p. 5

reinforced most Ennahda leaders' confidence that pragmatic gradualism represented the wisest approach."[179]

Moving to another reason, Islamists in Tunisia have long suffered from political exclusion and lack of recognition. For almost 30 years, Ennahda was pushed out of the political scene. Even after its independent members won good votes in 1989 elections under Bin Ali, Ennahda's success was unacknowledged and oppressed. After the eruption of the Tunisian revolution in 2011, Al-Ghannouchi returned to the country and was able in a short amount of time to gather his jailed and exiled members after the general amnesty to revive 1981-Ennahda party. Mohammed Kerrou raised a very interesting idea that could have a weight in understanding the struggle of Al-Ghannouchi himself to preserve his party in power; the Age of Al-Ghannouchi. 28 years of exile, far from his country, Al-Ghannouchi who will be 76 in June 2017, wishes to be a national leader as he always aimed throughout his resistance journey and dies in Tunisia, keeping his legacy and intellectual production for generations to come. Pragmatism is his only way to protect his path from any change of direction. No one could ever be sure, if he will have time still to produce a new intellectual legacy to make a real and fundamental change in the traditional political Islam. What seems to matter for Al-Ghannouchi is keeping himself and his party in power. Repeating the history of exclusion could not be by any means a possible option. Not just for Al-Ghannouchi, many Ennahda's members wish the same and aim for the very same end.[180]

Analysis:

The Islamist movements in several Arab countries have long co-opted the political circumstances in their countries and have undertaken changes in their discourse. Ennahda movement is not unique. El-Katiri argues that "Morocco's Party of Justice and Development (PJD), Tunisia's Ennahda movement, and Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood have since pragmatically moderated their stances on several societal issues such as personal liberties, gender equality, and

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[179] M. Marks, 'Did Egypt's coup teach Ennahda to cede power?', *Project on Middle East Political Science*, June, 2016, https://pomeps.org/2016/08/15/tunisias-ennahdha-party-a-conversation-with-monica-marks/ (accessed 20 April 2017)

[180] Dr. Mohammed Kerrou, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunisia, Tunis, 2017.

economic affairs."[181] As a result, the changes which were claimed by Ennahda are not new. Pointing this out, in the following paragraphs, I will try to cast the light on the resemblance between Ennahda and the Muslim Brotherhood in what concerns some of the changes undertaken by the Tunisian Islamist party.

The stance of the Tunisian Islamist movement regarding democracy has changed from a complete opposition to democracy following the *Ikhwani* ideology back in the seventies to the adoption of democracy in 1981 leading to the initiation of Democratic Islam after the 2011 revolution. Such political modification is not exclusive. Rather accepting democracy was the norm for almost all political groups opposing the state since the end of the seventies, by the rise of the liberal movements. For example, the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt made the same claim of adopting democracy. Wheatley argues, as mentioned in Bary's research, that "the organization [Egyptian *Ikhwan*] switched from a very antidemocratic, mysterious organization to a modern one that is led by educated and professional leaders. This modernization appears in the organization' transformation in the way they view women's right and democratic values, which contradicted Hasan Al-Banna ambivalence towards democracy."[182] Esposito, as mentioned in Wheatley's article, has described the changes undertaken by the Muslim Brotherhood as "opted for sociopolitical change through a policy of moderation and gradualism which accepted political pluralism and parliamentary democracy, entering into political alliances with secular parties or organizations as well as acknowledging the rights of Coptic Christians."[183]

 There is also a resemblance between Ennahda and the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood in procedural understanding of democracy as a technic for reaching power. Both movements out of their religious preaching and charity work have been able to root themselves in the society of their countries to establish a solid popular base, which could lead them to power through the use

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[181] M. El-Katiri., 'Revival of Political Islam in The Aftermath of the Arab Uprisings: Implications for The Region and Beyond', *Strategic Studies Institute,* 2014, p. 15

[182] I. Bary, 'Women's Political Participation in Muslim Brotherhood between the Hammer of Ambiguity and the Anvil of Inclusion-Moderation: The Case of Egypt and Tunisia', Master Thesis, Norwegian University of Life Sciences Faculty of Social Sciences Department of International, Environmental and Development Studies, 2015, p. 15.

[183] S. Wheatley, From Violence to Voting: Toward an Islamist Theory of Moderation, Ph.D. Thesis, Texas Baylor University, 2011, p. 73.

of democratic elections. As a result of such acceptance, both parties have reached power after the revolution through democratic elections. Munson stated in this regard that "They [the Muslim Brothers] called for an Islamic state and held that true Islam was essentially democratic."[184]

Moving to the renunciation of violence, Ennahda is also not particular in renouncing violence and adopting peaceful means in politics. El Katiri states that:

> "Moderate Islamist movements adopted a more constructive attitude and role in society. They rejected violence and accepted democratic rules as a way to compete for political power, including as political parties. During the 1990s and 2000s, many of these groups, including the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, gradually turned into de facto opposition movements, using human rights and democratic rhetoric and the fight against systemic corruption in existing political cadres as an integral part of their political programs. Throughout the years, many of these groups managed to refine and moderate their political thinking and win more support across society."[185]

A third point could be made on the openness of the Islamist movement on women's issues and rights. For instance, the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt has opened up for women's participation in politics. However, both Ennahda and the *Ikhwan* in Egypt maintained a pragmatic attitude in this regard. Marks argues that "success for women is an ironic success, 42 out of 49 were elected and represented in the Ennahda Party because of two reasons: the first one is that Ennahda party is the only party that respect the rules for electoral lists, and the second reason is the efforts of the Ennahda Party in mobilizing female activists to win over undecided voters and attract people to the polls."[186] According to Bary,

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[184] Z. Munson., 'Islamic Mobilization: Social Movement Theory and the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood', *The Sociological Quarterly,* Vol. 42, No. 4, 2001, p. 490.

[185] M. El-Katiri., 'Revival of Political Islam in The Aftermath of the Arab Uprisings: Implications for The Region and Beyond', *Strategic Studies Institute*, 2014, p. 4

[186] (ed.), *The Making of the Tunisian Revolution: Contexts, Architects, Prospects*, Noura Gana, Edinburgh University Press, 2013, pp. 224-251.

"The temporal phase of the strongest women's participation in the Brotherhood's political work is the period that followed the revolution of January 25, which has been credited with the emergence of women in the Muslim Brotherhood on the Egyptian political scene. Here we must point out that allowing the Guidance Office for Women Brotherhood's political participation in the first parliamentary elections after the January revolution is not due to the faith of the organization on the idea of the state of women, which arose for a long time among the leaders of the Guidance Bureau. This is due to the election law in the first transitional phase in 2011, which required a woman on each party list, bringing the number of Brotherhood candidates to 115 women. It included a list of nearly 222 deputies, of whom six were women."[187]

Here it should be pointed out that Hasan Al-Banna himself was pragmatic in politics. for instance, Al-Banna has long used 'western' terminologies in his writings, despite his anti-western thoughts. Al-Anani points this out:

"Clearly, al-Banna used, may be unintentionally, different 'western' concepts to outline his ideology. Words like freedom, stability, and welfare were alien to the Egyptian public in a time where independence from 'foreign' occupation, which was also western, was the main goal for all political and social movements. Ironically, Al-Banna employed the notion of "Islamic inclusiveness" to de-legitimize western ideologies such as communism and capitalism. He relentlessly asserted that Islam includes all the benefits of other ideologies. It, according to al-

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[187] I. Bary, 'Women's Political Participation in Muslim Brotherhood between the Hammer of Ambiguity and the Anvil of Inclusion-Moderation: The Case of Egypt and Tunisia', Master Thesis, Norwegian University of Life Sciences Faculty of Social Sciences Department of International, Environmental and Development Studies, 2015, p. 13.

Banna, overrides socialism, capitalism, east and the west, nationalism and universalism."[188]

Similarly, but under different circumstances, Al-Ghannouchi has long employed the western terminologies, such as democracy, freedom, equality, secularism, etc., in his writings aiming at Islamizing them to be able to modernize and democratize his Islamic identity to fit into the political scene in Tunisia.

After briefly presenting some of the similarities between Ennahda and the Muslim Brotherhood in the political changes undertaken, I can argue that Ennahda is the Tunisian version of the Muslim Brotherhood, however the nature of the Tunisian society, culture, and the historical background of the country, forced Ennahda to be a flexible version of the *Ikhwan* in Tunisia, able to pick and choose from different ideologies and incorporate various thoughts into Ennahda's political and religious understanding. Khairat Al-Shater, a member of the guidance office of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, states that "the Muslim Brotherhood's vision is represented in dozens of countries but there are no organizational links among us even if we are all linked to each other ideologically and structurally. There is a common base between us. Ideological framework is global but each group is free to apply it in their own way in their own country."[189]

Moving to another point of focus, I will to talk about the *Ikhwani* AKP (Justice and Development Party) in Turkey which is considered to be the blueprint of Ennahda for the compatibility of Islam and democracy. I will start with the current events happening in Turkey and the influence they might have on Ennahda.[190] In fact, the close ties between Erdogan and Al-Ghannouchi have long been cherished by Ennahda. Add to this, Al-Ghannouchi's books have long been translated into the Turkish language, issued and published in Turkey. Moreover, Turkey was serving Ennahda's discourse by being the implemented example of the compatibility between Islam and

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[188] K. Al-Anani, 'The Power of the Jama'a: The Role of Hasan Al-Banna in Constructing the Muslim Brotherhood's Collective Identity', *Sociology of Islam*, 2013, p. 51.

[189] The Brotherhood: Investigating The Muslim Brotherhood [online video], 2016, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5C1NyDnGfW8, (accessed 16 May 2017).

[190] Here I'm pointing out on the constitutional amendment which has recently occurred in Turkey. See B. Birce, 'Turkey's constitutional reform: All you need to know', *Al-Jazeera,* 17 January 2017, http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2017/01/turkey-constitutional-reform-170114085009105.html. (accessed 2/06/2017)

Democracy raised by the party. Marks writes: "I asked 72 Ennahda leaders and grassroots activists in cities around the country what kind of Islamic governance model Ennahda would seek to follow"[191] Marks added, "the vast majority of nahdawis [Ennahda members] at all levels of the party named Turkey's AKP as the most relevant model."[192] The historical resemblance of the two countries in terms of secularism, religion, and democracy made the people able to patiently deal with Ennahda and its pragmatism, especially with the economic crisis Tunisia has been experiencing since the revolution, by the fact that Turkey, under the rule of the AKP, has been the strongest economy in the whole region of the MENA. However, with the current changes undertaken by president Erdogan, made this glorious example taken by Ennahda problematic. Ennahda has been refusing the presidential system since the beginning of the revolution, with the insistence on the idea that such systems would surely lead to dictatorship and one party system. In Turkey, after years of Muslim Brotherhood ruling under the AKP, despite the emphasized call for democracy and pluralism, things are currently undergoing fundamental changes. These changes are expected to turn the diversity and the democratic system of Turkey into a dictatorship ruled by Islamists. So would a similar scenario happen in Tunisia if Ennahda was able to strengthen itself in power in the future?

Conclusion

In modern history, several analyses have been conducted as to expect the future of political Islam and the Islamist movements. Asef Bayat and Olivier Roy have written similar views on what was called a post-Isalmists era. They claimed that this era is neither anti-Islamic nor secularist. It is an era where realism will substitute ideologies.[193] Similar to these views, Hashem Saleh has written a future expectation deduced from the rise of the Islamists to power after the Arab uprisings. The latter believes that the rise of the Islamists to power after the Arab uprisings is a sign of their regression and decline. Saleh states that:

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[191] M. Marks, 'Tunisia 's Islamists and The "Turkish Model"', *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 28, No. 1, 2017, p. 105.

[192] Ibid, p.105.

[193] Olivier Roy has elaborated on this view in his book "the failure of Political Islam" published in 1994. Asef Bayat wrote "Making Islam democratic" in 2007 in which he explained his view of post-Islamism.

The Arab uprisings are very useful as they will force us to engage in a battle of historical clarification with ourselves.[194] Saleh adds: We [the Arabs] have returned to square one because the Salafist and *Ikhwani* swept the Tunisian, Egyptian and other Arab countries' elections.[195] He also writes that due to this event even though it was negative, it helped us understand where we are and in which point in history we [the Arabs] are situated.[196] According to Saleh, Arabs entered into a Salafi-Ikhwani stage due to the Arab uprisings. However, this is not to be considered as a victory of fundamentalism but rather the beginning of its demise […] the use of anti-progressive movements for the sake of achieving progress.[197] Saleh describes this as if the Arab-Islamic history is throwing up all of its historical accumulated residue.[198]

I can deduct from the pragmatism presented throughout this research that the cut with Political Islam and the beginning of a new era of post-Islamism is still not real and not possible. Although Islamists are practicing a sort of prioritizing pragmatism over ideological religious thoughts, this practice is still on the level of terms and substitution of concepts. The traditional interpretations and the classical thoughts of Political Islam persist in the deep understanding and political ambitions of the Isalmist movements. Islamists are becoming more aware of realpolitik and conscious about the need of pragmatism in their political performance. However, this awareness is done in order to gain attention, acceptance, and inclusiveness; nationally and internationally, preventing any possibility of repeating the years of oppression and exclusion of the past authoritarian regimes. Not all Isalmist movements are able to practice this pragmatism equally because the conditions differ from one country to another. However, it seems that the awareness regarding realpolitik is shared by all these movements. That's why, as presented in the analysis earlier, Ennahda along with other Isalmists have been claiming changes in their discourse but without any real implementation or explanation of these changes. This has led Isalmists to fall

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[194] H. Saleh, *Al-Thawrat Al-Arabiya fi Daw' Falsafat Al-Tarikh*, Beirut, Dar Al-Saki, 2013, p. 19.

[195] Ibid, p. 20

[196] Ibid, p. 20

[197] Ibid, p. 21

[198] Ibid, p. 21

into pragmatism; always giving fluctuating attitude in politics; between religious traditional discourse and modern discourse. Hamadi Redissi in his new publication titled 'L'Islam Incertain' provides an analysis on the political performance of Islamists in the context of post-revolution by describing this performance as uncertain; between democracy and barbarism/ between modernism and radicalism. He writes, "the method is the maximization of optimism: they gather the positive signs which points out the modernity of radical Islam and transform the negatives ones into positive."[199] Realpolitik tends to shape any ideology to fit the political game; to an extent that if compared with its classics, an ideology might seem in contradiction. As a result, in order not to appear contradictive, the Isalmists seem to act pragmatically through the Islamization of this pragmatism, as if this pragmatism is a continuation, in connection, or an updated version of these classics. Meaning, the classic understating of Isalmists aims at Islamizing the state system along with society through the use of the classical traditional Islamic terms, such as *sharī'ah, khilāfah, hūdūd, kāssās, shūrá, umma*. Today, this thought persists. What actually changed is that the Islamists' process of Islamization has started to be done through the Islamization of modern terms, such as democracy, rights, freedoms, rule of law. What makes this neo-process pragmatic is that the current Islamization is not backed up with actual references and intellectual productions. This process is done on the basis of the substitution of terms; classical by modern, not on the basis of developing concepts. As a result, the discourse being used is pragmatic. Ennahda is trying to keep as much space as possible for itself to extend and shrink in practices. Ennahda is keeping a distance between Islam and its politics, to give itself the scope of changing, without being limited by the already known political Islam or being bounded by any new interpretations.

Although the claim of the Islamists, especially Ennahda, of the beginning of a neo-political Islam [in the case of Ennahda it is already called Democratic Islam], one cannot deny the development happening on the level of the political performance of these movements. This development is not necessarily positive or negative. This development means a move to another level not vertically [better or worse] but horizontally [like a move to another scope or realm]. This development is proved by the survival of Ennahda in power until today. This survival is caused particularly but not exclusively on Ennahda's early understanding of realpolitik. Abd Al-Majid Al-Sharfi has

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[199] H. Redissi, *L'Islam IncertainRevolution et Islam post-autoritaire*, Tunis, Ceres Editions, 2017, p.93.

expected a development in the Isalmists' political attitude. He believes that these movements will start to know their real size and they will adapt to realpolitik. Islamists realized that "going back to the time of *Al-Sālaf Al-Sāleh*" is a sort of utopia that could never be implemented. Islamists of today are becoming conscious of realpolitik. They are becoming aware of the clash that could happen between a solid ideology and realpolitik. Al-Sharfi says that "the Isalmist movements should be in the periphery not the center of political attention. They should be one of the political actors without that exaggerated attention given to them."[200]

No one could be sure of the willingness of Ennahda to undertake a future project through which a scientific and intellectual breakthrough of neo-political Islam could be formed, at least not in the coming years because of several reasons. I believe this question will be a space for prediction and doubts for a long time. Isalmists nowadays seem to be faced by a serious problem: The traditional solid Isalmist ideology they have, which could not fit the political game of today. Because the present issues in the Arab countries are not issues of 'identity', as it was back under colonial ruling. I would call the crisis facing the Arab world today as crisis of political deficiency, such as dictatorship, lack of freedom and rights, and socio-economic problems. Because such political deficiency needs political mastering rather than religious mastering, which they lack, the Isalmists of the post-Arab uprisings had no other choice but to fall into political pragmatism. One cannot deny that the Islamists have acquired an awareness of the need for conducting new interpretations in the classic political Islam and Islamic law. However, neither time nor the circumstances in the Arab world would allow for this to happen. Coming up with new *Ijtihādāt* is a long term project that might be faced with a lot of challenges and oppositions. On the other hand, the present crisis of the Arab countries requires immediate practical solutions.

Many factors have made Ennahda different than other Isalmist movements in the Arab world, especially that Ennahda has understood realpolitik early, back in the eighties as already explained in previous paragraphs. One of the factors that should be noted is the Tunisian culture which has been secularized and westernized for a long time under the authoritarianism of post-independence regime of Bourguiba and continued under the Bin Ali regime. This distinctive culture has forced the Isalmists to maneuver in order to survive. Surviving is still Ennahda's aim.

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[200] Dr. Abd Al-Majid Al-Sharfi, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunisia, Tunis, 2017.

Ennahda through the political changes undertaken seems to buy as much time as possible to be able to establish itself well in politics and consolidate its power nationally and internationally. Nayfar asserted that "Al-Ghannouchi wants to unify and solidify his party for the long term. This might take ten or twenty years. Afterwards, we could expect some intellectual productions discussing Democratic Islam in depth."[201] According to Krishan, "Ennahda aims at nationalizing itself. This means that Ennahda wants to come to the point where Isalmists are considered as a normal political player. Ennahda wants to root itself in politics to an extent that any attempt to enroot the party from politics would equally mean enrooting the nation itself."[202] Ziad Krishan adds that "Ennahda is willing to present itself to the international community as well as to the national one like the Christian democrats in the west, Germany in particular. Pioneering Democratic Islam as a new ideology will make Ennahda the talk of the town for years non-stop. Ennahda through this act seems to stay under the spotlight for years to come because International and national scholars and academics will take this ideology as to conduct research, give lectures, write books, and produce literature."[203]

Ennahda is the only Islamist movement which maintained itself in power after the Arab uprisings in Tunisia. Loosing this opportunity is not an option for Ennahda because this is what this party has long strived for. Ennahda today facing a tough challenge. The survival of the transitional period in Tunisia is actually the survival of Ennahda and the whole Tunisian nation. Any mistake by Ennahda would start a chain reaction of failure. Also, the success of the in-process transitional period in Tunisia would definitely be a success for Ennahda. Such success would earn credit for this party which would make it more accepted nationally and internationally as a party in power. This will result in a new page of acceptance in dealing with all other Isalmist movements to be opened ignoring their history and would give them another opportunity to re-emergence in the political spectrum. I believe that this success is a pre-condition for the project of a neo-political Islam to enter the agenda of the Islamist movements.

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[201] Ms. Hmida Al-Nayfar, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunisia, Tunis, 2017.

[202] Ms. Ziad Krishan, Interviewed by Yasmine Hajar, Tunisia, Tunis, 2017.

[203] Ibid.

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