

Transformation of the *Ennahda* Movement from Islamic *Jama'ah* to Political Party

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ABSTRACT *The Ennahda Movement, whose foundations were laid in Tunisia at the beginning of the 1970s by Rached Ghannouchi and his friends, has continued its existence as an Islamic movement for many years, and has acquired the identity of a political party. This article analyzes the transformation of the Ennahda Movement –the role model of political transformations for Islamic movements in the Arab world post Arab Spring– from a religious movement to a political party. The article also addresses issues such as the role of the Ennahda Party in the democratization process started in Tunisia after the Arab Spring, its contributions to the new constitution, and its influence in the governments in which it has participated.*

Historical Background of the *Ennahda* Party

Many intellectuals and activists made theoretical and practical contributions to the process in which the fundamental building blocks for the *Ennahda* Movement were laid by individuals such as Rached Ghannouchi, Abdelfattah Mourou, Hamida al-Naifar, Salah al-Din Jourchi, and Abdulmajid al-Najjar. The *Ennahda* Movement, which was affected by the methods of Islamic movements such as the Muslim Brotherhood but avoided slavish imitation, went through many stages until it acquired an idiosyncratic structure. Without a shadow of a doubt, the prominent leader at all stages has been Rached Ghannouchi.

Ghannouchi showed interest in Arab nationalism in his youth; however, he gravitated towards “Pan-Islamism” after realizing that the latter type of nationalism possessed a more secular and Western character rather than embracing the culture of Islam. In his own words, he “entered Islam” while he was studying philosophy in Damascus, after having realized that the socialist and nationalist

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The young cadres that were on the verge of launching a new Islamic movement had to be involved in the quest for an encompassing discourse that could solve the real problems of Tunisian society, instead of a belief-based discourse constructed on exclusionism

Movement, gained Islamic awareness, he strengthened his world of thought theoretically by reading the works of thinkers such as Muhammad Iqbal, Hasan al-Banna, Abu A'la Maududi, Sayyed Qutb, Muhammad Qutb, Mustafa al-Siba'i, Malek Bennabi, and Abul Hasan Nadwi. He also kept in touch with the Ikhwan, Hizb ut-Tahrir, Sufi and *Salafi* communities in the field by participating in study circles with Damascus' prominent scholars. He attended the study circles of Nasiruddin al-Albani, an outstanding pioneer of contemporary *Salafi* movements. With the influence generated by Albani's grasp of the *hadith* (the Prophet Muhammad's sayings and deeds) and his efforts to purify Islam from superstition, Ghannouchi started showing interest in the works of Ibn Taymiyyah and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya. After having completed his undergraduate study of philosophy in Damascus, Ghannouchi went to France to continue his education. In France, he contacted with the *Tablighi Jamaat* (Missionary Community) that he had known from his years in Damascus. He enjoyed the fact that the *Jamaat* members lived Islam simply and worked to spread the faith.

While it may seem contradictory for an individual who studied philosophy, who strived to grasp Islamic thought in depth, who was affected by *Salafi* interpretations of Islam and who criticized traditional piousness in no uncertain terms, to be influenced by the practices of *Tablighi Jamaat*, which involve adopting a type of asceticism –*taqwa* (piety). This seeming contradiction actually positively contributed to Ghannouchi's thought when he formed his own practice. During the time he spent with the *Jamaat* in Paris, he had to reduce the Islamic culture and thought which he had based on a philosophical foundation to a simple level and understanding. Factors like the simple lives of the *Tablighi Jamaat* members, their focus on the spiritual dimension of Islam and their practices of the Holy Prophet's *Sunnah* (tradition) in their daily lives influenced Ghannouchi and transformed him into a missionary (*da'i*) rather than a teacher of philosophy. Ghannouchi, with a clear mind on his way to Tunisia as to what kind of working method he would implement, emphasized

movements he was involved in were crisis-ridden at the time. With this decision, he left both secular nationalism and traditional/imitational Islam and took a step toward fundamental or “real” Islam. This real Islam, whose main source was the revelation, is different from “imitational” Islam, which is the invention of history and traditions.¹

After Ghannouchi, a significant actor in shaping Tunisia's Islamic

the features of the method practiced by the *Tablighi Jamaat* in forming the first core of the Tunisian Islamic Movement. Based on the *Tablighi Jamaat's* method in regard to the Islamic movement, he came together with his friends in mosques to memorize some verses and *hadiths*. By walking in the boulevards and streets, they invited people to live a religious life without giving any political message.

After starting his activities with his method, however, Ghannouchi had to make a radical change when Tunisian security units began to scrutinize and hindered his group's activities. The method they followed had not required any secrecy at all. It was understood shortly that the method which was valid in societies where piety could be experienced openly and freely was not going to work in countries like Tunisia, where ordinary piety was marginalized and a strict secular and westernized politics was implemented.

Changing Socio-politics from Mashreq to Maghreb

The most important reason why the movement transformed into a different discourse and method was related to the strict secularism and *fait accompli* of Westernism policies there. Tunisia's political, cultural, and social structure presented both advantage and disadvantage for this cadre in search of a method and discourse. Therefore, the ideas that those who studied Maududi and Sayyed Qutb tried to disseminate did not have a tremendous impact.

Although it is geographically located in Maghreb (the region of North Africa, west of Egypt), Tunisia holds affiliations to the Mashreq (the region of the Arab world to the east of Egypt) basin, which includes Egypt, Syria and Iraq, due to its cultural and societal structure, a fact displayed by the commanding lead of labor unions, socialists and western-secularists in its discourses. Hence, the young cadres that were on the verge of launching a new Islamic movement had to be involved in the quest for an encompassing discourse that could solve the real problems of Tunisian society, instead of a belief-based discourse constructed on exclusionism. The Maghreb region had undergone a *de facto* colonialism period; Arab-Islamic culture had been alienated, forms of traditional piety were weakened, and the government had supported efforts to replace them with the cultural and societal values of the West. In contrast, the traditional piety and cultural and social fiber of Islam continued its existence without much damage in the eastern countries of the region, which had also experienced a colonial period. For instance, Egyptian intellectuals typically use English only for official business, and speak Arabic in their private lives and at home. However, the Tunisian intelligentsia use French in all fields of life, including their private lives. English is not the language of administration, culture, tradition and daily life; rather, French has become the official language of the country.

While the existence of different tendencies among the prominent cadre and members of Islamic *Jama'ah* in terms of understanding and interpreting religion represents the strength of the entity in one sense, it created a weakness as well

Language clearly demonstrates how these cultural, political and administrative differences between the Mashreq and Maghreb have affected these regions' respective Islamic movements.²

The Zaytuna University in Tunisia had adopted the Reform Movement which swept through the world of Islam in the 19th century. The reform they envisaged, however, was

completely different from the reform movement of religion in the West. This movement, which advocated a renewal in Muslims' grasp of religion, gained wide acceptance in the community by supporting the renunciation of some traditions that did not have much to do with religion, and making new rulings and interpretations based on the fundamental references (Quran and hadith) of social, political and legal areas. However, these reform actions, which started in Tunisia in a natural process were aborted during the colonial period and then disappeared in the Bourguiba period as a result of efforts to eliminate religion from all societal areas. The most basic feature that separates the Islamic Movement in Tunisia from similar movements in other regions involves this approach to the reforms. In Tunisia, innovation, reform, and renewal were advocated, whereas westernization and secularization were protested. The difference between westernization and modernization was understood, and while modernization with the help of local internal dynamics was approved, Westernization policies imposed via foreign, external dynamics were protested.

Islamic Jama'ah (al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyya, 1971-1981)

Experiencing a crisis of identity in the face of harsh Western policies imposed upon them, and aspiring to preserve their traditional Muslim identities, some young people came together and strived to express themselves through the Islamic *Jama'ah* idea and identity.³ The termination of the activities of Zaytuna University, one of the oldest educational institutions of the Islamic world, implementing a strict francophone style of secularism and forcing the government and the society to change in line with these policies quickly pushed the Islamic *Jama'ah* cadre to a process of reckoning with the official ideology and secular Western groups.

Islamic *Jama'ah* formed one of the building blocks of today's *Ennahda* Movement Party. It began its existence in 1970 by carrying on activities in the fields of thought, culture and education. The initial 10-year period of its formation also contributed to the growth of Ghannouchi and his friends by offering them a context within which to mature their own ideas, bring them together with



The *Ennahda* Movement leader, Rashid al-Ghannouchi, was awarded for promoting Gandhian values outside India with the *International Jamnalal Bajaj Peace Prize*, in Mumbai, India, November 7, 2016.

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the society through legal means, confront the real problems of Tunisian society, and provide practical experiences in searching for solutions. This entity assertively refused to resort to violence as a method, and has made its main goal to fight against the identity imposed by secular-western movements at the level of thought.

While the existence of different tendencies among the prominent cadre and members of Islamic *Jama'ah* in terms of understanding and interpreting religion represents the strength of the entity in one sense, it created a weakness as well. The different viewpoints among members of the *Jama'ah* relating to understanding and interpreting Islam crystallized as three main tendencies. On the one end of the spectrum were the tendencies based on Tunisia's traditional piety, such as *Ash'arism* in belief, the *Maliki* School in Islamic jurisprudence and the Sufi structure shaped according to the disposition of Junayd Baghdadi. On the other end of the spectrum was the group that envisaged returning to the Book and the *Sunnah* by receiving support from the *Salafi* movement, which declared adherents to the current political systems as unbelievers, divided people to the categories of believers and nonbelievers, and strived to have a political fight based on this outlook. Another trend that did not embrace the views of either of these groups brought the intellectual and cultural accumulation of Islam to the forefront, and gave voice to the revival of the reform school represented by individuals such as Khayr al-Din al-Tunisi, Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, Muhammed Abduh, Abd al-Rahman al-Kawakibi and Rifa'a al-Tahtawi, based on *Mu'tazila* interpretations and methods.

Ghannouchi and his friends who faced the realities of Tunisia felt the need to emphasize Islamic dimensions other than faith, and embarked on quest for an Islamic discourse and concept that embraced the human, societal, social, political, and financial aspects of life

both in terms of ideas and organizational structure, and continued their existence as the “Modern Islamists” initiative.⁴ The other pioneer cadre of Islamic *Jama'ah*, led by Ghannouchi and Abdelfattah Mourou, decided to proceed on their way by taking the name of the Islamic Tendency Movement.

The Islamic Tendency Movement (Haraka al-Ittijah al-Islami, 1981-1989)

The events of 1978 that resulted in Tunisian security forces' gory suppression of the protests that had been organized with the appeal of unions and the participation of workers and farmers throughout Tunisia, and the subsequent loss of hundreds of demonstrators' lives, had been extremely effective in persuading Ghannouchi and his friends to adopt a different method and discourse. Ghannouchi pointed to this fact with the following statement:

This worker revolution which represents the peak of the left movement in Tunisia woke us up from our sleep, drew our attention to the significance of labor organizations and social and union problems. Before these events, we were busy with vocation, and the communication of abstract ideological issues. We were lightly criticizing the political authority. Problems related to belief were our main topic since we are a *Salafi* entity.⁵

The pioneering cadre of the *Ennahda* Movement, who believed that the problems of society could be solved by correcting and adjusting their religious understandings, made a radical decision and in some cases separated ways by gravitating towards facing Tunisia's social, economic, and political problems, and finding solutions instead of focusing their discourse on basic belief issues. Islamists, who focused on the conflict between truth and falsehood, faith and blasphemy, and Islam and *Jahiliyyah* (the Pre-Islamic Age of Ignorance), saw that the social conflicts and struggle between the exploiting rich and the exploited poor, global capitalism and poverty, loomed higher as they went deep-

These methodical differences within the Islamic *Jama'ah* brought about an internal feud. One group included in the third tendency criticized the ideas of Sayyed Qutb, Ikhwan and the *Salafi* movements and preferred to stay as a thought movement referred to as the “Islamic left.” Another splinter group, led by intellectuals such as Hamida al-Naifar and Salah al-Din Jourchi did not adopt the idea that the movement would turn into a political structure, criticized some of the Islamic movements led by Ikhwan

er into life. Malek Bennabi's analyses of society and civilization conducted by Ibn Khaldun's method provided significant intellectual contributions to the ideological transformation of this cadre. Pioneers of the Islamic Movement in Tunisia, such as Ghannouchi, Abdelfattah Mourou, and Hamida al-Naifar had been going to Algiers annually since the 1970s to attend the *Multakaya al-Fikr al-Islami* (Islamic Thought Meetings) organized by Malek Bennabi, and they benefited from his ideas. Rather than redefining some Islamic concepts and evaluating society through these concepts, Bennabi concentrated on contemporary Islamic culture and a vision of civilization; he provided them with an outlook and horizon different than those of other thinkers.

Ghannouchi stated that he discovered this distinctness in his meeting with Malek Bennabi in the summer of 1969 and that he was different from Sayyed Qutb in his vision of civilization:

In one of his books, Malek Bennabi fiercely criticized Sayyed Qutb who stated that 'Islam is civilization, civilization is Islam.' On this issue, Sayyed Qutb had previously declared that he agreed with an Algerian author who ventured to say 'Islam and civilization are different things' and he pointed to Malek Bennabi without mentioning any names. I think Malek Bennabi considered this as an insult and he was angry with the deceased Sayyed Qutb. I adopted Malek Bennabi's views and realized that he had a more in-depth outlook on civilization compared to Sayyed Qutb.⁶

Malek Bennabi left a deep impact on the Islamic Tendency's cadres. Bennabi's mark on the Islamic Tendency Movement's discourse may be seen in the evaluation of issues such as women in Islam, economics in Islam, and government from the angle of concepts such as modernity-backwardness, justice-oppression, democracy-dictatorship, rather than considering them from the perspective of faith-blasphemy.

In their discussions with the leftists at the universities, the members of the Islamic movement and the youth realized that there were other conflict areas dominant in society, that the problems of the poor and deprived fractions were expressed in another literature, that imperialist powers exploited local communities, that there were different class conflicts, and that the real issue did not just boil down to the theological struggle between Islam and Communism. Ghannouchi and his friends who faced the realities of Tunisia felt the need to emphasize Islamic dimensions other than faith, and embarked on quest for an Islamic discourse and concept that embraced the human, societal, social, political, and financial aspects of life. Some concepts, such as "oppressed" and "tyrant," that went into the literature of Islamic movements along with the Iranian Islamic Revolution, and the quest to transform these concepts into a new theoretical discourse by supporting them with the fundamental

sources of Islam brought with it the birth of the Islamic Tendency Movement in Tunisia.

Ghannouchi and his friends published the founding declaration of the Islamic Tendency Movement on June 6, 1981, and assigned a new direction and method for the Tunisian Islamic Movement which was at an intersection between Mashreq and Maghreb. The founding declaration stated the main factors that created the movement, the fact that the country had transformed into a one-party state, and the fact that there were no rights and freedoms anymore, and identified the main goals of the Islamic Tendency Movement, as well as the means to these ends. The Islamic Tendency Movement, which is the first movement among contemporary Islamic movements to emphasize the importance of elections to reflect democracy and the public will, drew a reaction from other Islamic movements.⁷ As a matter of fact, Ghannouchi, who leaned toward the Iranian Islamic Revolution and received constant criticisms because of this, stated that the Islamic Tendency Movement was criticized by Iran as well because of their views on democracy and political pluralism:

As soon as the Islamic Tendency Movement declared that it supported democratic views, Iranians, who were previously happy about our support and announced it, criticized us heavily, for instance, on a media organ under the control of Revolutionary Guards and appraised our democracy emphasis as the result of being under the influence of the false values of the West. In response, we said that we regarded the Iranian revolution as a significant revolution and supported it; however; we did not take it as a model and they had no political tutelage rights over Muslims. We criticized Iran for considering itself as the only model for change and stated that change-transformation models were infinite and each country should seek the change model appropriate for itself.⁸

Ghannouchi also reported that the movement's views on democracy were not supported by other Islamic movements and, in a meeting about this issue with Omar Tilmisani, he stated that Ikhwan should transform into a political party and cooperate with other parties but Tilmisani regarded these ideas as useless, vain words.⁹

The Ennahda Movement (Haraka Ennahda, 1989-2011)

Zine al-Abidin Ben Ali, who was appointed Prime Minister by Tunisian President Habib Bourguiba in October 1987, took office as the new president of the country five weeks later when Bourguiba was removed from office citing his health status as the reason. By extending an olive branch to all opposition movements in Tunisia, and especially to *Ennahda*, the new president promised to follow liberal policies in all areas. The 'progressive democracy and reform' efforts that he initiated to set the country free from political oppression and economic crisis prior to the 1989 general election were received positively by

his opponents. As a matter of fact, Ghannouchi and his friends decided to use the '*Ennahda* Movement' name as a gesture of goodwill when the Zine al-Abidin Ben Ali administration stated that the name 'Islamic Tendency Movement' had religious connotations and that they could be allowed to establish a party if they changed it.

Following the developments in Tunisia, the *Ennahda* Movement made its presence felt to its members there by making official statements from time to time; however, these statements disturbed the regime in Tunisia

After the 1989 elections, in which the opposition was alienated and marginalized by different methods and the ruling Constitutional Democratic Alliance party emerged victorious, the country reverted to the practices of the Bourguiba period. President Zine al-Abidin Ben Ali abandoned the policies that he had addressed in the national unity consensus which had been announced to ensure the support of societal movements led by the *Ennahda* Movement; then he overthrew Bourguiba and returned to oppressive policies to marginalize this movement. The *Ennahda* Movement, which was now officially banned, had participated in the elections held in this period with independent candidates and displayed that it was the strongest political opponent against the ruling party with 14 percent votes. The Ben Ali administration declared the *Ennahda* Movement illegal in 1992, and had the full leadership cadre and many of its members arrested and tried for execution. He forced some of the leaders, including Ghannouchi, to go abroad. The civil war in neighboring Algiers, that had started with military intervention after the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) was successful in the first election cycle, was taken as internal and external justification for the Tunisian regime to carry out harsher policies against the *Ennahda* Movement.

Ghannouchi, who had been repeatedly arrested and tried for execution since 1981, went to Algiers in 1992 when he was free; however, he was not able to take shelter for long when the country was dragged into civil war. He travelled to Sudan and finally moved to England where he was given political asylum. The years Ghannouchi spent in England were a time when the *Ennahda* Movement, all of whose activities were banned in Tunisia, was exiled as well, but this setback opened the door to new experiences. Starting in this period, the *Ennahda* Movement experienced differences of opinion and breaks in communication among members of its cadre, some of whom remained in prison in Tunisia and others who lived in exile. Despite these unfavorable conditions, the movement was able to continue its existence by preserving its integrity. The experience of Algiers, where FIS performed successfully in the elections in which it represented Islamic movements, followed by its purge by a military coup and a low-intensity civil war, and on the other hand, the very different

experience of Turkey where the National Outlook Movement came into power by winning both local and general elections with a landslide victory played crucial roles in consolidating the basic ideology and actions that have carried the *Ennahda* Movement forward to this day.

The fact that members of the *Ennahda* cadre in diaspora continued their internal communication, closely followed developments both in and out of Tunisia, and were involved in activities to make the voices of their friends –prisoners in Tunisia– heard, were the factors, albeit passive, that ensured the continuity of the movement. Also, in this period, Ghannouchi became prominent as an intellectual, and significantly contributed to other Islamic movements at the theoretical level with some of his ideologies and approaches.¹⁰

Following the developments in Tunisia, the *Ennahda* Movement made its presence felt to its members there by making official statements from time to time; however, these statements disturbed the regime in Tunisia. Particularly, the manifesto-like declaration, which was announced on the occasion of the 15th year foundation anniversary of the movement, and informed the world about the developments in Tunisia, seriously distressed the regime. In a declaration titled, “Lessons from the Past, Current Issues and Future Perspectives” published from his London home in exile on June 6, 1996, *Ennahda* leader Ghannouchi pointed to the political and financial crises Tunisia was experiencing and stated that all related parties should take responsibility. He also indicated that although he had announced that he categorically denied resorting to violence to ensure system change since the day the *Ennahda* Movement was born, and had developed relationships with all fractions based on peace, he was alienated by the system and the members of the movement were exposed to oppression and purge.

The *Ennahda* Movement during Tunisia’s Jasmine Revolution

When street vendor Mohamed Bouazizi set himself on fire and burnt to death in Sidi Bu Zeyd, a city located in the central region of Tunisia, on December 17, 2010, in response to his alleged harassment by a municipal official, he also set fire to the fortress of half a century of dictatorship.¹¹ The protest movements that started in this region quickly spread throughout the country and became uncontrollable, forcing president Zine al-Abidin Ben Ali to leave the country. The previous country-wide public uprising called “the bread riots” that had taken place in the country in 1984 had been bloodily suppressed by then-president Habib Bourguiba, and 144 individuals had lost their lives. The fact that the country, which had lapsed into simmering silence for a long while, inflamed with a spark, quite literally in the wake of Bouazizi’s high-profile suicide, which was followed by growing riots that resulted in overthrowing the government, showed that the conditions for a revolution were ripe.¹² How the environment

was shaped to accommodate the revolution had not been foreseen by either the regime or its opponents. Bouazizi had opened a dependent new page in regime-opposition relationships and he shocked both the regime, which was reliant on oppression and purge, and the opponents who tried to survive in secrecy.

Many members of liberal and leftist circles, including the managers of the Tunisian General Labor Union, the deep-rooted worker union of the country, had supported the Ben Ali government with the belief that free elections would bring Islamists to power and the country would drift into misfortune; they were not able to foresee the silent, leaderless and unplanned public revolution that was on its way. In the same vein, the *Ennahda* Movement, a significant number of whose leaders lived in Diaspora, was not able to envisage the sudden change, but nonetheless quickly adapted to the process due to its better organizational skills compared to other opposition movements.

The Ben Ali government was shaken by the participation of unions, bar associations, opposition parties, and members of *Ennahda* in the demonstrations and protests that rapidly spread to all regions of Tunisia. In response, President Zine al-Abidin Ben Ali dismissed the Minister of Internal Affairs, gave orders to release the arrested demonstrators, and announced that he was not going to run for presidency in 2014. He also promised to reduce the prices of staple products, provide about 300,000 employment opportunities, and ensure press-media freedom. Despite these efforts to appease the demonstrators, he was unable to remain in power. As a matter of fact, these points promised by Ben Ali were not related to system or regime change, but constituted public demands. However, the regime convinced the external world led by U.S. and the domestic public opinion led by secular circles, with the argument that movements like the *Ennahda* struggling to ensure the materialization of these demands actually wanted to change the regime of the country and therefore it managed to camouflage its dictatorial side. Ben Ali grasped that the protestors who were setting themselves on fire and the demonstrators who supported them would not be convinced anymore by his outmoded arguments; he had to leave Tunisia on January, 14, 2011 when he realized that the compromises he had made were not working, and the country was devolving more and more into political instability.

The provisional government, established after Ben Ali left the country, fulfilled the demands for the rights and freedoms the Tunisian people had

The new political crisis, which started in Tunisia in 2013 with the assassination of two opponent politicians, was overcome when civil formations such as unions and bar associations came into play and defined a new road map

sought to obtain for half a century by a decision adopted in half a day. In its first session, chaired by Mohamed Ghannouchi, the provisional government opened a new page in Tunisian political life by making revolutionary decisions, such as proclaiming general amnesty for political prisoners, accepting the legality of parties that had been banned by the regime since they were regarded as dangerous, cutting off the ties between the government and the political party, closing down the ruling Constitutional Party and confiscating its assets.

The Political Process after the Jasmine Revolution

People from all political spheres rapidly formed parties in order to protect their acquisitions during the democratic transformation process that started in Tunisia when President Zine al-Abidin Ben Ali left the country, and began campaigning for the upcoming National Constituent Assembly (NCA) elections. The *Ennahda* Movement Party received 40 percent of the votes and came in first in the NCA elections held on October 23, 2011. Many parties participated in the elections, and the *Ennahda* party opted not to form the government on its own; rather, it guided the formation of a coalition government. The coalition government formed under *Ennahda* General Secretary Hamadi Jebali included Moncef Marzouki of Conference Party for Republic (*Hizb al-Mu'tamar min Ajl al-Jumhuriyyah*), and Mustafa bin Jafer of Democratic Forum for Labour and Liberties (*Takattul ad-Damoqrati Min Ajl al-Amali we'l-Hurriyyah*). Later, the leader of the formation that went into the coalition as the third party in the NCA was elected as the chairperson of the parliament, and Moncef Marzouki was elected President.

The new political crisis, which started in Tunisia in 2013 with the assassination of two opponent politicians, was overcome when civil formations such as unions and bar associations came into play and defined a new road map. Issues such as forming a government composed of technocrats, preparing the electoral law, identifying the electoral calendar, and completing the new draft constitution were adopted by both the ruling and opposition parties.

The new Tunisian Constitution was adopted by the NCA in 2014, and both parliamentary and presidential elections were held in the same year. The *Nida* Tunisian Party, formed in opposition to *Ennahda* came out as the first party, winning about 39 percent of the votes in parliamentary elections, followed by the *Ennahda* Movement Party which came in second with 27 percent of the votes. The *Ennahda* Movement did not present any candidates in the presidential elections that followed the parliamentary elections, and Baci Kaid Sibsi, the leader of the *Nida* Party was appointed President in the second round. Tunisia has continued on its way with a coalition government including *Ennahda* and independent technocrats; it is arguably enjoying the luckiest political experience among the countries that went through the Arab Spring, due to its

characteristics of using dialogue to solve internal problems and striving to protect the acquisitions obtained via revolution. Without any doubt, the contribution of the *Ennahda* Movement in this experience has been significant.

New Parties in Tunisian Politics

When Zine el-Abidin Ben Ali became president in 1987, he promised to change Tunisia from a one-party regime to a country where pluralist democracy would reign, based on his 1988 democratization and national consensus policies. Accordingly, he had released thousands of political prisoners led by *Ennahda* Movement members with the general amnesty announced in 1988 and 1991. Some small parties, termed “décor parties” by the Tunisians, were given the opportunity to be represented by 10 percent in the parliament in the 1994 elections, but this inclusion hindered the party processes of other formations with stronger grassroots support. The Tunisian parliament, which was composed of ruling party members with 99 percent of the votes in 1999, underwent a constitutional change in 2002 and opened the way for Ben Ali to become a presidential candidate for more than three terms. In the first term of his presidency, he wanted to get rid of the shadow of the charismatic leadership of Habib Bourguiba, who had joined Tunisian independence struggle and ruled the country for thirty years with an iron fist. As the first leader and in order to fill the leadership gap that would occur in the country, he opted to receive the support of the mass movements that had been previously alienated by the system. However, when he fortified his position in the ruling party and in the government, he once again resorted to the oppression and intimidation policies that he had implemented as Minister of Internal Affairs in the Bourguiba period. Starting with the second terms of his presidency, Ben Ali used governmental resources to drag the country into a secular versus anti-secular polarization, conducted various propaganda activities to affect internal and external public opinion, and intimidated all opposition movements that had popular, grass-roots support; therefore he was the most important actor in preparing suitable conditions for the revolution that resulted in public riots in 2011.¹³

It is possible to separate Tunisian political parties into three categories in terms of their legitimacy in the pre-Jasmine revolution era. Political parties, whose political activities were allowed and which were called “décor parties” by the public due to their support for Ben Ali’s dictatorial regime, were re-

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The 10th General Congress of the *Ennahda* Movement Party was held in May 2016.

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moved from the political scene when Ben Ali was overthrown. *Al-Tajamm al-Dustur al-Damokrati*, the party, which had continued its existence since 1956 as the only regime party of Tunisia, was closed after Ben Ali was overthrown and its assets were confiscated. Parties that had been represented in the parliament with a limited number of parliamentarians, such as Movement of Socialist Democrats (*Haraka al-Damokratiyyin al-Ishtiraqiyyin*), Popular Unity Party (*Hizb al-Wahda al-Sha'biyyah*), Unionist Democratic Union (*al-Ittihad ad-Demokrati al-Wahdawi*), Social Liberal Party (*al-Hizb al-Ijtima al-Taharruri*), and Green Party for Progress (*Hizb al-Hodar al-Taqqaddum*) did not have any success in the elections, although they continued their existence.¹⁴

The legitimacy of some of the parties as political parties included in the second group was accepted by the Ben Ali regime; however, all their political activities were banned. Although Progressive Democratic Party (*al-Hizb al-Damokrati al-Taqqaddumi*), one of these parties, was founded in 1983, its official existence was accepted in 1998 and it was not allowed to conduct any activities whatsoever. This party, which had criticized the policies of Ben Ali, committed political suicide by agreeing to take part in the provisional government in 2011, and supporting the conciliatory statements that Ben Ali made at the last moment. This party, known for its strict secular approach, developed a harsh discourse against the *Ennahda* Movement. It entered into Tunisian politics forcefully after the revolution and sought the votes from secular circles by sporting an un-

The Islamic movements that had appeared as a reaction to the policies implemented in the world of Islam after colonialism struggled to ensure the existence of Muslim communities in all areas of life

compromising attitude towards the *Ennahda* Movement. However, the party obtained 17 seats only and entered the parliament, consisting of 217 seats, as the fifth biggest party.

Another important party which was considered to be a legitimate political party by the regime but whose activities were banned was Democratic Forum for Labour and Liberties (*Takattu a-Damoqrati min Ajl al-'Amali wal-Hurriyah*), founded under the leadership of Mustafa bin Jafer. Although it was founded in 1994, its legal status was accepted in 2002 with no permits for activities. This party hosts some important union representatives and human rights activists; it set out with a “freedom, democracy and progress” slogan and gained international recognition. This party, hosting people of various identities such as seculars, liberals, democrats and Islamists, was also a part of the “18 October Rights and Freedoms Movement” which embarked on its journey with a 30-day hunger strike in Tunisia in 2005 to ensure that its demands, such as freedom of press and thought, freedom to establish political parties, release of political prisoners, and announcement of general amnesty were met. The party conveyed moderate messages to society, and its democratic and libertarian policies were implemented during the Jasmine Revolution; it stated that it could cooperate with Islamists when necessary for the interests of the country and became the third party in the elections in 2011.

In addition to the *Ennahda* Movement, formations such as *Hizb al-Mu'tamar min Ajl al-Jumhuriyyah* and *Hizb al-Umma li'sh-Shuyui al-Tunisi* were among the political parties that were not accepted as political parties and all their activities were banned during both the Habib Bourguiba and Ben Ali periods. *Hizb al-Mu'tamar* was established by Moncef Marzouki, who was appointed president after Ben Ali by his friends in 2001, but it was not recognized by Ben Ali regime and therefore did not obtain a legal status. Marzouki, a human rights activist, was able to return to Tunisia after the Ben Ali government was overthrown. His party was the first party to gain legal status after the revolution. The party obtained 29 seats in the constituent assembly elections and came out second among all parties. *Hizb al-Umma li'sh-Shuyui al-Tunisi*, a radical leftist party, was not able to get public support although it performed a significant mission with the media activities it organized during the revolution process.

***Ennahda*: From a Political Movement to a Political Party**

The Islamic movements that had appeared as a reaction to the policies implemented in the world of Islam after colonialism struggled to ensure the existence of Muslim communities in all areas of life. They based their efforts on religious discourse and continued their struggles as reform movements centered on identity; at times, they changed their discourses and action types according to changing conditions. The movement which originally emerged in Tunisia as Islamic *Jama'ah*, later as Islamic Tendency, and finally as *Ennahda*, opposed Arab nationalism, as did some of the other Islamic movements of the period; it took interest in problems that affected all Muslims, globally, and argued that all of these problems, especially issues related to Jerusalem and Palestine, were caused because Islam was not properly understood or practiced accurately.

The *Ennahda* leaders benefited from the ideas of many Iranian and Pakistani scientists and thinkers led by the leaders of Muslim Brotherhood in relation to comprehending and interpreting Islam today. They mostly adhered to a perspective expressed in North Africa as part of the Andalusian thought heritage that was based on interpreting religious provisions according to their purposes, instead of reading them literally. With their idiosyncratic thoughts on many issues such as democracy, human rights and freedoms, the issue of practicing *Sharia* law, relationships with non-Muslims, the matter of minorities, and the Islamic state and manner of administration, *Ennahda* leader Ghannouchi and his friends differed from leaders of other Islamic movements.¹⁵

The *Ennahda* Movement set out with goals such as opposing the strict secularism policies implemented by the Tunisian regime, emphasizing the Muslim identities of Tunisians, ensuring that the basic principles of Islam are practiced in fields such as politics and the economy, and that wealth is distributed according to these principles,¹⁶ and they adopted legal methods for realizing these goals. Although it had strived to get involved in Tunisian politics since the beginning of 1980s and had developed its discourse accordingly, the *Ennahda* Movement's existence was not accepted by the regime; it continued as a *Jama'ah* entity that was classified among others, or as a formation. When the country entered into a democratization process following the Jasmine Revolution, the *Ennahda* Movement was finally able to realize its half-century long dream of being a political party.

The Ennahda Movement Party and the de facto Political Experience

While traditional regimes and institutions lost power in the change process that started with the Arab Spring, the Islamic movements that had continued their existence in the form of religious *Jama'ahs* were advantageous as political actors, since they had organizational power within society. The *Ennahda* Move-

ment, which evolved from the *Ta-blighi Jamaat*, and was intellectually fuelled by ideologists of the Islamic movement such as Hasan al-Banna, Sayyed Qutb, and Maududi, was enriched during the process with the ideas of the reformist school, especially those of Malek Bennabi. It embraced its idiosyncratic manner of discourse and action and took a step into the new period as

The *Ennahda* Movement acted responsibly in addressing the problems of the country during the process of transition, and took a positive stance, which showed its readiness for cooperation with all fractions

the strongest actor in Tunisian politics after the Jasmine Revolution with its identity as a political party whose legitimacy was recognized. With removal of the legal barriers that political parties had previously faced, the *Ennahda* Movement started its legal political activities as the *Ennahda* Movement Party, ending its period of secrecy on March 1, 2011.

The *Ennahda* Party stated in its foundation declaration that, as a national-political party that acts within the framework of the constitution and takes Islam as its reference, it will work for the construction of a democratic and contemporary Tunisia; it will ensure the establishment of values such as citizenship, freedom, responsibility, and social justice; it will ensure the establishment of the unity of *Maghribu'l-Arabi* (West Arab World) as the first step of realizing unity in Islam as well as Arab unity; it will bring freedom to Palestine; and it will strive to cooperate with all communities in the framework of mutual respect.¹⁷ The *Ennahda* Movement, some of whose members had previously lived in exile or in prison, came together in the wake of the Jasmine Revolution to make politics for the future of Tunisia, finally reunited with the community and found an opportunity to put into practice the principles it had advocated theoretically since its days as the 'Islamic tendency.' The movement stated that it would respect differences and diversity to ensure the success of the democratic transition period that started in Tunisia and to realize the goals of the revolution. However, it opposes tutelage over the community in the name of Islam and it will act in common with all societal factions.

When the *Ennahda* Party participated in the 2012 Constituent Assembly elections, it did not engage in any theological discussions in the party program that it shared with the public, nor did it follow an approach that stressed that Tunisians should be better believers, or use vocation-based language; rather, it concentrated on solutions for the real problems of Tunisia. *Ennahda*, which organized in all regions of Tunisia in a short time, expressed the urgent problems of Tunisia and presented solutions by placing concepts such as societal development, economic welfare, justice and political pluralism at the main axis of its pledge. The *Ennahda* administration refrained from involvement

Since the day he made a name for himself, Ghannouchi has occupied an exceptional place among modern Islamic movement pioneers, and was able to successfully implement his theoretical ideas, whose infrastructures were a long time in the making

in ideological discussions with its opponents (such as debates over the merits of leftism, liberalism, or secularism), and tenaciously stayed away from secular vs. anti-secular polarization, thinking that such polarization would weigh against it. Instead, it aimed to remain on the agenda with its project, which consisted of solutions to present problems and goals for the future.¹⁸ The success of this approach may be seen in the fact that the *Ennahda*

Movement Party won the elections, obtaining 89 out of 217 seats in parliament by taking approximately 37 percent of the votes. Despite this victory, the party made a significant political sacrifice and pioneered a new era of inclusiveness by establishing the first coalition government in the history of Tunisia.

The achievement of the *Ennahda* Party in the elections was interpreted differently in internal and external spheres. *Ennahda* members and people who did not consider the *Ennahda* Movement as a danger, expressed that it was a significant, positive step to change the administration via peaceful means; they expected the movement that represented the public will to take an important role in restructuring the government, and felt that this movement which had a societal equivalent should be evaluated on its success in administration. On the other hand, from the perspective of secular fractions, Islamists rising to decision-making power would constitute a grave danger for the republican regime and the modernization of Tunisia. These circles considered the rise of *Ennahda* as a threat; they stated that *Ennahda* would Islamize Tunisian society by force, would create a new type of dictatorship under the guise of religion, and would stage a coup on democracy by using democracy itself. People who interpreted *Ennahda's* political success in more pragmatic terms approached the movement with suspicion in terms of its competence in solving Tunisia's social, political and economic problems.¹⁹

The *Ennahda* Movement acted responsibly in addressing the problems of the country during the process of transition, and took a positive stance, which showed its readiness for cooperation with all fractions. It especially avoided making declarations or statements in response to accusations from the secular sect that would increase tensions; rather, it generated a literature on secularism²⁰ and analyzed secular practices in the West, stating that the movement itself was not the absolute representative of Islam. The *Ennahda* Movement both competed with its political opponents by providing inclusionist responses to ideological accusations against it, and at the same time tried to hold together

its own base composed of different tendencies; in doing so, it was successful in formulating an election program to meet the needs of Tunisians.

While the *Ennahda* Movement left a mark in Tunisian politics as an important actor, it exerted great efforts to hold the different tendencies within the same structure without dissolving. Without doubt, the charismatic leader of the movement, Ghannouchi, presented an example of a successful leadership in managing and channeling the differences in ideology and preferences for action among the *Ennahda* cadre members who had lived separate from one another either in exile or in prison. While the party strived to convince its own base that all problems could be solved by political negotiations, it hovered on the brink of separation many times. While all the other parties represented in the parliament scattered and shrank after the elections, the *Ennahda* Movement came out of this process stronger. Since the day he made a name for himself, Ghannouchi has occupied an exceptional place among modern Islamic movement pioneers, and was able to successfully implement his theoretical ideas, whose infrastructures were a long time in the making. In this sense, he found the opportunity to provide a “rapid in-service training” to the forty-year *Ennahda* Movement, and also made significant contributions such as political negotiations and disclaimer to Tunisian political culture.

One of the most important discussions in the movement took place while the new constitution was prepared. Discussions were held on many topics during the writing of the constitution, such as religion-state relations, *sharia*, secularism, and the new structure of the regime; the conflicts that emerged during these discussions were resolved with the great self-sacrifice made by the *Ennahda* Movement. As a matter of fact, the resultant *Ennahda* policies even raised debate in many circles as to whether they are victories or fiascos. In short, the *Ennahda* Movement that continued its charismatic leader-centered existence for many years exerted extensive efforts to institutionalize itself in the process of becoming a party; some important individuals severed their ties with the movement during this time, stating that the party was not adequately institutionalized.

At the Crossroads of Missionary and Political

Islamic movements engage in self-criticism from time to time by questioning themselves based on the cultural, social and political conditions of their society, and reviewing their ideas and thoughts in line with the spirit of the times. In particular, some movements with *Salafi* tendencies in Egypt, and some organizations that had adopted violence as a method questioned themselves and their methods during incarceration, and publicly announced that they had abandoned their previous ideas and actions. For instance, the leader cadre of *al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyya* engaged in serious self-criticism, reviewed its existing ideas on *jihad*, declarations of others as unbelievers, office for public regularity

and relations with non-Muslims, for the sake of ending violence and bloodshed; they abandoned their previous comments to begin to reinterpret these issues in a manner that would not beget violence.²¹

The movements striving to transmit their ideas to the society through missionary activities without resorting to violence also went through a self-criticism and self-questioning process within time. Islamic movements, which had been strengthening their existence in different regions of the Islamic world since the 1970s, had to undergo a soul-searching as they faced the realities of life and society, and had to confront the degree of reality, and degree of practicality, of the reform and revolution discourses that they had nurtured in secrecy and only addressed in their narrower spheres. This process, sometimes called self-criticism and sometimes soul-searching, consisted of examining social and cultural activities alongside issues such as political participation, legitimacy, legality, participation in democratic processes, political pluralism, and popular sovereignty and will; these topics were included in the Islamic movement literature and widely discussed. The Islamic movements that discussed these concepts constructed their relationships with the “other” in an “inclusionist discourse,” and hence started to separate themselves from the movements that established their relation with the “other” on an “exclusionist” discourse.

The most concrete example where theoretical level discussions were experienced and concluded in the transition from a social, religious and missionary movement to politics can be found in the change experienced by the Movement for Unity and Reform in Morocco. A cadre from this movement established the Justice and Development Party and made a decision to proceed with politics by separating vocation and politics from one another. This differentiation process between the nature, style, method and practice of politics and the nature, style, method and practice of vocation processes also provided a different viewpoint from which to understand the nature of the modern religion-politics relationship.

The Muslim Brotherhood participated in the Egyptian elections with the Freedom and Justice Party it established after the Arab Spring; their candidate Mohammed Morsi, who obtained the most votes in parliament, was appointed president; however, he did not go into a distinct separation between the backbone of the *Jama'ah* and the structure of the party at that time. Internal discussions on this topic were forestalled by the military coup, which ousted Morsi, and therefore the relationship between both structures remains obscure.

Different than other Islamic movements, the *Ennahda* Movement, which faced the reality of the society in which it is located and which continuously developed itself, maintained a seminal discourse on topics such as political partic-

ipation, democracy, human rights and popular sovereignty. The movement found the chance to practice the political theory that it had continued advocating, even when its legal legitimacy was in question after the revolution; it experienced no contradiction between theory and practice. After five years of political experience in Tunisia, the movement organized the 10th extraordinary congress on May 20-22, 2016 and with its decisions, decided to progress by drawing a strict line between missionary and political, the *Jama'ah* and the party.²² With this decision, the *Ennahda* administration changed horses in midstream and took an immense political risk.

Based on their reinterpretation, the *Ennahda* Movement Party determined three priorities: ensuring economic welfare for the new period and improving a sustainable development model, completing the democratic construction process for a just and strong state, and effectively fighting against and ending the terror that continues to create immense losses for the country

A new expansion was created in the aforementioned congress by using the concept of “democratic Muslim” instead of the “political Islam” concept. The political Islam discourse is far from defining the existing position and its vision for the future. It is the main mission of the *Ennahda* Movement to exert radical and deep-rooted efforts to generate a large movement formed by “democratic Muslims” that believe no contradictions exist between Islamic values and contemporary values.”²³ In the same congress, the *Ennahda* administration clarified the issue that Islam was a reference point for the movement and ignited the fuse for discussions with and among other Islamic movements by sharing a judicial opinion and making a new interpretation:

The fact that Islam is a reference point is the motivating power of acquiring the best study. The fact that merit and experience are taken as bases is the result of not interpreting Islam with a goal orientation. This, at the same time, is a new judicial ruling and interpretation based on the accumulation of human knowledge and the cultural heritage of Islam with the *Quran* and authentic Sunnah tradition, the fundamental resources of Islam.²⁴

Actually, issues like reinterpreting Islam in the context of today’s realities and making new judicial rulings by reading the fundamental religious rules with a goal orientation reflect the basic philosophy of Tunisia’s reform school which had been established previously. After five years of *de facto* politics experience, the *Ennahda* administration clearly presented what it understood from the, ‘our reference is Islam’ discourse, which is one of the basic argu-

Some factors, such as the 'revolutionary Islam' discourse that came to light with the revolution in Iran, the critical perspective of the Sudan Islamic Movement led by Hasan Turabi, and the harsh opposition styles of the leftist unions against the Bourguiba regime were effective in formulating the idiosyncratic discourse and practice of the Islamic Tendency Movement

Islam as a source of reference for the party is directed toward the criticisms from some Islamic movements, notably the *Salafists*, about *Ennahda's* political discourse practices in Tunisia after the Arab Spring, which they characterized as extremely concessive. The *Ennahda* Movement, which stands to resist internal criticisms from other Islamic movements, also had to respond to external criticisms from secular circles by answering what it means to have Islam as a reference in the framework of its own understanding. They announced:

As of today, the *Ennahda* Movement, as a democratic party whose source of reference is Islam, has adopted a tenacious attitude to transform this statement into a system of values expressed with the terminologies of politics, society, economics and culture, so that the aforementioned source of reference will not be an empty slogan with no corresponding equivalence in terms of facts.²⁵

According to the new manifesto of the *Ennahda* Movement, even though this system of values is not different from the common values of humanity that are in harmony with the core of the Islamic message, a new interpretation will make these values more meaningful. Within this system emphasized with a new meaning and interpretation lie significant values such as freedom, honor, work, justice, tolerance, solidarity, moderation, reform, and trust. Based on their reinterpretation, the *Ennahda* Movement Party determined three priorities: ensuring economic welfare for the new period and improving a sustainable development model, completing the democratic construction process for a just and strong state, and effectively fighting against and ending the terror that continues to create immense losses for the country.

ments of Islamic movements. The explanation as to building a bridge between the fundamental resources of Islam, the *Quran* and the *Sunnah*, the past experiences of Muslims and the knowledge accumulation of humanity, and the fact that there is a harmony among the goals of these four references is a new interpretation with a judicial ruling. The emphasis on the Tunisian reform school shows that locality is preferred in differentiating between locality and universality, which is a characteristic in religious interpretations.

The announcement that the *Ennahda* Movement tenaciously identifies

While the understanding of the new period and new approach announced by the *Ennahda* administration in its extraordinary congress attracted extensive interest in secular spheres, it started a theoretical discussion in other Islamic movement circles. Ghannouchi specifically stated that the movement does not have an agenda such as political Islam and that such a concept would be very far from defining them. He explained the new process:

I expressed an opinion at the last *Ennahda* congress. Back in the day, we had presented a comprehensive Islamic ideology. That was an approach that covered politics and Islamic studies and societal work at the same time. Of course, when we presented these views we were the opposition. On the other hand, the government was imposing on the public the lifestyle that it created itself. When the regimes that imposed those comprehensive lifestyles fell, there was no meaning for the opposition that developed comprehensive ideologies. At this point, here's what I think: the job of political parties is making politics. Civil initiatives should take roles in the other areas. What I am trying to explain is not a new Islamic world view. Based on our faith, Islam is crystal clear with very explicit principles. But, what we try to transmit is how Islamic organizations or Islamic movements should be. Some of the people who believe in Islam do politics and some carry out actives and services in other fields. For instance, we asked for mosques and *masjids* to stay clear from politics. Let pulpits refrain from turning into tools of propaganda. I mean it is possible for *Imams* to talk politics in the pulpit, but that this politics should not be party politics, it should not advocate a political party. Politics was banned during the dictatorship period; therefore, we did politics under structures such as union movements and civil movements. At the point we are at today, there are no restrictions in doing politics, hence, you can go into politics if you want and you can establish civil society organizations and carry out activates in this field. These are different areas from each other.²⁶

Conclusion

The Islamic movements that emerged as a reaction to the withdrawal of the Ottoman Empire from the stage of history after WWI and the beginning of the *de facto* colonialism period in many regions of the Islamic world have succeeded in continuing their existence by reviewing their methods against the changing political and social structures. Islamic movements have adopted different methods to continue their existence with identities that oppose the political power that has become prominent in the context of the new world order established after WWII, especially in the Middle East. All of the theoretical discussions and practical differentiations that originated in Egypt, the homeland of the main Islamic movements, have found a voice in other countries as well. However, the *Ennahda* Movement, originating from Tunisia, has different

The fact that *Ennahda* refrained from escalating the political tension and preferred the agenda of the country to its own showed that this party did very well in its first most significant test

characteristics when compared to other Islamic movements led by the Muslim Brotherhood, with its idiosyncratic theoretical discourse and its experiences as a political party.

The *Ennahda* Movement, which emerged in Tunisia in the beginning of the 1970s as a result of religious communication activities, was later transformed into a political forma-

tion and then a political party. Along the way, the movement underwent a process in which it matured and grew with the help of theoretical discussions both internal and external to its structure. Discussions as to how religion should be understood and practiced within the structure kept the members of the movement away from the widespread *Salafi* thought. The movement was closely interested in social, economic, and political issues; it maintained its religious identity during ideological struggles against the common ideologies of the period led by the left and thus had to develop an ideological discourse. Some factors, such as the 'revolutionary Islam' discourse that came to light with the revolution in Iran, the critical perspective of the Sudan Islamic Movement led by Hasan Turabi, and the harsh opposition styles of the leftist unions against the Bourguiba regime were effective in formulating the idiosyncratic discourse and practice of the Islamic Tendency Movement.

Although important cadres of the movement were in exile or in prison, the movement acquired mass support with the help of dialogue and cooperation around common values initiated with other opposition circles. In this respect, the *Ennahda* Movement added a mass dimension to the reform movement addressed in the Islamic world by individuals in the 19th century such as Khayr al-Din al-Tunisi, Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, Muhammed Abduh, Shakib Arslan, Muhammad Iqbal, Namik Kemal, and Mehmet Akif, and ensured that it found social-political grounds.

In governments where it was included as a political party, the *Ennahda* Movement differentiated from extreme *Salafi* movements with its theoretical discourse and its political practice, as well as its interpretations of important issues included in the Islamic movements' agenda, such as the application of *sharia*, the foundation of an Islamic state, dialogue with the other, minorities and rights. Hence, the *Ennahda* Party brought national consensus and political partnership discourse to the forefront by staying away from the classical discussions and polarization policies that could push the country into a state of chaos; instead, it brought goals such as the construction of a democratic state, and the assurance of human rights and freedoms to the axis of politics.

Events such as the domestic security problems experienced in the first government led by *Ennahda* after the Jasmine Revolution, including months-long strikes, cessation of phosphate production which is the most important export product of the country, hindrances in railway transportation, an attack on the U.S. Embassy, the assassination of two opponents, and explosions in tourism areas brought the country to the brink of political instability and the present government had to resign. The fact that *Ennahda* refrained from escalating the political tension and preferred the agenda of the country to its own showed that this party did very well in its first most significant test.

The leading problem the movement encountered when the *Ennahda* Movement transformed into a party and participated in Tunisia's administration was the confrontation and reckoning with the *Salafis* from inside and outside the movement. Some individuals with *Salafi* tendencies within the movement prepared a convenient ground for anti-*Ennahda* discourse among secularists, with their statements that could leave the movement in a tight spot. In regard to *Salafis* outside the movement, the coalition governments' categorization of the *Ansar ash-Sharia* group as a terrorist organization, and decision to ban it after some terrorist activities, in tandem with Ghannouchi's harsh criticisms towards *Salafi* groups that adopted violence as a method, caused these groups to side against *Ennahda*. While the *Ennahda* administration took a stand against the *Salafis* who adopted violence as a method, it also asked the other *Salafi* groups who accepted politicization to form parties in Tunisia and practice politics by abiding with the existing laws as they did in Egypt. ■

Endnotes

1. Rached Ghannouchi, *Min Tajrubati'l-Harakati'l-Islamiyyeti fi Tunus*, (Tunisia: Daru'l-Mujtahid li'n-Nashr wa't-Tawzi, 2015), p. 28.
2. Ghannouchi, *Min Tajrubati'l-Harakati'l-Islamiyyeti fi Tunus*, p. 50.
3. Basic religious information, the *Quran* and prophetic biography classes, provided in the Sidi Yusuf Mosque located in the Kasba region of capital Tunisia, which attracted intensive attention from people concerned about their religious identities after the twenty-year silence that Tunisia experienced following Independence drew considerable interest in a short time from the youth who shared same thoughts, ideas and sensitivity. The fact that individuals such as Rached Ghannouchi, Abdelfattah Mourou, Shaikh Saleh Abdullah, Hassan Ghadbany, Hamida al-Naifar, Mohamed Shazly created study circles at mosques, and instructors from Zeytune University initiated religious classes for the public ensured a religious dynamism.
4. Salah al-Din Jourchi, *al-Islamiyyune't-Takaddumiyyun fi Tunus: Markazu'l-Qahira li Huquqi'l-Insan* (Cairo: 2000), p. 27.
5. Ghannouchi, *Min Tajrubati'l-Harakati'l-Islamiyyeti fi Tunus*, p. 50.
6. Ghannouchi, *Min Tajrubati'l-Harakati'l-Islamiyyeti fi Tunus*, p. 66.
7. See: www.ikhwanwiki.com/index.php
8. Ghannouchi, *Min Tajrubati'l-Harakati'l-Islamiyyeti fi Tunus*, p. 58.
9. Ghannouchi, *Min Tajrubati'l-Harakati'l-Islamiyyeti fi Tunus*, p. 59.

10. Kusay Salih Derviş, *Raşid Gannuşi İle İslami Harekte Üzerine Söyleşiler*, (translation by İbrahim Akbaba, Ramazan Yıldırım, Birleşik Yayıncılık), (İstanbul: 1994); Rached Ghannouchi, *al-Hurriyatu'l Amma fid-Dawlati'l İslamiyya*; Rached Ghannouchi, *al-Harakatu'l-İslamiyya wa Mas'alatu't-Taghyir*, (Tunisia: Daru'l-Mujtahid li'n-Nashr wa't-Tawzi, 2015); Rached Ghannouchi, *a'd-Damokratiyya wa Huququ'l-Insan fi'l-İslam*, (Tunisia: Daru'l-Mujtahid li'n-Nashr wa't-Tawzi, 2015).

11. The process that started on December 17, 2010 was called the "Jasmine Revolution," especially in the international media, with reference to the jasmine flower, which is common in Tunisia. In the preamble of the constitution adopted in 2014, this process was called *Sawratu'l-Hurriya wa'l-Karame* (Revolution of Freedom and Honor). See, <http://www.arp.tn/site/main/AR/docs/constition.pdf>.

12. With the concept of *al-qabiliyatu li'l-isti'mar* (suitability for colonialism), Malek Bennabi describes a different dimension of the relationship between the exploited and the exploiter. The conceptualization of "environment suitable for colonialism," which we use here was generated by Azmi Bishara based on Bennabi's aforementioned conceptualization, and the expression *al-qabiliyatu li's-sawra* (suitability for revolution). Azmi Bishara, *Fi's-Sawra wa'l-Qabiliyatu li's-Sewra*, (Qatar: al-Marqazu'l-Arabi li'l-Ebhas ve Dirasati's- Siyasat, 2014), p. 65.

13. Moncef Marzouki, the first president of Tunisia after the revolution, exposed Ben Ali's activities in this period in his report published under the title, "The Black Book." The Black Book published in 2003 by Presidential Public Relations and Information unit with the main heading "Propaganda Tools in the Ben Ali Period," includes information and documents that stunned many circles. The book, in which the methods used by Bin Ali to make his own propaganda, to create pressure on the public and eliminate opponents are provided as main headings; it presents all documents in detail, including articles, books, leaflets and media programs, as well as the amount of money paid to authors-producers. *Al-Qitabu'l-Aswad*, (Tunisia: Riasetu'l-Jumhuriyatu't-Tunusiyya, Dairetu'l-I'lam wa't-Tavasul, 2013).

14. Azmi Bishara, *al-Sawratu't-Tunusiyyatu'l-Majida*, (al-Marqezu'l-Arabi li'l-Ebhas wa Dirasati's-Siyasat), pp. 157-167.

15. Ghannouchi has a different discourse than leaders of other Islamic movements. For the harmony and continuity between Ghannouchi's political experience which he strived to practice in Tunisia in the post Jasmine Revolution period and the theoretical views that he expressed during his years of exile, see: Ramazan Yıldırım, "Raşid Gannuşi ile Çok Yönlü Bir Sohbet," *Yeni Şafak Gazetesi*, (October 20-24, 1996). For further information about the role and significance of Ghannouchi in other Islamic movements see Azzam S. Tamimi, *Raşid Gannuşi: İslamcılık Geleneğinde Bir Demokrat*, (translation by Ayşe Yönkül), (İstanbul: Hece Yayınları, 2016).

16. Fayiz Sare, *al-Ahزاب wa'l-Haraqatu's-Siyasiyya fi Tunus 1932-1984*, (Damascus, 1986), p. 213.

17. See: <https://goo.gl/ri58uf>

18. Enwar al Jamawi, *al-İslamiyyun fi Tunus wa Tahaddiyatu'l-Binai's-Siyasî wa'l-İktisadî li'd-Dawlati'l-Jadide, Qiraatun fi Tajrubati Haraqati'n-Ennahda*, (Qatar: al-İslamiyyun wa Nizamu'l-Hukmi'd-Demokratî, al Markazu'l-Arabi li'l-Ebhas wa Dirasati's-Siyasat, 2013), p. 473.

19. Enwar al Jamavî, *Ibid*, p. 465.

20. In addition to Ghannouchi's books and articles on state governance, rights and responsibilities, there are two studies on secularism. See: Rafiq Abdussalam, *Fi'l-İlmaniyye wa'd-Din wa'd-Damokratiyya*, (Qatar: Marqazu'l-Jazira li'd-Dirasât, 2008); *Tefkiku'l-İlmaniyye fi'd-Din wa'd-Demokratiyye*, (Tunisia: Daru'l-Mujtahid li'n-Nashr wa't-Tawzi, 2015).

21. Bilal al-Talidî, *Müracaatu'l-İslamiyyîn*, (Beirut: Merkezu Nemâ li'l-Buhûs ve'd-Dirasât, 2013), pp. 23-25.

22. See: <http://congres10.ennahdha.tn/ar>.

23. See: <http://congres10.ennahdha.tn/ar>.

24. See: <http://congres10.ennahdha.tn/ar>.

25. See: <http://congres10.ennahdha.tn/ar>.

26. We talked to Mr. Ghannouchi with a group of academicians and journalists in November 2016. This is Ghannouchi's explanation of the reflections of the aforementioned congress.