Islamism and Democracy

Is the Tunisian En-Nahda an example of a Democratic Islamist Movement?

Nina Eikesæth

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Departement of Political Science,

University of Oslo

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1. Introduction

1.1 Choice of Theme

Islamism[1] is a concept that is increasingly heard everywhere. Scholars on the Muslim religion or the Arab societies have used the concept for some time. The worldwide press and the common man and woman have more recently taken this concept in use, especially after September 11th .

My interest in this phenomenon can be traced back some years. I have learned that Islamism is a complex label that should be used with caution. Accordingly, I find it odd that more and more people arbitrarily refer to the concept, either when talking about demonstrations in the Middle East, Muslim priests (Imams) or terrorists. Most of all, Islamists are looked upon as something very different, odd, violent etc. To sum it up: Islamism produces fear. This follows the argumentation of Edward Said in *Orientalism* (1978). He accuses the Western world in particular of looking upon the Middle East as something different, exotic and at the same time barbaric. It can be argued that this view has bloomed with the increased attention on Islamists worldwide. Hence, I find it important to increase the focus on this subject. Without knowledge it is impossible to understand people's behaviour, and the risk of drawing incomplete conclusions of prejudice are present.

In many Middle Eastern and North African countries the Islamists represent the largest opposition to the regimes in power. To explore and explain this growth of Islamist movements will not be the main task of this thesis. Instead, I have chosen to look at the Islamist connection to democracy. Interestingly, the Islamists often demand democratisation of the political system in their countries. They accuse the regimes in power of being autocratic and undemocratic. The leading regimes on the other hand often claim their devotion to democracy, but reject the Islamists as

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[1] The definition of Islamism will be accounted for in chapter 2

terrorists or simply as people who do not possess certain qualities that need to be fulfilled if taking part in democratic elections. Usually Islamists are rejected to participate in the political contest because of their religious connection or suspicions of involvement in violence. Many governments articulate their dissatisfaction with a party that is trying to monopolise Islam. Religion is for everyone and is not going to be used by any particular party or movement, they argue. The Islamists on their side deny that they are trying to monopolise religion. They hold that they are only speaking on behalf of one way of interpreting the Muslim religion.

I have chosen to concentrate on the Tunisian Islamist movement, En-Nahda[2]. My main reason for focusing on En-Nahda is the extensive work that Mr. Rachid Ghannouchi, the movement's leader, has put down on defending an Islamic democracy.

Democracy is not a term widely discussed in Islamist doctrine even though many demand democratisation of the current political situation in their countries. Ghannouchi and En-Nahda have, however, made broad efforts in constructing their own democratic system. One has to assume that En-Nahda's stand on democracy is far more radical than most Islamist groups in this matter.

When analysing Islamist views on democracy, I found it best focusing on one movement. For the sake of conducting an extensive analysis, I had to choose a movement with an articulated and deeply founded view supportive of democracy. I will, however, stress that the group's articulated support for democracy does not mean that it automatically will be defined as democratic. But if choosing a group with negative views on democracy my analysis would be limited down to a rather short curiosity.

1.2 Research Objective

It has been argued that democracy is a Western concept and might therefore only work fully in Western contexts (Huntington 1993). Nevertheless, many scholars

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[2] The Arabic term is Hizb al-Nahda. Tamimi has argued that the English name is Ennahda. However, just like Tjomsland I have chosen to use En-Nahda, thus respecting the English spelling at the same time as it is similar to the original name.

disagree on this interpretation of the concept or choose to ignore this notion (Hefner 1998, Krämer 1993, Sisk 1992). To conclude and accept that democracy will not work in non-Western countries seems simple. Though I see that different cultures and religions may conflict with the way Westerners are used to see democracy, it would be wrong not to try and see this from other perspectives.

I will in this dissertation avoid seeing democracy as a strictly Western concept.

According to Islamism in general[3] God is the 'original governor', and to fully separate religion and state is impossible on the basis of Shari'a (the Islamic law). An Islamic state will have to implement and protect the Shari'a as the source of laws. Accordingly, an interesting question is *whether the Islamic law, Shari'a, is absolute or adaptable to people*. Most Muslims agree that the part of Shari'a that contains people's relation to religion (Ibadat) is final and not to interfere with. An interesting issue in this regard is how Muslims look upon the religion-society relation (Mu'amalat) that contains for instance economic, political and family life. Is Mu'amalat adaptable and possible to interpret for the people?

This is widely discussed among Muslims in general and Islamists in particular. As a result of Shia conviction, that the Quran is made of God in time, they are positive to human-made laws. Sunni-Muslims, on the other hand, believe that the Quran is eternal and this makes them more reluctant to human-made laws. Many Islamists, however, tend to see the possibilities of human lawmaking as a natural consequence of God's wisdom. God left the details of political organisation open to the Muslim community so that they could decide upon this according to their needs and aspirations (Krämer 1993:5).

The question that derives from this is the following:

If humankind is free to some degree to decide on issues regarding state and society, will this mixing of religious laws with politics allow for a democratic system?

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[3] I will not discuss Islamism in general throughout this dissertation since I find it impossible to look upon this as one coherent phenomenon. Nevertheless, from my basic definition of Islamism, made in chapter 2, it can be derived that all groups calling themselves Islamists have a goal to implement the Shari'a as the state's main source of jurisprudence.

Since my dissertation is narrowed down to the Tunisian Islamic movement En-Nahda, my problem to discuss will more accurate be:

To what extent is the Islamic democracy of the Tunisian En-Nahda democratic?

A common criticism towards Islamists, mainly articulated by the sitting regimes, is that the Islamists use democracy only of pragmatic reasons to get to power. Their critics fear that once the Islamists are in position there will be no more talk about democratic values or principles.

My intention is not to speculate on whether the movement will actually do as they say, if ever given the chance to rule. That would be an impossible task. I will rather analyse whether what they are actually saying in some way represents a sort of democratic system.

More precisely, I will have to investigate the ideology mostly elaborated by Rachid Ghannouchi, the leader of En-Nahda. Though there have been other people at the top of the organisation, Ghannouchi seems to be the main contributor to the En-Nahda ideology.

1.3 Analytical approach

In this dissertation I will examine En-Nahda's concept of Islamic democracy. Consequently, I will analyse whether this Islamic organisation can be defined as democratic. In deciding upon this I will apply theories on democracy. Evidently theories on democracy differ, and do not constitute a unified concept. Accordingly, I will try to simplify the picture by categorise into distinct alternatives. I will analyse En-Nahda's model by comparing and categorise its views on democracy with these theories. I see no point in operating with a model of variables that establishes the causes of the En-Nahda ideology.

Due to the focus on Islamists, the mixing of religion and politics will be discussed. Hence, the question of religion may have an impact on the results. I need to explore

whether the mixing of religion and politics excludes the possibility of a functioning democracy. This debate will first be treated in general terms, before exploring the consequences in the specific case of En-Nahda.

1.4 Methodological considerations

1.4.1 Qualitative case study

When answering a thesis one has to be conscious of how to approach the field of study. The approach chosen is both decisive for how the work is being conducted, and the results received. I have chosen the qualitative method for my thesis. An important principle within the qualitative method is to achieve a deeper understanding of the research units (Holme & Solvang 1996:87). To understand the research units' situation is significant. Accordingly, the more knowledge the researcher possess the better. The results will be received by the interaction of theoretical and empirical understanding (Holme & Solvang: 1996:93).

Ib Andersen states that a case study is an empirical analysis (Andersen 1990:122). The analysis aims at investigate a contemporary phenomenon where the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly evident (Yin 1994:13). Additionally multiple sources of information are used in the investigation of the phenomenon (Andersen 1990:122).

Svein S. Andersen (1997) divides case studies into three different categories depending on how they relate to theory in their design. In A-theoretical case studies the aim is not to use concepts or theories, or to understand some abstract construct or a general problem. The case under study is descriptive and tries to reveal the social reality and the uniqueness of the case (Svein S. Andersen 1997:62). The second category comprise interpretive case studies. Interpretive studies applies concepts and theoretical approaches to explore how conditions influence a certain event or phenomenon. The aim is not to generalise one's findings in order to develop a theory, but rather to employ theoretical perspectives as conceptual structures or as advanced organisers (Svein S. Andersen 1997:69). The third and last category of case studies is concerned with generating theory, where the aim is to provide insight into an issue

through refinement of theory. The case itself is of secondary interest, but it plays a supportive role in facilitating the theoretical understanding of a phenomenon through the testing of hypotheses (Svein S. Andersen 1997:73).

My analysis could have been of the A-theoretical category in that the case in study is rather unique. Nevertheless, I have chosen to use theoretical concepts to organise the analysis, accordingly my case sorts under the second category, interpretive case study.

Case study is also the most used strategy when analysing organisations. Few observation-units but several variables are considered typical for a case study (Andersen 1990:121). In my thesis there is only one organisation, En-Nahda. Consequently, this makes my study a single case study (Andersen 1990:123).

The focus on one organisation is made out of practical considerations and limited resources. I could have picked out another or more Islamist organisations, and made a comparative analysis. Such an approach could provide valuable information about differences or similarities between Islamist organisations. On the other hand, I would probably not have been able to analyse En-Nahda thoroughly. My choice is therefore not oriented towards generalisations. I am not trying to establish that Islamists in general are either democratic or not. My case in this regard is unique. I have chosen Tunisian En-Nahda for a reason: their special approach to democracy. One could say that En-Nahda, with Mr. Rachid Ghannouchi in front, is among the most moderate Islamists you can find. I am aware of the critique I could receive due to selecting such an moderate Islamist group for my thesis. Still, the point I am trying to make is that Islamists differ in opinion and approach, and that *some* Islamists could be democratic or semi-democratic.

1.4.2 Sources and collection of data

To get reliable information and a comprising understanding of the situation, it is necessary to use a variety of sources. I have mostly used secondary sources such as books and articles. The information received have been checked and supplemented with some primary sources such as the political manifest of En-Nahda and a personal interview with Mr. Rachid Ghannouchi.

In that data's validity is dependent upon high reliability, this is crucial for any data collection. If the collection and the treatment of data are done with a high level of accuracy, the reliability is high as well (Hellevik 1994:43). Opposite, a low level of accuracy will give a low level of reliability. However, high reliability does not necessarily mean high validity (Hellevik 1994:43). High validity means that the data collected is adequately reliable and relevant to answer the thesis. You may have collected accurate data, but if you use these data to say something about a slightly different subject it results in a low level of validity (Dahl 1973:67, Hellevik 1994:43). Primary sources are often considered as reliable data. In this thesis I have used the En-Nahda manifest of 1988. A primary source, such as a manifest or political program, is supposedly reliable, but there might be difficulties when analysing such materials. My interpretations are partly based on primary sources; still the results of the interpretations are mine alone.

I got the chance to interview Mr. Rachid Ghannouchi in Oslo June 9th, 2003. In a personal interview there is no problem concerning the reliability of the source. Ghannouchi must be considered a reliable source being the leader of En-Nahda. As to what Dahl describes as semantic problems, how to interpret the content of the source, this is explained as a successive process (Dahl 1973:64). First there is a problem concerning language. My interview was conducted in English. This is the second language of both the interviewer and the respondent. I have to take this into account when analysing the results. As to what Dahl refers to as reale interpreting terms (Dahl 1973:64-65), I need to trust my general knowledge concerning the issues in question. Other interviews used are conducted by others, and are to be considered as secondary sources. I can not be certain of how the questions and answers were influenced and interpreted, since I was not present. Consequently, I will only use this information as a supplement to other data. Additionally, I have used a couple of articles written by Ghannouchi.

Secondary sources are widely used in this thesis. In a tense situation like this where an organisation is banned in the home-country, it would be an impossible task to collect all the information by myself. Accordingly, I have good use of books and articles written by scholars. However, it is important to have in mind the tense

situation between the Tunisian government and En-Nahda. To achieve an overview of the different stands, who's taking sides in the conflict etc, is of great relevance. Some scholars that I refer to are coloured in their presentation. To exemplify, Hamdi is a former member of En-Nahda as well as a scholar. In contrast, Hermassi is both professor in Sociology and currently Minister of Culture in the Ben Ali government. Likewise, Islamist expert Burgat is seen as quite positive in approaching Islamists and their impact on Islamic societies, while scholars such as Roy and Kepel articulate a decline and lack of faith in Islamists' impact.

In my interview with Rachid Ghannouchi he stressed his support to the presentation of En-Nahda, made by Assam Tamimi. Accordingly, I have laid emphasis on Tamimi's book in this thesis.

In using Tunisian newspapers I will to take into account the widely repressed situation of the journalists in the country. They are not entirely free to express every side of a story.

Tunisia is a country with an Arabic speaking population. However, French is widely used and most Tunisians speak both languages. I don't speak or understand Arabic which constitutes a problem. I do on the other hand read and speak some French. Still, I am often put in an impossible situation when Islamists make a point out of publishing their writings exclusively in Arabic. Luckily some of this literature is translated into English or commented in English.

1.5 Further Outline

The overall goal in this thesis is to evaluate the Tunisian Islamist organisation En-Nahda, and their claim of being a democratic organisation. Most people would intuitively conclude that Islamists and democracy are two very different things and therefore incompatible. I intend to analyse this connection more closely before making any conclusions.

Chapter 2 is descriptive in that I am trying to give an overview of Islamists in general. I will describe the re-emergence of Islamism, central goals, and different classifications of the organisations. I will also try to portray some of the movements and their followers. In chapter 3 I will investigate the theoretical fundament.

Democracy is not a simple term that forms one single theory. Accordingly, I will explore different perspectives and approaches.

Religion's part in politics is vital to this thesis. Accordingly, I will include a broad discussion on the question of religion and politics. A presentation of the general discussion on Islamism and democracy is made in 3.3.

Chapter 4 is an empirical description of the rise and evolvement of the Tunisian En-Nahda. I feel the need to give a short description of the organisation before analysing its stands in chapter 5.

This chapter is divided into 3 parts. In part one I will analyse En-Nahda's stand in relation to 3.1. Part 2 of chapter 5 is about Ghannouchi and En-Nahda's relation to secularism and religion in politics. Finally, in 5.3, I will sum up the results found in the previous discussions, categorising the movement according to my democratic alternatives.

In chapter 6 I will summarise my findings, and draw a conclusion to the questions proposed in chapter one.

2. Islamism

Different names have been used on these groups with approximately the same ideas both in scholarly work and the mass media. This can be both confusing and inaccurate.

In the early phase of these studies *Islamic Fundamentalism* was the name most frequently used. Unfortunately, it is not very precise. "All those who call to a return to foundational beliefs or the fundamentals of a religion may be called fundamentalists" (Esposito 1999:5). This could include all practising Muslims, who accept the Quran as the literal word of God and the Sunna (example of the Prophet Muhammad) as a normative model of living (Esposito 1999:5). Fundamentalism originated in the context of American Protestantism covering those who advocated a literalist interpretation of the Bible. These were regarded as static, retrogressive and extremist, wishing to return to and replicate the past. Few organisations in the Middle East fit such a description. These groups often use the latest technology in their work and their interpretation of Islam is often inventive and new (Haugom 1995:9-10). The phenomenon also has a negative sound, and Western observers in an early stage saw these movements as reactionary, extremist religious groups acting on the basis of a literal understanding of Islam (Tjomsland 2000:27). Scholars were investigating the *cause* of the problem, not accepting the phenomenon as something that existed in its own right (Tjomsland 2000:28-29).

Political Islam is a concept that implies the interpretation of Islam as a political ideology. Still, many politicians in the Middle East have been using Islam as a tool to legitimise their politics without any further connections with this ideology. The Tunisian President, Ben Ali, promised a stronger emphasis on Islam and Arabic identity when he seized power in 1987. He both restricted groups like En-Nahda and at the same time strengthened Islam in public by implementing more religious TV-programs, announcing a Minister of religion and by reopening the Islamic university in Zeitouna (Roy 1994:127).

Islamism has been increasingly used in resent years. The concept implies an ideological connection as well as a differentiation from Islam. Most important is the use of Islamism by the groups themselves, Islamic or Islamist movement (al-haraka al-islâmiyya) (Utvik 1993:200). I will in the following use the name Islamism when referring to these groups in general.

2.1 Resurgence of Islam

The significance of the Islamic movements became evident in the end of the 1970s and during the 1980s. The Islamic revolution in Iran and the assassination of Egypt's President, Sadat, forced Muslim governments and the world to pay attention to this phenomenon. The different governments in the Muslim world had for years ignored these forces or believed they could be used to destabilize the radical leftist opposition (Kepel 1994:25). Instead the Islamists suddenly appeared as a major oppositional force and a threat to ruling regimes. Governments in the Muslim world had not predicted this politicisation of the religious revival. Following this development many scholars have put down a lot of effort to explain the rise of Islamist forces in the Muslim societies. Laura Guazzone argues that the rise and spread of Islamism is the consequence of several social, cultural, political and economic causes. She believes that these problems can be traced back to two major interacting factors:

1) "the cultural contradiction produced by the kind of access to modernity in the Arab world; and

2) the crisis of efficiency and legitimacy of the political ideologies and systems established after independence" (Guazzone 1995:4).

In addition, from the mid-1970s there has been an increasing urbanization in many Muslim societies without an adequate economic growth (Guazzone 1995:4). This development has intensified the combined effects of the two root causes identified above.

2.1.1 Religion in response to modernity

By the end of the nineteenth century and throughout the first half of the twentieth century, European expansion was seen in the Middle East and North Africa through imperialism and colonisation (Esposito 1999:48-49). Many Muslims felt their societies were in danger because of a perceived Western superiority.

The Muslim society was challenged politically, economically, morally and culturally (Esposito 1999:49). Recognition of internal weakness of their own communities, the external threat of Western imperialism and the acknowledgement of the value of modern science and technology made people frustrated (Esposito 1988:153). Ayubi defines development as "a process through which an entity can reach its maximum potential, both quantitatively and qualitatively" (Ayubi 1991:48). Effectiveness is vital to any development process, but should, according to Ayubi, be defined within one's own cultural reference. What happened in the Muslim world, according to Esposito, was that development was based upon "a theory of modernization that equated development with the progressive Westernization and secularization of society" (Esposito 1999:7). This process of Westernization and secularization was not easily translated into Muslim minds and culture. Small elites of the society took part in this process, while the rest of the population did not (Esposito 1999:7). Although most people wanted a process of development within their societies, they were not ready to copy the West. Muslim morals, culture and history were not seen as something to sacrifice on the way to a more modern society. As a result, an Islamic revival was seen in intellectual circles. Islamic reformers responded to the impact of the West by substantive attempts to reinterpret Islam to meet the new challenges in Muslim societies (Esposito 1988:127). These reformers, led by Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (1838-1897) and his disciples Muhammad Abdu (1849-1905) and Rashid Rida (1865-1935), stressed the compatibility of Islam with modern science and what they saw as the best of Western thoughts (Esposito 1999:53). They argued for a selective synthesis of Islam and modern Western thought in that they wished to reformulate the Islamic heritage in response to the political, scientific, and cultural challenge of the West (Esposito 1999:53). Most reformers wanted to adopt Western ideas and technology at the same time as they promoted the ideas of anticolonialism

and Muslim unity (Esposito 1999:59). Still, these reformers failed in mobilizing people in organizations (Esposito 1999:59), but their ideas have later been used and evolved into Muslim nationalism and Islamism.

Islamist groups emerged in the first half of the twentieth century (Esposito 1988:152). The Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and the Jamaat-i-Islami in the Indian subcontinent were stronger in their condemnation of the West than secular and Islamic reformers (Esposito 1988:153). They believed in the total self-sufficiency of Islam. Western secularism and materialism were considered alien and should be rejected (Esposito 1988:153, Kepel 2002:27). Both the Muslim Brotherhood and the Jamaat saw Islam as a comprehensive ideology for personal and public life. They "reinterpreted Islamic history and tradition to respond to the sociohistorical conditions of the twentieth century" (Esposito 1988:155). They were not against a renewal or modernization of the Muslim society, but they were convinced that it needed to be rooted in Islamic principles and values (Esposito 1988:156). In Burgat's view the Islamists strive to change the rules of the political discourse when they reconnect with an older symbolic system (Utvik 1993:208). Still, this caution with using words as modernisation does not stop them from promoting such ideas (Utvik 2003:56). Kepel agree in that these movements first wanted to adapt to the modern society. But he argues that we experienced a shift around the 1970s, when Islamists reacted to the marginalisation of religion in the public realm (Kepel 1994:1-2). In Kepel's view, the fight was no longer over Islamic ability to modernise successfully through own concepts and heritage.

The two founding movements chose different approaches in their organization. The Muslim Brotherhood grew quickly as a mass movement with support mainly from the rural lower class and the middle class (Esposito 1988:155). Contrary, the Jamaat was more an elite than a populist organization. The focus was on training a core of leaders, and writing down an Islamic ideology (Esposito 1988:155).

There is no general agreement among scholars in every aspect of the emergence of Islamism. Roy and Kepel tend to see the renaissance as a reaction to the reduced impact of God and religion in the public realm that the Middle Eastern societies experienced after independence. Burgat and Utvik often highlight the political fight

over symbols, symbols representing the Muslim and often Arab cultural heritage. According to Burgat and Utvik this fight over symbols represents a modern thought or way that the Islamists follow. From their view the Islamists are to be looked upon as a modernizing force themselves. I would consider Esposito to be somewhere in between these two poles, while Guazzone is found closer to Burgat and Utvik's position.

Regardless of what angle one chooses, it seems hard to explain why the revival of Islamic thought took place in the late 1970s. I will argue that other circumstances triggered this first explanation.

2.1.2 Failed expectations

Even though Islamic movements like the Muslim Brotherhood and Jamaat had emerged in the early twentieth century, it was Arab nationalism that grasped people's attention in the middle of the twentieth century. Egyptian nationalism represented by Nasser was to become a symbol of Arab nationalism and independence from the West, far beyond the Egyptian borders. The Free Officers and Nasser had planned to seize power for a decade when they took action in 1952 (Mansfield 1992:244). Their intention was to stop the foreign influence, mainly represented by Britain, to eliminate the power of the monarchy and the landlords as well as ending the corruption of political life (Mansfield 1992:244). In spite of the overwhelming support of the nationalist movements that seized power after independence in most Arab states, the nationalists lacked a political platform. After independence, these nationalist governments tried different approaches, but socialism was the most common ideology. Nasser in Egypt, Bourguiba in Tunisia and the Baath-parties in Syria and Iraq were all trying a socialist path to development. Nasser's success in driving the British out of Egypt and establishing control of the Suez Canal, made him a hero in the Arab world. Additionally, his politics of neutrality in regard to the West and Soviet Union (Mansfield 1992:249) increased his popularity. It was only after the Arab-Israeli war in 1967 that the faith in Nasser and Arab nationalism declined. The overwhelming superiority of the Israeli army when defeating the Arab alliance in 6 days shocked the whole Arab world. Nasser died few years later (1970), and a lot of trust in Arab nationalism was buried with him (Dekmejian 1985:28-29). Arab

nationalism had not helped the Arab states in resolving the conflict with Israel or other regional conflicts, as in Lebanon and between Iraq and Iran (Guazzone 1995:8). The credibility of Arab nationalism vanished and produced a vacuum (Kepel 2002:63). Additionally, by the 1970s it had become clear that the socialist strategy had not succeeded in providing economic growth and wealth to the people. The different states had vast internal problems. Various protests and riots were seen in countries like Egypt and Tunisia in the late 1970s (Guazzone 1995:8). The old identity crisis reappeared in the Muslim world. Revolutionary socialism, Western liberalism and Islamism were all alternatives with various supports. Throughout the 1970s the Islamic way proved to be the most popular among the population (Dekmejian 1985:29). The regimes had tried Western ideas without any success. The need to return to more familiar ideas like Islamic tradition and religion spread among the people. At the same time the populations were growing and an increased urbanization was seen. Unemployment rates were high. The expected economic growth was a failure. Additionally, the profit of the Arab oil production did not reach the people. The regimes were not capable of providing proper social services to their people (Esposito 2003b:72). This general discontent among the people was resulting in distrust towards the government. It was in this climate that the Islamists emerged as a popular movement. They argued for a return to the Islamic values and morality. They criticised the sitting governments and demanded a functioning social service. The need for technological and economic development was (and still is) central in the political agenda of the Islamists (Utvik 2003:54).

Additionally the 1979 Islamic revolution in Iran had an impact. It made people believe in the Islamic cause. The Iranian revolution proved it possible to conquer the old corrupt regimes, and helped spreading enthusiasm in the Islamist circles.

One could look upon these two root causes as competing perspectives. I have decided to treat these as congruent causes. When addressing the modernity explanation there is no good answer for why Islamism should accumulate in the late 1970s. The Muslim world has been exposed to modernity through Western influence for a long period of time. This is why I believe there was another explanation triggering or

affecting this modernity-explanation. The general failure of the social and economical politics in the Middle East was evident in the 1970s. People found this as evidence for a non-working 'Westernized' model in their countries. For many the untried new Islamist model seemed worth trying in a period where everything seemed to fail. Hence, I believe that general disapproval with the existing regimes and the consequences for society made people look in new directions.

2.2 Contemporary Islamism

2.2.1 Ideology

Islamist ideology is based on the conviction that Islamic law, Shari'a, provides an embracing and comprehensive system for individual, social and political life. Further, the political organization of society must be Islamic to secure a good Muslim society (Guazzone 1995:10). Hence, all Islamists have in common the wish to establish an Islamic state, based on the Shari'a. Naturally, the organization or movement needs to be politically oriented in order to be separated from strictly religious groups, emphasising for instance ritualistic or spiritualist behaviour.

Utvik sums the criteria for being an Islamic movement in the following definition:

1) "Those who refer to themselves as the Islamic (or Islamist) movement (al-haraka al-islâmiyya).

2) They call for the establishment of an Islamic state. The main criterion defining such a state is that it should be ruled by the Shari'a, the revealed law of Islam.

3) They organize themselves into social and political movements in order to achieve this aim" (Utvik 1993:200).

Islamists consider themselves to offer the Islamic solution as a third alternative to capitalism and communism (Esposito 2003b:72). "They argue that a modern Western bias or orientation, secularism and dependence on western models of development, have proven politically inadequate and socially corrosive, undermining the identity and moral fabric of Muslim societies" (Esposito 2003b:72).

2.2.2 Islamist movements

Widely put, Islamist movements can be traced back to three geo-cultural trends (Roy 1994:2). First is the Arab Sunni movement, based on the Muslim Brotherhood's Egyptian ideologue Hassan al-Banna (1906-49). The second is the Indian Sunni movement with Abul Ala Mawdudi (1903-78), founder of the Pakistani Jama'at-I Islami. Finally there is the Arab-Persian Shi'i movement that sees Ayatollah Khomeini as their main ideologue (Guazzone 1995:13).

"Through the decades, Islamism has evolved and diversified both in response to local and international changes and as a result of the cross influences of the various movements" (Guazzone 1995:13). Shi'i Islamism managed to put forth the first Islamic revolution in Iran, but is now marginalized to Iran and Hizbullah in Lebanon. The Arab Sunni movement based on the Muslim Brotherhood have experienced a split resulting in more radical movements like Hizb al-Tahir, Islamic Jihad, Jama'at Islamiia etc. These groups see Sayyed Qutb as their idol, and argue a more violent approach to gain influence. In for instance Malaysia and the former Soviet Union methods and action of Sunni and Shi'i movements have been mixed (Guazzone 1995:13).

Bagader argues that the different circumstances of the 1960s and 1970s, such as incomplete modernisation, decline of Arab nationalism, and secularisation of the elites, led to responses of different Islamic groups (Bagader 1994:118). He lists spiritual groups such as the Sufi-movements, ritualistic groups with emphasis on 'Islamic appearances' (beard, modest dressing, veiling of women etc), revolutionary groups demanding immediate change of society, Muslim Brothers' groups based on the teachings of al-Banna, independent intellectual groups, and finally traditional Islamic leadership groups of muftis, jurists and professors of Islamic studies (Bagader 1994:119-120). Even though all of these groups focus on Islam, they do not automatically fall into the categorisation of Islamists. As mentioned under 2.2.1 the groups have to aim at implementing an Islamic state and accordingly organise themselves. Following, I only find that the revolutionary groups and the Muslim Brothers's groups in Bagaders categorisation fit this description.

Despite the common goal in establishing an Islamic state, "Islamist movements differ in organization, type of political action, historical affiliation, source of ideological inspiration, territorial and social diffusion, and legal status in the various national contexts" (Guazzone 1995:14). Still, it is possible to place the different movements according to (1) how literalist the approach to religious orthodoxy is, and (2) by their approach to political action (Guazzone 1995:14). The level of literalist understanding distinguishes movements that are considered evolutionist (or pragmatic) from those who are more conservative (or fundamentalist) in their understanding of religion. The evolutionists tend to see the Shari'a as a universal system of reference values that needs to be interpreted and adjusted to the contemporary situation in society (Guazzone 1995:14). To what extent they find that interpretation should be used may vary among the different movements. Examples of movements that fall into this category are the Muslim Brotherhood, En-Nahda in Tunisia, the present Iranian regime and the National Islamic Front (NIF) in Sudan (Guazzone 1995:15). This approach is believed to have the best ability to meet democratic policy-making. "Extensive use of interpretation provides the ideological instrument for potential democratic development of these movements and trends" (Guazzone 1995:15). However, an evolutionist view provides no guarantee for democratic support.

In contrast, the conservative movements "feel that religious law, the Shari'a, is an all-embracing and unchanging system of rules that must be applied, not interpreted" (Guazzone 1995:14). The Wahhabi founders of the current Saudi Arabia, and salafi[4] supporters led by Ben Azzouz Zebdha and Hachemi Sahnouni within the Algerian FIS[5] (Rouadjia 1995:73) constitute examples of this approach.

These classifications concern only the interpretation of the texts. Hence, how these movements feel about political action is a separate issue. Movements that choose a revolutionary approach to politics is convinced that the construction of an Islamic state must take place "from the top down" (Roy 1994:24). By this is meant that a

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[4] The salafi doctrine is conservative and similar to the approach used in Saudi Arabia.

[5] FIS was founded as a cooperation between different Algerian Islamist groups, accordingly one finds various doctrines within the movement.

revolutionary and even violent takeover by these groups is needed, where no compromise with the existing regime is considered as legitimate (Guazzone 1995:15). This revolutionary approach provide small chances for democratic conduct. Clandestine groups of the Egyptian Jama'at and the Hizb al-Tahrir al-Islami, plus various small groups throughout the Arab world fall into this category (Guazzone 1995:15).

Contrary, the reformist movements believe that an Islamic state can be built "from the bottom up" (Guazzone 1995:15). These movements, like the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, FIS in Algeria, Sudanese brothers, En-Nahda in Tunisia (Bagader 1994:119) and those who operate within the political system, believe that they will succeed through political consensus and a gradual change of the social and political environment. This policy could be democratic in that the movements accept political contest for power.

These classifications may be useful in gaining a certain overview of the various Islamist movements. When desired to go deeper into understanding these movements it is necessary to look into the specificities and the national context of each movement (Guazzone 1995:16).

2.2.3 The spread of Islamism

Though modern Islamism is rooted in Egypt and Pakistan, Islamism is now spread from North Africa and the Middle East to Central, South, and Southeast Asia. In countries like Iran, Sudan and until recently Afghanistan, Islamist governments have seized power and established Islamic states. In countries like Kuwait, Lebanon, Yemen and India, Islamists have been allowed to act on the political scene (Burgat 2003:172). During certain periods, Islamists in Jordan have even been invited to participate in government-coalitions. In Egypt the Muslim Brotherhood is not accepted as a political party, but members of the movement have been allowed to participate as individual candidates. This was also the situation for the Islamists in Tunisia in the late 1980s. In for instance Algeria the Islamists were first allowed to enter the political scene, but were later repressed after achieving broad popular support (Esposito 2003a:1).

The spread of Islamist thought have been severe. Many have pointed out that regions with a strong Western influence, often through colonisation followed by modern secular politics, have experienced more Islamist support. Countries like Egypt, Algeria and Tunisia are examples in this case. Countries with a history of colonisation have more often experienced a politic of westernization and modernisation after independence. When the growth and economic success they were hoping for failed to come, many people in these countries blamed the westernization of their societies for the hard times. People started searching for alternatives, and many looked to Islam for help.

Islamist support in numbers is always hard to estimate. Because of the semi-legal and illegal status of Islamists in many countries, reliable opinion polls do not exist. Still, there are some election-figures from the 1980s and 1990s that could give us a hint. According to Guazzone (1995), Algerian Islamists (FIS) obtained approximately 50% of the votes in administrative and general elections in 1990 and 1991. In Egypt the Muslim Brothers have through their alliances with the Labour Party obtained between 10-20% in the years from 1984 to 1992. Jordanian Islamists raised their support from 20% in 1989 to 30% in the 1993 elections. In Kuwait the Islamist support in the 1990 elections were as high as 40%. In the 1992 elections of Lebanon, Hizbullah and Jama'a Islamiyya obtained around 10% of the total votes. Independent candidates for Tunisian En-Nahda achieved around 13% of the votes in the 1989 elections, which were the last elections they were allowed to participate in. Yemen Islamist support declined from 25% in 1988 to 17% in the 1993 elections of the unified Yemen (Guazzone 1995:31-33).

In spite of the election-figures one should keep in mind that in many of these elections threats and repression have been used from the government to influence the result. Likewise, support for the Islamists may sometimes have been the only real alternative to the sitting regimes (Guazzone 1995:17). Consequently, this support may sometimes be considered as general disapproval with the government, and not as sincere support for the Islamists.

To identify or give an exact profile of the supporters are never easy.

Modernization often means that modern government and investors focus on urban areas. The consequence for the Middle East and North Africa has mostly been a rapid urbanization of society where young and poor from smaller towns and rural areas move to the larger cities. Their hopes for a better life are often undermined by the realities of a life in poverty in the urban slums (Esposito 1999:14). The states were not prepared for the large population growth and the urban migration. The shanty towns were in lack of a working infrastructure. Instead the religious associations took care of these marginalised people providing them with at least some help (Kepel 1994:24). The shock of modern urban life with its influence of Western culture, added together with the difficulties in adjusting to a life far from hometowns, family and traditions made people seek comfort in religion. The charitable organisations built mosques in the slums long before any state-organised offices and services appeared (Kepel 1994:24).

According to Roy (1994:3), most followers of the Islamists are not 'traditionalists'. They left behind their previous forms of amusements and "the respect for elders and for consensus", when they moved from the villages (Roy 1994:3). Now they are confronted with values you find in modern cities such as consumerism and upward social mobility (Kepel 2002:66, Roy 1994:3). The problem is that these groups seldom get to take part of this 'new' world. They are either unemployed or they possess menial jobs.

People from the lower middle class have also joined the Islamists. Those who took education experienced bad prospects for a future career, while those who were able to get a job often felt the culture shock on a daily basis (Esposito 1999:14).

The younger generation is particularly strongly represented in the Islamist movements (Esposito 2003b:73). In contrast you find very few members recruited from the circles of the religious scholars (ulama) (Kepel 1994:31). Instead you find a large proportion of university graduates and young professionals from the lower middle class recruited from universities and mosques. In the 1970s many Middle Eastern governments opened the universities in a "policy of mass education which they thought essential to economic takeoff" (Kepel 1994:24-25). But the system was not prepared, and soon massive corruptions put and end to equality. Those who could

pay got private lessons and a better opportunity to do well. It was in this chaos the Islamists entered the campus and arranged free tutoring and other student services (Kepel 1994:25). It is usually people with the modern secular faculties of science, engineering, education, law and medicine that join the Islamists (Esposito 2003b:73, Kepel 1994:32, Utvik 2003:54). These groups do often feel "politically and economically disenfranchised or oppressed" (Esposito 2003b:73). Without any traditional religious education these students read and interpret the Quran "without reference to the learned commentaries of the ulemas and their social inhibitions" (Kepel 1994:32). They select quotations from the Quran, which they find in accordance with their feelings or a contemporary problem (Kepel 1994:32). Scholars such as Roy and Kepel are occupied with the failure of revolutionary Islamism (Islamism from above), especially in Sunni Islam (Kepel 1994:32, Roy 1994:25). This violent approach has not been able to recruit the masses. Roy further rules out the Islamist forces as influential in that these groups have not been able to change much of the political reality[6] in the Middle East and North Africa (Roy 1994:27).

Since I am interested in groups that are possibly more in line with democracy (or democratic behaviour), I will focus more on Islamists in favour of reform (Islamism from the bottom up). Accordingly, I do not agree with the conclusion that Islamism is played out and is without impact on the Muslim societies. In my opinion reformist Islamists are both important in a civil society-approach, where the members are expected to learn democratic behaviour, and when it comes to influencing their own societies.

Burgat tend to draw Roy's conclusion in doubt. When Roy argues that Islamism has lost its 'original impetus' (Burgat 2003:161), he refuses to see the evolvement of the Islamist movements as natural. While Burgat sees this evolvement as the reality, Roy refuses looking upon Islamists through their new policies. Burgat argues that much of these differences, when analysing the Islamist discourse, stem from scholars who are too attached to the phenomenon of revolutionary Islamism (Burgat 2003:162). The

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[6] As goes for states, regimes and borders.

reformist dynamics of Islamism has simply been underestimated. However, it is this kind of Islamism we witness during elections since these forces have been able to express themselves in some countries. And it is also most likely that these reforming Islamists are here to stay, in contrast to the more revolutionary Islamists. Through civil society organisations the Islamists offer health care, education, poverty advice etc, and most importantly they get in contact with the people. They are able to prove through these activities that they want to help the population and not only provide themselves with power and resources like many of the politicians in this part of the world do.

3. Democracy

The term *democracy* occurred in the English language in the 16th century, but the word stems from the Greek *demokratia*, which derive from demos (people) and kratos (rule). Thus a democratic government is based on the people's rule, in contrast to monarchies and aristocracies (Held 1996:1). In order to discuss modern democracy, and in this case more specifically the relation between democracy and Islam, it seems natural to start the discussion by recalling the original aim of the term democracy and to briefly follow the development of the idea. During the second part of this discussion I will go deeper into the issue that particularly concerns my focus for this dissertation; mainly the place of religion in politics. Finally, the ongoing discourse on democracy and Islamism, and their compatibility, will be discussed.

3.1 What is Democracy?

Democracy is a concept hard or even impossible to define accurately. There is no prevailing understanding of the concept, even though politicians, media and scientists of various disciplines use the word constantly. There seem to be just as many understandings of the concept as there are people who apply it. Consequently, there is little use in picking out one definition to base my analysis upon; hence various arguments of importance will be highlighted. An often-used classification of the different definitions of democracy is of the *classical* and the *empirical* models of democracy. The classical definitions are mostly concerned with certain values and norms, while the empirical definitions are occupied with the explanation of political reality (Jahanbakhsh 2001:6).

3.1.1 Classical models

The Athenian democracy has served as an inspiration to modern political thought. Its political ideas like equality among citizens, liberty, and respect for the law and justice are basic rights in most modern societies today (Held 1996:15). However, I find it best to limit this discussion by moving quickly to the modern philosophical debate.

Liberalism is not a single idea, but rather a set of ideas where different versions and interpretations have flourished through modern history (Held 1996:74). Classical liberalism is usually seen as a phenomenon that emerged in England during the 17th and 18th century although liberalism was also seen in North America in this period (Smith 1984:99). Classical liberalism evolved around claims of religious freedom and tolerance, constitutionalism and political rights. Greater freedom for each individual was a central goal. This was mostly formulated in a negative sense, emphasising the protection of individuals from state power rather than focusing on the individual's right to participate (Smith 1984:99). Hobbes launched the theory of contract, Locke wrote about the rule of law with limited authority, and Montesquieu evolved the idea of constitutionalism and political freedom (Klemetsdal 2000:13). Central in Locke's idea of society and the state is his regard of the state of nature. He believed that the right to dispose one's own labour and possess property was essential (Held 1996:79). By property Locke refers to the right of 'life, liberty and estate'. In the state of nature there are no guaranties that people will respect each others right in regard to property, therefore Locke suggests solving this by an agreement in which the society is given the right to decide upon a government to secure the right of property (Held 1996:80). To Locke, and followers of the liberalistic idea, the right of property and the freedom of the individual are the most important values. This is why liberalism focuses on the idea of economic freedom and the power of the market just as much as, or even more than, political rights. There is no automatic linkage between liberalistic ideas and democracy. In Locke's view, "the creation of a political community or government is the burden individuals have to bear to secure their ends" (Held 1996:81). In regard to democracy, Locke's ideas are by no means typically democratic. Political power were to be held 'on trust' by and for the people, but Locke failed to mention who should be regarded as 'the people' and under what circumstances 'trust' should be given (Held 1996:81). Still, Locke's views have been important for the foundation of liberalism and prepared the way for the tradition of popular representative government (Held 1996:81).

Karl Marx (1818-83) and Friedrich Engels (1820-95) opposed the idea of a 'neutral' liberal state and 'free' market economy, and claimed this would be unrealistic in practice in an industrial capitalist world (Held 1996:121). According to Marx, liberalism restricts freedom to a minority of the population by focusing on capitalist production and its relation to the free market. Marxists argue that freedom in a capitalist democracy is purely formal because of the power possessed by those in control of the economic sphere (Held 1996:136). This system legitimates the exploitation of the capacities, namely the workers (Held 1996:138). Here it is not the state that decides the premises for the social order, but the social order that dictates the state (Held 1996:136). As long as private ownership exists there will be no equality, and to Marx equality is a precondition for freedom and democracy. Only the abolition of the capitalist state makes it possible to have equal freedom for everyone. Marx says: "Freedom entails the complete democratisation of society as well as the state; it can only be established with the destruction of social classes and ultimately the abolition of class power in all its forms" (Held 1996:138). Marx did not write in detail about what communism should be like, but in his works he revealed some of his thoughts about the matter (Held 1996:138). In the two stages of communism, normally referred to as socialism and communism, the people would gradually be emancipated from politics (Held 1996:140). By this Marx meant that the large and slow state-bureaucracy should be as minimal and effective as possible in socialism (Held 1996:141) and in communism the society and the state should be fully integrated (Held 1996:146).

3.1.2 Empirical models

The democratic models by Max Weber (1864-1920) and Joseph Schumpeter (1883-1950) have by many been categorised as competitive elitism. Their conception of political life did in little degree enhance democratic participation and individual or collective development (Held 1996:157). Democracy was a restrictive concept, which was seen as a tool to choose the decision-makers and limiting their excesses. Weber argues that in a society with competing values there is little or no possibility of agreement on a specific set of morality that political life will rest upon. Accordingly, "the liberal polity can only be defended on procedural grounds – grounds which

emphasize its importance as a mechanism for promoting the 'competition of values' and 'freedom of choice' in a rationalized world" (Held 1996:161). Weber criticises direct democracy as an impossible model of political regulation. He argues that direct democracy requires equality of all participants, which is unrealistic in a heterogeneous modern society (Held 1996:163). Weber saw a system with capitalist economy, parliamentary government and a competitive party system as desirable (Held 1996:168). He argued for parliamentary government because of the openness this would provide securing the "expression of competing ideas and interests" as well as functioning as a "testing ground for aspiring leaders" (Held 1996:168). In addition, parliamentary discussions give opportunity for compromise. To Weber these criteria make parliament a "mechanism for the preservation of the competition of values" (Held 1996:169). Weber portrays democracy as a testing ground for potential leaders where you find those who are best fit to get elected. To Weber choice in politics is "between leadership democracy with a [party] 'machine' and leaderless democracy, namely, the rule of professional politicians without a calling" (Held 1996:172). Weber's support for representative democracy was mostly due to his belief in the importance of competent leaders than of the concern for democratic values. The democratic process "established a form of 'elected dictatorship'" which Weber saw as highly beneficial (Held 1996:172).

Schumpeter did in many aspects agree with Weber. Democracy was for him a political method to find suitable leaders who were capable of deciding in politics on behalf of the people (Held 1996:179). Hence, for Schumpeter democratic politics is steered ultimately by competing elites (Held 1996:207). Schumpeter saw bureaucratization as "basis of modern management and democratic government" (Held 1996:183). Democracy and bureaucracy was compatible with each other, and both capitalist and socialist organisation (Held 1996:183). He saw the idea of classical democracy as unrealistic (Held 1996:185,191). He criticized the notion of a 'common good' that all people would agree on "by the force of rational argument" (Held 1996:185). The interpretation of the 'common good' is bound to differ in modern diverse societies, he claimed. The classical meaning of democracy as in 'rule

by the people' was not an option. The people were only to accept or refuse the people who ruled (Held 1996:180). According to Schumpeter, the people themselves were not capable of understanding politics, the masses were not educated and therefore ignorant and in lack of sound judgement (Held 1996:181). He further argues that the 'popular will' is a social construct with no base in reality. Politicians try to make 'popular will' the motive of political processes, but to Schumpeter it is rather the product of these processes (Held 1996:187).

In the mid 20th century pluralists were examining political processes in their contemporary societies. These pluralists were occupied with the "dynamics of group politics" (Held 1996:199). According to Dahl, essential in the pluralistic theory, citizen's control of politicians can work if there are regular elections and political competition among parties, groups and individuals (Held 1996:205). Thinkers such as Madison, Mill and Tocqueville have expressed the fear of the power of the 'demos', that the majority will take no considerations to the minority. Dahl on the contrary believes that no tyrannous majority will rise because elections express the preferences of various competitive groups, rather than the wishes of a firm majority. His concept of *polyarchy*, the open contest for electoral support among a large proportion of the adult population, ensures competition among groups of interest, which for Dahl represents the safeguarding of democracy (Held 1996:206). The social prerequisites of a functional polyarchy are to Dahl: consensus on the rules of procedure, consensus on the range of policy options and on the legitimate scope of political activity (Dahl 1956:135, Held 1996:207). Protection against tyranny and protection of the minorities is according to Dahl to be found in these non-constitutional factors, the social prerequisites of democracy (Dahl 1956:135). He found value in the democratic process when "rule by the multiple minority oppositions" were achieved (Held 1996:206). This is in contrast to the well known "sovereignty of the majority" (Held 1996:206). In effect, Dahl's model of polyarchy does not secure the equal distribution of control with political decision-making nor does it secure equal political 'weight' among groups and individuals (Held 1996:208).

Two schools were growing in the 1950s and 1960s, The New Right and The New Left. The New Right stated, "political life, like economic life, is a matter of individual freedom and initiative."(Held 1996:253). The state bureaucracy should keep the expenses and the activities down to a minimal level, at the same time as the government should be strong and enforce law and order. The classical conflict between liberalism and democracy is evident when the New Right seeks limiting democratic use of state power (Held 1996:254). "For them, the contemporary state is a great Leviathan which threatens the foundations of liberty and, accordingly, must be radically 'rolled back'" (Held 1996:254). Friedrich Hayek, central to New Right thought, expresses his scepticism towards the 'demos'. The people should be "constrained in its actions by general rules, there is no guarantee that what it commands will be good or wise" (Held 1996:257). Hayek argues that liberty is only achievable if the power of the state is regulated by law. Hence, it is easy to criticise this view as limiting of the democratic debates and control (Held 1996:263).

The New Left questioned the idea that individuals are 'free and equal' in contemporary liberal democracies, and they appealed for more participation of the people in politics (Held 1996:264). Pateman and Macpherson are spokespersons of this view. "Inequalities of class, sex and race substantively hinder the extent to which it can legitimately be claimed that individuals are free and equal" (Held 1996:265). If you explore systematically the ways asymmetries of power and resource impinge upon the meaning of liberty and equality in daily relations, you will discover that massive numbers of individuals are restricted systematically from participating actively in political and civil life. Formal rights are considered of limited value if they fail to work in real life (Held 1996:264). They suggest two sets of changes to come closer to a participatory democracy. The state must be democratised by making parliament, state bureaucracies and political parties more open and accountable. In addition new forms of struggle at the local level must ensure that society, as well as the state, is subject to procedures which ensure accountability (Held 1996:266).

3.1.3 Limiting the theory: construction of a dichotomy

All of these models consist of interesting and important elements for the democratic discussion. However, in an analysis it might be easier and clearer to operate with

more specific alternatives. To cover all the elements of such a broad spectre of models, as referred to in the previous discussion, could provide unclear results.

As Østerud (1995:169) points out, there is a difference between regarding democracy as a model for 'the good society' and seeing democracy purely as procedures or mechanisms. The problem with viewing democracy as a model for society is the lack of clarity this brings. What one considers to be good in a society differ depending on who one asks (Østerud 1995:169).

In contrast, procedural democracy stresses the rules for decision as the legitimizing force. When the rules and mechanisms for decision are agreed upon and followed, the decision will be considered democratic regardless of its content. This procedural democracy would be similar to formal democracy. Formal democracy has been criticized for not being able to secure a real democratic outcome (Østerud 1995:175). Democratic values are not necessarily realised in society.

The New Left has an important point when they stress the difference between formal and substantive democracy. If a state fails to secure all of its citizens' real rights, the New Left finds it difficult to talk about democracy and popular sovereignty. Marx and the New Left base much of their critique of liberal democracy on this particular issue. They want democratic rights to be equal for the whole society. In a substantive democracy one has to focus on the realisation of certain values. These values could typically be the principles of popular sovereignty, freedom and equality[7]. To achieve this form it has been suggested that the people need to participate on a broader basis during the decision-making. Greater openness and accountability are other suggested measures.

In an attempt to make the conditions for the analysis clearer I will narrow the alternatives down to a dichotomy. I will by no means argue for such a simplification of the democratic discussion in general, but in my specific case this will clarify the argumentation to come. My democratic dichotomy will contain the terms *formal democracy* and *substantive democracy* based on democratic values.

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[7] I will get back to the discussion on these values under 3.4.

Formal democracy will in this context comprise a system based on electoral and procedural mechanisms, and effective institutions for decision-making. Contributors to such a system would typically be Schumpeter, Weber, Dahl/pluralists and the New Right. Simultaneously I will stress that I do not regard these contributors' models as completely in accordance with each other. I only find some similar trends on the issue of describing democracy.

Likewise I base the substantive democracy-perspective on a wish to define democracy as a broader model of society, most importantly based on real popular influence and respecting the values of popular sovereignty, freedom and equality. I have linked this view to the critique of formal democracy, defining this perspective as more focused on actual fulfilment of the democratic values in society in general. A Marxist view is on some issues in accordance with this perspective, but most dominantly the New Left argues in this direction. However, I do not view this dichotomy as strictly Western. I believe the principles in use are general, with possibility to work in various societies.

In addition, many of the empirical models can be criticized because they are based on contemporary societies. These thoughts and methods are not necessarily adaptable to different societies, and accordingly they may be inadequate as theoretical 'truths'. In this critique it is easy to draw attention to the role of Christianity and its influence on the development of democratic thinking. Religion has been of great concern for many of the theorists. Their conclusions have been based upon concrete historical events, such as the economic abuse by the medieval churches, along with other adjustments to the specific Christian religion. Have these influences from Western societies and Christianity made democracy inaccessible to societies with other religions? The answer to this question will probably vary according to who you ask and upon which principles they base their analysis. I believe that the central issue when discussing Islamic societies and democracy is to find out what place religion may have in politics without violating the most important democratic principles.

3.2 The question of Religion

When following the development of the democratic models treated earlier in this chapter, there is a clear tendency of secularisation in politics. In addition, scholars of the mid-twentieth century predicted that modernization[8] would lead to a decline of religion in public life (Sisk 1992:3). Apparently the historical development of politics did not fulfil this prediction. In most parts of Western Europe religion is not a vital political issue, but in the USA religious issues are an important part of politics. In the Middle East, religion is used both as a means of opposition, and as a means to legitimate governments.

When discussing religion in relation to democracy it is important to establish why religion in the public sphere is seen as a problem. The overall consideration should be on democracy's most evident principles – freedom and equality. The question derived from this is whether the presence of religion in public politics violates the principles of freedom and equality. Many seem to promote secularism as the answer to the democratic challenges we see in regard to religion. But there is no agreed definition of secularism and the concept is used in different ways in different discussions. Hence, the different definitions of secularism may protect or violate in various ways the democratic principles.

In the following, the views of different scholars will be treated in regard to their position towards secularism's place in liberal democracies. I will use the classifications of Charles Taylor as a departing point, and use this classification when discussing the other scholars.

3.2.1 Secularism

Charles Taylor argues that secularism is by most seen as when the state distances itself from the established religions, or when the state is considered neutral between religions (Taylor 1998:31). However, there are more to secularism. First, secularism is acknowledged as a product of Christian civilization because of its evolving in

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[8] Modernization in this context is meant to be the result or a 'state' in which society will be, after the industrial revolution, urbanization, interdependence in world economic relations and the revolution of communications.

Western history. This has made many non-Western countries reluctant to approve secularism as a universal idea (Taylor 1998:31). Many Muslims tend to see secularism as an alien form which should not be imposed on their culture. To the extreme, secularism has been looked upon as a continuation of the crusades (Taylor 1998:31). Taylor acknowledges that secularism has Christian roots, but he sees no reason to limit its application to post-Christian societies.

Taylor believes that secularism is required for democracy in religiously diverse societies (Taylor 1998:46). He argues the need of a sort of common identification among people to achieve a successful democracy (Taylor 1998:44). This patriotism should help the citizens to identify with the polity and ensure that the people are "willing to give of oneself for its sake" (Taylor 1998:44). This common identification should not derive from religion; at least this goes for religiously diverse societies. If there is no secularisation in politics and religion is used as a legitimate identification (basis) towards the state, the problem with minority groups will rise. The religious majority will be able to impose their will on the minorities resulting in lack of respect and trust in the state from the unheard minorities (Taylor 1998:45-46).

Taylor operates with three different approaches to secularisation: the common ground strategy, the independent political ethic, and the overlapping consensus. These approaches differ in their basis for secularisation and according to Taylor this affects the outcome or their ability to work. It is in their basis or argumentation for secularisation that Taylor finds evidence for why secularisation may work in non-Christian societies.

The common ground strategy aims at establishing a certain ethic of peaceful coexistence and political order. This is based on doctrines common to all Christian sects or even all who believe in the existence of God (Taylor 1998:33). "The goal is not to make religion less relevant to public life and policy, but to prevent the state from backing one confession rather than another" (Taylor 1998:35). The direction that Taylor calls the independent political ethic, suggests that people are to abstract themselves from their religious beliefs for purposes of a political morality (Taylor 1998:34). The people should make an independent ground their basis for living

together. This is in line with Hobbes who says that religion is irrelevant to the public sphere. "In a private realm, the believer can and must do what conscience demands, but he commits no sin in respecting publically-established forms and ceremonies" (Taylor 1998:34). In this sense, the independent ethic-logic can "lead to the extrusion of religion altogether from the public domain" (Taylor 1998:35). This is in contrast to the common ground strategy which has no goal or whish to make religion less relevant to public life and politics (Taylor 1998:35). Taylor argues that while the common ground theory must be rejected because it assumes that the citizens share some religious foundation, the independent ethic trusts that the people share a non-religious ground which according to Taylor is both unrealistic and dangerous in the sense that it may lead to the tyrannical attempt to impose some people's philosophies on others (Taylor 1998:37-38) To Taylor the overlapping consensus is the only approach that recognises that there will be no agreed basis (Taylor 1998:38). The overlapping consensus aims only at acceptance for certain political principles, but rules out the possibility of agreement on the basis for these principles. The respect of diversity in society and in peoples understanding is considered important (Taylor 1998:38). By rejecting the first approach on the basis of a common Christian ground and by placing the independent ethic approach as impossible to use, Taylor bases his argumentation for the use of secularism in non-Christian societies on the use of the overlapping consensus approach.

Taylor's overlapping consensus draws heavily on Rawls' thinking. Convergence is needed and should result in a set of politico-ethical principles and goods. A charter of rights must bee included with connection to citizenship (Taylor 1998:48). The political ethic will be a democratic one securing popular sovereignty as the basis for legitimacy. Political freedom will further be a valued principle. The core understanding of the overlapping consensus is that there are more than one set of valid reasons for signing on to it (Taylor 1998:49). "We converge on some political principles, but not on our background reasons for endorsing them" (Taylor 1998:51). Taylor gives the example of 'the right to life', meaning a set of rights guaranteeing against arbitrary arrest of punishment and the right of free exercise. These rights can

be argued for from an Enlightenment-inspired perspective of the dignity of human beings as rational agents. In contrast, these rights will by a Christian viewpoint be based on the thought that humans are made in the image of God (and you should not destroy what God wants). A Buddhist would probably argue for these rights out of an ethical demand for non-violence (Taylor 1998:49). The conclusion must be that there is convergence on respecting the integrity and freedom of human beings, in spite of diverging underlying reasons for this respect. But to distinguish the agreed ethic from the underlying reasons may not always be easy. The problem lies in the implementation of these rights. The same rights may be used differently when set against the background of these views. Interpretation will be a problem when there are several such backgrounds (Taylor 1998:50). The abortion debates in some Western societies make a good example of the problem with interpretation. Taylor is convinced that societies applying the overlapping consensus will experience this conflict more often (Taylor 1998:50). To make compromises between two or more views on the political arena should according to Taylor be expected, and considered normal.

Rawls' understanding was that people could agree on acting together on some basis, but they did not see this as morally binding. Taylor disagrees with this understanding, arguing that overlapping consensus will hold if we feel morally bound to the convergent principles (Taylor 1998:51). Rawls further writes about the converging on justice as guides for action, but he also adds the logical explanation of these principles. According to Taylor, this attempt to explain the converging principles has nothing to do with the model of overlapping consensus. The whole point here is exactly to distance oneself from the underlying justification of the principles (Taylor 1998:52). He sums up his view with the slogan: "Let people subscribe for whatever reasons they find compelling, only let them subscribe" (Taylor 1998:52).

A paradox is that the single background justification will no longer work for secularism itself. The essence of secularism lies in the principles of equality and inclusion (Taylor 1998:52). This requires a sort of distance between state and religious institutions, but there is no single formula on how to do this or to what extent they need to be separated. In regard to state funding of religious schools "one

may decide that separation forbids the funding of confessional schools out of taxes" (Taylor 1998:52). Still, another option may be to give economically support to all of these schools on a broad and fair basis. "To insist on one formula, as the only one consistent with 'liberal' principles is precisely to erect one background justification as supreme, and binding on all, thus violating the essential point of overlapping consensus"(Taylor 1998:52). According to Taylor, there need to be some sort of separation between state and 'church' on the institutional level. Still, he opens for religious background argumentation when deciding political matters. The important point is that the citizens agree on some principles regarding political work.

Many seem to make secularism a prerequisite for democracy. Michael Walzer is among these. He writes in *Pluralism, Justice and Equality* that "Democratic citizenship is not available where there is no secular state…" (Walzer 1995:288). Walzer sees liberalism as "a certain way of drawing the map of the social and political world" (Walzer 1984:315). To set up *walls* between different spheres is according to Walzer the core of liberalism. The most famous of these walls is the one separating church and state. The aim is to create a sphere of religious activity "into which politicians and bureaucrats may not intrude" (Walzer 1984:315). Walzer argues that the separation should encompass most institutions of society like church, universities, market, family etc. He believes that the art of separation is both morally and politically necessary "adaptations to the complexities of modern life" (Walzer 1984: 319). According to Walzer, a modern society enjoys freedom and equality when "success in one institutional setting isn't convertible into success in another" (Walzer 1984:321). Walzer's view may be considered as an independent ethic approach. Even though he believes in the protection of religion from the state and vice versa, his main point is that religion should be kept away from politics. He writes that churches are for instance the result of agreements among individuals. Walzer do not believe that religious freedom, as he sees it in a separation view, is a character of Judeo-Christian religiosity (Walzer 1984:324). The state's relation to the church in a separated society is as "the builder and the guardian of the walls", protecting the church from tyrannical interference (Walzer 1984:327).

In the book *Religion in the public square* Robert Audi and Nicholas Wolterstorff present the views they consider the most important in the democratic debate on religion and politics. Audi discusses the liberal position which in his view calls for the separation of religion and politics, while Wolterstorff argues from a more theologically oriented position that religion is indispensable to the vitality of pluralistic democracy (Audi&Wolterstorff 1997:ix).

Audi's position is that a liberal democracy must protect religious liberty. Additionally, the government in a liberal democracy must avoid the promotion of any particular religion. These arguments justify, according to Audi, the separation of church and state (Audi 1997:2). In any full-blooded liberal version of the separation view, he argues, there are three basic principles:

In the liberitarian principle the state must permit the practice of any religion. According to the equalitarian principle, the state may not give preference to one religion over another.

The neutrality principle argues that the state should neither favour or disfavour religion. This goes both between religions and between religious and non-religious. In defending the libertarian principle Audi states that freedom is required for democracy. Hence, a free and democratic society could use a set of framework securing religious liberty. Audi suggests this could be:

1) Freedom of religious belief in that no one, including the state, can forcibly inculcating religious beliefs in the general population (Audi 1997:4).

2) Freedom of worship enhancing the right of peaceable religious assembly and prayers (Audi 1997:4).

3) Freedom to engage in the rites and rituals of one's religion, unless these activities violate certain basic moral rights (Audi 1997:5).

Audi argues that the equalitarian principle is needed to protect citizens against government discrimination (Audi 1997:6). If a government tends to favour one religion in particular, people may feel pressured to do the same or limit their practice of their true religion. The state's preference of one religion over another may result in different opportunities for the citizens to exercise political power. This preference

may also lead to the ratification of certain laws that is based upon one particular religion (Audi 1997:6)

The neutrality principle is meant to protect especially the non-religious. Audi lists several practices by the state that can give preferences to religious people. Among these are: mandatory prayer sessions in public schools, religious exemptions from combat duty, religious eligibility requirements for adopting children, preference in filling government posts, and statutory roles for religious institutions or their representatives in government (Audi 1997:6-7). These practices may all lead to favour religious versus non-religious people.

According to Audi, 3 problems can arise in such a situation:

In societies where there is a majority of some religion this is likely to dominate legislation and policy affecting religion. Secondly, religious disagreements are likely to polarize the government more than secular issues. And finally, there is a danger of getting into a situation where the government would like to influence the church or other religious communities. This can be done by setting criteria as for what counts as being religious and soon groups will try to fill these criteria to establish advantages or financial support (Audi 1997:8). To Audi the separation should encompass "both the level of church and state and the political conduct of individuals" (Audi&Wolterstorff 1997:ix). It would be tempting to accuse Audi of being a supporter of the common ground approach since he is occupied with the problems that arise when the state is backing one religion on the dispense of others. But Audi is clear in his concern regarding the equality of non-religious and this places him closer to the independent political ethic characteristic. Further, he underlines the indispensable role of secular reasoning as the basis for democratic decisions (Audi 1997b:168). This can easily be compared with Taylor's characteristic of independent political ethic.

3.2.2 Other possibilities

Wolterstorff argues that "religion and politics should not be separated either at the church-state level or in political interactions among individuals" (Audi&Wolterstorff 1997:x). The departing point of Wolterstorff's argumentation is the notion made by many liberal democracy theorists that "a good citizen of a liberal democracy will

refrain from allowing religious reasons to be determinative when deciding and debating political issues of certain sorts" (Wolterstorff 1997:69). Wolterstorff, however, questions this notion as a requirement in political debate in a liberal democracy. According to Wolterstorff, liberal democracy is when governance are able to secure "equal protection under law for all people, equal freedom under law for all citizens, and neutrality on the part of the state with respect to the diversity of religious and comprehensive perspectives" (Wolterstorff 1997:70). Additionally, this system of law rests upon the citizens' right to equal voice, often exercised by voting for office. Wolterstorff sees this system of liberal democracy as an ideal type that is impossible to live up to. Consequently, societies can only approach this ideal type (Wolterstorff 1997:70).

Wolterstorff refers to *the liberal position* as his opponent. The liberal position sees the goal of political action as justice. Additionally, people's religious conviction are not to be the base of their opinions. People are to find principles derived from an independent source when deciding in politics (Wolterstorff 1997:73). The different liberal positions are thus united in the principle of a restraint on the use of religious reasons in deciding upon political issues (Wolterstorff 1997:75). Wolterstorff finds these restraints as paradoxical as they violate against the principle of equal freedom (Wolterstorff 1997:77). To Wolterstorff the liberal position is not realistic. It is not possible to control people's reasons for taking a specific position in politics. You can not force them to use independent sources, and it is impossible to define what these sources are (Wolterstorff 1997:111).

Wolterstorff's alternative to the liberal position is *the consocial position*. This is according to Wolterstorff in harmony with the idea of liberal democracy (Wolterstorff 1997:81). The consocial position agrees with the liberal position in that the goal of political discussion and action is political justice (Wolterstorff 1997:115). Still, the consocial position rejects the need of an independent source and wants no moral restraints on the use of religious reasons. Second, the consocial position interprets the neutrality requirement as the need of the state to be *impartial* when it comes to religion. It is not necessary to separate religion from politics (Wolterstorff 1997:115). He believes that there is a good chance for discrimination if religion is

separated from the state. For instance, if the state does not support religious schools this would be discriminating to those who want their children to go to these schools. Wolterstorff believes the secular state is partial with the non-religious schools in this matter, and the only way of being impartial is to support all schools no matter which/what religion or principles that they are based upon. To Wolterstorff it is clear that the separation principle is not compatible with the principle of equal freedom when it comes to religion (Wolterstorff 1997:115-116).

When comparing Wolterstorff's consocial position with the classifications of Charles Taylor there are some resemblance with the overlapping consensus. Wolterstorff agrees with Taylor in that it is impossible to force people to separate from their convictions and use independent sources or ethics. You can not really make people change their set of thinking and reasoning. Obviously Wolterstorff is occupied with the destiny of the different religious communities. He is genuinely concerned of the religious being discriminated in a secular system. In contrast, Taylor is in favour of a secular system. While opening for other solutions as to what degree religion and politics should be separated, Taylor is never in support of a total dissolving of the separation of political and religious institutions. In comparing to Taylor's model, Wolterstorff is operating with a false dichotomy. He believes that either there is secularism as in Audi's understanding, both institutional and in political debate, or there is no secularism at all. Taylor on the contrary overcame this contradiction when he launched his model. He argues for institutional separation of state and religion while permitting and sustaining people's right to use any religious argumentation to agree on politics.

Both Audi and Wolterstorff have used the USA as the basis for their discussions. The USA is clearly a heterogeneous society, this goes even for religion. The argumentation is heavily based on this experience or the assumption that the different religions are strongly represented in society. Taylor's article is 'neutral', but it was presented in a book about India – which must be considered a strongly religious and diverse society. Many would agree with the notion that a state that supports or takes side with only one religion in a religiously divided society is not ideal. The risk of

violating the religious freedom of the people as well as treating people unequally on the basis of their religious conviction is clearly present in such a state. The question that needs to be posed is whether this argumentation works when dealing with religiously homogenous states. Will a population that is close to homogeneous in the matter of religion feel that their rights of freedom and equal treatment are violated? Taylor stresses that he is writing about religiously diverse societies when he is arguing for secular solutions. Unfortunately he is not following up how he sees more homogenous societies in this relation. But the very fact that he is stressing that his thoughts concerns religiously diverse societies (Taylor 1998:46, 53) gives us a hint that he might see things differently in homogenous societies. Audi admits that the 'prohibition' of a government-established religion is not a requirement for every democratic system. In the Western parts of Europe the religion of the state is often proclaimed in a constitution (Audi 1997:2). No-one would argue that these countries are not proper democracies because they have a 'state religion'. It may be useful to consider each democracy's population, and in many countries the population is more or less homogenous in the question of religion. Would state-imposed religion then be violating the principles of freedom and equality? Evidently this homogenity is not absolute. Hence, the possibility that some groups might feel that their rights are being violated by the state is present. This is why a country with a proclaimed religion needs to protect, by law, those who do not share this religion's convictions. As mentioned earlier Michael Walzer supports the idea that secularism is a requirement for democracy. At the same time he sees the possibility of a morally just system in so-called religious states. "Religious identity replaces citizenship, and while this identity has its own inclusiveness (it rules out considerations of race, ethnicity, and class) the borders it establishes are different from those of the state" (Walzer 1995:288). To make a system like this *just* would be possible if autonomy were granted all the other religious communities, he argues. Walzer points out that reciprocity has been fairly successful in Muslim states in the past. The Jewish communities of medieval Islam achieved autonomy, and in the Ottoman Empire the *millet system* secured other religious communities (Walzer 1995:289). The millet system was based on Islamic law which defines Christians and Jews as 'protected

people' because Islam believes these three religions share the same God (Vikør 1993:188). The system allowed the different religious minorities to set up their own courts regulating family- and religious laws (Vikør 1993:188-189). A system with such protection of the different religions will in some ways meet the requests for equality and freedom to the people. But if this is enough is hard to say.

Another dilemma that will rise in these so-called religious homogeneous societies is to what extent people are practicing their religion. Obviously we will find a split within every religious society between those who consider themselves just belonging to a particular religion, and those who are fully practicing this religion at every level. In fact, the difference between people belonging to the same religion may be huge in for instance how they interpret and practice their religion. In my opinion, there are no homogeneous societies today. This makes it possible to use Taylor's overlapping consensus in every society. By treating the different degrees of religiosity within a so-called religiously homogeneous society the same way as in religious diverse societies, it would be possible to find compromises and establish mutual respect between the different standings.

3.3 Islamism and Democracy – the discourse.

There has in recent years been a debate on the compatibility of Islam and democracy. Samuel Huntington gave this discussion a boost when he wrote "The Clash of Civilizations?" in 1993. Much of the debate since then has been on the futility of using such general terms as both Islam and democracy. The discourse reflects the difference in use of these concepts as well as a massive response to Huntington from scholars specialising in Islamic thought and society. I will in the following focus on Islamism and democracy.

Huntington argues in *The Clash of Civilizations?* that "the fundamental source of conflict in this new world will not be primarily ideological or primarily economic. The great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural" (Huntington 1993:22). He further explains that "a civilization is thus the highest cultural grouping of people and the broadest level of cultural identity people

have short of that which distinguishes humans from other species" (Huntington 1993:24). As Huntington sees the political conflict potential, it is the Islamic civilisation and the West that are most likely to clash. These civilisations have already been in conflict for 1300 years and that is not likely to decline (Huntington 1993:31-32). According to Huntington, these differences in civilisations will also have an impact on democratisation. "Modern democratic government originated in the West" (Huntington 1993:41). "Western ideas of individualism, liberalism, constitutionalism, human rights, equality, liberty, the rule of law, democracy, free markets, the separation of church and state, often have little resonance in Islamic, Confucian, Japanese, Hindu, Buddhist or Orthodox cultures" (Huntington 1993:40). Consequently, Huntington makes democracy dependent on certain cultural prerequisites. Huntington's theories have been lively debated and criticised.

In contrast to Huntington, Robert W. Hefner is convinced that democracy can evolve in different cultures. He claims that "the social conditions of democracy's possibility" is increasingly important to comparable politics (Hefner 1998a:5). There is "a heightened awareness of the multicultural nature of the contemporary world, and the need to attend to this pluralism when considering democracy's prospects" (Hefner 1998a:5). Hefner asks: "Can ideas of human rights and democratic participation take hold in cultures whose ideas of personhood are premised on values other than those of liberal individualism?" (Hefner 1998a:5). Hefner stresses civil society as a social prerequisite of plural democracy (Hefner 1998a:5). Civil society is an arena of clubs, associations, unions etc that is beyond the family and outside the state. "This tissue of social ties, civil theorists assume, mediates between the household and the state so as to provide citizens opportunities for learning democratic habits of free assembly, non-coercive dialogue, and socioeconomic initiative"(Hefner 1998a:6). Instead of liberal democracy Hefner has chosen to use the expression *democratic civility* which derives from Enlightenment experiences in civility (Hefner 1998a:9). Democratic civility is explained with emphasis on values such as equality, freedom and tolerance. He claims that even though the discussion on democratic civility is global there is no unitary meaning and practice of the concept (Hefner 1998b:317). Hefner points out

that there have been several examples of good democratic experiences in non-western civilisations and there are also examples on non-working democracies in Western civilisation (Hefner 2000:4-5). It all depends on local variations. On different levels strong local organisation has been found in various cultures. Hefner mentions Indonesia as an example where Muslims have a history of intellectual and organisational pluralism (Hefner 1998a:21). Muslims in Indonesia have wide experience with the type of organising we refer to as civil society. The Dutch colonial power held Islam strictly separated from the state. This helped to create an Islamic tradition of grass-roots association and civic independence within the country. Hefner views it as a mistake "to take liberal philosophy as the best guide to the values of civil-democratic practice" (Hefner 1998a:25). He argues that in both USA and Europe[9], "civil democrats have struck different balances between individual and groups rights, and among the triplicate values of equality, freedom and tolerance" (Hefner 1998a:25)

By questioning liberal individualism, as the only cultural possibility where human rights can take hold, and by thinking differently about the place and possible benefits of public religion, the conditions of democracy's cross-cultural possibility has become an interesting field of study, he argues (Hefner 2000:5).

John L. Esposito and John O. Voll have written numerous books and articles on the religious resurgence in the Muslim world. In their joint work, *Islam and Democracy*, they try to explain and relate the two currently strongest trends: islamization and democratization. Esposito and Voll find the potential democratic resources of the Islamic tradition and the ability of the new Islamic movements to meet the demands of Islamic authenticity and popular democratic participation, the most important issues within this context (Esposito & Voll 1996:7). Esposito and Voll are positive to democratization in the Muslim world. In that the democratic concept is highly contested among Western countries and scholars, Esposito and Voll believe that democratization is not to be looked upon as a single model for Westerners to export

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[9] Especially the pillar-system of the Netherlands

(Espositio & Voll 1996:17). They criticize the West, and especially USA, for giving this impression when discussing global democratization. Esposito and Voll make Marx an example of alternatively Western democratic thinking (Espositio & Voll 1996:17). They do not take a stand whether they support the Marxist view of democracy, but they use it to contest the notion of a single Western model of liberal democracy. According to the authors, it is much more useful to see the possibilities for societies with other historical and cultural heritage to adopt their own democratic version on the basis of their own symbols and traditions. Hence, they are in strong opposition to Huntington who concluded that the cultural conditions in Islam made it impossible to develop democracy in these societies. Esposito and Voll point out that the development of democracy in the West involved combinations of previous anti-democratic institutions along with the newer democratic ones. After some time Western societies reconceptualized their older institutions in that they became more democratic while still holding on to the historical names (Esposito & Voll 1996:22). Esposito and Voll underline the importance of the Islamic principles of *Tawheed* (Unity of God), *Risalat* (Prophethood) and *Khilafat* (Caliphate) (Esposito & Voll 1996:23). The reconceptualization of these concepts are not supported by a united Muslim leadership, but according to Esposito and Voll they are essential for understanding the foundations of democratisation in the Muslim world (Esposito & Voll 1996:23). In short, the principle of *Tawheed* is normally understood in political philosophy as "there can be only one sovereign and that is God" (Esposito & Voll 1996:23). Hence, many Islamists seem to take different positions in this matter. Some reject democracy on the basis of *Tawheed* while others want to slightly reframe democracy in accordance with this principle (Esposito & Voll 1996:23). Interestingly, this principle has been evolved further, by Islamic democrats, to represent equality within the political system because all humans are equal before God (Esposito & Voll 1996:25). *Khilafat* has been reconceptualized in the same way by removing the emphasis from the historically monarchical leader to now make this concept one of representation (Esposito & Voll 1996:26). In addition, Islamic democracy may be seen as supporting the Islamic concepts of shura (consultation), ijma (consensus) and ijtihad (independent interpretive judgement) (Esposito & Voll 1996:27). This

redefinition has been vital in the argumentation of Islamists and Islamic revisionists who both support the building of an Islamic democracy. It is my impression that Esposito and Voll share this belief in an Islamic democracy based on Islamic culture, history and familiar Islamic institutions. Esposito and Voll do not stress the issue of religion any further than mentioning the non-existing tradition of any 'church-body'. The ulama (learned scholars of faith), the different schools of Islamic law, and the mystic brotherhoods have all developed as autonomous bodies, separated from the state, and sometimes in conflict with the state (Esposito & Voll 1996:4). This clarification from Esposito and Voll could be interpreted as acceptance of the institutional division of religion and state. Their avoidance of secularist discussion may on the other hand indicate that they do not view the separation of religion and politics, as in discussions and underlying motives, as crucial for democracy. Without Esposito and Voll actually confirming this stand I would suggest that their view may be seen in line with Taylor's overlapping consensus.

Khurshid Ahmad is Professor at the Institute of Policy Studies in Islamabad, but he is also a Pakistani Islamist leader. He disputes the idea of a Western monolithic model for democracy. According to Ahmad, Western democracy is a contested phenomenon that accordingly is not realistic to export to the Muslim world and Third world countries in general (Ahmad 2000:2). Ahmad divides between what he sees as the two major dimensions of democracy; *philosophical roots*, and *operational mechanisms*. The philosophical roots comprise "the concept of popular sovereignty and consequent principle of legitimacy based exclusively on popular support" (Ahmad 2000:2). Ahmad sees this as a denial of the existence of eternal religious guidance (Ahmad 2000:3). According to Ahmad, an Islamic political system opposes the concept of the sovereignty of the people in that it contradicts their conviction of God as the 'Supreme Law-Giver' (Ahmad 2000:14). Ahmad strongly opposes secularism which he finds in conflict with Islam. The operational mechanisms of democracy on the other hand include "ensuring people's participation in governance in order to discern the will of the people as to the choice of rulers as well of policies and programs" (Ahmad 2000:2). This dimension of democracy is in line with

Ahmad's argumentation. He sees the principles of justice ('adl) and consultation (shura), both deeply anchored in Islamic thought, as equal with the substance of the operational mechanisms (Ahmad 2000:2). Through the position of God's vicegerent (khalifa), the people[10] are trusted to run their worldly affairs as long as this is exercised in accordance with the Shari'a (Ahmad 2000:8). This may be compared to some of the thoughts of Hayek and the New Right that promote a 'Legal Democracy' model where legislation limits the scope of state action (Held 1996:258-259). Ahmad can be read as portraying a system where the Islamic law Shari'a is limiting or working as guidance for state policy. Ahmad is quite reluctant in giving Western democratic systems recognition, especially on behalf of the Islamic model. Still, Ahmad goes as far as giving the Western democracies credit for developing mechanisms as the multi-party system, various electoral systems, the separation of the judiciary and the executive institutions etc (Ahmad 2000:4). In highlighting various democratic mechanisms as useful, Ahmad finds himself in a position close to Weber and Schumpeter's conception of formal democracy. It seems like Ahmad agrees with Huntington in that Western democracies will not work in Islamic societies. But Ahmad believes that there is a difference between Western democracy and democracy in general. He actually goes as far as arguing that many democratic principles may stem from Islamic societies. This view is obviously in contrast to Huntington's argumentation.

There can be no doubt that Huntington stirred up a lot of passion with his article *The clash of Civilizations*. To cover the whole debate has not been my intention. Nevertheless, I have tried to show some of the different approaches. There are voices that believe the Islamists are capable of establishing democracy. Many see the importance in that democracy in the Islamic world needs to be based on Islamic values and concepts. Others go as far as accusing the Western understanding of democracy as narrow and in need of influences from for instance the Islamic world.

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[10] According to Ahmad this comprises all Muslim men and women.

In spite of the differences within this discussion, there seem to be a lot of faith in the compatibility of Islamism and democracy.

3.4 Concluding remarks

In the discussion in 3.1 I ended up with a dichotomy of democracy: formal democracy vs. substantive democracy based on democratic values. This was done for the purpose of simplifying the arguments because of the analysis to come. I intend by no means to justify this dichotomy as a general solution when dealing with democracy.

Still, substantive democracy is not very clear. Which democratic values one applies as a basis for such a model will differ. As seen in 3.3 these values are a matter of interpretation. Ahmad rejects such a model because he believes it comprises the principles of absolute popular sovereignty and secularisation. Ahmad's view on Islamism can not go along with such principles in that he holds God as the sole sovereign. Likewise, Hefner talks of the values of equality, freedom and tolerance that he views as important components of such a model.

In general, I would consider the main democratic principles of popular sovereignty, freedom and equality to be comprised in such a model. The point her being that the emphasis on the different values would vary according to as Østerud says (1995:169) what one considers to bee a good society.

To sum it up: this perspective conditions that one view democracy as a model for society where the population obtains influence, and decisions are based on democratic values. The various models will differ on emphasising these values, but popular sovereignty, freedom and equality would probably work as a common platform.

Hence, democracy has been split into a dichotomy:

Democracy 1: The system/ideology represents a formal democracy if it takes in use electoral, procedural and institutional mechanisms that are democratically agreed upon.

Democracy 2: The system/ideology represents a substantive democracy if it allows for real popular influence, based upon the principles of popular sovereignty, freedom and equality.

The substantive democracy would not exclude the tools and mechanisms of Democracy 1. Instead, it comprises a more extensive model that takes into consideration the actual influence of the people.

The situation is additionally complicated when the question of religion is added to the picture. Religion will have an effect on the dichotomy.

For the Democracy 1 variable, the question of religion is not hindering a democratic system as long as the procedures and institutional mechanisms are being held according to the popular will.

As for the substantive democracy, the question of religion needs to be linked to the principles in question. If for instance religious influence is adjusted to these principles this influence should not cause a problem for the democratic conduct. However, as seen during the discussion in 3.2 the principles of freedom and equality sometimes contradict each other. The influences of religion can be seen as a matter of defending people's freedom. Simultaneously, this freedom to argue and mix religious views in politics can violate the principle of equality if this policy is being imposed on people with other or no religious preferences. Accordingly, one has to check how the religious influences in such a system relate to the democratic values.

If religion restricts these principles it can not be accepted as an integrated part of such a democracy.

In 3.3 I looked into the discussion on Islamism and democracy in general, referring to the views of some scholars on this field of study. Obviously I could have referred to many more, but due to the limited scope of this study I had to focus on a restricted number. When comparing the argumentation and stands of the scholars with my democracy dichotomy, I find that Huntington is rejecting the coexistence of Islam with both Democracy 1 and Democracy 2. Ahmad is dismissing the possibility of a functioning Democracy 2 within an Islamist system, but he is however willing to

embrace Democracy 1. Through a gradual shift of meaning or content of the traditional Islamic institutions, Esposito and Voll are certain of the possibility for the mixing of Islamism and Democracy 1. I find their stand on the mixing with Democracy 2 unclear. Hefner, however, is clear in his backing of a Democracy 2 system within Islam. He argues for the importance of civil society that brings democratic civility. He views many independent Islamist groups as part of this civil society. Hopefully these contributions will help placing the views on democracy discussed during the analysis to come.

4. The Emergence of an Islamist Movement in Tunisia.

"The history of the contemporary Islamic movement in independent Tunisia is basically that of the movement now known as En-Nahda" (Hamdi 1998:7). First founded in 1970 as al-Jamâ'a al-Islâmiyya (The Islamic Group) the same movement was renamed to Harakat al-Ittijâh al-Islâmî (The Islamic Trend Movement) in 1981. Finally, the name was changed to the current Harakat al-Nahda (The Renaissance Movement/En-Nahda) in 1988, removing religious connections from the name after press from the government. Despite a couple of resigns where new groups were founded, the main core of members has remained loyal to En-Nahda making it the main oppositional force in Tunisia (Hamdi 1998:7).

In this chapter I will try to give a description of the emergence of En-Nahda. First I will focus on the Tunisian historical background, which is essential to the rise of the Islamist organisation. Then I will try to cover the actual evolvement of the organisation and comment on this with reference to explaining factors analysed in Chapter 2.

4.1 Brief historical background

The original inhabitants of Tunisia were Berbers. In the year of 670, Arabs from today's Egypt sent out armies that penetrated the Maghreb (Borowiec 1998:12). The Arabs settled down and the original inhabitants were undergoing a process of Islamisation and Arabisation.

In 1702 a rebellion by Hussein bin Ali against the Ottomans installed a dynasty of Beys[11] who lasted until 1957 (Ayubi 1995:119, Borowiec 1998:14). The Bey ruled rather autonomously but some taxes were claimed from the Ottoman Sultan in Turkey (Murphy 1999:43).

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[11] A sort of monarchy

During the 19th century the European struggle for influence in North Africa grew stronger (Borowiec 1998:15). As a result, in 1883 Tunisia officially became a French protectorate. The Beydom was reduced to a symbolic role (Murphy 1999:43). Nationalist forces grew stronger at the beginning of the 20th century, first with the Young Tunisians and then with the Destour and finally the Neo-Destour party. After World War II the French government relaxed political restrictions on Tunisia and the Neo-Destour party negotiated a gradual transfer of political power. As an alternative to civil war the new French proposals for internal autonomy were accepted in 1954 and two years later Habib Bourguiba, a charismatic leader of the Neo-Destour, led a delegation to Paris to negotiate independence (Murphy 1999:49). Independence was recognised on March 20, 1956.

4.2 The political situation in independent Tunisia, 1956-1970

The Neo-Destour won the following election and Bourguiba was appointed Prime Minister in April the same year (Murphy 1999:49).

The Constituent Assembly, where all members sympathised with the Neo-Destour, decided in July 1957 to abolish the system of Beys. Tunisia became a republic and Bourguiba was elected President for a five-year term (Borowiec 1998:25, Murphy 1999:49). Two years later the new National Assembly changed the constitution making the Neo-Destour "solely responsible for rule and order in the country" (Murphy 1999:50). Tunisia was now a one-party state, though the party was not entirely monolithic. The Neo-Destour was facing the typical problems of nationalist movements in post-independent time. Bourguiba and his party had led a struggle for independence, but further ideological foundations were lacking (Murphy 1999:50). Seeing the importance of having the Tunisian General Workers' Union (UGTT) on his side, President Bourguiba made the union-man Ben Salah minister in 1957. Ben Salah convinced the President of the benefits of putting Tunisia on a socialist path of development. As Secretary of State for Planning and Finances from 1961, Ben Salah was in charge of the socialist project with wide authority (Hamdi 1998:7-8). Agricultural collectivisation became the flagship and farmers had to give up their land and go to work for the co-operatives (Hamdi 1998:9, Murphy 1999:55).

Corruption and inefficiency became a huge problem in the co-operatives, and public outcries increased. Bourguiba saw that the socialist experiment was threatening not only the country's stability and prosperity, but also his own position as leader (Hamdi 1998:9-10). Other party-members grew jealous of Ben Salah's increasing influence (Murphy 1999:55) and in 1969 Bourguiba dismissed and later arrested the Secretary of State for Planning and Finances, turning Ben Salah into a scapegoat for the government's failed economic policies.

From the very beginning, Bourguiba led a policy of modernisation, decidedly pro-Western and secular (Esposito 1999:161). The religious reforms were radically affecting law, family life, education and personal religious practice (Hamdi 1998:13). Polygamy was banned, the Shari'a courts were abolished, the *hijab* (women's headscarf) were banned in some settings, Bourguiba encouraged the workers to break the fast of Ramadan and the Islamic university of Zeitouna was closed down (Esposito 1999:161, Hamdi 1998:13).

The reforms brought the structures of national religious life under government control. A powerless mufti was appointed and the ulama (religious scholars) were politically neutralised (Boulby 1988:591, Hamdi 1998:14). "For Bourguiba, Islam represented the past; the West was Tunisia's only hope for a modern future" (Esposito 1999:161).

A new educational system similar to the French was developed and all higher education was taught in French.

This educational system made people with Arab-Islamic upbringing feel alienated in their own country. For advanced studies taught in Arabic, they had to leave for countries in the Middle East.

People were getting frustrated by high unemployment rates and shortage of food during the tine after the collectivist project (Esposito 1999:162). The failure of Ben Salah's socialist program gave the impression that Bourguiba and his party was unable to offer a successful ideological framework for a workable model of development (Shahin 1997: 65).

Disappointment following the Arab defeat in the 6-days war in 1967, made people's faith in Arab nationalism decrease. This was the situation when the founding members of the Islamic group met in 1970.

4.3 The founding period, 1970-1979.

From the mid-60s the Zeitouna Mosque served as a gathering place for traditional scholars avoiding Bourguiba's secularisation policies (Shahin 1997:67). Some of these scholars held discussion circles and this was how the founding figures Rachid Ghannouchi, Abdelfattha Mourou and Ahmida Enneifer met (Hamdi 1998:16). According to Ghannouchi, they acted as a religious and cultural response to Bourguiba's anti-religious and pro-Western policies (Hamdi 1998:12). The political, social, economic and cultural backwardness of a Tunisian society, heavily influenced by the West, as well as its loss of identity and morals, called for a return to Islam (Esposito 1999:163).

The founding group had two levels of activity. They promoted conferences and gatherings in secondary schools and they organised lessons on Islam in the mosques. They were influenced by Jamâ'at al-Tablîgh, an Indian religious group, and used their method of missionary. At this time the movement was mainly concerned with religious issues; the basics of Islam, but also Islamic history and identity (Hamdi 1998:19-20). They joined the government-supported Association for the Safeguarding of the Holy Quran, which served as a cover for their organisation, but also contributed to spreading their thoughts (Hamdi 1998:19, Shahin 1997:72, Tamimi 2001:31). The Islamic Group's leaders started to publish the review al-Ma'rifa[12] (Knowledge) in 1972 (Shahin 1997:77). In 1973 the group was expelled from the Association for the Safeguarding of the Holy Quran, when the authorities had registered their high activities (Shahin 1997:72).

The group grew stronger during the seventies. Dreams of employment and prosperity among youth and villagers migrating to the cities seldom came true (Hamdi 1998:11). Tunisia, at this time, had a total unemployment rate of 25%. 60% of the Tunisian

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[12] Ma'rifa was published between 1972 and 1979.

population were under the age of 20 and they constituted the majority of those unemployed (Shahin 1997:75). Accordingly the Islamists had their major support among the disappointed youth.

The University became central in recruiting members, and a battlefield between the Marxists and the Islamists opened up on campus. As a result of these battles, the students sympathising with the Islamists found it necessary to address new social and political issues, to have an alternative answer to the Marxist agenda. In the end this led to a politicisation of the Islamic Group as a whole (Hamdi 1998:25-28).

The General strike in January 1978 further politicised the Islamists. The workers' union (UGTT) demonstrated together with the students against the government's policy of market economy, which they claimed made the workers and middle class poorer. The Islamists saw the need for social justice and the rights of workers and started to talk about an Islamic theory of development. The government, who used the military to quell the demonstrations, lost a large part of its support base among the workers to the Islamists the following period (Hamdi 1998:31-32).

Another incident that affected the Islamists support was the Iranian revolution. The Islamist movement in Tunisia was genuinely supportive of the revolution in Iran and spread their enthusiasm for it in several published articles in Al-Mujtama[13] (Hamdi 1998:33). Their support resulted in some clashes with the government, mainly oral disputes (Shahin 1997:83-84). At the same time the reference to a concrete example (Iran) where Islamism was put into practise made the whole movement optimistic, and the number of followers increased (Hamdi 1998:34).

4.4 Explaining the renaissance.

When comparing the emergence of MTI (later En-Nahda) with the explanatory factors discussed in chapter 2, there are several similarities between those general assumptions and the specific Tunisian situation. Guazzone's first factor, discussed under 2.1, is "the cultural contradiction produced by the kind of access to modernity to the Arab world". These problems with modernity are quite evident in the Tunisian

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[13] The Islamic movement's weekly newspaper, published from 1978-1980.

case. President Bourguiba had a strong wish to modernise (Esposito 1999:161). He softened the religious impact, believing the road to modernisation went through secularism. As Ghannouchi said (Hamdi 1998:12), they were acting as a response to the anti-religious and pro-Western policies of Bourguiba. Additionally, the influence of the Western values in general and the decision to use French language at the Universities in particular, contributed to alienate parts of the Tunisian population. This continuous removal from Arab and Muslim culture and identity would explain why many turned to the Islamists.

As for the discussion referred to under 2.1.1, whether this Islamic reaction is mainly caused by marginalisation of religion as Roy and Kepel argues, or if it is a fight over symbols representing familiar values and cultural heritage, is hard to say. There was a strong marginalisation of religion in Tunisia, and I believe The Islamic Group first reacted to this. But this reaction does not exclude the fact that identity issues, as this fight over symbols represents, became important during the evolvement of the movement. I personally believe that both explanations are likely to have an impact. Guazzone's second explanatory factor was "the crisis of efficiency and legitimacy of the political ideologies and systems established after independence" (Guazzone 1995:4)(evt 2.1). Since Bourguiba was a popular leading independence-figure there was little opposition when he seized power in 1956. But like Nasser in Egypt and other post-independence leaders, Bourguiba typically did not have strong preferences in politics. He tried different types of policies. When for instance the socialist experiment failed Bourguiba tried an 'open door'-policy with economic liberalisation. These shifts in policy showed that Bourguiba lacked ideological roots in politics, which clearly gave the President a legitimacy problem. Additionally, when the shifting policies did not work, and poverty and unemployment rates were continuously rising, the confidence in the government was in decline as the crisis of efficiency spread. With unemployment rates as high as 25% of the population, and these being mostly youth under the age of 20 (Shahin 1997:75), the Islamists had a huge potential. As seen, the Islamists grasped the opportunity. They entered the Universities where 'soon to be unemployed' students listened and joined in. Moreover, the Islamists got involved with the workers' union (UGTT) which

originally supported the President. During the demonstrations of 1978 the Islamists were defending the workers' rights, propagating for an Islamic policy of development. The government used the military to stop the demonstrations, and lost many supporters to the Islamists in the following period.

4.5 Turning political, 1979-

In 1979 the movement's support was wider than anyone had expected. The movement's journal al-Ma'rifa had increased from 6000 reviews in 1971 to 25000 reviews in 1979 (Boulby 1988:600). The leaders felt they had to reconsider their activity and called for a conference to discuss and decide on the movement's future (Hamdi 1998:34). 70 of the most prominent members attended and agreed upon a constitution for their secret association in August. Ghannouchi was elected president (Amir) and a detailed structure for the whole organisation was worked out.

Two incidents in the end of 1980 and the beginning of 1981 affected the policy of the secret association. In December 1980 two members were arrested. The association calculated that these members were tortured and that they would give away information to the police (Hamdi 1998:37). It was only a matter of time before the government and the police would know about the association and take action.

The other incident was the shift in government policy. The new Prime Minister Mzali was a political liberal. Mzali made Bourguiba open up for political pluralism in April 1981 (Murphy 1999:63). These events made the association move toward openness. It applied for official recognition as a political party in June 1981 with great expectations (Hamdi 1998:37-38).

The political openness did not last long. Already in the autumn of 1981 61 leaders of the MTI were arrested (Shahin 1997:87, Boulby 1988:609). MTI was not recognised as a political party; instead other opposition parties were tolerated. Still, these parties had to wait until 1983/1984 to be fully recognised, and then only after huge pressure from all oppositional groups (Murphy 1999:64).

The bad economic situation in Tunisia with heavy loans to the World Bank affected the whole country in this period. The World Bank demanded in 1983 Tunisia to cut state subsidies to obtain new loans. The government cut subsidies on wheat with the

result that prices on bread and pasta-products more than doubled (Tjomsland 2000:89). This led to 'bread-riots' in January 1984 in cities all over Tunisia (Hamdi 1998:47). The bread-riots cannot be seen as an Islamist initiative, but rather a popular response to the socio-economic situation (Krämer 1994:201). Nevertheless, the Islamists managed to turn this situation to their advantage; Islamist rhetoric was used in the demonstrations and the Islamist support were massive.

To calm the situation Prime Minister Mzali managed to convince the President to free most of the Islamists arrested in 1981 (Tjomsland 2000:89).

Political liberalisation was to some point achieved by extending the freedom of expression and association; human rights groups were registered and political parties legalised (Krämer 1994:201). The MTI and the Islamist journalists remained illegal, but they were given more space (Tjomsland 2000:89).

A. Hermassi suggests that the relaxed policy towards the Islamists was a tactical manoeuvre from the government (Hermassi 1995:107-108). In the period from 1984 to 1986 the Islamists were relatively free to do as they pleased. Prime Minister Mzali even arranged for meetings with MTI leaders (Boulby 1988:610). Mzali's idea was to neutralise the Islamists while undermining the UGTT (Hermassi 1995:107). The UGTT was clearly weakened, but the Islamists were far from neutralised.

The aging and increasingly senile President Bourguiba did not trust the MTI which by now was clearly the strongest oppositional force. Prime Minister Mzali was fired in 1986 and the Islamists were again put under heavy repression (Boulby 1988:610). In March 1987 the repression culminated in a major crack-down on MTI where hundreds were arrested the following months (Tjomsland 2000:93). The MTI was accused of taking violent action to obtain their goals. There had been some violent clashes and terror attacks on tourist hotels in Bourguiba's hometown Monastir. The possible connection between the MTI and the attackers was widely debated. The government and scholars as A. Hermassi[14] considered all Islamists to be the same. They accused them all for standing behind MTI with a wish to violently overthrow the Tunisian government.

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[14] A. Hermassi later became a Minister in Ben Ali's government and his objectivity is therefore questionable.

Other oppositional groups, different scholars, and MTI themselves have pointed out that the MTI leadership has continuously stressed the importance of achieving change through democratic measures. When there has been disagreement on this issue, members with anti-democratic attitudes have been asked to leave the organisation. During the Monastir bombing-trial several of the accused affirmed in court that they were not members of the MTI. The factual basis of the accusations was extremely dubious (Boulby 1988:611). The arrested MTI Islamists were accused of planning bombings as well as conspiring to overthrow the regime. Bourguiba asked for all of the imprisoned Islamists, that they would be sentenced to death. Executing the leading members of such a strong group, as the MTI now represented, would most likely turn those executed into martyrs and lead to a continuation of violent acts. Leaders of other oppositional parties defended the MTI and even other groups in the Arab world and European politicians got involved (Boulby 1988:612).

4.6 An opening?

When Prime Minister Ben Ali set forth a bloodless *coup d'etat* on November 7th 1987, most people were just relieved (Boulby 1988:613). He pointed out that Bourguiba had failed to implement democracy, promising that as the new ruler he would democratise Tunisia. Ben Ali also accused his predecessor of disregarding the Arab and Islamic identity of Tunisia, which would now be restored under the new regime (Hamdi 1998:64).

Ben Ali announced a wish for political reconciliation and illustrated this by releasing nearly all Islamist prisoners connected to MTI (Tjomsland 2000:95). This was followed by a mutual acceptance between the MTI and Ben Ali. They cooperated with the *Pacte Nationale*, an expression of political consensus among all political groups aimed at getting Tunisia back on track (Hermassi 1995:109, Tjomsland 2000:95).

The MTI was represented in the High Islamic Council, a government-appointed body that dealt with all religious matters in a consultative manner. The Islamic student organisation was legalised, but an official recognition of the MTI was still put on hold (Hermassi 1995:110).

The Islamists tried hard to win the confidence of the authorities. They changed their name from MTI to En-Nahda (The Renaissance movement) to fulfil the government's requirements that no political party could be based on religious or ethnic values (Hamdi 1998:64, Hermassi 1995:111).

Nevertheless, En-Nahda was forbidden to participate as a party in the 1989 elections. Instead they participated with independent Islamist candidates (Shahin 1997:100) covering 20 of a total of 25 constituencies (La Presse 1989b).

According to the official results, given to La Presse, the government party RCD obtained 80,34% of the votes, the independent candidates got 14,54% of the votes and the rest of the official parties got approximately 5% support altogether (La Presse 1989a). En-Nahda's support in the major cities, including Tunis, was around 40% of the votes (Shahin 1997:101).

Regardless of whether the election results were accurate or not, they strongly indicated that the Islamists had become an established oppositional force, making En-Nahda a threat to the regime.

Ben Ali soon took the consequences of the election results. The reports from the municipal elections in neighboring Algeria where The Islamic FIS had won most of the districts, proved to President Ben Ali that the Islamist threat should not be overlooked (Shahin 1997:101).

4.7 Fading out?

Already in May 1989 Rachid Ghannouchi, the leader of En-Nahda, left Tunisia to live in exile. Shortly after, the movement's review now named Al-Fajr, was closed down. The Islamic student organisation was banned, and religious lessons at the Zeituna University were prohibited. Further measures such as closing mosques immediately after each prayer, and the installing of government appointed imams were put forth (Shahin 1997:101). Arrests and harassment of En-Nahda-members, their families and also sympathisers of the organisation were part of a government-policy of eliminating the movement.

The regime justified their continuous repression of En-Nahda by two incidents in the spring of 1991. There was a violent attack on the government party's office in Bab Souika, central Tunis, by three young Islamists. This attack was covered heavily in the official media. Additionally, the Interior Ministry announced that a 'plot' by En-Nahda to seize power had been discovered and diverged. According to the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, both of the trials following the incidents were characterised by irregularities and lack of evidence (Shahin 1997:102). Dunn on the other hand argues that there would be no smoke without fire, and he trusts most of the government's accusations (Dunn 1996:160-162). At this time there was a split in the organisation and Mourou, the most prominent leader next to Ghannouchi, stepped down. Shahin and Dunn hold this split to be caused by the violent incident in Bab Souika, which Mourou did not approve of. In fact, it is hard to know if anyone in the leadership approved of this violence in that a clandestine wing probably conducted the attack (Dunn 1996:160). Additionally, there was a conflict of opinion between Ghannouchi and Mourou as a result of the Gulf war (Roy 1994:121). Ghannouchi condemned Saudi Arabia for letting US soldiers operate from Muslim land, while Mourou with close ties to the Saudis were reluctant to criticise his friends (Dunn 1996:159, Roy 1994:121). The Saudis constituted a major economic contributor; funding En-Nahda along with many other Islamist groups. Accordingly, En-Nahda lost this help as a consequence of Ghannouchi's critique.

Nevertheless, by 1992 Amnesty International reported that at least 8000 followers of En-Nahda were imprisoned in Tunisia (Shahin 1997:101).

3000 of these were later convicted of being members of an unauthorised association (Shahin 1997:101). Additionally, the Tunisian League for Human Rights was suppressed from 1992 and onwards. The government was now clearly intolerant of any public dissent (Shahin 1997:103). The announced electoral reform of 1994 (Dunn 1996:162) did not change much of this picture. Even tough 19 seats in parliament were now reserved for the legal oppositional parties, the opposition was unable to capture any additional seats (Shahin 1997:103). Moreover, it seems like Ben Ali strengthened his position as an autocratic President when arresting the former head of the Tunisian League for Human Rights, Muncif al-Marzuqi, when trying to challenge

Ben Ali for President (Shahin 1997:103). When eliminated his opponent, Ben Ali won the usual 99.91% of the votes in the elections of 1994.

The situation has ever since the beginning of the 1990s made it impossible for En-Nahda to act openly in Tunisia. En-Nahda has continued its work by holding conferences abroad. In 1995 they restructured the organisation and redefined its policy towards the Tunisian regime. Most importantly, they stressed their non-violent nature, and decided working for the prevention of further political polarisation in society by fighting for the political rights of the entire Tunisian society. Rachid Ghannouchi living in exile in London, was re-elected leader (Amir) of En-Nahda at this conference with only 52% of the votes (Tamimi 2001:72). He has established an En-Nahda office in London, and he is constantly travelling, giving lectures and interviews about the En-Nahda policy. He is in contact with other Islamist groups on a regular basis, but argues for variations in Islamist policy in that different countries require solutions adjusted to their specific context (Interview with the author, June 2003).

5. En-Nahda's Islamic Democracy

One of the main critics of En-Nahda, and their claim of supporting a democratic system, is not surprisingly the Tunisian regime. The movement is classified as illegal by the Tunisian government.

Michael Collins Dunn has been the strongest criticiser among the Western scholars in that he believes in the government accusations that En-Nahda was planning a plot in 1991 (Dunn 1996:160-162, Tamimi 2001:201). In addition, Bahey Eddin Hassan, director of the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies, has accused Ghannouchi for hypocrisy. He believes Ghannouchi is occupied with fighting violence and promoting Human Rights only in Tunisia, while remaining quiet about these conditions in Algeria, Iran and Sudan (Tamimi 2001:204). Arab secularist Haydar Ibrahim Ali holds En-Nahda and it's leader as pragmatists. He claims that they do not believe in what they profess (Tamimi 2001:207). Likewise, Abdelqader Zghad accuses En-Nahda for supporting democracy not as a value, but as less costly means than armed forces to achieve political power (Tamimi 2001:207-208). Mohammed Hamdi, a former member of En-Nahda, has analysed several aspects of the organisation. In resent years he has dissociated himself from the movement and its ideology. However, I will apply his views in this thesis due to his detailed knowledge of the En-Nahda argumentation.

I believe much of the criticism is difficult to verify in that many of the questions comprise a hypothetic scenario where En-Nahda seize power through legal elections. Still, I will comment on some of the accusations in the conclusion.

When explaining and analyzing someone else's ideology it is important to have a conscious relation to the information one uses. Access to primary sources such as documents and interviews give valuable information. On the other hand the information given by primary sources are more interesting when complemented with other sources, such as scholars on the subject.

In the following I will take a brief look at the Political Manifest of the En-Nahda. However, to completely understand the En-Nahda ideology I need to examine

interviews, books and articles on the subject. When trying to look at the different contributions I focus on the concept of Islamic democracy in 5.1.

In 5.2 the question of religion has been made a distinct paragraph.

Finally, in 5.3, I will try to categorise the Islamic democracy of En-Nahda according to my dichotomy and in comparison with the contributions discussed in 3.3.

5.1 En-Nahda's Ideology

Since my focus in this dissertation is on democracy I am not going to explore every aspect of the En-Nahda ideology. The illegal political party of En-Nahda have pledged their support to democracy on several occasions (Boulby 1998:604, Burgat & Dowell 1993:195). In my interview with En-Nahda leader Mr. Rachid Ghannouchi he confirms this stand: "Currently we are working for the establishment of democracy in Tunisia" (Interview with the author: June 2003). Hence, the primal concern will be on En-Nahda's democratic reasoning.

In 2.2.2, I portrayed Islamist movements with an evolutionist approach as more likely to support a democratic system than conservative literalist groups. Evolutionist movements are more eager to change the system according to modern or contemporary needs. Still, this does not mean that these automatically support democracy. I expect En-Nahda to support the evolutionist approach. Accordingly, I will comment upon this in the following analysis.

The other main factor deciding the Islamist direction is their stand on political action. A revolutionary approach is less likely to be compatible with democratic behaviour. Reformist movements who want to change the system from within are definitely more in line with democratic principles. They show interest in the popular will. In chapter 4 I have shown En-Nahda's general willingness to be part of the political system. There are some uncertainty about their conduct in 1991, when a violent incident occurred, and the government accused the movement for planning a coup d'etat. The En-Nahda policy previous to and after 1991 has however been a non-violent one.

As pointed out during chapter 3, democracy is not an easy concept with one prevailing understanding that everyone supports. To make this analysis more easy to grasp, I concluded my discussion on democracy under 3.1 with a simplified dichotomy. This dual way of understanding the concept of democracy is by no means complete and superior to other ways of treating this field of study. Still, I felt the need to restrict the theoretical universe for the sake of conducting a more useful analysis. Hence, in the analysis to come I will use the two concepts of democracy that I ended up with as a result of my theoretical discussion. Moreover, I will compare the En-Nahda ideology on democracy with the formal- and substantive democracy perspectives.

5.1.1 Political manifest

The Tunisian Islamist movement was officially constituted as a political party in 1981 when it launched the first political manifest. It applied for official recognition as a political party in June 1981 as the Islamic Tendency Movement (MTI). In the following years MTI experienced a lot of obstacles in becoming a legal political party. As a consequence they changed their name to En-Nahda/the Renaissance movement in 1988, in accordance with the new law on political parties of May 3 1988. A new En-Nahda party constitution was simultaneously proclaimed. Due to the evolving during the 1980s of En-Nahda's ideology, especially in relation to democracy, I find the 1988 Constitution more relevant than the previous version. I am therefore going to use the En-Nahda Constitution from 1988 as my main source when referring to their political manifest.

In the 1988 Constitution the proclamation of the political party is formulated in article 1. Article 2 enhances the goals of the Renaissance Party divided into A: the political level, B: the economic level, and C: the social level. Below I will mainly discuss the goals on the political level.

Article 2 states:

1. "To strengthen the republican regime and its foundations and protect the civil society and implement the principle of popular sovereignty and application of the principle of "Shura"."(The En-Nahda Constitution, 1988).

Evidently En-Nahda supports a republican regime in contrast to the regimes of Beys[15] that previously dominated Tunisia. What they mean by "its foundations" is hard to say though. Further they want to protect civil society. It is quite obvious that En-Nahda regards the temporary regime in Tunisia as in lack of support for civil society, and sometimes even repressive towards elements within civil society. En-Nahda is among those groups that have felt this repression from the regime. In addition, civil society is by many theorists within the field of democratisation held as an important and also indispensable element of the democratisation process (see for instance Hefner 3.3). This due to the democratic learning one predicts organisational- life and interaction give. Pluralists would support this view together with the New Left.

In my view this goal is especially interesting because of the focus on popular sovereignty and the use of the Arabic term 'Shura'. The principle of popular sovereignty is closely connected to democratic thought. Most democracy theorists hold this principle as central and vital in their argumentation. Popular sovereignty is by these considered as the foundation of democracy. Interesting in this connection is the question of religion. As seen by for instance Kurshid Ahmad, many Islamists have trouble accepting the sovereignty of any other than God. Obviously Islamists see this differently. En-Nahda have chosen to include this principle already in the first political goal in their constitution. I believe this inclusion is a contributory proof that En-Nahda supports an evolutionist view within Islamism (according to 2.2.2).

In addition, the principle of 'Shura' is pointed out as important. Shura is normally translated to mean consultation. It is a principle formulated in the Shari'a. Traditionally this concept has been understood as an advise or request for the leader to consult advisors in political matters of significance. More recently the term has been interpreted as an obligation for the leader to consult in political matters. And instead of advisors the leader should consult with the people. This is why many Islamists and others claim that the political leadership needs an approval through elections to be legitimate. This presentation of shura is in many ways parallel to democracy as in the formal understanding of the concept.

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[15] The Bey could be considered a monarch

It should be stressed that En-Nahda is not using the term democracy themselves. Whether this is due to their disregard of the democratic concept or is linked to other causes such as the Western connection is hard to say.

> 2. "To achieve freedom as a basic principle commemorating the dignity given to mankind by their creator, by supporting public and individual freedoms, human rights, an independent justice system, and a free administration." (The En-Nahda Constitution, 1988).

This goal indicates a strong emphasis on the relation between God and man. At the same time it is a statement that mankind is given the freedom of choice. En-Nahda interprets the Islamic religion to mean that some things are in the hands of humans. God trusts humans to make their own choices on certain issues. This is a typical evolutionist view within the characterisation of Islamists seen in chapter 2. The goal indicates that En-Nahda supports human-made laws and interpretations. Interestingly, En-Nahda stresses the principles of public and individual freedoms. The focus on public freedoms is in line with many traditional Muslim societies, while individual freedom is typically understood as Western oriented. As seen earlier in chapter 3, individual freedom was an important part of the evolvement of the liberal view, and later liberal democracy. I think this goal bear witness to an attempt to combine traditional views with more modern or Western ways of thinking. Further, by stressing the support of "human rights, an independent justice system, and a free administration" En-Nahda strengthens its position as a movement in favour of democracy.

The rest of the goals on A. the political level, enhance foreign policy and regional co-operation:

> 3. "To implement a foreign policy based on the sovereignty of the country, its unity and independence, and to build international relations on mutual respect and interest, and the principles of sovereignty, justice, and equality."

> 4. "To support co-operation and harmony between Arab and Islamic countries and to work toward more compassion and unity among them."

> 5. " To propagate the spirit of Arabic and Islamic unity and to bring attention to the fundamental issues facing us in order to put an end to the divisions, hatred, and bitter fighting and to build a more prosperous future while putting a greater emphasis on the unity of the Maghreb countries."

6. " To support the struggle for the liberation of Palestine, and to put it as a central issue necessitating a firm stand against Zionist occupation which has placed in the Arab heartland a foreign entity thus preventing progress and unity."

7. " To support the cause of freedom in the Arab, Islamic, and entire world, and to denounce colonialism and racism in Afghanistan, Eritrea, South Africa, and elsewhere, as well as to support all the popular movement for freedoms and justice."

8. " To increase the level of co-operation between African countries, to consider it a strategic choice for our country, to build stronger ties between the Mediterranean nations by eliminating all causes of tension, and to contribute to better relations between all peoples based on peace and justice."(The En-Nahda Constitution, 1988)

Without commenting every goal, the very essence of these goals conveys with what could be called typical Islamist. The strengthening of Arab and Islamic unity together with increased regional co-operation, with both Mediterranean and African countries, witness a conscious policy. The consequences I read from these manifestations are increased independence from the West. En-Nahda is indirectly trying to distance themselves from Western dependency. As to the democratic discussion I find this Islamist policy of independence from the West irrelevant.

A last interesting goal is to be found under C: on the social level.

13. " To support all popular organisations by protecting their survival, unity, democratic means within them, and independence so that they can truly represent the interests of their members and of society as a whole, and protect them from any kind of oppression."(The En-Nahda Constitution, 1988).

This can be read as a proof of En-Nahda's emphasis on the importance of a strong civil society. As mentioned earlier, civil society is often connected or made a prerequisite for the developing of democracy. I will cover Ghannouchi's views on civil society more thoroughly in 5.3.

In that the emphasis in article 13 is on *all* popular organisations indicates that En-Nahda is following up their devotion to civil society and the principles of freedom articulated in article 1 and 2. This can be held as an argument of their consistency. It can also be read as a argument in support of a substantive democracy. The term *democratic* is used in article 13 when promising to protect organisations "with

democratic means within them". This can only be interpreted as support for democracy.

5.1.2 Ghannouchi's thoughts on Islamic democracy

In the early days of En-Nahda, more precisely in the 1970s, democracy or Islamic democracy was never an issue. En-Nahda-leader Ghannouchi and his colleagues rather emphasised the question of education and morality (Hamdi 1998:102). They wanted an educational system that was Arab, instead of French, and they wanted more emphasis on religion in this education. This was En-Nahda's reaction to the modernisation program of Bourguiba, which was mainly based on a French model. The other interest, morality, was more of a personal issue than a political one. They wanted people to go into themselves and follow the religious message. The society as a whole would be better off if everyone was more concerned with religion.

It was only after the politicisation of the movement in the late 1970s, as a result of the trade union's demonstrations, that issues of democracy and political freedom were raised (Hamdi 1998:102). Hamdi believes that in the beginning this concern was for pure pragmatic reasons because the democratic claim made it harder for the government to ban the organisation.

Ghannouchi describes this shift as a necessary step for the movement to "link with the realities of the Maghreb" (Interview with al-Shira, 1994:3). These circumstances compelled En-Nahda to emphasize two axes: the axis of identity and the axis of civil liberties. They wanted to defend Islam as an identity, not merely as a state or way of life (Interview with al-Shira 1994:3). Further, Ghannouchi holds that centralisation of the state had made it impossible to find independent organisations in Tunisia. In order to fight for the principle of civil liberties the Islamist movement found it necessary to co-operate with other oppositional forces within Tunisia (Interview with al-Shira 1994:3).

The years between 1981 and 1984 that Ghannouchi spent in prison marked a shift in his interest (Hamdi 1998:103). During these years Ghannouchi wrote the book "al-Hurriyyat al-'amma" where he presented his *Islamic democracy* (Hamdi 1998:102). Following this period, there is no doubt that Ghannouchi becomes the head philosopher of En-Nahda. He is the one who puts the organisation's ideas into a

system, and evolves them far beyond En-Nahda's original plan. Deriving from this, it may be hard to separate the En-Nahda philosophy from Ghannouchi's own opinion. Nevertheless, Ghannouchi was elected president of En-Nahda, again, after writing several of his books, and this serves as an indicator of the general En-Nahda support of Ghannouchi's philosophy.

The relationship to Western democracy

First of all, Ghannouchi states the possibility that democracy may have Islamic roots (Hamdi 1998:104, Tamimi 2001:80). Europeans benefited from the Islamic civilisation's heritage of engineering and mathematics, and made concrete technology out of it. To Ghannouchi and other Islamic thinkers it seems perfectly reasonable that Europeans may have 'borrowed' other ideas as well (Krämer 1993:3). However, in contrast to many Islamic thinkers he sees no reason for Muslims to reject the Western tools of democracy. The concepts of ijma (consensus) and shura (consultation) are strongly rooted in Islam. Ghannouchi finds Western-made tools of democracy compatible with these Islamic principles.

Despite his acceptance of democratic tools, Ghannouchi strongly criticises parts of Western democracy. First he points out the historical problems of general suffrage. In the beginning there was only men with property that could vote and women's suffrage was only accomplished in the first half or the middle of the 20th century (Tamimi 2001:86). He further criticises the Western democracy of today as "a multi-party system of governance exercised by an elite of political leaders" (Tamimi 2001:86). It is tempting to interpret Ghannouchi's argumentation as a criticism of the procedural and formal democracy-perspective. If he resents a system where political power is fought over within an elite of political leaders Ghannouchi is approaching a substantive argumentation. This stand opens for better accountability from politicians, and more participation of the people in political conduct.

Nevertheless, Ghannouchi's main criticism of Western democracy is the way liberal democracy remains restricted to national borders. The privileges of liberties and rights include only the citizens of the nation-state. According to Ghannouchi, this is why great democracies such as England and France also have been the cruellest

countries when dealing with other countries. Ghannouchi blames the horror of the colonisation on these Western democracies (Tamimi 2001:86-87).

Still, Ghannouchi embraces the instruments of democracy like elections and the parliamentary system (Interview with Thomassen 1998:2). At the same time he criticises the philosophies of Western liberal democracies. It is especially the secular and nationalistic values he rejects (Interview with Thomassen 1998:2). He admits that Muslims need to learn from the West, which after centuries of struggle has found the spirit of dialogue. Muslims need to learn how to build a democratic pluralistic system, but as Muslims, he adds (Interview with Thomassen 1998:2). He says that democracy is a part of Islam and he holds rationalism, humanism, the possibility of interpretation (ijtihad), and diversity within Islam as proofs (Interview with Thomassen 1998:2). For a democratic regime to succeed it would need to be founded on sound philosophies and humanistic values. To Ghannouchi such philosophy can only be found in Islam (Tamimi 2001:89). If one moves away from the understanding that democracy is a strictly Western concept, the argumentation of Ghannouchi opens for an Islamic democracy as a substantive model (democracy 2). The question that follows is: will the Islamic democracy protect those values (mainly popular sovereignty, freedom and equality) that such an extensive model requires?

The concept of Islamic democracy

I find it best to quote Mr. Ghannouchi to understand why he is able to talk about Islamic democracy while many other Islamist groups reject the democratic idea:

> "Democracy is an object, not an ideology or philosophy. If you say 'liberal democracy' it can be an ideology, but democracy itself is a neutral conception which depends on how you define it. So we can mention the possibility of an Islamic democracy."(Interview with Turkish Daily News 1996:2)

Ghannouchi admits "Western communities learnt to solve its differences through political means instead of war after bloody conflicts as long as centuries" (Interview with Turkish Daily News 1996). The En-Nahda leader does not see why Muslims should not benefit from this experience. He points out that the Muslim societies of today obviously do not have a better system to offer. Accordingly, he is in favour of

accepting democracy as the best alternative we know of today, even if it may be Western in origin (Interview with Turkish Daily News 1996).

In this argumentation Ghannouchi portrays democracy as a neutral concept. Democracy is a tool to use in politics to avoid bloody conflicts. This is very much in line with the formal understanding of the concept.

He further holds that "Islam does not include a political system" (Interview with Turkish Daily News 1996). Ghannouchi believes there are political guidelines and values found in Islam, but there is no detailed political system to follow. In En-Nahda Islamists' opinion God left the forming of a political system to the people. However, they do not separate religion completely from politics. As Ghannouchi said: "politics should be inspired by Islamic values. These values inspired by the Shari'a should have an important impact on political conduct" (Interview with the author, June 2003).

Ghannouchi is all of a sudden arguing for a political system based on values. He opens for the use of a democratic system in that he finds no detailed instructions for politics in Islam. However, he confirms that any political system used in Muslim societies needs to be based on values found in Shari'a.

According to Ghannouchi, Islam includes several principles that are shared with democratic values (of the substantive model) . In addition to sovereignty of the people these are "political pluralism, protecting minority rights and tolerance, political power based on free elections, and respecting basic rights and freedoms" (Interview with Turkish Daily News 1996).

Here Ghannouchi takes a step further arguing that many of the values found in Islam are in accordance with democratic values. In his argumentation the En-Nahda leader has parted from holding the position that democracy is a neutral tool. He has argued for the necessity of Islamic values in the political system. Finally he ends up with defending many of the Islamic values as equal to democratic values. This must be taken as a proof of Ghannouchi's willingness to convince his readers that Islam and democracy are compatible. But while doing this he finds himself in the position of defending democracy as something more than a system for electing a leadership. He

is actually discussing democracy as a society model based on democratic values (democracy 2). Whether he is conscious of this or not is hard to say.

Ghannouchi sees *Shari'a* (the Quran and the Sunna) and *shura* as the two main pillars in Islamic democracy. The Shari'a comes first as Allah is the original governor.

> "To uphold his [Allah's] rule is obligatory for every Muslim, and this is why Muslims should organise themselves politically and form an Islamic state. The Islamic state's raison d'être is the implementation of the Shari'a, which is also the source of its legitimacy; if it is not implemented, then it cannot command the obedience of the people." (Hamdi 1998:104).

When implementing the Shari'a, a Muslim's obedience to the government is also obedience to Allah. Hamdi holds that Ghannouchi believes in a political system ordered by Allah. The details for this system are to be found in the Quran and Sunna, and full acceptance of these marks the difference between faith and disbelief (Hamdi 1998:105).

This is inconsistent with previously referred arguments made by Ghannouci that state the non-existence of a detailed political system in Islam. I believe this conflict is caused by the inconsistent use of on the one hand values and principles, and on the other hand the concept of political system.

Ghannouchi further argues that "the Islamic state has found in the texts of the Shari'a a solid base and a code of just laws; a canon not made by the ruling majority or a dominant class, but by Allah, the God of all. This canon is applied in detail by human institutions chosen by the people, wherein lies the authority of the umma, embodied in shura" (Hamdi 1998:105).

This argument makes it easier to understand Hamdi. What he means by 'political system ordered by Allah' is probably the authority of the ummah (Muslim community) given through shura. In other words, it is up to the Muslim community to decide on a political system. However, consultation (shura) should be part of this system. Ghannouchi writes: "Political power belongs to the community (ummah), which should adopt a form of shura, which is a system of mandatory consultation" (Ghannouchi 1993:55). Ghannouchi argues to have found in democracy "the

appropriate instruments (elections, parliamentary system, separation of powers etc) to implement the shura (Ghannouchi 1992).

The principle of shura derives from the Quran where consultation is stressed repeatedly. The power of Allah is given to the people. Ghannouchi believes that man is God's vicegerent on earth. The religious community, ummah, is thus responsible of forming a society according to God's will (Tamimi 2001:96). Ghannouchi argues that the ummah is also the source of legislation:

> Although the prime source of legislation in Islam is Allah's will, as is reflected in revelatory text from the Quran and the sunna, the umma should actively participate in legislating. The reason for this is that, making the final shari'a eternal required limiting the text of the revelation to legislate only the main principles ruling human relations and not to elaborate on details and minor issues, except for in a few cases such as legislating for the punishment of a major crime and for certain issues related to the family; legislation that helps form the overall shape of Islamic society. This means leaving the details of this shape to the legislative effort of the umma, which changes with the times, and it is a respectable endeavour, for the ijma [consensus][16] of the umma is considered one of the [religious] sources of legislation (Hamdi 1998:109-110).

Shura means the consultation of the people rather than the sovereignty of the people. But Ghannouchi takes this further and says that shura "is the principle that the power of interpreting the text is not to be monopolized by any one particular person or institution; interpretation is the prerogative of the entire ummah, the vicegerent of God" (Tamimi 2001:100).

En-Nahda argues that no one is sovereign in their understanding and interpretation of Islam (Interview with the author, June 2003). This is one of the many fields they base their critique of the Tunisian regime upon. En-Nahda believes the state is trying to be the sole and "official speaker in the name of Islam" (Interview with al-Shira 1994). En-Nahda parts from traditional Islam (represented by a majority of religious scholars) on this issue. It is a typical characteristic of Islamist groups to claim everyone's right to personal interpretation. En-Nahda is also taking a slightly different stand than many other Islamists when arguing for the sovereignty of the people. This is exactly why others (for instance Ahmad in 3.3) reject democracy.

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[16] My own addition to the text, ijma means consensus.

Many have a problem accepting democracy, because of the criterion of sovereignty of the people. Allah is the sole sovereign, they argue. Ghannouchi and En-Nahda are not opposing this point. Moreover, they emphasise the role given to the ummah as God's vicegerent on earth. They believe this is enough evidence to claim that Islam is compatible with democracy and the principle of sovereignty of the people. The ummah and the ruler have, according to Ghannouchi, a contract which legitimates the ruler. No ruler is legitimate without being contracted or selected by the people (Ghannouchi 1992, Tamimi 2001:101). The ruler is then in his right to be obeyed by the nation (Hamdi1998:111), at the same time as he is accountable to the ummah (Tamimi 2001:101). If the ruler acts in conflict with the Shari'a it is not necessary for the people to obey him. Following this it is a duty within Islam to criticise and correct authorities that do wrong (Tamimi 2001:90). How exactly they will get rid of bad or autocratic rulers are not thoroughly discussed by Ghannouchi. There thoughts are similar to Weber and Schumpeter's views on democracy (Democracy 1).

Ghannouchi discusses three ways of shura. The first is a direct form, which encompass referendum and general elections concerning major political issues. These issues would be the direction of the state's main policies, the choosing of a leader and entering military alliances (Hamdi 1998:110). "This direct shura, says Ghannouchi, is the textual implementation of the Quranic teaching which calls for the participation of all people in making the general policies of the state" (Hamdi 1998:110).

The indirect form of shura would be the election of a body which would form a committee of shura, parliament. This parliament is to play the role of control and guidance for both the government and the people, and additionally make policies and laws within the framework of the Shari'a.

A third consultative body will be formed by prominent religious and legal scholars, with main responsibility of making sure that all laws passed by the parliament or the government are compatible with the rules of Shari'a (Hamdi 1998:110). Ghannouchi himself has compared this to the High Court of the United States, but he fails to reveal on what basis the representatives of this body would be chosen.

The parliament (shura-council) is to nominate one or more candidates for the post of president. This should not hinder any other for running as candidate for the president post. The person elected president should not only be a Muslim, but a good Muslim, and he should be at least 40 years of age (Hamdi 1998:111). Ghannouchi remarks that "the minimum in this regard is for him to be known to have the correct religious beliefs and conceptions, to care for religion, to like knowledge and scholars, to observe his religious duties and abstain from forbidden deeds, to be honest and of good character with strong personality and physical capability, thus being able to serve the nation and lead it properly" (Hamdi 1998:111). The emphasis on the religious aspect is a consequence of the main duty of the president, to uphold the Shari'a. It would not be an easy decision to agree upon one person, with the correct religious belief. En-Nahda declared in 1981: "there is no one who can claim to be the official spokesman of Allah or Islam" (Hamdi 1998:114).

There is further stated that "there is nothing in Islam which gives a specific ruling about the relationship between the legislative and the executive powers" (Hamdi 1998:112). Ghannouchi hints about a system with co-operation between the two, and abolish the total separation of the powers as a Western institutionalisation of conflict between the president and the parliament. This gives us an Islamic state that is executive, based on both the parliament and the president's authorities. This system is, however, not only found in En-Nahda's model. Several Western democracies have established a similar approach, for instance Finland and France with their semi-presidential systems (Peters 1999:81).

The committee of religious and legal scholars should, according to Ghannouchi, check the compatibility between new laws and the Shari'a. At the same time this body is supposed to suggest or orientate both the public and the government when they find it necessary of using ijtihad in lawmaking. Following this, the committee of scholars becomes indirectly a legislative power. The separation of power becomes a diffuse issue when Ghannouchi suddenly sees the shura council as part of the executive power, presided over by the president (Hamdi 1998:113).

Additionally, the nomination or selection of the scholars is not discussed, but it is evident that if the president or the parliament is to take care of this, we could see

tendencies like in the USA where every appointment of a new member of the High Court is political.

Public and Civil liberties.

Ghannouchi argues that En-Nahda is fighting to win the struggle for civil liberties (Interview with Tunisia Insight, 1997). Freedom in Ghannouchi's opinion goes through religion. In his view Islam was revealed to guarantee man's essential needs (Tamimi 2001:76, Interview with Thomassen 1998:1). These guarantees given through Islam constitute, according to Ghannouchi, the general framework of human rights.

The En-Nahda leader is negative to the liberal view on freedom. Liberties in the West are guaranteed through state institutions, but they are only formal, he argues. Man is given the theoretical right to do various things, but he is not given any real power to fulfil these rights. Ghannouchi criticizes the way a limited group of citizens have monopolised power, wealth, and culture (Tamimi 2001:73). This is follows the critique given by the New Left, Marxists, and the substantive democracy perspective on liberalism. Power and wealth is gathered in the hands of a small group of elites. Equality and total freedom is not really achieved for the rest of the citizens.

Hence, Ghannouchi also argue against what he calls 'negative freedom'. The liberal view saw the need to secure citizens from the state. Ghannouchi holds a more 'positive' concept of freedom. He is compared to Kant who holds that freedom is the ability to realize oneself. Choices are connected to obedience toward moral law (Tamimi 2001:75). In comparison, Ghannouchi sees the moral law as obedience to Islam. In his version freedom is achieved through servitude to God.

Ghannouchi believes the main message in Islam is to guarantee Human Rights (Thomassen 1998:1). Shari'a is meant to serve the interest of human beings, says the En-Nahda leader. Religion depends on true faith and free will, thus the starting-point of Islamic human rights is the freedom of belief (Hamdi 1998:107).

In al-Hurriyat al-'Ammah Ghannouchi lists seven basic rights: Equality (all citizens are equal before the law), freedom to practice religious worship, freedom to propagate non-Muslim religions, freedom and dignity of the human being, freedom of

thought and expression, freedom of private ownership and social rights (employment, health care and social security) (Hamdi 1998:108). These values are in accordance with democratic values. The question is whether they are respected within the Islamic democracy.

Typically, there are some areas that are continually questioned when considering Islam and democracy. Religion and secularism are of this character, and I will treat this more thoroughly in 5.2 together with the rights of non-Muslims and Muslims that have rejected Islam (riddah).

5.2 Religion in Politics

Apart from the general scepticism surrounding the protection of human rights when dealing with Islamists, secularism or the impact of religion in politics is for many the main dilemma. As seen in 3.2, several scholars (Taylor, Walzer, Audi) hold secularism as a prerequisite for democracy. These scholars emphasis the freedom of religion and the non-discriminating elements that such a system will provide.

In the discussion to come, I will first focus on En-Nahda/Ghannouchi's general criticism towards secularism before considering Ghannouchi's own thoughts on the issue.

5.2.1 The general criticism of secularism

When asking Mr. Ghannouchi if he believes democracy is possible without secularism, he answered:" Yes. Democracy can exist without secularism, and secularism can exist without democracy as for instance in Communism, Zionism and under Nazism." (Interview with the author, June 2003).

Ghannouchi's stand is that secularism is not for the Muslim world. He believes there is a difference between secularism in the West and secularism in the Arab world. Ghannouchi do not reject secularism completely. He tends to agree in that secularism in the West has been necessary due to the nature of the Christian religion (Tamimi 2001:109). During the Renaissance the Christian church possessed huge power over state and society. Ghannouchi comments: "There might have been genuine intellectual, psychological, and historical justifications for the rebellion against the

religious establishment, a rebellion, then, deemed essential for the emancipation of man and the progress of society" (Tamimi 2001:109).

In contrast, the history of the Arab world did not see a comparable evolution, Ghannouchi holds. Secularism was imposed upon the Arab countries during colonialism. He criticises those who claim that Islam should be restricted to the spiritual or private sphere of life to achieve progress for Muslims (Tamimi 2001:112). In Ghannouchi's view, secularism is entirely unnecessary in the Muslim world. Islam encourages research and innovation, and guarantees the freedom of thought, expression and worship (Tamimi 2001:112). Hence, Ghannouchi sees no reason to separate between religious values and livelihood to obtain progress and development (Tamimi 2001:112-113). He claims that the national governments that succeeded the colonial rulers in North Africa adopted the Western policy of secularisation. Small secular elites seized power and continued the westernization and secularisation of society (Tamimi 2001:122). But while secularisation in the West emancipated both religion and society from the powerful church, the consequences for North Africa were the opposite. Ghannouchi maintains that the state of the secular elite in the Arab experience is comparable with the previous hegemony of the church in the West. Secularisation has led to destruction of society and the emergence of a corrupt political system, he holds (Tamimi 2001:122).

There seems to be agreement on the Western origin of secularism between Taylor and Ghannouchi. Taylor is convinced that this does not stop secularism from functioning in other parts of the world. Ghannouchi on the contrary sees the limitation of secularism, especially in the Muslim world. I will get back to this discussion later in this chapter.

Ghannouchi declares that secularism was brought to North Africa through colonialism. This was a new experiment for the Arab world he states. Ruedy disagree with this apprehension. Even though secularism as a complete philosophy never was accepted in Islam, Ruedy claims that "the separation of the political and much of the civil from religious has been actual in most regions and during most periods in Islamic history" (Ruedy 1996:xv). According to Ruedy, "There were many ulama in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries who accepted the distinction in various forms"

(Ruedy 1996:xv). It could seem that Ghannouchi is unwilling to see some of these facts. To me it looks like Ghannouchi is trying to blame every bad aspect of the regimes in North Africa on secularism. He opposes their monopolisation and control of religion, which is normally not understood as a question of secularism. But Ghannouchi has a point when describing secularism as when the state is taking control over religion. Turkey has conducted a policy of secularisation from the days of Ataturk. This policy has resulted in the controlling of religion instead of separating the religious institutions from the state.

Another issue that is linked to secularism is the downplayed role of religion i public life. Bourguiba kept Sunday as the public rest-day through his whole Presidency, making the Muslim population work on their religious holyday, Friday. Moreover, traditional dressing (for instance veiling) was forbidden in Tunisia at public working places.

5.2.2 Ghannouchi's solution

Ghannouchi:

> "Institutional separation of state and religion is not a problem in Islam. Islam is not represented by any institutional body as the church is in the Christian religion. So institutional secularisation is not a problem since there is no special authority representing Islam. There is no supremacy on how to interpret and decide in Islam. What we see in Iran is a very peculiar system. They have a religious body, a body that could not exist in Sunni-Islam. What I consider important is that politics should be inspired by Islamic values. These values inspired by the Shari'a should have an important impact on political conduct. In this sense I am against secularism, if this is meant to exclude religious values in politics." (Interview with the author, June 2003).

Ghannouchi maintains that there is no institutional body comparable with the Christian church in Islam. Hence, the institutional separation of state and religion is not hindering En-Nahda's Islamic democracy (Interview with the author, June 2003). Still, there is no doubt that the goal is to establish an Islamic state. Religion will by no means be regarded as insignificant.

In En-Nahda's proposition for a shura-system, discussed under 5.1.2, they launched the idea of a consultative body consisting of prominent religious and legal scholars. These scholars are to check the compatibility of the Shari'a and new laws passed by the parliament. I would say that such a 'consultative body' runs the risk of becoming

not only powerful in religious matters, but also close to an institutional body like the Christian church used to be. If such a body is given the right to reject laws passed by the elected parliament, this could mean the end of institutional secularism, the principle of no special authority representing Islam, and moreover democracy. The democratic principle of political power based on free elections would run the risk of being put out of effect. There is no help in having a democratically elected parliament if this parliament is being restrained from power by other mechanisms. In Iran we see a system where the religious council (Majlis) has the power to overrule decisions made in parliament. Ghannouchi has however portrayed the Iranian system as impossible to convey into a Sunni Muslim society (Interview with the author, June 2003). A problem is that Ghannouchi fails to give the details regarding how this consultative body of scholars will be appointed or elected. The composition of such a body will obviously affect the outcome of their politics.

Ghannouchi has said that to En-Nahda it is important that Islam is defended as an identity for the Tunisian people (Interview with al-Shira 1994:3). This is the opposite of Taylor's argumentation. Taylor agrees on the importance for the citizens in a state to have a common identification-basis. But he strongly advises to find something different than religion to identify with, especially in a religiously diverse society (Taylor 1998:45-46). The need to protect minorities must be a priority.

Citizenship rights are among those rights that show discrimination. In *The Right to Nationality Status of Non-Muslim Citizens in a Muslim Nation* Ghannouchi argues that rights of the non-Muslims are ordained by divine law (Tamimi 2001:76-77). According to the En-Nahda leader, equality and freedom are protected for both Muslims and non-Muslims in an Islamic state.

Ghannouchi's general point is that other religious groups are free to live in an Islamic state with the same rights and duties as Muslims if they respect the authority of the state and the laws (Shari'a). They must recognise the right of Islam as the majority religion and the need to organise and direct public life according to Islam. Non-Muslims are free to form their own political parties if they recognise the laws and pledge their loyalty to the state (Hamdi 1998:115). They are to some degree free to discuss religion with Muslims, though on a friendly basis (Hamdi 1998:108).

However, when it comes to citizenship Ghannouchi talks of two categories, unqualified (unconditioned) and qualified (conditioned) citizenship. This is caused by the freedom of choice for the people who live in an Islamic state. If one chooses to embrace Islam one also embraces the principles underpinning the state (Tamimi 2001:77). However, if one rejects the Muslim religion one has to express loyalty to the state and to the state's legitimacy, to achieve citizenship. Non-Muslim citizens have to refrain from activities "construed as threatening to the state's order" (Tamimi 2001:77). One will then receive a qualified or conditioned citizenship, and the condition is only lifted when one chooses to embrace Islam.

Non-Muslims are deprived of certain rights like serving in key political roles such as head of state, speaker, chief of army and membership of the supreme council of justice (Hamdi 1998:116). On the other hand there are certain exceptions that a Non-Muslim is free to enjoy which are forbidden for Muslims. This concerns issues in personal life like food, drink and marriage.

The issue of non-Muslims and the following consequences for the human rights and democracy marks one of the central problems of Islamic democracy when compared to a Western understanding of democracy.

Riddah (apostasy) is in classical literature defined as "the voluntary and conscious reversion to kufr (disbelief) after having embraced Islam by means of denying any of its fundamentals whether in matters of 'aqidah (faith), Shari'a (law), or sha'irah (rite)" (Tamimi 2001:78). Ghannouchi discusses two different schools of jurisprudence when dealing with riddah. Most of the classical jurists belong to a school that treat riddah as a religious offence punishable by death. Ghannouchi however subscribes to a school that considers riddah a political offence. To him it is not subject to Hudud (Islamic capital punishments) (Interview with al-Shira 1994). In this case riddah has nothing to do with the Islamic guarantee of a person's right to freedom of faith. Riddah becomes sedition instead of apostasy and is a problem connected to the authority's responsibility for the community and the maintenance of law and order (Tamimi 2001:78). Ghannouchi's interpretation of this issue has for instance made him unwanted as a guest in the Arab Peninsula (Tamimi 2001:78).

With this interpretation Ghannouchi avoids 'breaking' his own human rights. Still, he supports the notion that apostasy is wrong. He says, "the judgement on apostasy is in the hereafter" (Interview with al-Shira 1994). It clearly troubles Ghannouchi and other thinkers within Islam that the Quran deals with this problem and even sets the punishment for apostasy. His stand in this case really shows that he is an Islamist in favour of change. Literalist believers would never dream of concluding like Ghannouchi. As in regard to democracy and human rights it is easy to see that Ghannouchi is trying to interpret more in line with the principle of freedom of belief. The fact that apostasy is mentioned concretely in the Quran is impossible for him to overlook. This is one of the cases where his faith is really troubling him and he is not quite able to adjust to a more modern system. Needless to say, apostasy (riddah) gives Ghannouchi a problem of explanation when trying to promote his ideas as democratic and in line with human rights.

Returning to the discussion on the principles of freedom and equality it is obvious that an Islamic state adhering to democracy will have problems guaranteeing these rights. As a consequence of Ghannouchi's understanding of an Islamic democracy, non-Muslims will be restricted from certain opportunities such as holding major positions in the political system.

Apart from this Ghannouchi is making a point of freedom in religious belief. Walzer, who argues for a separation of religion and politics on the basis of freedom in religion, has addressed this scenario (see chap 3.2). He admits it is possible to achieve a just system if different religious groups receive autonomy within the religious state. Ghannouchi portrays such a system. Audi and Taylor on the other hand point out the lack of equality they believe a non-secular state will provide. They fear the majority's overruling of the minority. Wolterstorff is arguing for the lack of equality a secular system might give. He sees this as taking side with non-religious groups.

Important in this discussion is the role of religious values in politics. En-Nahda is doubtless in favour of this mixing. In my interview with Rachid Ghannouchi he formulated himself vaguely: "values inspired by Shari'a" (Interview with the author, June 2003). Islamists normally have a goal of implementing the Shari'a. When asking

the En-Nahda leader how they would solve, if given power, the fact that many dislike their ideas, he answered:

> "The future is through ijtihad. I think most things can be solved there. We might not get to interpret everything, but we can use ijtihad in some areas and not in others. If we get in political power and the majority want to implement more laws inspired by Shari'a, then we will probably do that. We are going to listen to the sovereignty of the people. But now the mainstream of Tunisia is neither Islamists nor positive to ijtihad." (Interview with the author, June 2003).

In other words, they aim at implementing more laws 'inspired' by Shari'a. I believe he uses the word *inspired* for two reasons. It does not sound as they are trying to implement Shari'a, *inspired* is more acceptable in peoples' mind. Secondly, Ghannouchi is interested in using ijtihad. This means that he wants to make new laws adjusted to contemporary society. The use of ijtihad in Islam is controversial. Most traditional Muslims and ulama argue that this door of interpretation is closed. Many Islamists that have focused on progress and developments disagree. They argue the need of new laws in accordance with modern society. In that the Shari'a probably does not mention many of these areas that, according to Ghannouchi, need laws, they have to come up with solutions in accordance with the spirit of Shari'a or Islam. Audi, Taylor and Wolterstorff all address the issue of religious values or principles in politics. Audi argues that a neutral ethic as the basis for politics is the only fair alternative. Taylor says it is impossible to control the underlying reasons for why people decide on something. That is why he argues for the overlapping consensus-approach as the only possible alternative. According to Taylor, people may have whatever reason they want to agree on a decision, the important element is that they agree on something. Wolterstorff agrees in the hopelessness of trying to control people's reasons for supporting or rejecting political issues. He holds it as necessary for the well-being of a vital and vivid pluralistic democratic system.

Ghannouchi is aware of the Islamists' limited popularity. Consequently, he is not trying to put himself into a corner by giving a recipe for governance. In his article *The Participation of Islamists in a non-Islamic Government* Ghannouchi stresses a cooperative approach to political power. First, he states that the Shari'a was set up to serve the interests of man (Ghannouchi 1993:54). Second, he holds that "justice is the

most important feature of an Islamic government" (Ghannouchi 1993:59). Ghannouchi then argues that under special circumstances such as when the implementation of an Islamic government is impossible, the duty of Muslims is to support a *just* government. Ghannouchi suggests that Islamists should engage in alliances with secular democratic groups to achieve a just secular democratic system. In other words, Ghannouchi sees a secular democratic system as second best after the Islamic democratic system.

He holds that power-sharing becomes a necessity, and it should be based on the authority of the ummah (according to the principle of shura).

> "..the community of believers may participate in an alliance aimed at preventing injustice and oppression, at serving the interests of mankind, at protecting human rights, at recognising the authority of the people and at rotating power holding through a system of elections. The faithful can pursue all these noble objectives even with those who do not share the same faith or ideology"(Ghannouchi 1993:58).

Ghannouchi gives some examples of situations that justify this practice. Muslims that hold a minority in their country should enter such an alliance, he argues. A secular democratic government will respect human rights, ensuring security and freedom of expression and belief (Ghannouchi 1993:60). Secondly, Ghannouchi finds that Islamic movements operating in Muslim majority countries with autocratic rulers should cooperate with secular parties.

The most remarkable example Ghannouchi gives is that of Islamic groups with potential majority living in Muslim majority countries with autocratic rulers. It would be expected that these groups should seize power and implement Shari'a laws etc. Still Ghannouchi hesitates. He suggests that these groups should establish a secular democratic system to avoid hostility from both within and outside their country (Ghannouchi 1993:61). He advises these groups to postpone "the long-term objective of establishing an Islamic government until circumstances permits" (Ghannouchi 1993:61).

Ghannouchi's advice to cooperate with secular forces and establish a democratic secular system is interesting. He justifies this behaviour out of a need to secure *some* important Islamic values or principles (when all seems impossible to reach). This thought is actually very much in accordance with Charles Taylor's secular model of

overlapping consensus. Taylor argues that the important thing is to agree on some political principles. The underlying motivation or argumentation for supporting these principles is insignificant (Taylor 1998:38). In fact, Taylor believes there are small chances of finding an overall agreement for the underlying justifications for any such principle. In comparison, Ghannouchi holds that the best interest of man and a just government are important Islamic principles. This leads to his support for the secular democratic system, under the circumstances mentioned above. In this situation the principle of a secular democracy is, in his opinion, made upon Islamic values.

The question of religious diversity is important in this discussion. As seen, Ghannouchi is in favour of establishing an Islamic democracy if winning political power in Tunisia. Tunisia is religiously a homogenous society with a 98% Muslim population and with small Catholic, Jewish and Protestant communities (Worldstates, December 15, 2003 [online]). Would the chances of violations on the principles of freedom and equality be major if implementing an Islamic democracy? The theories referred to in 3.2 are mostly concerned with religious diverse societies. My assumption would be that the violations against the Catholic and Jewish communities would be minimal in such a scenario. However, I would be concerned about the secular Muslim population. As a consequence of many years with a secular policy in Tunisia, it is likely to assume that parts of the Tunisian population have become secular as well. In a scenario where the Islamists win the election and constitute a majority, will they respect the secular Muslim minority?

5.3 A different kind of Democracy?

As seen in 5.1 En-Nahda expresses its support to democracy. Critics have sometimes trouble believing in this dedication to democracy and reject this as tactical considerations. I have however chosen to take En-Nahda's claims seriously when investigating their expressed thoughts in this matter. Hence, they express without doubt support to a democratic system of some sort. The trouble is finding out what kind of democratic system this represents.

Mr. Ghannouchi talks and writes most of the time about the political tools of democracy. His standpoint is that democracy provides good tools for politics that

should be taken advantage of. Accordingly, when they are being asked directly about this issue, Ghannouchi and En-Nahda are in favour of seeing democracy as formal (Democracy 1 in my dichotomy). However, as seen in the discussion made in 5.1, I do not find this stand compatible with Mr. Ghannouchi's argumentation. I am not questioning Ghannouchi's faith in the tools of democracy. Moreover, I believe he is arguing for democracy as something more. He is repeatedly stressing popular sovereignty, equality, human rights etc, which he finds both in Islam and democracy. To me it seems like Mr. Ghannouchi is using values to justify an Islamic democracy. He is trying to convince his audience that these values are in accordance with Islam and Islamist principles. By focusing on Islamic principles he is trying to stay clear of what is triggering the general disapproval of democracy in Muslim countries, namely the increase of Western thoughts and domination. The fear of Western dominance is making many Muslims reject solutions of Western origin, especially Islamists. This is probably why Ghannouchi is trying to convince his audience that democracy, in his image, is a neutral tool that can be transformed into an Islamic system.

Secularism is one of the Western principles that Ghannouchi openly disapproves of. He finds total secularisation of politics in conflict with Islam. However, secularisation is not a prerequisite for democracy in Ghannouchi's opinion. This is one of the Western values he tends to see as a historical specificity of Western and Christian society. To him this does not concern Muslim societies. However, it seems like he believes secularism is part of a broader society model of democratic values (Democracy 2 in my dichotomy). But as seen in the discussion on religion in 3.2 there are different opinions on this issue. Secularisation is not argued for out of its own sake. The reason for why people argue in this direction is the principles of freedom and equality. Scholars such as Taylor, Audi and Walzer believe that the mixing of religion in politics is bound to violate the principle of equality, and probably also people's freedom. They are concerned of the minorities' rights. Walzer is however willing to view a society that gives the different religious minorities autonomy as morally just (Walzer 1995:288-289).

In contrast, Wolterstorff stresses the violation of freedom that a secular state will provide for the religious. Additionally, he believes that the religious communities will be discriminated compared to the non-religious.

As for Tunisia where 98% of the population are Muslims the violations would probably not be vast. The country has a small Christian Catholic community as well as a tiny Jewish community in the south. En-Nahda has portrayed autonomy for these communities when it comes to religious and family matters. Still the conditioned citizenship seems discriminating along with the prohibition to serve in central government/state positions. Likewise the treatment of apostasy (riddah), even though Ghannouchi views this as a political offence, is obviously in conflict with the principle of freedom.

On the other hand, Ghannouchi admits that next to Islamic democracy he views a secular democracy as the best option. This statement is confusing. Again the question of homogeneousness in religion matters. It is only in countries where Islamists are in majority that he believes in establishing an Islamic democracy. And even in this situation he hesitates and stresses the importance in waiting for the right moment.

So, where does this leave the Islamic democracy of Mr. Ghannouchi and En-Nahda? Comparing this question with the discussions made in 3.3 might help placing the En-Nahda alternative.

It is obvious that Ghannouchi/En-Nahda and Huntington see things differently. Huntington portrays the Muslim culture as in lack of certain qualities – qualities that in Huntington's opinion are important for democratic life. Among these qualities are individualism, liberalism, constitutionalism, human rights, equality, liberty, rule of law, separation of church and state etc (Huntington 1993:40). Mr. Ghannouchi has actually mentioned most of these qualities when discussing Islamic democracy. He stressed for instance the principles of sovereignty of the people, political pluralism, protection of minority rights and tolerance, political power based on free elections, respect for basic rights and freedoms to Turkish Daily News (1996). As mentioned in 5.1.2, Ghannouchi has written about the importance of human rights in al-Hurriyat al-'Ammah. Here he lists seven basic rights including equality of law and freedom of expression. There can be no doubt that Ghannouchi considers these qualities as

crucial to an Islamic democracy. Secularism makes the springing point where he sees no reason to agree with Huntington's list.

When comparing Ghannouchi/En-Nahda's views with Kurshid Ahmad, there are many similarities. Since both are proclaimed Islamists this seems logic. They are both sceptic to Western influence and they both support and believe in a system where the people run worldly affairs in accordance with the Shari'a. Ahmad makes a distinction between democracy's philosophical roots and democracy's operational mechanisms. Apparently Ghannouchi makes a similar separation, but his argumentation is different from Ahmad's. Ahmad rejects what he calls democratic philosophical roots on the basis of the concept of popular sovereignty. Ahmad's reason for denying the principle of popular sovereignty is that it contradicts, in his view, with the principle of God as the 'Supreme Law-Giver'. In contrast, En-Nahda formulates support, as seen in 5.1.1, to the principle of popular sovereignty in their first political goal found in Article 2 of the En-Nahda Constitution from 1988.

Ghannouchi argues for the rejection of Western philosophical roots mostly out of disagreement with the principles of secularism, nationalism[17], and the building of an elite of political leaders. When looking deeper into this argumentation, I have not found a precise and unified understanding of democracy that makes these principles mandatory. Secularisation as a prerequisite for a substantive democracy based on democratic values is contested, though most Western scholars are in favour of secularisation as such a prerequisite.

In the matter of democratic rights within national borders, I have not found a discussion around this issue. The restriction of democratic rights to each state is a result of the world's system of states. Still, one could say that institutions calling for international declarations of for instance Human Rights are touching upon this problem of inequality. In recent years there has been a tendency of increased interest in international cooperation. The UN and other instances has functioned as an initiator for making as many countries as possible sign different declarations. One has

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[17] As in the restriction of liberal democracy within national boundaries, see 5.1.2, The relationship to Western democracy

to assume that the purpose of these declarations is to increase the equality and rights both between countries and between people from different parts of the world.

As for the problem of the development of elites of political leaders, several philosophers have addressed such a scenario. Schumpeter is among those who favour this type of system while those representing New Left are highly critical of this trend. Once again, the point here is: contributors to liberal democracy as well as the practice of liberal democracies are not unified.

Esposito and Voll's main argument is that Islamic democracy must be based on Islamic culture, history, and familiar Islamic institutions. The development of democracy in the West combined older anti-democratic institutions with newer democratic ones. Esposito and Voll believe this is the way to go for Islamic societies as well. Consequently, there is a need for respecting Islamic concepts in democratisation processes in Muslim countries. In doing this, the process of democratisation can take form through a reconceptualisation of these institutions. One could argue that En-Nahda is about to make such a reconceptualisation of democracy in a Tunisian context. They argue for the importance of Islamic and Arab history and culture. Additionally, they have for instance brought up the old concept of Shura as one of their main democratic institutions. The principle of Tawheed (there can be only one sovereign and that is God) which Esposito and Voll discuss (1996:23) has already been transformed by En-Nahda to allow for popular sovereignty in that man is God's vicegerent on earth. By applying a broader interpretation that sees different principles in relation to each other one opens for non-traditional conclusions.

Hefner's argument is that civil society or civility is the main prerequisite for the possibility of developing a successful democracy. He holds that this is historically conditioned within each society in contrast to Huntington's hypothesis which limits democratisation to Western civilisation. In Hefner's view, civility can occur in every civilisation and following also in Muslim societies. The question is whether the Tunisian society has experienced this type of civil society.

One of Ghannouchi's main accusations against the Tunisian regime is that they have not supported a civil society. On the contrary, he claims that the Tunisian governments since independence have repressed or worked against such developments. Ghannouchi is positive to the theories of civil society as a contributory cause to the development of democracy. Unlike many other Islamists he sees no reason for not bringing this concept into use (Tamimi 2001:132-133). He opposes the understanding that civil society is liked to secularisation and he holds the Islamic society as being part of civil society (Tamimi 2001:136-127). Ghannouchi has a theory about the development of the Tunisian civil society. He argues that the Muslim society prior to the colonisation was vivid, dynamic and self-reviving. The independence of civic institutions secured economic, cultural and social activities, he argues (Tamimi 2001:127). During the colonisation these activities were repressed and the following independent government continued this policy (Tamimi 2001:127). I believe Ghannouchi is right in many of his accusations against the post-independence Tunisian regimes. Much of the activity in the Tunisian post-independent society were cooperated into the control of the state (for instance trade- and workers unions and religious institutions). I find En-Nahda as being part of a civil society in Tunisia, though repressed. And I believe much of their fight for democratisation in Tunisia is a direct cause of their denied chances to participate and spread their views. Their stand on this issue has been made clear in their Constitution (see goal 1 on political level and goal 13 on the social level).

When concluding where En-Nahda stands in the democratic debate I try to compare their declared position with their argumentation. I believe En-Nahda to be an Islamic movement in favour of an evolutionist approach to religion and with a wish to work within the political system (as in opposite of revolution). Accordingly, En-Nahda belongs to those Islamists most likely to be positive to democracy.
As for which democratic system they support it is a strong argument that the movement regards itself as positive to formal democracy. This claim seems sincere and I find no reason why En-Nahda should not be called democratic in this perspective. As long as the procedures and mechanisms taking into use are

democratically agreed upon, which is En-Nahda's articulated stand, this system should work well.

Regarding the question of whether En-Nahda's Islamic democracy is fulfilling the criteria for Democracy 2, it gets more complicated. While Democracy 1 was all about procedures, Democracy 2 includes content. Democratic values need to comprise all society and decisions must not violate against the democratic values. Ghannouchi has supported democracy as a neutral tool separated from Western philosophers theories. Still, I can not see the difference between En-Nahda's Islamic democracy and other society models based on certain values. In my opinion, the Islamic democracy is exactly such an attempt to create a 'good society'. Ghannouchi is not only occupied with election procedures and the building of democratic institutions. I believe to have shown his concern with freedom, equality and human rights. I am not sure that Mr. Ghannouchi is aware of this, but I believe his negative attitude towards democracy as something more than a tool is based on the assumption that such a system must draw on Western philosophical theories. This was probably the general stand among scholars earlier in the 20th century. But I believe to have shown that several scholars view this differently today. Hefner and Esposito & Voll are among those who believe in democratic solutions based on local habits and culture.

Hence, my conclusion is that I believe Ghannouchi is arguing for a system according to Democracy 2. I view this argumentation as a sincere wish for real influence of the Tunisian people and a more accountable political system in Tunisia. Still, I can not see that En-Nahda has succeeded in protecting all parts of the people in such a system. This is mostly due to their religious concerns. By this I do not suggest that the chances to make a Democracy 2 system is ruled out by the including of religion in the political system. The clue is rather to find a way to balance this mixture with the protection of democratic values.

The proposition of conditioned and unconditioned citizenship is in obvious contrast to the principle of equality. Likewise, the punishment for apostasy provides no freedom in religion. This makes me draw the conclusion that En-Nahda has in spite

of everything a way to go before supporting a system that sorts under the Democracy 2 categorisation.

6. Conclusion

One dilemma concerning Islam and democracy is the reluctance towards human-made laws. Religious forces are often eager to promote the Islamic law (Shari'a) as a sufficient political and legal system. This stand is obviously hindering the formation of democratic politics due to a negative attitude towards more modern solutions. In their opinion the Quran and the Sunna is God's final revelation to the people, and accordingly this wisdom is complete. One has to agree that the way we view democracy today is a result of modern developments and knowledge. Accordingly, if arguing that an Islamic system based on Shari'a is democratic, one would assume that this system is open for modern adjustments. Among Islamists one can find spokespersons for modern adjustments. Extensive use of interpretation is the solution they offer. These groups are often more willing to change the political system than those in power. However, many Islamists are not planning to change the system towards a democratic one. And those who are promoting democratisation face the problem that few believe their efforts to be sincere.

This thesis started out raising the question whether Islamists' mixing of religious laws with politics would allow for a democratic system. The scope was then narrowed down to a specific case when asking:
To what extent is the Islamic democracy of the Tunisian En-Nahda democratic?
En-Nahda was chosen as case due to the explicit communication of an Islamic democracy. Consequently the case serves as an unique opportunity to explore an Islamist movement's view on democracy.

When writing the dissertation I found it necessary to give a broader understanding of Islamism in chapter 2. It seemed impossible to analyse an Islamist movement without this background information. Additionally, it was important for me to show that I am conscious of the wide spectre of directions within this phenomenon. Hence, I have not tried to draw a general conclusion about the relation between Islamism and the

question of democracy. My aim has exclusively been to show how the Tunisian Islamist movement, En-Nahda, argues over the question of democracy.

I started this thesis by claiming that I would avoid seeing democracy as a strictly Western concept. Despite of this initial position, democratic theory draws heavily on Western philosophers. My original stand in chapter 3 was to conduct a wide discussion to avoid giving a limited impression of the theory. A major criticism from scholars on the subject of democracy's possibility outside the West, is that democracy too often is portrayed as one consistent model. Despite this, I became aware of the necessity to limit my scope to be able to conduct an analysis. As shown, I ended up with a constructed dichotomy of democracy. The concepts of formal and substantive democracy, comprised in my dichotomy, can be viewed without too much reference to Western philosophy. Even though I found Western philosophers that roughly supported these concepts, I believe the concepts can be used in a general context. Further, I decided to discuss the question of religion in relation to democracy. This was a natural consequence of the definition made in 2.2.1, that Islamist groups aim at establishing an Islamic state ruled by the Shari'a. If the political model of an Islamist organisation has to be based on or influenced by Islamic law, what are the consequences for democracy? In 3.2 the subject of religion and the consequences for democracy was discussed in general. I found that secularism is not necessarily required to achieve democracy.

Additionally, I included some contributions on the discussion on democracy and its compatibility with Islamism. I found it natural to have this discussion fresh in mind when analysing En-Nahda's Islamic democracy. The discussion also serves as a basis for comparison with the En-Nahda stand.

Finally, I concluded chapter 3 with a clarification of the different sections and their internal link to stress the framework for an analysis. My general conclusion was to apply a dichotomy when analysing. Further I concluded that the mixing of religion and politics had little effect on a formal democracy. Regarding the substantive alternative I found that the impact of religion in politics would have to allow all

people to have real influence while simultaneously respecting certain values to fulfil
the criteria of this models.

Chapter 4 was carried out for the purpose of giving a general understanding and some
background information of the situation in which En-Nahda operates. Referring to the
methodological considerations, qualitative case studies require a deeper
understanding of the object in research, and the influence of its surroundings.

In chapter 5 I decided to analyse simultaneously as presenting the model for Islamic
democracy.

I used theoretical perspectives to explore and organise En-Nahda's concept of Islamic
democracy. I believe my democracy dichotomy helped in understanding and
categorising the argumentation presented by Ghannouchi and En-Nahda. Important
findings were consequently revealed when the En-Nahda argumentation alternated
between supporting Democracy 1 and Democracy 2. As pointed out En-Nahda openly
supports Democracy 1, consequently the findings in support of Democracy 2 was
rather unexpected. Still, the two concepts are not mutually excluding. One may
support the tools of a formal democracy while simultaneously argue for a more
substantive democracy.

Likewise, I took use of the discussion over religion and secularism made in 3.2. The
purpose was to show how religion influences democracy. In that En-Nahda rejects
secularism, the need to explore their solution in this perspective was present. By
keeping an open-minded attitude, where secularism was argued for over the
consequences for democratic values and not for its own sake, this discussion was
conducted in 5.2.

My results achieved through the analysis were commented in 5.3. I tried to compare
En-Nahda's Islamic democracy with the dichotomy as well as with the views on
Islamism and democracy presented earlier in 3.3. To define a system like En-Nahda's
was not an easy task. I realised that the Islamic democracy was approaching a more
extensive form of democracy described as the substantive form. The mixing of
religion and politics was argued for while trying to protect all groups in society. En-

Nahda holds that decisions made need to be based on popular will. This was confirmed in 5.2 where Ghannouchi opens up for cooperation with secular forces. He makes it clear that En-Nahda would support a secular democratic system if not receiving the electoral majority. The important goal being to be able to influence towards a just system. In my interview with Ghannouchi he further holds that even though En-Nahda wishes to use ijtihad to implement laws inspired by Shari'a, this would not be possible without majority support.

These are strong arguments in favour of a broader understanding of democracy that take into consideration more than electoral mechanisms. The respect for democratic values and real influence is acknowledged. Unfortunately limitations were simultaneously found in their model, making it hard to conclude in accordance with Democracy 2. The rights of religious minorities and especially rights for those not religious at all, seem troublesome to the Islamic democracy when compared to Democracy 2. Consequently, I find the Islamic democracy of En-Nahda approaching a substantive democracy, based on democratic values, that gives people real influence. Unfortunately the system suffers from some restrictions making it hard to completely embrace the Democracy 2 categorisation. As for the formal democratic categorisation, I have found no major arguments hindering En-Nahda from sorting under this label.

As the critics have pointed out, there are concerns whether En-Nahda would act as they profess in a situation where they obtain power. I believe En-Nahda to be more sincere in their support for democracy than maybe other Islamists due to En-Nahda's effort in portraying their model. It seems unrealistic to take time to develop such an extensive system, to communicate it and to defend it, if the movement has no plans of applying it. Still, I have no guarantees that the system would be followed in detail. In my opinion it is naive to promote a policy where a major force is being excluded from the political scene. The critics of Islamism are afraid the Islamists will violate democratic values. But by excluding the Islamists from politics, the critics themselves are the ones violating against democracy. It would be better to try including the Islamists in the democratisation of the state. If the popular support for the Islamists

are as solid as indicated in some elections, one needs to include these voters in a democratic project. Whether the Islamist support would remain strong after democratic elections with debates and open critics remains to see.

As stressed in the introduction my aim has not been to draw general lessons on the subject of Islamists and democracy. My single case study of Tunisian En-Nahda would not serve as sufficient evidence to make any such conclusions. However, I believe the lesson learnt from this dissertation is that one can not rule out the possibility that Islamist groups may argue in favour of democracy.

Their conception of democracy tend to be slightly different than the Western-established understanding, but may equally be regarded as democratic. And the Western understanding of democracy has shown to be less established than most like to believe.

In my opinion much of the negative views on democracy that Islamists articulate are caused by the Western origin of the concept. The negativity towards the West, mostly due to historical events such as crusades, colonisation and general exploitation, is deeply rooted in Islamist thinking. This makes it hard for Islamists to fully embrace democracy even though Ghannouchi and probably many with him would support most of the principles that democracy is based upon.

Currently En-Nahda is heavily repressed and unable to promote itself in Tunisia. The movement is active outside Tunisia, operating from a London office. Ghannouchi attends discussions and conferences, trying to convince the audience of the Tunisian regime's unfair treatment of En-Nahda. Ghannouchi sees it as the number one goal to achieve democracy in Tunisia. He argues for the necessity of getting every political party to respect and listen to each other. To work for the En-Nahda policy in Tunisia is useless if they can not attend the political arena. Consequently, Ennahda's goal for the next ten years is not to seize power, but to make people understand the organisations views. The leader is positive in this regard as he gets reports of increased activities in the Tunisian mosques as well as an increase in interest concerning Islamic questions.

Ghannouchi is convinced that Tunisia will democratise with or without President Ben Ali. Simultaneously he admits that the prospects are currently not looking good.

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