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## Politicizing the Tunisian Ennahda Islamist Movement

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Majid Alavian<sup>1</sup>, Garineh Keshishyan Siraki<sup>2\*</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup> Department of Political Science, South Tehran Branch, Islamic Azad University,  
Tehran, Iran

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Received: 22 Nov 2017 ; Accepted: 20 Oct 2018

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### Abstract:

The emergence and rise of the Islamic spheres in contemporary times have become one of the most important research topics of recent years and in this area literature is being developed. All those who are doing research in their quest are seeking to answer the question of what factors have led to the politicalization of Islam...? Accordingly, each researcher and writer examines the subject according to the angle from which it looks at the subject or from the position in which it is located and in other words these differences are in the perspective of the disciplinary approach that the researcher had. Sociologists, for example, have referred mainly to structural and class transformation and on this basis, have explained the rise of political Islam. Similarly, political scientists have emphasized and ideological factors this disciplinary attitude has led to the neglect of other factors and their role in the emergence of political Islam. Similarly, political scientists have emphasized and ideological factors this disciplinary attitude has led to the neglect of other factors and their role in the emergence of political Islam. Among these factors are the circumstances, processes and accelerators and in their view examined the reasons for the politicalization of the Tunisian Islamic movement. In this article we will try to examine the political context of the Ennahda salve movement.

**Keywords:** Social movement, Democratization, Islamist movement, Political Islam, Movement of Tunisia

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### Introduction

Wave of democracy which included nearly 30 countries from Europe, Asia, Latin America, and most importantly led to the democratization of a large part of the communist

world view of the Middle East were raised: why are these countries away from the process of democratic transformation?

For this reason, some writers and thinkers used the term “Arabic exclusion” to explain

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\*Corresponding Author's Email: G\_Keshishyan@azad.ac.ir

the late dictatorship in the Middle East emphasized in the Middle East and emphasized that the Arabs are different from other nations and are not willing to take revolution in spite of the suffering of oppression.

But the recent Middle Eastern revolutions that began in Tunisia which swept through a large part of the Middle East showed the absurdity of these claims and analyzes to everyone. That is, "Arab Spring" focused on the attribute of political sociologists and on the other hand. Led the dictators of the region to panic into the morning.

In the wake of the Arab revolution in the region of the West Asia and North Africa, which began in 2011 a trend has been seen among the Islamic movements indicating their politicalization.

The movement that was once founded and established after the teachings of religious doctrines after several decades of their life were in the position of the political party that held power in the country and formed the government, such as the Tunisia movement of the movement after establishing in the seventies of the last century in 2011 he was appointed to form a government in his country.

To investigate this process we will examine their conditions trends and accelerators.

### **Conditions**

One of the factors influencing the political process of Islamic movements is the conditions in which the movement has grown. Conditions are divided into several subcategories including confrontation with modernity, the failure of secular nationalist, lack of

political participation, and unequal economic development happen. (Poorzaki: 1392: 80)

### **Confronting Modernity**

Bobby S. Sayyid in the book, titled, "*A Fundamental Fear: Euro centrism and the Emergence of Islamism*", said, "Modernity is the cause of the emergence of political Islam". (Saeed: 1379: 43)

Meanwhile the majority of thinkers in this field have emphasized the great influence of modernity on the formation of political Islam. The reasons for this are also considered to be the introduction of anti-religious discourse modernity and naturally an important factor in responding to the basic religious beliefs. These religious responses are not specific to Islam and at various times have shown themselves in the other religions of Christianity and Judaism.

From the perspective of all in the people of modernity because of the formation of any relationship with the metaphysical reference and their pith is completely separated from the path of religion and with Islam, which the same traditional doctrines have been propagating their religion as a tough rival it appears that he has kidnapped the ball and the field and Islam chooses an aggressive approach to defend his past identity which is heavily exposed to the aggression and deterioration. As we see the fear of the destruction of identity has formed the basis of these movements in all religions.

Meanwhile, in reaction to the massive invasion of modernity three groups emerged from different functions to respond to this invasion: the first group of modernist intellectuals who accepted the West and its teachings fully accepted namely the West Hug with all the accessories.

The second group believed that the root of growth is in Islam and if we want to truly see growth and development, we should go to the tradition and find the roots of modernity. This group was known as epistemic religious intellectuals. The efforts of these individuals have a consistently shown Islam with modernity.

The third group included individuals who relied only on Islam to return to the roots of religion without any distortion or mismatch with the human teachings of modernity. They know them in terms of fundamentalists.

Although the roots of this confrontation reverberate in the middle of the nineteenth century, but as the discourse emerged the two factors led to a special crystallization of political discourse in the seventies and surpassed rival discourse and hegemony in many Islamic regions:

First, since the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century there has been an increasing expansion of the waves of modernity in the world, particularly the Islamic world and in the 1970s, there was a clear opposition between Islamic discourse and Western modernity. Indeed, with the expansion of the Western modernity the contrast between these becomes more intense and more acute.

Secondly, among the three above mentioned discourses in the Islamic world over time domestic and global conditions change in favor of pure Islamist discourse and as a result of the pure discourse of Islamic Islam a progress of discursive power becomes available and becomes a hegemonic dispute between discourses. (Poorzaki: 1392: 82)

The Islamic movement of Tunisia is rooted in the collision of the modern Bourgeois Ideology in the religious tradition of the Ottoman Empire in the late 1950s. As Bobby Sayyid points out the preference for a straight line in explaining the emergence of the polit-

ical Islam in the Muslim world was issue of modernity (Bobby. 2000:13). The role of Habib Ben Ali Bourguiba in Tunisia was similar to that of the greatness of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in Turkey. The political discourse of the bourgeoisie in the creation of national uprising and national emancipation and the emergence of a nationalist ideology capable of consolidating the people was taken from the pattern of Atatürk. (Imprint: 1376:70)

### **The Defeat of Nationalist Non-Religious Elites**

In the book, titled, "*The Encyclopedia of Islam*", the second volume, Poorzaki, said, Fouad Ajami considers the second reason or the ground for the achievement or hegemony of the discourse of pure Islamism the defeat of the elite after the colonial era have been. The nationalist non-religious elites who tried to adapt themselves to modernity failed not only to succeed, but also to the extent of their backwardness and dependence on the Western world more deeply and more disastrously.

No progress was made even with the replacement of cultural colonialism. According to some scholars', Islamism was a reaction to the defeat of native liberalism in the 1930s and Third World Socialism in the 1960s and 1970s.

In Tunisia the decline of the Democratic National Forces after government attacks on popular and guerrilla movements is interpreted in this regard.

### **Lack of Political Participation**

Some scholars believe that after the period of colonialization most of the governments that came into existence in Islamic countries were behaving like autocratic regimes, some scholars as a result of this were aware of this:

- 1.The personal character of the new regimes.

2. The expansion of civil and military sectarian methods obtained with the acquisition of independence led to an organized and unexpected aggression on the lives of the people.
3. The difference between nationalist ideology and legitimacy on the one hand, and the existence of national social inequalities and external interdependence of the other (Saeed: 1379:52)

In such a situation that the participation of many Muslim citizens was closed. One of the places that were politically important was mosques. In this situation the mosque became the only venue for public discussions that was not dominated by the government. Theda Skocpol emphasizes Rantys rule and political Islam. According to him the organized network of Shiite scholars played a major role in escaping the control of the Pahlavi dictatorship and was an important factor in overthrowing power.

The emergence of the mosque as the only effective place has led to the religious vocabulary taking a political momentum and also used to express religious protests.

According to Bobby Sayyid the lack of democracy and the control of places that the government could not access in the past would overcome the previous balance between civil society and government and force elements to prevent the spread of government together.

According to the above mentioned, we conclude that under the circumstances of that time the Tunisian state had the monopoly of political power in the hands of the ruling party which had a middle class and tendencies towards Arab culture which led to a Bourgeois struggle with the movement (Yusefiyan) To be this movement opposed the Tu-

nisian-French alliances that had signed the Bourgeoisie for the independence of Tunisia.

These quarrels were a struggle to identify Tunisia. The Bourgeois Opposition turned the Olive School into a base for organizing its first mass gathering. The coalition between the Yusefiyan Movement and the Zeytiniya School has been one of the sources of confrontation between political power and the religious establishment in Tunisia.

In the period between 1956 and 1958 Bourguiba adopted other cultural decisions in order to clear all the cultural and political roles of the religious organization of the olive tree. He published the magazine (al-Ahwal al Shakhsiya) for women in Tunisia which prohibited the number of polygamy. Bourguiba permitted a marriage of a Muslim woman to a non-Muslim man. The political strategy of the Tunisian government has been a replacement for modernization and secularism hence, Bourguiba has sought to overthrow the previous judicial institution and establish an independent judiciary. Bourguiba succeeded in disarming its religious opponents by deliberating the isolation of olives which were prohibited from attending religious institutions.

### **Development of Economic Inequality**

One of the reasons that contributed to the emergence of political Islam is the issue of unequal economic development. In the late decades of the twentieth century due to the development of cities and the migration of villagers conditions were created where most immigrants were in an unequal economy. Living in cities that was heavily exposed to the western culture of the traditional masses was a kind of anomaly. In this situation traditional dissident groups, such as the clergy

established umbrella support and sheltered non-standard groups. In this situation, the clergy provided a reading of Islam to escape the economic pressures and their growing demands and expectation which provided the possibility of establishing the promised paradise on earth. Political Islam was the result of such an evolution and it was indeed, a new formulation that emerged in response to the anomalous situation of immigrants in cities.

The second series of factors influencing the Tunisian Ennahda party is politics in processes. Processes are developments that occur over a long period of time and may be triggered by accelerator event. Regarding the political process of the Ennahda movement we can mention several processes:

#### **The expansion of Islamic revivalism**

Undoubtedly, the emergence of political Islam and the politicization of the Ennahda party is not possible without initiating a process called the Islamic Revival. Since the 1970s the Islamic world has focused more on religion and its external and external manifestations, including Islamic dress and Hijab separation between men and women turning to Halal food taking a stand against food forbidden moved. This Islamization was the starting point for the emergence of political Islam.

In this sense, the Islamic community by expressing the desire to live on the basis of the Islamic way opened the way for a move towards political Islam. Most of the thinkers and founders of political Islam first and foremost emphasize the way of Islamic life individual and then collective.

We now mention some of the cultural policies applied in Tunisia that somehow confirm the above mentioned:

Governmentalization of religious activities and direct government oversight of these

activities through religious institution and religious institutions affiliated with the presidential institution. Religious conversion institution from all governmental religious and social roles on the pretext that traditional thought has become a professional subset that follows public responsibility and the religious mogul will represent the presidential institution. Religious conversion scholars to the officials and government advisers to reduce the power of their opposition. The removal of the religious institution from all governmental religious and social roles on the pretext that traditional thought has become a professional and professional subset that follows public responsibility and the religious mogul will represent the president at congresses and meetings.

The monopoly of all religious activities including Ijtihad worship and the implementation of Islamic law in the political apparatus and conversion of the Mufti to a mere consultant to the government.

#### **The Growth of Radical Islam**

Networks, International networks have played an important role in the Islamic revival in recent years. These networks may be of an Islamic nature or merely a group of people who share a common religious background. The growth of the Networks and the type of global community's attack on the totality of Islam led to a process in which parties like Tunisia's Ennahda tried to show that Islam was not something that was presented to the world through some radical Islamic networks. On this basis, they presented a face of Islam that could be expressed as political Islam.

Al-Qaeda, including those groups that at that time sought to display a violent face of Islam could use the help of the global media and especially the internet to absorb and organize its forces in different parts of the

world and its foreign expression which would be considered by their operations and would be politically opposed to moderate groups such as Ennahda to the effect of this violent figure.

#### **Palestinian-Israeli conflicts:**

One of the concerns of this contemporary Islamism was the confrontation with the Western alliance of the West with regard to the individual and social life of Muslims and the suppression of the military and political domination of colonialism on Islamic lands especially the holy places. The occupation of symbolic places of worship is an indication of the continued domination of the West over Muslim affair. The attendant events along with the above mentioned factors and processes, there were some other factors that did not directly affect the establishment of the political process of the Ennahda Party but it was a factor that led to this trend to be accelerated. One of these factors is the occurrence of the Islamic Revolution in Iran the outbreak of the Afghan war in the Persian Gulf War in 1991 the September 11<sup>th</sup> and the American invasion of some Islamic countries such as Afghanistan and Iraq.

#### **The Occurrence of the Islamic**

National Security Advisor, Brzezinski, declared the 1979 Revolution in Iran was one of the most important events in the Middle East after the Second World War. The effect of this was that the Islamic revolution among the Islamic movements was the only Islamic movement able to gain political power based on religious struggles. In many Islamic countries, such as Egypt until this novel political Islam has never been successful. The occurrence of this revolution has had a very pro-

found effect on the leaders of Ennahda and even linked them to the Iranians especially with the Iranians. It became the seat of Europe.

#### **Afghanistan War**

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan led the country to become a place for the gathering of many Muslims who tried to defend their enemies from racism in the Islamic regions. This war turned into a platform for the reconstruction of the concept of jihad in the modern age. On the one hand, this led to the emergence of a spirit of jihad among the Muslims and on the other hand provoked Islamist sentiment so that some of the Muslims thought of defending Islam as political moves and in some way accelerating the course of political Islam forgave.

#### **The Persian Gulf War, 1991**

The first Gulf War is also a special consequence of the political action of Islamic groups of Delsha. In this war Saudi Arabia officially supported US involvement in Kuwaiti liberation becomes the most important military base in the United States. This led to the separation and pessimism of many Islamist groups under Saudi rule.

#### **The September 11<sup>th</sup> incident:**

The September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks as a turning point in the world has had an impact on the Western relation with the Muslim world, as well as the relations of Islamic groups with the West and even Islamic countries. This incident intensified the opposition between moderate and radical Muslims and provided new political opportunities for both governments and political activists. Some governments saw this war as an opportunity to discredit

their Islamic opponents and some even used this excuse to suppress moderate Islamist groups. Meanwhile, some Islamic groups that witnessed the violation of Islamic teachings were driven to radicalism and other moderate groups turned against them and led to the growth of political Islam.

Another important factor was the Iraq occupation by the United States in 2003. This is an important factor in the development of political Islam. Because after the occupation of Iraq the Islamist groups had two kinds of clashes with this fact: first radical groups had declared Jihad against them, but the moderate groups of the US invasion were considered a good means of overthrowing tyrannical governments which were somehow obstructed. The formation of political improvement and reform in the region has been.

### Conclusion

This paper examines the causes of the political process of the Islamic movement of Ennahda. This movement which existed in the seventies of the last century became a political party after several decades and most of its activities took on a political smell. Among the factors that led to this process there are three general cases with a number of subsets including circumstances' processes and accelerators. In examining the conditions of the Ennahda political party referred to such issues as the confrontation of this party with modernity the defeat of nationalist non-religious elites in Tunisia the lack of political participation in the country and the development of economic inequality in Tunisia. In the process of reviewing processes, including the processes that affect this area, we can mention issues such as the expansion of Islamic revival, the growth of radical Islamic network, and ultimately the conflict between Palestine and Israel. At the end of this article

along with the mentioned factors we mentioned factors and processes that did not directly influence the establishment of the political process of the Ennahda party but it was the factor that led to this trend to be accelerated. These factors include the 1979 revolution in Iraq, the outbreak of the first Persian Gulf War, of 1991, the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks, and the US invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan.

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