

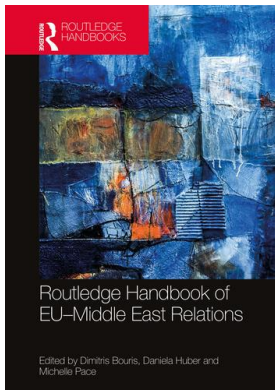
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# MODERATE ISLAMIST PARTIES IN THE MENA REGION AND EUROPE

## Between the democracy–human rights nexus and the stability–security nexus

*Djallil Lounnas*

### **Introduction**

With the aim of strengthening its partnerships and relations with its neighbours – particularly those of the Middle East and North African (MENA) region – in 2004 the European Union (EU) launched the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), whose goal was to promote “democracy, rule of law, respect for human rights, and social cohesion” (Commission of the European Communities, 2004). Accordingly, one of the key goals of this initiative was to deepen dialogue and relations with all peaceful political actors and civil society in the neighbourhood (Emerson and Youngs, 2017: 1). However, the launch of the ENP occurred in the context of the gradual political integration in the Arab countries of a major political force, namely moderate Islamist parties, which had been thus far excluded from power. This, in turn, raised major concerns within the EU regarding the commitment of those parties to the goals of the ENP, given the widespread perception in Europe at the time of an incompatibility between its basic principles of democracy and respect of human rights and those of political Islam, then perceived as a manifestation of radical and extremist political forces.

Those concerns reached a new level in 2011 in the context of the Arab Spring. Until then, those parties had either been part of coalition governments, with little impact on key strategic decisions, such as in Algeria, or were integrated into formal political institutions (parliaments, city halls, etc.) without being part of the government such as in Morocco, Egypt or Jordan. In the 2005 parliamentary elections in Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood won 88 seats in the national assembly, not enough to influence the policies of the government but enough to form the largest opposition group. One of the few cases of the victory of an Islamist party in general elections was in Palestine when Hamas won the 2006 parliamentary elections. However, Hamas is a separate case, that is, of a resistance – as much as of an Islamist – movement against Israeli occupation (Pace, 2009).

The Arab Spring changed this as several of these parties won the immediate post–Arab Spring elections and gained power. Consequently, this raised the apprehensions of the EU since the stance of these parties were seen as “questionable” or at least ambiguous especially on the

issue of law making/democracy, violence, individual rights, women's personal status issues and respect for religious minorities (op. cit. Emerson and Youngs).

However, the uneasiness of the EU vis-à-vis these parties further increased with the rise of new major security challenges in the MENA region; in particular the collapse of Libya and Syria, the rise of ISIS in the Middle East, and the explosion of "illegal" migration. This led an interviewed EU official to summarise the relationship with the MENA region today as structured around three key security issues: (1) terrorism which includes terrorist organisations in the MENA related to either Al Qaeda or the Islamic State (IS) as well as the threat of foreign fighter returnees; (2) illegal migration; (3) securing MENA borders from instability as they are the "gateway to Europe".

This chapter explores the evolution of the perceptions of Islamist parties and Europe towards each other; and how "the practice of power" has led to a dramatic evolution of these relationships/perceptions. More specifically, after briefly enquiring into the ideological roots of moderation strategies adopted by those parties, it explores how those parties followed such strategies prior to the Arab Spring and how they implemented them once in power, especially in the areas of democratic practices and individual/women rights. It also shows that the dramatic security changes in the MENA regions resulted in a shift of priorities. While not new, the security–stability nexus is now privileged over the democracy–human rights nexus. Moderate Islamist parties now in power had to in turn adapt themselves to such a shift as to appear as credible partners for the European governments.

In this chapter, by moderate Islamist parties, I mean those parties which do not call for a revolutionary change of the existing political institution aiming at the creation of an Islamic State, and instead insist on defending the Islamic principles of society by legislative and institutional means (Amghar in Emerson and Youngs, 2007: 15). Robert Springborg calls these parties Muslim democrats and argues that these are

political parties that have either rejected violence and radicalism or restricted its application to what they see as efforts to achieve national liberation; or have evolved from being politically passive and focused on encouraging personal religiosity and/or providing social services, into being political activists.

As he further explains, all are nationally focused and seek to achieve their goals by democratic means (Springborg, 2007: 5).

### **Political power, Islam and democracy**

As Yadh Benachour explains, in the original conception of Sunni Islam, politics and any policy are expected to have as their sole goal conformity to the law imposed by the "divine legislator" and his prophet. Thus, the state is expected to be "a state of religion", a guardian of the law (*Shar'*). From this perspective, the law is the expression of the "divine will" and guarantees the social order, it is the manifestation of justice while maintaining the unity of the community and its identity (Ben Achour, 2008).

In this context, modern political Islam emerged in 1928 with the creation of the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) in Egypt under the influence of Hassan Al Bana (1906–1949) and Sayyed Al Qutb (1906–1966), the ideologue of the organisation (see the writings of Olivier Carré, 2004). Originally with a totalising vision of political and social life, the MB considered that the life of believers must be united and structured around a single element: Islam, arguing that the Koran was their only constitution.

Furthermore, the core of Islamic political thought structures around the concept of *tawhid* (unity of God) and *hakkimiya* (power of God) which confer all powers, including temporal powers on earth to God (Bori, 2007). Thus, the role of temporal power, its very *raison d'être*, is to be found in religion, that is in the Koran and the Sharia (ibid.). For the Pakistani thinker Abu Ala Al Maududi, the author of *Jihad in Islam* and a strong supporter of the *tawhid* and *hakkimiya*, the power of God and men are mutually exclusive and thus “obedience to human laws is a grave act of impiety [for] which punishment should be death” (Kepel, 2000: 32). An opinion largely shared by Al Qutb, for whom “anyone who believes that he has the right to impose a law on a group of human beings attributes himself a divine right as this person attributes himself one of the highest attributes of God” (ibid.). By doing this, both Al Maududi and Al Qutb opposed democracy, in which by definition sovereignty belongs to the people, as contrasted to the conception of politics in Islam, in which sovereignty belongs to God.

Thus, several scholars argued that Islam and democracy were antinomic. Samuel Huntington for example, argued that for “Islam, for instance, no distinction exists between religion and politics or between the spiritual and the secular, and political participation was historically an alien concept” (Huntington, 1984). Huntington further argued that given that democracy is associated with the West, it was unlikely to emerge as a major political force in the MENA region. Bernard Lewis (Lewis, 1996) and Jeffrey Haynes (Haynes, 2006) shared this opinion on the incompatibility between Islamic values and democracy due to the absence of secularism and the fact that Islam embraces both the spiritual and temporal/political life of individuals. However, such authors like many others focused only on a specific fringe of the Islamist current, i.e. the fundamentalist one, which Olivier Roy and Kai Hafez present as a current which rejects all forms of secularisation in favour of an order constructed on Islamic law as a fundament (Hafez, 2010). Thus, many authors ignored that a major reevaluation exercise had taken place within Islamic thought in regard to the compatibility between Islam and secularism and, as matter of fact, democracy.

Indeed, a major work of reevaluation of political Islam towards moderation started in the mid-1960s within the Muslim Brotherhood, then led by Hassan Al Hudaibi. In 1977, a book attributed to Al Hudaibi (who had died in 1973), called the *Du'at, la Qadat* (Preachers not Judges), showed that political principles of democracy could be found in Islam. He showed, for example, that the caliphs were elected to an office sanctified by an oath like in modern democracies (Zollner, 2009). He also argued that apostasy (*takefir*) which constituted the basis for radical organisations to declare jihad, could be declared on some people; however, their punishment should be left to God (*irja*), thus implicitly rejecting the resort to violence (ibid.).

By doing this, Al Hudaibi, and those who supported his ideas, put forward the concepts of *ijihad* (making an effort), *istihssan* (preferential judgement), *istislah* (judgement to improve the common good) and *ijmaa* (consensus) (Ben Achour, 2008), all used by political Islamists to justify their political participation on grounds that they allow for the improvement of the situation of believers, a duty in Islam. Yusuf Al-Qaradawi, for his part, strongly supported the complementarity of Islam and democracy arguing that the good of Islam required the participation of Muslims, and that Islam included democratic principles through the *shura* (consultation) and that rulers were accountable for their deeds (Al Qaradawi in Euben and Zaman, 2009).

Based on this, for Schwedler “Moderation is implicitly (and sometimes explicitly) tied to liberal notions of individual rights and democratic notions of tolerance, pluralism and cooperation” (Schwedler, 2011: 352). The expected benefits from such moderation strategies are high, in the sense that rewards usually entail participation in the political process as well as in political institutions and potentially a larger share of power (Schwedler, 2013: 3–6). Most of the moderation-related theoretical models emphasise the ways in which structural openings and constraints

provide incentives for previously excluded groups to enter the system and play its rules that are set and controlled by incumbent regimes. This process is captured in the idea of what Samuel Huntington (1993) called a participation/moderation trade off, a sort of democratic bargaining which entails a balance between participation and moderation that makes opposition groups become eligible to take advantage of the political openings, but only once in power.

Indeed, the inclusion-moderation strategy amplified in the context of the Arab Spring and led Islamists to moderate their strategies, agreeing to (1) abandon violence and any commitment to revolution; (2) accept existing basic social, economic and social institutions; and (3) to work through elections and parliamentary procedures in order to achieve power and put through their policies. Therein rests the essence of the debate regarding the strategies of moderation and the possibility of reconciling democratic principles with those of *tauhid*, *hakkimiyah* and *sharia*.

Nonetheless, on key issues such as human/women's rights and democracy, Islamist parties continued to be perceived negatively or at least with apprehension by Western countries, whether the United States or Europe. Furthermore, the Arab Spring led to the emergence of major security threats in the MENA region including terrorism, failed states and "illegal" migration. In this context, those parties confronted with the reality of political power had to face a double challenge, that is, to show their "real" commitment to the democratic processes while at the same time confronting those security threats and proving to be reliable partners for the EU.

### **Political Islamists and the exercise of power: democracy and human rights**

As Anne Wolf shows, in view of the elections of the Constituent Assembly in 2011, Ennahda's political program was clear and explicit in that the party was dedicated to establishing a modern and democratic Tunisia, rooted in dignity and social and economic freedom (Wolf, 2017). Thus, Ennahda clearly put itself in the path of the ideas of the reformist Islamists such as Al Hedaybi and Al Qaradawi which was reflected in the Ennahda leader Rached Ghannouchi's endorsement of modernity and power sharing (ibid.).

More generally, and in the context of a democratic transition, moderate Islamists constituted an important pole of attraction for the masses and pious/conservative middle-classes which are willing to embrace changes while rejecting radicalism and violence. By doing this they appeared as credible partners and actors of stabilisation that could be associated with other parties including secular ones, while at the same time seducing their popular basis of support with a conservative and reformist agenda (Boubekeur and Amghar, 2006).

The Egyptian MB also showed their disposition to endorse democracy in the immediate aftermath of the Arab Spring. In February 2011, it created the Freedom and Justice Party. Muhamed Badi (the MB's supreme guide) announced that this party would be a "civil party of Islamic frame of reference and open to all the citizens from all faiths" (Wickham, 2013: 174), i.e. including Christians, thus implicitly confirming that this party would not be based on religious orientations and would be respectful of rights of minorities and guarantee religious freedoms. Carrie Wickham explains that the Egyptian MB thus evoked public interest (*Al Maslaha Al Ama*) and the good of the community to endorse and defend fair presidential elections, limitations of power and the right of political parties and associations. At the same time, they remained ambiguous on social/cultural issues using the concept of *Thawabet Al Umma* (values of the community) to put limits on individual freedoms and conservatism (ibid.). For example, major ambiguities remained regarding the Coptic Christians and the role of women in society. Indeed, some leaders of the MB argued that along the Sharia, women and Copts should be excluded

from higher positions. However, it was also argued that this was valid for the MB organisation and that there was no need to translate this into a law (Hamzawy and Brown, 2010). As Wickham (2004) argues, on most of the divisive issues where there could be a contradiction between Islamic and democratic principles, the MB resorted to ambiguity which allowed them to avoid putting themselves at odds with their social basis.

In that regard, the Jordanian Islamists showed a remarkable sense of adaptation and endorsement of legality (Hazimeh, 2015). Indeed, taking advantage of a democratic opening in 1989, the Jordanian Islamists structured essentially around the Islamic Action Front (IAF) and, attempting to broaden their basis of support, endorsed democratic principles, individual freedoms and freedom of expression (Sahliyah, 2005: 118–119). While they agreed that their party was founded on “Muslim” principles, they however rejected any kind of sectarianism showing a will to cooperate with the authorities. However, in the wake of the Arab Spring, they did mobilise their basis demanding the monarch to transit towards a fully-fledged constitutional monarchy. This led to further division within the movement and a major split in 2015. All this, however, did not alter the overall stance of the IAF on democratic rule and principles.

When it comes to women’s rights, moderate Islamist parties have shown important ideological shifts. However here they remain nonetheless conservative in essence and ambiguous in practice. Thus, in judicial/legislative matters and regarding issues which are not referred to specifically in the Sharia, moderate Islamist parties endorse the principles of reform and change. For example, in Tunisia, the Ennahda party endorsed and supported parity between men and women in elections and representation in parliamentary elections (Thédrel, 2011); in 2014 they also supported the concept of equality between men and women in rights and duties inscribed in the constitution, renouncing their initial notion of complementarity of men and women – which had provoked an outrage in Tunisia where the equality between men and women had been a political milestone since the country’s independence in 1956 (Verdier, 2019). They supported laws which authorised women to marry foreigners and the abolition of the requirement for women to have their husbands’ authorisations to take their children abroad. However, at the same time, on all matters where the Sharia was specific, the Ennahda stuck to Islamic law and refused any reforms as illustrated in late 2019 when Ennahda supported laws in inheritance in which, following the Sharia, women are to receive only half of the share of men (Online: Human Rights Watch, 2018).

In Egypt, Mohamed El Morsi, during his short tenure in power, proved to be ambiguous on women’s rights as well. He removed the minimum quotas for women from the constitution and reduced the age for legal marriage, recognising the Sharia as the principle basis for the laws and rules (Derichs and Fennert, 2014) while at the same time appointing women and Copts as key presidential advisers. He also held the project of nominating a woman as vice-president, although it never materialised. To that extent, and while in rhetoric El Morsi was ambiguous, in practice the laws passed were extremely conservative and in effect reduced the rights of women (Tracy Mc Veigh, 2013).

By contrast, the Jordanian IAF – while not part of the government – proved in general more liberal and open especially on women’s rights issues. Indeed, after a major split and internal conflict in 2015 between the hardliners and moderates, the IAF established a coalition of secular and tribal leaders, and reaffirmed its endorsement of the constitution (The Wilson Center, 2017). On the issue of women’s rights, the IAF established a minimum quota on the number of women that are to be part of their consultative council (Shura council), a first in the Arab world. In terms of political slogan and rather than “al islam houwa al hal” (Islam is the solution), a common slogan to these organisations, the IAF opted for “Renaissance of the homeland, dignity

for citizens” with a program focused on the social-economic needs of the citizens rather than on Islamic principles (ibid.).

To that extent, most of the Islamist parties met the EU requirements and appeased their partners on those issues by meeting what Mohamed Hafez refers to as the minimum democratic requirement of Western modernity – that is, the constitutional state within the framework of a popular sovereignty founded on electoral procedures (op. cit. Hafez, 2010). They endorsed human rights and basic secular principles such as freedom of religion and overall remained ambiguous on the issue of women’s rights, taking little steps to neither promote nor to implement a conservative agenda on those issues.

### **The European response: from the democratic–human rights nexus to the security–stability nexus**

In this context and as a matter of fact, prior to the Arab Spring, the EU reciprocated those visible changes by engaging moderate Islamist parties rather than attempting to contain them. However, as Pace and Wolff argue, the focus of this engagement was on “de-radicalisation” and combating extremism (Pace and Wolff, in Schumacher et al., 2017). Thus, the EU praised its southern partners in the fight against ‘extremist interpretations of Islam and the dialogue between cultures’ (ibid.). It also included some limited parliamentary engagements via dialogue between members of the European parliament and representatives of these parties in their national parliaments. As Pace and Wolff also argue, such initiatives remained more or less superficial and limited. Furthermore, the EU, while offering to help and finance democracy and civil society in the MENA region, such aid remained very difficult to access for parties and associations that were linked to Islamist parties. The post–Arab Spring situation and the arrival of these parties to power did not, in theory, change these EU orientations.

Indeed, shortly after the Arab Spring, Stefan Füle (European Union, 2012), EU commissioner for enlargement and the ENP, presented his regrets for the EU support for authoritarian regimes instead of democracy. In March 2011, the EU released a document *A Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity with The Southern Mediterranean*, updated in 2013. This document re-affirmed the basic EU principles on democracy, human rights, social justice, good governance and the rule of law (European Union, 2013). All this did not present any major constraints for these parties as they had already integrated at least partially these EU requirements into their political platforms as part of their moderation strategy.

However, the collapse of Libya, the civil war in Syria and in Iraq, the rise of ISIS and the explosion of “illegal” migration led to a radical change in the EU’s perspective: to shift to a clear focus on security and stability (Dandashly, 2018). While not new at all, the focus on these issues now took precedence over the ones related to human rights and democracy. Thus, Islamist parties were also expected to meet those concerns in the context of this partnership and to prove themselves credible governing actors. Indeed, as an EU official explained in 2014, “in the south (MENA region) you have the origins of the security concerns of Europe, the south may become a rear basis for those threats”; he further argued that cooperation with MENA countries will be from then onward structured around this nexus of security–stability.<sup>1</sup> Thus, border control, security cooperation between countries regarding the trafficking of migrants and fighting terrorism became the core of this new security–stability nexus.

The fluidity of 2017 context increased the focus on this nexus as the security concerns of the EU increased in the post ISIS environment with regard to the stabilisation of the countries where ISIS deployed itself: Syria, Iraq and Libya. On the one hand, the related security concerns were not only with “illegal” migration but also the return of foreign fighters to their

home countries, including in Europe. One related concern was also the redeployment of ISIS abroad in new areas closer to Europe (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia or Libya) knowing that over 7000 foreign fighters came from this region (Watanabe, 2018). According to an EU official, in 2018, “the MENA region has witnessed new changes which raise the concerns of Europe [. . .] destabilization remains a major concern for us”.<sup>2</sup>

### **The political Islamists’ response to the stability–security nexus**

Regarding the security concerns raised by the EU very early on in the post Arab Spring, the Political Islamists’ responses have varied according to each specific context. As such, they had rejected violence as a means to achieve their political goals and endorsed democracy as the means to achieve these. The main problem was, however, on how to deal with armed Jihadi organisations which rejected this strategy of *wassatiya*, i.e. centrist, and advocated instead a more radical Islam and the use of violence.

In this regard, the political Islamists were somewhat ambiguous and it took them time to fully commit themselves to combat violence. In Tunisia, for example, in the immediate post-Bin Ali era, the state security apparatus was weakened and the new authorities did not want to constrain freedom of expression. Thus, as Michael Ayeri explains, it created a vacuum which radicals used to spread their ideas. Organisations like Ansar Al Sharia in Tunisia took advantage of this to recruit people and spread their radicalism as well as to recruit people to join the Jihad in Syria, Iraq and Libya. The new authorities in Tunis let things happen and did not try to prevent young men departing for Jihad, while, in some cases, based on revolutionary solidarity, they encouraged young people to volunteer for the fight in Syria against the Syrian regime (see Ellouz, 2013). Ayeri explained that Ennahda tolerated radicals including Ansar Al Sharia in those early stages both for fear of their excesses but also in the hope of recuperating them.<sup>3</sup>

It took the attacks on the US embassy in Tunis in September 2012 and the rise of domestic terrorism with the deployment of the Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) for Ennahda to eventually change its stance on Ansar Al Sharia and other radical movements, and to support and engage itself fully in the fight against terrorism. Leaving behind its ambiguous stance, especially after the dramatic attacks that hit Tunisia between 2014 and 2016, Rached Ghannouchi in a Tribune published in 2018 in the French newspapers *Le Monde*, reaffirmed his attachment to democratic principles and the unequivocal condemnation of violence and terrorism (Ghannouchi, 2018).

For his part Morsi, while fully condemning violence and jihadism, initially tried to address the issue by initiating a dialogue with the Salafi jihadi groups which had launched an insurgency in the Sinai, especially with Tawhid wal Jihad and Ansar Bayt Al Maqdis (Sabry, 2015), which were responsible for numerous attacks (particularly against Israel), taking advantage of the security vacuum in the context of the fall of Mubarak. The problem raised was that while these were open to a dialogue which would stop the attacks against the Egyptian security services, they refused to stop their attacks against Israel thus directly testing the commitments of Morsi to the peace treaty with Israel. The negotiations eventually failed and, in the summer of 2012, the Jihadists ambushed and killed 16 Egyptian soldiers. As a result, Morsi gave a speech promising that the perpetrators would pay a high price for these attacks and the Egyptian army launched a massive crackdown in the Sinai called “Operation Sinai” which continued until his overthrow in July 2013.

On the issue of migration and human trafficking as well, Islamist movements – once in power – also seemed “open” to European concerns on these issues. Thus Morocco, since 2011, has increased its measures to combat “illegal” migration including by sending back underage



“illegal” migrants to their home countries, the reinforcement of controls, and the dismantling of networks related to human trafficking which led the EU to provide financial support to Morocco given the important pressure exercised in Rabat by this phenomena (Iraqi and Crétois, 2018). In 2018, a trust fund was created by the EU which allocated 148 million euros to Morocco to combat “illegal migration” (European Union, 2018).<sup>4</sup> In this regard, the EU Commissioner for European Neighborhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, Johannes Hahn, qualified Morocco as a key partner with whom cooperation needed to be intensified. The PJD (Party for Justice and Development)-led government has passed several laws since 2011 criminalising related activities while at the same time refusing the creation of a transit centre financed by the EU on Moroccan territory.

A similar concern was observed in Tunisia as early as 2011, where shortly after the fall the Bin Ali regime, Rached Ghannouchi made a statement to the French press agency AFP in which he clearly stated that “soon Europe won’t have to worry about the illegal migration incoming from Tunisia” and that Tunisia would uphold all its previous commitments on this issue (Directinfo, 2011). Thus the Ennahda government supported strong measures to combat this phenomenon which led to a major decrease of the annual “illegal” migrants trying to reach Europe from Tunisia, falling from 23,000 in 2011 to 6000 in 2017, while 9000 were apprehended in the same year (Lixi, 2018). In 2018, Ennahda called upon the Tunisian government to take all the measures and implement all the reforms needed to put an end to “illegal” migration (Réalités, 2018).

Thus, and once in power, Islamists resorted to pragmatism rather than ideology in their measures and actions to confront those challenges, be they illegal migration or terrorism. This allowed them to appear as reliable and responsible partners for the European governments who were initially apprehensive of them. However, this resort to “pragmatism” rather than ideological orthodoxy had consequences on the parties: a split between the “old” and “younger elites”.

Indeed, as Hamza Meddeb (2019) points out in the case of Ennahda in Tunisia, since 2011, by enforcing concessions on its Islamic project and trying to find a consensus with the Tunisian society to present itself as a party of government, and eventually renouncing its ideology, Ennahda has faced a tremendous crisis of identity. This was met by resistance from “the old guard” which remained attached to conservative principles while a new rising younger elite, more pragmatic, is more concerned about electoral success and how to cope with the orientation of voters who are more worried about their daily problems than the building of a state based on Islamic principles. On the other hand and by comparison in Morocco, the PJD’s access to power did not lead the party to such a major “reevaluation” of its ideological foundations and therefore did not face a major crisis of identity. Indeed, and while the PJD did face several crises, especially in 2016–2017, these were leadership crises unrelated to the orientations of the party as such. This allowed the party to manage two consecutive electoral victories in the 2011 and 2016 elections.

## Conclusion

When they arrived to power in 2011, the moderate Islamist parties were seen with major apprehension on the part of the EU, especially on the issues of democracy and human rights. However, the moderate Islamist parties had already started to move towards a major “ideological” re-assessment formulation since the 1960s which led them to endorse and support those principles, thus reaching “a minimum consensus” on democracy. As a result, once in power, they did not alter the “rule” of the game. Moreover, and even in such cases where reforms

may contradict Islamic Law principles, they resorted to ambiguity. These ambiguities did not go un-noticed and have resulted in the EU's mistrust. Nonetheless, they proved overall more pragmatic than ideologically oriented. The fact that from 2013/14 EU concerns towards the MENA region started to shift towards security concerns on issues such as terrorism and migration and, given that those issues directly threatened the stability of those very countries where the moderate Islamists were in power, led those same countries to adopt stricter measures and cooperative strategies with the EU. Thus, all in all, while ambiguities and concerns remain, moderate Islamist parties have nonetheless shown their ability to adapt themselves and to work with European government in a cooperative manner and thus to be perceived as reliable partners in most cases, except for the Palestinian Hamas which continued to be perceived at least officially as a radical organisation.

### Notes

- 1 Author interview with an E.U official, 2014.
- 2 Author's interview with an E.U official, 2018.
- 3 Interview with Michael Ayeri, director of International Crisis Group, Tunis, Tunisia, March 2018.
- 4 See [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/news\\_corner/news/western-mediterranean-route-eu-reinforces-support-morocco\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/news_corner/news/western-mediterranean-route-eu-reinforces-support-morocco_en)

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