

## Lessons from the Islamists Failure

### News:

After years in exile and after years of calling for Islam, the last few weeks have seen Ennahdah do a complete U-turn on Islam. Tunisia was the birth place of the Arab Spring which ushered in an era of unprecedented change in the Middle East. But at a recent conference Ennahda turned its back on Islamic politics for secular rule. Ennahda's leader, Rachid Ghannouchi explained: *"following the revolution of 2011 and the adoption of the new Constitution in 2014, there is no reason for a party in Tunisia to refer to the term political Islam."* Ghanouchi added, *"The party would seek to define itself as a democratic and civil movement."*

### Comment:

With Ennahda making official their abandoning of Islamic politics they have officially followed a number of Islamic political organisations that have also failed. These groups made the same mistakes as their predecessors and have let down the millions of people who sacrificed their blood for change. Whilst we do not question the sincerity of most of these groups who acted according to their understanding of Islamic political change, here are some of the reasons why these organisations failed, miserably, after emerging in power.

**It's not the man, it's the system.** The first mistake of such parties was to lead the people into thinking that the various problems within society was down to the ruler only. In reality, no ruler rules on his own, they need the facilitators of oppression and have a whole regimes to achieve this. This was made evident when the old guard quickly deposed of Egypt's Mohamed Morsi in 2013. This is the case in much of the Muslim world where the systems were designed by the West to ensure that power lies with a secular elite. To create Islamic system within the old corrupt secular system was always destined to fail.

**Appeasement gets you nowhere.** Most of these Islamic parties ruled from a position of weakness where they were more focused on appeasing others, as opposed to carrying out their mandate. Ennahda for example constantly reassured secular parties in Tunisia, eventually voting to allow individuals from the old regime to run in parliamentary elections. The Muslim Brotherhood adopted a similar approach, this time with international powers under the excuse of "protecting tourism" by signing security agreements with the Jewish entity. Both parties never realised that such a policy makes you look weak and incompetent.

**Have a plan.** Many of these political parties have been in existence for decades and have therefore had a chance to prepare for day they come into power. Preparation comes in the form of a constitution, political road map or individual policies which are to be pursued. The reality was unfortunately, both Ennahda and the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) lacked each and every one of these things and made the structural, economic and societal problems worse, the longer they remained in power.

Egypt for instance had 40% of its population living under the poverty line. Instead of acting to restructure and redistribute the huge resources present within Egypt, MB took the decision to approach the IMF who are notorious for putting countries into a constant debt cycle leading to further poverty.

**Give the people what they voted you for.** It is clear that in the peak of the Arab Spring the civilians around the Arab world wanted Islamic Governance. Most felt that the Islamic rules could solve the various issues present within society and voted these parties in on such a mandate. However, both Ennahda and MB backtracked on their promises of ruling by Islam by arguing for its “impracticability” in the modern era. They carried out unIslamic actions including renewing treaties with enemy states and taking out interest-based loans whilst justifying their lack of application of Islam with excuses of maintaining tourism. They used the Islamic sentiments of the people to pursue secular, political projects which the people quickly saw through.

**Change the system, not work through it.** The Prophet (saw) in his Seerah rejected all opportunities to work within existing political systems to create change. This is because the degree of change will always be restricted by the goalposts of the existing system. As opposed to uprooting the existing system, Islamic groups have compromised and abandoned Islamic political principles and have affirmed the secular regimes in place by opting to work through them. This does nothing but restore confidence in a dying system which was imposed by colonialist nations and have so far given the Muslim world nothing but problems.

**Silence your opposition.** Despite have mass support and despite being elected into power both Ennahdah and the MB stood stunned in front of their critics. In both Egypt and Tunisia the old guard were never going to accept being out of power and they tune d every decision be the newly elected governments into a drama and mass stand-off in the streets. Rather than taking on the opposition, with the support of the mass’s they proved to be incompetent and weak in dealing with these rebels. In Egypt Morsi did not take on the opposition, neither did he silence them, in the end he just compromised his own position in order to appease them. Today Morsi sits in a prison with a death sentence on his neck for all his compromises. Both Ennahda and MB failed to deal with their opposition.

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