Islamist Parties and the Challenges of Power in North Africa: Evidence from Morocco

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ABSTRACT:

The advent of Islamist parties to power in some North African countries such as Egypt, Tunisia and Morocco raised hopes for many people. However, the strong mobilization of the secret state structures, also called the "deep state", generated a genuine uncertainty setting. Given its high intervention capability, the deep state showed that it had the resources to seriously undermine any attempt towards change initiated by the Islamists.
Using the Principal-Agent Approach, we show that, in the absence of asymmetric information, there is an optimal risk- sharing between the Deep State (Principal) and the Islamist Government (Agent). Both parties have the opportunity to enter into an implicit and informal contract. The latter allows them to preserve not only their interests but also those of the nation that they represent. Considering the risk of escalation, it seems that the North African countries still need a strong and benevolent Deep State.

Keywords: *Deep State, Islamist parties, Power, Principal-Agent approach, North Africa*

Résumé

L'arrivée des partis islamistes au pouvoir dans certains pays d'Afrique du Nord tels l'Egypte, Tunisie et Maroc était porteuse d'espoir pour les populations. Mais, la forte mobilisation des structures étatiques secrètes, baptisées «Etat profond » a créé un véritable climat d'incertitude. En raison de sa forte capacité d'intervention, l'Etat profond a montré qu'il dispose des moyens de nuire gravement à toute tentative de changement aspiré par les islamistes.

En utilisant l'approche du Principal-Agent, nous montrons qu'en l'absence d'asymétrie de l'information, il existe un partage optimal du risque entre l'Etat profond (Principal) et le Gouvernement islamiste (Agent). Les deux parties ont la possibilité de conclure un contrat implicite et informe. Ce dernier leur permet de préserver non seulement leurs intérêts, mais aussi ceux de la nation qu'ils représentent. Face au risque de débordement, il semble que les pays d'Afrique du Nord ont encore besoin d'un Etat profond fort et bienveillant.

Mots-clés : Etat profond, Partis islamistes, pouvoir, approche du principal-agent, Afrique du Nord

INTRODUCTION

Unlike most democratic revolutions triggered in many parts of the world (Chile, South Africa, etc.), the uprisings in North Africa were largely initiated and led, as a spontaneous protest movement, by apolitical youth in search of dignity and freedom. The peaceful protests also served as an incubator for Islamists to unleash their movements. The context of

the uprisings allowed them to come to grips with or even exercise power by means of a democratic process rather than through *Jihad*. In essence, the rise of Islamists to power in some North African countries is a powerful sign for the popular rejection of both economic and political desolation.

People, namely the youth, rebelled against living conditions that severely affected their well-being: repression, unemployment, corruption, nepotism, cronyism, etc. Undeniably, the ensuing populism benefited the Islamist parties that were much aided by an untarnished political record.

Despite their history and embeddedness in North African societies, some Islamist parties such as *Ennahda* in Tunisia, the *PJD* in Morocco, and Egypt's *PJL* were called upon to exert their first hands-on experience of power. Unsurprisingly, they were confronted with complex legal, administrative, and political structures. Actually, such structures are what the Turks usually brand as "the deep state". These structures frequently indicate the existence of a secret institution. It essentially consists of government officials, soldiers, dignitaries, judges, and members of different security apparatuses. Each and every stakeholder acts on the margins of the legitimately established government for the protection of their interests as well as those of the system they represent.

The North African deep state developed a political order founded upon a hybrid system combining control and authoritarianism. In modern North African history, the traditional alliance between the military, security services, certain political elites, the bureaucrats, the notables, and the business class undermined attempts to establish the rule of law. It is also true that Western governments backed this system on behalf of the struggle against terrorism, geopolitical stability, and the preservation of their economic interests.

For some political scientists, the deep state in the North Africa region is a barrier to change. Because it has a great power of intervention, it can significantly jeopardize any attempt to build a genuine democratic society. For others, it is rather a counter-power, some kind of a shield against any potential obscurantist or totalitarian drifts.

In this paper, the analytical framework we adopt for analyzing the relationship between the deep state and the Islamist Executive is that of the Agency theory or, more accurately, the Principal-Agent model. Definitely, an extensive body of literature exists concerning the application of this model (Holmstrom, Shavell, Grossman, McAfee, McMillan, Laffont, Tirole, etc.). Yet, in the North African context, only a few scholars were interested in exploring the relationship between the deep state as a Principal/Executive (Government or President) and the Islamist government as Agent. Methodologically, the Principal-Agent approach offers a two-fold advantage. It not only helps better understand the real issues of the distribution of power between the two major actors, but also tackles matters related to information asymmetry.

We aim to show the extent to which the Principal-Agent approach can be used to build, in the case of Morocco, a model of an optimal power-sharing covenant between an Islamist government and a deep state. Such sharing will be analyzed as an agency agreement. Within such contract, the deep state, altruistic (Principal) and the government led by democratically elected Islamists (Agent) are well advised to cohabitate for the preservation of a certain balance of power.

For the sake of clarity, our paper is organized as follows. *Section 2* depicts the process of accessing to power by Islamist political parties in some North African countries such as Morocco, Egypt and Tunisia. *Section 3* describes the deep state as a genuine counter-power facing the democratically elected Islamists. *Section 4* provides a critical analysis of the relationship between the deep state and the Islamist executive in Morocco. *Section 5* presents a summary and teachings that may pave the ground for building a real democratic model in North Africa.

THE ADVENT OF ISLAMIST PARTIES TO POWER

Following the nationalist movements, the rise of Islamist-inspired political movements in North Africa is a reaction to past circumstances. Indeed, around the first half of the 20th century, partly under the pressure of the secular Atatürk movement, the region experienced the collapse of the Islamic *Khilafa*. Two trends rapidly emerged. These were the *Salafist* movement in Egypt (Manar Rachid Rida) and the theological liberation trend in North Africa. Sheikh Abdelhamid Ben Badis (Algeria) and Abdul Karim Al-Khattabi in Morocco mainly represented the latter.

In this backdrop of Islamist vigor, the Egyptian Hassan Al-Banna founded the reform movement of the Muslim Brotherhood *in 1928. This movement was a response to the model of Western democracy. It was also a reaction against the evangelization of Christians and certain other transformations of the Egyptian society, which the movement deemed negative.*

Since their emergence, the Islamist political movements experienced momentous changes [1]. These mutations were conditioned by the political opportunities that arose (repression or domestication), the changing demands of the populace, and the geopolitical conditions prevailing in the Middle East.

The figure below describes the six evolution phases of political Islam, as defined by Gilles Kepel (2000):

Figure 1 : Evolution of Political Islamism

Phase	Features
1967-1973	Progressive evolution of the international context (the *Six Day War*, *Indo-Pakistani War*, *Yom Kippur War)* and economic (first oil shock). These events created favorable conditions for the success of Islamism.
1974-1982	Training and early emergence of major Islamic hubs in some Muslim countries such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Iran, and Pakistan.
1982-1991	A boom in all directions from the original four strongholds that fed into many countries: Sudan, Algeria, Tunisia, Turkey, Lebanon, Palestine, Afghanistan, Western Europe.
1992-1997	A swing of many Islamist movements into violence, including in Algeria and Egypt. Additionally, Westerners developed a growing interest for political Islam.
Since 1997	The ebbing of militant Islam, mainly visible in Turkey, Algeria or Egypt.

Source: G. Kepel**,** 2000.

Contrary to a fairly widespread belief, the conservative and reformist parties working for the change of political regimes were not the exclusive actors that mobilized the political potential

of Islam. Even some North African states deliberately exploited militant Islam to legitimize their authoritarianism and shore up social conservatism (Gellner, 1981).

Having long remained in a radical opposition to North African regimes, Islamist political parties have gradually incorporated the bet of liberal democracy. Since the second half of the nineties, they showed a remarkable ability for adaptation and management of the daily concerns of society. They slowly engaged into some sort of "silent bottom-up revolution" by assuming a social and humanitarian role through a network of associations. In exchange for accepting the rules imposed by the authorities, Islamist parties such as the PJD in Morocco were granted participation in political life. They acknowledged and defended in Islamic terms the legitimacy of the monarchy. Certainly, their relations with political regimes were often strained and sometimes even conflicting. Yet, both parties have chosen a sort of forced cohabitation. Similarly, the Muslim Brotherhood *in Egypt under Mubarak managed to elect representatives in Parliament.*

On the eve of the North African uprisings, many Islamist political movements already underwent a substantial internal transformation. By abandoning the utopian revolutionary project of the Islamic State (Dawla islamiyya) they plainly stood out from the fundamentalist prospect**.** This meaningful shift delineated itself through a relatively simple, pragmatic, and soothing discourse. Its basic components revolved around the themes of moral order, the strengthening of faith (al-iman), social justice, the importance of the family, and the appreciation of labor. Islamists also appropriated the concept of the "political activist" as the main instrument of change. Turkey's Islamic-conservative party, the *Justice and Development Party* (AKP), fascinated Islamist movements. They admired its successful blend of the exercise of political power, attachment to Islamic values, and the attraction of a large part of businesspersons.

Islamist parties no longer sought to set up a political regime exclusively founded on *Islamic Law (Sharia)*. They swapped their doctrinal and rather moralizing attitude for some form of moderate Islamism."They now accept the nation-state, operate within its constitutional framework, reject violence (except in cases of foreign occupation), have adopted a reformist rather than revolutionary vision and invoke universal democratic norms" (*International Crisis Group*, 2005). Actually, analogous political entities found in Western democracies defend comparable conservative ideas. The Islamist slogan is no longer necessarily "Islam is our solution", but the struggle against corruption (Alfassad) and the revival of the economy on new foundations, namely social justice (al-adala Ijtimaia)) and freedom (al-Hurriyya).

Thus, in the context that prevailed immediately before North African uprisings, it is possible to classify North African countries into three groups:

- Countries where the political participation of Islamists is symbolic (authorized but highly controlled) and institutionalized through legal political parties as in Morocco and Algeria);
- Countries where the political participation of Islamists is symbolic (authorized but highly controlled) and that do not officially recognize political parties of Islamic obedience, but authorize some of their activists to participate, without any political label, in elections. Such is the case in Egypt and to a lesser extent Tunisia;

- Countries where the political participation of Islamists is strictly prohibited. This latter group includes particularly Libya, which was governed by a repressive regime unappreciated in the West.

Based on the categorization above, a key remark is necessary. There is a strong and established correlation in North Africa between the cost of change and the degree of integration or exclusion of Islamist parties. Indeed, countries such as Morocco and Algeria that symbolically allowed the political participation of Islamists were mildly impacted by the subsequent uprisings. As to the countries led by repressive regimes against Islamist movements such as Libya, Egypt and Tunisia, they have dipped into uncertainty.

Furthermore, during the 2011 uprisings, the North African Islamic movements enacted relatively flexible strategies and sometimes even adopted reluctant attitudes. In Morocco, for example, the PJD formally opposed demonstrations aimed at achieving political change by means of force. Instead, it favored siding with the monarchy, hoping for a change within stability. In opposition, the *Muslim Brotherhood* in Egypt was less clear. Certainly, they called for the fall of the Mubarak regime. Yet, their political commitment was not commensurate with their weight in the Egyptian society. Their goal was to avoid confrontations with the military as well as with the other liberally inspired political forces. In Tunisia, the Islamists chose to join the revolution, even though their presence remained symbolic.

The Islamic movements' strategy, or rather tactic, was the outcome of a levelheaded appraisal of the evolution of events. Indeed, Islamists were well aware that the popular movements, which claimed change, lacked leadership. Accordingly, the latter could not occupy the post-revolutionary political space. In addition, the non-Islamist opposition parties, the Liberals and the left parties, were not in a powerful position to emerge as a credible political alternative. Over time, they were weakened and sometimes even domesticated by the authoritarian regimes. Predictably, the Islamists were best positioned to benefit from the popular protests. They relied on a good sense of organization, uncorrupt leadership, an immaculate record vis-à-vis the political authorities, and above all a robust social embeddedness. Thus, the Egyptian, Tunisian, and Moroccan Islamists entered a new space that they did not build. They are explicitly indebted to popular movements mainly composed of young people with neither pyramidal organization nor political affiliation.

Eager for justice and freedom, young North Africans were the genuine promoters of change. Unlike the sixties, the demographic structure in the countries affected by the wave of change is characterized by relatively low birth and death rates. Obviously, such structure offers a real opportunity for development, known as the "demographic dividend". Indeed, North African countries have a specific age pyramid, featuring a high number of young adults with relatively few children and elderly. This age structure results in a highly productive population. The latter is capable of ensuring a maximum economic production with limited wealth transfers and public investments in favor of children and the elderly. Hence, both numerous savings and a period of strong economic growth become possible.

Nevertheless, as the events unfolded, such countries were unable to benefit from such a demographic advantage. They did not manage to plan and carry out the necessary investments in young people before the inception of the demographic transition. They also failed to create the conditions conducive to the socio-economic integration of young people

through the accumulation of capital. Consequently, thousands of young people found themselves unemployed. Forsaken, they rebelled. By resorting to social networks, they sought to have their voices heard and mobilize the masses against their regimes. Despite their apolitical attitude, they managed to eradicate the barriers between the various segments of the opposition, which were long domesticated or crushed by the regime.

The working class also played a significant role in the process of change that hit North Africa. The *Ben Ali* regime for example was compelled to step down following, among others, a strike initiated by the labor union UGTT. Similarly, in Egypt, the Mubarak regime was weakened by strikes triggered in several industrial complexes in Suez, Port Said and Cairo. Finally, the first decade of the 21st century witnessed repeated strikes in different economic sectors and Moroccan public administrations. In addition, there were growing sit-ins led by unemployed graduates on a regular basis before the Moroccan Parliament. These movements weakened the position of the Moroccan authorities that did not hesitate to use violence to disperse protesters. Obviously, such a repressive reaction was only to strengthen the feeling of injustice and raise the level of anxiety about the people's future.

The coming to power of Islamists in some North African countries such as Morocco, Egypt and Tunisia reveals a deep economic, social, and political distress. The people elected them not only for reasons related to the economic crisis, but also because they yearned for a return to both moral and political orders. The populace has growing needs for cultural identity markers.

Finally, the political success of some North African Islamist's parties would perhaps never have happened without the endorsement of external forces, particularly the United States. This stance is deeply anchored into the concept of "Broader Middle East" initially engineered under the George W. Bush administration for the promotion of democracy in the MENA region. Within years, Americans closely reconciled themselves with moderate Arab Islamists whose programs Americans found attractive and, more significantly, less hostile to Western democracies.

THE DEEP STATE VS. ISLAMISTS

The concept of *deep state* was first coined to describe the deep structures of the Turkish political landscape (derim devlet) in the early 20th century. It points to that part of the state, which circumvent the attention of the people. It refers to a circle of alliance and high-level connections, usually secret and personal, but perfectly legitimate. It essentially consists of senior military officers, members of the various security services, and bureaucrats exercising an effective monitoring of the State. Such a state within the state avails itself of the duty to protect the interests of the nation, albeit unlawfully. The "deep state" also purports to defend society against what it believes is a danger threatening the integrity of the social body from within. It is a covert state structure within the Public State (Scott, 2010). No wonder, the funding of such a structure is often dubious (slush funds, drugs, mafia, etc.). As described by Galbraith (2009), it is located within the limits of the predatory state.

It is worth pointing out that the concept of the deep state differs from that of interest groups. On the one hand, the deep state fundamentally consists of a branch of official institutions, which act within the political system itself; hence the use of the term "State". As for interest groups, they do not fit into state institutions. Special interests' organizations rather seek to

shake states through the activity of lobbying. Interest groups aim either directly or indirectly at influencing the development, the application or interpretation of legislation, standards, regulations and generally any interference in a government's decision (Farnel, 1994).Moreover, the institutions of the deep state are not an officially recognized legal entity. Conversely, interest groups are often organized in formal structures (NGOs, unions, federations, etc.).

One of the fundamental features of the deep state lies in its high capacity to perpetuate itself and permanently adapt to socio-political events. For us, four factors have combined to explain such capacity:

- The strong fragmentation of the democratic opposition;
- The challenging of the political legitimacy of the ruling regime;
- The government's inability to generate compelling economic results;
- The lack of a democratic culture.

According to Akin Uver (2009), the deep state tradition is nothing new. It dates back to the 1908 Turkish revolution in which the *Committee of Union and Progress* (C.U.P.) indirectly seized power from the Sultan Abdulhamid II. The C.U.P. was basically a reformist movement initiated by members coming from different backgrounds and various currents, ranging from the most conservative to the most anarchical. Its main objective was to modernize the Empire by the transposition of European models. The Committee considered then that the best way to take action against the Sultan was to gain the support of the army. Accordingly, an intense *Young Turks* propaganda was organized in military circles. The Committee soon developed in Macedonia where many secret cells were created. The latter eventually led to uprisings in July 1908, which resulted in the Revolution and the restoration of the 1876 Constitution (Bozarslan, 2004).

The structure of the deep state subsequently evolved depending on the circumstances that guided the evolution of Turkish history (the defeat in *World War* I, the NATO membership, the *Cold War*, the 1960, 1971 and 1980 *coups d'états*, the rise to power of the AKP, etc.). Until today, the deep state still acts as the custodian of both the *Kemalist* legacy and ideology.

However, since the coming to power of the AKP, the Turkish deep state weakened slightly. The country was engaged in a process of reforms designed, among others, towards the demilitarization of political and social life. A case in point was the commencement of the trial of the Ergenekon network. The latter was convicted of seeking to destroy the ideology of political Islam in Turkey and the ensuing collective resignation of the General Staff of the Army in 2011. Today, the army, police and government are under the control of the Turkish civil government.

Clearly, the argument of the deep state therefore presupposes the existence of two states. On the one hand, a sham civil state, that is visible and responsible for handling current matters. On the other hand, a powerful state, that is invisible and holding meaningful powers. In the event of decisions deemed, rightly or wrongly, dangerous for the future of the nation or contrary to its interests, the deep state takes command while the civil state fades away. In support of such reversal, the members of the deep state do not hesitate to wield their mission as outright defenders of the values of society and safeguards against any political drifts.

Indisputably, the Turkish model provides a reference for a better understanding of the situation prevailing in some North African countries nowadays. Nonetheless, the perfect transposition of this model to North Africa is no easy matter. Indeed, the historical process of change is not identical in both settings. Furthermore, Turkey is the only Muslim country based on secularism as both an ideology and conviction. Actually, were it not for the secular roots of the Turkish State, the Islamist *Justice and Development Party* (AKP) itself would probably have never emerged. Yet such status exists nowhere in any North African country. What is more, the Turkish have shown preeminence in terms of economic performance and human development.

In contrast, some North African countries today are not only characterized by the existence of a dualistic political structure in which coexists both the civil and the deep state. They also experience a considerable confrontational interaction between the new ruling elite, supposed to represent the civil state, and the (in-)visible resistance forces.

Unlike North Africa, the major component of the Turkish deep state remains the army. It is the guarantor of secularism. Nevertheless, in North Africa, armies do not necessarily constitute "shields" for regimes. It is rather the body of security forces and presidential or royal guards, which perform such functions. As the recent uprisings in North Africa demonstrated, the armies in some countries such as Egypt and Tunisia were compelled to engage in the transitional process that they barely mastered.

Yet, on the face of it, Egypt seems to be the closest case to the Turkish model. The deep state there is primarily represented by the military but also the security forces, the bureaucracy, the judiciary, the media and much of the urban bourgeoisie and rural notables tied to the former Mubarak's *National Democratic Party* (NDP). However, in sharp contrast with the Turkish model, these elements do not form a homogeneous body working for the defense of a fair national cause. Instead, they are more akin to groups advocating their own economic interests than real proposal forces bound by a common ideology. Thus, just like the Egyptian society, the Egyptian army is a fragmented structure with components of conservatism, religiosity and even secularizing trends. Egyptian bureaucracy and landowners alike are not affiliated to a specific ideological movement. Even in the era of Nasser (1954-1970), they never harnessed their resources in order to serve the mainstream socialist ideology.

In Morocco, social and political scientists alike hardly ever employ the concept of the deep state. The opponents, but also academics, prefer the concept of "Makhzen-state" or that of "secret party". Historically attached to the *Alawite* dynasty, it most often refers to the Moroccan State in its traditional and despotic practices. "It is the central power of the State, made up of the court of the Sultan (dar al-Makhzen), ministers (wuzara), secretaries' offices (Kutab dawawin), and by extension, the channels of central authority at local level: Governors (wulat) and Qaids "(Bourkia, 2011: 35). It exercises both a political, economic and a symbolic hegemony (the act of allegiance). According to Ramonet (2005), the expression "Makhzen" refers to "the political and administrative structure upon which rests power, which is composed of submission, rituals, ceremonies, traditions; a specific concept of authority that permeates the entire political class whose centerpiece remains the King."

Strangely enough, the meaning and message conveyed by the concept of "Makhzen" have undergone a radical change in recent years. Initially, it conveyed both the power of the central state and the manner of exercising it before it came to acquire a dual connotation. The

King himself as the head of state epitomizes, one the one hand, a positive connotation. On the other hand, other informal and/or traditional components at the service of the monarch symbolize a negative connotation.

The latter connotation particularly draws the attention of political scientists and sociologists. For them, the *Makhzen* is the antithesis of both the modern state and democracy (Bourkia, 2011: 45). It refers to archaic political and administrative structures, a network of rural notables, "crony capitalism" through "cash NGOs" etc. It is neither a formal institution nor a secret group, but rather a circle of interpersonal relationships fully or partially escaping the law. Just like the deep state in Egypt, the makhzanien system is not based on a specific ideological standard. It essentially serves its interests while simultaneously deactivating the risks associated with any rapid and uncontrolled political change.

This dual system has triggered another duality, namely that of language. Indeed, the *Makhzen* is often synonymous with conservatism. Tradition belongs to the required rhetoric of power in its quest for legitimacy (Hibou, 2007: 171). As regards the government, it usually epitomizes the dynamics of change and hope for a political as well as an economic and social renewal.

Nowadays, many dissenting voices condemn the persistence of the makhzanian structures as a force of resistance to democratic change and modernity. The head of the Moroccan government, affiliated to the Islamist party, the PJD, tagged these resistance structures as "crocodiles and demons." For some, the head of government did nothing else but reflect the views of the majority of Moroccans according to which the politico-administrative structures, which are directly linked to the Palace, impinge on a part of the government's prerogatives. For others, the head of government deliberately used both terms to confuse public opinion and prepare it for the inevitable failure of his program.

Another significant aspect of the Moroccan model is the strong adaptability and resurgence of the *Makhzen*. Thus, the arrival of the Islamist party the PJD in power in 2011 is not inherently a process induced by an ordinary political impetus. The *Makhzen* itself initiated internal reforms through the revision of the constitution and the organization of free elections. It was fully aware of the danger on its perpetuation represented by the so-called *Arab Spring* wave. Interestingly, similar behavior was observed back in 1997, with the first government of political alternation. Nevertheless, despite its sporadic concessions, the Makhzen (with all its components) continues to dominate the Moroccan political sphere. This is what led My Hicham Alaoui to talk about an "asymmetric cohabitation" between the Palace and the PJD. For him, this party does not exercise power. Its role is relegated to the execution of lower and subordinate governmental tasks (My Hicham Alaoui, 2012). Indeed, the head of government takes less strategic decisions than the King's advisors and entourage. Such actors are positioned in strategic circles of power (Hibou, 2007: 171). In these circumstances, it is understandable that the head of government is not able to aspire to leadership for fear of being accused of seeking to overshadow the royal institution.

However, in its negative version at least, it appears that the *Makhzen* institution has somewhat diminished, thereby causing a gradual unlocking of the Moroccan political field. In formal terms, the Principal-Agent model offers an ideal framework for understanding such a significant shift. In fact, it is powerful tool for capturing the profound relationship between the state and the Islamist executive in Morocco.

THE PRINCIPAL-AGENT APPROACH

The change process in Morocco went through three stages: birth, uncertainty and finally the consolidation of core achievements. The first phase was characterized by a spontaneous popular mass mobilization called the *February 20* movement, which denounced both the distressing socio-economic conditions, the lack of freedom, and political authoritarianism. The result was, among others, significant constitutional concessions made by the King of Morocco to the head of government. The second phase was characterized by doubt as to the success of such a change drive. Indeed, as the protest movements were spontaneous and leaderless, the fear of escalating anarchy settled into society. The last phase was that of a relative political stability. Elections were held, whose main result consisted in the coming to power of the Islamist party *Justice and Development* (PJD).

The exercise of power is carried out in a context of conflict of interest between the Islamist political executive and the deep state. Such a relationship is obviously guided by Agency considerations. The deep state (Principal) implicitly delegates to the government headed by the PJD (Agent) the responsibility to perform certain tasks, particularly the execution of current affairs. The purpose of the Principal is to offer a contract that maximizes its utility. Additionally for such a deal to work, the Agent must also accept it. This is a common practice in social and political interactions. Both legitimate and explicit, the delegation in a representative democracy means that people transfer to policymakers the authority to make decisions on behalf of society. Unlike the latter, the delegation here is linked to very different political norms.

Contrary to the usual applications of the Principal-Agent model, the delegation relationship is neither the normal consequence of the division of labor nor that of specialization. In fact, in economics, the latter is perceived as an efficiency factor. On the contrary, delegation refers here to the preservation of interests. The Principal is a complex structure, which seeks, through all legal and illegal means, to discredit the Agent in order to distort the political legitimacy of the latter. The divergence of interests becomes the main source of agency problems.

We hypothesize that the Principal is not only aware of the efforts of the Agent, but also of other characteristics such as costs, preferences, capabilities, etc. As strong as it is, such assumption is acceptable. It can be justified by the strong presence of members of the deep state in all structures and at every level of the Islamist executive. The result of this assumption is that the deep state has the ability to monitor the progress of the tasks performed by the Agent (the execution of current affairs). Apparently, there is no great risk for the deep state to lose its supremacy and control over the Islamist executive.

In these circumstances, it is understandable that the agency relationship is driven by the pursuit of a first-best option. The divergence of preferences will lead the Islamist government (Agent) to choose an action that goes against the interests of the deep state (Principal), given that the latter has the ability to check the behavior of the Agent based on the examination of both efforts and costs.

Since the deep state monitors the effort of the executive (the government of Islamist obedience), it is also able to set the rules of the game in the form of a delegation contract. By the same token, it specifies the compensation function and the level of effort. The compensation function is written: $q(x)$, where x symbolizes the results to be shared between

both parties. The distribution of such a random variable is contingent on the effort of the Islamist government. As to the effort made by the government, it is represented by a scalar noted: e.

The contract under hand is tacit, implicit and informal which means that it is not necessarily enforceable. Indeed, no coercive system could force either party to deliver on its promises. This is even truer as the Agent (Islamic government) and Principal (deep state) are driven by their opportunistic behavior. Despite their political legitimacy, Islamists tend to set up strategies or tactics. Their objective is the consolidation of their positions in dealing with the left or liberal-minded parties. For its part, the deep state seeks to preserve the material and more particularly the symbolic gains from any kind of manipulation (pressure, threats, block, intimidation, etc.).

Furthermore, contrary to the basic model, the effort is not a source of disutility for the Islamist government, but rather the opposite. It was elected based on a program and according to universally acknowledged democratic rules. It has every interest in deploying a considerable effort in terms of governance in order not to lose the confidence of its constituents. In a context of crisis, the Islamists were the main group still credible in the eyes of the population simply because the erosion of power did not hit them. Furthermore, their tagline revolves around social justice and the fight against corruption, two claims long demanded by these populations.

As the level of effort of the Islamist government is weak, the deep state gets the desirable result, i.e. a higher level of utility. Conversely, it faces a loss because its very existence depends, among other things, on the ability of a government to restrict its maneuvers. The objective of the deep state is to maximize its expected utility. This function can be written as:

$$E\ u(x - q(x)) \ = \int_x u(x - q(x)).g(x,e)dx \tag{1}$$

with $u' \succ 0$ and $u'' \leq 0$.

The representation: $g(x,e)$ refers to the density of the conditional result with regard to the effort made by the Islamist government.

In order to ensure that Islamists subscribe to the provisions of the delegation agreement, the deep state must choose the function of remuneration for the sake of keeping its participation constraint. This constraint takes on the following form:

$$E(\pi(q)) - w(e) = \int_x \pi(q(x)).g(x,e)dx - w(e) \geq U_0 \tag{2}$$

$w(e)$ and U_0 respectively denote the disutility of the effort made by the Islamist government (Agent) and the utility that it can draw outside of the contract designed by the deep state (Principal). In fact, the idea is that the Islamist government has the opportunity to build relationships with other actors of the sociopolitical sphere, a move that may provide it with an additional utility. It can count on its own network, but also on voter support that warrant an electoral legitimacy. In these conditions, the deep state program (Principal) can be written as:

$$\text{Max}\ L = \int_x u(x - q(x)).g(x,e)dx \tag{3}$$

Subject to the constraint:

$\int_x \pi(q(x)).g(x,e)dx - w(e) \geq 0$ For the sake of resolving the program, we suppose that

the added utility of the Islamist government is normalized to zero. Considering the Lagrangian, this program can be rewritten as follows:

$$\text{Max } L = \int_x u(x - q(x)).g(x,e)dx + \lambda \left[\int_x \pi(q(x)).g(x,e)dx - w(e) \right] \qquad (4)$$

with λ meaning the multiplier of Lagrange

After resolving the program, we obtain the following result:

$$u'(x - q(x)).\pi'(q(x')) = u'(x' - q(x')).\pi'(q(x)) \qquad (5)$$

This finding indicates that, in the absence of asymmetric information, there is an optimal risk-sharing between the deep state and the Islamist government.

If we assume the neutrality of the deep state with respect to the risk, then $u'(x - q(x)) = 1$. Following these conditions, the equation (5) becomes:

$$\pi'(q(x')) = u'(x' - q(x')).\pi'(q(x)) \qquad (6)$$

Or else:

$$\frac{1}{\pi'(q(x))} = \lambda \qquad (7)$$

Finally, if $.\pi'(q(x))$ is decreasing compared to $q(x)$, the Islamist government (assumed to be risk averse) will be insured against the risk, because it will receive a fixed remuneration. This insurance is naturally provided by the deep state. In this case, the latter plays the role of promoter for the preservation of the heritage and acts as a political pressure absorber. The main consequence is the preservation of the welfare of both parties within the framework of a cooperative equilibrium. Therefore, despite the presence of a conflict of interest between the deep state and the Islamist government, these two actors show some sort of rationality, described as opportunism by Williamson (1975). They therefore have every incentive to cooperate in order to protect their interests while reducing the uncertainty and the risk of political instability.

CONCLUSION

The Islamist-leaning political parties were the big winners of the elections in the aftermath of the outbreak of riots in some North African countries. Populations cherished high hopes on these players who long stayed away from political office. People were willing to grant them the chance to manage public affairs through implementing their programs, which contained three main components: social justice, freedom, and the fight against corruption. However, if Islamist parties came to power through an electoral process, their leeway for change expected by the Arab society remained limited. The presence of the deep state did not make their task any easier. While it was supposed to act as a guarantor of the continuity of state institutions, this actor entered into a strong mobilization phase. Its members did not favorably view the advent of Islamists to power. For them, the rapid transition towards democracy carried a risk of seeing the structure of the state itself collapse in a sociopolitical context still highly unfavorable to this type of change.

Unlike Egypt, and to a lesser extent Tunisia, where Islamists were quickly undermined by the deep state, Morocco managed to pull together a socially optimal political balance. Certainly, some mistrust settled at the beginning between the *Makhzen* and the Islamists. However, over time, both sides soon found some common ground. They were able to enter into an informal and implicit contract. Such alliance allowed them to preserve not only their interests but also those of the nation. Under such agreement, the *Makhzen* defined and set the rules of the game, while the Islamists were entrusted with the management of current affairs. They know, just like their Turkish counterparts, that they will have access to effective political power only at the cost of a genuine ideological mutation. Only at such a transformation can they canvass the support they need against the significant actors and structures forming the 'deep state embodied by the *Makhzen*.

No matter how appropriate, our analytical approach has four limits. First, in the Moroccan context, it is not always easy to determine safely which actor is in a position of Principal and which one is in the Agent situation. Second, our findings seem optimistic because they rest on the assumption that there is a contract between two parties. However, it is often uncertain to assume that either party agrees to commit to its future behavior in the form of a contract. A similar uncertainty reinforces the need to develop a more comprehensive model encompassing other actors, especially the Parliament, the judicial system, the external environment, etc. Third, the Principal-Agent approach does not fit into the black box of negotiations since the choice related to a contract once signed cannot be altered. However, the relationship between the Islamist government and the deep state occurs within a political dynamic. Studying the negotiation process then remains an indispensable phase. Fourth, the analysis in terms of Principal-Agent is often normative. However, in the case of the relationship between the Islamist government and the deep state, it is important to study the evolution of the modes of formation of public policies.

Admittedly, in its current state, the approach of the Principal-Agent is not an entirely appropriate framework for understanding the relationship between the deep state and the Islamist government. On the one hand, considering the reality of the implementation of power in North African countries requires additional assumptions. On the other, certain constraints are linked to the existence of numerous actors, within the deep state, who do not necessarily share similar interests. Further investigation is needed to shed light on these critical dimensions.

NOTES

[1] We have deliberately neglected *Jihadist* and missionary movements (al-da'wa) because their relationships with politics are not always in line with the liberal democratic ethos.

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