

Autocrats and Islamists: Contenders and Containment in Egypt and Morocco

HOLGER ALBRECHT & EVA WEGNER

ABSTRACT *This article examines how authoritarian elites manage the quest for political participation of moderate Islamist groups in view of securing regime persistence. Through a comparative analysis of the logics of two cases—the Moroccan Movement of Unity and Reform (MUR) and the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood—it aims to understand the key factors accounting for differences in form and evolution of the respective containment strategies. The MUR was formally included into parliament and electoral processes. In contrast, the Muslim Brotherhood remains illegal, was tolerated on an informal basis only and subject to a repressive backlash in the 1990s. Therefore, whereas both regimes have yielded to the movements' demands for political participation, the mechanisms (formal vs. informal) and the developments (protracted vs. reversed) show marked differences. Starting from the assumption that the chosen mechanisms result from the rulers' risks perception, the comparison shows that the rulers' choices are predominantly shaped by the institutional setting of the respective authoritarian systems (monarchic vs. presidential) and influenced by the strength of an Islamist organisation relative to other opposition forces. As to the different developments, it is argued that continuity or the reversal of an inclusivist experiment is the result of the ruler's assessment of the success of the experiment. Inclusion is continued if it contributes to regime stability through the Islamists' compliance with the rules of the game or, at least, if it does not impact negatively on the latter. If, instead, the Islamist challenge increases over time, inclusion is abandoned and replaced by a largely repressive containment strategy.*

Introduction

When looking at post-September 11 discourses, we may imagine Islamism as the major curse in world politics. However, the terrorist threat from the al-Qa'eda network and other Islamist groups divert our views away from the fact that non-violent Islamist groups play an integral part in Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) politics. Indeed, it is these groups rather than radical ones that challenge the authoritarian incumbents in the present-day Arab World. They draw on strong popular support; they are, by and large, well-organised and financially autonomous from the state. In the absence of other strong opposition forces the Islamist movement represents the major political

Holger Albrecht is an assistant professor of Political Science in the Department of Middle Eastern Affairs at Tübingen University. He has published articles in, among other publications, *International Political Science Review* and *Democratization*, and is currently working on a book on political opposition in Egypt. Eva Wegner was, at the time of writing, finishing her PhD on Islamism in Morocco at the European University Institute, Florence, Italy. She is now a researcher at the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, SWP) and teaches at the Department of Political Sciences of the Free University Berlin.

challenge for the regimes in the Arab world particularly in times of economic and social crises.

Over the last decades, Islamist groups have evolved into a powerful social movement active in several states in the Middle East and North Africa. This movement is composed of a broad range of organisations, whose forms, means of action, political strength, popular support, and ideological orientations differ remarkably within and across countries. The common denominator of these various organisations is that they relate to the same ideological source. Non-violent Islamist groups aim to realise their ideas and programmes through collective and organised action not only in the social, but even more so in the political field. The Islamists' quest for participation in elections can be seen as the latest expression of their aim to reform political institutions and agendas.

How have authoritarian rulers reacted to this resurgence of political Islam that turned out to become one of the most alarming threats to regime maintenance?¹ Elitist containment strategies have varied across countries, time, and according to the respective Islamist organisation. It is important to note, however, that most regimes in the MENA region have, at least at some point in time, experimented with Islamist participation in elections, even if they have rejected the legalisation of a party, and/or revoked their choice and returned to a more repressive approach. Thus, this article addresses the question of how authoritarian elites manage the Islamists' quest for participation in elections in view of securing regime persistence. We assume that the latter is the ultimate aim of authoritarian incumbents in the Middle East and that those have a variety of potential strategies at their disposal. While pure coercion remains the last resort to overcome—at least temporarily—challenges to authoritarian incumbents from any kind of opposition, repression is by no means the main, let alone the sole strategy.

This article explores the dynamics of two cases of alternative containment strategies, the *informal toleration* of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and the *formal inclusion* into political institutions of the Movement of Unity and Reform (MUR) / Party of Justice and Development (PJD) in Morocco. In the wake of economic and social crises, the political elites of both countries' regimes have yielded to the movements' claims for inclusion into the political institutions. Comparing Egypt and Morocco, however, illustrates that scope, timing, and outcomes of inclusivist strategies of containment differ remarkably from one case to the other: while the MUR was formally included in parliament, the Muslim Brotherhood has never been legally recognised and remains subject to a limited and informal toleration by the Egyptian regime. Moreover, formal inclusion in Morocco is a continuous feature whereas, in Egypt, the threshold of toleration was shifted vigorously downwards at the beginning of the 1990s. Thus, this article inquires into questions of why and under what circumstances authoritarian regimes use different inclusivist strategies of opposition management. More precisely, we aim to assess the relative impact of factors influencing the choice of rulers regarding inclusion, its form, and the likelihood of re-exclusion.

For the purpose of contextualising and specifying our questions and formulating our hypotheses, we will start with a brief description of the two cases, addressing the movements' emergence, their interaction with the rulers, and the specific context and form of inclusion. We will then discuss the different authoritarian regime types as the main variable accounting for the Moroccan Movement of Unity and Reform's formal inclusion into the political system and a mere informal toleration of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. Moreover, we consider the relative strength of an Islamist organisation—inside the

Islamist movement and compared to other oppositional groups—as a contributing factor to explain an authoritarian regime’s containment strategy towards it. Third, in order to explain different paths of development, we will refer to the adaptive capacities of authoritarian rulers in Egypt and Morocco when evaluating the outcomes of their initial choice with respect to the goal of rule stabilisation. Finally, we will aim to extract some broader lessons about the relationship between authoritarian incumbents and Islamist movements in the Middle East and North Africa.

The Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt: Limited Informal Toleration

The Muslim Brotherhood (*al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn*) was founded in 1928 and quickly emerged into a powerful organisation with a social and a political agenda. After the revolution in 1952 the Brothers initially welcomed the end of British occupation, but quickly found themselves caught in a power struggle with the new regime of Nasser’s Free Officers. Nasser won this fight by resorting to blunt repression. The Muslim Brotherhood denounced militancy in the early 1970s and entered the political scene again when Nasser’s successor, Anwar Sadat, discretely encouraged the Islamists in an attempt to counterbalance secular opposition from Nasserist, Marxist, and Nationalist circles.²

With this political move Sadat laid down the origins for the strengthening of political Islam in Egypt. As Carrie Wickham (2002) showed in a seminal study, Islamist outreach fell on fertile soil within Egyptian society at large. Using the Islamic concept of *Da’wa* (call), the Brotherhood fell short of offering a comprehensive political programme, but called—in very general terms—for the re-Islamicisation of Egyptian society and the application of the Islamic rule, *Shari’a*, to law and politics. This programmatic fuzziness, however, did not harm its appeal towards the populace, mainly because the Islamic doctrine was accompanied by the movement’s provision of social services that the Egyptian regime could not maintain any longer in times of economic crisis. Fuelled by an Islamic economic sector, the Muslim Brotherhood capitalised politically on the proliferation of services, jobs, and material benefits.

When Hosni Mubarak came to power in 1981, he did not face an easy task to handle the awakened Islamist movement. His regime was confronted with the challenge of both radical underground groups and a moderate Islamist mass movement independent from government control and deeply rooted within society. Mubarak employed a two-sided strategy of containment. While the radical *Jihad* and *Jama’a Islamiyya* were put under heavy-handed pressure from the security and military apparatuses, the moderate Muslim Brotherhood was given some opportunity to become a player in the formal political institutions. During a phase of political liberalisation in the 1980s, a playground emerged for those among the Muslim Brotherhood who advocated activism in these political institutions. In the first decade of his rule, Mubarak conceded to these demands but activities have been closely scrutinised and restricted. Most importantly, the regime did not tolerate the creation of a political party under the Brotherhood’s banner. Instead, the Brothers were allowed to participate in the elections of the parliament and professional syndicates as independent candidates.³ Another remarkable impact on the formal political institutions in Egypt had the Brothers’ activities in the professional syndicates: between 1987 and 1992, Islamists took over the majority in the boards of the engineers, the doctors, and the lawyers syndicates respectively (Fahmy, 1998; Wickham, 1997).

Since the early 1990s, the ‘political honeymoon’⁴ of the 1980s ended and the Muslim Brotherhood came under siege from coercive statist containment leading to a policy of ‘minimal toleration and formal restriction’.⁵ Coercive measures of the state included the arbitrary arrest of the Brotherhood’s rank and file and prominent activists, particularly in the run-up to the parliamentary elections in 1995 and 2000. Among those who succeeded to win a seat, some Islamists have been removed when they have been perceived by the regime as too active.⁶ Moreover, the Muslim Brotherhood is excluded from political dialogue with other opposition forces in the country (i.e. legal political parties and human rights NGOs); communication between the regime and the Brothers is exclusively maintained via security channels.⁷

On the toleration-side, the regime has never made an attempt to destroy the organisational capacities of the movement: the Brotherhood maintains offices in Cairo and other cities in the country; the coordination of activities is openly organised in the professional syndicates. In some rare instances, the regime even cooperated with the Brotherhood, for instance when they jointly organised public demonstrations on 27–28 March 2003 to oppose the US-led military campaign against Saddam Hussain’s Iraq (Schemm, 2003). Moreover, despite the previously mentioned restrictions during elections, the Brothers managed to remain the strongest opposition force in parliament, all the more so since the 2005 elections in which the Islamists managed to win 88 of a total 444 seats. This remarkable success even fuelled some rumours of a ‘secret deal’ between the regime and the Muslim Brotherhood.

The Movement of Unity and Reform in Morocco: Legalisation and Protracted Inclusion

Heavily influenced by the spread of the Muslim Brotherhood’s ideology, Moroccan Islamic activism emerged essentially as a student movement in the early 1970s (Munson, 1986). In the 1990s, one of the two major Islamist organisations in Morocco, *Haraka al-Tawhid wa al-Islah* (Movement of Unity and Reform, MUR)⁸ integrated into an extant, but inactive political party, the *Mouvement Populaire Constitutionnel et Démocratique* (MPCD), renamed Party for Justice and Development (PJD) in 1998. While the Moroccan Islamist movement includes innumerable local educational, social and cultural associations, independent preachers, and some small radical groups, the main other organisation of national outreach is *al-‘Adl wa al-Ihsan* (Justice and Benevolence) led by Sheikh Abdelsalam Yassin. In contrast to the MUR, *al-‘Adl wa al-Ihsan* rejects so far the conditions of the electoral game in Morocco. The MUR itself is a merger mainly of two Islamist organisations: *al-Islah wa al-Tajdid* (Reform and Renewal) and *Rabita al-Mustaqbal al-Islami* (Rally for the Islamic Future) in 1996. Both are late products of the *Jami’yyat al-Shabiba al-Islamiyya* (Islamic Youth Association) founded in 1969 whose revolutionary agenda was inspired by the radical teachings of the Egyptian Sayyid Qutb.

Similar to Egypt and other Arab states, the regime initially encouraged the Islamists as a counterweight to the left on the university campuses. This strategy was, however, short-lived as it became clear that Islamism was becoming a strong social force in the Middle East and North Africa. When the Islamic Youth was banned in 1976, its followers split into different groups.⁹ In the 1980s the leaders of the MUR’s predecessor organisations showed their ideological flexibility by their readiness to adapt their ideas and strategies

to changing constraints and opportunities. The Islamists replaced the revolutionary agenda with a reformist and comprehensive approach to social and political change. They categorically condemned the use of violence in any form. Since the late 1980s, they actively lobbied for inclusion into the formal political process (Tozy, 1999a, pp. 228–235).

The inclusion into official politics was enacted in a peculiar way. Though the palace denied them the creation of their own political party,¹⁰ the Islamists were authorised to integrate into the dormant MPCD. This rather ambiguous way of inclusion was acceptable to both the regime and the Islamists. The former was able to take one current of the Islamist movement on board without creating a precedent through authorising a ‘religious’ political party. The Islamists, in turn, gained legality and were permitted political activity even though they had to accommodate some of the party’s old guard.

From 1992 onwards, Islamist leaders re-activated or founded local and provincial party bureaus; in 1996, integration was made explicit in an extra-ordinary congress during which movement leaders were appointed to the party’s General Secretariat. The most important MUR leaders became party leaders while keeping their office in the MUR’s executive bureau. There had been long internal debates about whether the MUR should merge its whole organisational body with the party but eventually, its Shura Council opted for a formal separation of the two organisations. In 1997, the MPCD / PJD ran for the first time in national elections and participated in all subsequent elections. Covering only half of the electoral constituencies in 2002, it still became the third largest party in parliament and is now the most active of the opposition parties.

National and international commentators largely praised the 1997 elections as a significant step in the Moroccan ‘democratisation process’, but not because of electoral transparency. It was the king’s appointment of the leftist leader Abderrahmane Youssoufi as Prime Minister of the *Alternance Government* that included all former opposition parties that was seen as a symbol of the king’s commitment to a political liberalisation process he had set into motion at the beginning of the 1990s.¹¹ This process was a response to a combination of a protracted economic and social crisis that had led to severe rioting in the early 1990s and strong domestic and international criticism over the Moroccan human rights record. Moreover, large demonstrations in the early 1990s revealed the mobilisation capacities of the Islamist movement (Tozy, 1999b, p. 80). In addition to legitimacy crisis and street politics, the problem of succession was already at the horizon. In this context, Hassan II aimed at bringing the ‘old’ opposition parties from the independence movement into governmental responsibility while—at the same time—including the Islamists into the formal political process, in order to stabilise the system.

Strategies of Islamist Containment in Egypt and Morocco

The containment strategies of the political regimes in Egypt and Morocco display similarities as well as marked differences. The most important common feature of Islamist containment in Egypt and Morocco is that both regimes have opted—at least at one point in time—for some form of Islamist participation in the formal political process. Thus, for both Islamist organisations, we observe changes in their domestic opportunity structures that allowed for new forms of collective action and political participation. However, the containment strategies in Egypt and Morocco differ remarkably concerning the *form* as well as the *evolution* of state policies.

With respect to the form chosen by the regimes, the participation of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egyptian politics has been realised on an informal basis only. The Brothers have never been authorised to establish a political party. In Morocco, the MUR was allowed to take over a dormant political party; even if in a twisted way, it was formally included in the political system. The second difference concerns the evolution of statist policies towards Islamists over time. In Egypt, we witnessed a change of strategies: while the Muslim Brotherhood benefited, during the 1980s, from political liberalisation, since the early 1990s it has experienced a severe repressive backlash. The status of the Muslim Brotherhood has changed from one of ‘informal inclusion’ to a mere limited toleration. Quite the contrary in Morocco, where the formal inclusion of the MUR/PJD is a continuous feature.

Two broad questions emerge from these observations: first, what accounts for the different *forms* of inclusion? Formal inclusion and legalisation of Islamists is difficult to reverse for authoritarian incumbents because this could constitute a serious blow to liberalisation schemes which are employed as legitimacy-creating mechanisms. Consequently, the legalisation of Islamists is a risky enterprise that will only be undertaken if authoritarian elites are convinced that they can control the consequences. We will argue that the potential of control largely depends on the design of political institutions. Therefore, it is differences in the institutional settings in Morocco and Egypt that determine most importantly the different forms of inclusion. Recalling that the initial inclusion occurred in both cases at a moment of political liberalisation, we examine not only differences in stable institutional factors in Morocco and Egypt (such as *regime legitimacy*) but also differences in the structure of *political competition* in order to account for the incumbents’ choices.¹² As a second determinant, we compare the strength of the two movements relative to other non-regime actors in these countries.

Second, what accounts for the different *evolution*? We argue that the differences in the paths (change vs. continuity) are related to how successful the initial experiment is perceived by the regimes, that is whether inclusion is seen to have decreased the threat the Islamist movement constitutes for regime persistence. In turn, the growth or decline of perceived threats depends heavily on the Islamists’ *reaction* towards the new strategies. In short, does inclusion induce them to play by the rules of the political game or do they use the benefits of political liberalisation to further erode the legitimacy of the regime?

Choosing the form of Inclusion (1): Competitive vs. Hegemonic Rule in Parliaments

In order to explain the incumbents’ choices regarding the inclusion of Islamist organisations into the political realm, we need to consider the strategic importance of the political institution into which Islamists may be included. In other words, what roles and functions are ascribed to parliaments, elections, or other institutions with respect to the stabilisation of authoritarian rule? And how does this affect the decision to include a strong oppositional actor?

Parliaments are potential arenas of political competition in most polities. The critical questions are if and why the respective authoritarian rulers tolerate such competition in this arena or not. The political systems of Morocco and Egypt can both be characterised by the term ‘liberalised authoritarianism’ (Brumberg, 2002). Contrary to closed authoritarian systems, incumbents in liberalised authoritarian systems are eager to use coercion only when deemed absolutely necessary. An additional means of power maintenance is to

create a liberal picture of their rule through the toleration—albeit carefully controlled and restricted—of some degree of political participation and civil freedoms in order to increase internal and external legitimacy. Below the level of rule-making, competition and political dissent are tolerated in both systems as they facilitate a juggling act of interests between different societal and elitist groups (Brumberg, 2002; Albrecht, 2005).

The difference between these two regimes that is of chief importance for our argument, is that in Morocco the parliament constitutes the arena for political competition, whereas in Egypt this is not the case. In Egypt, competition takes place between distinct—in themselves rather homogenous—pillars of the state, i.e. between the military, the religious world of *al-Azhar*, ‘civil society’, and the political realm of the authoritarian system, that is parliament and government.

These differences in the systemic functions and strategic importance of parliaments are due to the type and degree of political legitimacy at the rulers’ disposal. Different from the Arab presidents, the ruling Moroccan Alaoui dynasty enjoys traditional and religious legitimacy. In post-independence Morocco, the king has built upon these sources of legitimacy to nourish an image of an arbiter above politics—supposedly neutral vis-à-vis any group of society. In short, in contrast to Republican presidents, kings ‘are [...] above all factions and party to none’ (Richards & Waterbury, 1998, p. 289). This superiority is expressed in Hassan II’s famous phrase ‘I will never be put into equation’ (Zartman, 1986, p. 64), which illustrates the distance between the monarchy as a ruling and governing institution and the rest of the Moroccan institutional landscape and its actors. The monarchy as the ultimate Moroccan power centre cannot be contested by parliamentary government; in turn, for those actors who accept the rules of the game, there is a sphere for articulation and political contest, namely parliament and elections.

Contrary to the Moroccan king, the Egyptian president faces a tangle of legitimacy problem. He does not dispose of an inherent legitimacy, based on the hereditary transmission of the power to rule. As a consequence, he remains much more subject to contestation, at least from within ruling circles.¹³ Simply speaking, the ‘distance’ between the Egyptian president and the said pillars of the state is narrower than in Morocco. The Egyptian president needs the parliament to create legitimacy whereas the political elites are independently co-opted via the ruling National Democratic Party (NDP). As his legitimacy depends on the hegemony of the president’s party in parliament, the toleration of dissent and contention within parliament must remain decidedly limited. Consequently, new parties are only legalised when they do not represent strong social forces.

In Morocco, the function of parliament is precisely one of allowing competition among social forces. Contributing to the stability of rule in quite a different way, parliament serves as a means for integrating and co-opting political adversaries not only individually but as organised groups, and for allowing a tamed style of protest articulation. Parliament can serve such purposes well because the king is not directly affected by political competition within it. In theory, he is not associated with any of the numerous pro-regime parties or, as the Moroccans call them, ‘the parties of the administration’.¹⁴ This is not to say that the king has not kept tight control over who would be allowed to be represented in parliament. However, even though repression has always been an important element of rule, the same holds true for the ‘manipulated’ (Zartman, 1986, p. 64) or ‘controlled’ (Santucci, 2001) pluralism of organised political forces.

In Egypt, the ruler’s task to foreclose the rise of contention in elections becomes particularly critical when looking at potential dissent from political forces that are independent

from direct state control. The formal inclusion of a strong opposition party controlled by the Muslim Brothers would inevitably weaken the regime's own party, the NDP. This would seriously threaten the power base of the Egyptian regime since—in the absence of traditional legitimacy—it needs that political basis much more to control society than the Moroccan king.¹⁵ Thus, there is a prudential logic behind the seemingly half-hearted strategy to allow the Muslim Brotherhood to perform in elections on an informal, individual basis but, at the same time, foreclose the establishment of a political party. By contrast, the Moroccan political system allows more smoothly for the liberalisation of a political sphere in which the ruler is not among the contestants. Here, the formal inclusion of a strong new actor—the Islamists—in an institution where the power to rule is not at stake bears relatively little costs and insecurity for the regime. In sum, it is these differences in systemic political structures that account most prominently for the formal inclusion of Islamists in Morocco and for the barriers for the same strategy in Egypt.

Choosing the form of Inclusion (2): Islamists in the Opposition Camp—One Among Many or The One and Only?

It would not be a surprise that the power of a social movement determines authoritarian incumbents' strategies towards it: the stronger a movement which is granted access to the formal political realm, the higher is the risk of undesired consequences for the authoritarian regime. However, our argument is that differences in strength do not necessarily matter so much in absolute terms. Rather, it is the relative strength of an Islamist organisation *vis-à-vis* other domestic opposition forces—both Islamist and non-Islamist—that determines a ruler's choice to legalise it or not.

Differences in organisational capacities and the presence of relevant Islamist competitors are a first good set of indicators to compare the Muslim Brotherhood's strategic position in the Egyptian oppositional landscape with the MUR's in the Moroccan. The Muslim Brotherhood established a very capable organisational structure and is organised strictly along hierarchical arrangements at the top of which stand the Supreme Guide (*al-Murshid al-'Amm*) and his two deputies. As an executive board functions the Guidance Bureau (*Maktab al-Irshad*) which is composed of 15 high-profile members of the older and middle generations among whom the organisation's leadership is elected. At the lower organisational strata, the Muslim Brotherhood maintains offices not only in all governorates and cities of the country, but even in smaller villages and settlements. The organisation's working agenda is reflected in special departments in which day-to-day work on specific issues is coordinated.¹⁶

Clearly, the Brothers' organisational capacities stand out in Egypt and impact positively on its role as a powerful social movement organisation: first, they guarantee high degrees of homogeneity among its ranks.¹⁷ Second, public outreach is institutionalised through a network that reaches almost every corner in the country and facilitates the coordination of the Brothers' work in the professional syndicates, schools, universities and student unions, clubs, and charity organisations. As concerns active support, the Muslim Brotherhood has built up its basis during the 1970s in the universities. From the end of the 1980s, the Brothers controlled the student unions in all major universities including those in Cairo, Alexandria, Mansura, and also *al-Azhar* University (Al-Awadi, 2005, p. 64).

In contrast to the Brotherhood's extensive territorial penetration, active involvement in the MUR (and other Islamist organisations in Morocco) is mostly an urban phenomenon.

The decidedly urban character of the movement is to some extent due to the student background of the initiators. Even if these were migrants from the countryside, given the better employment prospects in the cities, they have largely stayed in place and concentrated their activities there.¹⁸ Similar to Egypt, these activities include a broad range of charitable, educational, and missionary (*Da'wa*) activities.

It is difficult to assess the strength of the Moroccan Islamist movement in general and of the MUR's strength in particular. As to the movement in general, Munson (1986) estimated that, in the early 1980s, less than 15 per cent of the university students were actively engaged in some Islamist organisation.¹⁹ The number of university students had, by the early 1990s, almost tripled and a second generation of Islamist activists had come to the fore. The size of the Islamist movement has therefore definitely increased but these new activists have not necessarily joined the MUR. Rather, they are scattered among numerous organisations. In elections, the PJD—until 2005 the only legal Islamist party—has surely benefited from ideological support created by activities of other Islamist organisations. Whereas the strength of the MUR is thus difficult to assess, what matters most from a comparative perspective are both the fragmentation of the Moroccan Islamist movement and the existence of a serious competitor within the Islamist movement, *al-'Adl wa al-Ihsan*. This is an important difference to Egypt where the Muslim Brotherhood is by far the most powerful Islamist organisation.

A second indicator for comparison is the strength of other political actors, and in particular, of other oppositional actors. In Egypt, even though a multi-party system had been introduced by Sadat, the opposition parties have—since the 1980s—never had the opportunity to perform successfully in elections and remain very weak in popular support and financial capacities.²⁰ The parliamentary elections in late 2005 became an excellent litmus test for the strength of opposition forces: while the secular parties' camp, organised in the United National Front for Change (UNFC), only managed to secure 14 seats, the Muslim Brotherhood celebrated a remarkable success at the polls winning 88 seats that is 20 per cent of the total 444 seats.²¹

Resulting from the discussed features of political competition, the Moroccan regime can count on a variety of established parties able to confront the Islamists in the electoral and parliamentary arena. Certainly, all parties do face a challenge with the arrival of the Islamists to the electoral game. They are either artificial products of administrative crafting or weakened after decades of conflict and co-optation. Nevertheless, both palace and former opposition parties have some resources to confront the Islamists. The palace parties lack party activists but enjoy support because they constitute well-established patron-client networks that allow for access to material resources and office (Willis, 2002, p. 15). Even if the available resources may be decreasing with a new and potentially strong party in the game, it is unlikely that these networks would simply collapse. As to the former opposition parties, these have relatively well-developed local structures. With their press, affiliated organisations, and local bureaus they have some degree of implantation in the society (Daoud, 1997; Santucci 2001, p. 96). Moreover, the very fact that one of the stronger oppositional forces is a relatively well-organised left makes it unlikely that they would join forces with the Islamists in parliament.

In sum, without any doubt the Muslim Brotherhood has been the strongest non-state actor in Egypt for roughly the last three decades, while the MUR/PJD remains one among a whole range of well-organised social and political actors. As such, its formal inclusion bears much less potential to shaken the balance of the Moroccan political landscape.

Constructive and Insolent Islamists: Inclusion Protracted or Reversed?

So far, we have accounted for the reasons behind the distinct strategies of authoritarian incumbents to accommodate Islamist movement organisations. After initially opting for either formal inclusion or informal toleration, both strategies can be subject to revision. Looking at the development of regime-Islamist relationships from the early 1990s, we observe that the situation once reached in Morocco was sustained, while it changed in Egypt. What accounts for the different paths of development? Two aspects are central to our discussion: first the *reaction* of the two movements towards the different strategies of accommodation and, second, the *perception* of the two regimes concerning their inclusivist experiments. Obviously, the Moroccan experience of inclusion has been viewed as a success story, while the Egyptian regime felt seriously threatened by its Islamist movement and resorted to more repressive means of containment.

From the very beginning of inclusion, the leadership of the Moroccan MUR/PJD has aimed to reassure the palace that it would play by its rules.²² Indeed, the party's readiness to help legitimise the regime is remarkable. Most importantly, the Moroccan regime did not need to employ overt harassment and electoral fraud as means of limiting the Islamists' electoral success. Instead, the PJD was convinced to limit its coverage of the electoral constituencies.²³ Progressive, or—as PJD leaders like to put it—'qualitative' instead of 'quantitative' participation in elections, are part of the initial deal of inclusion and accepted by the party leadership to counter domestic and external fears.²⁴ As they say, the PJD's participation should not impede upon the 'equilibrium' that they 'have to respect' and 'understand'. It was in 'everybody's interest' that the PJD's participation develops progressively and that the 'people inside and outside Morocco see that the PJD is a party just like all the other parties'.²⁵ To the same directions points the PJD's initial decision to support the 1998 government led by its long-time adversaries, the socialists: at the time of their entry into 'official politics' they saw the necessity of displaying their positive attitude towards the Moroccan institutions and playing a constructive role in the consensual *alternance* at which Hassan II aimed.²⁶

In 2000, the PJD moved to the opposition benches. This shift occurred in a climate of increasing liberalisation.²⁷ The abandoning of the PJD's support to the government resulted from the increasing weight of a faction more committed to an activist agenda that feared to lose touch with its constituency and to appear co-opted.²⁸ In practice, however, even in this period, there were no activities or negotiations concretely pushing for the revision of the constitution or other strong signs of confrontation with the regime. Most importantly, the party has maintained the principle of limited coverage in the 2002 elections fielding candidates in only about half of the constituencies. Moreover it praised these elections as an important step in the Moroccan democratisation process in the MUR's newspaper *al-Tajdid*.²⁹

The strategies the party adopted after the Casablanca attacks of May 16, 2003, highlight the extent to which the Moroccan regime's inclusivist approach has provided incentives for the Islamists to opt for compromise.³⁰ In a general climate of 'anti-Islamism' the party approved two laws it had fiercely contested before and it further decreased its coverage in the 2003 communal elections.

The opposition against the modernisation of the Moroccan personal status code as part of the Youssoufi government's *Plan pour l'intégration de la femme au développement* had been the key event of Islamist mobilisation in the first legislative period. The Islamists'

opposition centred on elements they considered harmful to social morality.³¹ This protest was also conducted as a general campaign against—what was called by the Islamists—the ‘conspiracy’ of the francophone, secularist elites and international organisations against Islamic values. After facing not only the Islamists’ extra-parliamentary mobilisation but also critiques inside his government, the prime minister conferred the issue to a royal commission. The amendments of the personal status code that the king eventually proposed in October 2003 are very similar to the original reform project of the government. The reform now being a palace law, both PJD and MUR immediately issued favourable statements qualifying the reform as a pioneering project that would serve the interests of families and women.

Less covered by the media but pointing to the same direction, is the case of the law against terrorism. Only five days after the Casablanca attacks of May 16, 2003, the government pushed for the adoption of a law that defined any ‘disturbance of the public order’ as a terrorist act. The law contains provisions that allow the security forces to hold suspects for twelve days without access to a lawyer and remarkably extends the range of crimes subject to death sentences. As a draft bill, the ‘anti-terrorist law’ dates back to February 2003. Since then, the PJD had strongly criticised it as a blow to human rights and democracy. After the Casablanca incident, however, the law was declared an issue of national interest and the PJD—in need to send a strong public message that it opposed all terrorist acts—voted in favour of most articles of the bill and did not propose own amendments.

In sum, the PJD has proven its willingness to appease the regime by limiting its outreach, by hiding its political strength, and accepting its limited role in parliament. The Islamists’ attempts to reassure the palace were remarkable since the very beginning of inclusion and have culminated in a strategy of anticipatory obedience in the sensitive moments of 2003. The reform of the Moroccan personal status code is an example of the party’s readiness to step over ideological thresholds; the law against terrorism that reduces civil and political liberties is another indicator of the willingness to accept a curtailment of political freedoms if the palace requires so. Very importantly, the necessity of a moderate and prudent approach is accepted by a majority of the party members.³² This is expressed in the delegates’ overwhelming support for Saadeddine al-Othmani, the architect of the post-16 May strategy, in the 2004 election for the party’s presidency.

The benefits of inclusion are thus clear from the perspective of the palace. But what accounts for the Islamists’ strategy? In a general way, legalisation and the inclusion into the formal political realm provide protection from too harsh harassment and opens up more space to promote social and political agendas. As is shown in the PJD’s success at the ballot boxes, inclusion allows the Islamists to capitalise on the passive support of those who are sympathetic to its message but would not actively engage in the movement under more risky conditions. Besides this, the PJD has also considerably improved its organisational capacities in the last decade. It has aimed to strengthen the party organisation by holding party congresses and internal elections, and by constantly revising its formal procedures. It has attracted new members, established more provincial and local bureaus, added more vertical and horizontal organisational layers, and founded ancillary organisations for youth, women, and sympathising cadres. The answer might thus be simple. The Islamists have gained political and social strength through inclusion. Consequently, they now have also much more to lose from re-exclusion.

We shall make it very clear that, like in Morocco, the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood did not *actively* challenge the Egyptian regime in the political field.³³ Since the early 1990s,

the regime's experiment of informal inclusion was displaced by a strategy of limited toleration. What rendered the Muslim Brotherhood dangerous in the eyes of the authoritarian incumbents? We can identify three variables that account for a change of regime strategy towards increased coercion: the extent and success of the Brotherhood's societal outreach, the politicisation of their activities, and diffuse fears of an 'Islamist threat' in general.

Indeed, the Egyptian regime had enough reason to be worried about the increasing success of the movement in its societal outreach during the 1980s which was, in turn, made possible by the regime's toleration of informal activities. As Hisham al-Awadi (2005) observed, the Brotherhood made use of its financial capacities and organisational network to increase its popularity. It has capitalised on increasing societal discontent fuelled by a severe economic crisis in the 1980s (Lust-Okar, 2005, p. 144). Financed by a parallel Islamic economic sector,³⁴ the organisation provided jobs, education, and health care and helped out with hardship funds and other charitable services. Thus, Islamists took over the task of providing social services which had been largely abandoned by the state. The regime must have been on high alert with the growth of this parallel Islamic sector since it lost credibility and, as a consequence, political legitimacy to the Islamists. As the main transmission belt for the provision of social services functioned the numerous private mosques and religious endowments (*Awqaf*). Estimates put it that, in 1993, 170,000 mosques existed in Egypt of whom only around 30,000 were sanctioned and controlled by the state; roughly half of all private voluntary associations (some 15,000) are supposed to have religious foundations (Wickham, 2002, p. 98ff). While we cannot equate the entirety of the parallel Islamic sector with the Muslim Brotherhood,³⁵ the latter is by far the largest and most important single organisation of Islamist social outreach bringing it to the centre of statist countermeasures.

A second aspect that raised concerns at the side of the Egyptian regime was the politicisation of the Muslim Brothers' activities and—in this context—the Islamicisation of existing political institutions (Al-Awadi, 2005). Thus, Islamist outreach was a success story not only in informal politics, but also in the formal political realm. A first sign of the Islamist take-over of political institutions was the Islamicisation of the opposition Labor Party. Originally embracing a socialist ideology, the party took on an Islamist agenda since its cooperation with the Muslim Brotherhood at the 1987 parliamentary elections. When the Brotherhood—along with other opposition parties—boycotted the 1990 parliamentary elections this was surely not the intended outcome of a policy of political liberalisation from the view-point of a regime which had aimed to increase its legitimacy through the opposition's participation in the electoral process. Another clear sign of the Brothers' dedication to 'turn political' was the attempt to create the *Wasat* as a party platform in 1996.³⁶ Most important in the context of the Islamicisation of formal political institutions was, however, the penetration of professional syndicates. In doing so, 'Muslim Brother activists gained an opportunity to hone their leadership skills, broaden their base of support, and present an alternative model of political life' (Wickham, 1997, p. 131). To create an 'alternative model of political life' was certainly not in the minds of Egypt's rulers when they tolerated the Muslim Brotherhood.

In addition to these factors, the repressive backlash of the early 1990s was almost certainly evoked by the increasing strength of Islamist movements in the region and across organisations at large, both with an electoral and with a militant agenda. As Najib Ghadbian (1997, p. 101) argued, the Algerian experience, where a legalised Islamist movement was about to unseat the Algerian incumbents, was closely observed by the

Egyptian state.³⁷ In the national context, the *Jama‘a Islamiyya’s* and *Jihad’s* militant initiative starting in the 1980s has also impaired opportunities for the Brothers since it has increased diffuse fears of an Islamist revolution.³⁸ Thus, in the early 1990s, the no-compromise-stance within the Egyptian political elite—particularly in the security and military complex—took the lead to install a strategy of ‘indiscriminate state repression’ (Hafez & Wiktorowicz, 2004, p. 78) that targeted not only the radical groups, but also the Muslim Brotherhood.

In sum, the Party of Justice and Development tried hard to demonstrate to the Moroccan king that, despite its legalisation and increasing strength, it respected the rules of the game and thereby secured its prolonged integration in the Moroccan political system. By contrast, the politicisation and social outreach of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood during the 1980s, in combination with an increasing fear of an Islamist revolution, have stretched the limits of informal toleration set by the regime and triggered a repressive backlash in the 1990s. Only recently did we witness a resurgence of the Brotherhood in parliament. It is intriguing to follow up whether this will be a renewal of political liberalisation, including the regime’s readiness to think over and revoke its repressive siege on the Brotherhood, or whether it will be assessed as a mere ‘accident’ of the very same strategy which may result in another round of repression.

Concluding Remarks

Our comparative analysis of the relationship between authoritarian incumbents and Islamist opposition movements in Morocco and Egypt shows that the rulers’ options of containment strategies are primarily constrained by the institutional setting of the respective systems. The Egyptian case suggests that, in republican-authoritarian regimes, the formal inclusion and legalisation of strong Islamist groups might not be an available option if it is to secure its grip on power. This observation is supported by other inclusivist experiences (or the lack thereof) in the Middle East and North Africa. The Algerian elections of 1991 surely serve as a chief example to Arab presidents that the legalisation of the Islamists is an extremely risky enterprise. Similarly, the Tunisian neighbour never made the mistake of legalising the Islamists. In contrast, the Jordanian monarchy, whose institutional setup is similar to the one in Morocco, legalised the Islamic Action Front as a parliamentary offspring of the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood in 1992.

As we have argued, whether or not a regime can count on other political forces to balance the Islamists in- and outside of the political institutions is a second—though less important—factor in its cost-benefit analysis regarding inclusion. In the presence of both conditions—a favourable institutional setting and a fragmented, but relatively strong opposition camp—the Moroccan Islamists have a structurally higher propensity to reach the ‘sunny side’ of inclusivist authoritarian containment than the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood.

The Moroccan regime managed to reach—at least for the moment—a stable and mutually beneficial deal with this strand of the Islamist movement through formal inclusion. Participation in elections has enabled the PJD to increase its organisational capacities, to broaden its support remarkably, and to impact directly on the agenda setting of existing political organisations.³⁹ Clearly, the PJD had good reasons for its compromising strategy that assured the continuity of its legal status, necessary if the party wants to play a major role in Moroccan politics in the future. In contrast, the ups and

downs in Egypt demonstrate that a similar deal lies—if at all—somewhere ahead in the future. As we have argued, it was not a clear confrontational approach that triggered state repression in Egypt. More crucial was the increasing strength of the Muslim Brotherhood through limited inclusion without simultaneous substantial rewards in regime legitimacy: the politicisation of the Muslim Brotherhood, the Wasat project, and—most recently—the energetic electoral campaign in 2005 and the Brotherhood’s remarkable success at the ballot boxes was not welcomed by the Egyptian incumbents. The latter’s reactions and the unstable relationship between the regime and the Muslim Brotherhood shows that it is much harder to create a win-win situation in Egypt than in Morocco.

Alternations in inclusivist strategies and repressive backlashes notwithstanding, our concerned political regimes did not attempt to solve the ‘Islamist problem’ altogether by force. In the end, the authoritarian incumbents in Egypt and Morocco found it more apt to introduce a flexible containment regime: ‘soft repression’ and the formal and informal inclusion of Islamists are strategies of containment which are deemed less costly than the use of blunt repression. In an ironic twist, the persistence of Islamist organisations does also come with some advantages for the two regimes: in both countries, Islamists are an important player in a juggling act by which opposition forces are pit against one another. Struggles occur between leftist and Islamist groups probably even more often than between regime and opposition (Lust-Okar, 2005). As a consequence, Islamist movements can persist over a long period of time in authoritarian settings. Their existence does not automatically lead to either systemic regime change (i.e. democratisation, ‘Islamic revolutions’) or the elimination of the movements by their authoritarian counterparts. From a state-versus-society perspective, we can thus denote a coexistence of strong authoritarian states and strong Islamist movements.

Yet, we should not deny that, in both cases, the relationship between autocrats and Islamists remains delicate and conflictive and led to, what one could coin, the *politics of protracted mutual challenge*: Islamists challenge authoritarian regimes in the Middle East not so much by manifest political action, but all the more so by the very fact that they persist as strong social actors. In turn, their ultimate goal—the Islamicisation of politics and society—is severely constrained by statist repression and other containment policies which impede their social outreach and meaningful action in the political institutions. We assume that this situation will not change fundamentally in the foreseeable future. Thus, potent Islamist movement organisations will remain an important component of politics in Egypt and Morocco for the years to come, though without having the capacities to trigger fundamental changes.

In the focus of many stands the question whether Islamist organisations and parties would be compatible with democracy. While the puzzle itself sounds decidedly hypothetical, those who would state a clear ‘no’ usually cite the discourses of Islamists and the ‘totalitarian’ character of their ideological source. In this context, our inquiries shed some light on another perspective. Similar to authoritarian incumbents in their dealing with Islamists, Islamist movement organisations seem to be open to act in a compromising, flexible, and pragmatic way. They calculate the impact of their forms of activism according to political circumstances and changes, to opportunities and disincentives, while their doctrine and discourses take on a subordinate role and remain, more often than not, subject to quick changes and turnarounds. Thus, the moderate Islamists’ dedication to adjust to the political reality surrounding them might well bear witness for the assumption that they

would adapt as much to a democratic institutional environment as to the current authoritarian setting.

Moreover, we rule out that the religious character of the Islamist *discourses* or the degree of social conservatism can explain the strategy of authoritarian incumbents towards the respective groups and the extent to which they are willing to liberalise the political systems. In the Western public spheres, the religious content of Islamist ideologies and discourses is often at the forefront of the debate. However, to put it simply, we hold that authoritarian elites do not at all care about whether opposition forces are of an Islamist, leftist, nationalist, or whatever ideological background. Rather, they care about the extent to which any of these groups manages to grow into a strong opposition movement capable to challenge their rule. In the end, the reasons behind the lack of democratisation processes should not be looked for in the Islamists but in the ability of the authoritarian regimes to keep their hold on power alive.

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Notes

1. Michael Hudson (1995) was among the first to raise this question from the Arab regimes' point of view. He distinguishes between five possible containment strategies: 'forced exclusion', 'marginalization', and 'pre-emption' can be subsumed under exclusionary strategies, while 'limited accommodation' and 'full inclusion' are inclusionary strategies. 'Full inclusion', however, remains more than ten years after the publication of Hudson's article, still a hypothetical category.
2. In an almost ironic twist, the Islamist resurgence encouraged by Sadat in the 1970s proved to become a ghost that escaped the bottle in 1981 when Sadat was assassinated by members of the *Islamic Jihad*.
3. In 1984, the Brotherhood formed an alliance with the *Neo-Wafd* Party; in 1987, members of the Muslim Brotherhood and other Islamist associations joined the Labor Party (*Hizb al-'Amal*) and the Liberal Party (*Hizb al-Ahrar*) to form the 'Islamic Alliance'.
4. The term was coined by Hisham Al-Awadi (2005); cf. also Auda (1994, p. 385ff).
5. Most opposition parties boycotted the 1990 parliamentary elections. This was the starting point for a decade of political de-liberalisation embracing higher degrees of repression not only towards the Islamist challenge but society at large (Kienle, 1998).
6. The most prominent example here is the case of Gamal Heshmat, a Brotherhood bigwig from Alexandria who was ousted from parliament in January 2003 even though he had not deliberately crossed a common 'red line' (G. Heshmat, personal communication, 21 December, 2004, Cairo).
7. Until the time of writing, there was no open political communication between the regime and the Brotherhood. According to several Brotherhood members, unofficial communication channels have been restricted to the corridors of parliament, some professional syndicates, and Universities (personal communication, December 2004 and January 2005, Cairo). This communicative deadlock will almost certainly change in the aftermath of the parliamentary elections of 2005 because—with a 20 per cent stake of the Muslim Brotherhood in parliament—the regime will not be able to ignore the presence of the group as a political player any more.

8. The MUR is itself a merger of different Islamist organisations in 1996. In the following, if not hinting precisely at one of these predecessor organisations, we will employ the label MUR to refer to the entirety of all those groups that are now part of the MUR.
9. The largest of these groups founded a new organisation in 1981, first called *al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya*, since 1992 *al-Islah wa al-Tajdid*. The organisation was founded by Mohamed Yatim, Abdallah Baha, and Abdelilah Benkirane, who are currently all MPs and members of the General Secretariat of the PJD. Neither *al-Jama'a* nor *al-Islah* have been legalised but the authorities tolerated their activities to some extent. The second big faction inside the MUR, the Rally for an Islamic Future was founded by former members of the Islamic Youth who had initially turned to local religious associations.
10. In 1989 and 1992, they asked for the legalisation of an own party project, the 'Party of National Renewal', which was designed to conform to the Moroccan law on political parties that—like in Egypt—explicitly prohibits religious parties. For instance, the statutes invoked that the party would be open to all Moroccans irrespective of their religious affiliation.
11. Two constitutional referenda (1992 and 1996) channelled more power to political parties and parliament and provided for the direct election of all MPs. Increasing transparency of the electoral process was achieved through the creation of a National Electoral Commission that comprises members of all relevant political parties. Through the 1996 constitutional reform, however, a second chamber with large prerogatives was created in order to counter undesired effects of the increasing power of the first chamber. All the members of the second chamber are elected among the municipal councillors and the members of the employer and labour unions. The predominance of municipal councillors (three out of five) in the second chamber guarantees its conservative bias.
12. The suggestion that different regimes have different fears regarding the participation of strong social groups in elections is mirrored by their preferences for different electoral rules. Lust-Okar & Jamal (1999, p. 359ff) have shown that single-party regimes in the Middle East and North Africa opt for electoral rules that favour the dominant party while monarchies aim at fragmenting the political landscape. The problem for the single-party regimes lies in the danger that the Islamist party turns out to be stronger than the ruling party.
13. This is obvious particularly in times of power changes. When Nasser, Sadat, and Mubarak came to power, they always had to overcome strong contenders from their own ranks. Moreover, current events that saw the advent of lively street protests (*Kifaya*-movement), a revival of political parties, constitutional reforms, and general public discontent indicate that the Egyptian regime has increasingly come under pressure from society.
14. While being behind the creation of supportive 'royalist' parties such as the *Rassemblement National des Indépendants* or the *Union Constitutionnelle*, the king has never associated his faith with any of them and has actively promoted conflicts and splits if any of his creations appeared to become too powerful.
15. For the working mechanisms of the co-optation and control of society, see Kassem (1999).
16. There is a 'political section' subdivided into the 'political', 'economic', and 'information' units. The 'technical section' supervises activities in the professional syndicates and comprises several subdivisions, like the 'labour unit', the 'women section', and the 'social section' (Abdel-Hamid al-Ghizali, University professor and Brotherhood member, personal communication, 19 December, 2004, Cairo); cf. also Munson (2001).
17. Indeed, fissures within the organisation exist between moderate and more radical proponents and, most notably, between different generations of activists: while the organisation's leadership is still occupied by an 'old guard' of veterans, the 'middle generation' (*Jil al-Wasat*) comprises those activists who have been politicised in the 1970s. They occupy the majority of the seats in the Guidance Bureau and took the lead in the professional syndicates and in parliament. Competing perceptions rose about important issues, such as the internal discourses on Islam vs. democracy and modernity, or the very nature of the organisation. However, internal fissures never turned into open conflict among the Muslim Brothers' ranks that have successfully drawn a disciplined picture (El-Ghobashy, 2005, p. 391). Rather, open dissent led to the split of factions as the case of the *Wasat* party exemplifies (cf. Stacher, 2002; Wickham, 2004).
18. As Islamist movement activism is by and large a phenomenon of the educated, an additional explanation lies in the high illiteracy rate in rural Morocco.
19. Munson notes that ideological support for the Islamist movement was much broader with over 30 per cent favouring 'the re-establishment of Islamic law as the sole legal system' (Munson, 1986, p. 274).
20. The most important legalised opposition parties are the *Wafd* Party, the *Tagammu*, the Nasserist Party, the Labor Party, and the recently founded *al-Ghad* ('Tomorrow') Party (cf. Stacher, 2004).

21. The UNFC was formed in September 2005 under the leadership of former Prime Minister Aziz Sidqi with the idea to knit together opposition forces and thus challenge the regime more effectively. It comprises all major opposition parties, except for Ayman Nour's al-Ghad, along with other tolerated groups, such as the *Karama* (Dignity) movement, the frozen Labor Party, and several protest movements performing under the *Kifaya* (Enough!) banner. For a first account of the parliamentary elections, see El Amrani (2005).
22. For a more detailed discussion of the effects of inclusion on the Moroccan Islamists and its contribution to regime stability, see Wegner (2004).
23. In the 1997 and 2002 parliamentary elections, it covered about half of the constituencies. In the 2003 communal elections, it decreased the coverage below 18 per cent and enacted a model of selective coverage assuring that it would not win the majority in any major city.
24. There are other reasons behind this decision, most importantly the limits posed by the organisational capacities of the MUR/PJD which made it difficult to cover all the constituencies in 1997. However, given that the PJD has restricted its coverage well below its capacities in 2002, we must see the limited coverage as being clearly motivated by the desire to placate the regime. Additionally, rumours (and allusions of a party leader) say that the PJD actually came out as the largest party in the 2002 elections but agreed to take the third rank (member of the party's General Secretariat, personal communication, 9 November, 2003).
25. Member of Parliament, of the PJD's General Secretariat, and the MUR's Executive Bureau, personal communication, 12 November, 2003, Rabat.
26. Personal communication with a member of the PJD's General Secretariat, 7 March, 2003, Rabat.
27. King Hassan II passed away in 1999. At the beginning of his rein, his successor Mohammed VI appeared to be committed to further liberalisation. A very important symbol in that respect was the forced resignation of Driss Basri, the ministry of interior since 1976, long considered as the second most powerful man in Morocco, and responsible for electoral fraud and the deplorable human rights situation.
28. While the initial choice to support the government was taken by the party's executive in the General Secretariat, the decision to change sides to the opposition was pushed for and eventually imposed in a very tight vote by the National Council (*al-Majlis al-Watani*), a body of 240 members, in which the weight of members of local and provincial bodies is particularly strong.
29. Cf. *al-Tajdid*, 30 September, 2002, pp. 1, 3.
30. On 16 May, five simultaneous suicide bombings in Casablanca left 45 dead and nearly 100 injured. After Casablanca, approximately 1,100 terrorism suspects were arrested and the courts have sentenced more than 50 people to life in prison and 16 people to death. The PJD was boycotted by the national TV stations and accused by the leftist parties of having provided the climate for terrorism. While the regime did not threaten to ban the party, the ministry of interior used the opportunity to intervene in the selection of party office holders and to negotiate an even lower coverage in the September 2003 elections.
31. Especially raising the minimum age for marriages, the abolition of polygamy, and the women's right to conclude marriages without a 'marital tutor'.
32. In only two cities, Tangier and Agadir, local party leaders rebelled against the strategy in the communal elections. In Tangier, they refused to run in only three out of five constituencies, and in Agadir, they refused to run on a joint list with another party. In other cities, there were some discontent militants but the General Secretariat's decisions were eventually accepted.
33. For instance, the Brotherhood has—only until recently—never capitalised on its popular support to take politics to the street and organise public demonstrations in order to challenge the state. In early 2005, however, the organisation joined in the new dynamics of opposition politics and organised mass rallies in Cairo and other cities in which they championed domestic political reforms. Obviously, this move was triggered by the appearance of another protest movement, *Kifaya*, that crossed formerly established thresholds by demanding the end of Mubarak's hold on power. While the Brotherhood tried hard to placate the regime—e.g. by the announcement to support Mubarak's bid to serve another presidential term—this did not prove successful. Instead, the Brotherhood rallies have been accompanied by a massive security presence and triggered the arrest of up to 1,000 sympathisers and even prominent members, such as Essam al-Iryan and the organisation's Secretary-General, Mahmoud Ezzat.
34. The extent of financial flows through Islamic channels is unknown. However, we may reasonably speak of a 'parallel economic sector' as it is largely uncontrolled by the state. Sources to finance charitable services include Islamic banks and investment companies, donations from wealthy individuals in

Egypt and particularly from Egyptian residents in the Gulf countries, and the profit-making activities of Islamic associations (Wickham, 2002, p. 100).

35. Many organisations and associations are of an apolitical nature, and militant groups provided social services too as a case study in southern Egypt shows (cf. Toth, 2003).
36. The *Wasat* was mainly an initiative of the Brotherhood's middle generation of activists and initially included prominent members like Abdoul Mounem Aboul Foutouh and Essam al-Irian. The importance of the project is emphasised by the fact that it was masterminded by the current Brotherhood leader, Muhammad Mahdi Akef. After an unsuccessful attempt to be legalised as a party, the idea was quickly dismissed by the Brotherhood's leadership. However, some initiators decided to hold the *Wasat* alive and split with the mother organisation. Today, it appears as an independent group headed by the prominent Islamist intellectual Abu Ela Maadi and remains an important platform for discourses on the modernisation of Islamism. Even though the split between the *Wasat* and the Muslim Brotherhood seems to be very deep and conflictual, some informed observers assume that the Brothers could gain control again over the *Wasat* at any time (Abu Ela Maadi, personal communication, 25 January, 2005, Cairo; Muhammad Mahdi Akef, personal communication, 18 January, 2005, Cairo).
37. According to Roussillon (2001, p. 101), the Egyptian ambassador in Algeria claimed that his main task was to convince the Algerian regime not to legalise the FIS.
38. Quite to the contrary in Morocco where radical Islamist groups never turned into a serious political threat making life for the moderate side of Islamism easier.
39. One important effect of the inclusion of the Islamists in the political realm is that other political parties are increasingly adjusting to the new tones in politics and started to adopt some traits of 'Islamic' discourses.

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