

Changing the Player, Not the Game

Ennahda's *Homo islamicus*

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We've adopted in our program a system of free social economy: the same system of the market but within the framework of justice and humanity, not the system of brutal markets. Yes, we encourage free initiatives, but within the framework of humanity.

—Rached El-Ghannouchi, leader of Ennahda
Interviewed on Al Jazeera's *Empire*, 13 November 2011

One understudied aspect of the politics of Tunisia's dominant political party, Ennahda, is its approach to the monumental task of meeting revolutionary demands for a more equitable economic order, with greater prosperity shared by a wider part of the population.¹ This stance reverses the concentration of wealth seen in the latter years of Zine El-Abidine Ben Ali's regime. This article is a preliminary attempt to situate Ennahda's economic philosophy within a broader universe of Islamic or Islamist thought on economic issues. It also makes a tentative projection about a likely limitation on economic policy if Ennahda finds itself in power after the current transitional period. The basis for this projection is the track record of the employers' association MÜSIAD and the labor union Hak-İş in Turkey, whose core ideology appears consonant with that of Ennahda.

To the extent that Ennahda articulates a distinctive economic philosophy, it is one that operates only at the individual level. Although it shares with many political movements of the global south a rhetoric of resistance to the hegemony of neoliberal globalization, it does not posit any coherent alternative. The main tool offered by Ennahda to ameliorate Tunisia's economic hardships is *Homo islamicus*, a more virtuous economic actor who will be disciplined enough to refrain from corrupt practices and who will inspire workers to greater productivity by engaging them in culturally appropriate ways.

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The Regional Historical Conjuncture as Context for Economic Ideology

How are Islamist parties responding to economic demands of uprisings that propelled them to power? A first cut at that question by Ibrahim Saif and Muhammad Abu Rumman for the Carnegie Middle East Center in May 2012 found commonalities across several cases but noted that Tunisia's Islamists' approach to economic questions was already more developed than that of their counterparts in Egypt, Morocco, or Jordan.² On the other hand, some observers, such as Khalil al-Anani, see little or no difference between how Islamists in power approach economic policy and the neoliberal policies of the fallen regimes:

While in the program of the Freedom and Justice Party one can notice the overuse of terms and language that are based on what has become to be known as “the Islamic economic system,” the actual economic policy applied by the Party on the ground is not much different from the capitalist practices that prevailed during the era of the former regime. . . .

This is also the case with Tunisia's Ennahda Party, whose leaders never miss a chance to call for more capital, stimulation of the private sector, and engagement in economic partnership that is based on international free market principles and commitment to international conditions, in reference to economic liberalization programs, which are often applied at the expense of the poor and low-income people.³

Al-Anani is a critic of the Islamists, but he is far from alone in noticing an essential continuity of policy. Stephen Glain reported in the *Washington Post* that the “mercantilist sensibility” of the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) means that it combines “patronage systems that provide food, education and health care to Egypt's poor” with “an ancient laissez-faire tradition” that it traces to the birth of Islam.⁴

So is there in fact any significant difference between Islamists' preferences and neoliberal capitalism? Al-Anani notes that the MB's critique of the previous regime “does not stem from the fact that there is a structural flaw in the prevailing economic system, but on the fact that the problem lies in those who are in charge of it.”⁵ This remark allows an entry point for understanding where the two approaches part company: the distinction between liberalism's *Homo oeconomicus* and Islamism's *Homo islamicus*.

The influential nineteenth century Islamic reformist Jamal al-Din al-Afghani had concerns about the individualism of modern subjectivity: “The quality of *egoism* consists of self-love to the point that if a personal profit requires a man having that quality to let the whole world be harmed, he would not renounce that profit but would consent to the harm of everyone in the world” (italics in original).⁶ Liberal individualism can appear simply as antisocial: rights-bearing individuals

capable of choosing moral ends for themselves stand in contrast to the dutiful followers of divine discipline, for whom moral ends are already chosen exteriorly. We will see below how Ennahda's discourse on the economy echoes al-Afghani.

The self-interested chooser who concerned al-Afghani was the *Homo oeconomicus* who is the basis of classical liberal economic theory and the dominant global economic order today. Islamic thought might reject the notion of a human being who chooses his or her own moral ends and an ethical order built upon that foundation; nevertheless, Islamists' economic orientations have considerable overlap with liberalism. The distinction comes, as the short quotation from al-Anani suggests, not from the approach to economic structures but the nature of the economic actor. The name of the Islamic actor is found in the subtitle of a publication produced by MÜSİAD, the Turkish Muslim employers' association: "*Homo Islamicus*."⁷

Before we discuss the nature of this being, we should note that a different conception of the actor implies at least the possibility that the structure within which he or she operates might also be different. Indeed, we learn from Ayşe Buğra that in MÜSİAD publications, "the rules set out by the prophet himself to guide the exchange activity in the Medina market are often discussed as rules which clearly define a competitive system with minimum state intervention and regulation. This system is different, however, from a pure market economy in that it is *clearly embedded in social relations mediated by a religious morality*" (emphasis added).⁸ So *Homo islamicus* as a concept always exists within Islamic society.⁹

Saif and Abu Rumman identify seven core economic principles expounded by MB founder Hassan al-Banna and, they argue, broadly influential among Islamists:

[1] approving licit earnings and describing them as 'the foundation of life itself'; [2] declaring the inviolability of private property; [3] affirming the need to narrow the gap between social classes; [4] supporting a social safety net for all citizens; [5] making the state responsible for achieving 'social balance'; [6] forbidding the exploitation of political influence to further private economic interests; and [7] proscribing illicit sources of revenue.¹⁰

Clearly such principles are incompatible with Leninism (point two) but could otherwise accommodate a range of political-economic arrangements from democratic socialism to liberal capitalism, except of the most doctrinaire libertarian variety (due to points four and five). So it appears that the main distinctions between Islamic and non-Islamic economic systems are moral ones, at the level of the society and of the individual actor embedded in that society.

Ennahda's Economic Ideology

The key question facing Ennahda is how it responds to the demands of party members and other citizens for a way out of Tunisia's economic crisis within the constraints imposed by the international context and consistent with its own core values. What, in practice, is the "system of free social economy"?

One might wish to analyze policies enacted since the troika government, in which Ennahda is the leading partner, came to power. However, these offer at best a partial indication of the party's priorities because Ennahda is forced to make compromises due to being in a coalition. Furthermore, the transitional nature of the government has tended to make national unity and consensus higher priorities than would presumably be the case were Ennahda governing alone and in a regularly elected government.

We also need to be very aware of external constraints on policy making as an important filter between preferences and outcomes. The Ennahda-led government has repeatedly reassured investors and others that there would be no major shifts in either macroeconomic policy or social policies likely to have a negative effect on the crucial tourism sector, such as bans on alcohol or bikinis. These constraints would presumably be the same for any government of postrevolutionary Tunisia.

More generally, it is hard to assess the government's economic decision making due to low levels of transparency. The 2012 Open Budget Survey awarded Tunisia a remarkably low score of 11/100, showing how little budget data it releases for public discussion.¹¹ Leaked documents related to negotiations with the International Monetary Fund for a standby arrangement show disparities between publicly announced figures for growth and the budget deficit and the figures shared with the fund: growth is reportedly 3.2 percent rather than 3.6 percent, and the budget deficit is 8 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) rather than 5.9 percent.¹²

Saif and Abu Rumman do summarize some proposed policies covering 2012–16, based on Ennahda's 2011 election manifesto. The goal for GDP growth is set at 7 percent annually (it is less than half that currently), with unemployment planned to decrease from 14 percent in 2010 to around 8 percent by 2016 (in 2012 it declined from 18.1 to 16.7 percent).¹³ The unemployment reduction was to come through job training for university graduates and incentives for the private sector to provide job opportunities. The platform pledged a reduced tax burden on medium- and low-income groups. It planned to make Tunisia a financial hub by encouraging development of a modernized insurance market with an emphasis on Islamic insurance. It would combat corruption and reduce red tape, seek to revive

the North African Union, and enhance Tunisia's status vis-à-vis the European Union (EU). With the exception of the reference to Islamic insurance, there is little here to distinguish Ennahda from a secular party of the center-right. However, in a supplementary budget submitted to the Constituent Assembly in April, after a few months in power, the government of Hamadi Jebali revised growth estimates for the year down to 3.5 percent and asked for an increase in the budget of 2.5 billion dinars (about US \$1 billion) for short-term Keynesian stimulus through expenditures on housing and infrastructure.¹⁴ The overall impression is one of pragmatism, with more reliance on state intervention in the economy than classical liberal economics might countenance.

Ennahda is routinely described as a moderate Islamist party, associated taxonomically with the MB in Egypt and its various offshoots as well as Turkey's Justice and Development Party. But it is not identical to either of them, having a distinct organizational history and sociopolitical context. A crucial element in its identity (going back to its predecessor movements) is opposition to secularist leaders Habib Bourguiba and Ben Ali in Tunisia. This history, though, is not a straightforward one of binary opposition; nor was Ennahda alone in opposing the more dictatorial elements of Bourguiba's reign and the police state that followed a brief "Tunisian Spring" in the late 1980s after Ben Ali's coup of 1987. It sits amidst an array of reasonably effective liberal and leftist opposition groups—part of the reason Ennahda finds itself governing in coalition now, unlike the MB in Egypt before the Morsy government fell. It was brutally repressed—like the MB—but unlike the MB, Ennahda could not organize extensively in the 1990s and the past decade. The Egyptian group took over professional syndicates and ran for parliament as independents, whereas such opportunities were not open to Ennahda. The movement's leader, Rached El-Ghannouchi, and many of his closest associates spent the past two decades in exile, in common with activists, journalists, and others from across Tunisia's political spectrum. The limited amount of organizing took place underground; thus, when El-Ghannouchi and others returned after the fall of Ben Ali, they took charge of a movement that had generational splits in experience and ideology. They also quickly encountered more conservative religious political groups emerging alongside the longer-established liberals, leftists, and other forces, including the important nationalist trade union UGTT and the emerging neo-Bourguibist Nidaa Tounes party. In brief, Ennahda is part of a diverse political space in which it maintains a plurality of influence but in which it is vigorously challenged from several directions.

So what is Ennahda's approach to the economy? Saif and Abu Rumman quote El-Ghannouchi: "I believe that we must adopt the form of social democracy practiced in Sweden and the other Scandinavian states. Economics must be

dominated by social values, and not simply the aggressive forces of the free market.”¹⁵ At that level of generality, not much daylight appears between the Islamist leader and the liberal-left interim president of Tunisia, Moncef El Marzouki: “To believe that the market economy, liberal or neo-liberal, will pull Tunisians out of poverty is . . . a false and stale idea.”¹⁶

Ennahda answers economic challenges in a way that can be seen as distinctive compared to how a secular party might approach the same questions, doing so primarily at the level of the individual economic actor. Its answers, in common with those of the other regional Islamist actors discussed in Saif and Abu Ruman, reach to the early Islamic community for their justification. As shown here in discussion of a statement on economic policy posted on the party’s official website, Ennahda does not offer concrete proposals on macroeconomic issues so much as identify mechanisms whereby “Islam’s men” will

1. act in an uncorrupt way;
2. bridge the gap between the rulers and the people, and between employers and employees;
3. attract trust and confidence; and
4. empower people to be better economic agents through discipline (moral training).

This last point invites interesting comparisons to Max Weber’s argument in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* and, less obviously perhaps, to the attempts to harness private religious morality to economic efficacy in the mid-twentieth-century educational programs of Turkey, Egypt, and Tunisia itself, at least under Bourguiba.¹⁷ In essence, Ennahda’s claim here could be taken as saying that on the economic front, it will succeed where Bourguiba failed since its ideology is more consonant with the culture of the masses: disciplining through religion will work better than its secular educational counterpart.

What follows is an analysis of a policy document posted on Ennahda’s official website (one of two under the heading “Thought”): “On the Problematic of the Islamists’ Economic Program.”¹⁸ The document seems to be derived from writings or statements by El-Ghannouchi, but its authorship is not explicit. It is composed of seven “observations,” each elaborated upon at some length.

In its first observation, the document notes that previous governments hid correct information about the economy and that the struggle has focused on removing dictatorships. This is by way of explaining why Ennahda has not hitherto set out a comprehensive economic plan: the emphasis has been elsewhere, and the information has remained unavailable. It is not that Ennahda has anything to hide: “Discussing the Islamic economic program is not discussing a secret or

magical project, as some adversaries of the Islamic solution spread around . . . nor is it a matter of a moral project, even though morals have some role in societies' renaissances."

The Islamic economic program is integrative, embedded in a context whose most relevant circles are the cultural, social, and political, working complementarily with them to provide citizens the necessities of their society—their becoming civilized (*tamadun*) and their self-respect or dignity (*3azzah*). "It is impossible to separate the economy and politics, particularly these days: economic and political issues do not exist in a vacuum but originate in an organized human society related to moral ideals." This echoes the summary of al-Banna offered by Saif and Abu Rumman.¹⁹

The second observation develops a notion of congruence between state and people: "A regime certainly cannot succeed if it conflicts with the ideals the people believe in." It draws a contrast between this approach and what it describes as the rule elsewhere: "Most governments of the Islamic world do not know Islamic ideals and do not wish to get to know them." It describes a widening gulf between "the state and economic elite on the one hand and the mass of the people on the other," which deepens mistrust and hampers effective development.

The third observation is essentially a criticism of dominant approaches to economics in the second half of the twentieth century, as the global south achieved independence. It argues that development projects of right and left have failed, leading to deepening poverty and indebtedness.

The fourth observation draws a stark contrast, making an argument for Islam as a better alternative to other development frameworks. Islam is a complete system. Islamic civilization reached its height when Islam led the world in cultural, legal, and economic life: "Markets of this life side by side with markets of the next gave physical form to the Islamic precept joining the material to the spiritual."²⁰ Evocation of the "golden age," common to Islamist discourse, is here tied directly to economic issues: "Islam is still the most important ingredient in the identity of the *umma* and the motor of its energies if it is put to work in development projects, as happened in the experience of Malaysia, Turkey and Indonesia."²¹ Aside from these positive examples, the Islamic movement (treated as a singular entity) remains mostly in opposition while secularists are in government, so the movement cannot be blamed for shortfalls in the production of necessities.

The next section appears crucial to understanding the individual-level foundations of a distinctively Islamic approach. Given that Islam led society well,

it is natural that its men would be most capable of mobilizing our peoples in any development project and bridging the enormous abyss opened up by the Westernizing/estranging (*taghriibiiyah*) curricula between the ruling and cultural elite on the one hand, and

the mass of the people on the other, which made the elite as if they were calling to it from a far place so that scarcely anything of their pronouncements and directions could reach.

So the difference is primarily ethical at the individual level (better men will run things better) and social (they speak the language of the culture). The next section develops both of these ideas with reference to success stories from elsewhere. It is noteworthy that in the absence of a track record, due to being frozen out of power for so long and persecuted, they can only point to the records of other Islamists elsewhere, naturally cherry-picking the best news. This can be a temporary strategy only: as in all performance-based legitimization strategies, they will sooner or later need to reproduce these successes on their own terrain in order to substantiate their analysis of what factors have worked elsewhere.

The fifth observation, then, discusses Turkey's experience in economic reform. It also mentions the growing interest in Islamic banking worldwide, including the part of non-Islamic institutions such as Barclays and Citigroup, and studies in institutions around the world—including the West—on Islamic finance and economics (it refers to the United Kingdom's Loughborough University as a center of such studies). Both theory and practice have developed. Islamic banking is internationally competitive, including competing successfully with interest-based banking. The document also cites successes in development within civil society rather than at the state level, noting that the MB took over the running of many professional syndicates in Egypt, proving itself effective in delivering services.

In many ways, Turkey is the trump card here, particularly in light of its strong economic performance over the past few years. The document draws a contrast between Turkey's experience in reducing debt and unemployment on the one hand and "capitalism" on the other: "Their economy escaped the collapses that afflicted the capitalist economies, and there is no clear reason behind these successes apart from Islam, since it is the distinguishing factor."

So how does Islam do its work in these instances? Through its people. Islamists study with secularists in the same universities, take the same subjects, but they do better in business because "firstly, their speech is closer to the broadest sectors of the masses." Here again is the argument that they are similar in culture to those they must lead and manage—that they can inspire them, unlike the secularists who speak as if from a distance. The behavior of the Islamist inspires more trust than others. He is among the community, praying with them and so on. This is a clear benefit to business.

Moreover, only Islamists are said to have a very important developmental factor: Islam imposes modesty, makes doing right a duty and forbids doing wrong, and curbs waste and excess. "Islam is a moral training agent" that gives capacity

for self-control—the ability to curb a tendency toward waste, conserving a share for the needs of all and allowing growth. It is a hedge against corruption. The document notes that Tunisia’s first postrevolutionary prime minister said corruption was a significant drag on growth, exacerbating unemployment. Turkey’s mid-1990s Islamist prime minister Necmettin Erbakan and his followers are held up as an example of successfully setting their country on a path away from corruption and achieving positive economic results. Because of the externally imposed constraints of the law, believing Muslims will conduct themselves in ways conducive to successful development, in implied contrast to the egocentric *Homo oeconomicus*. Economic policy, then, is about disciplining productive economic actors. “The economic program is not just plans, however precise and whatever their good points, as much as it is above all a humanitarian, cultural training project” (*mashruu3 thaqaafi tarbawii insaanii*). In other words, it is about human capital development through the discipline of divinely sanctioned productive behavior.

But here the document takes a turn toward something straight out of liberal development orthodoxy: “Governments, if they want any reform, must be logical [consonant?] with themselves and marry together economic freedom and political freedom,” for without that they will not be able to realize plenty for the people: “freedom is indivisible.” This idea is developed more in the following observation.

The sixth observation argues that what Islam said in the seventh century CE agrees with what liberalism said in the nineteenth century CE and since then on the indivisibility of rights, so long as there is “balance between the material, spiritual and creative needs of the individual, and he is considered part of a family and a group and human collectivity and in a necessary and fateful relationship with the environment,” contrasting this to capitalist and socialist development. It follows, then, that development needs planning, legislation, investment, education, professional training, and so forth. “But probably before all of that, it needs an encouraging political climate, a helpful psychological atmosphere, calm social circumstances, just laws,” making these the key tasks of revolutionary governments. Here one finds a notion of substantive democracy, perhaps an echo of Amartya Sen’s influential work in which he argues that political development and economic development are essentially indivisible, that the goal of increasing the freedom and capabilities of individuals cannot be served effectively by a narrow focus on economic growth but must be approached holistically: “Development requires the removal of major sources of unfreedom: poverty as well as tyranny, poor economic opportunities as well as systematic social deprivation, neglect of public facilities as well as intolerance or overactivity of repressive states.”²² The section is summarized as arguing for “democracy in its broad and complete sense, such that political life is transparent and clear, in which every individual, estab-

lishment, organization, and entity knows its place and its limits and its rights, and economic life and productive activities are likewise.” Although it is not enough on its own to produce goods and so forth, it is nevertheless indispensable that “an atmosphere of seriousness, trust, faith, and confidence reign in society.”

The seventh observation moves to populism or, at least, majoritarianism.²³ Economic policy should be determined by what the majority of the people want, through transparent processes. Other routes “threaten balance and social peace, destroy a society’s institutions and the environment and throw the country into civil war or the edge of it.” To illustrate those other routes, the document recalls that dictatorships in most Arab states received Western support if they pursued structural adjustment under pressure from international financial institutions, even where this led to states of emergency, announced or not, and annulment of national or syndicate elections—“to facilitate the workings of international capitalist policies, crushing the hopes of peoples for independent development on behalf of the peoples and their freedoms and emancipation from dependence.” As at the global level, hegemony must be resisted, so a key task is to “end the hegemony of the state over society” and “to rebalance between state and society in favor of the latter.”

The piece ends in a burst of rhetoric (“economic work sees rebirth in the context of a complete renaissance, guaranteeing the liberation of the individual and society from state hegemony and from the greed of the globalist capitalist dragon”) and commitment to helping the poor, uneducated, and others. Finally, it offers a hadith about the Caliph Umar, reminding us of the duty to provide work and care for workers.

In summary, we do not see here any commitment to systematic redistribution but a plan for the remoralization of the economy at the individual level. If El-Ghannouchi wants social democracy, this statement does not offer a road map. It is long on the rhetoric of rejection of neoliberal globalization, along with broad criticism of both capitalism and socialism, but says almost nothing about macroeconomic alternatives. Rather, it is an argument that liberal economics work better when led by moralized agents embedded within a society whose language they speak and whose mores are theirs. The external discipline of religious law and divine sanctions against wrongdoing makes economic actors less wasteful, immune to the temptations of corruption, and harmonious with others in their society. It is a deeply idealistic vision.

Projections: One Observation Based on Turkey's Experience

One must be very cautious in making analogies between Turkey's experience and likely future directions in Tunisia. However, there are some good reasons to do so. First, Ennahda itself clearly looks to Turkey as an inspiration and in some degree a model. Moreover, the commonalities of experience vis-à-vis the international context are important: both have crucial ties to the EU, in contrast to the more arms-length relationship between Egypt and the EU, for instance. So far, the troika government led by Ennahda shows every sign of maintaining emphasis on that relationship. Evidence from a number of domains indicates that the prospect of membership has imposed a salutary discipline on Turkish reform efforts. That degree of engagement is not in prospect soon, if ever, for Tunisia; nevertheless, the desire to increase access to the EU's markets can serve as a powerful incentive to become a cooperative partner, indicating that a shift away from broadly liberal macroeconomic approaches is unlikely.

A thorough consideration of the trajectory of Turkey's Islamist economic actors and ideas lies beyond the scope of this article. Studies of two key institutions, though, suggest where an economic philosophy built around *Homo islamicus* might lead. Buğra studied the most important Islamist business association and labor union in Turkey. She noted that Hak-İş and MÜSİAD share in an "Islamic politics of recognition."²⁴ Both criticize Turkey's past statist model, but "a pure market society characterized by the 'disembeddedness' of the economy from society is not considered to be viable and desirable by either association."²⁵ She makes a persuasive case for the growing success of the two organizations since the 1980s due to their harmony with local and global economic trends:

Such traditional values comfortably fit in the information society which is characterized by the increasingly significant economic role of small and medium sized enterprises and, on the cultural plane, family values and religion contrast to large scale, capital-intensive enterprises, highly interventionist welfare state practices and a rationalist/positivist outlook which characterize Western industrial society.²⁶

This all seems of a piece with Ennahda's orientation as analyzed above. But the two organizations do not exist entirely harmoniously. From the perspective of the bosses' organization, Islam suggests "a model where workers' rights and entitlements, as well as responsibilities, are determined by informal and personal relations as opposed to redistributive/associative principles"—a patriarchal or patrimonial model of reciprocal relations, in other words.²⁷ The leaders of Hak-İş, on the other hand, "do not at all share MÜSİAD's enthusiasm for the East Asian model of 'embedded economy', which, according to them, is based on an authori-

tarian, undemocratic political system. The emphasis of flexibility that one finds in MÜSİAD's agenda, too, is replaced by Hak-İş's call for economic relations based on formal rules and regulations."²⁸

In their complementary study of 2005, Burhanettin Duran and Engin Yıldırım examine the evolution of Hak-İş's positions over time. Until the early 1990s, the "basic tenet of Hak-İş was the principle of the commonality of employer and employee interests on the basis of Muslim brotherhood. Hak-İş declared that conflict between labour and capital was artificial because labour and capital complement each other."²⁹ Although labor relations are not discussed directly in the Ennahda document, this seems broadly consonant with its picture of economic relations built around *Homo islamicus*. However, the experience of trying to advocate effectively for workers within an Islamic framework has proven frustrating to the leaders of Hak-İş, including the times when their antagonists were members of MÜSİAD. The leadership is careful not to appear to be developing a class-based rhetoric or ideology, but frustration is clear in some of the quotations:

Muslims do not seem to be interested in problems of labour. Some Muslims see the cause of all problems in the lack of moral values, but the answer should not be to present traditional Islamic morality. Muslims should understand the question of class, and side with the poor. The powerful and the oppressor exploit sources of *rızk* by using the political and economic privileges Allah donated for the poor and the oppressed. Those who do not recognize workers' rights are against God.³⁰

They found that "approaching workers from a purely moralistic standpoint was not sufficient. Hak-İş had to imitate tactics of other unions if it was to survive. It was forced to recognize the reality of conflicting interests between workers and employers," leading it to move away from a paternalist mode and toward an articulation of rights in universalist terms.³¹ Relations with the EU and the prospect, eventually fulfilled, of integration into Europe-wide labor organizations provided a further spur. Ultimately the authors credit the union with a key role in developing a democracy-friendly discourse within Turkish Islamism: "Hak-İş leaders have been articulating their arguments in universal terms since the early 1990s. It has been forced to reconsider democracy and secularism as universal values rather than regarding them as western products. Hak-İş leadership correctly judged that their fortunes were closely tied to the strengthening of democracy."³²

This is by no means automatically a cautionary tale for Ennahda. Democracy has already been incorporated into its discourse since the 1990s at least.³³ However, relations between the two Islamist economic organizations, as well as their differing conceptions over time of what Islam requires of them, suggest that ideal-

ism about the invigorating potential of *Homo islamicus* as an economic project must be tempered by recognition that both the strong tidal pull of global and European liberalism and the concrete reality of class relations may act as constraints on its ability to promote an alternative, harmonious model of efficient and just development.

Conclusion: Possible Future Directions of Ennahda's Economic Policies

Ennahda's priorities since coming to power as part of a transitional coalition have called for completing the process of writing a constitution and positioning itself well for future electoral competition while keeping the economy ticking over. Once elections take place for a nontransitional government—and if Ennahda is as successful as seems likely—we will see more clearly how it attempts to implement the vision articulated by El-Ghannouchi of free markets “within the framework of humanity.” The policy document analyzed here suggests that there will be little change at the macroeconomic level to the neoliberal approach pursued over the past decades but that an Ennahda government would seek to emulate Turkey in curbing corruption and more generally remoralizing economic life by promoting individual virtue. If the experience of Turkey's Islamist organizations is a guide—and perhaps recent protests against commercialism and overdevelopment in Istanbul and elsewhere point in the same direction—the external discipline of piety may be insufficient to overcome or even disguise the harsh competition of material interests.

Notes

1. The name of the Renaissance Party is transliterated in several ways. I have fairly arbitrarily settled on this one, following the practice of some Western news outlets.

2. Ibrahim Saif and Muhammad Abu Rumman, *The Economic Agenda of the Islamist Parties* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Middle East Center, May 2012), http://carnegieendowment.org/files/islamist_econ.pdf.

3. Khalil al-Anani, “Islamists in Power Adopt Economics of Old Regimes,” translated from *Al-Hayat*, 22 August 2012, Al-Monitor, <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/business/2012/08/islamist-in-society-neoliberal-in-the-economy.html>.

4. Stephen Glain, “Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood Adopting Caution on Economic Matters,” *Washington Post*, 24 January 2012, http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2012-01-24/world/35438204_1_muslim-brotherhood-tea-party-new-parliament.

5. Al-Anani, “Islamists in Power.”

6. Quoted in Michael J. Thompson, "Islam, Rights, and Ethical Life: The Problem of Political Modernity in the Islamic World," *Theoria* 57, no. 123 (June 2010): 112–13.

7. Ayşe Buğra, "Labour, Capital, and Religion: Harmony and Conflict among the Constituency of Political Islam in Turkey," *Middle Eastern Studies* 38, no. 2 (April 2002): 194.

8. Ibid.

9. The possible consequences of this for migrant communities are intriguing but outside the concerns of this article.

10. Saif and Abu Rumman, *Economic Agenda*, 4.

11. Clark Kampfe, "International Report Shows Poor Budget Transparency in Tunisia," *Tunisia Live*, 2 February 2013, <http://www.tunisia-live.net/2013/02/02/international-report-shows-poor-budget-transparency-in-tunisia/>.

12. Salma Bouzid, "Leaked Details of IMF Loan Throw Government Transparency in Doubt," *Tunisia Live*, 29 March 2013, <http://www.tunisia-live.net/2013/03/29/leaked-documents-on-imf-loan-raise-questions-of-transparency/>.

13. Saif and Abu Rumman, *Economic Agenda*, 6–7; and "Tunisia Unemployment Rate," *Trading Economics*, 2013, <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/tunisia/unemployment-rate>.

14. Saif and Abu Rumman, *Economic Agenda*, 6–8.

15. Ibid., 6, quoting an interview in *Al-Hayat*, 4 January 2012.

16. "Tunisia Needs New Economic Model to End Poverty: President," *Ahram Online*, 30 March 2013, <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/2/8/68058/World/Region/Tunisia-needs-new-economic-model-to-end-poverty-Pr.aspx>.

17. See Gregory Starrett, *Putting Islam to Work: Education, Politics, and Religious Transformation in Egypt* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); and Edward Webb, "The 'Church' of Bourguiba: Nationalizing Islam in Tunisia," *Sociology of Islam* 1, no. 1 (Spring 2013): 17–40.

18. Ennahda, accessed 22 October 2013, <http://www.nahdha.tn/>.

19. Saif and Abu Rumman, *Economic Agenda*, 4.

20. This section contains a historical mistake or, at least, an odd interpretation. It says that the victors of the First World War demanded that Turkey abolish the caliphate and shariah as part of the Lausanne Treaty negotiations. Those steps were taken independently in the first few years of the Turkish Republic by the Westernizing elite led by Mustafa Kemal, later Atatürk.

21. The *umma* is the community of all Muslims.

22. Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1999), 3.

23. One wonders whether the downfall of Egypt's MB government, driven in part by resistance to its majoritarian rather than inclusive approach to governance, will cause a reconsideration of this aspect of Ennahda's thinking. Thus far, Ennahda has expressed solidarity with the MB and condemnation of the coup that removed it.

24. Buğra, "Labour, Capital, and Religion," 189.

25. Ibid., 192.

26. *Ibid.*, 194.

27. *Ibid.*, 195.

28. *Ibid.*, 200.

29. Burhanettin Duran and Engin Yıldırım, "Islamism, Trade Unionism and Civil Society: The Case of Hak-İş Labour Confederation in Turkey," *Middle Eastern Studies* 41, no. 2 (March 2005): 232.

30. *Ibid.*, 238. *Rızık* is daily bread, sustenance.

31. *Ibid.*, 243.

32. *Ibid.*

33. See Azzam Tamimi, *Rachid Ghannouchi: A Democrat within Islamism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).

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