Government Formation by Consensus?

Monarchy, Democracy and Political Islam in Morocco

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Since the constitutional reform and 2011 elections, Morocco's political reform course has continued to stabilise. However, is there any democratic foundation for this stability? Do the political parties form a democratic force that could lead the population through a necessary transformation process? And how "moderate" are the Islamists who were in power during the last election period?

On 7 October 2016, at the end of a normal legislative period, the seats were reallocated in Morocco's House of Representatives. As the leader of the moderate Islamist Justice and Development Party (PJD), which again won a majority of the seats, King Mohammed VI followed the constitutional guideline to invite the former Prime Minister, Abdelilah Benkirane, to form a new government.

Over a period of more than five months, Benkirane unsuccessfully attempted to honour this invitation during tough coalition negotiations. The disagreements primarily centred around the leading position, which the liberal National Rally of Independents (RNI) demanded, and the marginalisation of the nationalist conservative Istiqlal Party, which Benkirane would have preferred to be included in the new government. However, the Istiqlal Party had largely manoeuvred itself to the sidelines due to the remarks of its Secretary-General, Hamid Chabat, who almost triggered a national crisis on 26 December by declaring that not only the "south provinces" (Western Sahara) but also Mauritania belonged to Morocco. The negotiations were finally considered a failure when the RNI leader and billionaire, Aziz Akhannouche, gave Benkirane an ultimatum on top: either to form a coalition government with the two liberal reform parties, the Popular Movement (MP) and Constitutional Union (UC) as well as the social-democratic Socialist Union of Popular Forces (USFP) and excluding Istiqlal, *or* not to form a government at all.

For Benkirane, this crisis came to a head with the King's decision to request the new parliament to elect a president, even without a new government in office in order to be capable of taking action. Thus, on 13 January 2017, (with the abstention of the PJD), Habib El Malki was elected by the USFP as the new parliamentary president.[1] This may be viewed as a highly pragmatic solution, however, many observers also treated it as a "coup d'état" that contested the will of the electorate.[2]

This crisis came to an end on 17 March with the King's decision to withdraw once more from Benkirane the invitation to form a government, only to grant it to Saad-Eddine Othmani a few days later. This invitation to Othmani, who was also a PJD member and the first foreign minister in Benkirane's government from 2012 to 2013, was said to have been linked to a deadline of two weeks. However, thanks to the highly disciplined manner in which he conducted the coalition negotiations, Othmani achieved this in the space of ten days. The new coalition government, which started work on 5 April, comprised the PJD, RNI, UC, MP, PPS and USFP. The number of ministerial positions was reduced, while the proportion of women was increased from four to nine – the highest in Moroccan history.

On the Route to Democracy?

Regular elections are no novelty in Morocco. They were held for the first time in 1963, and have been held at fixed terms of about every five years since 1993. The timing of each election date is fixed by the Minister of the Interior.

Table 1: The Political Parties Represented in the First House of the Moroccan Parliament

PJD	**Justice and Development Party (Parti de la Justice et de Développement)** (moderate Islamist, regarded as largely uncorrupted), founded 1998
PAM	**Authenticity and Modernity Party (Parti Authenticité et Modernité)** (reformist party and initiative of an advisor to the King, technocratic and mainly secular), founded 2007
PI	**Istiqial Party (Parti Istiqlal)** (monarchist and conservative), independence party, founded 1956
RNI	**National Rally of Independents (Rassemblement National des Indépendants)** (social-liberal), founded 1978
MP	**Popular Movement (Mouvement Populaire)** (liberal-conservative), popular movement dated 1957
USFP	**Socialist Union of Popular Forces (Union Socialiste des Forces Populaires)** (social-democratic), founded 1975
UC	**Constitutional Union (L'Union Constitutionnelle)** (reform party, liberal), founded 1983
PPS	**Party of Progress and Socialism (Parti du Progrès et du Socialisme)** (older Communist party), founded 1974
MDS	**Democratic and Social Movement (Mouvement Démocratique et Social)** (liberal, socialist), founded 1996
FGD	**Federation of the Democratic Left (Fédération de la Gauche Démocratique)** (progressive, socialist), founded 2016
PGV	**Green Left Party (Parti de la Gauche Verte)** (green, socialist), founded 2015

Source: Author's compilation.

The elections took on a new quality when the new constitution was established in 2011. For the first time the basic principle of a division of competencies was recognised. As part of the scheduled parliamentary duties the parliamentary opposition is assigned specified tasks; moreover, it can call for parliament to debate its opposition motions and to make them public. The political parties, parliament and the transparency of the courts' jurisdiction should comply with democratic standards. In Article 47 the King specifically undertook to appoint the respective "head of government" from the ranks of the party that gained the most votes in the democratic elections. The King himself remains "commander of the faithful", however, his status is merely considered "sacrosanct" and no longer regarded as "holy", as it was previously. With specific regard to religious questions, yet also in policy areas concerning foreign,

security and defence matters, and quite often in other political areas as well, the King always has the last word.

However, both the latest elections for the House of Representatives (in 2011 and 2016) can be regarded as an advancement of the country's democratisation and its foundation as a constitutional state. They emerge as a step forward to a new form of stability as well as to a state based on the rule of law that was achieved through reforms. Such reforms go hand in hand with new opportunities for participation, especially in the field of decentralisation. In a single legislative period, there have never been so many executive orders passed recently. Since then it has become increasingly common for anti-corruption measures to be adopted consistently and transparently in many areas of the administration, and the responsible parties are held

publicly accountable. Furthermore, for the first time there is also a legal basis for monitoring elections. This change is supported by most of the country's politicians as well as being positively received by the majority of the population.

However, with a view to the elections, the extremely low level of enthusiasm of the Moroccans for turning out to vote in the first place does not fit in with the newly democratised framework at all. Due to the lack of serious efforts made by the state, and compared with the growing number of those eligible to vote, electoral participation has hardly improved since the first 1963 elections. Moroccans who live abroad, or serve in the army or law enforcement agencies, and prison inmates are not eligible to vote. During the October 2016 election, 28.3 million Moroccans were eligible to vote, of which 21.5 million were registered, however, only 6.75 million actually voted. For example, despite all the precautionary measures taken, not a single citizen turned out to vote in the village of Agouray in the High Atlas Mountains, in addition to the practical problem that the election is only possible at the place of registration effectively, this reflects a basic mistrust of the politicians' actions as well as an underlying attitude of confidence in the King for almost everything, yet only scant trust in democracy.

The PJD, Parliament and the King

In comparison to the reign of Hassan II (1961 to 1999) when governments were still formed under the King's leadership, the political parties have improved their image significantly. Nonetheless, to this day, the political system continues to be dominated by the influences of the *makhzen* (i.e. the king's advisor along with all the traditional political supervisory authorities). Party-political interests also take second place to this. Nevertheless, since 1963 the parties' development is primarily influenced by the formation of political camps. The parties in the older camp form the so-called *koutla* (the monarchist Istiqlal Party and both the socialist parties, USFP and PPS). The younger camp comprises the "administrative" parties (in particular, the MP, RNI, UC and now PAM) which are primarily concerned with the stability of the structures and the formation of institutions. Since 1998, the Islamists have formed a separate camp along with the PJD. The relationship of each of the parties to the King is subject to constant change, and ultimately heavily dependent on the respective representatives.

The daily party political routine is hardly influenced by ideological but rather by pragmatic interests. Senior civil servants are not permitted to be party members. Party political programmes also only rarely fulfil the purpose of policy orientation, not even for the major PJD and PAM parties.[3] By contrast to PAM, which was first founded in 2008, the PJD had already fought to run for the elections in the 1990s. The party was first allowed to run for office in 2002 and won 42 (of 325) seats. It had to overcome numerous obstacles before it first took the winning position in 2011 and could therefore form the government. By contrast, the PAM almost seems to have had the red carpet rolled out for it, as from the very beginning it could be sure of support from the king's council, whose senior advisor, Fouad El Himma, founded the party as a counter-model to the PJD. While the PJD is taking the trouble to consolidate its close connection with ordinary Moroccans thanks to its deep and far-reaching roots and links with their everyday routines and lives, from its inception the PAM projected an image as the party with a stake in the future.

Daily party politics is hardly influenced by entrenched ideological battles. Pragmatic conflicts of interest dominate.
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In 2011, and more so in 2016, the PJD presented a less and less religious image and appeared as more pragmatic and willing to embrace compromise. Its role model in the early days was the

Taking to the streets: Like no other party in Morocco the PJD is skilled in mobilising its supporters, particularly via social media. Source: © Rafael Marchante, Reuters.

Turkish Justice and Development Party (AKP) whose success at that time was also thanks in substantial part to its members' social engagement. During the 2011 elections, the number of votes for the PJD was nominally 1.3 million, which roughly corresponds to the number of its members (including their families). More than any other party, the PJD has a strong core electorate that it also mobilised to vote again in 2016. However, at the same time there is a dispute concerning the extent to which the PJD primarily represented the political interests of the whole country or whether it prioritised religious interests. For example, this is reflected in its approach to education policy: does it venture at all into this vacuum? Or, does it hand this matter over to the traditional Islamic clerics, the *ulema*? Furthermore, it is rather controversial as

From the outset, the PJD knew how to control social media more skilfully than any other party, and it also had an intelligent and efficient communication strategy. Furthermore, the election speeches of its leader Benkirane were a constant reminder of his originally militant Islamism from the 1990s. His style of public speaking, which has always connected with the common people and mostly uses colloquialisms, is only adopted in this form by the Secretary-General of the Istiqlal Party, Hamid Chabat. Benkirane unsuccessfully attempted to integrate the latter figure in the process of forming a government. While Benkirane also emerges today as a brilliant speaker, his speeches are increasingly regarded as erratic and unpredictable. In 1998, before he became a founder of the PJD, he had already established the Movement for Unification and Reform (MUR, *Mouvement Unicité et Réforme*), which does not appear as a political party. Rather, to this day, it forms a kind of ideological talent school for the PJD. MUR acts as a safety valve for the PJD by absorbing Islamist attitudes before these become harmful for the PJD.

Meanwhile, Benkirane personally embodies an authority that is not always primarily representative of the PJD when asserting political interests but rather charismatically draws on the PJD party machinery. In November 2011, when the King appointed him as Morocco's first "Islamist" governmental head of state, this seemed to many like an incalculable, balancing act: an Islamist as the supreme head of the executive under a King whose position also continues to be anchored in the new constitution as a "commander of the faithful". The headlines in several newspapers reported this as an "unprecedented combination" (*cohabitation inédite*). Subsequently, however, Benkirane carried out all assignments for his "boss", as he once called the King, punctually and regularly, and indeed even if they were as unpopular as the rise in the retirement age from 60 to 63 years, or the structural reform of the government's subsidies budget.

What the PJD achieved as Morocco's first party is the systematic and rigorous levy of membership contributions. Moreover, all those with a

to which role it plays within the Muslim Brotherhood *(Organisation internationale des frères musulmans)*, of which it is a member, and the organisation is primarily supported by Qatar and the Turkish state. Here, Benkirane has been in a dilemma, since currently he is confronted with the expectations of the Muslim Brotherhood whose aims he has co-authored and represented in the past.

senior position must pay the membership contribution. For government ministers this can be up to 20 per cent of their monthly income. Even students and unemployed persons must pay five euros per annum. The party machinery works well accordingly. All members are "brothers" because religion is the common frame of reference. As far as the interaction with power is concerned and the clear precedence of all "national matters", the PJD has been completely "normalised". Benkirane has long since mutated into a "statesman". He became a master of political "engineering" and the sole orchestrator of the PJD. He was well versed in the original ideological spectrum of the PJD and simultaneously understood how to harmonise it with other, modern instruments. If his successor, Othmani, could achieve in ten days what Benkirane had failed to manage in more than five months, then this was solely thanks to a new and significantly enhanced willingness to compromise. On the one hand, this was based on integration into the USFP, and on the other on acceptance of the dominant role of the President of the RNI, Aziz Akhannouche. Thus, Othmani faces two major tasks: he must re-establish the PJD as a reliable partner to the royal palace and at the same time prevent a split within the PJD.

PAM – A Second New "Mainstream Party"?

If Morocco ever had a mainstream party in terms of supporters, then since 2002 this has been the PJD. Since the elections in October 2016, however, a second party seems to have emerged: the Authenticity and Modernity Party, PAM. Theoretically, either of the two parties could initiate the formation of a government. Islam is the underlying framework of the PJD, and for the PAM it is latent, pragmatic anti-Islamism, and ultimately the proximity to the crown.
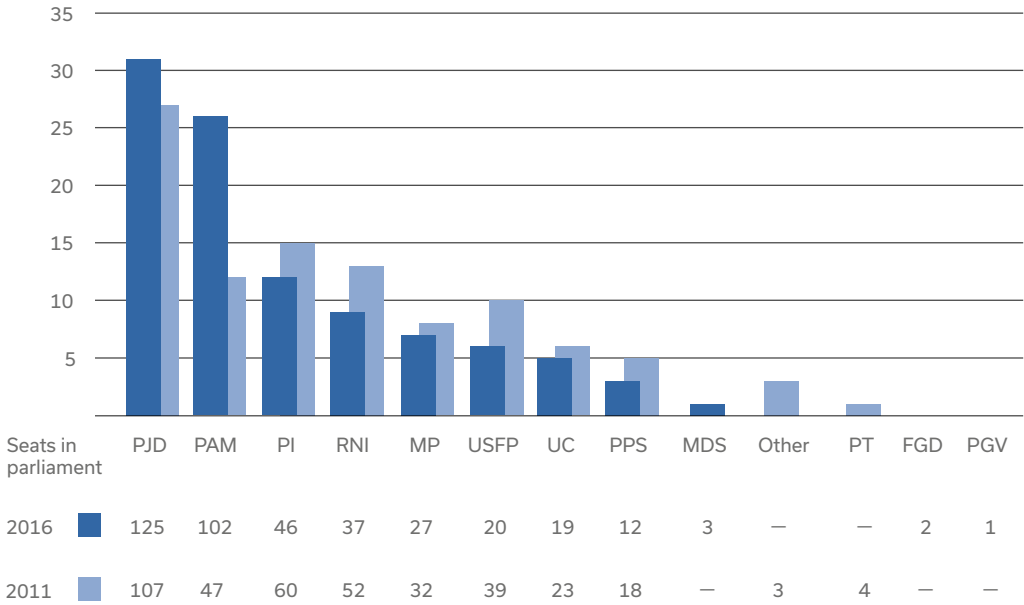
Evidently, the PAM, which lays claim to "authenticity and modernity", is increasingly winning over a majority of the population for its latent secular politics. For several years, the party has been fully immersed in creating a programmatic

image that enables it to oppose the Islamists. It would not only be too little merely to be anti-Islamic, but it would also be too dangerous. PAM has emerged with the claim of overhauling the PJD through pragmatic and efficient political solutions. Furthermore, ultimately it stands for the highly challenging objective of a constitutional monarchy as part of a state under the rule of law. Both parties agree on only one point: that they are not ready to talk to each other, nor even to think about the option of a "grand coalition".

In the King's speech[4] in both houses of parliament on 14 October 2016, when he defended the multi-party system in Morocco, this seemed to be directed at all parties, however, realistically it primarily meant support for the PAM. The first parties emerged from the fight for independence in the mid-1950s under Mohammed V (his grandfather), in which in his day all population groups had participated, according to the King. By now, many of the adjustments could be implemented that were mainly necessitated on the basis of the 2011 constitution. However, the parties, parliament and trade unions in particular had to go to even greater lengths to rise to today's challenges on all political levels. The administrative structures would have to be modernised and improved in such a way as to be capable of reacting appropriately to the problems and concerns of the citizens. The King highlighted the particularly urgent need for a change of mentality and improvements in training opportunities for state civil servants to equip them with the skills required for the workplace (namely e-government). Equally, he made the fight against corruption on all levels a condition of transferring more power. In this sense, an efficient and properly functioning administrative apparatus was the condition for the broad interest in advancing decentralisation as a forthcoming reality.

The reactions to this speech dominated the media for days: the King had given elected officials and members of parliament a "box on the ears", was the verdict of *L'Economiste*. He had insisted more bluntly than ever that the

Fig. 1: Election Results of the Moroccan National Elections 2011 and 2016 in Per Cent

Seats in parliament		PJD	PAM	PI	RNI	MP	USFP	UC	PPS	MDS	Other	PT	FGD	PGV
2016		125	102	46	37	27	20	19	12	3	—	—	2	1
2011		107	47	60	52	32	39	23	18	—	3	4	—	—

official administration in Morocco was much too bureaucratic, incompetent and backward. The consequence of this had to be a reorganisation of public service across the board, and now this was the paramount task during the new legislative period.[5] PAM supporters particularly applauded this.

The King's speech on 14 October 2016 reflects the continued polarity of constitutional legitimacy and democratic legality that has increasingly characterised Morocco's political life since King Mohammed VI's accession to the throne in 1999. The last decade of the reform process exposes how the King intends to accomplish a longer-term transformation to a parliamentary monarchy. In this case, stability is no end in itself; moreover, the choice of the methods with which he controls the nature and pace of this transformation will remain flexible. If the PJD should continue to lag behind expectations, the PAM's share of the votes at the next elections could certainly increase.

Are the Islamists "Moderate"?

A characteristic of political discourse in Morocco is that major parts of society regard this balancing act between constitutional objectives and the parliamentary decision-making process as constructive. They are committed to the country's democratic advancement without the central monarchic guidelines being called into question. The crown guarantees for them stability as well as external and internal security.

This also applies to the representatives of the PJD, which is repeatedly described as "moderate". Since the formation of this party in 1998, its representatives were more concerned with politics than religion. They accepted from the outset that the party does not describe itself as "Islamist". Instead, it may only run for election "in referring to Islamist values". Their driving motivation was to combine religion and politics with each other in a new, socially just and, in principle, democratic way. Based on the

model of the original AKP in Turkey and in clear contrast to the Salafists, their focus is now the implementation of Islamic values in the context of a modern constitutional state and with the assistance of a democratically legitimised party. However, before this image of the PJD could emerge, dozens of Islamist groups and organisations had formed since the 1970s that were then either dissolved again or banned. However, in many cases their actors joined the PJD to progress to a certain extent "on a trajectory through the institutions". Today, they mainly present an overwhelmingly conservative, and, in some cases, socialist or liberal image. In fact, the PJD owed its success in both the 2011 and 2016 parliamentary elections to its numerous promises of putting religious values into practice in politics. Influenced by the aims of a socially just social and economic policy, its claim is that it also contributes the necessary decision-making authority in the other political fields.

Unlike the Salafists, the Islamists in Morocco are concerned with the implementation of Islamic values in the context of a modern constitutional state.

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The last five years have shown that the PJD has not been concerned with politicising religion, but rather the opposite. Its moral conservatism was to become suitable for political purposes and from the beginning this also meant tackling the secular daily routines of the democratisation process that was already under way in Morocco. There is a striking difference in the significance attributed to the religious themes in the election campaign and after the election. At the same time, nationalist oriented politics were again clearly reinforced following the formation of the government in January 2012. In fact, the PJD can demonstrate some modest successes from the previous legislative period. Most of the numerous executive orders, which were in the pipeline, continue to remain on the parliamentary schedule. This schedule has adapted to the stability of the existing political structures and has been successfully adopted.

However, the fact that ultimately this is a secular system simultaneously indicates a secularisation of political Islam and that the political dimension supersedes the status of religious matters. For example, no leading party member identifies with the demand for a reintroduction of the death penalty, as – in particular, in cases of apostasy – this is not only imposed by the Salafists, but also by parts of the *ulema*. The balance of power between the monarch and the head of government is continually put to the test. Apparently, only a small intellectual elite is interested in what may be understood from a constitutional perspective as secularism and as guaranteed individual rights to freedom. However, for the PJD, democracy and the recognition of human rights are also integrated into their understanding of political participation.

In contrast to the established power structures of the Moroccan monarchy, the "moderate" PJD – despite its governmental responsibility – has not attempted to assert any changes that would have called into question the basic political structures. Ultimately, it did not come to power in opposition to the monarchy, but rather thanks to the King's reform policy. The clear statement made by Benkirane that "The State is the King" ("L'Etat c'est le Roi") has a more affirmative tone than a resigned character. In fact, the PJD does not appear as a voice for religion against politics, but as a player that could also accept a leading role in future in the arena of power.

However, the *makhzen* continues to be the King's established means of power and control that presides over the continuation of the reform policies. It is difficult to assess what this means for the future of the PJD. Currently, it draws criticism from all sides, even the trade unions. Several observers assume that over the past five years the PJD has had its chance and has now "atoned for its guilt".[6]

Ubiquitous: Religion continues to shape Morocco's private and public life. Source: © Youssef Boudlal, Reuters.

The King as "Arbiter"

The most difficult area of tension for Benkirane to navigate during the past two years was over the crucial agreement with the King concerning religious questions, since the King continues to have a key position as far as the coherence of Islam in Morocco and its options for political organisation are concerned. Ever since the Alawite dynasty took power in 1631, the Moroccan kings have legitimised their rule as

cherifs. In other words, they can rely on their descent from Hassan, son of Fatima, the Prophets' daughter, and thus on a direct line of succession. In turn, the title *Amir Al Mouminine* or "Commander of the Faithful" is derived from this. This title is now anchored in Article 41 of the new Moroccan constitution and gives the King the right to preside over all religious affairs by decree (*dahir*) both with prerogative and definitive power. Until now, this legal right was only publicly criticised by the *Al Adl* movement,

which played a dominant role in the daily demonstrations in 2010/11 and could definitely make a comeback.

With the benefit of reinsurance as "Commander of the Faithful", the King not only controls training of the imams, teaching the Koran, and Friday and fasting sermons. Frequently, he seems to be the only one with the capacity to be able to shape politics. The new constitution has undoubtedly introduced the country to more democratisation. It is the most comprehensive democratic constitution in the history of Morocco. It recognises the principle of the separation of powers, with a guarantee of fundamental rights and freedoms, strengthening both the rights of government as well as those of the parliamentary opposition and extends to all core areas of the political order. The King's powers of royal prerogative generally concern the areas of religion, foreign and security policy, and decisions concerning political and strategic policy orientation. However, the King not only holds power but also rules and directly intervenes in the decisions of the executive. At the time, the weekly newspaper Telquel coined the concept of a *monarchie exécutive* – the King was not only the arbiter, but also a co-participant and he generally always wins.[7]

The important aspect for the King's policy towards Islam is his direct control over the *Dar al-Hadith al-Hassaniya*, a respected research institute for religious studies with a reputation extending far beyond Morocco. King Hassan II commissioned the establishment of the institute in Rabat, not least as a counterweight for the traditionally independent university Islamic studies, especially in Fés. The Mohammadia League of Scholars *(Rabita Mohammedia des Oulémas)* are also under the King's directorship as a kind of theological think-tank, as well as the *Majliss Al Ilmi*, a training center for the *ulema* from the whole of Morocco. Both institutes are based in Rabat. Recently, a controversy arose concerning the Interior Ministry's re-opening of Salafist El Maghraoui's Quaranic schools in Marrakesh. Unlike in 2011, since El Maghraoui had not articulated any electoral recommendation for the PJD, it also joined in the official protest.

Political Islam on the Way to the Modern Era?

As in other Islamic-influenced states, in the preamble to the Moroccan constitution and in several subsequent articles, Islam is defined as the country's state religion. On the one hand, this regulation serves the purpose of withdrawing the freedom of the respective government over the decision-making authority in religious matters in order to exclusively transfer it to the sovereignty of the monarch. On the other hand, this by no means excludes the fact that questions concerning religion and politics can be distinguished from each other. While the Moroccan state is already defined in the preamble to the constitution as a "Muslim" state, it is also simultaneously described as a constitutional state which is established on the principles of participation, pluralism and good governance.

Furthermore, in the preamble – just as in several of the following articles – human rights are universally recognised as indivisible and universal. Today, the Islamic government is faced with the same problems in daily politics as would also be the case for every other government. Real secularism, which has influenced major areas of everyday life and political culture in Morocco for a considerable time, reinforces citizens' expectations for ongoing democratisation and sets limits on all Islamist ambitions. In foreign and European policy, as well as in economic and energy policy, many policy directions are fixed in such a way that most of the population would prefer not to see them given secondary status.

To this day, both public and private life in Morocco are heavily influenced by Islam, and for most people everything that is defined as secular still has a negative, unpleasant overtone. However, even in Morocco, secularism is pervasive. Without secular structures, the country's political and economic progress and its integration into the world economy would not be possible in the same way. Religious fundamentalism, which intended to reverse this integration, no longer has majority support. Basic and human rights, a ban on discrimination, and equality for

men and women based on a secular social order are integrated not merely into the 2011 constitution, but also appear in earlier constitutions. Ultimately, to this day, the majority culture of the Berbers is considered as more heavily influenced by individualist and therefore also pluralist elements than by orthodox religious aspects.[8]

Presumably, one of the key questions of political Islam throughout the entire region is whether in the Arab states of North Africa "modern", democratic and ultimately primarily pluralist political forms of government can exist without an underlying secular structure. Here, it is important specifically to evaluate the relationship of politics and religion in every state and every region according to the historic circumstances and current general conditions. In Morocco, one very quickly gains the impression that the strong influence of Islam in a social context also needs to be aligned with a corresponding influence in politics. There appear to be three primary positive conditions for this: firstly, there is a strong civil society, which is characterised by social engagement and the vital formation of communities. Secondly, there is widespread demand for freedom rights and an improvement of living standards. Thirdly, in the business sector especially, there is an openness to tackling the challenges of globalisation.

> **Religion has remained a constant part of public life, but religious education has increased, especially among women.**
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Simultaneously, the discourse on religious subjects is held at all levels of Moroccan society. This not only applies to protest movements, but also to broad sections of the country's educated elite that sympathise in high numbers with the demonstrators, although they would be reluctant to join protests on the streets. While large

parts of this movement are religiously motivated, they are not prepared to use violence. Their motivation is not nurtured by religious fundamentalism, but most likely by the need for religious self-determination and the demand for participatory democracy. This represents a sign of democratisation as well as a transformation of the religious heritage.

As the analyses of El Ayadi, Rachik and Tozy show, Islam in Morocco, as in other North African states, has been influenced by two strong trends over the past two decades: on the one hand, by the state's renewed claim to power over religion, and on the other, by a growing fragmentation in many areas of religious life.[9] According to their analyses, religion has remained a constant part of public life, however, religious education has heavily increased, particularly that of women. At the same time, religious practice has become heavily individualised. There is a growing trend for pragmatism that is easily internalised and whose political opportunity is already reflected in many ways in public life. Moreover, this affects all age groups, even if the trend to dogmatism increases with an aging population. The authors call for understanding both for this structural change in the public face of Islam in general as well as for individuals' daily religious practice in the light of the process of secularisation.

With regard to most of the political changes in Morocco during the last decade, it is difficult to explain these in the light of religious or cultural concepts of Islam. The advances in the recognition and validity of human rights, the reforms of women's rights (*moudawana*) and, in particular, the implementation of the new constitution since 2011 proceeded decisively due to the King's initiative. They were not carried out by opposing the Islamist forces in the country, but through cooperation with them. Hence, all attempts to introduce orthodox policy demarcations on behalf of several Islamists therefore increasingly began to conflict openly with the influences of globalisation and the country's continual and advancing process of democratisation.

As far as the modern, cultural sphere is concerned, the Marrakech International Film Festival and the *mawazine*, a music festival in Rabat, feature as the top international events every year. Criticism of this from several Islamic groups falls far behind the general enthusiasm. This clearly shows that their cultural and political ideas are no longer capable of gaining a majority in metropolitan Morocco, and, at the same time, that an increasing number of areas in Morocco tend to follow the developmental lines of globalisation rather than those of a generally backward-looking Koran exegesis.

Recently, the French economist Jacques Ould Aoudia, who is highly respected in the Maghreb, indicated that Moroccan politics is influenced on the whole by a pronounced "culture of compromise" and pursues long-term development perspectives. However, when it came to the Islamists, they had major problems in dealing with secular policymaking. He justifiably regards any development like that of the Christian Democrats in Europe as unlikely.[10] If this were to be the case, the PJD – and this similarly applies to the other parties – would have to comply far more strictly with the political manifesto, image formation and objectives and to impose these consistently to substantiate its claim to power.

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1 This election was necessary so that parliament could approve Morocco's application for re-admission to the African Union.
2 Cf. TelQuel, 20 Jan 2017, p. 36.
3 Cf. Reifeld, Helmut 2016: Stabilität bestätigt, 12 Oct 2016, KAS Country Report, in: http://kas.de/wf/de/33.46638 [30 Mar 2017].
4 Cf. Moroccan Government 2016: Full text of HM the King's Speech at Parliament Opening, 17 Oct 2016, in: http://bit.ly/2nLB8jw [14 Mar 2017]
5 Cf. especially: L'Economiste and LesEco, 17 Oct 2016.
6 Cf. TelQuel 2017: Un nouvel épisode de la guerre Palais-PJD?, 20–26 Jan 2017, pp. 35–39.
7 Cf. TelQuel, 7 Jun 2013, p. 25; TelQuel, 28 Jun 2013, p. 22.
8 Cf. further: Oulhaj, Lahcen 2016: Propositions pour séculariser la société et normaliser l'Islam au Maroc, in: Abouddahab, Zakaria / Reifeld, Helmut (eds.): Pauvreté, religion et identité nationale. Les voies marocaine et indienne vers la démocratie, Rabat, pp. 125–153.
9 El Ayadi, Mohammed / Rachik, Hassan / Tozy, Mohamed 2013: L'Islam au Quotidien. Enquête sur les valeurs et les pratiques religieuse au Maroc, Casablanca, pp. 280–289.
10 Ould Aoudia, Jacques 2016: "Le Maroc possède une culture du compromis" (Interview), TelQuel, 4–10 Nov 2016, pp. 40–43.