

# The concept of democracy: A CDA study on the discourse of Jama'at Al Adl Wal Ihsan

by

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## Abstract

The present study explores the discursive patterns in the discourse of the Jama'at al Adl wal Ihsan (Justice and Spirituality Group) in the discussion about democracy in Islamic societies so as to disclose the JSG's ideology as regards the ideal model of governance in the Muslim state. The data corpus assorted consists of a variety of excerpts from the JSG's founder books, statements selected from the JSG's official website, official declarations by prominent figures in the JSG as well as interviews conducted with members from the base. The analytical framework used comprises elements from Critical Discourse Analysis and Rhetoric. The analysis revealed that the promotion of the JSG's ideology is based on the negative representation of adverse ideologies by means of lexicalization and metaphorical language. The contrast between the discursive clues present in the discourse of the JSG's founder and the recent statements made by other members earmark a shift in the strategy of the JSG towards a greater adaptation to the contextual constraints.

**Keywords:** Democracy – Islamism- Discourse- Ideology- Critical Discourse Analysis- Rhetoric

## Introduction

Islamism in Morocco encompasses a large spectrum of trends that differ greatly in their ideological tenets and the extent of their ambitions. Despite being a semi-legal Islamist group, Jama'at Al Adl Wal Ihsan (the Justice and Spiritual Group) saw its popularity flare in the 90's demonstrating an unparalleled rallying and mobilization potential. The Jama'a forged a different path through its uncompromising and challenging positions towards Moroccan politics. Yassine outlined his reformative project in a number of books and articles addressing several issues ranging from democracy, *Shura* (the Islamic principle of consultancy) to women's emancipation. He opted for a non-participative approach on the grounds that Moroccan political parties are not granted larger prerogatives to operate a significant change in politics. The different studies conducted on Jama'at Al Adl wal Ihsan (JSG) tend to explore the political leaning of the Jama'a either through a historical or socio-political perspective. Thus, the present study offers a conscientious analysis of the discourse articulated by the leading figures of Jama'at Al Adl Wal Ihsan using the tools availed by Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) informed by several cues from the Moroccan political context. This research explores the discursive strategies used by Jama'at Al Adl Wal Ihsan's (Justice and Spirituality Group) leader and its most prominent spokespeople as regards their position on democracy and secularism. A close investigation on the discursive patterns common in the JSG's discourse around the concepts of democracy and secularism is liable to unravel its ideology and its conceptualization of the ideal Islamic state.

## Background of the Study

Islamism (i.e., reducing a religion to a political ideology) remains a bone of contention between those who advocate the political character of Islam and those who rebuff the possibility of turning the Islamic creed into a political blueprint designed to govern Muslim societies. To dispel these terminological and conceptual ambiguities, we deem it necessary to delineate the intersections between Islamism and Islam. As a matter of fact, Islamism may be essentially grounded in the principles of Islam, but it remains distinct by virtue of its potential for mobilization.

As Tibi (2013, p.1) explains, "Islamism is about political order, not faith. Nonetheless, Islamism is not mere politics but religionized politics." For Tibi, Islam represents an ethical scheme replete with political values but it does not promote a particular political order. For that reason, Islamism can be considered as an interpretation of Islam which may replicate a number of religious premises and discard others (Tibi, 2012). When interviewed by Al Jazeera<sup>1</sup>, the Muslim intellectual Tariq Ramadan draws the attention towards the

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<sup>1</sup> Ramadan, Tariq. Interview by Mehdi Hassan. Al Jazeera, 2014. Web. 3 April 2014.

subtle differences between the state of being a Muslim and the affiliation to Islamism:

This was in fact a concept that came from within the Muslim Brotherhood in the 50s in jail, where a group of people were saying the only true Muslims are us, and Nasser is no longer a Muslim. The mainstream Muslim Brotherhood movement said no, we are "*Islamiyun*", and we are all Muslims "*Muslimun*", meaning that the Islamists have a social project, a political project as different from Muslims who are practicing Muslims and believers. So there is something here which has to do with a political vision about the state, but also a vision about the society.

Therefore, the most blatant difference between Islam and Islamism is the inclination of the latter to embody different forms of political and social activism that aim at provoking a change within the Muslim society. The variety of Islamist groups makes it more difficult to provide an inclusive definition of Islamism. A number of features common to the majority of Islamist groups irrespectively of their degree of conservatism. Islamist groups tend to converge in the advocacy of a societal reform based on Islamic principles (Tibi, 2012). The final project of Islamist group remains the creation of an Islamic state where Islam is endorsed as a political ideology and constitutes the primary source of legislation. If all Islamist fringes toil for an ethical, political and institutional reform, they differ greatly in the depth and the breadth of the change they advocate and most importantly in the *modus operandi* they employ to reach their objectives. There are two main trends in Islamism namely the mainstream that represents the institutional Islamism and the extreme currents often associated with violence. These two categories may differ in the means they use but they remain nonetheless in unison as regards their ultimate goal that is the reintegration of religion in the functioning of the Muslim state (Tibi, 2012). Islamists capitalize essentially on *Shura* (consultation) despite the fact that this concept has not been fully explored by Muslim thinkers and its tangible applications in the realm of politics have not been yet fully unraveled. For that reason, a thorough delineation of the concepts of democracy and *Shura* is paramount to the understanding of the Islamist ideology.

The choice of the label "Al Adl wal Ihsan" (Justice and Spirituality Group) mirrors admirably the vision of the JSG's founder Sheikh Abdesalam Yassine. *Al Adl* (Justice) refers to a just form of government that is expected to achieve equity in all realms of life whereas *Ihsane* (spirituality) refers to an advanced stage in the journey the Sufi disciple marked by a profound knowledge of God<sup>2</sup>. The use of Sufi terminology helps to preserve Yassine's supremacy as a spiritual leader notably with the growing democratization of the JSG (Tozy, 1999). The Jama'a was founded by Sheikh Abdesalam Yassine, an enigmatic figure who combined Sufi mysticism with political pragmatism. His relation with the monarchy went through a series of setbacks owing to Yassine's challenging positions. In 1973, this high school pedagogical inspector will be propelled to the limelight after sending a 114 pages epistle entitled *al Islam aw Attufan* (Islam or the deluge) to the Moroccan Monarch Hassan II. In his letter, Yassine calls Muslim rulers to repent, to commit to a real sociopolitical reform, to dissolve all political parties and to form a *Shura* council involving Muslim scholars and clerics (Daadaoui, 2001). He deplors the effects of rampant Westernization and imperialism on the Moroccan society as well as the deterioration of moral values and the lack of social equality (Munson, 1993). The decision to shun away from political participation is justified both by the JSG's opposition to the regime and to the constraints imposed on political parties.

## Research Methodology

The framework of analysis used in this paper explores the visible linguistic units such as the lexicon as well as connotative structures namely metaphors and persuasive strategies such as the Aristotelean appeals. The template used comprises CDA models devised by Van Dijk in the analysis of political and ideological. Though, Van Dijk includes the study of argumentation in his different models, we believe that a minute description based on Toulmin's description of the argument's layout is more effective in the analysis of the JSG's discourse. In the same vein, we shall examine the use of Aristotelian appeals namely ethos, pathos and logos in the data selected. Van Dijk groups a plethora of linguistic elements susceptible to reveal the semantic and pragmatic dimensions of a given discourse as well as its ideological implication.

The model devised by the British Philosopher Stephen Toulmin unravels the main constituents of arguments. Toulmin considers that an argument consists primarily of a claim supported by evidence or data. The evidence can be further backed a generally agreed upon belief called warrants. The backing is a statement that defends the legitimacy of the data submitted. The two remaining parts of the argument are the qualifiers

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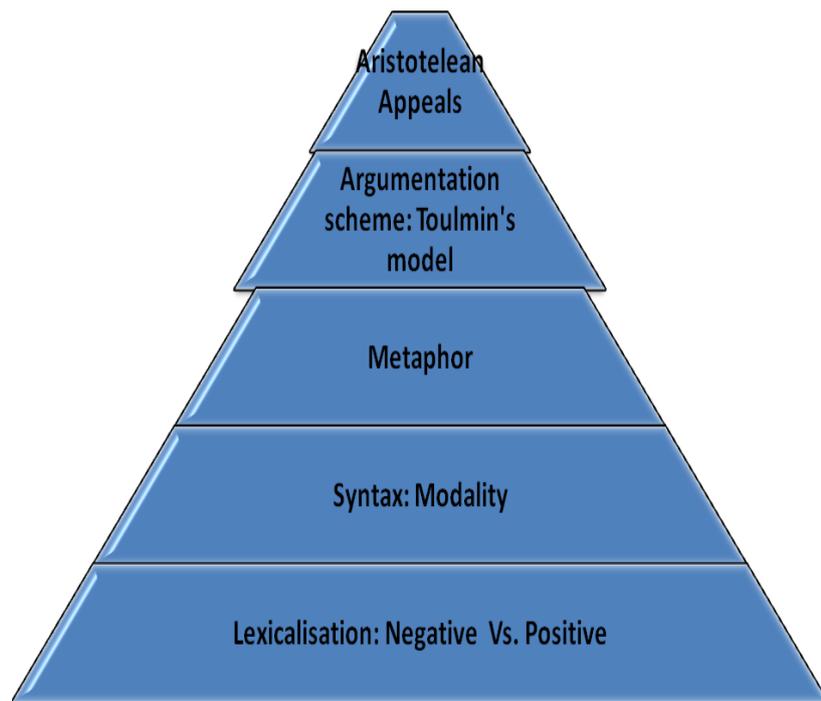
<sup>2</sup> AL Qushayri, Arrislala al QUshayria, pp 10. ( Quoted by Tozy)

which limit the scope of the claim and the rebuttal which constitutes an anticipated reaction to a potential criticism (Seyler, 2011). In his treatise of persuasion "Rhetoric", Aristotle outlines the main argumentative techniques used by speakers to persuade their audience. The rhetorical structure presented by Aristotle includes three major appeals namely Logos, Ethos and Pathos. Logos refers to the appeal to logical correlations in the argument. A Logos-based argumentation uses scientific facts, historical junctures, statistics and factual ideas. Ethos pertains to the speaker's ability to establish credibility and trustworthiness. The use of ethos is manifest in the positive attributes associated with the speaker her/ he or the authorities mentioned to lend weight to the formulated claim. Pathos seeks to stir the emotional involvement of the audience throughout the course of the argumentation. It is an attempt to win the addressee's sympathy and acceptance through the reference to particular values and beliefs.<sup>3</sup> The figure below shows the different appeals and their respective prices.

**Table. 1 Discourse dimensions by Van Dijk**

Discourse Dimensions	Examples
Grammar <sup>1</sup>	Word order, transitivity
Semantics <sup>2</sup>	Overlexicalization, under lexicalization
Macrostructure/ Topics <sup>3</sup>	Introduction, conclusion, thematic sentences.
Rhetoric <sup>4</sup>	Metaphors, comparisons, irony, hyperbole, euphemism
Superstructure <sup>5</sup>	Argumentation, premises, inferences
Discourse pragmatics <sup>6</sup>	Speech acts, illocutions, assertions, promises.

The analytical framework deployed in the present paper constitutes a synthesis of numerous analytical models.



**Figure 1: The Hybrid template used in the study of the JSG's discourse**

The plethora of discursive elements included in this template is susceptible to reveal substantial information about the ideological leaning of the Jama'a as regards the concepts of secularism, democracy.

### Data Sources

The sampled data includes several excerpts from Yassine's books notably those addressing democracy and secularism in the Islamic state:

<sup>3</sup> <http://textrhet.com/2013/11/26/aristotles-three-appeals/>

*The Prophetic Method: Education, Organization and Breakthrough  
Democracy and Shura  
The Muslim Mind On trial: Divine Revelation versus Secular Rationalism  
A Dialog with Honorable Democrats*

In order to have a more updated outlook on the Jamaa's, it is necessary to include several interviews by Nadia Yassine, Yassine's daughter and the head of the feminine branch of the Jama'a. The analysis covers also interviews and lectures two prominent members of the JSA namely Mohammed Hamdaoui, Head of the JSG's External Relations Bureau and Hassan Bennajeh, member of the general assembly of the JSG's political bureau. Nadia Yassine, the head of the JSG's woman's section and Yassine's daughter has given numerous interviews about the JSG's tenets and a host of topical issues as well. The corpus selected includes also lectures by highly ranked members of the Jama'a. In addition, three interviews were conducted with members of the Jama'aso about the themes of the research.

**Table 2. Lecture and interviews by the JSG's members**

Members / language	Themes	Date production/ Link
<b>Mohammed Hamdaoui<sup>4</sup></b>	Interview: Islamists and the Pursuit of Power.	For the website: Ashahid/ <a href="http://www.chahed.tv/chahed-100-video.html">http://www.chahed.tv/chahed-100-video.html</a>
<b>JSG's official Website:</b>		www. aljamaa.net

To have a comprehensive view on the JSG's ideology as regards the themes of secularism and democracy, we have interviewed three female members from the Jama'a whose names and specific positions will not be revealed following their own request. The respondents A and B are senior female members who are part of the educational section in the Jama'a whereas a respondent C is actively involved in the activities of the JSG though not holding any particular position.

**Table 3. The questions used in the interview**

Theme	The Question
Secularism	Is secularism compatible with the Islamic mode of governance?
Democracy	Is democracy compatible with the Islamic mode of governance? What is your view about the ideal Islamic state?

It is noteworthy that many books selected for the analysis were originally written in Arabic whereas some of Yassine's books were translated to French and English. Likewise, the lectures and interviews given by members of the Jama'a were produced either in Arabic or French. Therefore, it was necessary to translate a number of Arabic and French excerpts into English.

## **Results**

The data corpus used in this paper was diligently selected to align with the objectives set previously and to guarantee a greater relevance to the themes under study. The study of each discursive feature is susceptible to provide substantial cues about the JSG's ideology as regards the themes chosen.

### **1. Ideological Collocations**

Yassine has published a number of books in which he outlined his political theory. The survey of a number of his writings on democracy revealed the use of distinct lexical patterns that convey his own view on the best suited model for the governance of the Muslim State.

<sup>4</sup> Head of the JSG's Bureau for External Relations.

**Table 4 . Ideological Collocations in Yassine’s Discourse**

Collocations	Translation	Lexeme1	Lexeme 2	Reference	Comments
The Shura-based Freedom	The Shura-based freedom of expression	Freedom of expression	Shura Based	<i>Shura and Democracy</i>	The combination of the Western concept with Islamic Shura
Moralizing Democracy	Moralizing democracy	Moralizing	Democracy	<i>Shura and Democracy</i>	Negative implicature: Implies that democracy is devoid of ethics.
Islamic Politics	Islamic politics/ Sharia-based politics	Islamic ( derived from Shari’a: Islamic law)	Politics ( mode of governance)	<i>The Prophetic Method (p.28)</i>	The formulation of a political theory based on the Islamic law
The Soldiers of Allah	The soldiers of God	Soldiers : Individuals who have a mission within a army.	God : of a divine order	<i>The Prophetic Method ( p.16)</i>	Refers Islamism activism.
The Political Jihad	Political Jihad aimed at forming a particular group that who command good and forbid evil.	Political: pertains to the area of governance.	Jihad: a broad concept that refers generally to the quality of resilience and perseverance  (There are several types of Jihad).	<i>The Prophetic Method</i>	Jihad reflects a determination to operate a radical in the political order in the Muslim state.

The set of collocation examined display often a combination of two concepts associated with two different ideological backgrounds. The amalgamation between Shura and freedom of expression is an implicit acquiescence of the importance of the latter in the achievement of justice. It demonstrates also the JSG’s determination to advocate a faith-based alternative that stands out from the democratic model. Collocations like Islamic politics *السياسة الشرعية* constitutes a challenge to secular democracy whose main premise is the separation between religion and politics. Additionally, the use of the collocation *جند الله* (the soldiers of God) signals the JSG’s high level of mobilization. The collocation *جند الله* constitutes a self attributed legitimacy through the self- assignment of a divine mission.

The publication of *The Prophetic Method* marked an unprecedented shift in the theory of Islamism in Morocco. In this book, Yassine delineated a detailed roadmap towards the access to power in order to establish a religion-based order. Among the term that are singularly associated to the JSG is the concept *قومة* that we choose to translate as “uprising”. The following passage is the English translation of an excerpt from *The Prophetic Method*:

We have borrowed the word uprising from our history. Our scholars are called the soldiers of God who stand in the face of darkness from the Prophet’s descendents such as the Imam Hussein Ibn Ali, Zayd, and

the fragrant soul Mohammed, Yahya, Ibrahim. We use the word Qawma to avoid the use of a revolution because revolution includes violence and what we want is strength... we want to stand out (Yassine, 1981)

The choice of certain lexical items serves as a marker of identity for the Jama'a. According to Yassine, the word Qawma differs largely from revolution both in the means and the objectives. Contrary to the concept of revolution, the uprising foreseen by Yassine excludes the use of violence and seeks to achieve strength. This statements constitutes also an indirect criticism against political revolutions.

## 2. Lexcalization

By lexicalization, we mean the intended use of semantic patterns to convey a particular world view. In the JSG's discourse, the choice of certain lexemes is not a mere stylistic choice. The ideological significance of the terms related to key concept and the set of collocations assembled by different speakers unfold a large part of the JSG's ideology. This section examines two major aspects of lexicalization namely ideologically loaded collocations as well as negative and positive lexicalization

### 2.1 Lexicalization about the Condition of Muslims

Besides consolidating the position of the Jama'a towards a number of divisive issues, negative lexicalization about secularism constitutes an ideological statement that deserves a special attention. The passages selected below discloses a score of cues that contribute to the mental construction of the "Ideological Other". Yassine expresses his view on capitalism and communism as follows:

When others talk about the goals of the economic plan and try to find a way towards the market of farmers ..... In the journey of the communist output based on bureaucracy and the revolutionary disciple that enslaves the worker and the farmer. We come with the will of Allah in response to the caller of God who ordered us to live and prosper on earth. .. And when the epidemics of capitalism which encircles the throat of the worker and the farmer and oppressed people.... We, with the will of Allah stand up for the great uprising including the economic uprising (Yassine, 1981, p. 408)

We note the juxtaposition of the negative portrayal of communism and capitalism and the positive depiction of Islamism.

**Table 5. Lexicalization about the Other**

Lexemes used	Communism	Capitalism	The Self
Positive lexicalization	-----	-----	Great uprising
Negative lexicalization	Enslaves	Encircles the throat Oppressed people	-----

### 2.2 Lexicalization on Democracy

In the following passage, Yassine levels criticism against the practice of democracy in Muslim countries (*Shura and Democracy/Online version*)



**Figure 2. Semantic field about democracy in Morocco**

You have not measured and figured out and reasoned, you are close to implement on people an order if it was familiar and understood theoretically by the upper elite, it remains a peculiar novelty for an illiterate people. They lied to the people and drove them to the democratic ballots to practice ceremonial rituals the

people realized through the wrangling of the opposition and the reading of the results that it is a fake game, a mount, a falsehood and a ladder climbed by seasoned politicians.

Yassine points out to the manipulation of democracy by the corrupt elite in Morocco. He qualifies the democratic model as an alienating process. The lexemes used to describe the manipulation of democracy by the secular elite can be grouped under the semantic field of “fraud”.

In the passage above, Yassine does not express any particular adversity towards the main principles of democracy but rather towards the dishonesty of the political elite.

The JSG’s official website provides a more updated outlook on the JSG’s main stand on democracy. The following passage was selected and translated from the JSG’s website [www. aljamaa.net](http://www.aljamaa.net) (Rubric: who we are / Our Method)

Our main criticism of democracy resides in the fact that it overlooks the other part. It does not offer Humans an exit from apostasy the biggest oppression. Our criticism is towards its close associate and its bedfellow secularism which overlooks all moral norms. Freedom trespasses all limits and yearns for the forbidden and for us the pinnacle of freedom is to be the slaves of Allah.

The first remark we can make about this passage pertains to the use of a less marked lexemes though the negative representation of democracy persists through negatively loaded phrases (overlooks all norms/ does not offer / trespasses limits: yearns for the forbidden). The criticism towards the principle of democracy and the freedoms that ensue is controlled. In other words, the JSG does not object to the procedural aspect of democracy. Its main objection regards the secular character of democracy and the moral permissiveness it allows. In an interview published in English by the Spiegel Online ([www.spiegel.de](http://www.spiegel.de)), Nadia Yassine is asked whether the JSG intends to abolish the secular state. She retorts “What we want is a true democracy”. Nadia Yassine endorses the democratic model; nevertheless the use of the modifier “true” implies the existence of an “untrue” version of democracy. It is indeed an implicit criticism towards the actual practice of democracy in Morocco.

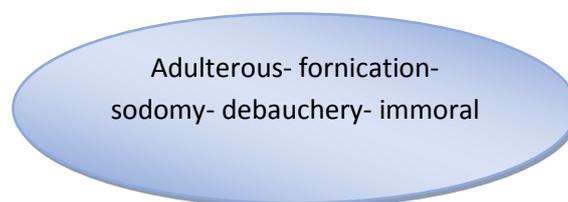
### ***2.3 Lexicalization on Political Pluralism***

Political pluralism is part and parcel of the democratic model. The JSG’s perception of the extent to which pluralism can be tolerated in the imagined Muslim state is manifested in this passage from the JSG’s website:

Political Pluralism : It is a quality whose virtue we reckon. There is no sensible mind that argues about its righteousness and only a despot can deny it. It is an opportunity for honorable competition to serve the general interests that all toil for provided it is governed by transparency responsibility and seriousness.

The overall representation of political pluralism is positive (quality, virtue, honorable competition). Yet, the acceptance of political pluralism is conditioned by a set of ethical guarantees namely responsibility, transparency and seriousness.

### ***2.4 Lexicalization on Individual Freedom***



***Fig 3. The Semantic field about freedom of expression.***

In this subsection, we will present two excerpts referring to individual freedoms for the sake of comparison. The first passage is a translated excerpt from Yassine’s book while the second is a statement posted on the JSG’s website. Yassine argues:

and the democratic freedom of expression retrogresses in the countries of democratic freedom to the lowest levels, and it is further debased through the adulterous behavior fornication sodomy and the commercial debauchery manifested in the immoral advertising.

Yassine characterizes the boundless permissiveness allowed by freedom of expression in Western countries as the epitome of immorality. The words associated with the democratically based freedom can be grouped in the semantic field of “debauchery”.

The following excerpt is a translated passage from the JSG’s website under the heading: public freedoms, as below;

Public Freedoms: Constitutes a meeting point with those who advocate freedoms as a reluctance to repression and oppression and yearning to a freedom that guarantees pluralism of opinion, methods and means . . . Yet we assert that these freedoms will remain mere formalities and wishful thinking if we do not seal a convention a promise and a bond that guarantees continuity.

This passage represents a more updated insight into the JSG’s position towards individual freedom. We note that the lexical choice is generally neutral. Contrary to Yassine’s position, the JSG’s latest position on public freedom is devoid of any particular reserves.

Overall, Yassine showed a consistent concern about the distinctiveness of the JSG’s ideological lines through a singular combination of words that constitute strong ideological markers. The representation of democracy through particular lexical reveals that the JSG does not object to the endorsement of procedural democracy. The main reserves towards democracy concern rather the political environment in which it is enforced. Having said that, we need to draw attention towards a notable discrepancy in the positions towards the manifestation of individual freedom in the public space. Yassine expresses apprehension from the consequences of an uncensored form of freedom whereas the latest posts in the JSG’s website do not articulate any restraint towards the expression of individual freedom.

### 3. Syntactic Features: Pronoun Use and Modality

Personal pronouns are essentially used to refer to the subject of the sentence. Their referential function changes in the case of ideological discourse. The following excerpt from Nadia Yassine’s interview with the Spiegel Online illustrates the use of pronouns in ideological discourse:

**SPIEGEL:** So what would you do differently? What would a Muslim state based on your ideas look like?

**Yassine:** The Islam we want to revive is an Islam of dialogue. We are a political and social organization, but we are also a non-violent, spiritual movement. We believe the Koran conveys a universal message.

Nadia Yassine uses “we” to speak on behalf of the JSG. In this excerpt the pronoun “we” consolidates the ideological identity and the distinctiveness of the JSG. In other words, the plural pronoun “we” is not a mere a reference to a group of Individuals. Thus, we can ascertain that the ideological identity of the JSG is not bolstered only through concrete forms of political activism. The ideological identity is expressed to a large extent through the use of pronouns. Another syntactic structure that we deem important to highlight is the use of modality. In his book *The Prophetic Method*, Yassine (1981) argues:

We have to build the economy of force to form it. There is no unity we can expect among the rulers of oppression. ....we have to fight, we, the Islamists before the liberation and after the attempts of opacification on our thoughts (Yassine, 1981, p.26)

The use of modality is common in ideological discourse. It aims not only at convincing but also at the mobilization towards a particular kind of action. The use of the modality “have to” produces a sense of obligation and urgency on the part of the reader. It is interesting also to examine the use of the pronoun “we” in the passage above. The reader notices a pause that marks the importance of the collective identity referred to by distinctively isolated appositive. Besides its referential function, the foregrounding of the pronoun “we” and the delineation of the collective identity serves two purposes. On one hand, it asserts the ideological identity of the JSG. On the other hand, it confers more solidarity among the members of the Jama’a through the establishment of a common objective that is the building of a strong economy and the resistance to oppression. The passage below is a translated excerpt from Yassine’s book *Shura and Democracy (Online version)*. It illustrates the use of modality for the sake of mobilization:

We must wake up, to purify ourselves, to raise to gather and to unite, to consolidate our ranks .... So as to live up to the level of the life context and life system and the ethical law, the belief in Allah and the last day.

The use of the modal “have to” is a call for purification and union to live up to the expectations cast on the shoulders of true Muslims. The combination of modals and the appeal of religion engender a form of moral

compulsion and a propensity towards cooperation on the part of the audience. It becomes clear that the activism that is markedly manifest in the JSG's discourse is expressed through the use of modality patterns notably those of necessity and obligation.

#### 4. The Use of Metaphors

Metaphors mark the shift from the literal use of language to an area of subjectivity that expresses a particular worldview through the superposition of two different entities. A close investigation of the use of metaphors in ideological discourse unravels the cognitive structures that this kind of discourse aims to forge. The survey of the data selected for the present study discloses a frequent use of metaphors in the writings of the JSG's founder. By comparison the discourse of other members is more denotative. We shall illustrate this point through the analysis of the excerpts below.

##### 4.1 Metaphors about the condition of the Umma

The following passage is a translated excerpt from Yassine's book *Shura and Democracy* ( Online version)

The body of the Umma is ailing, its blood is a mixture of a curded legacy and an elapsing talk. Our Muslim pious mental blood lost its original balance in the same fashion as blood loses its mineral water enzyme and chemical homeostasis. Our blood (pious) lost the nutrients that the family, the line in the mosque and the congregation of knowledge and faith used to supply.

Yassine employs an extended metaphor that associates the Islamic Umma with the anatomy of the Human body. The community of Muslims is reduced to an enfeebled body. The blood that maintains the body's homeostasis and supplies its organs with vital nutrients can no longer fulfill its functions which cause the body of the Umma to weaken. The frailty of the Umma is ascribed then to the absence of family values, the commitment to the prayer in the mosques and the absence of religious congregations. We shall discuss this condition fully in dislocation and social imaginary section.

##### 4.2 Metaphors on Democracy

The position towards democracy in Yassine's discourse remains cautious and ambiguous. He refers to democracy as a mode of governance "Transplanted in a foreign land"<sup>5</sup>. The transplantation denotes the act of uprooting and relocating. This image lays emphasis on the foreign character of democracy and its alienating effect on Muslims. The same metaphor of the plant is used in a different way in by Hamdaoui, the head of the JSG's bureau of external relations. In an interview entitled "Islamists and the Pursuit of power," Hamdaoui asserts "This trend is an authentic plant in this Umma". The metaphorical representation of Islamism is positive through the use of a modifier "authentic". Islamism is depicted as an indigenous movement that does not pose any threat to the Muslim identity. The image about secularism creates a sentiment of discomfort and suspicion on the part of Muslims whereas the one about Islamism is more likely to engender a feeling of sympathy and affiliation.

**Table 6. Metaphors in the data selected**

Topic	Tenor	Vehicle	Signification
Dislocation	Islamic Umma	Human body	The Umma is a diseased body due to the loss of religiosity.
Secularism	Secularism	A Colonial weapon	Secularism is the weapon of French colonization.
Secularism	Westernized elite	A wolf	Distrust towards the intentions of Westernized elite.
Democracy	Democracy	A foreign plant	Democracy represented as an outsider.
Rise of Islamism	Islamism	An authentic plant	Islamism represented as an endogenous trend.

The opposition to secularism in Yassine’s writings discourse is marked by the intensity of the metaphors used. It becomes obvious that the use of metaphors in the JSG’s discourse contributes to a large extent to the promotion of the Islamism.

## 5. Argumentation

The main objective of this section is to delineate the layout of the JSG’s argumentation as regards the debate over secularism, democracy and Shura. To that end, we have opted for Toulmin’s model in which he deconstructs the different components of the argument namely the claim, ground, backing, warrant, rebuttal and qualifier. It is equally interesting to examine the kind of Aristotelian appeal that pervades in the JSG’s discourse.

### 5.1 Arguments on Democracy

Yassine considers the circumstances under which the Islamists may be driven to take part in the democratic process:

Some of us may have been pushed by necessity to look for a way of legitimacy to open the door for public liberties. If so, our scholar Maududi stated that Muslims take part to the democratic game. This allows Muslims to showcase their case and to solve the problem of the Umma in the light of the day. This is good along with the necessity to a temporary silence on the fact that Islam has its legitimacy and it is different from the legitimacy of that is manufactured by America and Russia standing on platform of the Umma, teaching surrender and atheism (Yassine, 1981, p.27)

The passage provides two main claims. The former is a claim of policy stating that Islamists should get involved in the proceedings of democracy as long as it is the only way towards power. The latter is an assertion about the difference of the Islamic legitimacy. Claims of policy as outlined by Toulmin are statements about what should be or should not be done (Seyler, 2011). Yassine lends weight to his claim via the use of ethos appeal manifested in the voice of Pakistani scholar Maududi.

**Table 7. Arguments about democracy**

Claim	Grounds	Aristotelian Appeal
Islamists should take part to the democratic process. (claim of policy)	To showcase their ideology and to solve the problems of the Umma	Use of a credible authority on the field of Islamism/ Maududi: urges Islamists to participate in the democratic process. Use of

**Table 8. Arguments about democracy**

Claim	Type	Ground	Comment
<b>Claim1:</b> It is impossible to moralize democracy in Muslim countries.	Claim of value: The speaker makes a moral judgment about democracy.	The absence of supporting laws, lack of awareness among Muslims and the weakness of the judiciary. ( ground 1) / logos	Yassine makes a judgment about the eligibility of Muslims societies to democracy based on factual information.
<b>Claim2:</b> Democracy in Muslim countries is a dream unlikely to come true	Claim of value that confirms the former one.	in the system of nepotism, The corruption and all kinds of epidemics ( ground 2)	This claim reiterates the same idea in claim 1. The difference lies in the used of metaphorical language “ democracy is a dream” as well as the evidence presented.

Democracy is compatible with the Islamic rule but in reality it is not enforced. The incumbent governments do not enforce democracy; you can see many political parties have particular political discourse for example certain positions before they access power. These principles are not implemented.

The respondent is assertive about the compatibility between Islam and the democratic model. Yet her statement is soon readjusted as she refers to the state of affairs in Moroccan society which is qualified as relatively undemocratic.

**Table 9. Argument in the statement of respondent A**

Claim	Qualifier	Type	Ground
Democracy is compatible with the Islamic mode of governance.	Yet, democracy is not enforced in Morocco.	Claim of value	Factual observation: The political parties do not keep their promises.

This may suggest that the JSG has no objection regarding democracy itself, yet the political manifesto posted on the Jama'a's website *aljamaa.net* addresses the question of secularism differently.

Some people may think that what we aim for is to present a carbon copy of the democratic system whose features are outlined in the writings of politicians, or those whose principles are embodied in a context different from ours. But we insist on the originality of our project and on the prominence of our alternatives by virtue of their religious soul and its preaching character.

The reference to the “ideological other” in the process of argumentation constitutes a noticeable strategy of persuasion.

**Table 10. Arguments about democracy**

Claim	Type	Rebuttal
Our project is not a replica of Western democracy. It is an original model.	Claim of value: The statement is an appreciative judgment about the Islamist project	The anticipation of the criticism that may be leveled against the JSG constitutes a rebuttal

It is uncustomary in argumentative discourse to state the rebuttal before the main claim. Yet this move allows the speaker to gain grounds as it lends weight to the statement made. It refers also the JSG's alertness and awareness about potential disapproval by ideological opponents. In his book *Dialogue with Democrats* (online version), Yassine depicts democracy as an exhausted model of governance:

No, the senile sickened democracy has lost its credibility in its own country. People in general have lost faith in the political class or they got used to the periodical electoral carnivals or they were raised to pay periodic visits to the voting boots.

**Table 11. Arguments about Democracy**

Claim	Type	Ground
Democracy is an ageing model whose capability to run the affairs of Muslims is failing.	Claim of value: Yassine makes a subjective judgment about democracy.	Voters have lost faith in the process of elections/ People were conditioned to cast the ballots.

The argument put forward in the passage above aims at discrediting the practice of democracy in Western countries. Democracy is depicted as a fraudulent and ritualistic process devoid of any ethical values. Yet the main criticism that overrules the appropriateness of democracy is put forward by Yassine (1998) in the following excerpt “Democracy could have been a school of learning if it were a mere procedure at if it were not along with secularism the two sides of the same coin” (Yassine, 1998, p.313). Yassine's objection towards democracy stems essentially from the secular character of Western democracy. It is Yassin's contention that democracy and secularism are irrevocably conjoined. The respondent B interviewed in this study is a female member in charge of the educational affairs in the Jama'a, when asked whether it is possible to conceive of secularism in a Muslim society, she responded:

It is impossible because our religion is comprehensive. It covers the Human existence in general. We cannot separate religion from the state because the rule of His Almighty Allah should be enforced on earth.

The respondent is adamant about the incongruence between secularism and Islam. The main evidence she provides to back her statement is a factual knowledge about the comprehensiveness of Islam.

## **6. Aristotelian appeals**

The primary purpose of this section is to delineate any particular appeal that is consistently used in the JSG's argumentative scheme. Yassine displays in his book *Islamizing Modernity* a strategic use of French scholars and philosophers. Likewise, in one of her interviews, Nadia Yassine uses a Marxist adage to illustrate her point "In Islam being spiritual, thinking and reflective is also being socially engaged. As the Marxist adage says "He who is hungry has no ears to listen. The study of the data selected revealed a preponderant use of ethos over pathos and logos. By ethos, we mean the reliance on authorial voices to lend weight to the claims put forward. The credibility of Quranic verses and the voices of different scholars provide a solid backing to the assertions made about democracy and Shura. The argumentation in the JSG's discourse in general relies less on the emotional appeal. Most of the grounds presented derive their persuasive power from logical reasoning or from the moral authority and competence of the references cited.

## **Discussion**

The analysis of a varied set of data showed that the JSG's discourse is the channel of a complex ideology driven by a common project. The profusion of coined by Abdessalam Yassine marks the articulation of a new discourse that is primarily aimed at supplanting secularism. Collocations like the political Jihad, Islamic politics and Shura-based freedoms constitute an amalgam of the religious and the political realms. Besides contributing in the articulation of the JSG's political theory, these terms represent a statement about the indivisibility of religion and politics in the vision of the Jama'a. The creation of this alternative discourse is in fact a reinvention of a new reality based on new paradigms utterly distinct from those of Western democracy. In addition, the lexical choice consolidates the identity of the Jama'a through the creation of a common repertoire. The negative lexicalization associated with the "Other" is a discursive move aimed at discrediting the "other" with the aim of promoting the Islamist ideology.

The use of metaphors is a powerful instrument in the cognitive construction of the other. The association established between the sick body and the Umma for instance contributes in the formation of the mental image about the condition of the Muslim community that is liable to create or enhance the sentiment of estrangement among Muslims. These metaphors forge the image of democracy as a suspicious and exogenous import whereas Islamism is portrayed as a home-grown and therefore a philosophy. The power of the JSG's discourse to mobilize others is derived partially from the use of modals like have to and must. These syntactic structures are intended to rally Moroccans towards the political change orchestrated by the Jama'a. The call for action in this context is an invitation to reverse the state of dislocation grounded in the JSG's discourse and most importantly in Yassine's writings.

It would be simplistic to assume that the study of the JSG's argumentation scheme reveals a conclusive view on its stand on democracy. The analysis of the set of data selected on the basis of Toulmin's model revealed a preponderant use of evaluative judgments about the validity of democracy in the Moroccan context. It becomes clear that democracy as a model of governance poses intricate issues for the Jama'a. There seems to be a consensus within the Jama'a around the acceptability of the form of democracy that gives preeminence to popular sovereignty through the electoral process. Notwithstanding, Yassine and other JSG's members express concerns about the political environment in which the electoral process is conducted in Morocco. It is often described as a carnivalistic ritual fraught with frauds and lies. In this regard, democracy is often associated with the emergence of corrupt elites that manipulates democracy to uphold its privileges and serve their vested interest. Yet, the main criticism leveled against democracy regards its alliance with secularism. The arguments advanced by the JSG's members make it clear that the secular model remains at odds with the Islamic mode of governance. As regards argumentation, the analysis showed that the evidence used to back the arguments set forth are based more on ethos and logos than pathos. That is to say, that JSG's discourse relies on the voice of authorial references namely Quranic verses and the statements by prominent figures in Islamic culture. The articulation of rebuttals before the presentation of the main claim constitutes a proactive discursive move. It bespeaks the Jama'a's high responsiveness to its context and its alertness to any potential criticism that is leveled against its ideological tenets. The argumentation scheme concerning other manifestations of democracy such as pluralism and individual freedom show a discrepancy between the

assertions made by Yassine in his writings and the recent statements issued by the Jama'a. As regards the expression of individual freedom in the public domain, Yassine proffers a conservative position towards the moral permissiveness that uncensored freedom may engender. Contrariwise, the discourse in the Jama'a's website about political pluralism and public freedom remains highly moderate.

It is easy to discern a difference in tone and style in the discourse of Abdessalam Yassine compared to other members of the Jama'a in the data analyzed. As a matter of fact, Yassine capitalizes more on the boasting and derogation strategy that is the positive representation of the self and the negative representation of the "Other." The rhetoric of Nadia Yassine and other members interviewed tends to be more moderate. That is not to say that their positions are more compromising, but the choice of lexicon is more cautious. This confirms Daadaoui's assumption that the Jama'a at the image of other Moroccan Islamists groups moved from the mindset of clash to a tactical positioning. The Jama'a's seems content with the "semi-legal" status which allows its members to undertake their activities and to preserve a functional organization. Thus, the JSG opts for a mild form of political dissent that does not endanger the liberty of its members. It is difficult to disentangle the political and the religious dimensions in the discourse of the JSG. On one hand, the JSG's political statements are grounded in its own interpretation of Islam. On the other hand, political action is considered as a means to restore religious morality in the Moroccan society. It becomes evident that the concern about the political order in the Muslim society is pervading in the discourse of the Jama'a and the advocacy of a change in the current political order in Morocco is omnipresent in the JSG's rhetoric. This stems from the JSG's awareness that the moralization of the Moroccan society cannot be achieved only through proselytism. Therefore, Tibi's statement about the concern of Islamist with political order rather than faith does not hold true for the JSG. In fact, the access to power guarantees more control over the legislation and the economic resources. It follows that the Jama'a perceives politics as a means and not as an end itself.

## **Conclusion**

The variety of the data selected allowed for a broader and updated overview about the JSG's ideology. A thorough analysis of the data corpus demonstrated that all levels of discourse can channel ideological statements and values. The concepts of democracy and secularism are omnipresent in the discourse of the Jama'a. While the rejection of secularism is irrevocable, the attitudes towards democracy remain segmented and ambiguous. The JSG places itself in the position of political dissension through the constant evaluation of other political actors. Shura on the other hand is presented as the most appropriate model of governance for the Muslim state. The change in the rhetoric of the Jama'a singled out throughout the analysis of the data echoes perfectly its transformation from a subverting element to a semi legal group closely controlled by the authorities. Notwithstanding, the Islamist rhetoric is not always a transparent discourse. While the JSG's official statements sound disengaged from the real pursuit of power, the project of a radical political change is maintained in the uncensored speech of its members.

## **Acknowledgments**

I would like to thank my parents for their support throughout my journey in the search of knowledge. Thank you for showing me the way to school and for opening those boundless horizons to me.

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my supervisor, Pr. Mohammed El Biad, for his guidance and support throughout this study, and especially for his confidence in me. I learned a lot from his insight and his comments during the discussions we had.

This thesis commemorates two years of hard work, unparalleled joy and above all a delightful journey into the enchanting world of Humanities. I would like to sincerely thank all the professors who were part of the Master program for their earnest diligence.

This thesis is only the beginning of my journey.

## **Notes:**

1. For more on grammar, please see: O'Grady, Dobrovolsky and Katamba (1996).
2. For more on semantics, please see: Trofimova (1999).
3. For more on macrostructure/topics, please see: Van Dijk (1997).

4. For more on rhetoric, please see: Corbett (1990).
5. For more on superstructure, please see: Zaleski (2008).
6. For more on discourse pragmatics, please see: Allan and Salmani Nodoushan (2015); Bhatia and Salmani Nodoushan (2015); Capone and Salmani Nodoushan (2014); Salmani Nodoushan (1995; 2006a; 2006b; 2007a; 2007b; 2007c; 2008a; 2008b; 2011; 2012a; 2012b; 2013a; 2013b; 2014a; 2014b; 2014c; 2015a; 2015b; 2016a; 2016b; 2016c; 2017; 2018; 2019); Salmani Nodoushan and Allami (2011); Salmani Nodoushan and Khakbaz (2011); Salmani Nodoushan and Mohiyedin Ghomshei (2014); Salmani Nodoushan and Montazeran (2012).

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