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The Substance of Democracy behind Layers of Discourses: EU's Democracy Promotion in Tunisia.

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Abstract

Following the signature of the Millennium Declaration in 2000, and of the Lisbon treaty in 2009, the EU developed a key-role role on the international stage notably through the development of the CSFP and its HR representative, Federica Mogherini. While the EU reinforced its security policies, its involvement in developing countries increased as well. Higher requirements toward its foreign partners are expected, notably regarding the implementation of democratic principles. The EUROMED partnership, through which Tunisia is bound to the EU's financial support and socio-economic goals, deploys a wide range of democracy promotion instruments. This research looks at the meanings of democracy in the context of the EU-Tunisian partnership through a transversal discursive analysis based on the work of Chaban & Holland, the foucauldian normative theory and the criteria for an ideal democracy from Dahl and Habermas. The analysis compares two layers of democratic discourses: the official one, from the EU and the Tunisian government; and the civil society level, from NGOs, journalists and activist bloggers. The aim of the study being to look at the possible mismatch between democratic discourse and democratic realities, resulting in a transformation of the democracy definition. The findings show discrepancies between the EU's institutionalized democratic discourse, the Tunisian governments newly democratic discourse based on familial and religious values, and finally a Tunisian civil society distanced from political life, but speaking the "parrhesian" truth of Foucault and appearing as the last authentic layer of authentic democracy.

Key-words: EU democracy promotion; Tunisia; EUROMED; democratic layers and substance; democratic ideal; normative power; parrhesia; public sphere; discourses and representations; civil society.

Abbreviations: The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EUROMED), The European Neighborhood Policy (ENP), European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), Common Security and Foreign Policy (CSFP), High Representative (HR), EED (European Endowment for Democracy), European Partnership for Democracy (EPD).

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1. Introduction

1.2. EU's Position in a Globalized Era: Diplomacy, Development and Democracy Promotion.

Compliance with democratic principles and the rule of law have been placed at the top of the European Union's priority list in the past 15 years. Likewise, developing countries bound to the EU by specific agreements or partnerships are required to align with those standards. Indeed, after the signature of the Millennium declaration in 2000 followed by the Lisbon treaty, which entered into force in 2009, the EU's enlargement led to an expansion of expectations for new member states, but also for partners in developing countries. Meanwhile, the development of international inter-connections on a global level fostered the EU to set an agenda in accordance with its international partners and with the international community's demands. As a matter of fact, the recent growth of neo-liberal politics and ideologies through Western countries stimulated inter-dependence and inter-connection around the world, enabling the creation of global rules and regulations, and developing the globalization era we experience today. One aspect of neo-liberalism concerns economic liberalization and development, but also the use of diplomacy and alignment with common values, such as democratic principles. Nowadays, these principles appear imperative if a country wants to be recognized as a morally respectable player in the international arena. The EU seems to have employed the diplomatic strategy to be acknowledged in international politics and has developed a softer picture on the international stage in comparison to its Western partner, such as the United States. Indeed, the US is often depicted as capitalist in democratic disguise when interacting with the developing world, while the EU is portrayed as diplomatic and socially driven (Holland, 2002; Pace, 2007).

The EU's savior and peace provider representation has contributed in particular to its credibility on the international stage. The development of this symbolic image in the international community derives from its tendency to use normalizing instruments in peacekeeping operations, while the Americans are more generally depicted as the "true Western capitalists", favoring armed force to softer instruments (Linklater, 2005: pp. 437-438; Delanty, 2005: p. 67). This, seemingly, more noble imagery has supported the EU's legitimacy globally and reinforced its diplomatic and peaceful image through time.

Nevertheless, the EU recently developed stronger policies in terms of security and defense. The EU's role in foreign affairs has become more consistent and homogeneous allowing, for instance the deployment of peacekeeping forces directed by the EU, or strengthened surveillance of its frontiers. The establishment of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), the creation of its representative position, with the current High Representative (HR) Federica Mogherini, as well as the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) transformed and perhaps altered the EU's softer image. The development of common EU foreign policies has reinforced its power on the international stage; however the EU's diplomatic image has deteriorated. Indeed the EU's behavior, which on one hand diffuses democratic and pacific values, and on the other strengthens its defense policy, producing an ambiguous discourse that has been questioned (Holland, 2002; Pace, 2007). In order to understand how these mismatching discourses obscure the meaning of democracy on the international scene, this research will observe and compare the EU's democracy promotion discourses to the Tunisian ones. Supported by the normalizing theory of Foucault, Dahl's concepts of an ideal democracy, the concept of a democratic public sphere from Habermas, and the methodological framework of discourse analysis, the European and Tunisian democratic layers will be analyzed and compared in this study.

1.2. The EU and its Southern Mediterranean Neighborhood: the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and the European Neighborhood Policy

The European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EUROMED) are the major agreements binding the EU to Tunisia. While the ENP covers a larger region, including Eastern countries, the EUROMED focuses on Southern Mediterranean states. However, both agreements overlap each other and apply in the case of Tunisia.

The EU's relationship with its Southern Mediterranean neighboring countries has evolved significantly over time. The ENP, launched in 2004, structures a policy framework through a partnership with 16 neighboring countries including Eastern Europe, the Middle-East, and Mediterranean countries. This bilateral policy sets the agenda for economic and political goals to be achieved in a limited timeframe (Eeas.europa.eu, 2015). This agreement is based on the observance of democratic principles, the rule of law and respect of human rights. In 2010-

2011, the ENP was reassessed and those democratic principles were strengthened and deepened through an emphasis on reaching a "deep and sustainable democracy" toward the settlement of "free and fair elections, freedom of expression, of assembly and of association, judicial independence, fight against corruption and democratic control over the armed forces" (Eeas.europa.eu, 2015). The role of civil society was also highlighted, described as the indispensable foundation that would enable genuine and consistent democratic development (Eeas.europa.eu, 2015). Finally, partner countries would be financially rewarded according to the effort they put into democracy and the implementation of democratic principles (Eeas.europa.eu, 2015).

The EUROMED signed in 1995, formerly called the "Barcelona Declaration" and embedded in the ENP as described above, performs as a multilateral socio-economic and political partnership between the EU and the following 15 Southern Mediterranean countries: Albania, Algeria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Mauritania, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Palestine, Tunisia and Turkey (Eur-lex.europa.eu, 2015). While the objectives of this partnership revolves around a mutual economic agreement through the construction of a possible future free trade area, it also addresses issues and policies related to energy, environment and corporate development. In addition, compliance with human rights and fundamental principles such as the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights enunciate are cited as the fundamental obligations to align with. Clearly, respect of the rule of law and of democratic principles are described as mandatory. Furthermore, the agreement describes a concrete plan of action to achieve those goals through the settlement of exchange and work programs emphasized on intercultural dialogue, civil society's development and involvement (Eur-lex.europa.eu, 2015).

1.3. EU's Democratic layers and the Substance of Democracy

With the settlement of the ENP and the EUROMED, the EU seems to have paved a solid path to developing democracy in the Southern Mediterranean area. Indeed, the socio-political agenda includes thoughtful programs dedicated, among others, to: combat corruption; develop and reinforce civil society; establish and supervise free and fair elections; and finally elaborate an independent judicial system (Eeas.europa.eu, 2015; Eur-lex.europa.eu, 2015).

However, despite the efforts put into a thorough definition of democratic implementation in the Southern Mediterranean area, the EU faces criticism. The EU's political strategy and discourse in terms of democratic implementation seem to disclose a certain ambiguity. In their research, Orbie, Bossuyt and Wetzel have diagnosed a lack of democratic substance lying behind the EU's promotion of democracy in developing countries, revealing a rather elusive and shallow definition of democracy (2015). This publication raises questions with regards to the possible discrepancies between the EU's promotion of democracy and its actual implementation in the Southern Mediterranean region. Officially, the EU seems to have significantly progressed and made considerable steps to re-define the various aspects enabling the settlement of democracy in those regions. Unofficially, what type of democracy is implemented in Tunisia and what kind of democratic discourse is dispensed? The Tunisian state, which is bound to the ENP and the EUROMED, has been one notable example of democratic transformation. After experiencing years of dictatorship under the yoke of Ben Ali, the country renowned for originating the ardor of the Arab Spring revolution, is experiencing a new born democracy, established through the creation of democratic elections and a democratic constitution in 2014, supported by the EU (BBC News, 2015; Dabashi, 2012). However, what if the Tunisian democracy was a democratic surface hiding a different story?

1.4. The Tunisian Case: a Brief Overview

In Tunisia, the recent implementation of democracy, toward the establishment of a new constitution structured by democratic institutions and launched with the first democratic elections in the country in 2014 has given hope to the Tunisian population who has gone through decades of socio-political turmoil. Indeed, Tunisians carry the burden of a painful past shaped by decades of oppression under Ben Ali's dictatorship, while the raise of extremist movements and terrorist attacks produced a complex socio-political environment where democratic principles and values were laborious to implement. Despite the EU's support and the enthusiasm of Tunisian youth for the revolution, the democratic ideal seems still difficult to reach, while economic issues, unemployment and growing inequality between the lands and the coast contribute to disappointment and despair among the Tunisian population. This new born democracy has been often depicted as lacking the sufficient democratic culture and understanding, on a governmental level and on a civil level, where

decades of obedience have been ingrained in people's sub-conscious (BBC News, 2015; Dabashi, 2012; Pace, 2009; Courrier de l'Atlas, 2014).

Tunisia, depicted as lacking the fundamental culture of democracy, is supported by the EU through the settlement of the ENP and the EUROMED, but also programs of civil society's reinforcement. However, if the Tunisian civil society is stuck in a democratic and political deadlock, how should the EU behave? Is there a way to discover where democracy lies within the Tunisian society and if the EU's discourse on democracy promotion is efficient and genuine?

2. Research question(s)

2.1. EU's Democracy Promotion in Tunisia: the Official and Civil Society Layers

Democracy and democratic principles are at the heart of the EUROMED partnership and set the basis of their inter-dependence, notably through the "more for more" principle under which the EU strengthens its financial support to the most cooperative countries who make significant efforts to align with the EU democratic principles (Eeas.europa.eu, 2015).

As stated in the previous section, in Tunisia, partner in the EUROMED, the democratic political reform has already taken place. After almost 25 years of dictatorship under the president Ben Ali, the Tunisian population massively protested in 2011, and evicted the former president from the government, giving rise to a massive rebellious movement across the Arab region known as the Arab Spring (BBC News, 2015). At the end of 2014, the first democratic parliamentary and presidential elections took place, resulting in the victory of the liberal secularist party, Nidaa Tounes, opposing the moderate Islamist Ennhada movement. Beji Caid Essebsi became the first directly elected president in Tunisia (Europeanforum.net, 2015).

This raises the question regarding the level of democracy that Tunisia has reached. To which extent is it fulfilling the democratic criteria of the EU and its democratic principles? How can

we measure the democratic progression of Tunisia in relation to the EU's actions when the country is still experiencing democratic opacity? But mostly, how do we define a "good" democracy and which criteria shall be used in the context of the partnership with the EU and Tunisia?

In order to reveal the authentic substance of democracy existing in Tunisia, and to measure the different democratic layers crossing the barriers of Tunisia through EU's democracy promotion, the official channel and the civil society channel will be observed. The EU's democratic discourses will not only be analyzed in order to measure the possible impact they have on Tunisia, but also on the definition of democracy.

Through a discursive and comparative analysis between these two different channels, the research questions are the following:

- *First, what can be discovered from the EU's democracy promotion discourse and the Tunisian understanding of democracy and to what extent will there be a discrepancy between democratic ideal, EU's democratic ideal, and the perspective of democracy in Tunisia?*
- *Secondly, what kind of democratic substance can be found when the layers of normative democratic discourse are peeled away, and to what level does it conform to the democratic values described by philosophers and thinkers?*

In order to answer these questions above, the EU's democracy promotion discourse in Tunisia will be analyzed and compared to the reception of these ideas of democracy by the Tunisian people. This analysis will be based on several concepts and definitions of democracy supported by Foucault, Dahl, and Habermas, and supported by the theory of normalization. The methodology will set a discourse analysis framework based on the observation of two different layers: the official layer and the civil society layer. The analysis will be transversal through the use of those theories and concepts, used as instruments to dissect the democratic discourses in those two levels.

3. Theory

3.1. Classical International Relations Theories: from Realism to Neo-Liberalism

If we want to get a broader view of the EU's possible motives and interests in promoting democracy, we have to look at the different existing academic perspectives. The usual classical theories of international relations will bring an overview of the previously discussed reasons prompting states, or state communities such as the EU, to act in a specific way on the international stage. This will offer a better understanding in relation to the EU's comportment and motives to promote democracy outside its frontiers.

There are two leading schools of thought at the basis of international relations studies: realists and liberals, as well as the modern version called neo-realists and neo-liberals. The latter sustain opposing views of the socio-political world; however, they may use similar tools to reach their goals. Neo-realists and neo-liberals share similar basic concepts and beliefs regarding the anarchical structure of our world. According to their perspective, the world is depicted as a threatening and unpredictable environment where outside the state's borders, behaviors of neighbors remain uncertain. This results in suspicion and fear in the international arena producing a search for safety within the states who will focus on self-interests and consequently attempt to gain power within their own frontiers (Baylis and Smith, 2004: pp.4-5). However, while neo-realists believe that this can be achieved through military force, enforced security policies and power-maximizing, neo-liberals believe cooperation, economic inter-dependence and international institutionalization would be more efficient to bring order and peace in their own state and worldwide (Lamy, 2004: pp.208-215).

Realism was the dominant theory in international politics before the 90s, but the liberals have gained credibility in the international community since the end of the Cold War (Dunne, 2004: p. 186). Liberal and neo-liberal thought have indeed taken more space in international society's ideology (Dunne and Schmidt, 2004: pp.162-164). Neo-liberal thinkers such as Walzer or Beitz, highlight the remarkable progression of cooperation and common norms on a global level, that create a cosmopolitan global society with universal morals and rules (qtd in Lee, 2012: pp. 118-121). Walzer even claims that nations have entered into the state of

"conditional sovereignty" in this new international environment where "common life rights" have become fundamental and universal (qtd in Lee, 2012: pp. 118-119).

Democratic principles, considered nowadays as the necessary universal moral basis, have been related to the civilizing process, through which peace could be maintained worldwide. These principles were at the basis of the EU's construction, including the economic ties used to keep an inter-dependence preventing wars from being waged between member states (Linklater, 2011: pp. 437-457). Indeed, peaceful relationships have been maintained within for six decades, and the Nobel Peace Prize earned by the EU in 2012 proved this "advancement of peace and reconciliation, democracy and human rights in Europe" to the international community (Nobelprize.org, 2015). In the past 15 years, the EU has moved further and evolved as a key-player the international stage through its alignment to the international standards through the signature of the Millennium declaration in 2000 and the launch of the Lisbon treaty in 2009. Democratic principles have been put at the core of European values and the promotion of democracy has become one of the EU's highest priorities (Holland, 2002).

Some studies prove the efficiency of democracy aid in developing areas, where political stabilization has improved, while other contemporary academics are pointing out the pervert consequences of development assistance (Savun and Tirone, 2011; Moyo, 2009). Indeed, scholars have found ambiguous motives when the West has aimed to implement democracy in developing countries. Whether these interests were economic, social or political, development policies were used to maintain a certain dominance and control over the third world (Middleton, 1998). Morgenthau, a realist contemporary thinker, would interpret the EU's democratic involvement in developing countries, as self-centered. The use of foreign policies would keep European borders closed while development policies would maintain the EU's ascendance and safety from neighboring conflict zones (1985: p. 24). For realists like Morgenthau, nation-states and their self-interest are still at the center of international relations and all nations have the wish to gain power toward "freedom, religion, philosophy, economy or social ideal" (1985: p. 24).

The EU's behavior in the Southern Mediterranean area, and especially regarding its democracy promotion, could be perceived in various ways: in the light of the liberal theory, order, peace and morality could be reached beyond the EU's borders in order to maintain

universal peace; while from a realists perspective this would be a utopia and democratic implementation would be a hidden way to dominate the Southern Mediterranean region.

If neo-liberalism and neo-realism explain in different ways the interactions of nation-states, they do not interrogate the very existence of the structure they are evolving within. According to those theories, the world has no higher power to maintain order and peace, therefore the struggle for dominations is unavoidable, even if inter-dependence between states would be a solution to balance this struggle, or for neo-realists would bring universal peace.

3.2. Normalizing and Civilizing power: Democratic Norm and Democratic ideal

☞ Foucault: Norms and Hidden Power

Another theory can be applied to the EU's behavior not only when it comes to its promotion of democracy, but also its political role on the international stage. During the past 15 years, a significant number of scholars have studied and described the EU as a "normalizing power" in the global arena (qtd in Manners, 2015: pp. 301-302). According to Laïdi, through the settlement of norms and standards and in conjunction with international institutions, the EU uses the most credible way to act as a key player in the globalized world. Indeed, with the end of the Cold War, new dominant powers such as China, Brazil and India have become powerful on the international stage and the EU's normative influence seems to remain its most essential tool, even if internally member countries are far from achieving the federalist dream of the European federation (qtd in Manners, 2015: p. 307).

Foucault was already describing the shift in our modern societies where norms and rules have become new instruments to control populations and communities, using surveillance and through the development of conceptualized ideas. According to him, modern Western societies have created a set of rules controlled by the government, institutions and bureaucracy allowing order to be maintained, including the definition of "normal" and abnormal" behavior (Foucault, 2000: pp. 57-59; Foucault, 2000). According to Foucault, the new modern society through its administrations, institutions and bureaucracy, has made power invisible and diffused; therefore making the population docile and pacified (Foucault, 1977: pp.218-219; Foucault, 2000). The symbol of the "Panopticon" illustrates the

institutionalization concept: in the middle of the tower, the supervisor can watch all the prisoners or patients; therefore, individuals are susceptible to be watched constantly and consequently regulate their own behavior. Finally the presence of the guard is not even necessary anymore, as people follow rules and procedures because of this "object of power", the "Panopticon", while the real power, in that case the guard, is made invisible (Foucault, 1977: pp. 217-219; Foucault, 2000). This ensures in our societies a diffusion of power, and thus a control of populations by preventing resistance and rebellion to arise in a power that is horizontal rather than vertical as in ancient societies (Foucault, 1977: pp.217-219; Foucault, 2000).

According to Foucault the combination of capitalism and liberalism we experience in modern times, offers on one hand great freedom, but on the other hand, presents an inevitable danger. Indeed, behind the development of institutions and systems, control and power can be hidden, while the addition of capitalism develops inequality leading to disciplinary societies where the primary idealistic liberalism seems to contrast considerably with the substance of democracy lying behind those institutions (Foucault, 1977; Foucault, 2000)

Foucault's theory opens up interrogations regarding this present research and would be an interesting starting point to guide the examination of the EU's democracy promotion and principles in Tunisia. Have those democratic principles become normalized, and therefore, implemented in a mechanical way, through the set of institutional instruments and concepts, considered as "good" in nature, but paradoxically impeding any sort of challenge or rebellion? The layers of these discourses surrounding and underlying this newly European democratic norm will be observed in the case of Tunisia, following Foucault's thought as an inspiration and starting point.

⌘ Previous Research on EU's Democracy Promotion

Narratives and discourses have been observed by some academics when it comes to the EU's democracy promotion. Schmidt has for instance compared the United Nations democracy promotion discourse to the EU's, basing its theorist framework on Foucault with the concepts of sovereign-power and norm-based power. He finds out that the EU's democracy substance shifted and took a turn in the 90s. The principles and universal morals as advertised by the liberal idealistic thought created a "universal ideal democracy", which through time turned

into a flexible democracy which "adapts" to its environment and context. EU democracy's promotion has become more distant from the audience and the public visibility, losing its essence and being more prone to focus on being well-perceived; consequently, focalizing on appearance (Schmidt, 2014).

Kurki, another academic who searched for the technocratic assumptions embedded in EU's democracy promotion discourse, noticed that these tendencies did exist and created paradoxical consequences. They emptied the meaning of "universal ideal democracy" from its political substance leaving it inconsistent (Kurki, 2011). Both Kurki and Schmidt deplored the discrepancy existing between the EU's democracy promotion discourse and the lack of political foundations and democratic concrete implementation on the ground, leaving a political void overlapped by the EU's democratic advertisement of an idealistic universal democracy (Schmidt, 2014; Kurki, 2011). This gap was also highlighted by Chaban and Holland in their research. In Fiji, a country in democratic crisis bound to the Lomé agreement, a EU's partnership with African, Pacific and Caribbean countries, democratic principles have to be strictly followed if partners want social and economic support. Chaban and Holland have therefore compared how democracy promotion was transformed through different channels: from the official documentation to the media. The actual progression of democracy in Fiji, compared to the democracy promotion discourse showed a significant divergence in this study (Chaban and Holland, 2011). Consequently, this raises questions with regard to the other democratic gaps, between EU's democracy discourse and local democratic implementation that might exist in the developing world. How many developing countries are facing the same challenge, behind the mask of the EU's democracy promotion discourse and its representations in the media? What democracy means in this context and what consistency can we expect to discover when this conceptualization of democracy has gone through various communication channels? Will the term "democracy" be transformed, perceived and symbolized in a different way at the conclusion of this present research?

✎ Post-Structuralist Stance

The discourse analysis that follows will be based on Foucault's theory of "normalization". Democracy in this case, a word coming with its set of meaning, will be analyzed in two different channels; the official channel and the civil society environment. While the actual

democratic principles of the EU and Tunisia will be observed, the discourses about democracy will be compared and be of major importance in the context of this study. As Foucault explains, the conceptualization of norms encapsulates power; therefore a discourse analysis will allow us to look for these hidden marks of power (qtd in Foucault, 2000: pp. 57-59). This research will be inspired by Foucault's works and thoughts on the power hidden in the structures and in the language, as well as in the creation of norms. The thesis will be based on a post-structuralist theories and therefore will focus on identity and subjectivity. In this research, the word democracy will be observed in different contexts; in order to analyze the actual meaning of democracy in different and specific environments. It will then be compared to a model of an idealistic democracy. According to Foucault, there is a duality related to the chore subject that creates opposed polarities, such as "good" and "bad": the "good" and "civilized" society and the bad criminals that are imprisoned for instance (Foucault, 2000). The modern society, for Foucault is a "disciplinary society", where "good behavior" is created allowing norms (what is "normal" and not "normal") to settle. Through constant supervision, that is institutions in that case, social control over individuals is enabled (qtd in Foucault, 2000: pp. 57-59). The theory of "normalization" used by Foucault and this duality forms the basis for this research. In this study, we will take a new perspective by looking at the meanings of democracy according to the EU, and in the context of its development policy in Tunisia.

4. Research Methodology

4.1. Transversal Framework inspired by Chaban & Holland, Foucault, Dahl and Habermas

In Chaban and Holland's research, a discrepancy was found between the discourse and aims of the EU's democracy promotion and the actual outcomes of democracy on the spot, in Fiji, a developing country in democratic crisis. To draw this conclusion, Chaban and Holland observed the media discourses on the EU's democracy promotion, it's official documentation and claims, and compared it to the local media's discourse on democracy (Chaban and

Holland, 2012). They have analyzed the metaphorical images the EU was using to construct those discourses in media, TV and newspapers. Words such as "friends", "partnership", "dialogue" and "co-operation" were employed to qualify the connection and agreements, including the democracy promotion, between the EU and the Fijian state (Chaban and Holland, 2012: p. 291). Besides, the EU was projecting an image of "benevolent authority", a positive to neutral "parental figure" and "teacher" in editorials and front page (Chaban and Holland, 2012: pp. 292-293). However, the EU's picture was also described in a negative way, as a "bully" and "inconsiderate authority" in the local Fijian media, with the use of specific expressions such having to "succumb" to the EU's pressure (Chaban and Holland, 2012: pp. 293-294). In conclusion, the authors found a gap between the self-image of the EU and the perspective of the Fijian locals, through media analysis: while the EU was depicting itself as a progressive figure, provider of democratic norms, in the Fijian local media the EU was described as a guiding figure, but also a threatening and punishing one (Chaban and Holland, 2012: pp. 296-298). As Chaban and Holland state, perception and perspectives of the other side, in that case the country where democracy promotion and support from the EU is developed, because it can bring direction to improve communication between the involved actors, and help to adjust policies (qtd in, 2012: p. 298).

This thesis will be inspired by the methodological framework of Chaban and Holland because it will be a relevant tool to discover possible discrepancies existing in the case of Tunisia. Indeed, while in Chaban and Holland's research, the Fijian state, described as a state in democratic crisis, the case of Tunisia, that has recently been through a revolution with the overthrowing of the dictator Ben Ali replaced by a new born republic and democratic constitution, there might be interesting gaps to find between democratic discourses from both parts. Indeed, while this new constitution has been settled, how would the Tunisians view the settlement of their new democratic institutions supported by the EU, while they stood up for themselves during the Arab Spring? Will the presence of such institutions and programs confirm the existence of an authentic democracy in Tunisia? Two different layers of discourse will be observed in this thesis: the official discourse, from the EU and the Tunisian government and the civil society's discourses. Positive and negative concepts, words, as well as the repetition of expressions will be observed in those discourses, as Chaban and Holland did. Theories and criteria of other thinkers and authors will be used to develop this methodology and will be described in the following paragraphs.

While institutions and administration allow for the construction of a skeleton of a modern democracy civil society is the "flesh" enabling it to give democracy consistency. The EU has indeed set up various civil society development programs, but how can we verify if this civil society substance is genuine? To give some guidance and tools to observe, the concepts and ideas of thinkers such as Habermas, Foucault and Dahl, will be used to dissect the democratic discourses and extract the democratic substance in the EU-Tunisian relationship. The method will therefore be done through a cross-cutting analysis where concepts of democratic ideal and its underlying principles, as enunciated by those thinkers above, will be used as instruments to observe the official and civil society discourses. The timeframe of this analysis will be limited to the most recent events: from the beginning of the new constitution and elections in 2014, after the revolution in 2010-2011, until the present day.

The discourses will be observed through official documents of the EU and from the Tunisian government: agreements, constitution, diplomatic discourses and democracy promotion (videos and imagery). The second part of the observation will consider the civil society layer including NGOs, media, political debates and blogs from citizens (written online, videos and imagery). The research's aim is to be qualitative and will analyze limited amount of products contents in order to discover a possible gap between democratic promotion discourses and local outcomes. This will enable to get a different angle and perspective on the meanings of democracy. However, this analysis will not give a homogeneous view or answer on the EU's democratic process in Tunisia, because of the limitation of length, but also because a more classical policy analysis has voluntarily been left aside. An analysis based on discourses aims to understand the underlying and invisible power that a classical policy analysis would not be able to do.

The aim of the study is to open up to new ways of seeing the possible gap existing between the EU democracy promotion and its actual implementation that may the democratic principles meanings to form an aggregate which diffuses a new meaning, and consequently underlying the power and knowledge, normalizing power that Foucault describes. The aims of this study are to raise questions when it comes to the discourses of EU's democracy in the context of a democratic principle implementation, in order to observe the possible discrepancy of the actual democratic performance. However, it will not provide a definitive answer and solution to the EU's democratic implementation in Tunisia, as well as the Tunisian case it will not reflect rigorously on how the EU's democracy promotion discourses are changing in other

countries. The goal of this research is to observe the transformation of the meaning of democracy, in order to open up doors to new insights about this concept, but will remain limited in time and space.

4.2. Method for Discourse Analysis

∞ Discourse and Power

"Discourse is the social and cognitive process that reflects, shapes, re-creates, and reifies meaning in the life world" (Strauss, 2013: p. 1). Language is the tool we use to communicate and to understand each other within various social groups, from the familial circle to a whole community. However it is the discourse behind the language that creates meaning, and consequently makes sense of underlying layers of power. The use of specific words and the way these words are conveyed, visually or said in a certain tone, the environment and many other imperceptible components, create what is called a "discourse" bringing invisible power to our language (Strauss, 2013: pp. 2-3). Discourse creates a "productive force" where subjects and agents are interacting with each other creating new meanings which consequently develop and transform our social world. Behind discourse, social struggles and conflicts are made invisible; however, they do involve power struggle and can reveal, when we dissect it, the divisions between social groups. Discourses may therefore reproduce ideologies that are reinforcing those inequalities between social powers (qtd in Whinter, 2002: p. 63). Finally, the practice of certain types of discourses reveal identities, values, relations, and ideas (qtd in Whinter, 2002: pp. 66-67). Discourse analysis will therefore allow this research to grasp the various perspectives of democracy.

∞ Conceptualization of Democracy

Abstract nouns in the discourse are different from concrete nouns, because they embody larger concepts, including certain types of ideologies and beliefs (Strauss, 2013: p. 18). The word democracy can be considered as abstract because it includes a conceptualized idea that can convey different meanings and be expressed in different forms, transforming its own meaning through time. In this thesis, the word democracy as promoted by the EU in Tunisia will be analyzed through a range of material divided into two categories: official and

unofficial (civil society). This material will later be connected to the concepts of several thinkers of authors and analyzed allowing the discourses to be analyzed with practical instruments.

↻ First Layer of Observation: Official Discourses

The first category will consider the meanings surrounding democracy in official discourses that is in the EU's agreements with Tunisia, as well as the various democratic tools embodying it. The legal framework will be taken into account, including the repetition of specific words and the use of abstract nouns contained in the democratic conceptualization of the EU. When it comes to democracy promotion, the visual aspect will also be observed as videos and images will be used as material.

↻ Second Layer of Observation: Civil Society Discourses

The second category relates to the civil society's discourses. Within the civil society, Tunisian and Western media, independent from the EU's institutions or the Tunisian government, will be analyzed. Political debates and discussions within the journalistic field will be monitored. The last layer of civil society that will be observed relates to the social media, and in particular, blogs from Tunisian citizens. Taking into consideration this area seem interesting when it comes to the Tunisian case, but also because of the growth of those modern public spheres where people feel more free to express their opinions.

↻ Provenance, Audience, Environment

Before observing those layers of discourses, the source of the material, the targeted audience, as well as the visual or audio environment will be analyzed. Indeed, within a relevant discourse analysis, all the various components, surroundings and actors involved are indispensable to get a broad picture and to understand how discourse has to be dissected (Strauss, 2013: p. 51). This will involve, for instance, the socio-political framework of the text, or the video, the position of the speaker and of the listener-reader-watcher, as well as the journalist ideologies, or any type of state or corporate pressure that would orientate and

influence the discourse. Provenance, audience and environment will be checked and scanned throughout the material.

☞ Freedom of Speech and "Parrhesia"

"Parrhesia" is translated into English as "free speech" (Foucault, 1999). Indeed, one explanation of "parrhesia" can be linked to freedom of expression. However, the meaning of "parrhesia" has evolved through time and was even considered as dangerous for democracy for Plato. However, this form of "parrhesia" had a different meaning involving "whatever one has in mind", and for Plato, a good democracy meant good representations and brilliant minds to sustain it (Foucault, 1999). However, there is another angle when observing this word, which implies "telling the truth" from a positive angle (Foucault, 1999). If we take this version of the word "parrhesia", it involves first and foremost risk-taking for the speaker that is, speaking with honesty while being aware of the dangers involved in telling this truth (Foucault, 1983). Consequently, referring to "parrhesia" involves a relationship between two actors: the speaker and the listener. Furthermore, "parrhesia" involves authenticity, which means that the speaker expresses exactly what he believes: his thought is expressed accordingly to his speech and there is no discrepancy between them (Foucault, 1999).

The concept of "parrhesia" will be interesting to use when it comes to defining democracy in the EU's framework in relation the democratic development of Tunisia. In our Western modern societies, freedom of speech and expression are highly valued and seem to be naturally inseparable from democratic principles. According to Foucault, "parrhesia", however, cannot be used in an environment where obedience and authority exist, which could in our case reveal a possible ambiguity in the modern democratic implementation of the EU, based on rules and norms to be followed (Foucault, 1999; Foucault, 1983).

The concept of "parrhesia" and freedom of speech, as Foucault depicts will be analyzed in the material from official and unofficial sources.

☞ Dahl and Criteria for the Democratic Ideal

An efficient democracy in our modern states mostly correspond to the model of the "large-scale democracy" that require the requested institutional tools to be able to function correctly

(Dahl, 1998). These political institutions in a democratic country implies: representatives, that is elected officials; free, fair and frequent elections; freedom of expression; access to alternative and independent source of information; autonomous association; and inclusive citizenship (Dahl, 1998).

Four criteria are needed according to Dahl to allow an “ideal” democracy: everyone should be able to participate and to express their opinions in policy-making, everyone should be able to vote, everyone should be informed (the proposals and the existing alternatives), everyone should have the opportunity to choose the importance of the proposals on the agenda. While those criteria are clearly impossible to reach completely, according to Dahl they are a good indicators to judge the democratic quality (1998).

These criteria will be observed in legal agreements binding the EU and Tunisia, as well as in the civil society layer.

☞ A Public Sphere for Democracy

According to Habermas, public spheres are spaces where people can interact, communicate and discuss common interests with the aim of reaching consensus. Consequently those spaces, whether physical or virtual allow the creation of norms and rules in society (Habermas, 1964: pp. 49-55). According to Delanty, public spheres do not have to exist physically. In the EU's case, these public spheres were developed toward discourses and culture (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: p. 103). With the development of communicative tools and the massive use of the internet and mass media, modern public spheres are mainly virtual. In this process, journalists, whether professionals or volunteers, appear as essential vectors of information and of public opinion have a different kind of role in our modern age according to Habermas (1964, pp. 52-54). While he deplores the arrival of private interests and mass media, who have limited the freedom of political expression, the rise of digital media gives a more optimistic perspective (Habermas, 1964: pp. 52-54). Indeed, the development of new channels have developed access to free information found in various place such as online newspapers, videos or blogs. Besides, these new public spheres give the opportunity to people to create their own independent public spheres, enabling a wider range of choice for the reader, but also develop independent and participative journalism. In the Tunisian case, political discussion develop in public spheres where journalistic activities can origin from professional journalists,

but also from Tunisian citizens in participative blogs where everyone is able to use "parrhesia" and to speak his own truth. However, does the EU provide the public spheres necessary for the development of an authentic democracy in Tunisia?

5. Data and Analysis

Among the material used, key-words and expressions will be highlighted in bold and italics in order to catch the recurrent expressions and to connect them to the concepts of democracy listed above. The non-verbal messages will also be taken into account, as well as the words and expressions that are *not* said.

V.I Discourse Analysis on Official Discourses

⌘ Legal Material:

EUROMED - Barcelona Process

The EUROMED, signed in 1995 (former Barcelona Declaration) is the partnership binding the EU to Southern Mediterranean countries, including Tunisia sets the conditionalities required to receive more financial support: the "more for more" principle. If Tunisia makes significant effort to reform and to attain democracy, it will receive more (Eeas.europa.eu, 2015). The ENP, the other agreement through which Tunisia is tied to the EU was reassessed in 2010-2011 stressing the need for democratic observance (Eeas.europa.eu, 2015). The role of civil society was also highlighted and added, described as the indispensable foundation that would enable a genuine and consistent democratic development (Eeas.europa.eu, 2015; Euro-Mediterranean Agreement, 1998). The Barcelona Process sets the framework of the principles included in the EUROMED. If we follow Dahl's criteria, Foucault's parrhesia and Habermas public sphere, these aspects seem to appear in the agreements. Indeed, EUROMED and the Barcelona Declaration, seem to align with those indispensable requirements needed to reach an ideal democracy through an emphasis on a "*deep and sustainable democracy*", the "*respect the equal rights of peoples*", as well as toward the settlement of "*free and fair elections, freedom of expression, of assembly and of association, judicial independence,*

fight against corruption and democratic control over the armed forces". A paragraph is also dedicated to civil society and youth: *"Youth exchanges should be the means to prepare future generations for a closer cooperation between the Euro-Mediterranean partners (...)based on experience acquired in Europe"* and Exchanges between Civil Societies: *"Senior officials will meet periodically to discuss measures likely to facilitate human exchanges resulting from the Euro Mediterranean partnership, especially those involving officials, scientists, academics, businessmen, students and sportsmen, including the improvement and simplification of administrative procedures"*, as well as social development and employment: *"in particular of women"* (Barcelona declaration, 1995). The roles of women, sportsmen, officials, as well as the academic, economic and scientific community seem to embody a wide range of actors needed for the development of civil society.

However, the length dedicated to civil society and democracy appears as less detailed as the long paragraphs concerning the free trade area project, as well as business-related and economic aspects (Barcelona declaration, 1995; Euro-Mediterranean Agreement, 1998). Specific expressions have been highlighted, such as *"based on experience acquired in Europe"*, which could imply that the EU would behave as a role-model and provider of good norms when it comes to youth education on democracy and civil society (Barcelona declaration, 1995; Euro-Mediterranean Agreement, 1998)

☞ Tunisian Constitution

In comparison, the Tunisian Constitution launched on the 27th January 2014 favors religious symbolism at the beginning of the text, instead of the democratic basis set by the EUROMED in the beginning of the Barcelona Process. *"In the name of God (...) in order to realize the goals of the Revolution of liberty and dignity (...) devoted Tunisians have shed blood (...) sacrificed (...) fighting against oppression, corruption, injustice (...) for the republican regime and democratic (...) Islam and tolerance"* (Legislation-securite.tn, 2014). It is important to note that accessing the Constitution was inconvenient as it was not available on the Tunisian government website and was found toward a website.

☞ Discourse Analysis on the EUROMED and the Tunisian Constitution

The EUROMED and the Barcelona Process advocate a "deep and sustainable democracy", "respect the equal rights of peoples", "free and fair elections, freedom of expression, of assembly and of association, judicial independence", as well as the "fight against corruption and democratic control over the armed forces", "human discussion" and the involvement of "scientists, academics, businessmen, students and sportsmen" and "women" (1995; 1998). These claims comply with Dahl's criteria for an ideal democracy, allowing everyone to participate and the settlement of appropriate institutional tools to reach democratic elections, as well as the development of Habermas public spheres to discuss and communicate, while highlighting freedom of expression (1998; 1964). However, the process of parrhesia, speaking the truth as Foucault claims appears complex in an institutional system where power is diffuse (1999; 1983). The EUROMED uses the EU framework to assess democracy but does not mention the Tunisian perspective. The program is based on "experience acquired in Europe" (1995) therefore implies that the EU presents itself as an example for the Tunisian community, which confirms Foucault's claims on the normalization process.

In comparison, the Tunisian Constitution uses more religious symbolism, with the use of the word "God", "Islam", and "tolerance" showing the inherent presence and importance of religious figure that could be related to the collective Tunisian culture, or to the political ties to religious parties in the government (Legislation-securite.tn, 2014). Words relating to democratic values are also cited, such as "liberty", "democratic regime", and "republic"; however, expressions such as "blood", "sacrifice", and "injustice" seem to indicate a certain intensity compared to the diplomatic discourse of the EUROMED (Legislation-securite.tn, 2014).

☞ Democracy Promotion:

EIDHR: European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights

The EIDHR was launched in 2006 with a budget of 157 million € per year approximately including electoral observation. Goals are to develop respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in conflict zones toward the development of the civil society's role and the promotion of human rights and democratic reform (Eidhr.eu, 2015). Words and expressions related to the concepts of democracy are the following: "**peaceful conciliation** (...) **political participation and representation**" by following the "**EU guidelines**", and with

"*dialogue on human rights (...) justice (...) rule of law (...) promotion of democracy*". Meanwhile, "*transparency of democratic electoral process*" though monitoring is promoted, as well as the fights against torture, support to **children and women** (Eidhr.eu, 2015).

The website's layout includes **EU symbols** and pictures of what represents **tribes** (African, Indian, Maghreb and probably Southern American). Three "eyes" are drawn, one Asian, one Caucasian and another African, promoting "*Equal in rights worldwide*". There is a map representing the world and the EIDHR projects worldwide, titled as the "*Vibrant civil society worldwide*". Tunisia is part is one of the lowest on the scale, having where 1 to 4 projects running ("Vibrant Civil Society Worldwide", 2015). On the "FAQ" section, a cartoon represents **multicultural** people voting. A woman wearing the veil says joyfully to the man wearing a turban, waiting in the line and accompanied by a smiling child: "It's the first time in my life". Behind them an Asian man and a man from an African tribe wait patiently. Behind the voting desk, a man dressed up as a **military** officer sits **under the surveillance of a guard representing the EU**: a cheerful young blond woman wearing a t-shirt with the EU symbolic stars (Eidhr.eu, 2015).

EED: European Endowment for Democracy

The EED is an "*independent*" grant giving institutions the supports for local actors in order to develop democratic change "*in the EU Neighborhood and beyond*". Seventeen members including Germany, Switzerland, and the EU as a whole are part of this granting project allowing rural areas to be developed in Tunisia for instance and involving **young people** and high school students in **activism** (Democracyendowment.eu, 2015).

EPD: European Partnership for Democracy

The EPD is depicted as "*an independent*" European non-profit organization that supports democratic development outside the European Union and supports democratic assistance toward the "*exchange of knowledge and practice*" of various policies such as political parties, elections, leadership or human rights. Two programs are currently established in Tunisia such as the PASC ("Programme d'Appui à la Société Civile" meaning **Civil Society's Program Support**). The layout of the website represents people in cartoons who are for

instance blowing bubbles where lamps appear, to represent **ideas**. Another cartoon represents people **building together** walls by putting together big colorful blocks where Arabic inscriptions are written. They seem to play as **children** would, except that they are building the foundations of democracy and civil society (PASC Tunisie, 2015).

Anticor: Tunisian website fighting corruption

This website describes itself as a place of "*transparency*" where "*civil society* (...) *exchange* (...) *listening*" and "*surveillance*" are mentioned. The word "*bridge*" is used to depict the actors involved in the fight against corruption where citizens are encouraged to use online interaction and to denunciate actions that would go against the "*the rule of law*". However, the last posts are from 2013 (Anticor Tunisie, 2015).

Discourse Analysis of EIDHR, EED, EPD and Anticor

The EIDHR promotes democracy and aims to support Tunisia by bringing "peaceful reconciliation", "political participation and representation", "justice", "transparency of democratic electoral process" toward a "dialogue" (Eidhr.eu, 2015). Symbols of the website include multicultural representations of people implying their openness to the world and to people from all backgrounds, including children (Eidhr.eu, 2015). However, the "EU guidelines" are to be followed and the cartoon of a cheerful young blond woman to represent the EU keeping an attentive eye on elections communicates a message where the EU acts as a caring and benevolent parent (Eidhr.eu, 2015). Meanwhile, the EED describes itself as "independent" giving the impression that no political organization is involved, whereas the EU finances the projects, accompanied by other member-states and non member states such as Switzerland. There is an emphasis on young people and the word "activism" which implies political involvement; therefore brings an ambiguous discourse (Democracyendowment.eu, 2015). Finally the EPD reiterates the use of "independent" to depict itself, while supporting the "exchange of knowledge and practice" in civil society which contrast with the discourse on following "EU guidelines" that supposes a certain ascendance from the EU (PASC Tunisie, 2015). The use of child-like cartoons to explain democracy to the countries involved gives a simplified idea of democracy, while being able to reach a wide range of people,

notably young people (PASC Tunisie, 2015). Finally, while Anticor highlights "transparency" and "civil society", "exchange" and "listening", the word "surveillance" to fight corruption confers a threatening tone to the discourse (Anticor Tunisie, 2015).

∞ Videos:

Video of Federica Mogherini High Representative

Federica Mogherini is a significant figure and symbol when it comes to the EU's global position. Since the creation of the CSFP, the position of HR has allowed the EU to speak for the member states in a more homogenous manner with regard to EU's foreign policy. Because she is the spokesman or spokeswoman of the EU in foreign affairs, observing her speech seemed relevant to grasp one aspect of the EU's discourse.

This video titled, "Towards a new European Neighbourhood Policy: the EU launches a consultation on the future of its relations with neighbouring countries", was released on the 4th of March 2015, and relates to the future of the ENP. The first layer analyzed in this video is the "formal" language related to democracy. Words such as "**democracy**" and "**human rights**" are uttered by Federica Mogherini in the beginning. She maintains that these neighboring partners should: "**choose their own way forward**" to attain democracy. However, the discourse takes a different turn when she addresses the "**security**" and "**threat**" issues, relating most probably to terrorist attacks or irregular immigration. However, she does not mention any particular case but the Ukrainian issue, in a very vague manner using metaphors instead. She claims that the "**door of European cooperation will always be open**", but her facial expression and her voice tone take a more serious note when she firmly states: "**you have to respect international law and international principles to be seen as a real international partner and player**". Who she is talking to when saying "**you**" remains vague, even though she briefly mentions Crimea which needs to be; "**respectful to the principles**" (© European Union, 2015).

Video of Malika Benarab-Attou

Jim Gibbson, a European journalist and media consultant interviews Malika Benarab-Attou, member of the Green party (Maghreb delegation - Group of the Greens - European Free

Alliance) in 2011. This video was posted on the EU Neighborhood Info Centre. The journalist has reported on the Tunisian revolution in various media such as Euronews, Deutsche Welle, or CNN. He also specializes in media training (how to respond to interviews and how to be an interviewee in politics) (www.wallaceit.co.uk, 2015).

Her interviewee is asked to give her opinion on the recent "Jasmin revolution" 2011. She describes the revolution as a "**democratic revolution**" where the "**EU stands beside Tunisia**". According to her the national army is "*with people and supports people*", while "some others will support Ben Ali". She explains that the fundamentalist movement developed because of a "**blocked**" political system. A "**dream coming to reality**" for Tunisia concludes the interview (Europarltv.eu, 2011).

Discourse Analysis on Federica Mogherini and Malika Benarab-Attou Speeches

The speech given by Federica Mogherini on the Euro-Mediterranean cooperation creates a tension, a certain elusiveness and an ambiguity. While the words "democracy" and "human rights" are pronounced, "security" and "threat" are stressed. While the frontiers of the EU are described as a cooperative door, they are also a "doorstep" that one cannot cross without respecting international law and international (© European Union, 2015). She seems to refer here to the Ukrainian case and Crimea; however, she does not go into further details on this point. This brings mystery to her discourse, which also could be interpreted as a warning to non-EU countries who may attempt to threaten the EU, or cross its borders irregularly (© European Union, 2015).

Malika Benarab-Atto, by contrast, describes the EU-Tunisian relationship as a friendship, using the expression, "the EU stands beside Tunisia" (Europarltv.eu, 2011). While she denounces the "blocked" political system, she compares the Tunisian revolution to a "dream coming to reality" (Europarltv.eu, 2011).

*Educational Videos from the European Neighborhood Info Centre on
Elections and Democracy*

The first video explains the philosophy behind the "more for more" program. As stated in the video: **"the countries who will do more will receive more!"**. Along the video, explaining the principle of this financial support dedicated to the civil society's development in Tunisia, youth programs and EU exchange programs are promoted. In the background images of **workers, scientists, schools and customs** appear while a rock and **young** music brings **dynamism** to the discourse (ENPI video, 2014).

The second video explains the Dawrak project organized by the Anna Lindh foundation. This video of one minute is in Arabic language and uses cartoons. Civil society and democracy are depicted in a simplified manner, with expressions such as **"duties to be carried out by every citizen"** and **"active participation"**. The metaphor of a basket ball game is used: **"life is a game (...) everyone has to play and participate (..) and shall not watch the game silently (...) we all have to know the rules (..) and thanks to the players, we can solve many problems"**. The country will experience a **"renaissance"** through **"youth participation"**. The music is a guitar ballade played gently (ENPI video, 2014)

The third video uses the example of a family to explain democratic changes: **"alone one cannot make a family"**, while the **"rights and duties"** of every member of the family are highlighted. The video concludes: **"that's citizenship (...) because homeland is the big family"** (DAWRAK Programme - Citizens For Dialogue, 2014).

Discourse Analysis on Educational Videos

The EU's educational videos above seem to be addressed to young people from Arabic countries and use simplified imagery, cartoons and symbols such as family and the basket-ball game to explain democracy and civic participation. Words such as "duties", "rules" and "rights" are cited and give a certain authoritative but benevolent and parental figure to the EU, as stated previously (ENPI video, 2014; DAWRAK Programme - Citizens For Dialogue, 2014).

Preliminary Conclusion on the Official Discourses Layers

The EU often describes itself through such discourses as a parental figure; caring, gentle, but also controlling and commanding through the settlement of rules and obligations that are promoting some hope for a better society. By contrast, Tunisia uses democratic terms as well, but the Constitution seems to bring together religious symbol as well as strong symbols of fight and dignity through sacrifice. Finally, it is interesting to compare websites advocating for Tunisia democracy, which much differ whether they are produced in Tunisia or in the EU. It seems that the EU outbalances Tunisia regarding the amount of official websites where information can be found.

5.2. Discourse Analysis on Civil Society

🔗 Videos:

Interview of Vincent Geisser

Vincent Geisser, political scientist and researcher, focuses on subjects related to immigration, Islamophobia and, as he calls it, "**democratic authoritarianism**" or "**authoritarian democracy**", with a focus on Tunisia (WFAFW, 2015). "Le Courrier de l'Atlas" from where the video is released is a media depicting itself as the provider of news from Maghreb to Europe, and approaches a wide range of themes, mainly related to society and political life. The audience would probably concern the Maghreb population living in Europe, wishing to get an in-depth information, going further than the regular everyday news (Lecourrierdelatlas.com, 2015).

In this interview from October 14th, 2014 the interviewer asks the journalist how he could explain the Tunisian people's lack of enthusiasm for the elections. In his talk, Vincent Geisser speaks very thoroughly about the Tunisian case, using metaphors and expressive faces. The background of the video shows; the busy tunisian streets, bringing liveliness and authenticity to his speech. His informal clothing and lively expression both make him convincing (Lecourrierdelatlas.com, 2015).

According to him the presence of former politicians involved with Ben Ali in the present Tunisia impeded Tunisians to feel trustful toward their new government. As he claims, the previous regime is still present, the "**same software**" runs in Tunisian politics. As he says, "**officially the constitution is parliamentary but in people's minds, in their behavior, their representation, they feel imprisoned in the personal power syndrome**". He points out the "**political responsibility**", as well as the "**democratic pedagogic deficit**" that leads to "**distance from the people, resignation, indifference and abstention**". To him "**media is responsible**". Despite the development of the media, there is a "**reproduction of the Ben Ali period**". He finally concludes using the word "**masquerade**" to depict these newly Tunisian elections described as a "**voluntary mistake (...)** **institutions are not taken seriously**", and, "**young people are not used**" (Lecourrierdelatlas.com, 2015).

Tunisian Political Discussion with Mohamed Sahbi Basly

This video was released on March 17th, 2014 and begins with powerful pictures depicting the history of the Tunisian revolution toward a timeline. Mohamed Bouazizi who immolated himself on December 17th, 2010 is cited while cartoony designs of protesters are shown in the background. Afterwards, on January 14th, 2011, the overthrown of the dictator Ben Ali, is depicted in the shape of military people, following January 26th, 2014 when the first elections under "the first democratic constitution in the Arab world", as the video says, appears with hands pointing the sky freely (OummaTV, 2014).

The political discussion is led by Tawfik Mathlouthi, an activist and journalist in France and Tunisia. He is facing Mohamed Sahbi Basly, the founder and president of the party Al-Mustakbal (meaning "the party of the future"), a liberal centrist party created on March 9th, 2011 (Yahmed, 2015). Oumma TV is a broadcaster describing itself as the "TV of the Muslims residing in France" (OummaTV, 2015). During the discussion, several statements are made when it comes to the Tunisian government such as: "**people don't believe in politicians anymore**", the "**lack of transparency**", and the theme of regional differences between Tunisian regions is addressed (OummaTV, 2015).

Discourse Analysis on Interview and Political Debate

Vincent Geisser, the journalist who denounces "democratic authoritarianism" and "authoritarian democracy" described the Tunisian citizens as being in the "same software" as during Ben Ali's dictatorship, while representing them as "imprisoned in the personal power syndrome" existing in the political government (WAFAW, 2015; Lecourrierdelatlas.com, 2015). He depicts the population as "distanced", "resigned" and "indifferent", while blaming the media for worsening the political situation (Lecourrierdelatlas.com, 2015). He compared these new elections to a "masquerade" (Lecourrierdelatlas.com, 2015). Mohamed Sahbi Basly in the political debate gives a similar picture of the Tunisian politics, blaming the lack of transparency, and mistrust for the politicians (OummaTV, 2015).

☞ NGOs:

Human Rights Watch and Reporters Without Borders

Analyzing the discourse of NGOs seemed important because they are most of the time the whistle blowers enabling to spread information that could remain hidden from the public and citizens. Through their advanced research and investigations on breaches of international law and through the diffusion of covert information, they can act as warning signals for the society and gather the rest of the civil society ; people, journalists, activists. Their participation on the international arena acts as a leverage that pushes government and larger international organizations; such as the United Nations, to act and align to standards with regard to human rights or freedom of expression. Consequently, their legitimacy on the international stage plays a major role. Two renowned NGOs will be analyzed with regard to their discourse: Human Rights Watch and Reporters without Borders.

On their website, HRW denounces the threats and danger experienced by Tunisian journalists and activists, even under the new Tunisian democratic Constitution: *"the Tunisian Constitution could criminalize the conduct of journalists, whistleblowers, human rights defenders, and others who criticize the police, and would allow security forces to use deadly force when it is not strictly necessary to protect lives (...) surviving repressive provisions in*

*the press and penal codes are still used at times in political trials and reforms to create an independent judiciary are **moving too slowly**" (Hrw.org, 2015).*

On the RWB's website, the new Tunisian constitution is also reviewed and criticized for its ambiguous statements. In the Constitution, as RWB states: " *Article 6, on religion, guarantees freedom of conscience...**ban on blasphemy**' as a **restriction of freedom of expression that is unacceptable under international standards** ". RWB depicts itself as "**very disappointed**" and "**disturbed**" by the adoption of this provision which, as they claim: "*sets the constitution above Tunisia's international obligations*". Article 31 of the Tunisian constitution on freedom of expression is also dissected: ' *The freedoms of opinion, thought expression, information and publication are guaranteed. These freedoms may not be subjected to prior control.* ', but **freedom of expression should have been set at the basis of other rights not just fundamental rights**". RWB find it, "**worrying that 'public morals' are included in the interests that need protecting and could therefore restrict freedoms** (En.rsf.org, 2014).*

On freedom of speech and expression, RWB also deplores its insufficient definition in the Constitution that allows the new judicial authority to regulate the entire media: "*Even if regulation is required in the radio and television sectors, a body with jurisdiction over the entire media sector is **extremely dangerous and pointless**" (En.rsf.org, 2013). This analysis was addressed to the French President, François Hollande, when he was meeting Moncef Marzouki, the Tunisian president in 2013 to discuss the draft of the Tunisian constitution (En.rsf.org, 2013).*

Discourse Analysis on HRW and RWB

HRW's discourse regarding the Tunisian case uses strong and powerful words which are aimed to catch the attention. The Tunisian state is accused to "criminalize the conduct of journalists" and to use "deadly force", using "repressive provisions" (Hrw.org, 2015). Meanwhile, the reforms expected to create independent judiciary are "moving too slowly" (Hrw.org, 2015). On the other hand, RWB uses a similar language that could also resemble the EU's parental language and the use of norms and rules to support the argumentation. RWB says that the ban on blasphemy is a restriction of freedom of expression that is "unacceptable", under "international standards" (En.rsf.org, 2014). The use of words such as

"worrying", "extremely dangerous" and "pointless" add an emotional layer to the discourse catching the reader's attention (En.rs.f.org, 2014; En.rs.f.org, 2013).

✎ Blogs

Nawat and Blog Débat Tunisie

Nowadays, with the growth and development of communication and internet, revolutions can start on social media and through Facebook leading populations to the streets, as it was the case in the Arab Spring where populations encouraged each other to rebel against authoritarian regimes. Without the existence of those communication tools, would these phenomena happen? In Tunisia, blogs launched by Tunisian citizens seem to develop and to play a major role within the Tunisian population by creating a space where thoughts, opinions and discussions about politics can be expressed freely.

Nawat, meaning the "Core" is a collective blog which became an official NGO after the revolution. It was launched in 2004 and managed by Tunisians. It is claimed to be independent and not financed by private or public organizations, though it has partnerships and has been rewarded by RWB. Nawat also organizes trainings for people and citizens who want to become benevolent journalists and are willing to get their hands on technical tools required for broadcasting or recording (Nawaat, 2015).

The blog is written in a very elaborate way, using irony and sarcasm to criticize politics, local politicians, or international actors. One article sharply criticizes the attitude of Béji Caïd Essebsi, current Tunisian president, who is interviewed on the Tunisian television. The president is depicted by the blogger as a president who tries to **remain authoritarian and austere to hide his exhaustion and absence**. When asked about the economic crisis in Southern Tunisia, depicted as **"explosive"** by the blogger, the president seems **"annoyed"** and changes the subject. The blogger writes: **"Digression is apparently symptomatic in a right wing politic with 'securitarist priorities'".** As he states, the president is **"threatening"** people who might throw a second revolution, the **"hunger one"**, replying, **"You are dreaming, I am telling you! (...) the law will apply firmly!"**. The president is criticized for **"citing the Coran to justify his politics"** that are **"clearly right wing"** according to the author (Soudani, 2015).

Another article denounces the EUROMED described as an unequal partnership used by the EU to close the European borders to Tunisians, while taking advantage of the financial benefits of the economic liberalization. The article uses the term "*European diktat*" and criticizes the EU which seems to use "*all its weight to have a cake and eat it too*" wanting to install a "*wild liberalism* (...) *without considering the humans, their claims*". The article concludes by saying that the EU wants to "*get rid of the heavy Southern migratory countries case*" calling for the Tunisian diplomacy to negotiate a "*real partnership instead of the trickery proposed by the EU*" (Othman, 2015).

The blog Débat Tunisie is another blog that has been chosen because of the explicit caricatural cartoons that are published and mocking the Tunisian politicians and politics.

One article released in December 2014, depicts in a sarcastic manner the Tunisian political situation similar to a "*generalized cancer*". The author aims to "*conduct the autopsy*" of the Tunisian society that is, according to him, not only the responsibility of the authorities and politicians, but also relates to the general "*broken Tunisia*" where basically two Tunisia are in conflict: one rural and conservative in the lands, and a liberal and modern one on the coast. The article is illustrated by a drawing representing the Tunisian president with his body cut in half transversally. His "human" part has a monkey face and wears a costume, while his other half makes his skeleton visible where we can see a sort of hairy monster hiding in his shell and stomach. In the intestine, there are small people, representing an extremist, an intellectual or academic, and a criminal (Debatunisie.com, 2014).

Discourse Analysis on Nawat and Blog Débat Tunisie

In both blogs, the language used to describe the Tunisian government and the EU's development policy are satiric and narrated in a humorous manner, while giving strong opinions about the political life. The writers are mainly Tunisian citizens who are not anonymous. When they speak about the Tunisian president and politicians, the words "authoritarian", "austere", "right-wing", "securitarist", while the EU is depicted as almost dictatorial, bringing a "wild liberalism" (Soudani, 2015; Othman, 2015). Meanwhile, the word "trickery" is used to describe the EUROMED partnership settled by the EU (Othman, 2015). The economic crisis in Tunisia is depicted as "explosive" and the metaphor of a "generalized

cancer" to illustrate the socio-political situation of Tunisia (Soudani, 2015; Debatunisie.com, 2014).

Preliminary Conclusion on the Civil Society's Discourses Layers

The civil society's layers observed in this part are embedding journalists, NGOs and blogs. The language and discourse used to describe the Tunisian situation and the EU's role appear rather pessimistic, dark and sharp: "democratic authoritarianism", "deadly force", "repressive", "authoritarian", "austere", "right-wing" and "securitariat" amongst the words used to depict Tunisia (WAFAW, 2015; Lecourrierdelatlas.com, 2015; Hrw.org, 2015; Soudani, 2015; Othman, 2015). Meanwhile the EU is depicted as a dictatorial, lying and selfish actor, bringing "wild liberalism" and organizing "trickery" (Soudani, 2015; Othman, 2015).

The economic crisis in Tunisia is depicted as "explosive" and the metaphor of a "generalized cancer" is used to illustrate the socio-political situation of Tunisia, while Tunisian elections are a "masquerade" (Soudani, 2015; Debatunisie.com, 2014; Lecourrierdelatlas.com, 2015)

The Tunisian people and citizens are described as being "imprisoned", "distanced", "resigned" and "indifferent" who no longer trust politicians (Lecourrierdelatlas.com, 2015; OummaTV, 2015).

While the three channels seem to adopt a similar language, both sharp and ironic, there is one exception with the NGOs who are using a more meticulous language, similar to the EU through the use of parental terms and legal terms. Besides, they use an emotional language aiming to catch the reader's attention with words such as "unacceptable", "worrying", "extremely dangerous" or "pointless" standards" (En.rsf.org, 2014; En.rsf.org, 2013).

5.3. Final Analysis: the Substance of Democracy behind the Layers

When we compare the official discourses above to the civil society's discourses, a clear gap in language is observable. Firstly, within the official discourse a common diplomatic language is used to refer to the democratic conceptualization and the other concepts embodied in this.

Words related to equality, sustainability, freedom, civil society, rights, dialogue and transparency appear in diplomat speeches as well as in legal documents from the EU. Tunisia uses similar terms; however, the religious symbolism is very palpable with use of terms related to God, while democracy is connected to terms encompassing loyalty, dignity and sacrifice in comparison to the EU's discourses related to rules and norms (Eur-lex.europa.eu, 2015; Legislation-securite.tn, 2014).

☞ The EU: an Institutionalized Language and a Parental Figure

The EU's language in terms of democracy promotion can therefore appear as "institutionalized" in comparison to the Tunisian language, who seems still associated to loyalty and devotion to the homeland. When looking at the EUROMED and the Tunisian Constitution there are different interpretations of democracy that is revealed, a democracy based on norms and rules for the EU and a democracy based on more general themes, such as familial values, or religious values. This reading alone cannot draw a conclusion on the whole Tunisian society or European society; however, it can open up to a better understanding when it comes to the possible mismatch in the definition of democracy for the Tunisian government and the EU, or it can also reveal the political interests and manipulations hidden in the texts.

The EU, whether toward legal texts or speeches made by representatives, such as Federica Mogherini, uses a parental language as described in Chaban and Holland's study (2011). This parent can be kind and caring through cooperation and support, and it can reward financially in exchange for a good behavior as in the EU-Tunisian partnership. Nevertheless, this parent can also punish, via regulations and passive aggression, for instance by threatening to cut financial aid, or by closing its borders (Eur-lex.europa.eu, 2015).

Foucault's theory on modern normalizing societies is well suited to describe the EU's behavior. Indeed, the EU uses institutions, norms, and rules to develop a power, seen as soft and hardly visible because of its diffused nature, but in reality mighty. As Foucault states, this power is made invisible and as in the Panopticon, the prisoners behave in the right way even when the guard is not there (Foucault, 2000). The development of norms and rules through the institutional mechanism of the EU, as well as its parental behavior go in this direction and can be seen in the ambiguous speech of Federica Mogherini who implies but does not state, and who uses terms related to democracy, openness and security and threat in the same discourse (© European Union, 2015).

☞ The Ideal Democracy and the Civil Society's Democracy

While the EU's legal texts fit Dahl's requirements to reach an ideal democracy by offering equality among people, rights, free and fair elections, freedom of expression, of assembly and of association, judicial independence, fight against corruption (Eur-lex.europa.eu, 2015; Dahl, 1998); ambiguity remains within the Tunisian Constitution in regards to freedom of expression as stated by RWB (Hrw.org, 2015).

If we look at the civil society's discourse, there seem a civil society in Tunisia, developing under cover by themselves, without having a space delivered by the EU's institutions or the Tunisian government. While the EU and Tunisia have worked together to provide programs and spaces to improve the Tunisian civil society, there seem to be a "generalized political cancer" within the Tunisian political life, as the blogger from Debatunisie.com claims that it impedes the Tunisian people to trust the government, let alone the EU (2014). The development of blogs where Tunisian citizens have a space to practice parrhesia, in the foucauldian sense, seems to reveal an authentic democratic substance in comparison to Tunisian and EU's discourses.

The local discourse on the EU and on Tunisian politicians is harsh but sharp, showing a vibrant interest in political life from Tunisian citizens as in the Arab Spring's period. However, the Tunisian situation does not seem to improve when reading the testimonies and economic situation of the country. While there are other factors that may be taken into account in this situation such as the extremist rise, in particular in the neighboring countries, such as Libya; there is an elusiveness and ambiguity in the development of this newly democracy supported by the EU. While the legal texts and democracy promotion tools, videos or work programs advocate exchange, communication, and cooperation; in speeches, the terms security and threat used by the EU diplomats could confirm the hidden self-interest and need for safety in the Fortress Europe, as a realist theory would claim.

☞ Teaching Democracy?

When looking at the discourses on democracy in the EU and in Tunisia, the gap between perceptions of democracy can be seen on the EU level, which has an institutionalized language made of norms and rules, and where the power is diffuse; whereas on the local level, in the Tunisian government, the language of democracy appears as closely connected to familial and religious values.

Nonetheless, the civil society's discourse give a new perspective on the meaning of democracy. As the civil society and freedom of speech, the foucauldian "parrhesia", seem to be the indispensable foundation of democracy, does it fit with a large-scale and institutionalized democracy where communication is dispersed and distanced from the civil society, despite the establishment of standardized norms? And is a standardization, implying control and order, fitting with the precepts of democracy? Furthermore, is there a way to "teach" democracy as the EU seems to do throughout its civil society programs and educational videos, or does democracy come from within?

When looking back at the development of blogs from Tunisian citizens, their eagerness to change their social and economic conditions locally, and their sharp criticism toward the political life, going on inwards, toward the Tunisian government, or outwards, with the EU, there is a clear distance and rebellion developing outside of the governmental and institutional framework. However, it shows that a push for change does exist in the Tunisian society willing to bring a genuine democracy. Does it imply that democracy and the process of "parrhesia" as described by Foucault, is possible only when words are expressed through spaces where authentic truth can be expressed? Do those blogs will be the channels through which the Tunisian citizens will fight for their political freedom?

6. Conclusion

The aims of this research were to observe the democracy promotion processes and layers in the EU's partnership with Tunisia. Toward a discourse analysis based on the normalizing theory of Foucault, and through the conceptualization of the democratic ideal of Dahl, the public sphere of Habermas and the freedom of speech and foucauldian "parrhesia", the layers of democratic discourse have been observed and analyzed.

Two layers of democratic discourses have been investigated: the official layer discourse gathering legal documents, democratic promotion tools and speeches; and the civil society's layer including political debates, NGOs statements and Tunisian blogs.

Through this investigation an institutionalized language was found within the EU's official discourses, while the government of Tunisia's language highlighted familial and religious values. The EU was picturing, in its discourses, texts and democracy promotion videos as a parental figure, caring, rewarding but also punishing toward regulations, norms and rules. The Tunisian democracy depicted by the civil society was harshly criticized and mocked, described the Tunisian government as a democracy in disguise where authority was still palpable. The perception of the EU in the Tunisian civil society was quite negative and depicted as disdainful, hypocrite and self-centered, driven by economic benefits and reluctant to welcome foreigners.

Through this discursive and comparative analysis between these two different layers, the official one and the civil society one, the EU's democracy promotion discourse can be observed as "normalizing". However, a discrepancy was found between the EU's discourse, and the local discourses in Tunisia. The normalizing process of the EU appears ambiguous in regards to the discrepancies found between discourses. The democratic ideal has not yet been reached in Tunisia despite the implementation of democratic institutions and elections. The authentic democratic substance that seems to be left in Tunisia remains in the blogs developed by Tunisian citizens where freedom of speech and open spaces of communication were created.

In conclusion, the substance of democracy left behind the peeled layers of democratic discourses in this study appears diffused and disparate, behind the EU's institutionalized mask. However, if parrhesia and freedom of speech are essential foundations to settle democracy, blogs have proven to be used as an important channel of political debate among the Tunisian citizens giving the hope for a further development and reinforcement of an authentic substance of democracy coming from the Tunisian citizens.

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