

The Arab and Islamic Societies' trends towards
pluralism and freedom,
The diversity of Islamist and post-Islamist
movements in the Arab awakenings.

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Abstract

This paper would look at the flourishing and the diversification of the various political movements that draw inspiration from Islam, with a particular focus on Egypt and Tunisia since the uprisings there.

While much of the media coverage in the West has expressed concern about “Islamists”, any closer examination of Tunisian and Egyptian politics shows that there is significant diversity and variety within so-called “Islamist” movements, particularly in Egypt where a greater number of different political parties have been allowed to register.

I would argue that Asef Bayat's notion of post-Islamism has been proved prescient.

Looking to the future, the paper would contend that the old Islamist-secular split is too reductive an approach and that, particularly for the younger generation, debates about issues such as human rights, economic justice and the role of the military are more central issues, crossing the Islamist-secular divide.