



# Essays on the Revolution in Tunisia

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## Abstract

The Tunisian Revolution and constitutional process constitute the first successful indigenous democratization process in the Arab World. In this article based thesis the historic event is analysed and discussed in relation to the established theories of democratization. The thesis contains four different articles. The first focuses on why the Tunisian Islamists accepted the country's new constitution despite the fact that it contained principles that were in opposition to some of their previous Islamist beliefs. The second centres on the role of the Tunisian General Labor Union. It seeks to explain why the union could play such a crucial role in the revolution and constitutional process despite the fact that its leadership had close connections to the previous regime. The third article looks into how the Tunisian religious sphere changed as a result of the revolution. The fourth article tries to answer why the revolution came to be understood as a conflict between "Islamists" and "secularists" through an analysis of the conflict between the Islamists and the Tunisian General Labor Union. Finally, in the last chapter the state of comparative politics is discussed in relation to the conclusions of the different articles.



**Jury:** Olivier Roy (EUI/RSCAS) (Supervisor), Nadia Marzouki (Harvard/EHESS), Kasper Ly Netterstrøm (candidate), Hanspeter Kriesi (EUI), Malika Zeghal (Harvard) in absentia

### **Bio**

Kasper Ly Netterstrøm is a political scientist with a particular interest in Tunisia and its revolution in 2011. Before joining the EUI, he worked as a journalist for the Danish Broadcasting Corporation and studied political science at University of Copenhagen and Sciences Po Paris. His doctoral work focuses on the constitutional process in Tunisia, especially the role of the Islamist party, the labour unions and the changing relations between the state and the religious sphere. The thesis also speaks to the literature on democratization and comparative politics more broadly.