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The Muslim Brotherhood is an Islamic mass movement whose worldview is based on the belief that “Islam is the solution” and on the stated aim of establishing a world order (a caliphate) based on Islamic religious law (Shariah) on the ruins of Western liberalism. With extensive support networks in Arab countries and, to a lesser extent, in the West, the movement views the recent events in Egypt as a historic opportunity. It strives to take advantage of the democratic process for gradual, non-violent progress towards the establishment of political dominance and the eventual assumption of power in Egypt and other Middle Eastern countries.



Generations of Muslim Brotherhood leaders (clockwise from top left): Hassan al-Banna, the founder; Sayyid Qutb, the philosopher of militant Islam school of thought; Mohammed Badie, the current general guide; Ibrahim al-Hudaybi (of the movement's younger generation), a blogger and grandson of the sixth general guide

Overview

1. **The Muslim Brotherhood (*Jama'at al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin*) was established in Egypt by Hassan al-Banna in the early 20th century.** Later in that century, it became one of the major movements of **political Islam**.
2. **Its worldview, based on the belief that "Islam is the solution" to all individual, social, and political problems, and that Islam is "both a religion and a state", has turned it into a major challenge for the Arab regimes. The movement has also spread to Muslim communities in Europe, often becoming a major source of political and social power.**
3. **The Muslim Brotherhood's success lies in a combination of political and social factors that peaked by the mid-twentieth century: its ideology was perceived as an authentic response to the hegemony of the "Western occupation", winning over a public that had grown tired of other failed ideologies; it managed to take root among the urban educated middle class, which was undergoing a process of Islamization; above all, it developed an extensive socio-economic system (*da'wah*) to be used as a tool in the battle for hearts and minds.**
4. **The Muslim Brotherhood's emphasis in this activity is on addressing the problems of ordinary citizens through extensive social assistance systems, education and health infrastructure, and a network of mosques and preaching.** These have often been a substitute for dysfunctional state institutions **and an effective social network for the spread of the Muslim Brotherhood's religious-political message.**
5. **At its core, the ideology of the Muslim Brotherhood aims to achieve an Islamic revival and establish a global regime based on Islamic religious law (i.e., a caliphate), starting with the removal of Arab regimes in the current "land of Islam" (*dar al-islam*) and ending with the emergence of a caliphate on the wider world scene (*dar al-harb*), on the ruins of the Western liberal world order.**
6. **The Muslim Brotherhood considers the land of Palestine an Islamic endowment (*waqf*), denies Israel's right to exist, and opposes the peace treaties and any compromise with it. It consistently pursues an anti-Semitic line and spreads anti-Semitic ideas, including *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* and the motifs contained therein. At the same time, the movement opposes terrorism, except when it's aimed against "Zionism" and the "occupation" in Iraq, Afghanistan, etc. It strives for a**

gradual realization of its objectives while taking advantage of opportunities as they arise.

7. **Unlike the militant factions of other Islamist movements**, which completely rule out democracy on the basis of it being a Western, pagan, and ignorant idea, **the Muslim Brotherhood does use the term “democracy”**. In its view, however, it has two main connotations: **a tactical, instrumental means of taking over countries** through the use of the democratic process, **and an “Islamic democracy” based on Shari’ah law** (i.e., Islamic religious law) **and a model of internal consultation within the leadership** (*shura*). These views have almost nothing in common with the ideas of liberal democracy (including minority rights, personal freedoms, rule of law, pluralism).

8. **The Muslim Brotherhood is not a uniform movement, consisting also of more moderate, pragmatic factions, some of which have a real desire to integrate Islam with true democratic parliamentarism and political tolerance. In our understanding, however, these factions taken together exert relatively minor influence** compared to the more dogmatic elements in the movement—**at least for the time being.**

9. **Since the time of Gamal Abdel Nasser, the Muslim Brotherhood has been persecuted and suppressed throughout the Arab world** (by some regimes more than others), **and outlawed as well.** Mubarak’s regime considered it its sworn enemy and, in a long struggle, was able to neutralize its power and influence in Egyptian internal politics. This was clearly demonstrated in the latest elections, when the regime was able to practically eliminate the Muslim Brotherhood presence in the People’s Assembly (which, in retrospect, appears to be a Pyrrhic victory, as it undermined the legitimacy of Egypt’s political game).

10. **In recent years, the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt has been plagued by internal ideological and political schisms; faced fundamental questions over its identity; and had difficulties retaining its status as an ideologically attractive option for the younger generation. This has mostly been a result of its conservative leadership’s lack of desire for change, and the competition with other Islamist factions that has eroded the status of the global Muslim Brotherhood movement.** Nevertheless, it is our understanding that it is currently the most organized opposition force in Egypt.

11. **While the movement played no dominant part in the recent Egyptian revolution, it considers it a historical opportunity to increase its political power**

and put itself in a better position to assume power and turn Egypt into an Islamic state. For this purpose, **it intends to participate, for the first time, in the elections to the parliament as a party** ("Freedom and Justice Party"). **At this point, however,** the Muslim Brotherhood proceeds in a gradual approach, **cooperating with other opposition parties and movements** intending to run for the parliament elections, **presenting an ostensibly moderate political line to reduce concerns among the public, the regime, and in the West.** To the extent that circumstances permit, it will attempt to gather momentum and make similar achievements in other Middle Eastern countries.

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Chapter 1: The historical evolution of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt



The Muslim Brotherhood logo depicts a Qur'an flanked by two swords, reflecting its status as the movement's source of authority and ideological foundation. At the bottom is the Arabic word for "prepare," taken from Surat al-Anfal, verse 60: "And prepare against them whatever you are able of power and of steeds of war by which you may terrify the enemy of Allah and your enemy."¹

Overview

1. The Muslim Brotherhood is **the largest religious-social movement in the modern era, and has the largest deployment and greatest influence of all Islamic factions operating among Sunni-Muslim societies in the Middle East and elsewhere.** Its establishment and rise to prominence took place on the backdrop of dramatic regional events, particularly the fall of the Ottoman Empire at the end of World War I and the occupation of Muslim countries by the "infidel" West.
2. **The establishment of the Muslim Brotherhood marked the beginning of the second wave of Islamic activism**—an ideological school of thought seeking to provide an authentic cultural, socio-economic, and political response to the challenges of modernity brought by the West's infiltration into the Middle East, and into Egypt in particular. While the first wave (from the 1880s to the 1920s) was mostly an intellectual-ideological effort,² the second wave (from 1928) transformed that effort into organized political activity and institutionalized social activity. This activity was based mostly on religious preaching ("battle

¹ Sahih International, 8:60.

² Its three most prominent representatives are **Jamal al-Din al-Afghani** (1838-1897), **Muhammad Abduh** (1849-1905), and **Rashid Rida** (1865-1935).

for hearts and minds”) and welfare services for the weaker sectors of society, mainly in urban areas.

3. **The Muslim Brotherhood is a modern phenomenon both in terms of the social fabric of its supporters and leadership, and in terms of its religious worldview,** which follows the ideological line established by the philosophers of the first wave of Islamic activism. Its founders, senior activists, and most members are educated urban people from the middle and low-middle class. While many of them have had some traditional education, **they acquired higher education in modern institutions³** rather than from traditional clerics and preachers or Sufi orders, an inseparable part of popular Islam in Egypt.

4. **Unlike the traditional Islam** espoused by members of the religious establishment, relying on a blind imitation of the Islamic religious-legal tradition (*taqlid*), **the Muslim Brotherhood calls for a return to “original” Islam (Salaf) by reviving the *ijtihad*—an interpretation of religious sources** (the Quran and Prophet Muhammad’s Sunna) **in accordance with the spirit of the time, to turn Islam into a relevant response to current challenges.**

5. Among the factors that facilitated the movement’s growth and, to a significant extent, have remained present during its existence are: **economic distress**—deterioration in the socio-economic situation, a large division between classes in society, a rapid urbanization accompanied by an identity crisis and economic distress as an individual relocates from the countryside to the city, and unemployment among a fast-growing educated middle class; **social factors**—growing Western influence, secularization, presence of colonial forces, followed by a failure of the socialist and pan-Arab ideas promoted by Nasser’s regime; **and the passivity of the religious establishment,** which soon became a provider of religious credence for the regime’s policy.

6. Thanks to its attractive ideological platform and social activity, the movement has become highly popular with the Egyptian public, becoming first an ideological and then a major political opposition to the Egyptian regime.

7. **In the first half of 2011, after the fall of the Mubarak regime, the Muslim Brotherhood entered a new phase in its history.** The movement, previously outlawed, gained legitimacy. Now, for the first time, it intends to run to the parliament as a party named Freedom and Justice, aiming to win half of the seats. For this purpose it has appointed a leadership, it is formulating a political platform, exploring the possibility of

³ For example, Hassan al-Banna and many Muslim Brotherhood leaders at the time were graduates of the modern academic institution Dar al-‘Uloum rather than Al-Azhar University.

extending its support base by jointly running with additional parties, and continues to send appealing messages as to its goals.

Major phases in the movement's evolution up to the fall of the Mubarak regime

8. Over the years, the Muslim Brotherhood has seen changes and developments in its ideology and conduct. These can be divided into several major phases:

a. **The first phase (1928-1954)—the formation of the movement's structure and path, and the establishment of its status in society.**

b. **The second phase (1954-1970)—isolation and conflict with the regime, accompanied by a strong internal division between the radical faction that had evolved in the movement and the pragmatic faction** (the movement's main stream).

c. **The third phase (1970 to early 1990s) - the era of relative political openness on the part of the regime,** the secession of radical factions from the Muslim Brotherhood, and the beginning of its integration into the political system.

d. **The fourth phase (mid-1990s until now)—increased suppression by the regime and internal reflections within the movement over the identity it needs to adopt** (a socio-religious movement and/or a political party), accompanied by repeated internal tensions.

The first phase (1928-1954)—the movement's formation

9. **The Muslim Brotherhood was established by Sheikh Hassan al-Banna in Ismailiyah, in 1928.** Unlike the elitist discourse of the philosophers from the first wave of Islamic activism, **Al-Banna's was a popular message. He addressed the masses** and envisioned a practical goal: **the establishment of a socio-religious movement.** It would be the first step **towards a long-term goal: the liberation of Egypt and the land of Palestine from foreign rule, the establishment of an Islamic rule in Egypt, and then—the reunification of the Muslim nation and the reestablishment of the Islamic caliphate** (abolished in 1924).

10. The movement began as an association for Islamic reform, aiming to serve workers who had emigrated from the countryside to cities in the Suez region, then under British rule. It soon spread to Cairo (in 1932-1934) and, in its second decade, already had an estimated 500 branches and half a million members.

11. The movement was able to rise above similar organizations common in Egypt at the time and become highly popular thanks to **Hassan al-Banna's charisma** and his ability to combine **a religious message addressing the masses,**⁴ i.e., preaching for a return to pure, original Islam, **and the socialist idea, i.e., the development of infrastructure for volunteer-based welfare services for the weaker urban sector of society.** Another unique characteristic of the Muslim Brotherhood was that it bridged between folk customs and cultural traditions on one hand and modern concepts of education and organization on the other.

12. The social service network established by the movement formed the platform for the spread of its ideas, aimed to garner broader social support **to eventually bring the Muslim Brotherhood to power.** The flexibility in membership levels set by Al-Banna⁵ also made it possible to recruit a wide spectrum of members within a short time.

13. In its formative phase, the movement also saw its share of disagreements and internal tensions. Challenges to Al-Banna's leadership were heard as early as in 1932, as well as in 1939, and were accompanied by secessions of activists from the movement.

14. Despite the movement's political aspirations, Hassan al-Banna's original thought **prohibits the movement from taking part in the party system** due to concerns that such integration would lead to its corruption. **The Muslim Brotherhood did avoid doing so early on,** even though the royalist regime imposed no restrictions on it with regard to this issue.

15. **The movement's basic organizational structure emerged in the first decade of its existence. The General Guidance Office was established** (with regional administrative offices and various associations under its control), **and Hassan al-Banna became the first general guide** (the highest position in the Muslim Brotherhood). **A "secret apparatus" (the operative wing) was established alongside the leadership body. The purpose of the "secret apparatus" was to fight the British in Egypt and the Jews in Palestine to liberate Muslim lands.** However, **the existence of the apparatus** likely reflected a deeper understanding within the movement that, **in order to attain power, it would need not only a broad-based social consensus but also actual strength.**

⁴ Unlike the ideologically inflexible Salafi movements of his time, Al-Banna avoided creating a dichotomy between orthodox and Sufi Islam, accepting Muslim believers from various Islamic schools of thought into the Muslim Brotherhood.

⁵ The membership levels at the time were (from the most basic to the highest): associate member, affiliated member, practical member, and mujahid--the highest level, denoting deep financial and spiritual sacrifice for the movement and its principles.

16. The movement's violent activity through the "secret apparatus" began in the 1940s.⁶ It was not aimed against Egyptians, but rather against the British and senior regime officials (taking mainly the form of retaliation for the regime's measures against the movement and its activists).⁷ **Hassan al-Banna was eliminated in 1949, probably by the regime's secret police, in revenge for the Muslim Brotherhood's assassinations of the regime leaders. His elimination plunged the movement into a serious internal crisis.**

The second phase (1954-1970)—confrontation with the regime

17. **The first two years of the Free Officers' regime (1952-1954) were a honeymoon period in the Muslim Brotherhood's relations with the new regime.** The movement was a partner in the regime change and expressed support for the new regime, while it in turn granted a senior position to a prominent Muslim Brotherhood member.

18. This period came to an end with **the attempt on Nasser's life (1954)**, after he signed an agreement with Britain allowing it to retain its military presence in the Suez Canal region. **Following the attempt, the regime used an iron fist against the movement and its members and outlawed it, a situation that, legally, persists to this day.**

19. During the conflict with the regime, thousands of the movement's leaders and activists were put to trial and arrested. **Under the leadership of senior activist and ideologue Sayyid Qutb, the movement went through a process of ideological radicalization.**⁸ Qutb's radical thought **produced a source of division within the movement.**

20. **While most gave top priority to social activity (*da'wah*) and considered armed struggle (jihad) to be a last resort** that should only be used if the movement was banned from pursuing its social activity, **one of its factions took the view that the armed struggle should be broadened to include not only foreigners but also Muslim governments that did not follow religious law** and supposedly compromised the welfare of the Islamic nation. In 1969, a pragmatic faction led by general guide Hassan al-Hudaybi

⁶ The violent activity of the apparatus included training volunteers for the war in 1948; assassinating the governor of Cairo and the prime minister of Egypt in 1948; and terrorist attacks against the British in the early 1950s.

⁷ Examples include the assassination of Egypt's then prime minister Fahmi al-Nuqrashi after his involvement in the release of a military warrant to disband the Muslim Brotherhood in 1948; and the assassination of the judge Ahmad al-Khazandar in 1949 after charging Muslim Brotherhood members with violent acts against British soldiers.

⁸ This process was mostly reflected in **the adoption of force and violence as legitimate means for the achievement of the movement's objectives**, as the public activity of the Muslim Brotherhood at the time was considerably reduced as a result of the severe blow struck by the Nasser regime against its organizational infrastructure. During that period, the movement's detainees (particularly the younger generation) developed the concept of *takfir*, which permits violence not only against rulers who have strayed from the path of Islam but also against ordinary Muslims who do not practice a Muslim lifestyle according to the standards set by *takfir* philosophers.

publicly renounced Sayyid Qutb. **He was executed in 1966, and his teachings became the cornerstone of violent Islamic radicalism, which later gave rise to Al-Qaeda.**

21. Forced to keep a low profile, the movement took the opportunity to formulate its ideological line, spread the writings of its major ideologues, and deepen its social infrastructure.

The third phase (1970 to early 1990s): renunciation of violence and gradual entry into the political system

22. The de-Nasserization policy led by **Sadat** as he came to power (1970) **temporarily brought the interests of the Muslim Brotherhood in line with those of the regime. On Sadat's orders, many of the movement's activists were gradually released and allowed to resume public activities in exchange for granting legitimacy to the president's administration ("the faithful president").**

23. **Sadat's policy of political openness affected the leadership of the movement and gradually strengthened its pragmatic line** (which had also existed under Nasser) and willingness to engage in a dialogue with the regime.⁹ The desire to mobilize the masses through the establishment and society of the time contradicted the view held by the movement's radical factions, which considered the Egyptian regime and public to be infidel and espoused an immediate, drastic change in the country. The gap between the factions grew deeper throughout the 1980s; eventually, **the radical groups splintered from the movement.**¹⁰

24. **In fact, Sadat's reign marked the beginning of the third wave of Islamic activism that lasted into the 1980s and 1990s.** For the Muslim Brotherhood, this meant **a turn to a more active path of realizing the return to Islam** by integrating into the political system, and at the same time was reflected in the launch of attacks on the regime and on ideological opponents by the violent groups. This period saw the proliferation of Islamic groups (*jama'at*) on university campuses¹¹ (starting in 1971); **militant terrorist groups started appearing later.**¹²

⁹ This approach was nurtured by the general guides Hassan al-Hudaybi (1951-1977), Umar al-Tilmisani (1977-1986), and his successor Muhammad Hamid Abu al-Nasr (1986-1996).

¹⁰ Some of the major radical groups were Al-Takfir wal-Hijra, Al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyya, and Al-Jihad (see Chapter 12 for details).

¹¹ One of them was Shabab al-Islam (Youth of Islam) led by Issam al-Aryan (currently a high-ranking Muslim Brotherhood activist), which took part in student demonstrations as early as in 1971 and was among the first expressions of this Islamic wave.

¹² The first case of Islamic violence that shook the regime was the incident of the Military Technical College (1974), when an armed group of cadets led by Saleh Sariyyah attempted to storm the academy compound as a first step towards the toppling of Sadat's regime. The attempt was thwarted by the authorities.

25. **In addition to Sadat's lenient policy, a number of trends and developments in Egypt and elsewhere also helped advance the third wave of Islamic activism: the collapse of the idea of pan-Arabism** following the 1967 defeat against Israel; **the Islamization process of Egyptian laborers** who began working in Saudi Arabia and were exposed to the strict Wahhabi-Hanbali doctrines; **the Iranian revolution, which became an example for a successful takeover of (Shi'ite) clerics over a secular country; and ongoing socio-economic distress** in Egypt, particularly noted for the **increasing frustration among the educated youth** (whose number became significantly higher following higher education reforms) over their inability to find jobs to match their skills.

26. **The honeymoon period between Sadat's regime and the Muslim Brotherhood did not last**, coming to an end by the mid-1970s. **The regime, owing to concerns over the power gained by the Islamists and the strong resistance encountered by Sadat's policy** (mainly the policy of *infitah*, strengthening the ties with the West, and turning towards a peace treaty with Israel), began systematically suppressing the Islamists, including the moderate faction.¹³ **In 1981, Sadat's assassination by the Al-Jihad group was the peak of the Islamists' fight against the Egyptian regime.**

27. Early in his presidential reign (starting in 1981), **President Mubarak showed relative tolerance for the Muslim Brotherhood and the other opposition parties to create a unified national front against the threats of Islamic terrorism.**¹⁴ At least until the mid-1990s, and as long as Islamic terrorism posed a notable threat to stability, Mubarak's policy towards the movement was "controlled acceptance", i.e., political openness moderated by security restrictions (surveillance and occasional small-scale arrests) while putting a spoke in the wheel of its attempts to participate in the political system.

28. **While the movement preferred to avoid confrontation, it began** (as part of the pragmatic strategy) **penetrating the political scene on the basis of its social support.** This was reflected mainly in participation in elections for the official institutions (the People's Assembly and the Shura Council, local councils, trade unions). It was sometimes done by cooperating with opposition parties and by increasing its activity among students (taking part in elections for student councils and other bodies on the university campuses).

¹³ Towards the end of his reign, when pressure from the opposition increased, Sadat made a dramatic move and issued an order to hit the Muslim Brotherhood's infrastructure and arrest all opposition activists (September 1981). This crisis was the main factor that led to Sadat's assassination on October 6, 1981.

¹⁴ Mubarak freed most of the activists detained in Sadat's days, and particularly Umar al-Tilmisani, the then general guide. His message was that he did not oppose the movement itself, but only its violent wing.

29. While the movement's success in penetrating the government bodies (the People's Assembly and the Shura Council) was impressive yet limited¹⁵ (due to the regime's intervention), by the mid-1990s it made **impressive electoral achievements in student organizations and university teaching bodies**, as well as trade unions.¹⁶

30. The early 1980s also saw the **proliferation of Islamic financial companies and institutions, a time of significant development for the movement's economic infrastructure** (including its network of public welfare services). The period of growth ended when the regime intensified its control of the Muslim Brotherhood's economic activities in the late 1980s, which, according to some, was a major blow to its moderate activity. The watershed in the regime's stance towards the social and economic activities of the Muslim Brotherhood was the movement's assistance to victims of the 1992 earthquake, whom the regime was powerless to help.

The fourth phase (mid-1990s to now): between movement and party

31. The change in the regime's policy towards the movement first became apparent in the early 1990s, when the struggle between the regime and the Islamic terrorist organizations escalated. During that time, **the regime came to the realization that, in the long run, the Muslim Brotherhood posed a significant threat to its stability**. The realization came after the movement's success in penetrating official political establishments, **the Islamists' victory in the 1992 elections in Algeria, and the exposure of Muslim Brotherhood documents** (also in 1992) **presenting its plans to take over Egypt within several years**.¹⁷

32. Based on this understanding, the regime adopted a tougher stance towards the movement by the mid-1990s. **The regime began taking the harshest measures in 1995, encouraged by its success in fighting Islamic terrorism. Constitutionally, the movement's ability to take part in elections for official institutions was**

¹⁵ When the movement first ran for the People's Assembly in 1984, it won eight seats (of the 58 seats won by the alliance between the Muslim Brotherhood and the Al-Wafd party). In the next elections for the People's Assembly, in 1987, the movement won 36 seats (of the 56 seats won by the three-way alliance between the Muslim Brotherhood, the Al-Amal party, and the Al-Ahrar party).

¹⁶ The institutions in which Muslim Brotherhood representatives were elected to senior positions include the Union of Engineers (1987), the Union of Doctors (1988), the Union of Pharmacists (1989), the faculty club of Cairo University (1990), and the Union of Attorneys (1992). The movement won the majority of seats in the student unions of the universities of Cairo, Alexandria, and Zagazig (1987), and in 1989-1999 controlled the student unions in Mansoura and Al-Azhar. Main faculty clubs ruled by the Muslim Brotherhood included the universities of Cairo, Alexandria, and Asyut (1985-1986).

¹⁷ This refers to the **Salsabil affair**, named after a computer company in Cairo owned by a senior Muslim Brotherhood figure (Khairat al-Shater). In 1992, security forces seized documents containing information on the movement's structure, the names of major activists, guidelines on behavior in case of detention by the regime, the ties between the movement in Egypt and Muslim Brotherhood branches abroad, **and its plan to take over the country**. The plan mentioned the Muslim Brotherhood's penetration into such public institutions as student organizations and trade unions, as well as efforts to infiltrate the army, police, and media and law apparatuses. The documents instructed activists to prepare for a confrontation with such forces as the government and the West, which would attempt to prevent the movement's uprising plan, and to allocate financial resources towards the takeover plan.

restricted;¹⁸ it was tarnished by slanderous propaganda and accused of involvement in terrorism; and suppressed with mass arrests (including of its senior figures)¹⁹ that, to a considerable extent, paralyzed its activity until 2000.

33. **During this time, the movement underwent yet another crisis—the secession of a group led by the younger generation to establish a political party (Al-Wasat) in 1996.** The establishment of the party was not an issue that gained internal consensus within the movement, since its members (particularly the veteran leadership) understood that the regime would not allow it and even use the opportunity to crack down on the movement. This was apparently compounded by the difficulty in reconciling the principles of Islam with political objectives. At any rate, it was **only after Mubarak's regime was toppled that the Al-Wasat party was granted legal status in Egypt.** The party adopted a moderate, democratic political platform, when in fact it is a **competition to the Muslim Brotherhood, which has currently announced that it wants to establish its own party.**

34. **In the 2000s, with the release of Muslim Brotherhood members and leaders arrested in 1995-1996, the movement made new political achievements.** The biggest was **winning about 20 percent of the seats in the 2005 elections for the Egyptian People's Assembly (88 of 444 contested seats).**²⁰ **The achievement was made possible thanks to close legal monitoring imposed on the elections as part of the democratization pressure exerted on Egypt by the West,** which made it more difficult for the regime to skew the results as it usually does. It is hard to estimate to what extent the elections reflected the people's support for the movement, and to what extent it constituted a protest vote against Egypt's ruling party and official opposition parties.

35. During the short-lived "age of democratization" (2004-2006), the movement even took part in political protests against the regime in cooperation with other opposition elements, mainly the Kifaya movement.²¹ The height of the political activism was a **show of strength**

¹⁸ One example is the amendment of the trade unions election law in 1993. The law required the participation of at least 50 percent of the union members for the election to be considered legal. Thus the law enabled the regime to disqualify elections with low voter turnouts (the normal situation in Egypt) where most voters were members or supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood. As a result, the situation in many trade unions remained unchanged for several years, which were used by the regime to "deal with" Muslim Brotherhood candidates. Additionally, the ban on the establishment of religious-natured parties also remained in force.

¹⁹ Of particular note in this context is the arrest of some 80 members of the Shura Council—one of the highest institutions in the movement—and their conviction by a court martial in November 1995, on the eve of the People's Assembly elections. Since then, the movement avoids convening the Shura Council in a public, orderly fashion. The movement's headquarters in Cairo was shut down in the same year. It is unclear when the Cairo headquarters was reopened; however, in recent years it operates from the capital.

²⁰ With ten more deputies appointed by the president, the People's Assembly has a total of 454 seats. In 2009, 64 seats reserved for women were added to the assembly, bringing the total number of contested seats to 518.

²¹ Kifaya ("Enough"), an umbrella movement for various political factions (including activists from Islamic movements, intellectuals, representatives from left-wing parties, and judges) established in July 2004 around the

in Al-Azhar University (December 2006), **perceived by the regime as a real challenge against it.**

36. **With the cessation of external pressure for democratization, the regime once again cracked down on the movement, both constitutionally** (i.e., the 2007 amendment banning the establishment of religious-natured parties) **and in practical terms** (i.e., arrests, prevention of Muslim Brotherhood members from being elected to government institutions,²² and damaging its socio-economic infrastructure).

37. **Since then and up to the toppling of the Mubarak regime in early 2011, the movement avoided confrontations with the regime and focused on its *da'wah* activity.** While it often directed public criticism against the regime, **it avoided taking part in anti-regime protests due to internal political considerations,** and usually did not engage in actual cooperation with other opposition elements. Even so, the movement **repeatedly proclaimed its right to participate in the political system** and did not abandon its attempts to run for official government institutions.

38. With Mubarak's regime gone, such declarations are once again made by the movement, which **announced its intention to establish a party** called "Freedom and Justice". Muslim Brotherhood spokesmen attempt to allay concerns over the movement's intentions, portraying Freedom and Justice as a civilian party with a commitment to democratic values, along with the Islamist orientation.

declaration about opposition to President Mubarak's ongoing presidential tenure and the passing on of power to his son, Gamal.

²² The Shura Council (June 2007, June 2010), local authorities (April 2008).

Chapter 2: The ideology of the Muslim Brotherhood

39. Since its very beginning, the Muslim Brotherhood was based on ideological foundations that first emerged as a result of disenchantment with the idea of **“Islamic reformism”**. Advocates of the idea, which appeared in the second half of the 19th and early 20th century, **sought to have Muslim society undergo a rapid Western modernization and reform the religion of Islam.**

40. According to **Jamal al-Din al-Afghani** (1838-1897) and **Muhammad Abduh** (1849-1905), the founders of this school of thought, the modernization they sought was to be based **on a comprehensive adoption of technology, social structure, and even way of life prevailing in the West** at the time, **only clothed in Islamic garb. This required deep, substantial reforms in Islam and its institutions.**

41. As part of the proposed changes, the reformists sought to abolish **the principle of “taqlid”** (“tradition”, i.e., blind imitation of past customs) **and adopt the principles of Islamic religious law to modern demands.** They considered the **religious-legal restraints that interfere with modernization to be “harmful additions”** added to Islam over the centuries, **believing that Islam should be liberated from them through innovations (some of them far-reaching) in religious law.**

42. For example, Muhammad Abduh wanted to grant **equal rights to women, particularly in education,** and argued for the need to **draw know-how and technology from the West** without considering it to be **“bid’ah”** (a change that contradicts religious law and is therefore prohibited).

43. The ideas of Afghani and Abduh may be viewed as an attempt to promote a gradual process of Westernization, stemming from their belief that Western societies were the most advanced and that emulating them was a goal to be achieved. **These ideas, however, did not gain extensive support in the Islamic world.** It was their successor, **Muhammad Rashid Rida** (in 1865-1935) who started **calling for a reexamination** of his predecessors’ ideas. Like them, he considered the Muslim world to be weak compared to the West, yet his suggested method of rectifying the situation was different: **instead of Westernization, a return to the roots of Islam, the implementation of Islamic religious law (Sharia), and the establishment of a Sharia state.**

44. **Hassan al-Banna**, the founder of the modern Muslim Brotherhood movement, **was highly influenced by Rashid Rida's thought, and developed his ideas into a social organization** dedicated to the implementation of those principles. Alongside the Muslim Brotherhood's rapid expansion in the 1930s, Al-Banna wrote **five *risalat*** (letters) to his young, educated supporters. The ideas he set forth in the letters **are still the pillars of the movement's worldview.**

45. **In his ideological messages, Al-Banna defined his movement as a group of believers on a quest for the revival of Islam, seeking to establish a Sharia state based on the Quranic "law of Allah". It is an objective Al-Banna hoped to achieve by liberating the Muslim world from any kind of foreign rule, followed by shaping a state governed by Islamic religious law.** According to Al-Banna, the establishment of such a state **is not the final goal.** On the contrary, the new Sharia state must realize its **social order in accordance with Islamic religious law and become a basis for the worldwide spread of Islam, eventually culminating in the emergence of Islamic hegemony around the globe.**

46. **Al-Banna listed seven stages to achieve these objectives,** each to be carried out in a gradual fashion. The stages are divided into **social and political:** the first three are based on **educating the individual, the family, and the entire society of the Muslim world to implement Sharia laws in every aspect of daily life.** The next four stages are **political** by nature, and include **assuming power through elections, shaping a Sharia state, liberating Islamic countries from the burden of** (physical and ideological) **foreign occupation, uniting them into one Islamic entity ("new caliphate"), and spreading Islamic values throughout the world.**

47. The principle of liberating the world of Islam from the occupation of foreign powers **has particular implications for the Muslim Brotherhood's stance towards Israel,** whose establishment is considered by the movement members **an integral part of the Western plot to conquer and bring division into the world of Islam.** They **categorically deny Israel's right to exist, and express vociferous opposition to any indication of normalization in relations with it.** It appears that this principle is welcomed by all Muslim Brotherhood activists, regardless of time or location (see Chapter 6 for details).

48. Al-Banna's principles **still constitute the ideological foundation of the Muslim Brotherhood.**²³ However, **there occurred considerable developments in the validity of his ideological message** since the end of World War II. The change stemmed mostly

²³ Al-Banna's five letters have a special place on the official website of the Muslim Brotherhood, whose leaders have often stressed their adherence to the letters' principles in recent years.

from the appearance of **radical Muslim Brotherhood factions in Egypt** following the mass arrests of their members by Nasser's regime in the 1950s and 1960s, and the lifting of restrictions on their political participation in various Arab countries since the 1970s.

49. **The growth of the Muslim Brotherhood's radical faction is associated with Sayyid Qutb (1906-1966), a senior ideologue in the movement's Egyptian branch.** In the 1950s and 1960s, Qutb wrote several books (some during his prison term) **supplementing Al-Banna's ideas with a radical spirit.** Thus, **he developed the idea of "modern jahiliyya",²⁴** according to which **modern Islamic society is ignorant and has strayed from the code of conduct required by divine precepts.** In this context, Qutb discussed the phenomenon of Westernization, as well as the existence of **regimes based on earthly, man-made legal systems.** Accordingly, **in Qutb's view the Arab regimes were considered as lacking religious and divine legitimacy** (which he considered a supreme value), **and thus he publicly called to resist these regimes.**

50. Even though Qutb did not emphasize that resistance to the regimes must be violent, **he created an opening for such violent activity by defining jihad for the enforcement of religious law (Sharia) in Muslim society as every Muslim's duty.** Qutb's execution in 1966, which many saw as *shahada* (martyrdom for the sake of Allah), served to further disseminate his ideas. Starting from the 1970s, these ideas gained even more popularity thanks to the educational activity of his supporters, who **came to Saudi Arabia and linked Qutb's principles to those of Salafism²⁵ and Wahhabism.** Later, this link gave rise to **the idea of global jihad and takfir** (accusing others of infidelity).

51. Alongside the radical ideology of Qutb and his successors, another faction developed starting from the mid-1980s, also originating in the ideology of the Muslim Brotherhood. It is the **Wasatiyya** (middle ground) faction, **mostly associated with a well-known Qatari cleric of Egyptian descent, Yusuf al-Qaradawi.** This faction supports the idea of **adjusting Islam to modern reality and religious tolerance, strongly opposes the idea of global jihad, and attempts to give religious-legal validity to changes resulting from the adoption of modern technology, social modernization** (in women's status, for example) and the need to contend with the influence of other cultures (as part of life in immigrant communities, among other things).

²⁴ *Jahiliyya*—the period of "ignorance" that preceded the appearance of Islam in the Arab Peninsula.

²⁵ **Salafism**—a movement in Islam that considers the Quran and the Sunna the highest legal authorities and calls to build the life of the Muslim nation on a literal understanding of the Quranic text and on the practices of the first three pious generations of the nation (*Salaḥ*).

52. The messages of this school of thought focus mostly on **the attempt to fight the spiritual influence of the followers of global jihad**. However, despite the fact that it contains different liberal ideas, this faction's **adherence to the fundamental principles of the Sharia**, without implementing a comprehensive reform in the Muslim worldview, **reflects a desire to "conquer Rome"** (i.e., victory over the West) **and reiterates vicious anti-Semitic views**. The faction supports terrorism (including suicide bombings and murder of civilians) "only" against Israel and the occupation in Iraq, while the struggle as a whole—against Middle Eastern and Western regimes—should take place **through the *da'wah* and without the use of violence** (see Chapter 11 for Qaradawi's profile).

53. Since the Muslim Brotherhood supports the worldwide spread of Sunni Islam, it shares **the Sunni-Shi'ite debate**. **Early on, the Muslim Brotherhood considered the Shi'ites an inseparable part of the Muslim nation, and even expressed support for the Islamic revolution in Iran**. **Afterwards, the Muslim Brotherhood's attitude towards Iran grew much more hostile** due to Iran's efforts to export the revolution to the Sunni Arab domain. In recent years, and all the more so **since the second Lebanon war, the question of the attitude towards the Shi'ites has reemerged once again**. In general, the basis for the debate is **the difference in the perception of Iran's political role in the region**.

54. Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood has not reached an agreement on the stance towards Iran. Some members of the Muslim Brotherhood leadership in **Egypt** lead support for Iran as the **"engine of resistance"**, making official Egyptian observers claim that the movement's leadership attempts **to find ways to strengthen its ties with Iran to form an alliance against the Egyptian regime**. On the other side of the fence are **Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi, who on several occasions has expressed concerns over the threat of "Shi'itization" of Sunni population in Arab countries, and the leadership of the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood, which considers Iran an ally of Assad's oppressive regime, responsible for the brutal suppression of the movement in Syria**.

55. Ultimately, it appears that the Muslim Brotherhood's stance to the Shi'ites is **one of ambivalence**. This is a result of the **built in tension between its fundamental support for the idea of "resistance", currently led by Shi'ite Iran and implemented, among others, by Hamas, and its character as a Sunni organization par excellence, requiring a certain level of commitment to Sunni traditions that don't take kindly to the Shi'ite faith**.

Chapter 3: The Muslim Brotherhood's education, preaching, and social activity

Overview

56. The Muslim Brotherhood **emerged** first and foremost **as a movement that embodies an Islamic mission whose goal is to establish Islam as an “overall order”** (political, social, and economic) **throughout the world, and in Egypt in particular**. It is a concept originating in Muslim Brotherhood founder Hassan al-Banna's view of Islam as a comprehensive religious and cultural system that applies to all aspects of human life and may be implemented anywhere, at any time.

57. **According to the movement and its founder, the establishment of such new Islamic order will be made possible only by the creation of a new Muslim society. As already mentioned, the creation process is multi-stage** (consisting of seven stages) **and long-term** (without a definite timetable for the realization of the ultimate objective), **starting with shaping the mind of the new Muslim individual**. It is a person of strong faith, who follows Islamic religious law in all spheres of life and is familiar with its cultural tradition, and is deeply committed to the welfare of other Muslims, the Islamic nation, and God. **It is the true believer, in the movement's view, that will change his community, and such a community of believers will then change the entire Muslim nation.**

58. **The movement heavily emphasizes the issue of education (*tarbiya*) and preaching, which, with its welfare activity, comprise the pillars of the *da'wah*** (taken as a whole)²⁶ of the Muslim Brotherhood, aimed at changing the Muslim nation.

Education and preaching

59. **The movement's view of education goes beyond imparting of religious or general knowledge—above all, it is education for values.** Emphasis is placed not only on Quran and Sunna studies, but also on education to patriotism, love of one's homeland, and love of the entire Muslim nation. This, according to the movement, requires the development of a sense of social responsibility, a desire to fight the ills of society (poverty, ignorance, crime, etc.), and an aspiration to create a model society based on the principles of Islamic justice and brotherhood.

²⁶ The literal meaning of *da'wah* is “call to return or preaching to Islam”, mainly by indoctrination or reeducation. In practice, the term has become synonymous with the movement's education, preaching, and welfare activities.

60. In the movement's early days, its curriculum even included physical education, since Al-Banna believed that sports builds discipline, self-confidence, cooperation, and friendship.²⁷ As a result of the emphasis placed on the significance of education, teachers' training became the movement's top priority, and its literature widely discussed the qualities that make the best teachers.

61. The Muslim Brotherhood began building its own education system as soon as it was established. At first, it was an informal network of schools and prayer classes all across Egypt, with studies held in the evenings and on Fridays and focused on religious themes. As part of the movement's fight on analphabetism, its young missionaries began teaching in clubs, cafés, etc. By the 1940s, the movement's education program was fully developed and included various disciplines in addition to religious themes, which remained the focus of the program.²⁸ **The Muslim Brotherhood currently has schools in all of Egypt's provinces, as well as various other education services** (after-school activities, summer camps for adolescents, professional training and evening classes, supplementary lessons for children, and more) **that provide an alternative to the official/state-controlled education.**

62. The preaching activities were given the most attention due to the importance the movement placed on spreading its religious and political message. Training in preaching and the development of oratory skills were already included in the curriculum of the first education network established by the Muslim Brotherhood. In 1951, Hassan al-Hudaybi, the second general guide, issued a call to create at least one school for preaching in each Muslim Brotherhood administrative office, **and in 1953 the movement established its *da'wah* (preaching) academy in its Cairo headquarters.** The aim of such institutions was to train professional preachers to compete with traditional and government-employed clerics for the hearts of the Egyptian public.

63. Throughout its existence, the movement put considerable effort into the publication of periodicals,²⁹ books, and leaflets, and the organization of

²⁷ It is a view that led to the establishment of the Muslim Brotherhood scout movement, which was listed as an official movement within Egypt's national scout movement in 1938-1939. The scouts organized sports competitions and, starting in 1938, began organizing summer camps that included religious themes, social activities, and physical and military exercises (to internalize the idea of jihad). The scouts organized parades and their songs included religious and jihadist themes. The system of "battalions" created by Al-Banna (starting in 1937) also included meetings for study and prayer sessions, trips in the outdoors, and youth camps that included Quran studies and physical training, the purpose being social bonding and spiritual growth. By the mid-1940s, the scouts and battalions were organized in a broader network of cells ("families").

²⁸ Al-Banna wanted to implement Western teaching methods, to which he had been exposed during his professional studies.

²⁹ Al-Da'wah was the movement's main publication until it was outlawed in 1954 (in general, the movement began publishing dailies, weeklies, and other periodicals in the first years of its existence). Its publication was resumed in

conventions and religion classes. It also purchased publishing rights for articles and statements from newspapers' and magazines' publishing license holders.³⁰ In the 1940s the movement also began publishing books. It operates dozens of publishing houses, distribution centers for written publications, and libraries across Egypt. The movement's publications are not limited to religious themes and also address a wide variety of other subjects (history, political, economic, and social issues, and news reports), expressing the movement's stance on them.

64. **The Muslim Brotherhood operates an extensive network consisting of tens of thousands of private mosques** built with charity funds. **The mosques are major preaching sites for the movement.** Throughout its existence, however, the movement has been keen to harness the various tools provided by modern advances. A noteworthy example from the past decade is **the adoption of Internet communication for propaganda, distribution of the movement's messages, and improvement of its image in the Muslim and Western world.**

65. **Since 2000, the movement operates its official website, Ikhwanonline;** in 2005 it launched an English-language website called Ikhwanweb. These are modern, news-oriented websites, reporting on developments in the movement and around the globe. The Muslim Brotherhood also has a streaming video website called Ikhwantube (its version of YouTube), which contains religious preaching themes. In addition, there are numerous other websites affiliated with the movement, and in 2007 the number of bloggers affiliated with it reached 150.

The welfare system

66. The popularity and extensive support the movement gained among the Egyptian people has been greatly facilitated by its **network of welfare and health services for the weaker sectors of society.** Such activities also stem from **the Muslim Brotherhood's ideology, emphasizing social responsibility and concern for the welfare of fellow Muslims.** The creation of the network began immediately after the movement's establishment. It was subdued under Nasser **and experienced considerable resurgence under Sadat and Mubarak.**

1976 on the backdrop of Sadat's reconciliation policy towards the movement. It became one of the Muslim Brotherhood's main propaganda organs, and its issues were in great demand. In the movement's own view, the publication was one of its most important media experiments. It was discontinued by the authorities in the early 1990s. Other periodicals published by the movement since the 1970s are Liwaa al-Islam, Al-Bashir, and Al-I'tisam. By 2000, the regime shut down some of the movement's periodicals and newspapers.

³⁰ One of the most obvious examples is the periodical of the Al-Amal Party, Al-Sha'b (1987-1993), which was practically taken over by the Muslim Brotherhood.



Ramadan fast-breaking meal held by the Muslim Brotherhood

67. Similarly to the preaching and the education services, **the welfare activity also revolves around the mosque.** The movement provides the services through regional administrations directed by its administrative network. Islamic associations and NGOs across Egypt are a major platform for this purpose.

68. The movement provides health services (22 hospitals and a significant number of clinics); subsidized clothing and food; subsidies for students; social activities; separate transportation for women (to avoid contact between members of the opposite sex, including sexual harassment, which is fairly common in Egypt). In the poor regions, the movement operates catering services, conducts wedding ceremonies, and distributes food, clothing, and money in exchange for adherence to Islamic law (for example, modest dress for women).

69. **The services provided by the movement are cheaper** (or even provided for free) **than private alternatives, and are more efficient than the normally low-quality services provided by the state.** This results from the high rate of volunteers among the movement's members and the constant funding it receives from donations. **The privatization policy and the state's withdrawal from its major role have reinforced the status of Islamic networks as providers of social services.**

70. By the late 1980s and early 1990s, the movement's welfare activity helped it **exert a hold over minor political institutions—student unions, faculty clubs in universities, and trade unions.**³¹ The Muslim Brotherhood made efforts to identify the main issues troubling the public in these institutions and address them, whether on its own (by improving

³¹ The institutions in which Muslim Brotherhood representatives were elected to senior positions include the Union of Engineers (1987), the Union of Doctors (1988), the Union of Pharmacists (1989), the faculty club of Cairo University (1990), and the Union of Attorneys (1992). The movement won the majority of seats in the student unions of the universities of Cairo, Alexandria, and Zagazig (1987), and in 1988-89 ruled the student unions in Mansoura and Al-Azhar. Main faculty clubs ruled by the Muslim Brotherhood included the universities of Cairo, Alexandria, and Asyut (in 1985-1986).

existing services or launching lacking services), or by exerting pressure on the relevant state authorities.³²

71. **The trade unions led by the Muslim Brotherhood began providing employment** (for example, by creating pilot businesses for new engineering and medicine graduates), **housing and income for doctors, teachers, and other young professionals, making them less dependent on the state in these matters.** The assistance to students included private tutoring, cheap schoolbooks, assistance in housing and financial grants, healthcare services, etc.

72. **Throughout the years, the movement also functioned in crisis situations and disasters in Egypt, providing aid to the casualties before the inefficient authorities did.** For example, the Muslim Brotherhood launched evacuation operations in the 1992 earthquake that hit Cairo, before the government could do so, and provided financial assistance to the victims. After the sinking of the Al-Salam 98 ferry (February 2006), the government provided financial assistance to the victims' families and helped them recover. As a result, in the 1990s the Egyptian regime promoted a special program called "Arafat" to contend with disasters with the assistance of the military.

The battle against the regime for the heart and mind of the Egyptian citizen

73. Even though the movement is active among all social classes in Egypt—upper and lower—**its main base of support is the educated middle and lower-middle class urban public** (including students, lecturers, clerks, skilled laborers, and free tradesmen).

74. One thing shared by these diverse groups is **the exposure of most of their members, during training, to modernization processes, with all the difficult consequences they entail** (difficulties in finding jobs that fit their professional and mostly academic training, an identity crisis and feelings of social alienation brought about by the move from rural areas to cities, and large socio-economic gaps). **This population is also the Muslim Brotherhood's main recruitment pool.** The movement's presence and influence among common laborers, farmers, and uneducated individuals is highly limited.

³² On university campuses, for example, the movement distributed questionnaires to identify and map the students' needs and organized/improved services accordingly. One example of assistance through mediation vis-à-vis state authorities was the Muslim Brotherhood's assistance to young lecturers from Cairo University whose low wages prevented them from obtaining housing to start their own families. After winning the 1986 elections, the movement held an official meeting with the then minister of housing (Fathi Muhammad), following which the government granted about 200 low-cost apartments to young lecturers.

75. The Muslim Brotherhood's welfare activity **provides a response to the vacuum in public services which the regime has difficulty filling due to the ineptitude and ineffectiveness of its systems.** It thus helps reduce pressure in some sectors of society, serving the regime's interest in maintaining domestic order and peace. On the other hand, the extensive public support gained by the movement thanks to such activity has deepened the government's understanding that, **in the long run, the movement may pose an actual challenge to its stability.**

76. Accordingly, the regime has made efforts to restrict the growth of the movement's social power and launched **a campaign to win the Egyptians' hearts and minds. The Egyptian regime attempted to portray its actions as inspired by Islam, and marketed state-controlled Islam through the Al-Azhar institution while imposing restrictions on the movement's freedom of preaching.³³ At the same time, the regime attempted to delegitimize the movement** by portraying it on the official media as supporting or being involved in terrorism and plagued by internal strife, conservative views, and intolerance towards its own members.³⁴ **In addition, the regime takes measures against its financial³⁵ and propaganda system. This is reflected, among other things, in confiscating propaganda materials and banning preaching in mosques in the month of Ramadan.**

77. **It appears that, from the Egyptian regime's point of view, the results of this struggle were limited until the fall of the Mubarak regime in Egypt. The public continued to perceive the regime as being corrupted and exploiting. The regime was having difficulties curbing the movement's penetration into the education system** (many teachers are affiliated with the movement, and it apparently has a great deal of influence on school curricula), limiting its preaching activities in private mosques (being unable to provide enough hired preachers for all the mosques operated by the movement due

³³ One example is the attempt to require private mosques to hire imams working for the regime as a prerequisite for getting their operation license, and to influence the contents of Friday sermons. This attempt failed as the Muslim Brotherhood preachers were able to obtain licenses for the operation of preaching rooms from the local authorities, and even secure the cooperation of low-level officials from the Ministry of Religious Endowments. In addition, the regime had difficulties recruiting a sufficient number of professional preachers to cover all private mosques (whose number reached about 170,000 in 1993). Another attempt was a constitutional measure to nationalize private mosques and bring them under the authority of the Ministry of Religious Endowments.

³⁴ The most prominent example in recent years was the arrest and court martial of Muslim Brotherhood leaders on charges of involvement in terrorism, **which happened first in the case of Khairat al-Shater, the deputy general guide, arrested in 2007 and currently released by Egypt's military regime.** During the latest election to the movement's leadership bodies (December 2009-January 2010), the regime sought to emphasize the tensions within the movement that accompanied the elections. For instance, the following is from an article published on the website of the National Democratic Party: "The organization boasted about dialogue, brotherhood, and ability to reach out to others, while the truth is that it cannot even contain its own people, who disagree with the organization and do not commit to its principle of blind obedience".

³⁵ Such activity includes freezing bank accounts belonging to the movement or to activists affiliated with it and framing them for money laundering and terrorism sponsoring, preventing the movement's gatherings, such as the Ramadan fast breaking meals (used, among other things, for collecting charity), and hitting the infrastructure created by the movement (one example is the razing of a hospital built by the Muslim Brotherhood in late 2009).

to budget restrictions), and monitor the distribution of its publications using modern technology (audio and video tapes, internet, and satellite television).

78. **In summary**, the Muslim Brotherhood has been and still remains **the Egyptian military regime's bitter enemy, ideologically and practically**. By building **an efficient, extensive network of services, the movement intelligently filled the vacuum left by the regime in those areas**. This strategy has turned it from a religious missionary movement **into an actual socio-economic alternative to the regime** and made it widely popular with the public.

79. The Muslim Brotherhood's broad organizational deployment has given it the ability to resist the measures taken against it by the regime (it is part welfare organization, part investment company, and part service provider in all areas of life). This has allowed the movement to maneuver between its efforts to score points on the political scene and its focus on social activity, **if only to get itself into a better starting position for an opportunity—which, it appears, the movement believes to have come—to fully realize its political goals**.

Chapter 4: The structure and funding sources of the Muslim Brotherhood

Structure and organization

80. **The Muslim Brotherhood has been outlawed in Egypt since the 1950s.** Consequently, it has created an **organizational structure designed to be as resilient** as possible to suppression from the regime. This is achieved, on one hand, by **decentralizing its activity** and, on the other, becoming state-like in organizational behavior, through **local and nation-wide networks**. The movement is composed of **a central administrative body** (legislative branch, executive branch, and judiciary/arbitrating branch) based in Cairo, **and local networks**.

81. **While the movement's popularity with the Egyptian public is beyond question, it is rather difficult to provide figures about the support it enjoys or locate data on the extent of its socio-economic activity.** This is mainly because the movement's members keep their membership a secret due to the regime's threats. **The number of supporters is estimated between hundreds of thousands and several millions.**³⁶ **Another assessment**, based on voter turnout and the electoral achievements of the Muslim Brotherhood, **puts the support rate for the Muslim Brotherhood at 20-30% of the Egyptian public.** Some believe, however, that the numbers are much lower.

82. **The Muslim Brotherhood's organizational infrastructure is based on a bottom-up design:**³⁷

- a. **The basic level is the "family" (*usra*),** a framework established in the first several decades of the movement's existence. It is a cell that first included five, and then a larger number of activists sharing a close relationship with each other. This cell represents the broadest spectrum of members on various levels of organizational affiliation. Each "family" chooses a leader (*naqib*) to represent it on the administrative council of the local Muslim Brotherhood branch. Each family member is required to lead

³⁶ This results from the various methods used to count votes. The count frequently includes the wife and children of the member/supporter. The movement's achievements in elections for the People's Assembly cannot be taken as indicative of its support—not only are the voting figures unreliable, but in many cases voting for Muslim Brotherhood members can be motivated by vicinity, family ties, personal friendship, and/or dissatisfaction with the regime rather than sympathy with the movement's ideology.

³⁷ This part is based on three fundamental documents: the movement's up-to-date regulations, published in December 2009; the regulations of the global Muslim Brotherhood movement as published on its official English-language website (www.ikhwanweb.net), and the movement's internal documents exposed by the regime following the Salsabil affair in 1992. Additional sources were used in some cases.

an Islamic lifestyle; bond with other Muslims; take part in weekly meetings and other activities; pray, fast, and study the Quran with fellow members of the movement; and donate a portion of his income to the “solidarity fund”, used to assist members in need and, in part, transferred to the general welfare budget of the Muslim Brotherhood headquarters. **This network of cells has proven itself to be a highly effective training and bonding system for the movement’s activists.**

b. **The activity of the “families” is monitored by a regional administration.**³⁸

In its appointed sector, it operates as an independent body both socially (helping people in need, local activity in mosques, classes) and politically. The activity of the regional administrations is directed by the **professional departments**, subjected to the **General Guidance Office**.

c. **On the national level, the structure of the Muslim Brotherhood has remained essentially identical to the initial scheme formed in the 1930s and 1940s.** The movement’s organizational structure was reformed in the 1980s. **The reform focused mainly on a partial departure from the centralized character and providing more decision-making freedom to province-level leaders.** This was reflected in the expansion of the various committees and departments and the development of the movement’s local authorities.

83. **Currently, the following bodies may be said to constitute the movement’s national level:**

a. **The general guide** (*al-murshid al-‘aam*)—the title held by the **leader of the Muslim Brotherhood**, the person who shapes the movement’s policy and activity pattern. **The general guide is also the chairman of the Guidance Office and the movement’s Shura Council.** Members of the movement are expected to fully obey his decisions, and all Muslim Brotherhood departments are subject to his authority. In practice, this changes in accordance with the general guide’s personality, power, and status in the movement’s leadership. Traditionally, the general guide in Egypt also serves as the head of the international Muslim Brotherhood movement.

84. Formally, the general guide’s election procedure is well-established; however, it is in fact flexible and open to interpretation.³⁹

³⁸ At least in the early days of the movement, there were additional levels between the “family” and the regional administration: every four families were a “tribe” (*‘ashira*), every five tribes were a “group” (*raha*), and every five groups were a “battalion” (*katiba*). It is not unlikely that similar divisions between the two levels exist to this day.

³⁹ It appears that there is no permanent process/procedure for the election of the general guide, and that it changes according to the personality of the candidate, political and security circumstances, and the balance of power within

a. **The general guide is formally elected by the movement's Shura Council** from the candidates presented by the Guidance Office.⁴⁰ Usually, the candidate is a member of the Guidance Office, even though this is not required by the regulations (it is enough for the candidate to be a member of the Shura Council). In Muslim Brotherhood tradition, **the new general guide is the oldest physically- and socially-functioning member of the Shura Council perceived to be as a worthy candidate.**

b. **If the Shura Council is unable to convene for any reason,⁴¹ its authorities** (including the election of the general guide) **are transferred to the Guidance Office.**

c. Being also the leader of the global Muslim Brotherhood movement, **the candidate must be known and respected by Muslim Brotherhood circles outside of Egypt, and secure the agreement of the Supreme Shura Council** (the Shura Council of the international Muslim Brotherhood movement).

85. **In 2010, it was decided that the general guide can serve up to two six-year terms⁴²** (most general guides in the past⁴³ were elected for life). Also appointed are one or more deputies and a spokesman.⁴⁴ **The current holder of the title of general guide is Mohammed Badie (elected in January 2010).**

the movement. For example, after the death of the second general guide, Hassan al-Hudaybi (1972), his successor, Umar al-Tilmisani, was elected on grounds of being the longest-standing, oldest member, foregoing the process of elections in the Shura Council. The election of the general guides who followed—Muhammad Hamid Abu al-Nasr (1986-1996), Mustafa Mashhur (1996-2002), and Ma'mun al-Hudaybi (2002-2004)—was not based on age or standing, instead being a product of internal circumstances and manipulations within the movement. In the case of Mustafa Mashhur and Ma'mun al-Hudaybi, the movement introduced the custom of a public pledge of allegiance to the worthiest candidate for general guide at the burial ceremony of the previous general guide.

⁴⁰ In this context, the general guide is elected by direct, secret ballot, and the winner is the candidate who obtains more than 50 percent of the votes. If no candidate has the required percentage of the votes, another round is held and the candidate with the most votes is elected. **In practice, it appears that the election takes place by a majority consensus, perhaps even without voting** (due to the occasional difficulties in voting caused by the arrests of some of the movement's leaders).

⁴¹ It appears that the Shura Council has not convened regularly since 1995, when all of its members were arrested during one of its meetings.

⁴² The clause concerning the reelection of the general guide and the definition of the term's length was introduced into the movement's regulations in 1992, but it did not put a limit on the number of terms.

⁴³ The exceptions are the appointment of a temporary general guide (in 1949-1951); a short period of time in early 2004, after the death of general guide Ma'mun al-Hudaybi until the appointment of Mahdi Akef as his successor—usually on the backdrop of a crisis and/or differences of opinion within the movement about the general guide's successor; and the stepping down of Mahdi Akef after his first term as general guide—a precedent-setting incident in the movement's history.

⁴⁴ The up-to-date regulations require each geographic region to have at least one representative in the Guidance Office. Muslim Brotherhood documents exposed in the Salsabil affair (1992) contain a clearer division of representatives by geographic regions, and it is unclear whether it is still valid (at least as a custom): nine members of the Guidance Office are from Cairo (provided they permanently reside there) and are to address matters pertaining to the movement's departments, organization, and activity; one representative from the provinces of Alexandria and Marsa Matruh, two representatives from Upper Egypt, and two representatives from the Egyptian diaspora abroad.

a. **The General Guidance Office is the movement's highest leadership and administration body, formulating and executing its national policy** (which includes direction and monitoring of preaching activities and the operation of its departments) **and its international relations.** According to the movement's regulations:

1) **The office consists of 16 members, most of them Egyptians⁴⁵ and the rest delegates who represent the movement in other Arab countries.**⁴⁶ Members of the Guidance Office are elected by secret ballot by the movement's Shura Council.⁴⁷

2) **The elections for Guidance Office are held once every four years.** Elected members can serve up to two terms (i.e., eight years) and appointed members can only serve one term, which always ends when the Guidance Office elected members' term ends.

3) **The office meets periodically** (it is headquartered in Cairo). **The meetings are overseen by the general guide** or by his deputy or the longest-standing member of the office, when the general guide is not available.

4) **Four General Guidance Office members are also members of the Permanent Committee** (*al-hay'a al-da'ima*) that makes decisions in emergencies or on relatively minor routine matters.

b. **The General Guide's Headquarters and the Guidance Office:**

1) **The Political Bureau/Political Department—the movement's executive wing, directly under the Guidance Office.**

⁴⁵ The regulations published on the movement's official English-language website (www.ikhwanweb.com) require that the Guidance Office include representatives from the movement's branches in other countries. This issue is not mentioned in the up-to-date regulations (December 2009).

⁴⁶ For now, members of the Guidance Office must also be members of the movement's General Shura Council. In December 2009, former deputy general guide Muhammad Habib brought up an idea to amend the regulations so that a member of the Guidance Council is not required to be a member of the General Shura Council, with the intent of separating the movement's legislative branch (the Shura Council) and the executive branch (the Guidance Office). The idea, however, did not gain popularity.

⁴⁷ Limiting the number of terms Guidance Office members can serve is one of the recent changes introduced in the movement's regulations. The amendment stemmed from the demands of the movement's younger generation for more considerable representation in its key roles. On the other hand, it has been decided that a person is considered a member of the Guidance Office even if his term is over, as mentioned above, until the Shura Council convenes to elect the new Guidance Office members. This is a result of the difficulties in convening the movement's Shura Council due to the security and political limitations imposed on it. Another amendment of the regulations rules that a person shall remain a member of the Guidance Office even if he is arrested.

2) **Departments—the general guide and the Guidance Office are in charge of a number of departments equivalent to government ministries** and responsible for specific issues. Through these apparatuses, the movement maintains constant work relations with the various associations in the regional administrations (charitable and welfare societies, trade unions, and students associations).

c. **The General Shura Council—according to the regulations, the council is equivalent to a legislative branch**, takes part in the formulation of the movement's overall policy (for instance, it is supposed to approve the overall policy and discuss annual reports submitted by the Guidance Office) and is involved in various logistical and administrative issues. In practice, **the General Shura Council has been unable to meet properly and regularly since 1995, and appears to have become a fictitious institute used as a rubber stamp to approve decisions made by the Guidance Office**. According to the formal regulations, the authorities and main roles of the Shura Council are:

1) **The council consists of 75-90 members elected** by secret ballot from the regional Shura councils. **The Guidance Office can appoint up to 15 additional members.**

2) **The Shura Council members' term lasts four years.** In case that the Shura Council elections cannot be completed at the slated date, **the existing council will continue serving until a new council is elected.**

3) **The Shura Council is supposed to convene twice a year** (once every six months) at the request of the general guide. If needed, the general guide may convene it for an emergency meeting. The Guidance Office decides on the location (which is supposed to be in Cairo) and agenda of the session. A valid quorum for a council meeting is half of its members, and its decisions require majority vote of present members for approval.

4) **The council's monitoring of the Guidance Office—**according to the regulations, the Guidance Office is required to present the Shura Council with a comprehensive report on its activity and the movement's *da'wah* activity for the previous year, and present its policy and work plan for the coming year. The Guidance Office is supposed to implement the decisions approved by the Shura Council.

d. **If extraordinary circumstances prevent the Shura Council from convening, the Guidance Office will assume all its powers.** In our understanding, this has been the case since 1995.

86. **The movement's judiciary branch, established by the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood this past year, consists of a legal counselor and courts,**⁴⁸ which apparently operate on a regional basis. It seems that this system is also overseen by the general guide, since court decisions are referred to his approval. In addition, the general guide appoints the judges.

87. **The national-level structure of the movement is duplicated on the regional level. Thus, each region or group of regions has an administrative office** (equivalent to the Guidance Office) **and a regional Shura Council.** Their relationship parallels that which exists between the national-level bodies. The General Guidance Office monitors and directs these bodies and may intervene to change their conduct or human composition. Through these bodies, the movement operates a network of services for the public and remains in constant contact with the people.⁴⁹

Covert networks

88. In the early days of the movement, **Hassan al-Banna introduced a covert component into its structure.** Its most prominent expression is the "secret apparatus", which in the 1940s operated against the British presence on Egyptian territory and was involved in assassinations of regime officials. Some of its activists even fought alongside the Arab forces in 1948. The radical elements have left the movement over the years; however, **covert bodies may exist even now, such as a covert intelligence apparatus** that gathers information on the members and institutions of the movement and other external power elements, **and a "special" military-oriented group. To the best of our current knowledge, the Muslim Brotherhood currently does not have a terrorist wing.**

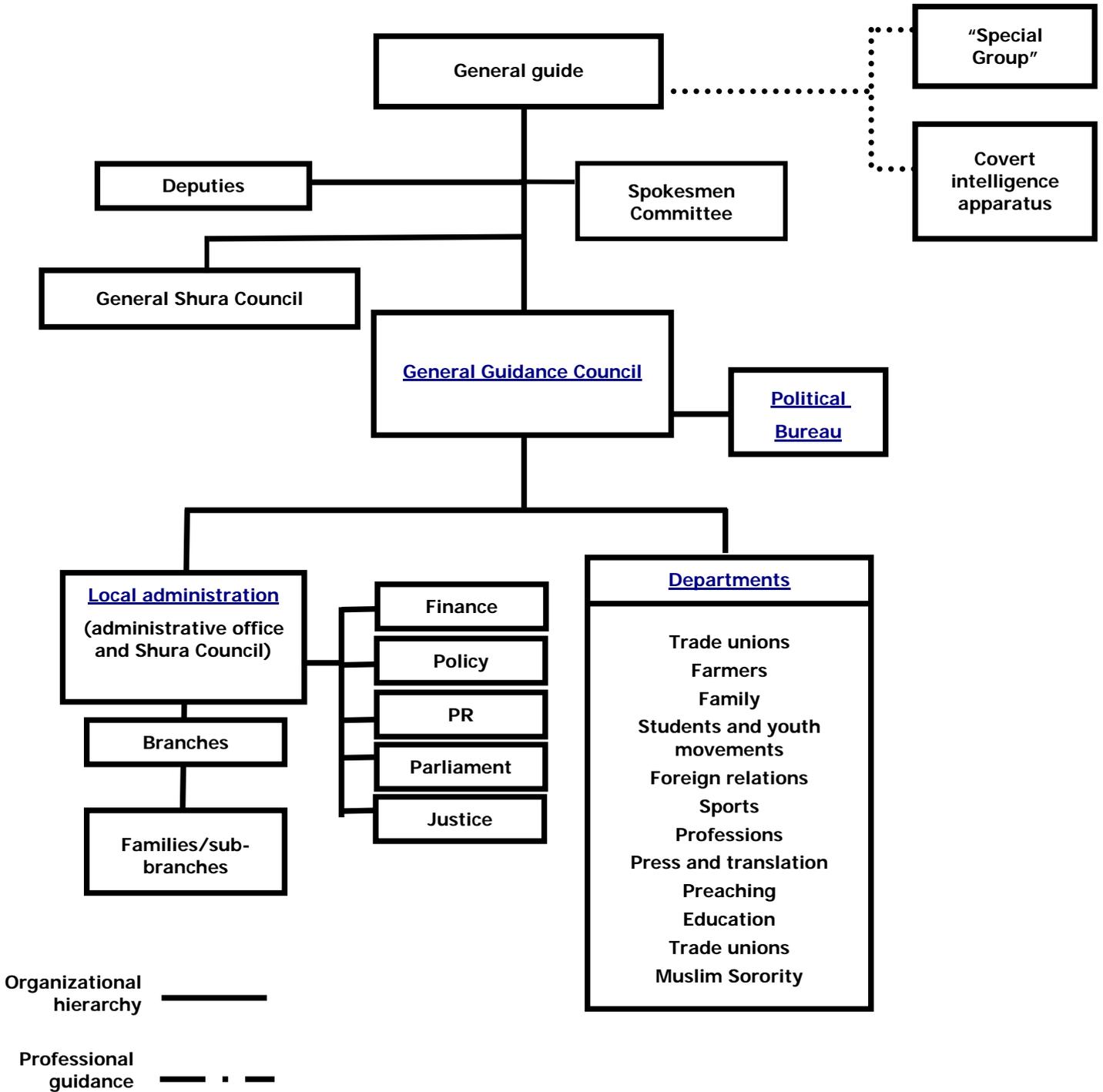
⁴⁸ The judiciary was apparently established with the assistance of representatives from the movement's pragmatic faction. It has been reported that the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood has courts where its members are tried. It is likely that the equivalent system in Egypt may operate in a similar fashion.

⁴⁹ In fact, the Muslim Brotherhood's organizational structure is similar to that of communist and fascist movements that operated in the 1930s. There is some evidence to indicate that **the founder of the movement, Hassan al-Banna himself, was influenced by and deeply impressed with the militarist youth movements established in fascist Italy and Nazi Germany.** Thus, in the first several decades of the movement's existence, Al-Banna established the Muslim Brotherhood's scout movement, whose graduates were later integrated into a system of "battalions". In addition to religious training, members underwent routine physical training in summer camps and other gatherings of the movement. In the 1940s, some were integrated into the movement's military wing, "the secret apparatus".

89. **The movement's regulations is a dynamic document that undergoes periodical developments and reflects the changes undergone by the movement over the years.** It was apparently written in the first years of the movement's existence (1930-1931), was revised, and finally approved in 1945. New regulations approved under the second general guide, Hassan al-Hudaybi (1952-1977) included a clause allowing for the revision and amendment of the regulations. The regulations were next changed in 1982 to accommodate the movement's expanding activity. The regulations defined **the general guide, the Guidance Office, and the General Shura Council as the main administrative bodies of the movement.** The regulations were also amended in 1990 **to limit the general guide's term to six years.**

90. The latest amendment (apparently in December 2009), based mostly on the 1990 text of the regulations, limits the number of terms members of the Guidance Office can serve, preserves the positions of its detained members, and introduces changes in their election process. In general, it appears that **the changes of the movement's regulations include the strengthening of the hierarchical and centralized axis with regard to decision-making on issues of the movement's structure and strategy, and giving more weight to the general guide and the Guidance Office at the expense of the Shura Council, while providing the "ground levels" with considerable leeway for operation.**

The structure of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt



The international Muslim Brotherhood organization

91. **The international Muslim Brotherhood movement, which constitutes an umbrella organization for Muslim Brotherhood branches around the globe, was established in 1982 under the leadership of the Egyptian movement.** The movement apparently includes the **Global Guidance Office** and the **Global Shura Council**.⁵⁰ The international Muslim Brotherhood convenes occasionally **and serves as a framework of consultation between the various Muslim Brotherhood branches in the world.**

92. **The movement's regulations⁵¹ formally define three circles of association between the Muslim Brotherhood branches and the leadership of the international Muslim Brotherhood, which is mostly the Egyptian leadership:**

a. **The first circle**—Muslim Brotherhood leaders in the various countries are required to follow the decisions made by the movement's general leadership (the general guide, the Guidance Office, and the Shura Council) on membership conditions and general policy. In addition, they must secure the approval of the General Guidance Office before making important political decisions.

b. **The second circle**—Muslim Brotherhood leaders in the various countries are required to consult and reach an agreement with the general guide or the Guidance Office before making decisions on local issues that may affect the Muslim Brotherhood in other countries.

c. **The third circle**—the leeway for independent action⁵² of Muslim Brotherhood leaderships in other countries includes the local movement's action plan, policy, and activity, organizational development, and positions on local affairs that have no bearing on the Muslim Brotherhood in other countries, provided they do not conflict with the movement's overall strategy. Such issues must be reported to the general guide or the Guidance Office as soon as possible or in the annual report of the general supervisor (the title held by Muslim Brotherhood leaders outside of Egypt).

d. Additionally, Muslim Brotherhood leaders in the various countries must share the burden of spreading the movement's principles, and each national branch is required to

⁵⁰ The structure and method of operation of the international Muslim Brotherhood movement is unascertained. According to an interview given by former general guide Mahdi Akef to Al-Quds al-Arabi in April 2004, the Global Guidance Office consists of 80 Egyptian and five non-Egyptian members, while the Global Shura Council consists of 90 Egyptian and 40 non-Egyptian members.

⁵¹ Also exposed in the Salsabil affair (1992).

⁵² This is motivated by the movement's understanding that each branch exists in different conditions and is subject to a system of considerations and opportunities unique to its country.

pay a specified annual amount to the general Muslim Brotherhood. The exact amount is jointly determined with the Guidance Office.

The Muslim Brotherhood's funding sources

93. The extent of the Muslim Brotherhood's economic activity and funding sources is uncertain. **The financial system is considered one of the movement's most closely-guarded secrets, directly managed by the general guide**, his deputies, and the secretary general by virtue of being its major source of power. **The movement's leaders claim that there is no central economic body responsible for funding its activities. In their view, all funds come directly from the pockets of its members;** accordingly, each administrative office is charged with independently managing economic activity in its respective sector.

94. However, our information suggests that the extensive financial network is based on **private donors outside of Egypt** (mainly from Persian Gulf states and the West), **including well-organized foundations; funds collected from the movement's activists**, mainly the wealthy ones; **"charity funds" (zakaat) collected in mosques and during public conferences organized by the movement** (such as Ramadan fast-breaking meals and conferences on the Palestinian issue); and **profits from investments made by the movement and its members in various companies and enterprises** in Egypt and elsewhere.

95. The Muslim Brotherhood apparently has **extensive connections with Islamic banks and financial institutions**,⁵³ on which it relies, so it seems, to manage its routine financial activities. It is also likely that the movement's financial system is **nourished by regular budgets transferred by the Egyptian regime to legal charitable societies** strongly controlled by Muslim Brotherhood members.

96. On April 24, 2010, the Al-Masri al-Youm newspaper reported that a criminal lawsuit was filed against five Muslim Brotherhood leaders for transferring millions of dollars from abroad into Egypt to fund the movement's activity. The funds had been transferred through economic institutions in Egypt owned by Muslim Brotherhood activists. One of them is detained in Egypt, and the others were tried in absentia.

⁵³ Such institutions proliferated in Egypt during the 1980s; however, later in the same decade the regime was able to eliminate the system of Islamic investment companies working with the Muslim Brotherhood. The latest major financial institution exposed as funding Muslim Brotherhood activities was Al-Taqwa Bank, directed by Muslim Brotherhood member Youssef Nada. Incorporated in the Bahamas in 1988, it was shut down in 2000 for financial felonies.

97. One of the suspects, Ibrahim Munir Ahmed Mustafa,⁵⁴ was accused of exploiting the Israeli Operation Cast Lead to collect donations for the movement, claiming the funds would go towards helping the "Palestinian people". The other suspects are also accused of involvement in fundraising and laundering money transferred to the movement and supposedly raised for the Palestinian people. Another suspect, Wagdi Ghanem, was said to be involved in raising funds at a conference held by an organization known as the **Palestinian Forum in Britain**.

98. One of the British institutions reported by the newspaper Al-Masri Al-Youm to have been involved in transferring the funds to Egypt is Dar al-Ri'aya (Muslim Welfare House), an institute belonging to the Muslim Brotherhood in Britain. On January 8, 2011, the Al-Ahram newspaper reported that the criminal court in Giza had reopened the affair.

⁵⁴ **Ibrahim Munir**, a London resident, is a member of the Muslim Brotherhood Guidance Office, chairman of the international Muslim Brotherhood organization, and the movement's spokesman in the West. He supervises the Muslim Brotherhood mouthpiece Risalat al-Ikhwan, published in London.

Chapter 5: The Muslim Brotherhood's struggle against the various Egyptian regimes and other challenges facing it

The challenge posed by the Egyptian regime

99. In its 83-year existence, Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood has become the largest socio-religious movement, with the most extensive deployment and influence among Sunni-Muslim societies in other countries. Its worldview, based on the belief that "Islam is the solution" to all personal, social, and political problems, has struck roots across the Middle East, allowing it to become the major opposition to the regime in Egypt and many other countries in the Middle East (for example, Jordan and Syria).

100. Since the 1950s, all the governments in Egypt have perceived the Muslim Brotherhood as their major opponent due to its radical-Islamic ideology and success in penetrating state institutions. The movement operates a nation-wide network of welfare, health, and preaching services (*da'wah*), relying on a variety of funding sources (most of them outside of Egypt), thus creating an alternative to the inefficiency of government apparatuses in dealing with the needs and difficulties of the common Egyptian citizen.

101. The combination between social activity, filling the vacuum created by the regime, and distributing an authentic cultural-religious message that appeals to broad sectors of the population is one of the reasons for the considerable popularity gained by the movement among the Egyptian public, which has become a source of great irritation for the Egyptian regime.

102. The Egyptian regime's approach to dealing with the Muslim Brotherhood has been multi-dimensional, consisting of a wide variety of methods, from violent suppression to local and temporary arrangements. The targets and intensities of the measures taken against the movement changed from ruler to ruler and from period to period; as a rule, however, the relations between the regime and the movement follow a similar cyclic pattern: the Muslim Brotherhood lowers its profile as the regime steps up activity against it, the regime's suppression diminishes as the movement tones down its activity and obscures its objectives, the movement reasserts itself once again and challenges the regime, and so the cycle continues.

103. **The following are some features of the struggle between the two sides:**

a. **On the social scene—most of the time, the regime’s activity against the movement could be characterized by “controlled acceptance”, since its social activity partly served its interests (by alleviating tensions in the weaker sectors of society). In the past decade, the regime has started taking more aggressive measures,⁵⁵ forcing the movement to reduce its institutionalized *da’wah* activity and, in many cases, move to “individualized” *da’wah*. Nevertheless, its decentralized structure, numerous funding sources, and variety of social services it provides give the movement a high degree of resilience against the regime’s measures.**

b. **On the ideological scene—the regime’s efforts to compete against the movement for the hearts of the common people or effectively monitor the contents of its preaching activity (with the assistance of the religious establishment) have resulted in a failure, and have even invigorated Islamization processes in Egypt. In the years prior to Mubarak’s fall, the regime attempted to undermine the movement’s popularity by arresting members, particularly those belonging to its reformist bloc, which supported greater involvement in politics and was widely popular with the younger generation. At the same time, the regime also strengthened Egypt’s Salafism⁵⁶ (as yet a non-political school of thought in Islam) as an ideological alternative to the political Islam of the Muslim Brotherhood.**

c. **On the political scene—the regime has done everything possible to keep the movement from amassing political power. It does so by the imposition of strict constitutional limitations,⁵⁷ suppression (using the extensive powers granted to the regime by the emergency law),⁵⁸ prevention/minimization of achievements made by the movement in elections to official state**

⁵⁵ Such measures included razing structures built by the movement, preventing Ramadan fast-breaking meals, freezing financial assets allegedly affiliated with the movement, etc.

⁵⁶ **Salafiyya** (lit. “return to the path of the forefathers”) is a school of thought in Islam that appeared in Egypt, first as modernist intellectual, which later undergone changes and gave rise to additional schools of thought. **In general, the Muslim Brotherhood is one of the incarnations of Salafiyya.** In the above context, however, the term is used to refer to the stricter (in the religious-legal sense) branch, which developed later and was influenced by modern Saudi Wahhabism (a non-militant branch that preaches obedience to the regime). This branch prohibits any liberal interpretation of the Muslim holy texts and demands adherence to the written text of the Quran, including the imitation of the physical aspects of life (customs, dress, etc.) during Prophet Muhammad’s time as they are depicted in the Quran.

⁵⁷ Among other things, the regime constitutionally banned the establishment of religious-oriented parties, which made it difficult for the movement to present a presidential candidate on behalf of the party, while setting hard-to-attain conditions for presenting an independent presidential candidate (not on behalf of any party).

⁵⁸ For example, by sending detained Muslim Brotherhood leaders to a court martial with no possibility of appeal.

institutions,⁵⁹ and imposing arrangements with the movement from a position of power—ahead of elections⁶⁰ or during sensitive times (to ensure peace and quiet). **In this sense, the regime has the upper hand. The movement understood it, and in recent decades sought to avoid conflicts with it.**

d. **In the preventive scene—the regime occasionally detained Muslim Brotherhood activists and released them** (a “revolving door” of sorts, mostly prior to and after elections); **conducted raids** on its publishers and libraries and confiscated preaching materials and documents; **took action against the movement’s local funding sources**; and waged propaganda campaigns against the movement by portraying it as being affiliated with terrorism.

Other challenges faced by the Muslim Brotherhood until the fall of Mubarak’s regime

104. In addition to the challenge of surviving under the oppression and persecution by the Egyptian regime, prior to the fall of Mubarak’s regime the movement faced **a series of other difficult challenges that threatened its cohesiveness, ideological attraction, and even its continued political existence. The following are the major challenges faced by the movement:**

a. **Questions of identity and mission: in the past decade, the movement’s activists, particularly the younger generation, have become increasingly uncertain about the movement’s identity and objectives. In this context, the main issue is whether the Muslim Brotherhood should remain a socio-religious movement with a clandestine aspect, become an open, “transparent” political party, or preserve both elements.** The movement also has difficulties deciding on the fundamental issues on **which its members’ opinions differ, such as the character of the state it will establish if it can assume power** (an Islamic state or a civilian state with an Islamic orientation). The movement **had difficulties reconciling the principles of its Islamic ideology with its political goals**, and has therefore avoided providing specific answers to these questions.

⁵⁹ For example, suspending elections to trade unions; in the case of parliament or local elections—deliberate division of election regions to make it difficult for the movement’s candidates to attain enough votes to get seats; arresting candidates and/or eliminating/weeding out the candidacies of movement members (which was also customary in elections to student organizations) and forcing it to withdraw from the race; and forging elections results.

⁶⁰ For example, arrangements on the number of candidates presented by the movement.

b. **The challenge of maintaining cohesiveness** results mostly from tensions with regard to the issue of the movement's identity **and the lack of a charismatic leadership:**

1) **Widening differences between worldviews, particularly between the conservative school of thought**, whose top priority is *da'wah* activity and moderate political involvement while maintaining the movement's original religious and ideological principles; and the **pragmatic school of thought**, which prefers stronger political integration even at the price of giving up or diminishing some of the movement's principles, and whose representatives support the establishment of a political party alongside the movement (in stark contrast to Hassan al-Banna's views).⁶¹

2) **The increase of internal power struggles and personal intrigues. The decades-long absence of a strong, visionary leader** (the current general guide, Mohammed Badie, is not considered as such) **has intensified internal division and compromised the movement's ability to formulate a coherent policy.** The concentration of power in the hands of the conservative faction and the institutionalization of the norm of promoting long-standing, wealthy, and well-connected members at the expense of those with skills alienates the younger generation. However, **most young activists and representatives of the reformist faction remain loyal to the movement and seek to change it from within.**

c. **Difficulties in maintaining ideological attraction:**

1) **Social and technological changes, particularly globalization and the internet era, have limited the movement leaders' ability to influence the minds of its younger activists.** The latter have developed and spread an independent worldview, usually more liberal than that held by the older generations, and often critical towards the conduct of the conservative leadership. **The leadership's disregard for their ideas and demands, coupled with the increasing popularity of the "personal" and "economic" schools of Islam** (driven by individualization trends and the development of consumption culture) **produces potential competitors to the movement's view of political Islam.**

⁶¹ Some go as far as to demand that the movement be transformed entirely into a party. This school of thought, also known as *wasatiyya* (supporters of the middle ground) has apparently lost some of its power and is currently not represented in the general guide's office.

2) There is even evidence to suggest that **regular members leave the Muslim Brotherhood for those competitors**, or even for the idea of global jihad. Thus, **in 1995 a group that splintered from the Muslim Brotherhood established a party called "Al-Wasat" ("The Middle"), stressing democratic, pluralist, and tolerant order.** It has now been recognized as a legal party by the current Egyptian regime. **It is small wonder, therefore, that the movement was not the initiator or leader of the recent events in Egypt. It played only a minor role, joining the protests only when it was certain of their intensity and with the purpose of exploiting them for its own goals.**

d. **Difficulty in maintaining political relevance and survivability—the Muslim Brotherhood's considerable penetration of state institutions has been blocked by the regime. The movement has not been able to translate its parliamentary force into real influence on its policy. In addition, it avoided taking part in previous domestic protests** (mostly taking part in protests involving the Palestinians and Israel as the lowest common denominator of other opposition elements, when it was able to prove its ability to bring thousands to the streets);⁶² **or making strong, long-term alliances with other opposition factions** (due to concerns over getting into trouble with the regime, as well as its clandestine nature and differences of views and interests). **Such passivity has drawn criticism from the movement itself and erodes its relevance as a political player.**

e. **The status of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood vis-à-vis its global counterpart—in the past decade, it has become increasingly evident that the Egyptian movement is losing its status with the global Muslim Brotherhood.** The erosion is evident in the fact that other Muslim Brotherhood movements have become more active in challenging the Egyptian movement's right to remain the leader of the global movement, **and in the increasing popularity of Qatar-based Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi in Egypt, the Arab world, and Europe** (see Chapter 12).

105. The fall of Mubarak's regime **is perceived by the Muslim Brotherhood as a historic opportunity.** The movement **had already established a party** – "The Freedom and Justice Party" – **and is determined to use the political process** (it hopes for as 40%-50% of parliament) **to gain power and gradually establish its dominance in Egypt.**

⁶² One example is the protests that took place during Operation Cast Lead (January 2009), led by Muslim Brotherhood activists and attended by tens of thousands of people.

Chapter 6: The Muslim Brotherhood's stance on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict

The Muslim Brotherhood's stance towards Israel

106. The Muslim Brotherhood's stance on the existence of the State of Israel is dictated by its fundamental ideological principles, shaped and transformed by historical circumstances. The Muslim Brotherhood opposes the State of Israel's right to exist on ideological grounds, stresses that it has no right to exist in the region, and strives to establish a Palestinian state on the entire territory of "Palestine". Since 1979, the movement has strongly opposed Egypt's peace treaty with Israel and strived to abolish it. However, it now follows a more pragmatic line, according to which it is necessary to "examine" the peace treaty and its future will be decided in a referendum.

107. In the early 20th century, when the Muslim Brotherhood made its first appearance on the Egyptian political scene, public discourse was replete with aspirations to "liberate" the Arab nation from the burden of Western colonialism, with each political force (liberals, left-wingers, etc.) suggesting its own means to accomplish that goal. The Muslim Brotherhood was also required to reflect these aspirations on its ideological platform, with the Zionist enterprise (and later the State of Israel) perceived and depicted as part of the West's plan to gain a foothold in the Middle East to exercise colonial power over Arab nations.

108. Other than the historical context, the Muslim Brotherhood's opposition to the existence of Israel as a political, Zionist entity is also grounded in ideological considerations:

- a. The assertion (attributed by Muslim Brotherhood ideologues to the Quran) that it is inconceivable that a part of the Muslim nation should be ruled by foreigners (for example, the Muslim Brotherhood opposes a Copt becoming the president of Egypt).
- b. The assertion that Palestine is a land of *waqf* (Islamic endowment), and part of the "land of Islam" (*dar al-islam*), and as such may not be ruled by non-Muslims and has to be liberated from them.

c. **Modern anti-Semitic approaches presented in an Islamic garb** (such as the alleged quotes from the Quran referring to Jews as the children of pigs and monkeys, traitors, and so forth).

109. The Muslim Brotherhood's strong stance on Israel **has directly influenced their political conduct vis-à-vis the regimes of various Arab countries**. The most well-known example was the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood's decision **to cease its political cooperation with the regime, withdraw from the government, and boycott the 1997 parliament elections following the signing of the peace treaty with Israel in 1994**.

110. While the Muslim Brotherhood emphasizes a strident rhetoric on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, in fact it is **afraid to depart from the accepted policy of boycotting Israel, and often has a hard time reconciling its principle position with its political objectives**. This is due to the fact that the Islamic worldview may alienate potential supporters aware of the benefits of peace with Israel (international legitimacy and economic aid extended to Egypt because of it). For this reason, **Israel and its existence take a back seat in the overall spectrum of the issues dealt with by the movement**. For example, **the issue of Israel was conspicuously absent from the movement's platform, published in September 2007**. The Muslim Brotherhood now emphasizes the statement that, **when it is in power, the treaties with Israel will be put to a referendum**.

111. One example of the influence of the fundamentally-hostile stance towards Israel on the political activity of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt is **its attempts to oppose the signing and implementation of the natural gas export agreement from Egypt to Israel**. It is a political campaign **waged by Muslim Brotherhood MPs in the Egyptian parliament since 2003**, and in fact, **to this very day**. The struggle is mostly reflected in the submission of parliamentary questions to relevant government ministries, as well as publicly condemning the gas export program. In 2008, members of the Muslim Brotherhood faction in the Egyptian parliament even expressed their willingness to jointly withdraw from the parliament as an act of protest over the gas export agreement. The Muslim Brotherhood did not follow through with its intention, arguing that such a move could have been interpreted as an attempt to abdicate the responsibility placed on the movement by its voters.

112. Despite the belligerent rhetoric towards Israel, a number of statements made by the movement's leaders have included (under some political circumstances) **veiled references to the Muslim Brotherhood's intent to honor the peace treaty with Israel** if the

movement comes to power. Thus, prior to the 2005 parliament elections, the movement's former general guide Mahdi Akef noted that while the movement did not recognize Israel, it would not fight it and honor the treaties (i.e., those signed by the Egyptian government with Israel) if it attains power. Issam al-Aryan, chairman of the movement's Political Bureau, stated that the Muslim Brotherhood **would not be able to act in the same fashion as an opposition organization and as a ruling party.**

113. In October 2007, Al-Aryan claimed that if the Muslim Brotherhood came to power, it would take a "realistic" approach towards Israel—that is, treat Israel as an **existing country and recognize the treaties signed with it.**⁶³ Later, Al-Aryan was forced to retract his statement.⁶⁴ **The movement now claims that all decisions regarding this issue must be made by a referendum.**

114. Such interest-driven statements, echoes of which can also be found in the recent events in Egypt, **have been made in political contexts that were right for their time and circumstances.** In light of the fundamental ideological hostility towards Israel and the wall-to-wall support for Hamas (see below), **it is highly questionable whether the Muslim Brotherhood will stand by these statements if it can achieve influential government positions,** let alone if it succeeds in establishing an Islamic regime in Egypt.

The Muslim Brotherhood's position towards Hamas

The ideological sphere

115. The Muslim Brotherhood branch with the most extensive ties to the original Egyptian movement is the Palestinian branch—the **Hamas movement.** Hamas emerged from the Al-Mujamma' al-Islami Association, the Gaza Strip branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, **and its ideology (with the exception of characteristic Palestinian themes) is based on Hassan al-Banna's teachings.** Hamas' education system, mosques, preaching, and welfare (*da'wah*), as well as the significance it places on them, are clearly based on the Muslim Brotherhood model. Hassan al-Banna is considered a role model by Hamas, and his portrait is featured on its posters (see below).

116. The ideological affinity between the two movements is reflected in the **Hamas charter, its primary, most important document,** portraying its ideology as it was shaped and

⁶³ On the same occasion, Al-Aryan claimed that if a Palestinian state was established, the movement would consider recognizing Israel—later he claimed that his remarks were distorted.

⁶⁴ Having been strongly criticized for his remark, both by the public and by the movement's leadership, Al-Aryan claimed that if the movement came to power, it would act in political ways to help Palestinians regain their rights, stressing that such ways did not entail recognition of Israel.

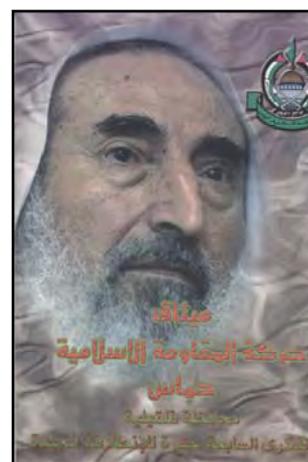
formulated by its founders.⁶⁵ The document sets out a radical Islamic worldview inspired by the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, which has undergone no significant changes in the years since the establishment of Hamas. With regard to Israel, the charter expresses a non-compromising view which considers the “Palestinian problem” a religious Muslim issue, and the conflict with Israel a battle between Islam and the Jewish “infidels”. The territory of “Palestine” is portrayed by the charter as an Islamic endowment no part of which may be given up, since nobody (including Arab and Muslim rulers) has that kind of authority.

117. That worldview brings in its wake the refusal to recognize the State of Israel's right to exist as an independent, sovereign nation, the waging of a ceaseless jihad (holy war) against it and total opposition to any agreement or arrangement that would recognize its right to exist. At the beginning of the charter there is a quotation attributed to Hassan Al-Banna, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood and an important figure in the Hamas pantheon of martyrs, that “Israel will arise and continue to exist until Islam wipes it out, as it wiped out what went before.”

The quotation
by Hassan al-
Banna



The quotation attributed to the “martyr imam” Hassan al-Banna at the beginning of the charter: “Israel will arise and continue to exist until Islam wipes it out, as it wiped out what went before.”



The front cover of the Hamas charter, printed in Qalqilya in 2004. It shows Sheikh Ahmad Yassin, who shaped the charter and gave it its final form.

⁶⁵ For more information, see our March 23, 2006 Information Bulletin: “The Hamas Charter (1988): Overtly anti-Semitic and anti-West, radical Islamic in outlook, it stresses Hamas’ ideological commitment to destroy the State of Israel through a long-term holy war (jihad)”.

The practical sphere

118. In recent years, the Muslim Brotherhood's relations with Hamas have been reflected in the following:

a. **Political, ideological and propaganda support**—the Muslim Brotherhood provides Hamas with political, ideological, and propaganda support, attacking the policy of the Egyptian regime when it believes it to be detrimental to Hamas. The propaganda support can be seen on Muslim Brotherhood media.



Ismail Haniyah, chief of the Hamas de-facto administration in the Gaza Strip, at a meeting with Dr. Mohammed al-Baltaji, chairman of the Muslim Brotherhood faction in the Egyptian People's Assembly. Dr. Mohammed al-Baltaji was the leader of the Egyptian delegation aboard the Mavi Marmara.

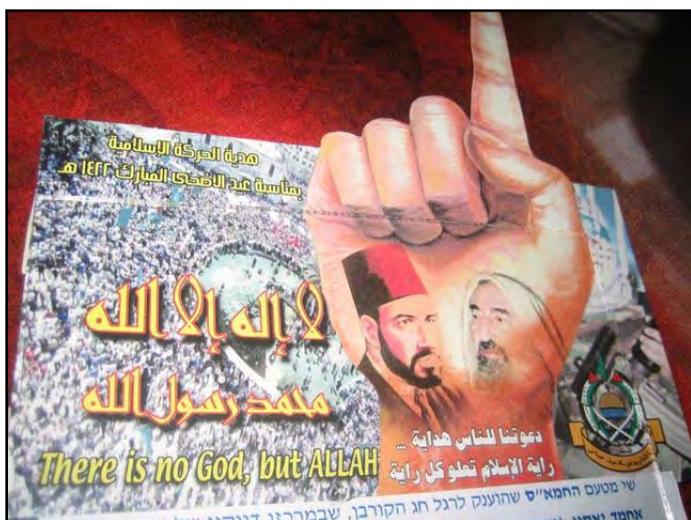
b. **Intensive involvement in the flotillas campaigns and aid convoys to the Gaza Strip**—the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood is intensively involved in flotillas and convoys coming to the Gaza Strip (also through the Egyptian association of doctors, controlled by the movement). An important part in this campaign is **played by the Muslim Brotherhood network in Britain and other European countries** (in cooperation with radical left-wing elements). The Mavi Marmara flotilla included two Muslim Brotherhood members of the Egyptian People's Assembly and Muslim Brotherhood activists from Jordan.

c. **Financial aid**—in a 2006 interview with senior Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood activist Issam al-Aryan, he confirmed the movement's intention to provide financial assistance to Hamas and stressed its commitment to assisting the Palestinian people. Egyptian media reported that **following Operation Cast Lead, the Muslim Brotherhood established a "Gaza Strip rehabilitation fund" to raise 50 million dollars for Hamas**. It is unclear to what extent the promise was fulfilled.

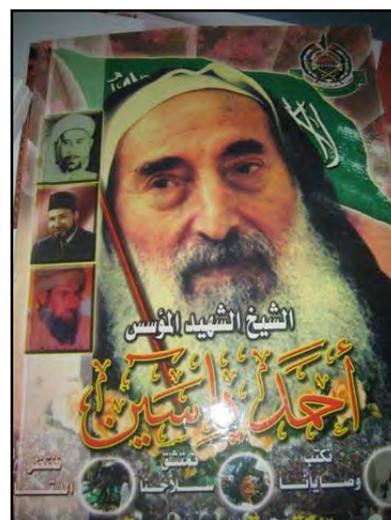
119. On its part, the Egyptian regime was highly concerned over the **Hamas takeover of the Gaza Strip** (dubbed "an Islamic emirate" by Egyptian media) **and the processes of**

military buildup (by means of smuggling weapons through Egypt) **and Islamization taking place in the Gaza Strip**. The possibility of terrorism, subversion, and radical Islam spreading from the Gaza Strip to Egypt was considered by the Egyptian regime a threat to Egypt's national security.

120. Consequently, **the Egyptian regime made an effort to keep the Muslim Brotherhood-Hamas connections to a minimum**. Among other things, **the regime warned Hamas against contacting the Muslim Brotherhood**, detained Muslim Brotherhood elements suspected of holding actual economic and operative contact with Hamas, and foiled the Muslim Brotherhood's efforts to assist Hamas during sensitive times (by denying the Muslim Brotherhood's aid convoys the right to cross into the Gaza Strip shortly after Operation Cast Lead, for example). In addition, **it waged an ongoing campaign to delegitimize the association between the Gaza Strip movements and Egypt, portraying them as a "conspiracy"** (shared by Iran and Hezbollah) to destabilize the region, and Egypt in particular.



A gift given by Hamas on the occasion of Eid al-Adha, as part of its *da'wah* activity. Featured in the center are Sheikh Ahmed Yassin and Hassan al-Banna, with the Hamas logo on the right.



A poster of Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, the founder of Hamas, with other personalities revered by Hamas. From top to bottom: Izz al-Din al-Qassam, Hassan al-Banna, Abdullah Azzam.

Chapter 7: The development of political discourse in the Muslim Brotherhood and the 2007 election platform

121. **The changing economic, social, and political reality in Egypt, and the movement's increasing integration into the local political system, has transformed the political discourse and election platform of the Muslim Brotherhood in recent years.**

122. **The movement has gradually toned down religious-Islamic terms and demands, putting an emphasis on terms and demands compatible with the spirit of democratic reform and economic liberalism.** At least on the outside, it has partially brought itself in line with the political demands of other opposition elements. The movement began making such declarations in 1994, **adopting views that proclaim the principles of Islam to be compatible with democracy.** In practice, however, **reliable information in our possession shows that the Muslim Brotherhood leadership still clings to the dogmatic ideological line, considering the moderated statements as nothing more than a tactical device.**

123. **The changes in the movement's discourse and platform have resulted from the demands of opposition elements and circles in the Egyptian public** (independent intellectuals, Copts) **to clarify its positions on sensitive issues.** For example, the movement was asked to clarify its position on the practical implications of implementing the Sharia (a codex of laws that is not static and open to various interpretations) and its impact on legislation, the status and rights of Copts and women in Egypt, political pluralism, and freedom of expression.

124. **Other considerations that seem likely to have prompted the movement to such a change have been the desire to differentiate itself from radical Islamic movements following the September 11 attacks and the desire to take advantage of the Middle East democratization agenda to have the U.S. administration exert pressure on the Egyptian regime to recognize it as a legitimate movement and grant it political freedom.**

125. As part of the conciliatory rhetoric, former Muslim Brotherhood general guide Mahdi Akef claimed ahead of the 2005 parliament elections **that while the movement did not recognize Israel, it would not fight it and honor the treaties** (i.e., the peace treaty)

once in power. Later, the movement began stressing that while it basically believes international treaties must be honored, the treaty with Israel must be reexamined and put to a referendum.

126. Despite these efforts, the movement finds it difficult to reconcile democratic principles with its Islamic objectives and worldview. Most of its publications remain vague with regard to sensitive issues, and even include contradictory messages. What is more, there have been obvious discrepancies between the movement's publications and statements made by its leaders in Arabic and those made in English, which use more moderate formulations.

127. One noteworthy example of the Muslim Brotherhood's inconsistent messages is the statements made by former deputy general guide Mohammed Habib on the issue of the political rights of Egypt's Copts. In 2005, Habib noted that Copts had no right whatsoever to be elected to a senior political post. In 2006, he said that Copts do have the right to be elected to a senior political post but not to presidency; in a statement made in English at the same time, however, he noted that Copts were citizens with equal rights and could be elected for presidency as well. **The 2007 draft of the Muslim Brotherhood's political platform once again denied Copts the right to run for presidency.**

128. According to the movement, the draft political platform published in July-August 2007 was designed to be the first step towards the establishment of a political party. Apparently, the publication was also motivated by the movement's desire to remain politically-relevant despite the severe oppression by the regime. **The platform sought to combine—rather unsuccessfully—such democratic principles as equal rights and opportunities, freedom of expression, and political pluralism, with contradictory Islamic principles, like barring women and Copts from running for presidency and establishing an advisory committee of clerics to supervise policy, which would render the parliament powerless.⁶⁶**

129. In the economic sphere, the platform took exception to the idea of privatization, establishing Islamic economy (which forbids stock market profiteering and interest loans), **and imposing Islamic norms on foreign tourists** (dress code, alcohol consumption, etc.). **On foreign issues, while taking a positive view of cooperation with world countries, the platform presented the need to reexamine international treaties signed by Egypt** (also implying the peace treaty with Israel).

⁶⁶ The English version of the platform published on the official **Muslim Brotherhood website did not include some of the manifestly Islamic elements that appeared in the Arabic version.** Those that did appear were toned down.

130. The draft platform also revealed a telling insight into the tensions between the movement's younger generation, which supports a flexible, broad interpretation of the "implementation of the Sharia" and the movement's goals, and the older generation, representing the movement's conservative faction that is concerned over the loss of its unique voice, which may alienate its traditional supporters.

Selected articles from the Muslim Brotherhood draft political platform (2007)

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Foreign policy | <p>Honoring international treaties and agreements that call for cooperation between nations for the sake of humanity</p> <p>Reviving Egypt's leading role in the Muslim and Arab world</p> <p>Building a network of international connections for the promotion of human contact between nations and civilizations</p> <p>Reexamining bilateral treaties and agreements is an accepted norm in international relations, stipulated in the treaties themselves and considered a routine procedure</p> |
|-----------------------|--|

| Issue | Democratic features | Islamic features |
|---------------------|--|--|
| Nature of the state | A state based on the rule of law, with equal rights and opportunities without discrimination on grounds of gender, origin, language, religion, and faith , a state which promotes national unity. | The head of state (president or prime minister, according to regime) is a religious post , and is therefore contrary to the faith of the non-Muslim . Accordingly, a non-Muslim is exempt from this task . A woman should not be charged with the duties of president as they go against her nature and her other social roles. |
| | Promotion of legislation to | The constitution must be |

| | | |
|---------------------------------|--|---|
| | guarantee freedom, education to political involvement, and freedom of opinion. | based on an Islamic identity and an Arab cultural orientation. |
| | Freedom of political association and a culture of political pluralism, the abolishment of one-party monopoly and hegemony. Separation between the three government branches, guaranteeing independence for the judiciary and the judges. | It is necessary to establish an independent, elected body of Islamic clerics to examine the decisions of the president and the parliament and provide consultation and recommendations on policy in accordance with Islamic law. |
| | It is necessary to cultivate a “civil society” —the number of its institutions and their independence are vital for guaranteeing the stability of the political system and the promotion of democracy. | |
| Political-economic order | Responsibility for economic activity must be transferred to the private sector, based on the implementation of technology in accordance with the conditions and circumstances where economic activity takes place. | The use of the stock exchange must be reduced. |
| | Tourists should be encouraged to visit Egypt. | Tourists must follow the principles of Islam and not violate them in public during their stay in Egypt. |
| | Guided and directed economic activity based on an Islamic buyers’ market , grounded in a system of cooperation, respectable economic competition, and restrained economic liberalism to control production based on supply and demand. | |

Chapter 8: Profiles of prominent Muslim Brotherhood figures in Egypt

Overview

131. **Most Muslim Brotherhood leaders and senior activists belong to the middle or upper-middle class**; some come from wealthy families,⁶⁷ **have university or college degrees** (some even studied in the West), **and have work experience in the public sector**. Many of the movement's senior officials acquired their religious education in its own religious studies system (even though there is also a group of Al-Azhar University graduates).

Guidance Office

132. Dr. Mohammed Badie Abd al-Majid Sami

a. **Position in the movement: general guide** (as of January 2010)



b. **Personal background:** born 1943, from Al-Mahallah al-Kubra, married and father of three, the son-in-law of the fifth general guide, Mustafa Mashhur. Has a Ph.D. in veterinary medicine from Zagazig University, worked as a lecturer in the universities of Asyut and Zagazig, resided in Yemen during the 1970s and 1980s, was chairman of the general veterinarians trade union.

c. **Background in the movement:** member since the 1960s; member of the Guidance Office since 1996; member of the Global Guidance Office since 2007. Arrested and served several prison sentences for his activity in the movement (the first time was in 1965-1974; the last time was for one month in 2008 during the municipal elections).

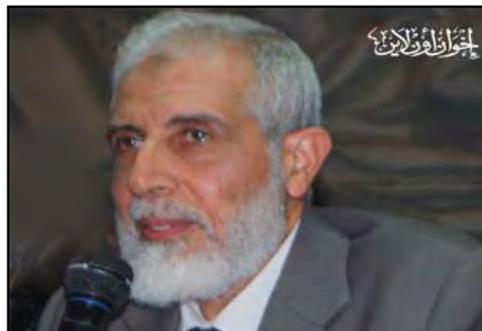
d. **Ideological orientation:** in his early days, he was influenced by the ideas of Sayyid Qutb. He is considered a prominent representative of the movement's conservative school of thought. After being elected general guide, he made statements in support of Hamas' terrorist activities and the jihad waged by "persecuted Muslims" in various arenas worldwide.

⁶⁷ For example, Umar al-Tilmisani, the third general guide, was born to an Algerian family that had immigrated to Egypt in the 19th century and built its wealth in real estate. Abu al-Nasr, the fourth general guide, came from one of the richest, most influential families in Asyut Province.

e. **Other:** he has yet to prove himself; **it is our impression, however, that he is a lackluster, careful leader with no charisma or vision**, elected as a compromise candidate between the movement's powers.

133. Dr. Mahmoud Ezzat Ibrahim

a. **Position in the movement: deputy general guide** (as of January 2010) and head of the Da'wah Dissemination Department (as of February 2010)



b. **Personal background:** born 1944, Cairo, married to the sister of former general guide Mahdi Akef. Lecturer on medicine at Zagazig University, also worked as a lecturer at Sana'a University in Yemen (in the early 1980s and possibly even prior to that).

c. **Background in the movement:** member since 1962, elected as member of the Guidance Office in 1981 but is a permanent member since 1995. Formerly the movement's chairman. Arrested and served several prison sentences (first in 1965-1974; the latest was for three months in 2010).

d. **Ideological orientation:** considered a prominent representative of the conservative school of thought.

e. **Other: considered one of the most powerful, influential personalities in the movement, and the one that pulls its strings.**

134. Dr. Jum'ah Amin Abd al-Aziz

a. **Position in the movement: deputy general guide** (as of January 2010); head of the Education Department and supervisor of the Muslim Sorority (as of February 2010).



b. **Personal background:** born 1934, Beni Suef.

c. **Background in the movement:** member since 1951; served as director of the International Islamic Youth Symposium in Jeddah in 1981-1985; member of the

Guidance Office since 1995. One of the movement's ideologues and historians. Arrested and served several prison sentences (the first time was in 1965-1971).

d. **Ideological orientation:** prominent representative of the conservative school of thought.

e. **Other:** known to suffer health issues.

135. Dr. Rashad al-Bayumi



a. **Position in the movement: deputy general guide** (as of January 2010); head of the Students Department (as of February 2010).

b. **Personal background:** born 1935, Sohag. Lecturer at the Cairo University's Faculty of Science (specializes in geology).

c. **Background in the movement:** joined in 1948 during the war; worked in the UAE until 1986; member of the Guidance Office since 1995. Served a prison sentence in 1954-1971.

d. **Ideological orientation:** prominent representative of the conservative school of thought.

e. **Other:** known for his lack of organizational skills.

136. Dr. Khairat al-Shater



a. **Position in the movement: deputy general guide** (as of January 2004); currently serving a prison sentence.

b. **Personal background:** born 1950, Dakahlia, married to the sister of Guidance Office member Mahmoud Ghazlan; his daughter is married to the latter's son. Has an undergraduate degree in engineering from Alexandria University and a graduate diploma in liberal arts from Al-Shams University; has a diploma in Islamic studies; studied civil society and NGO studies; apparently has a Ph.D. in computer studies from his studies in London. In addition, he has worked in commerce and has been a board

member of several companies and banks. Owns over ten companies and factories (including the Salsabil computer company, associated with the 1992 affair when security forces confiscated materials on the Muslim Brotherhood and its members from the company offices). His worth is estimated at 100 million Egyptian pounds; resided in Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Britain, and traveled extensively to Arab, Asian, and European countries.

c. Background in the movement: officially joined in 1974; started taking part in Islamic activities as early as in 1967 (he was apparently a Nasserist in his early days); member of the Guidance Office since 1995. Detained several times (starting in 1968), notably in 1995 (for five years), and in 2007 (for seven years) on charges of financing terrorism and money laundering following the Al-Azhar militia affair in December 2006. **Considered the economic brain of the movement and its main financier** (second to Youssef Nada).

d. Ideological orientation: while he leans more towards the reformist school of thought in the ideological sense, in practice he occupies the middle ground between the conservatives and the reformists. Said to be “embraced by the old guard”.

e. Other: prior to his arrest, considered the movement’s strongest, most influential figure (nicknamed “Iron Man”, he was in control of the Muslim Brotherhood’s funding sources and appointed his associates to key positions). Was popular with the movement’s younger generation.

137. Dr. Mahmoud Hussein

a. Position in the movement: secretary-general (as of January 2010) and in charge of the South Upper Egypt region (as of February 2010).



b. Personal background: born 1947, Jaffa, to a Palestinian mother. Resided in Rafah. Lecturer on engineering at Asyut University.

c. Background in the movement: was a candidate to replace the fourth general guide, Abu al-Nasr, in 1996; member of the Guidance Office since 2009. Detained in 1995 and sentenced to three years in prison.

d. **Ideological orientation:** in our assessment, he is a member of the conservative faction.

138. **Dr. Issam al-Din Mohammed Hussein al-Aryan**

a. **Position in the movement:** **Political Bureau chief and official spokesman** (as of February 2010).



b. **Personal background:** born 1954, Giza. Has a first degree in medicine, a diploma in law, and a diploma in Islamic religious law from Al-Azhar University; founding member of the Egyptian human rights organization.

c. **Background in the movement:** apparently joined in the 1970s; founding member of Islamic educational activity in Cairo University and other Egyptian universities; was member of the People's Assembly in 1987-1990 (representing Imbaba); one of the most prominent members who spearheaded the movement's integration into the political system in the 1980s; was head of the Political Bureau and chief of PR under the previous general guide. Arrested and served several prison sentences (notably in 1995-2000; his latest prison sentence was for three months in 2010).

d. **Ideological orientation:** a notable representative of the pragmatic school of thought, even though he is able to coordinate his positions with representatives of the conservative school of thought.

e. **Other:** highly active and influential member of the movement; experienced, charismatic politician able to position himself as a "warrior for democracy" vis-à-vis the West; was perceived as the movement's contact with the U.S. though he denies it.

139. **Dr. Muhammad Saad al-Katatni**

a. **Position in the movement:** **official spokesman**, in charge of the North Upper Egypt region (as of February 2010), **chairman of the parliament faction** (as of 2005).



b. **Personal background:** born 1952, has a B.A. in liberal arts and a Ph.D. in science, lecturer on botany at Al-Minya University; member of an Egyptian organization for

freedoms and human rights; secretary-general of the teaching faculty club at Al-Minya University since 1990.

c. Background in the movement: co-founder of the coordination committee between parties, national factions, and trade unions; one of the leaders of the movement's involvement in the political system; member of the Guidance Office since June 2008; the movement's representative at international conferences outside of Egypt.

d. Ideological orientation: prominent representative of the reformist faction.

e. Other: highly active in politics.

140. Dr. Mohammed Mursi

a. Position in the movement: official spokesman and head of the department of trade unions (as of February 2010).



b. Personal background: apparently born in the 1950s; head of the Department of Material Engineering at Zagazig University.

c. Background in the movement: member of the People's Assembly and chairman of the Muslim Brotherhood parliament faction (2000-2005); was not elected to the People's Assembly in 2005; negotiated with other opposition elements (particularly the Nasserist party) ahead of the 2010 Shura Council elections.

d. Ideological orientation: according to various publications, member of the pragmatic faction.

e. Other: considered to be deputy general guide Khairat al-Shater's confidant.

141. Dr. Abdul Rahman al-Bar

a. Position in the movement: the movement's mufti (replaced Abdullah Khatib in February 2010).



b. Personal background: born in 1963, Dakahlia.

Has a Ph.D. in hadith studies from Cairo University, lecturer on hadith science at Al-Azhar University.

c. Background in the movement: member of the Guidance Office since 2009; preaches to Islam abroad. Detained in 2008 on charges of funding and transferring weapons to Hamas.

d. Ideological orientation: apparently leans towards the conservative faction.

142. Dr. Osama Nasr al-Din Mohammed Mustafa

a. Position in the movement: head of the Muslim Brotherhood's administrative development department.

b. Personal background: born in 1956, Alexandria. Lecturer on microbiology at Alexandria University.

c. Background in the movement: served as chairman of the movement's administrative office in Alexandria; member of the Guidance Office since 2008. Frequently arrested since 1995 (the last time was in 2010).

143. Engineer Saad Ismat Mohammed al-Husseini

a. Position in the movement: member of the Political Bureau (as of 2010) and member of the Muslim Brotherhood faction in the People's Assembly for the provinces of Al-Gharbiyya and Al-Mahallah al-Kubra (as of 2005); deputy spokesman for the faction.



b. Personal background: born in 1959, engineer by trade.

c. Background in the movement: member of the Guidance Office since 2008; was involved in promoting contacts with other opposition elements (particularly the Al-Ghadd party) for the 2010 Shura Council elections. Detained in 1995 and acquitted; detained several times during the last decade.

d. **Ideological orientation:** in our assessment, belongs to the reformist faction.

144. **Dr. Mohammed Abdul Rahman al-Mursi**

a. **Position in the movement: in charge of the Central Delta region** (as of February 2010).

b. **Personal background:** born in 1956, Dakahlia. Cardiovascular specialist.

c. **Background in the movement:** served as deputy chief of the Muslim Brotherhood administrative office in Dakahlia Province. Arrested several times (most notably in 2004).

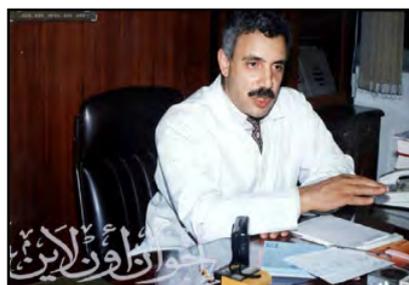


145. **Dr. Mahmoud Ahmed Abu Zaid**

a. **Position in the movement: in charge of the Greater Cairo region** (as of February 2010).

b. **Personal background:** born in 1956. Has a Ph.D. in vascular surgery; lecturer, Faculty of Medicine, Cairo University.

c. **Background in the movement:** member of the Guidance Office since 2009. Detained in 2006 and recently released.



146. **Dr. Mahmoud Sayyid Abdullah Ghazlan**

a. **Background in the movement:** former secretary-general (up to his arrest in 2001; released in 2005); rejoined the Guidance Office in 2009. Last arrested in 2007.

b. **Personal background:** apparently of the same age as general guide Badie and his deputy, Mohammed Ezzat; has family ties to Khairat al-Shater, the deputy general guide. Lecturer, Faculty of Agriculture, Zagazig University.

c. **Ideological orientation:** member of the conservative school of thought.



d. **Other:** mentioned in July 2008, with Mahmoud Ezzat and Sabri Arafa, as a powerful personality in control of the movement.

147. **Dr. Muhyi Hamed Mohammed al-Sayyid**

a. **Position in the movement: in charge of the East Delta region** (as of February 2010).



b. **Personal background:** born in 1960, Suez. Has a B.A. in medicine and surgery from Zagazig University, currently a consultant in ear, nose and throat medicine.

c. **Background in the movement:** deputy secretary-general in the Al-Sharqiyya Province, deputy chairman of the Alexandria administrative office, member of the Guidance Office since 2008. Arrested several times since 1992.

148. **Dr. Mustafa Taher al-Ghneimi**

a. **Position in the movement: in charge of the West Delta region** (as of February 2010).

b. **Personal background:** born in 1955, Gharabiyya. Gynecology specialist; served as chairman of the association of Gharabiyya doctors.

c. **Background in the movement:** member of the Guidance Office since 2009. Arrested several times (notably in 1999, over the trade unions affair).

149. **Dr. Mohammed Ali Bashar**

a. **Position in the movement: honorary member of the Guidance Office**



b. **Personal background:** born in 1951, Manufiya. Lecturer, Faculty of Engineering, Manufiya University.

Since 1997 serves as chairman of the regional office of the Federation of Engineering Institutions in Islamic Countries (FEEIC).

c. **Background in the movement:** joined in 1979, ran several times (including in 1995) for the People's Assembly but failed due to the regime's involvement; served as head of the Islamic education association in Manufiya and head of the Islamic equality and charity association; took part in international conferences on behalf of the Muslim Brotherhood; in 2005 was the movement's spokesman in Egypt and elsewhere; rejoined the Guidance Office in 2009 (his name was removed from the Guidance Office in 2008 following his arrest); arrested again in 1999 over the trade unions affair and released in 2002.

d. **Ideological orientation:** apparently affiliated with the reformist school of thought.

Prominent members of the organization's parliament faction

150. **Mohammed al-Baltaji—chairman of the Muslim Brotherhood parliament faction** (in 2005-2010) and one of the most active parliament members (for the province of Qalyubia, Shubra al-Khaymah). **Staunch activist against the blockade on the Gaza Strip.** In 2009-2010, was involved in organizing humanitarian aid convoys in protest against the construction of the steel wall along the Gaza Strip-Egypt border by the Egyptian regime. Was one of the two Egyptian parliament members who took part in the Turkish flotilla to the Gaza Strip and were present aboard the Mavi Marmara (May 2010). **He was a strong critic of hereditary power transfer** (by President Mubarak), has written articles criticizing the regime's policy in oppositionist/independent media. At the same time, **he supported the Muslim Brotherhood's non-participation in presidential elections and its choice not to support other presidential candidates, as well as to settle for only 20 percent of the seats in the People's Assembly—at least for the two next terms, while focusing on social activity.**



151. **Hussein Mohammed Ibrahim—deputy chairman of the Muslim Brotherhood parliament faction** (in 2005-2010).



152. **Jamal Nassar—spokesman for the movement's faction** in the People's Assembly, owns and runs the Muslim Brotherhood website, at times considered the movement's media advisor.

153. **Hamdi Hassan—spokesman for the movement's faction** in the People's Assembly (in 2005-2010).

154. **Hazem Farouk—active member of the Muslim Brotherhood parliament faction** (in 2005-2010, representative of the North Coast). With Mohammed al-Baltaji, was involved in activities to lift the blockade on the Gaza Strip, including participation in the Marmara flotilla (May 2010).



Other prominent Muslim Brotherhood activists

155. **Dr. Mohammed al-Sayyid Habib** (born 1943)—**formerly deputy general guide**, during which time he was considered **one of the movement's most powerful personalities** (together with Mahmoud Ezzat and Khairat al-Shater) and even **a leading candidate to replace Mahdi Akef as general guide**. Within the movement, Habib was perceived as a **self-serving**



manipulator who had no qualms about exposing internal differences of opinion and his personal criticism of the general guide's performance to the media. As a result of escalating conflicts with other elements in the Muslim Brotherhood leadership, **he was not elected to the Guidance Office** (December 2009), **as a result of which he announced his retirement from all of the posts in which he served**, although he remained a member of the organization's Shura Council. **Habib called for a "division of authority" in the movement and for a reduction of the unlimited control exercised by the Guidance Office**. So far, he has been unable to bring together a front to support his ideas. **As for his ideological orientation, Habib has positioned himself in the middle ground between the conservatives and the reformists**.

156. **Abd al-Mun'im Abul Futuh** (born 1950), **one of the most prominent leaders of the organization's pragmatic school of thought, popular with the young activists; supports the idea of turning the movement into a party; holds pragmatic and open-minded views** (for example, does not rule out women and Copts as presidential candidates) **and fervently supports the increase of the Muslim Brotherhood's political activism** (including by strengthening cooperation with other opposition elements). Already in 2002, Abul Futuh was mentioned as a candidate for senior



posts in the organization, such as general guide, deputy general guide, and the movement's spokesman; however, he has systematically lost to stronger candidates from the older generation (Ma'mun al-Hudaybi, Mahdi Akef, etc.). **In the latest elections** (December 2009), **Abul Futuh was not reelected to the Guidance Office** and is currently only a member of the movement's Shura Council.

157. **Youssef Mustafa Nada**—a millionaire, probably also as a result of arms trade. Already in the 1990s, he was known as a supporter of the Muslim Brotherhood from abroad. **Was president of the Islamic Al-Taqwa Bank, whose assets were frozen by the Americans in late 2001 on charges of**



money laundering and suspected terrorism financing. Has been operating outside of Egypt since 1954, **facilitating Muslim Brotherhood activities worldwide, mostly in Europe.** Currently considered the movement's commissioner on foreign relations. It appears that he has constant contacts with the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt.

158. **Mohammed Jamal Hashmat**—elected to the People's Assembly (for Damanhour, Al-Bahira); his membership was terminated in December 2002 when the Supreme Court found his election to be illegal; ran again in the 2003 elections but lost to a candidate of the Al-Wafd party (apparently with the regime's assistance); in the 2005 elections he lost to Democratic Party candidate



Mustafa al-Faqi. Was not reelected to the organization's Guidance Office in the previous round of appointments/elections that took place in June 2008. Belongs to the reformist school of thought and is an associate of Issam al-Aryan.

159. **Ibrahim Zaafrani**—from Alexandria, apparently **affiliated with the pragmatic school of thought**, a close associate of Issam al-Aryan, Jamal Hashmat, and the like, and is similarly a member of the doctors' union. **In 2002 he was mentioned as a potential candidate for deputy general guide.**



160. **Mokhtar Noh** (born 1953)—lawyer by trade, served as treasurer for the lawyers' union, a supporter of Issam al-Aryan, one of the candidates for deputy general guide in 2002. Muslim Brotherhood elements were not pleased with his release from prison in August 2002 due to his public support of reevaluating the movement's principles. In the past (April 2004), he became involved in a conflict with the movement over his substitution as the Muslim

Brotherhood's representative at the lawyers' union following his arrest, and over his establishment of a center for human rights and liberal studies in addition to his work in the movement.

161. **Sabri Arafa**—former member of the Guidance Office (2004-2009), a post to which he was appointed by Khairat al-Shater (who chose him over Issam al-Aryan); was apparently a close associate of Mahmoud Ezzat and Mahmoud Ghazlan; according to one report, the three are members of the core group that actually controls the movement.

162. **Lashin Abu Shanb** (born 1927)—was a candidate for general guide in 2004. Considered one of Khairat al-Shater's most important people in the Guidance Office; however, his activity was apparently terminated due to health issues and he was not elected to the Guidance Office in the latest elections (December 2009).

163. **Sheikh Abdullah al-Khatib** (born 1931)—the movement's former mufti and member of the Guidance Office until his resignation in November 2008, apparently due to health issues. Was mentioned as a possible candidate for general guide in 2004. Al-Khatib holds conservative and radical views, preaching for the destruction of existing churches and the cessation of construction of new ones, and is opposed to the election of Copts and women to senior posts.

164. **Mohammed Mahdi Akef** (born 1928)—**the movement's seventh general guide and the first in history to voluntarily step down while still alive.** Considered a weak, uncharismatic general guide elected as compromise candidate. Was member of the "secret apparatus" and even



involved in Nasser's assassination attempt; his views became more moderate following a long prison sentence. While he belongs to the conservative school of thought, he has often "flip flopped" between it and representatives of the movement's reformist school of thought. His rash hawkish statements about the regime were cause for severe internal criticism of his performance. His term as general guide was rife with internal conflicts in the Muslim Brotherhood that also leaked to the media. His weak performance was apparently the reason he stepped down. He is currently a member of the movement's Shura Council.

165. **Abd al-Mun'im al-Maqsud**—a Muslim Brotherhood attorney in Egypt.

Chapter 9: The Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood's ties to its branches in Middle Eastern and Western countries

Overview

166. **The Muslim Brotherhood emerged in Egypt as a fundamentally Egyptian Sunni-Muslim movement. However, its desire to reestablish the Islamic caliphate and spread Islam across the globe, as well as its unique character as a socio-religious movement, soon led to the spread of its activity to other scenes in the Arab and Muslim world, the Middle East, and Western countries.**

167. **Starting in the 1940s, Islamic political daughter movements were established in most Middle Eastern countries, with an ideology and organizational structure similar to those of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood.** In these countries, the initial cores of the movement were usually formed by local activists ideologically inspired by their studies in Egypt. **However, only some movements defining themselves as Muslim Brotherhood are officially linked to the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood and considered its offshoots.** Some, mostly in Western countries, deny belonging to the Muslim Brotherhood and having organizational ties with it.

168. **The Egyptian movement fostered and institutionalized its ties with the daughter movements established in Arab countries.** The most notable among them are **Hamas, the Palestinian daughter movement; the Muslim Brotherhood movements in Jordan and Syria where they form a major opposition to the regimes; and the movements in Lebanon, Iraq, Tunisia, and other countries.**

169. **Due to security considerations, the leadership of the Egyptian movement has kept a low profile and exercised extreme caution with its foreign connections. The Muslim Brotherhood leaders in those countries usually serve as deputy general guide on foreign affairs.** For example: Muhammad al-Huweydi, a former senior official in the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood, who served in this post under general guide Mahdi Akef; and Ibrahim al-Masri, director general of Al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyya, the Muslim Brotherhood branch in Lebanon, who was about to be appointed to this post under the new general guide, Mohammed Badie.

170. **According to its core idea, the global Muslim Brotherhood movement, established in 1982, is meant to be a centralized body with central leadership institutions where the movement's national branches are represented.** These institutions were designed to be the highest authority on all political and other significant decisions made by the national branches.

171. **However, the power struggles that developed between the Egyptian leadership and the national Muslim Brotherhood branches for control over the global movement resulted in increasing decentralization, which turned the global movement into little more than a loose federation of organizations functioning as a coordinating and fundraising mechanism.** What is more, the Egyptian general guide is often prohibited from leaving the country (being the leader of an illegal movement, which the Muslim Brotherhood is considered to be), while the lackluster personality of some of the Egyptian general guides has made it difficult for them to attend the global conferences and played a part in the deterioration of their control over the global movement.

The evolution of the relationship between the Muslim Brotherhood and its daughter movements

172. **The following are some characteristics of the relationship between the Egyptian leadership and the daughter movements dispersed in the various countries:**

a. **The Muslim Brotherhood branches outside of Egypt are committed to the fundamental principles, the overall policy, and the educational method outlined by the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood.** Each leadership may make **local adjustments** to its philosophy, according to the particular conditions of the country where it operates.

b. **The Egyptian mother movement and its general guide are the de-jure ideological and spiritual authority** for the other Muslim Brotherhood branches. However, due to the recent proliferation of religious jurists, the fact that the Egyptian general guide has become a mostly political figure and the Egyptian leadership's slide into ideological conservatism **have made Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi and other popular clerics in the Sunni-Muslim world the de-facto sources of religious legal authority (*marja'iyya*) of the Muslim Brotherhood.**

c. **The leaderships of the non-Egyptian movements are required to consult the Egyptian leadership on issues that may affect Muslim Brotherhood**

branches in other countries, and accept its decisions when there are disagreements within the movements. Even so, it appears that the power of the international movement to enforce its decisions on the Muslim Brotherhoods in the various countries is limited.

d. **The Muslim Brotherhood movements outside of Egypt enjoy freedom of action with regard to domestic issues that do not influence movements in other countries.** This stems from the recognition that each movement faces challenges specific to the country where it operates, and from the assumption that each local leadership is better acquainted with its own territory. At times, the Egyptian leadership provides counseling and general guidance for the political tactics of the various movements, but **does not impose its opinion on them.** When the Egyptian movement has attempted to enforce its authority, the local movements have criticized it for seeking to undermine their sovereignty.

173. Over the years, **the overall pan-Islamic aspirations of the Muslim Brotherhood have proven unable to overcome the local interests of each national movement.** The ultimate goal of the Egyptian movement is confined to that country, which is why the Egyptian movement's leadership **fosters its foreign relations mostly for raising funds and building up its domestic status.** In many cases, the fostering of foreign relations is inversely correlated with the internal legitimacy of the reigning general guide, representing an attempt to compensate for weakness with external legitimacy.

174. **The international Muslim Brotherhood reached the peak of its influence under Mustafa al-Mashhur (in 1996-2002); however, its sphere of activity has diminished following his death.** Former general guide Mahdi Akef, who demonstrated weak leadership, made efforts to reassert his leadership, resolve the conflicts in the international movement and revitalize it, even at the cost of meddling with the internal affairs of the movements in the various countries (such as mediating between the radical and pragmatic factions of Jordan's Muslim Brotherhood in 2010).

175. In recent years, non-Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood movements have been increasingly **questioning the right of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood to continue heading the global organization,**⁶⁸ and demanding more independence from its authority. This is apparently motivated by the lack of a strong general guide and the Egyptian movement's

⁶⁸ Among other things, it has been said that the general guide of the Muslim Brotherhood does not have to be Egyptian. In general, the claims against the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood's dominance in the international movement and criticism of the global movement's structure were brought up already in the early days of its existence.

slide into conservatism. **Be that as it may, the tradition of the Egyptian movement's leadership in the global Muslim Brotherhood is still maintained.**

The Muslim Brotherhood's stance towards jihadist/terrorist organizations

176. The Muslim Brotherhood **has produced the founders of many radical and fundamentalist Islamic movements in Egypt (Al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyya, Al-Jihad) and in the Islamic world (Al-Qaeda and global jihad networks in various places worldwide). Accordingly, the movement has been branded as a terrorist organization and accused of having ties to similar organizations almost from the day it was established.**⁶⁹

177. **The movement denies any connection with terrorist organizations inside and outside of Egypt**, stressing the significant difference between its own definition of its worldview and the means to promote its objectives, and the way militant and Islamic jihadist groups do so. However, the Muslim Brotherhood **makes a distinction between the right of "resistance" on one hand and terrorism and other illegitimate activities on the other.** Meaning, **it unequivocally supports the terrorist activities of Hamas and Hezbollah, portraying them as legitimate "resistance"** (even when directed against civilians), **as well as activity against the "occupation" in Iraq** (support for which has been voiced by some of its leaders). **On the other hand, it objects to Al-Qaeda's terrorist activity.**

178. Even here, things are not always consistent. **The distinction between "resistance" and "terrorism" tends to be vague, and the movement occasionally has difficulties drawing the line between them.** For example, in May 2008 former general guide Mahdi Akef said that **Osama Bin Laden was a "jihad warrior"**, and that he supported Al-Qaeda's activity. He was soon required to qualify his statement due to the wave of criticism that targeted him and the Muslim Brotherhood (eventually, Akef said that the Muslim Brotherhood agreed with Al-Qaeda's philosophy but objected to violence against civilians and Muslims).

The Muslim Brotherhood's stance towards the U.S. the West

179. **The stance towards the West and the relations with it is an issue that poses ideological and practical difficulties to the Muslim Brotherhood leadership. In**

⁶⁹ For example, in February 2003, against the backdrop of the riots in Chechnya, the movement was put on the Russian government's list of terrorist organizations.

general, its Islamic ideology rules out Western values, particularly those perceived as permissive, and calls to reject any penetration or influence of Western views, values, and cultural products (the Islamic ideology considers the penetration of the West a deliberate effort to weaken the world of Islam and the moral resilience of its people, accusing it of its failures). The writings of the movement's early ideologues clearly reflect the view that considers the nation of Muslim believers to be locked in an existential struggle against the West.

180. However, the Muslim Brotherhood is influenced by the trend of globalization, Western technology, and American power and influence in the Middle East. The U.S.-led campaign for democracy in the first half of the previous decade posed **an ideological challenge to the movement**, since, at the time, it forced the regime to let go of its hold and allowed the movement to partially realize its political power. The movement was therefore faced with the dilemma of whether to support foreign Western messages—while making unprecedented political achievements—but also lose some of its Islamic character and risk compromising its image.

181. The internal debate on the relationship with the U.S. and the stance towards the West is one of the most complex issues dealt with by the movement: its conservative faction remains fairly loyal to the official Muslim Brotherhood ideology and rejects any dialogue with the West. **For example, in the Danish cartoon crisis** (January 2006), **the Muslim Brotherhood led the protests and demonstrations sparked by the cartoons that offended Prophet Muhammad.**

182. The movement portrayed itself as the “protector of Islam”, which considers integration and acceptance of Western values a scheme to weaken the Islamic nation. On the other hand, **the group affiliated with Hassan al-Banna and the pragmatic factions consider the West as a legitimate tool for achieving its political objectives.** The difficulties in formulating a cohesive policy on the issue are evident in the leaders' vague statements on the relations with the West.⁷⁰

⁷⁰ On several occasions in 2004-2006, former general guide Mahdi Akef noted that the U.S. reform and democratization plan was designed to serve American interests, and that the drive for reform was part of a religious war to take over the hearts and minds of Arabs and Muslims. According to Akef, the promotion of secularism and political and economic liberalism is designed to strengthen the U.S. and is part of the struggle between Islamic and Western cultures; globalization is the means to bring the economies of Arab countries under the control of the West; and if the Muslim Brotherhood assumes power, it will hold talks with the U.S. only if the latter changes its attitude towards Islam.

183. Supporters of the pragmatic view also find it hard to reconcile the ideological difficulties in establishing relations with the West, **attempting to play both sides of the issue.**⁷¹ **Muslim Brotherhood members would like to launch a dialogue with “groups in American society”** (i.e., social organizations and associations, academia members, and intellectuals) **and not with the administration itself.** The terminology used by the movement’s spokesmen in this context is democratic.

184. **All Muslim Brotherhood factions deny having contact, as a movement, with the “infidel” U.S. administration.**⁷² While the movement’s entry into the Egyptian parliament in 2005 did open a new communication channel to official Western figures, they were held with the Muslim Brotherhood parliament faction as independent MPs rather than representatives of the movement. Issam al-Aryan, the former chairman of the Muslim Brotherhood Political Bureau and one of the reformist faction leaders, is considered in charge of the movement’s contacts with the U.S. and the West, although he denies it.

185. **In actuality, routine contacts between the Muslim Brotherhood and the U.S. embassy in Egypt began in the 1970s, under Sadat.** In the 1980s, **the embassy officials occasionally visited the movement’s headquarters in Cairo.** The contacts stopped at the movement’s request following the September 11 attacks. In June 2005, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice promised that the U.S. would cut off its ties with the Muslim Brotherhood; however, the contacts resumed within about a year.

186. **U.S. law-level officials have openly met with Muslim Brotherhood MPs** (as independent delegates) **in the presence of other Egyptian figures, including members of the National-Democratic Party.** Saad al-Katatni, the head of the Muslim Brotherhood parliament faction, was allowed to visit an academic conference in Georgetown University only in his capacity as parliament member. It was also reported that former deputy general guide Mohammed Habib met with U.S. academia members on several occasions.

The Muslim Brotherhood’s relationship with Europe

187. **Throughout history, senior Muslim Brotherhood figures have played major and even leading roles in the creation and direction of the network of Islamic**

⁷¹ For example, Abd al-Mun'im Abul Futuh, a prominent figure from the reformist faction, said that the conflict with the U.S. was not an obstacle because Prophet Muhammad had held talks with infidels. He further noted that there was no dialogue with the U.S. because such a dialogue would be pointless and not benefit Egypt. Another reformist Muslim Brotherhood leader, Issam al-Aryan, wondered about the usefulness of the movement’s dialogue with the West—would the West accept another model of democracy in the Middle East, an Islamic democracy? On another occasion, he noted that the Muslim Brotherhood was almost the only political faction not contacted by the Americans, and that the movement, on its part, made no attempt to contact them.

⁷² This is also due to concerns over the regime’s possible reaction, since any such contact held without the presence of official Egyptian figures may result in the arrest of the movement’s members.

organizations in Europe, which to a great extent followed the organizational and conceptual model of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. For now, it appears that these organizations, while maintaining contact with the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, **have developed their own activities and organizational patterns** (local leadership) and act according to the principles of the global Muslim Brotherhood, **without constantly taking organizational direction from the movement leadership in Egypt.**

188. The major component in the Muslim Brotherhood's activity in Europe is **the establishment of Islamic centers in the Muslim immigrant communities in European countries.** The movement considers this a necessity dictated by reality (many of its leaders fled to Europe to escape persecution by the regimes in their respective countries) and a mission (the transmission of Islamic law, the Sharia, to immigrant communities). This also has the approval of Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi who, while not an official member of the Muslim Brotherhood, currently enjoys considerable influence among the Muslim communities of Europe, outshining Mohammed Badie, the general guide of the Muslim Brotherhood.

Chapter 10: The Muslim Brotherhood in other Arab countries and in Europe

The Muslim Brotherhood in Arab Countries

189. **Muslim Brotherhood branches started emerging in the Arab world in the 1930s and 1940s.** A notable Muslim Brotherhood branch appeared in **Syria**, once considered the second largest branch after the founding Egyptian movement. Important Muslim Brotherhood branches also emerged and became established in **Jordan, Algeria, Sudan, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, and Persian Gulf states.** A daughter movement (Hamas) appeared on the Palestinian scene.

190. Examination of the movement's conduct in the various countries and the relationships between the branches in Arab countries and their respective regimes shows that they exhibit **various patterns of activity. These patterns were influenced by the different social and political conditions in each country and such distinct characteristics as national, ethnic, religious, or tribal tensions.**

191. As a result of the Muslim Brotherhood's worldview, emphasizing deep social change, and in light of the aggressive policy adopted by the authorities, **in most Arab countries the movement focused on building a social infrastructure and preaching Islam (*da'wah*), exhibiting a great deal of pragmatism and willingness to come to terms with persecution by the regimes to ensure its long-term survival.**

192. In some countries **the movement integrated into political establishments**, mostly as a tolerable opposition. For example, in **Jordan**, even though the movement traditionally posed a potential threat to the Hashemite regime, at times it was integrated into the government; in **Sudan** the movement oscillated between integration into government institutions and influence on that country's politics on one hand, and persecution and suppression on the other; in **Algeria** the movement eventually integrated into the government system of President Bouteflika; in **Morocco** the movement split into a party integrated into government institutions and an oppositionist group persecuted by the authorities; in **Saudi Arabia** the regime granted asylum to Muslim Brotherhood activists while maintaining a wary attitude towards them; in **Qatar** the movement won the support of the authorities; in **Kuwait** it integrated into parliamentary life.

193. In **Tunisia**, Al-Nahda, a Muslim Brotherhood-affiliated party, was persecuted by the authorities until the return of its leader, Rashid al-Ghannushi, following the Jasmine

Revolution. In **Syria**, however, in the 1970s and the early 1980s, the Muslim Brotherhood led a military uprising, particularly in the city of Hama, which was brutally suppressed by the Hafez Assad regime; in the **Palestinian Authority**, Hamas, the Muslim Brotherhood's daughter movement, took part in the 2006 parliament elections following which it **took over the Gaza Strip by force** (in 2007) and neutralized its opponents, Fatah and the Palestinian Authority. **The Gaza Strip is an exceptional example where an Islamist government entity was established through a military coup and is ruled by a movement affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood.**

194. As a cautionary measure and to avoid becoming involved in day-to-day politics, the movement operates on the parliamentary scene in most Arab countries **through front parties affiliated with it, which have become integrated into the political game**: for example, the Muslim Brotherhood in **Jordan** established the Islamic Action Front; in Algeria it established the Mouvement de la société pour la paix (MSP); in **Sudan** it established the Islamic Charter Front (ICF) and later the National Islamic Front (NIF). In **Lebanon** the Muslim Brotherhood operates through an organization named Al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyya; in **Morocco** it established the Moroccan Justice and Development Party (PJD); in **Tunisia** it established the Al-Nahda party, persecuted by the authorities; in **Saudi Arabia** it was prohibited from establishing a party; and in **Kuwait** it established the Islamic Constitutional Movement. In **Syria**, however, the movement has retained its Muslim Brotherhood identity, even though in the past year its leader has expressed willingness to turn it into a political party.

195. **In some countries** (Jordan, Morocco, Kuwait), **the Muslim Brotherhood's integration into government institutions has been a catalyst for internal tension on the backdrop of disagreements between pragmatic factions and radical factions, preferring to be in the opposition and confront the regime.** In other countries, such as Sudan, the movement has occasionally enjoyed political influence but has been plagued by persecution and suppression after internal upheavals in the senior echelons of the regime.

196. The Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and other countries in the Arab world **is a participant in the current revolutionist awakening.** However, decades of persecution and oppression by Arab regimes have taught it to **keep a low profile in public and on the media.**

197. Therefore, it adopts **cautious tactics, reflected in playing down and concealing its radical ideology, presenting a moderate façade and avoiding blunt public and**

media remarks. In some cases, it prefers to integrate into a broader coalition of social opposition, youth movements, and left-wing movements, all sharing expressions of protest against the various regimes.

198. Even so, it can be estimated that if and when such expressions of protest mature into deep socio-political changes, the Muslim Brotherhood will abandon its current cautious conduct, **striving to become, in those countries, a legitimate, prominent political player striving to enforce its Islamic agenda and become a dominant factor among the regimes and societies of the various Arab countries.**

The Muslim Brotherhood in European countries

199. The main catalyst for the movement's spread beyond Egypt, including European countries, **was the suppression campaign launched against it by Egypt's President Gamal Abdul Nasser in 1954.** In the 1950s, two large, well-organized Muslim Brotherhood groups **fled from Egypt to Saudi Arabia and Qatar.** A third, less cohesive group of Muslim Brotherhood activists **fled to the U.S. and several European countries, including West Germany.** The Muslim Brotherhood currently claims to have presence in **over 80 countries worldwide.**⁷³

200. **In Germany,** the Muslim Brotherhood first mingled with the Muslim community, and then established a presence on university campuses and with left-wing opposition activists. **In years to follow, the Muslim Brotherhood gradually took hold in other European countries, becoming a distributor of radical Islam and de-facto representative of Muslim immigrant communities.** However, the various bodies and activists in Europe **usually tend to deny belonging to the Muslim Brotherhood,** particularly after the September 11 terrorist attacks.

201. Using financial aid from Persian Gulf countries (which continues even now), **the movement expanded its *da'wah* network in Europe and the U.S.** by establishing banks, mosques, research centers, Islamic institutions, and social and educational institutions.

202. These are involved in the spread of the movement's radical-political Islam in European Muslim communities. **The most prominent Islamic centers in Europe directly or indirectly affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood are currently in Britain, France and Germany** (for a long time, Munich was the headquarters of the movement's activities).

⁷³ Ehud Rosen, "Mapping the Organizational Sources of the Global Delegitimization Campaign against Israel in the UK", published in late 2010 on the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs website, hereinafter "Ehud Rosen".

The major institutions in these countries include the **Islamic Society of Germany (IGD), France's Union of Islamic Organizations, and the Muslim Association of Britain (MAB).**

203. The Muslim Brotherhood in Europe **seeks to turn Islam into the dominant force among Europe's multi-cultural society, as part of the overarching vision of a global Islamic takeover.** Yusuf al-Qaradawi, a senior Sunni cleric affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood, has recently expressed his confidence that Islam will eventually take over Europe—**not by means of war, however, but through preaching and education efforts** (*da'wah*).⁷⁴ He has argued that "Islam will return to Europe as a conqueror and victor, having been expelled twice". He qualified his statement, however, by saying that "**it is possible that the next conquest, Allah willing, will take place by preaching and ideology**".⁷⁵

204. One expression of the ultimate goal can be found in *Risalat al-Ikhwan*, the Muslim Brotherhood organ in Britain, whose cover page featured a world map and a quote by Muslim Brotherhood founder Hassan al-Banna: "**Our goal: world domination**". The phrase "**word domination**" was apparently removed sometime in 2003 (possibly due to the Muslim Brotherhood's concerns over drawing the attention of UK law enforcement authorities after the September 11 terrorist attacks).

⁷⁴ Ehud Rosen, p. 12.

⁷⁵ Special Dispatch No. 447, Ehud Rosen, MEMRI, December 6, 2002.

The Muslim Brotherhood's Risalat al-Ikhwan before and after removing the quote about world domination



The European Muslim Brotherhood's stance towards Israel

205. As in Arab countries, the Muslim Brotherhood in Europe is a hostile movement towards Israel, which supports Hamas, denies the legitimacy of the Palestinian Authority, and strongly opposes the peace talks between Israel and the Palestinian Authority and the signs of normalization between Israel and Arab countries (primarily Egypt and Jordan). According to its ideology, "Palestine" is an Islamic endowment all of whose territory should be used to establish an Islamic Palestinian state and accommodate all the refugees who fled in 1948.

206. These fundamental views have been reflected in a continuing political and media struggle against the peace process and the signs of normalization; assistance to the Hamas administration in the Gaza Strip by sending flotillas and convoys while joining forces with radical left-wing elements in Europe based on shared hostility towards Israel; and taking part in the delegitimization campaign against Israel, where the European Muslim

Brotherhood (particularly in Britain) **and in Arab countries plays a key role** (as witnessed in the Mavi Marmara incident).

Summary

207. The Muslim Brotherhood in Europe **is not** directly involved in terrorist attacks against Israel or the West, and in many cases **its affiliated organizations and activists refrain, for security considerations, from explicitly identifying themselves as belonging to the Muslim Brotherhood.** The Muslim Brotherhood's cautious approach is designed to facilitate its freedom of action without exposing itself to the reaction of local security services in European countries. European countries have allowed the Muslim Brotherhood existence and activity, **in stark contrast to Al-Qaeda and global jihad, both targets for counter-activities conducted by the various European countries.**

208. **Even so, it is our assessment that the Muslim Brotherhood is a potential threat to Europe and the Western countries where it operates,** for several reasons: the radical Islam it propagates contributes to the segregation of the local Muslim communities, making it more difficult for Muslims to integrate into local societies and absorb the liberal and democratic values of the West; the blatant propaganda it spreads against the West and its values stirs feelings of alienation and non-belonging among local Muslim populations; in addition, **young people from all over Europe exposed to the radical Islamic ideology of the Muslim Brotherhood are a potential for recruitment to global jihad organizations.**

209. Indeed, in recent years there have been terrorists with Western citizenship who at some point in their lives were educated in institutions affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood's *da'wah*, or underwent radical Islamization through the internet (a process of "jihadization") **and eventually turned to the path of terrorism of global jihad.**

Chapter 11: A profile of Sheikh Dr. Yusuf al-Qaradawi



Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi (Palestine-info, August 15, 2010)

Overview

210. Sheikh Dr. Yusuf Abdallah al-Qaradawi is a central figure affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood. He was expelled from Egypt and found refuge in Qatar, and operates from there throughout the Muslim world.

211. **After President Hosni Mubarak was ousted Al-Qaradawi returned to Egypt and delivered the Friday sermon at a mass rally held in Al-Tahrir Square in Cairo. Many consider him the supreme religious and ideological authority for the Muslim Brotherhood, although he is not officially its leader** (in the past he refused to accept the title of the Muslim Brotherhood's General Guide). **He is influential in Egypt and considered one of the most important Sunni-Muslim clerics of our generation** and a spiritual authority for millions of Muslims around the world, including the Hamas movement.

212. **Al-Qaradawi's popularity among the Sunnis has grown because of the massive use he makes of electronic media**, including television and the Internet. **One of his most important tools is the Qatari Al-Jazeera TV channel**, which broadcasts his popular program "Life and Islamic Law" (Al-Sharia wal-Hayat), viewed by tens of millions of Muslims.

213. Al-Qaradawi has often **exploited the program for blatant anti-Semitic propaganda and incitement** (see below). **He was also one of the founders of the IslamOnline website** in 1997, which often quotes him.



Sheikh Dr. Yusuf al-Qaradawi on Al-Jazeera TV's popular "Life and Islamic Law" program (Al-Jazeera TV, March 15, 2009).

214. **Al-Qaradawi refers to his religious views as "moderate Islam," which seeks to balance intellect and emotion.** He has positive attitudes toward reforms in Islam, which he calls "correcting perceptions which were corrupted." He is considered one of the foremost propounders of the doctrine of "the law of the Muslim minorities" (*fiqh al-aqalliyyat*) which **provides the Muslim minorities around the globe with space in which to maneuver and compromise between their daily lives and Islamic law.** The aim of implementing his doctrine is to unite and unify Muslim minorities **to make it possible for them to live under non-Muslim regimes, until the final stage of spreading Islam to the entire world.**

215. At the same time, building a bridge between the exigencies of Muslim emigrants' daily lives and Islamic religious law also includes **regarding taking over Europe as Islam's next target.** In 2003 Al-Qaradawi issued a fatwa declaring that **"Islam will return to Europe as a victorious conqueror after having been expelled twice. This time it will not be conquest by the sword, but by preaching and spreading [Islamic] ideology [...]** The future belongs to Islam [...]. The spread of Islam until it conquers the entire world and includes both East and West marks the beginning of the return of the Islamic Caliphate [...]"

216. **Although Al-Qaradawi opposes Al-Qaeda and its methods, he enthusiastically supports Palestinian terrorism, including suicide bombing attacks targeting the civilian Israeli population.** In the past he also expressed his support for the "resistance" (i.e., terrorism) to the occupation of Iraq, including, by implication – although he denied it – abducting and murdering American civilians in Iraq.

217. **He issued fatwas calling for jihad against Israel and the Jews, and authorizing suicide bombing attacks** even if the victims were women and children. He regards all of

“Palestine” as Muslim territory (according to Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas ideology), strongly opposes the existence of the State of Israel and rejects the peace treaties signed with it, and **opposes the Palestinian Authority** (and in the past called for the stoning of Mahmoud Abbas).

Al-Qaradawi and the recent events in Egypt

218. In response to the dramatic events in Egypt, Al-Qaradawi (whose statements are widely reported in Egypt) expressed his support for the demonstrators. **He called on the Egyptian people to fight the despots and forbade the security forces to shoot civilians.** The IslamOnline website posted a chapter of his book [*Islamic Law and Jihad*, according to which **jihad against corruption and a tyrannical regime is the most exalted form of jihad**, even more important than jihad against external enemies.

219. **Al-Qaradawi was expelled from Egypt to Qatar in 1997 because of his affiliation with the Muslim Brotherhood, which was outlawed in Egypt.** After Hosni Mubarak was ousted, Al-Qaradawi appeared at a rally attended by more than a million people in Cairo’s Al-Tahrir Square and delivered the Friday sermon (February 18, 2011). He expressed his esteem for the young people of Egypt who had revolted against the “despotic Pharaoh” Mubarak.

220. **At the same time he sent a message of interfaith unity between Muslims and Christians, who had stood and demonstrated side by side.** He praised the Egyptian army which had “adhered to freedom and democracy” and called for the immediate release of all political prisoners and for the rapid formation of a civilian government. **He ended the sermon with a call for the liberation of Al-Aqsa mosque and asked the Egyptian army to open the Rafah crossing and allow aid convoys to enter the Gaza Strip** (Al-Jazeera TV, February 18, 2011). A few days later, apparently on February 21, he returned to Qatar.

221. The Muslim Brotherhood, which until Al-Qaradawi’s arrival was careful to keep a low profile, **was quick to declare that it was not behind the invitation that brought him to Egypt**, apparently to prevent tensions with the other protest movements. Dr. Muhammad Sa’ad al-Katatni, Muslim Brotherhood spokesman, said that the Muslim Brotherhood had not invited Dr. Al-Qaradawi to Egypt, but rather that the invitation had come from the youth in Al-Tahrir Square (Al-Sharq al-Awsat, February 19, 2011). Spokesmen for other protest movements tried to diminish the importance of al-Qaradawi’s appearance.



Sheikh Al-Qaradawi speaks at a mass rally in Cairo's Al-Tahrir square (Al-Jazeera TV, February 18, 2011).

222. Al-Qaradawi's appearance at the rally in Cairo **was a tribute to the great popularity he enjoys in Egypt and reflects a new stage in the Muslim Brotherhood's public involvement in the events in Egypt.** However, the statement made by the Muslim Brotherhood spokesman **may indicate a potential rivalry and/or dissention** between the Muslim Brotherhood leadership in Egypt and Al-Qaradawi, who entered the leadership vacuum which has plagued the Muslim Brotherhood in recent years.

Al-Qaradawi's biography

223. Al-Qaradawi was born in a small Nile delta village in 1926. His father died when he was two and he grew up in his uncle's house, in a religious environment. When he was four he was sent to a religious school. According to stories, when he was nine he knew the Quran by heart. As a youth he studied at a religious school in Tanta **where he delved into the writings of Hassan al-Banna, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, who Al-Qaradawi said shaped his political and religious thinking.**

224. When he was 18 he became a student in the religion department of Al-Azhar University in Cairo. He graduated in 1953. The following year he passed the exam to receive a teaching license. In 1958 he received a Master's degree in Arab language and literature and in 1973 received a Doctorate. So far he has written more than 50 books about various aspects of Islamic jurisprudence. **During his studies at Al-Azhar he was exposed to the Muslim Brotherhood ideology** and devoted himself to political Islamic activity and to preaching against the British presence in Egypt. His preaching against Nasser's regime led to his being arrested several times.

225. His Islamic political activity and sharp tongue **caused him to be dismissed from Al-Azhar University** in 1961 and assigned to head its branch in Qatar. However, sent to Qatar and released from the pressures of the Egyptian regime, enabled him to become prominent as an independent cleric. **He has lived in Qatar since 1961**, where he headed a high

religious school. **In 1977 he founded the Department of Islamic Law Studies in the University of Qatar and headed it until 1990.** He also founded an institute for Sunna study.

226. To this day, the institutions he founded are important centers for his activity in the Arab-Muslim world and among Muslim communities in the West. He was granted Qatari citizenship in honor of the services he performed for the country. He has received a number of awards and decorations, among them the King Feisal of Saudi Arabia Award, the Islamic University of Malaysia Award and the Sultan of Brunei Award.

227. **After the Muslim Brotherhood was outlawed in Egypt, al-Qaradawi became a wanted man and could not return to his home country.** Until now he has lived in Qatar, where he has held a number of posts, both in and outside the country. They included head of the Qatar University's institute for the study of the history of the prophet Muhammad; chairman of the association of Muslim scholars; head of the European Council for Fatwa and Research (ECFR – an Islamic-European umbrella organization for the rapprochement between Muslim communities throughout Europe and for building bridges between the various Islamic schools so that they can integrate life in democratic Christian Europe with Muslim law). In July 2007 he launched a forum for moderate Islam named after himself and funded by the Sharia department of the University of Qatar and the moderate Islamic Center in Kuwait.

228. Although al-Qaradawi began as a Muslim Brotherhood activist he later **denied membership in it and several times even refused to head the movement in Egypt** (i.e., to accept the title of general guide). However, **he has a special status among members of the Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas**, its Palestinian branch, and the Islamic movement in Israel, for all of whom he is the supreme authority on Islamic law.

Ideology, political activity, and publications

229. **Al-Qaradawi refers to his religious views as “moderate Islam,” which seeks to balance intellect and emotion.** He has positive attitudes toward reforms in Islam, which he calls “correcting perceptions which were corrupted.” He is considered one of the foremost propounders of the doctrine of “the law of the Muslim minorities” (*fiqh al-aqalliyyat*), which **provides the Muslim minorities around the globe with space in which to maneuver and compromise between their daily lives and Islamic law.** The aim of implementing his doctrine is to unite and unify Muslim minorities **to make it possible for them to live under non-Muslim regimes, until the final stage of spreading Islam to the entire world.**

230. At the same time, building a bridge between the exigencies of Muslim emigrants' daily lives and Islamic religious law also includes **regarding Europe as Islam's next target**. In 2003 Al-Qaradawi issued a fatwa declaring that **"Islam will return to Europe as a victorious conqueror after having been expelled twice. This time it will not be conquest by the sword, but by preaching and spreading [Islamic] ideology [...]** The future belongs to Islam [...] The spread of Islam until it conquers the entire world and includes the both East and West marks the beginning of the return of the Islamic Caliphate [...]"

231. **Conservative Muslims object to what they consider Al-Qaradawi's excessive flexibility** and have occasionally attacked his fatwas as "too permissive." However, despite the criticism he is greatly respected and esteemed in the Muslim world and most Muslim clerics respect his fatwas. **Many people today consider him the heir of Sayyid Qutb** (Muslim Brotherhood radical theoretician and senior activist in Egypt) and as the movement's **highest religious and ideological authority, even if he did reject offers to officially head it.**

232. Al-Qaradawi has issued a great many fatwas and written a large number of books, the most important of which is *The Lawful and Prohibited in Islam*. It was translated into many languages and has sold millions of copies. **Today it is considered the best selling Muslim book in Europe after the Quran.**



Dr. Yusuf Al-Qaradawi answers viewers' questions
(Al-Jazeera TV, March 15, 2009).

Al-Qaradawi's attitude towards suicide bombing attacks and support for Hamas

233. All of Al-Qaradawi's opinions regarding Israel are extreme and **he is a source of supreme religious authority for Hamas**. He is an enthusiastic supporter of Palestinian

terrorism, including when it is directed against civilians, claiming that it is a legitimate expression of the so-called “resistance” and that Israel is a militaristic society where every civilian is a potential soldier.

234. He issued fatwas calling for jihad against Israel and the Jews and authorizing suicide bombing attacks, even when they entailed killing women and children. He also issued a fatwa authorizing attacks on Jews around the world because in his view there is no essential difference between Judaism and Zionism, and therefore every Jewish target equals an Israeli target.

235. His status as a leading Sunni-Muslim cleric lends added importance to his fatwas supporting Palestinian terrorism and makes him particularly influential in shaping anti-Israeli sentiments in the Muslim and Arab world.

236. In July 2003, during the height of the suicide bombing terrorism (during the second intifada), he addressed the issue of suicide bombing attack at an ECFR conference. He said that *istishhad* (death as a martyr for the sake of Allah),⁷⁶ carried out by the Palestinian organizations to oppose the so-called “Zionist occupation”, was by no means to be defined as terrorism (Al-Sharq al-Awsat, July 19, 2003). On other occasions he also supported suicide bombing attacks, including on the BBC (February 8, 2010) and Al-Jazeera TV (January 28, 2009).⁷⁷

237. Senior Hamas figures relied on Al-Qaradawi’s fatwas which authorize suicide bombing attacks against Israel to justify that sort of (controversial) attack. For example:

a. **Sheikh Hamed al-Bitawi**, senior Hamas activist in Judea and Samaria, relying on an Al-Qaradawi fatwa, said that according to Islamic jurisprudence, “jihad is a collective duty (*fard kifaya*) [...]” and that if infidels occupy any bit of Muslim land – such as the occupation of Palestine by the Jews, jihad becomes the duty of every individual (*fard ‘ayn*), thus making it permissible to carry out suicide bombing attacks.⁷⁸

b. **Dr. Abd al-Aziz al-Rantisi**, a senior Hamas leader who died in a targeted killing, relying on a fatwa issued by Al-Qaradawi, said that “suicide depends on intention. If the person intends to kill himself because he is fed up with life, that is suicide (which is prohibited). However, if he wants to die to strike at the enemy and to receive a reward

⁷⁶ The suicide bomber is called *istishhadi*, the one who deliberately sacrifices himself for the sake of Allah.

⁷⁷ According to MEMRI, February 8, 2010.

⁷⁸ Al-Hayat, February 25, 2001.

from Allah, he is considered as delivering up his soul [and not as committing suicide].⁷⁹

238. To help fund Hamas' civilian infrastructure (the *da'wah*) **Al-Qaradawi established the Union of Good, which he heads today**. It is an umbrella network which raises money for Hamas and other Islamist activities around the globe. The Union of Good was declared a terrorism-sponsoring organization and **outlawed by Israel in February 2002. In December 2002 it was designated as a terrorist organization by the United States and outlawed.**

239. **Al-Qaradawi is hostile to the Palestinian Authority**. At the beginning of 2010 he criticized Mahmoud Abbas for his vote regarding the Goldstone Report, and **issued a fatwa calling for Mahmoud Abbas to be stoned in Mecca**. Mahmoud Abbas demanded a retraction from Al-Qaradawi, who denied having issued the fatwa. However, he did admit that during a sermon he said that if accusations against any person in the Palestinian Authority were proved true [i.e., that he had supported the cancellation of the vote on the Goldstone Report], that person should be stoned in Mecca as punishment for treason (IslamOnline, January 7, 2010). In response Mahmoud al-Habash, Palestinian Authority minister of religion and endowments, said that his ministry had ordered all the preachers in the mosques in the Palestinian Authority to attack Al-Qaradawi personally (Al-Quds Al-Arabi, January 18, 2010).

Anti-Semitic statements

240. Al-Qaradawi has often made anti-Semitic statements. For example, his "Life and Islamic Law" program, broadcast on Al-Jazeera TV on March 15, 2009, discussed the topic of righteous Muslims in Islam. One of the viewers called in and asked about the role of the righteous (*al-salihun*) in the Quran in the liberation of the (Islamic) holy places and the victory of the (Muslim) nation.

241. Al-Qaradawi used the opportunity to attack the Jews, basing his answer on a known *hadith* (oral tradition) calling for the **killing of Jews**. On the program he said that righteous Muslims were "the salt of the earth" who were always instrumental in liberating lands. He called them a source of hope and said he hoped that through them Jerusalem would be "liberated," as would "Palestine," the Gaza Strip, and all the lands ruled by the enemies of the Muslims. **He said that the war against the Jews was not only the war of the Palestinians but of all Muslims.**

⁷⁹ Al-Hayat, February 25, 2001.

242. Al-Qaradawi based his answer on a well-known *hadith* about the war on Judgment Day between Muslims and Jews. He said that the prophet Muhammad said that “...**therefore you will continue to fight the Jews and they will fight you until the Muslims kill them. The Jew hides behind rock and tree.** The rock and the tree say, oh, slave of Allah, oh, Muslim, here is the Jew behind me, **come and kill him.**”⁸⁰ He interpreted that to mean that those who fight to “liberate” the holy places are the **Muslim slaves of Allah, and not Jordanians or Palestinians or Egyptians or Iraqis.**

Al-Qaradawi’s position on Al-Qaeda and the global jihad

243. **Al-Qaradawi denounced the September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center in New York and said it was the duty of every Muslim to help bring the perpetrators to trial.** However, as opposed to his opposition to Al-Qaeda, **he called for attacks on Americans fighting in Iraq.**

244. In August 2004 a conference titled “Pluralism in Islam” was held by the Egyptian union of journalists in Cairo. At the conference **Al-Qaradawi issued a fatwa allowing the abduction and murder of American civilians in Iraq to exert pressure on the American army to remove its forces.** He emphasized that “all Americans in Iraq are fighters, there is no difference between civilians and soldiers, and they have to be fought against because the American civilians come to Iraq to serve the occupation. Abducting and killing them is a [religious] duty to make [the Americans] leave [Iraq] immediately. [On the other hand] mutilating their corpses is forbidden by Islam” (Al-Sharq al-Awsat, London, September 2, 2004).

245. Al-Qaradawi issued the fatwa a week after public figures from various Muslim countries published an open letter calling to support the forces fighting the Western coalition in Iraq. It was signed by 93 Islamic clerics and public figures, including Al-Qaradawi and members of the Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas, the Palestinian Islamic Jihad and Hezbollah (Al-Quds Al-Arabi, London, August 23, 2004).

246. **In view of the storm caused by the fatwa permitting the abduction and murder of American civilians in Iraq, ten days later Al-Qaradawi sent a fax to the London-based Arabic daily Al-Hayat denying “what the media said he had said.”** “Some of the media claimed I issued a fatwa saying it was a duty to kill American civilians in

⁸⁰ According to the original *hadith*, every tree and rock will give up the hiding places of the Jews except the *nitraria*, (a thorny bush which grows in desert regions). In other versions, such as that quoted by Al-Qaradawi, the words of Muhammad are not related to Judgment Day but used rather in their current political contexts and as a general commandment to Muslims to kill Jews, with no mention of the protection theme.

Iraq,” Al-Qaradawi said. “That has no basis. I never issued a fatwa about that issue. A few days ago I was asked at the Egyptian union of journalists whether it was permissible to fight against the occupation in Iraq and I answered in the affirmative. After that I was asked about American civilians in Iraq and I answered only with a question: Are there American civilians in Iraq? It is well known that I do not use the word ‘kill’ in a fatwa but rather ‘struggle,’ which is broader and does not necessarily refer to killing. In addition, on several past occasions I denounced abducting hostages and demanded they be released without threatening to kill them” (Al-Hayat, London, September 9, 2004).

247. **Before the denial was issued, Al-Qaradawi’s office manager Issam Halima confirmed that Al-Qaradawi had issued a fatwa stating that it was a duty to fight the American civilians in Iraq because they were invaders** (Al-Quds Al-Arabi, London, September 23, 2004).

Al-Qaradawi and Iran

248. Al-Qaradawi **strenuously opposes attempts to disseminate Shi’ite Islam and is critical of Iran’s attempts to spread it to Sunni countries.** He has also criticized Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah on a number of occasions.

The call for Muslims to acquire nuclear weapons

249. In the past Al-Qaradawi said that Muslims should acquire nuclear weapons “to terrify their enemies.” However, he said that nuclear weapons should not be used.⁸¹

Al-Qaradawi’s position on the uprisings in Tunisia and Libya

250. **Regarding the recent events in Tunisia,** Al-Qaradawi said that the struggle should be continued until all members of Ben Ali’s party are removed from their positions, with the exception of the interim president, who should, he said, remain in power to prevent the creation of a constitutional vacuum. He called on Tunisia to release political prisoners, bring back political exiles, and **restore the Islamic customs which were forbidden by the ousted president’s secular regime, such as wearing the veil (*hijab*) on university campuses.**

251. Regarding the recent events in Libya, Al-Qaradawi called on Muammar Gaddafi to relinquish power and learn the lessons of Egypt and Tunisia. **He said that a revolt against**

⁸¹ Qatari TV, October 18, 2002, according to MEMRI.

Gaddafi was an Islamic religious duty, calling on the members of the tribes in Libya to rise up against Gaddafi and join the ranks of the demonstrators. He called on the Libya army "to behave like their brothers in Egypt, to stand alongside the people **to restore to Libya its Arab Islamic character.**" He asserted that those who had died during the violent events in Libya were martyrs in paradise and supported the jihad fighters rising up against the Libyan regime (Egyptian TV, telephone conversation with Al-Qaradawi broadcast in a special program, February 20, 2011).

Chapter 12: Islamic jihadist organizations in Egypt ideologically originating in the Muslim Brotherhood

Overview

252. From the 1970s to the late 1990s, militant Islamic groups in Egypt posed the greatest challenge to the regime in terms of internal security. The number of groups was estimated at several dozens, the largest and most important being **Al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyya** and **Al-Jihad**.⁸² Some of them splintered from the Muslim Brotherhood due to differences of opinion over the means to achieve the goal of turning Egypt into an Islamic Sharia state and apply Islamic religious law to all spheres of life. Other groups were ideologically and organizationally inspired by the Muslim Brotherhood and its leaders.

253. The ideology of the Islamic groups is based on accusing the regime of heresy against Islam (*takfir*). Within militant Islam there are two conflicting ideological approaches for achieving the goal of establishing a Muslim state and society:

a. **Jihad**—waging a holy war against the regime until the goal is achieved, including a violent struggle against the leaders and branches of the regime to topple it. This approach is followed by the two leading organizations, Al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyya and Al-Jihad al-Islami.

b. **Al-Takfir wal-Hijra**—like the regime, the society is also corrupt and rotten, and is also to blame for the current social situation. Accordingly, it is the believers' duty to work against the infidel society, seceding from it physically and living a true Islamic life while advancing the collapse of the regime and the society. Following the collapse, the believers must assume leadership and establish a pure and just Islamic society. Until then, the believers are forbidden to mingle in society, take part in elections, or serve in government positions.

⁸² Other militant Islamic organizations that have operated in Egypt are smaller and mainly consist of groups that splintered from the organizations discussed in this part. The smaller organizations consist of **Tala'e al-Fath** (the name used to refer to the operational wing of Al-Jihad al-Islami which was established by Al-Zawahiri outside of Egypt), **Al-Shawqiyyun** (a faction which splintered from Al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyya in 1988 and is named after its founder), **Al-Harakiyyun** (which splintered from Al-Jihad, a local organization in Beni Suef Province), **Al-Wathiqun min al-Nasr** (which splintered from Al-Jihad in 1991), **Al-Tawaqquf wal-Tabayyun** (a faction of al-Takfir wal-Hijra), **Al-Najun min al-Nar** (a faction established following Al-Jihad's breakup in the 1980s).

254. The different groups strongly oppose the West in general and Israel and the Jews in particular, believing they are largely to blame for the decline of Islam in the modern era. However, **resistance to the West and Zionism is not the first priority of the groups—in their view, the war on Israel will be launched after first disposing of the Egyptian regime, their main enemy.**

Al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyya

255. **Al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyya is the largest and most active radical Islamic organization operating in Egypt. It was established in the late 1960s as a student organization affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood.** In the mid-1970s it splintered from the Muslim Brotherhood over differences of opinion, as it considered that organization to be too moderate in its approach towards the regime. It became institutionalized in the late 1970s **and in the early 1980s formed a military wing for violent terrorist attacks.** Its ties to Al-Jihad grew closer at the time, and the two organizations cooperated fully with each other, **including in the assassination of President Sadat in 1981** (the assassination itself was carried out by Al-Jihad, while Al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyya simultaneously attacked the security department in Asyut, killing dozens of police officers). The cooperation between the two organizations decreased following Sadat's assassination due to disputes between their leaders.

256. The organization consisted of various subordinate groups in the areas of Egypt where it operated, particularly in **Upper Egypt** (Asyut, Qana, Al-Minya), **Cairo slums** (particularly Imbaba, Ain Shams, and Giza), and **Alexandria**. According to estimates, the organization numbered thousands to tens of thousands of activists, **and had a structure similar to that of the Muslim Brotherhood** (spiritual leader, Shura Council, a central leadership acting as a "government" in charge of various issues, and a similar province-level organizational structure under the central leadership). **The organization's supreme leadership body is the Shura Council, consisting of few activists** (some abroad and others detained in Egypt). The council is the organization's **"external leadership"**. While the **"inside leadership"** is limited in its ability to direct the organization's operative and routine activities from prison, its members' opinions count more when it comes to issues of religious law and the organization's strategic course of action.

257. **The organization's most prominent figure is Sheikh Omar Abdel-Rahman**, its spiritual leader. Abdel-Rahman is a blind cleric with a Ph.D. in religious law from Al-Azhar University, who was influenced by the writings of Ibn Taymiyyah and Sayyid Qutb at an early age. During his studies in Al-Azhar he met Abdullah Azzam (see below), and they became close friends in the 1980s. According to a study conducted by the British Adrian Morgan on

the Muslim Brotherhood, Abdel-Rahman came to the U.S. with the assistance of two Muslim Brotherhood activists, Mahmoud Abu Halima and Mustafa Shalabi (Abu Halima was sentenced to 20 years in prison for involvement in the World Trade Center bombing;⁸³ he is currently serving a life sentence in the U.S. for involvement in planning and carrying out the first World Trade Center bombing on February 26, 1993).



Sheikh Omar Abdel-Rahman (Wikipedia)

258. Other important personalities:

- a. **Mustafa Ahmed Hassan Hamza**—chairman of the organization's Shura Council.
- b. **Muhammad Mukhtar Jum'ah al-Muqri'**—member of the Shura Council.
- c. **Sheikh Abd al-Akhir**—member of the Shura Council.

259. **Major terrorist attacks committed by the organization:** assassination of the People's Assembly speaker in 1990; attempted assassination of the information minister in 1993; assassination of the anti-fundamentalist ideologue and journalist Farag Foda in 1992; attacks against Egypt's foreign tourism, Copts (assassinations, torching houses and businesses) and security forces (mainly police officers, including high-ranking ones). On several occasions the organization proved its ability to carry out strategic "showcase" terrorist attacks: attempted assassination of President Mubarak in Addis Ababa in 1995, blowing up a car bomb in Croatia in 1995, and a terrorist attack against tourists in Luxor in 1997, where 58 people were killed.

260. **Following the regime's major success in fighting the organization, both in Egypt and elsewhere, starting in July 1997 its detained leaders made several statements calling for a ceasefire in their activities against the regime.** In March

⁸³ Adrian Morgan, Muslim Brotherhood's Long-Standing War on the West.

1999 the organization's external leadership also accepted the initiative as a tactical measure. Ever since the organization remained committed to the announcement since it was made.

261. **Beginning in 2002, the detained inside leadership** worked to achieve recognition of the ceasefire not as a temporary tactical measure but rather **as a permanent strategic choice** (organization members even apologized for past crimes) by all of its members, including the more radical external leadership. On its part, the regime provides the inside leadership with such incentives as releasing prisoners, while taking an aggressive stance towards the external leadership and making efforts to have the free activists extradited and brought to trial. **The inside leadership currently condemns all terrorist activities and complies with the regime, even against the Muslim Brotherhood.**

Al-Jihad al-Islami

262. **Al-Jihad al-Islami was established in 1975. Upon its exposure by the regime in 1978, its members were arrested and the organization was disbanded.** In 1978-1979, the organization was reestablished and became at the time the largest and most powerful of its kind in Egypt at the time. Al-Jihad was exposed once again after the assassination of President Sadat. Some of its leaders were executed; others were imprisoned or put under police surveillance. **It was a hard blow for Al-Jihad to recover from, and it therefore went from being a major militant organization to the second largest organization (after Al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyya).**

263. **In the early 1990s, Al-Jihad al-Islami was reorganized in Pakistan under the initiative and leadership of Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri, who was at the time Al-Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden's second-in-command.** As part of the plans, the organization established a military headquarters in Afghanistan. The organization's activity at the time focused on building an operative network of underground cells in Cairo, Alexandria, and the Delta region. The several cells established were involved in the acquisition of weapons, preparation of a network of safe houses and weapons storages, training, collecting intelligence for operations, self-funding, and planning of bold showcase operations (such as assassinations of senior regime figures).

264. The organization consisted of the Founding Council, the supreme wing (whose different committees each supervised specific aspects of its activity), and the Shura Council, apparently as a coordinating body involved in fundraising and scouting for training locations. **The organization had ties** (such as funding and training) **with elements outside of Egypt: Sudan, Iran, and Afghanistan** (members of the organization took part in fighting against

the U.S.S.R. as part of their military training course). **Its operatives resided in various Arab countries and were involved in fundraising also in European countries.**

265. **The organization's major leaders:**

a. **Ayman al-Zawahiri**, arrested after Sadat's assassination, relocated to Pakistan upon release and later became Al-Qaeda's number two.

b. **Aboud al-Zumour**, its military leader, arrested after Sadat's assassination and put in prison for an extended period of time.

266. **The organization consisted of thousands of active members.** Apparently, the organization focused on violent activity, while propaganda and preaching played a less prominent role. It operated mostly in **Upper Egypt** (particularly Asyut and Beni Suef) **and the slums of Cairo** (particularly Imbaba, Ain Shams, and Giza). The organization's showcase terrorist attacks include assassination attempts on the prime minister (December 1993) and the interior minister. The organization also committed "simpler" terrorist attacks (shooting and throwing grenades, setting explosive charges, and attacks on the Coptic minority, police officers, security personnel, and tourists). Al-Jihad's aim was apparently to compete with the appeal and exposure gained by Al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyya for carrying out similar attacks).

267. **Al-Jihad al-Islami's modus operandi exhibited perseverance, careful planning and operative intelligence collection, integration of operatives from various countries, and strict field security, communications security, and compartmentalization.** Thus, the organization's cells in Egypt consisted of a large number of independent squads called *tala'e al-fath* (pioneers of victory, the name of Al-Zawahiri's organization established outside of Egypt), each with few operatives. Each unit trained for specific tasks, limited in their scope. In case of a larger, more complex terrorist attack, the organization's leader would assign different components of the mission to the various units while maintaining absolute secrecy.

268. **The regime was able to land a serious blow on the organization's infrastructure in Egypt and detain many key operatives, forcing it to move the bulk of its infrastructure and operations out of Egypt.** In this context, it created a worldwide network of cells in countries such as **Afghanistan, Lebanon, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Sudan, Chechnya, the U.S., Canada, Britain, Germany, the Netherlands, and elsewhere.** As the organization relocated its infrastructure abroad, and in light of the difficult situation in which it found itself, **it tightened its cooperation with**

Osama Bin Laden's Al-Qaeda until finally joining it in February 1988, **committing itself to that organization's goals and activity.**

269. In 2000, **the organization's leadership called to "cease all hostilities against Egypt and focus on the main objective—a holy war for the liberation of the Al-Aqsa Mosque"**. While the initiative gained increasing support from the detained inside leadership and was encouraged by the regime, which publicly took positive measures towards the organization and released hundreds of its operatives, Al-Jihad's outside leadership persisted with the same kind of operative terrorist activity as before the initiative.

270. **In 2001, Ayman al-Zawahiri announced that his organization had decided to cease anti-regime activities, but stressed the need to continue terrorist attacks against Western targets.** The organization's leadership condemned the terrorist attacks carried out in Egypt in recent years, announcing that Al-Jihad intended to launch an initiative to stop the violence, similarly to Al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyya. However, it appears that the organization believes that the initiative can only be launched once Egypt has implemented political reforms, guaranteed civil rights, and given the organization's members their political rights immediately upon their release.

Al-Takfir wal-Hijra

271. **The organization was established in 1971 and carried out violent activities in the late 1970s and early 1980s, although its low-profile operations continued for several years afterwards.** According to an announcement released by the Interior Ministry in 1989, the authorities exposed a secret radical organization established by Al-Takfir wal-Hijra members with Iranian supervision and funding. In December 1992, the Egyptian interior minister defined Al-Takfir wal-Hijra as one of the two most dangerous organizations in Egypt.

272. According to the organization's ideology, the believers must relocate to an isolated place, preferably a desert, **to reestablish an authentic Muslim society while waiting for the collapse of the rotten society and its regime, and then take over the country and establish a true Islamic society.** In various periods the organization was able to realize this worldview and established small, isolated communities in Egypt's western desert and on the outskirts of cities.

273. The organization's principles dictate that no member can submit to a ruler, and that loyalty and obedience are reserved only for God. It considers those who belong to another Muslim group to be infidels, even if they do follow the precepts of Islam. It therefore set penalties (including the death penalty) on seceding members. The organization allows only its

own members to exercise the principle of *ijtihad* (religious ruling based on personal judgment) to reject rulings made after Muhammad, denying all other Muslims the same right.

274. **The organization's most prominent leader and founder was Shukri Mustafa, considered its general commander (*al-amir al-'aam*), executed in the late 1970s.** The organization conducted its activities through various cells across Egypt, keeping them as compartmentalized as possible. At its height, it numbered thousands of activists, particularly young people from the urban lower-middle class. Its funding came from donations of members and supporters in Egypt and elsewhere. One of its most notable terrorist attacks was the abduction and murder of the endowment minister in 1977.

Major Al-Qaeda members who got their start in the Muslim Brotherhood

275. Two major Al-Qaeda members formerly rooted in the Muslim Brotherhood:

a. Dr. Abdullah Yousef Mustafa Azzam

1) Palestinian, from the village of Silat al-Harithiya, near Jenin. Al-Qaeda's former ideologue and Osama Bin Laden's spiritual guide. Still viewed as a role model by Hamas. His teachings emphasized the significance of jihad (war on the infidels) as a personal duty shared by all Muslims. He fought against the Soviets in Afghanistan and died when a bomb exploded in his car in Peshawar, on November 24, 1989.

2) The roots of his ideology can be traced back to the Muslim Brotherhood. He was brought up on Hassan al-Banna's teachings, and established a Muslim Brotherhood cell in his home town when he was a teenager. He was later influenced by other Muslim Brotherhood ideologues, including Sayyid Qutb. During his studies in Damascus, his stay in Jordan, and his studies at Cairo's Al-Azhar University, he had contact with the movement's activists and took part in its activities. While in Egypt, he made friends with the families of Sayyid Qutb and Hassan al-Hudaybi, the former general guide of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, and the blind sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman. He later became more extremist, to the point of publicly challenging the Arab regimes.⁸⁴

⁸⁴ See Asaf Maliach and Shaul Shay, *From Kabul to Jerusalem: Al-Qaeda, Global Islamic Jihad and the Israeli-Palestinian Confrontation* (Tel Aviv: Matar Publication, 2009), for an in-depth account of Abdullah Azzam's life.

