AN EDUCATION IN PRUDENCE: A DISCURSIVE ANALYSIS OF THE EGYPTIAN MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD BALANCING ACT, FROM THE AUTHORITARIAN ERA TO THE ARAB SPRING

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An Education in Prudence: A Discursive Analysis of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood

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ABSTRACT

This paper will contend that it was the Muslim Brotherhood's prudence in its public discourse that made its attempts at balancing competing interests largely successful. Although its political success, as was seen by its unprecedented popularity in Egypt's 2012 parliamentary elections, was undeniable, the caution of its message leaves its position and intentions open to radically different interpretations from all sides. This paper argues that this strategy only intensified in the post-revolutionary period, as did the Brotherhood's overall attempt at controlling its message. This prudence in the movement's discourse allowed each competing faction within Egypt to see the Muslim Brotherhood in a very different light depending upon the background of the beholder. The movement showed, quite clearly, its willingness to bend in whatever direction was most politically expedient. What remains to be seen, however, is exactly how many of its previously held values are expendable for the sake of political, rather than social, success.

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INTRODUCTION

The Political Environment

At the time that there will be ready, Oh ye Muslim Brothers, three hundred battalions, each one equipped spiritually with faith and belief, intellectually with science and learning, and physically with training and athletics, at that time you can demand of me to plunge with you through the turbulent oceans and to rend the skies with you and to conquer with you every obstinate tyrant. God willing, I will do it.[1]

Hasan al-Banna during remarks at the Muslim Brotherhood's Fifth General Conference in January of 1939

This paper will contend that it was the Muslim Brotherhood's (MB) prudence in its public discourse that made its attempts at balancing competing interests largely successful. Although its political success, as was seen by its unprecedented popularity in Egypt's 2012 parliamentary elections, was undeniable, the caution of its message left its position and intentions open to radically different interpretations from all sides. This paper will argue that this strategy only intensified in the post-revolutionary period, as did the Brotherhood's overall attempt at controlling its message. This prudence in the movement's discourse allowed each competing faction within Egypt to see the Muslim Brotherhood in a very different light depending upon the background of the beholder.

To the conservatives within the movement, the Muslim Brotherhood was too liberal, to the liberals, it was too conservative. Externally, the Islamist Salafists saw the movement as too secular, to the Egyptian Secularists, the movement was too Islamist. Although most perspectives differed depending on the ideological bent of the group in

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[1]Richard P. Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 15.

question, the common denominator was, that to each competing faction, the Brotherhood was never too radical or too liberal to work with. To some, the movement itself may not have contained "enough" of certain political persuasions for the respective groups' ultra-ideologues (be they conservative or liberal) to be happy, but it was never "too much" of something to stop the majority of Egyptians supporting it.   In light of this, the Muslim Brotherhood performed an exceptional balancing act, internally within its own movement and externally within Egypt and the rest of the world. It will be shown that, in order to be all things to all people and protect a powerbase of support that give it legitimate governance, the movement's message was best served in remaining imprecise and prudent so as to not alienate those who, albeit sometimes begrudgingly, supported it.

The story of the Muslim Brotherhood is one of religion, social justice, revolution and power. It is a story that has been scrutinized by countless supporters and critics alike, but it is also a story best told in the movement's own words. This paper will analyze the Muslim Brotherhood's discourse from 2005 until 2012, both public and private, in order to highlight the delicate balancing act it was trying to achieve. Throughout, this paper will ask the fundamental question: How did the Muslim Brotherhood maintain its balancing act within Egypt, and did this methodology changed in the post-revolutionary period?

THE PLAYERS

The Egyptian political landscape was (and is) an extremely complex environment. This paper's contention that the Muslim Brotherhood was intentionally cautious in its discourse in order to be "all things to all people" within Egypt, coupled with a genuine

ambition to build a state based on the rule of law[2], was complicated by the sheer number of differing views within Egypt. These disparate views were further aligned into a multitude of political, religious, economic and social factions. In order to better gain an appreciation for the varying groups that influence the Muslim Brotherhood's discourse, this paper will briefly describe the three major external players – the establishment, the Salafists and the secularists – and the two broad camps within the Brotherhood itself - the liberals and the conservatives.

The Establishment

For the purposes of this paper, I have defined the *establishment* as the collective group of individuals who, at any given time within the periods under analysis, formed the core of the ruling elite in Egypt. Within the timeframe discussed, there were two such groups: the Hosni Mubarak government exercising power during the pre-revolutionary period; and the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) exercising authority in the immediate post-revolutionary period.

In the pre-Egyptian revolution period, the establishment consisted of Mubarak, his government, and his security forces. Under his leadership, dissent was stymied and any serious contender to Mubarak and his government, such as the Muslim Brotherhood, was outlawed outright, or harassed and terrorized to such an extent by Mubarak's security forces, that the organization in question was virtually ineffective in its opposition. Mubarak's National Democratic Party tightly controlled the parliament of Egypt, despite

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[2]Samer Shehata and Joshua Stacher, "The Muslim Brotherhood Goes to Parliament," *Middle East Report* 36, no. 240 (Fall 2006); http://www.merip.org/mer/mer240/brotherhood-goes-parliament ; Internet; accessed 29 November 2011.

propagandized "free" elections throughout the 1990s and 2000s. To maintain the illusion of democracy a number of opposition groups (those that really posed no serious threat to Mubarak) were allowed to contest these elections. Invariably Mubarak never failed to gain at least two-thirds of the seats.

Post revolution, the establishment was the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF). This was an unelected body, consisting of 20 high ranking members of the Egyptian military who seized control of the government of Egypt in February 2011, dissolved parliament and suspended the Egyptian constitution. This was done under the auspices of facilitating the eventual transfer of power to a democratically elected government, under a new constitution, when the conditions were right. Much of the political conflict within post Mubarak Egypt was focused on the defining these conditions and exactly how much power the SCAF would retain once they were met. The SCAF argued that the military, rather than the government, should have been the keepers of the constitution, and they therefore should have been given "some kind of insurance ... so that it is not under the whim of a president."[3]

The relationship between the Brotherhood and the SCAF was extremely complicated. While the Muslim Brotherhood was accused of making backroom deals in order to secure its own political fortunes (a charge the Brotherhood vehemently denied), it, at times, was extremely critical of the SCAF. The movement charged that the SCAF, while acting as the interim Executive branch of the Egyptian government, "failed even

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[3]Jeff Martini and Julie Taylor, "Commanding Democracy in Egypt," *Foreign Affairs Magazine*, (September/October 2011): 127-137.

more disastrously, more spectacularly than previous governments."[4] The irony was that

the Muslim Brotherhood itself, with a self-professed legacy of being the quintessential

anti-establishment movement, was positioning itself to become the new establishment.

The Salafists

The Salafists, much like the Muslim Brotherhood, are best described as a

"movement".   Unlike the Brotherhood, the Salafist movement is Islamic ultra-

conservative in nature. Egyptian Salafism has oft been equated with radicalism and

terrorism.[5] While Salafism is not inherently synonymous with violence, terrorism, or

radicalism and many "Salafis throughout the world are doctrinally rigid, but peaceful" [6],

most radical Islamists are, in fact, Salafists.

The common perception of the Salafists during the pre-revolutionary period was

that they were complacent, and happy to conduct their religious business in private, away

from the scrutiny of Mubarak's government. The situation radically changed post

Mubarak, and "Salafis used the new atmosphere of protest to join other Islamists in

demonstrations in Tahrir Square, including a march of several hundred in support of

Osama bin Laden after he was killed."[7]

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[4]Muslim Brotherhood Statement on Obstacles Hindering Power Handover to Elected Civilians http://www.ikhwanweb.com/article.php?id=29812

[5]Mommaned Hafez, "The Alchemy of Martyrdom: Jihadi Salafism and Debates over Suicide Bombings in the Muslim World," *Asian Journal of Social Science* 38, no. 3 (2010): 364-378.

[6]Global Security.org, "Salafi Islam"; http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/intro/islam-salafi.htm; Internet; accessed 11 January 2012.

The political representation of the Salafists in Egypt was the Al-Nour, or "Light" party. Although officially espousing democracy in the post Mubarak regime, most Salafists focused on religion as the primary source of their political and spiritual guidance. They, like some conservative Muslim Brotherhood members, believed that Islamic law should be the cornerstone of legislation. But, unlike most conservative members of the Muslim Brotherhood, the Salafists were much more adamant about their desire for Sharia law.

The Salafists are primarily Sunni-Muslims whose ultra conservative Wahabbite views were often at odds with the new "democratic" reality in Egypt. They were described as "a melting pot of various conservative and formerly militant groups (whose) members were not exactly known for their democratic ambitions, but rather for their close ties to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia."[8]

Although the Salafists, in general, are considered ultra-conservative by most Egyptians, during this period they exercised a great deal of influence with all stripes of the country's Muslim majority. The Muslim Brotherhood was acutely aware of this, and it will be shown it consciously attempted to tailor its messages in order to not offend the Salafists, or the ultra-conservative crowd. A much more difficult task, however, was how the Muslim Brotherhood accommodated the interests of the Egyptian secularists.

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[7]Evan Hill, "Explainer: Egypt's crowded political arena," *Al Jazeera* (17 November 2011); http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/spotlight/egypt/2011/11/2011111510295463645.html; Internet; accessed 11 January 2012.

[8]Hill, "Egypt's crowded political arena."

The Secularists

       The ideological antitheses of the Salafists are the Egyptian secularists. This group is an eclectic mix of leftists, liberals, reformers and market capitalists. Unlike the Salafists whose religious views are the basis for a well-defined, relatively organized movement, the secularists during this time were a loose collection of disparate, and at times, contradictory groups. Although at the macro level, they were defined as secularists, the term did not necessarily imply an "anti-religious" bent. In fact, the secularists included some of the most religiously devout of all Egyptians in the Coptic Christian and Sufi communities. The secular leanings of the group had less to do with their religious beliefs, than with their contention that religion should not be a part, or at least the dominant part, of government.

       During this period, the Egyptian secularists were represented in the political realm with several legitimate partisan organizations while the Salafists fielded only one of these organizations. Some secularist parties, such as the "Free Egyptians", founded in 2011 by Christian telecom billionaire Naguib Sawiris, were formed along religious lines. More groups, however, were established along socio/economic lines. The Egyptian Social Democratic Party, formed by Egyptian "Liberal Elites" in 2011, espoused liberal socialism, whereas Egypt's oldest political party, the economically conservative "Wafd", was distinctly capitalist in nature. In the middle, politically speaking was the "Ghad" party, founded in 2004, which was socially progressive, and yet espoused a free market.

       It is interesting to note that at one point or another within the span of 2011-2012, most of the political arms of these three major groups (the establishment, the Salafists and the secularists) were officially allied with the Muslim Brotherhood's Freedom and

Justice Party under an umbrella political organization called the "Democratic Alliance".

Although most left the group to form their own alliances elsewhere, the fact that the

Muslim Brotherhood brought these groups together under one banner, even for a short

period, reflected just how well they appealed to a diverse group of interests and beliefs.

The Muslim Brotherhood Liberals

Unlike the secularists external to the organization, the liberals within the

organization identified themselves, and more importantly Egypt, as fundamentally an

Islamic state, with Islamic values. This group was described as "leftist, though it

included Islamists and economic liberals."[9] This was not to be confused, however, with

the hardline approach of the Salafists who viewed Egypt as a potential caliphate under

Sharia law. The liberal wing of the Muslim Brotherhood generally comprised most of its

youth and less fundamentalist Islamic members, including reformers. These rank and file

liberals were often at odds with the Brotherhood leadership as they saw themselves as

"less-conservative members of the Muslim Brotherhood who, unlike the organization's

older leadership, had been quick to embrace the January 25 protests that launched

Egypt's revolution."[10]

The Muslim Brotherhood Conservatives

During this time period, this group within the organization was usually comprised

of the older, more established members and represented the "old guard". Their likes

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[9]*Ibid.*

[10]*Ibid.*

included Mohammed Badie, the Brotherhood's Supreme Guide and Chairman, and Khairat al-Shater, the movement's key financier and the Brotherhood's eventual candidate for the presidency. Their ranks comprised most of the political power within the organization, and were also seen to be generally more "Islamist" in nature. They were described as "supporting Islamic law as the source of all legislation but declaring that the country should be a civil state"[11], not beholden to Sharia law. This core group of Brotherhood members was perceived to be the "real" power of the movement, and grew up in the culture of oppression and imprisonment at the hands of successive Egyptian governments, most notably Mubarak's. They tended to view the post-revolutionary period as their time, and were generally not opposed to working with any particular external group, despite their relatively principled nature. Although more religiously conservative in nature than their liberal counterparts within the movement, they were much less fundamentalist than the Salafists external to the organization.

METHODOLOGY FOR ANALYSIS

The analysis will begin by situating the reader within the historical context of the Muslim Brotherhood. Beginning with the birth of the movement in 1928, the first chapter will trace the origins of Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, and its evolution over time. It will highlight the movement's important watershed moments, such as its prohibition in 1948, and its ascendance to power in 2012, as well as its most influential leaders and members. The early discourse of the Brotherhood over the years will also be highlighted in this section in order to form a basis for analysis in subsequent chapters.

[11]*Ibid.*

The second chapter will specifically focus on the discourse of the Brotherhood from 2005 to 2011, having identified this period as indicative of what would become a balancing act like no other in the history of the movement. This chapter will introduce the five specific themes I have chosen to model my discourse analysis around, which will form the framework for subsequent chapters' analysis. These themes are: the Brotherhood's view on Human Rights, specifically with regard to women and non-Muslims; their view on religion and Sharia Law in Egypt; the Brotherhood's view on foreign affairs; their views on domestic politics; and, finally the movement's discourse on terrorism and jihad.   I will use discourse from official Brotherhood documents and interviews from prominent members to highlight the calculated caution and prudence the movement was conducting throughout in order to maintain this balancing act.

This paper will then build on the themes introduced in the previous chapter, and analyse the discourse from the post-Egyptian Revolution period (2011 to 2012). This will specifically show how the Muslim Brotherhood's message was systematically manipulated to appeal to a more mainstream audience, and further contribute to its balancing act.[12] The more managed and moderate public discourse during this period will be shown to have contributed to the movement's success in the 2011 parliamentary elections, and how legitimate political authority within Egypt, previously unattainable throughout its history, became a reality.

Finally, the paper will conclude with a summary of the analysis conducted, and a review of the major differences between the two eras studied in terms of the nature and tone of the discourse. It will highlight the prudence in the Muslim Brotherhood's stated

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[12]*Ibid.*

policies and demonstrate just how effective their strategy was. This final section will also include some predictions as to what the future holds for the Brotherhood as it moves forward into the post Mubarak era.

CHAPTER 1

The Muslim Brotherhood: Origins and Legacy

> *I rose to speak. When I began my speech, I could not hear my own words in the beginning, but suddenly I gained strength and felt absolutely cured…The sincere and intelligent young men are joining the Ikhwanul Muslemoon (Muslim Brotherhood) in large number.[13]*
>
> Hasan Banna on the birth of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt

The Muslim Brotherhood's story begins as "just another reformist association inspired by the conviction that the sorry state of the Muslim world was to be attributed to its departure from religion."[14] What it eventually becomes, however, eight decades after its beginnings, still remains to be seen. What cannot be argued is that throughout its history, the Muslim Brotherhood has grown and matured from the relatively insular Egyptian reformist organization it was born as, to one of the most influential, powerful and politically savvy movements in the world.

This section will trace the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood and the development over time of its motives, its leaders and its internal and external influences, beginning with its founding in March of 1928. The people, events, and most importantly, the *discourse* of the Brotherhood over the years, will be highlighted in this section in order to

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[13]Hasan al-Banna. *Memoirs of Hasan al Banna Shaheed* (Karachi: International Islamic Publishers, 1982), 182.

[14]Ana Belen Soage, "Hasan al-Banna or the Politicisation of Islam," Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions 9, no. 1 (March 2008): 21-42; http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=4&hid=119&sid=3665fdbb-b40f-4e0b-906d-10db4dc5d7bb%40sessionmgr114; Internet, accessed 15 December 2011.

form a basis for analysis in subsequent chapters. I will divide this chapter's examination of the history of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood into five chronological periods, based around historically significant events that helped to mold the movement into what it is today. The first such period covered is a brief narrative of the movement's founder, Hasan al-Banna, and the factors that led to the establishment of the organization called the Muslim Brother's Society. The next section will examine the period beginning with its founding in 1928 to its prohibition by the Egyptian Government in 1948. The third period for review is from 1948 to 1975 and coincides with the amnesty granted to the last of the Brotherhood members imprisoned in the "Nasser purge" of 1954.[15] The fourth era we will cover will effectively range from the 1975 amnesty to Mubarak's overthrow in February of 2011 following the event popularly referred to as the "Egyptian Revolution". The final era discussed will be that which followed the collapse of the Mubarak regime, the assumption of power by the Egyptian military and the elections of 2011- 2012. One cannot begin any discussion of the Muslim Brotherhood, however, without first discussing its founder, Hassan al-Banna.

HASAN AL-BANNA: HUMBLE BEGINNINGS TO REVOLUTIONARY

Sheikh Hasan Ahmed Abdel Rahman Muhammed al-Banna was born in 1906 in Mahmoudiyah, Egypt. The son of a local imam and watch repair man, al-Banna became involved in religious and political organizations at an early age, joining a Dervish sect at the age of 12 and participating in demonstrating against British rule in 1919 as a part of

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[15]Barry M. Rubin, *The Muslim Brotherhood :The Organization and Policies of a Global Islamist Movement* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010), 41.

the Egyptian revolution that same year.[16]   In 1923 Al-Banna moved to Cairo in order to

attend college at Dar al-Ulum, studying "counselling and teaching". It was here that he

"became particularly preoccupied with what he saw as the young generation's drift away

from Islam,"[17] and the seeds of a pan Islamic global movement were born.

Graduating in 1927, al-Banna received a teaching position in the northeastern

Egyptian town of Ismailia, where he sought about establishing himself as a leader among

the population. His frequent sermons at mosques and eateries calling for Islamic renewal

and decrying the inadequate working conditions of those working for the British on the

Suez Canal caught the attention of some locals employed by the Suez Canal Company.

Six of these workers visited al-Banna in 1928 and convinced him to become the leader of

group that would stem the pervasive influence of Western ideology in the Arab

population and promote Islamic welfare, values and ethos amongst the Muslim

population. It was the establishment of this group, to be called the Society of Muslim

Brothers, or Muslim Brotherhood, that heralded "one of the most significant events in the

development of political Islam."[18]

Al-Banna, in deference to his Dervish roots, "took the title of *al-Murshid al-Amm*

(General Guide), and the Society's members gave him the *baya* (oath of allegiance) and

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[16]Brynjar Lia, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers in Egypt: The Rise of an Islamic Mass Movement, 1928-1942* (Reading: Garnet & Ithaca Press, 2006), 25-27.

[17]Muslim Brotherhood, "Hasan Al-Banna and His Political Thought of Islamic Brotherhood," *Ikhwan Web* (13May 2008); http://www.ikhwanweb.com/article.php?id=17065; Internet; accessed 10 December 2011.

[18]Soage, "Hasan al-Banna …," 21-42.

adhered to strict rules of self-discipline and obedience." [19] Thus was born the Muslim

Brotherhood.

It is important to note that the Egyptian political scene at this point was in turmoil,

the fledgling country in the throes of seeking out and finding an identity at this time.

Having only gained independence from Britain in 1922, much conflict between the native

Egyptians and their former British rulers was still evident. Although technically its own

Kingdom under King Fuad, the actual authority of the Egyptian people over their

domestic affairs was limited. The British guaranteed that they would retain some control

over Egyptian domestic affairs, as well as ensuring an enduring military presence in the

region. The Kingdom was plagued, however, by corruption, and the ensuing tensions

with the British and the Kingdom itself led to a number of political protest organizations

emerging, including the Communist Party, the Wafd Party, and of course, the Muslim

Brotherhood.[20]

1928-1948: INCEPTION TO PROHIBITION

From the beginning, al-Banna realized the importance of a robust membership,

and how appealing to the masses, not just catering to the religious elite, would become

the means by which the movement's message would grow, and eventually flourish.[21]

The organization set upon an inspired education and construction effort, building a new

mosque in Ismailia in 1931 and repairing many others across the country[22], commencing

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[19]Ibid.; 21-42;.

[20]Lia, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers in Egypt…*, Chp 1.

[21]Hasan al-Banna, *Memoirs* (Cairo: Dar al-Shihab, 1966), 50-51.

adult literacy programmes[23] and enticing youth to study religion through the auspices of sport and recreation clubs called "jawwala".[24] This concerted effort had the effect that al-Banna and the organization wanted.

By 1938, the number of branches of the Society of the Muslim Brotherhood had grown from three to over 300 in just five short years.[25] However, this success was not gained without some dissention. In 1931 a number of members of the still fledgling society began to openly disagree with some of the views that al-Banna had espoused, bringing into question the very essence of his leadership. Chief among them was al-Banna's belief that any member, not just those of privilege or title, could serve as a leader within the movement. This caused a conflict with some of the members who believed that the organization should work to attract more high profile (read wealthy) individuals by offering them prominent roles within the Brotherhood. Al-Banna refused, steadfastly insisting that morality and sacrifice were the only measure by which members would be judged.

The two factions faced off with a vote in the Society's General Assembly, with al-Banna receiving the support from a majority of members. Faced now with the threat of expulsion, those still vehemently opposed to al-Banna's views resigned.[26] Al-Banna set about reconstituting his authority by drafting the Society's "General Laws", which entrenched himself as the titular head, discounted calls for greater consultation amongst

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[22]Lia, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers in Egypt…*, 42-44.

[23]*Ibid.*, 109-111.

[24]*Ibid.,* 101-102, 167-70.

[25]Mitchell, *The Society …,* 12-13.

[26]Lia, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers in Egypt…*, 60-67.

the membership, and revealed the overt skepticism he held for democratic elections. A careful review of these laws has led some scholars to go so far as to suggest that "there were significant similarities between the Society's organisation and that of fascist parties."[27]

The organization that al-Banna founded soon become a movement. From the relatively benign social welfare projects it had espoused in its nascent years, it progressed to openly organizing demonstrations against British rule.[28] In 1936, it called for the boycott of Jewish shops in Cairo due to their perceived support of Zionist causes.[29] It was during this period that al-Banna also began implementing less democratic ideals regarding that would form the leadership of the Brotherhood. The executive committees of the various branches, he decided, would no longer be elected by its respective membership, but appointed by the General Guidance Bureau.[30] As well, in 1935, the Bureau decreed that its delegates would "swear complete confidence and absolute obedience to the General Guide in what one likes or dislikes to do."[31] Interestingly, although he seemed to oppose "grass roots democracy" within his own organization, al-Banna was not shy about his view that "the Muslim Brothers consider that of all the existing systems of government, the constitutional system is the form that best suits Islam

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[27]Soage, "Hasan al-Banna …," 21.

[28]Mitchell, *The Society …,* 15-16

[29]Lia, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers in Egypt…*, 236-244.

[30]*Ibid.*, 98-105.

[31]*Ibid.*, 105, from JIM (Jaridat al-Ikwhan al Muslimin a Yawmiyya (MB newspaper), no. 42, 1353/1935, p 14. See also Mudh., (al-Banna's memoirs); 225

and Muslims."[32] This explicit belief, and in practice consistently adhered to throughout the Brotherhood's history, is perhaps the most compelling argument against the "facism" comparison alluded to earlier.

While al-Banna's original hope was for the organization to stay away from any sort of violent conflict, he realized that tensions with the British were still high amongst his membership. As a result, al-Banna pledged a well-trained, well armed wing of the Brotherhood to take up arms against imperialist occupation, as a means of last resort if negotiations failed. At the same time, however, he unequivocly discounted terrorism, subversion and guerilla warfare as tactics that would be used by the Brotherhood if they did eventually resort to violence. For some in the Brotherhood, the patience required of al-Banna's "negotiate first" plan was too laborious and conservative. In 1939 dissenters broke away from al-Banna's organization and formed a rival group called "Muhammad's Youth."[33] Realizing that more of his members may join the exodus, a military wing of the Brotherhood, christened the "Secret Apparatus", was created.[34]

The Second World War brought about a unique alliance with the Brotherhood, and a change in the tactics al-Banna santctioned for the Secret Apparatus. Living up to the adage "the enemy of my enemy is my friend" the Brotherhood joined forces with the Nazis during this period, committing acts of espionage, sabotage and supporting terrorist activities against the British in Palestine.[35] As for the government in Egypt, an uneasy

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[32]*Ibid.,*, 202-204.

[33]*Ibid.,*172-181.

[34]Olivier Carré and Gérard Michaud, *Les Frères musulmans: Egypte et Syrie (1928-1982)* (Paris: Gallimard, 1983) , 30-31

alliance was evident throughout the war years. In exchange for al-Banna to not overtly throw his Muslim Brotherhood in the political ring as candidates in the Egyptian elections of 1942, the Wafd Government passed laws that were of importance to the Islamist sentiments of the Brotherhood organization. These including outlawing prostitution and tightening the controls on the sale of alcohol. This loose alliance ended in 1945 when national elections in Egypt were held once again.

The Brotherhood fielded a number of candidates, all of whom were defeated in the ensuing votes, in an election that was generally agreed upon as fixed.[36] This snub only inflamed already heightened tensions between al-Banna, who still espoused mostly non-violent means despite the election results, and the organization's more radical wing, personified by its Secret Apparatus, which was at this point falling less and less under the immediate control of al-Banna. This struggle between the militant and moderate factions of the Brotherhood was to become a common feature of the movement throughout its history.

In 1946, the newly elected Sa'dist Government negotiated a draft treaty of independence with Britain, which Nationalist groups, of which the Muslim Brotherhood was the largest, were vehemently opposed. Violent riots broke out, and the Secret Apparatus began to carry out attacks on British nationals in Egypt and Egyptian security forces. This targeted violence reached a crescendo in 1948 when the Secret Apparatus assassinated an Egyptian judge who had sentenced Muslim Brotherhood members for their role in attacks against British soldiers. The Government commenced a crackdown

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[35]Ian Johnson, *A Mosque in Munich: Nazis, the CIA, and Rise of the Muslim Brotherhood in the West* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010): 100.

[36]Lia, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers in Egypt…*, 270-273

and arrested over 30 Brotherhood members and eventually criminalized the society in Egypt, and made it illegal to be a member.[37] In retaliation, on December 28th 1948, Egyptian Prime Minister Mahmud Fahmi Nokrashi was assassinated by a Brotherhood member. [38] This was to mark the beginning of the overt hostilities that would mark membership in the Muslim Brotherhood for the next seven decades.

1948 -1975: PERSECUTION TO AMNESTY

> *(T)he radios broadcast the order of the ministry of the interior dissolving the Society of the Muslim Brotherhood throughout the length and breadth of Egypt.[39]*

> Description of the banning of the Brotherhood in 1948

In 1948 the estimated membership of the Brotherhood in Egypt was thought to have numbered between five hundred thousand and one million Muslims spread through several thousand branches. [40] Al-Banna was finding this large of an organization harder and harder to control. Despite his continued and public repudiation of violence carried out by Brotherhood members, the Secret Apparatus remained active carrying out attacks on government instillations. In response, al-Banna was assassinated, most likely, by the Egyptian Political Police in February of 1949.[41]

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[37]Robin Wright, *Sacred Rage: The Wrath of Militant Islam* (New York: Simon & Schuster,1985): 179.

[38]Mitchell, *The Society ...,* 62.

[39]*Ibid.*,65.

[40]Carre and Michaud. *Les Frères musulmans ...,* 21.

[41]Mitchell, *The Society ...,* 70-71

The next few years saw many arrests and the overt persecution of the Brotherhood, with some estimates of up to 4000 members being imprisoned.[42] In 1951, the Brotherhood launched a court challenge arguing for the de-criminalization of the organization and was ultimately successful. A new leader for the vindicated society, Hassan Ismail al-Hudybi, was recruited from outside the organization. This caused internal frictions amongst the members, specifically with the Secret Apparatus, whom al-Hudybi attempted to disband. The Government, now led by Nahhas Pasha, and the Brotherhood reached an uneasy alliance later that same year. This time the common ground was their mutual goal to gain independence from Britain. The Brotherhood aided the successful coup by the Free Officers in 1952 helping to overthrow the monarchy mainly through non-violent means, all the while protecting foreigners and maintaining civil order throughout.

The relationship between the leader of the new regime, Colonel Gamal Abdel Nasser, and the Brotherhood appeared to be genial at the start. Nasser, and his government, maintained the "façade of cordiality"[43] throughout 1953. This relationship soured quickly, however, in early 1954 with the government disassociating itself from the Muslim Brotherhood.[44] Open animosity between the Government's "Liberation Rally" party and the Muslim Brotherhood was soon displayed, and cracks began to show. Violence between the two came to a head in January of 1954 when members of the Liberation Rally party and Muslim Brotherhood clashed in Cairo. Prime Minister Nasser

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[42]*Ibid.*, 80.

[43]*Ibid.,*, 111.

[44]*Ibid.,* 112.

issued a decree that the Brotherhood was to be dissolved under the auspices that they were planning to overthrow the government. Al-Hudybi and hundreds of Brotherhood members were imprisoned. An attempt on Nasser's life by supposed Brotherhood members, which may have been staged by Nasser himself, gave the Government the opportunity to further dismantle the organization. The Society's headquarters was burned, six members were hanged, and seven, including their leader al-Hudaybi, were sentenced to life in prison.[45]

In the years that followed, one of the most significant members of the Brotherhood to rise to prominence was Sayyid Qutb, the former editor of the Brotherhood's official newspaper. Due to his outspoken beliefs, Qutb was imprisoned and tortured by the police, but continued to write about his experiences while incarcerated, culminating in his seminal work "*Milestones*" published in 1964 upon his release. This document, and the thoughts contained within, is still considered some of the most influential, and controversial in modern Islamic thought, contributing to both the dialogue within the Muslim Brotherhood at the time, and influencing future groups like Al-Qaeda and the Islamic Jihad.[46] Qutb and two other members of the Brotherhood were executed in 1966 after being implicated in a plot to overthrow the government. It is important to note that al-Hudaybi was critical of some of Qutb's thinking, specifically those more radical views that supported armed jihad, and advocated a more tolerant view. This moderate view, which was the hallmark of the Brotherhood "appalled the takfiris

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[45]*Ibid.,* 141.

[46]Kepel, *War for Muslim Minds,*(Cambridge: Harvard University, 2004), 174-175

(supporters of Qutb), who streamed out of the Brotherhood" to form their own, more militant and radical groups.[47]

In 1970, Anwar Sadat succeeded Nassar as Prime Minister and set about a period of liberalisation within Egypt. This included the shuttering of the concentration like camps that the Brotherhood prisoners were housed in, and implemented the gradual release of the prisoners. Al-Hudaybi himself was released in 1971, and subsequently died in 1973. Although the Brotherhood was still illegal, all of the Muslim Brotherhood political prisoners had been released as of 1975.[48]

1975-2010: The Brotherhood, the fight for legitimacy and Mubarak

The government's official policy towards the Brotherhood remained relatively unchanged throughout this period. Under both Anwar Sadat and Hosni Mubarak, the Brotherhood was still illegal in Egypt, but tolerated. For the Government, these years were characterised by intermittent crackdowns on Brotherhood members and organizations. On the Brotherhood side, the main issues championed during this period were to push for Sharia law[49], to argue for free and fair elections, and the continuation of the movement's social welfare programs.[50] Progress was made on all fronts, with the Egyptian Government amending the constitution in 1981 to declare that Sharia "is the

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[47]Robert Leiken and Steven Brooke, "The Moderate Muslim Brotherhood", *Foreign Affairs* 86, no.2 (March/April 2007): 117.

[48]Kepel, *War…*, 72, 93, 101–107.

[49]*Ibid.,* 124.

[50]Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, *Mobilizing Islam: Religion, Activism and Political Change in Egypt,* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002): 178-200.

main source of all legislation."[51] In 1984, the Brotherhood was allowed to run candidates

as members of the Wafd party, and again in 1987 as members of the Labour Party.

Despite Mubarak placing tight controls being on opposition parties' finances and

restrictions on campaigning, in each election, the opposition party that the Muslim

Brotherhood had candidates running for received more votes that all of the other

opposition parties combined.[52]

The years that followed saw another government crackdown, which began to

expose fissures in the Brotherhood itself. Conflict between the society's General Council

(made up of the older hardline Islamist establishment) who did not support cooperation

with Mubarak, and the younger more moderate members whose goal was to legitimize

the Brotherhood through more liberal interpretations of Islam, and dialogue with the

government. After the death of Hamid Abu an-Nasr, the Brotherhood's leader from 1986

to 1996, the role of General Leader fell to Mustafa Mashur. Mashur was a former

member of the Brotherhood's Secret Apparatus, political prisoner, and a Brotherhood

hardliner. Due to Mashur's hardline stance and violent roots, a group of high profile

young moderates left the Brotherhood in 1995 to form the Wasat (Centre) Party, which

aligned itself with a number of Coptic Christians.[53]

Muslim Brotherhood members began running as independents in Egyptian

elections as of 2000. That year they won a total of 17 seats, again under tight campaign

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[51] Kepel, *War…,* 124.

[52] Wickham, *Mobilizing Islam…,* 90.

[53] Augustus R. Norton, *Thwarted Politics: The Case of Hizb al-Wasat. Remaking Muslim Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005): 141.

control by the government.[54] Sensing a sea change in the political arena, the new General

Leader, a Brotherhood moderate by the name of Mohammed Mahdi Akef, attempted to

distance the Brotherhood from the hardline religious intolerance and overt anti-Semitic

rhetoric that had characterised the society throughout its history. This shift, parlayed

through the media by Brotherhood spokespeople at every opportunity, played well to the

Egyptian populace who expressed their approval at the polls. In it, they handed

Brotherhood candidates, all running as "independents" under the banner "Islam is the

Solution"[55] (a well-known Muslim Brotherhood adage), 88 seats in the parliament in

2005. This translated into roughly 20% of the overall seats in the People's Assembly.

This result was garnered in spite of many overt examples of government sanctioned

electoral fraud[56] and the arrest, imprisonment, and intimidation of many Brotherhood

supporters and candidates.

The post 2005 election saw yet another crackdown by the government on the

Brotherhood. Along with the usual wave of arrests, in 2007 Mubarak amended the

Egyptian constitution to favour "registered parties" vice independents. This ostensibly

put a halt to Brotherhood candidates running in elections, as they were still an outlawed

organization. As a result, they were not able to form a party to contest elections therefore

no longer able to run as independents.[57] Mubarak also played to his Western support and

their Islamophobic sentiments, seeking to highlight the Brotherhood's Islamic views.

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[54] Wickham, *Mobilizing Islam…,* 220-227.

[55] John R. Bradley, *Inside Egypt: The Land of the Pharaohs on the Brink of a Revolution* (Palgrave MacMillan, 2008): 56.

[56] Amira Howeidy, "Lessons learned," *Al-Ahram Weekly* no.771, 1-7 December 2005.

[57] Yaroslav Trofimov, "Muslim Brotherhood Falters as Egypt Outflanks Islamists," *The Wall Street Journal*, 15 May 2009, A1-A10.

Mubarak manufactured conflict, instigating the Brotherhood to walk out of parliament by introducing an amendment to the constitution. This amendment would have removed the reference to Islam as the explicit state religion and would have allowed Christians and women to become president. [58] Mubarak's course of action worked. Pundits noted that "after a number of conciliatory engagements and interactions with the West, the Brotherhood retreated into its comfort zone of inflammatory rhetoric intended for local consumption: all suicide bombers became "martyrs"; "Israel" regularly became "The Jews"; even its theological discourse became more confrontational and oriented to social conservatism."[59]

Despite Mubarak's success in vilifying the Brotherhood to his supporters to the West, it was all for naught, as Egypt was about to change. The idea of legitimacy for the Brotherhood that had been fleeting throughout its history, was about to become reality.

2011 to Present: The Arab Spring

With the fall of Mubarak in early 2011, the Government's long ban on its organization was lifted. As such, it announced it would form a political party under the name "The Freedom and Justice Party" (FJP), with long time Muslim Brotherhood member Saad el-Katatni as its leader in order to contest the first Mubarak elections held in late 2011. The FJP also acted as the head of the "Democratic Alliance" which "was intended to be Egypt's pre-eminent post-revolution political force, a broad coalition of

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[58]Tarek Osman, *Egypt on the Brink: from Nasser to Mubarak* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 102.

[59] Osman, *Egypt on the Brink…*, 13.

Islamist and secular parties who could dominate across the country."[60] In the end, the

coalition consisted only of the FJP and a handful of FJP affiliates. Prior to the election,

more conservative entities (namely the Nour Party) of the Democratic Alliance broke off,

calling the alliance too "secular".[61] Likewise, various liberal groups, best characterized

by the Wafd Party, pulled themselves from the alliance feeling it was too "Islamic" in its

nature.[62] Despite these fallouts, the FJP won 218 seats (roughly 43 per cent) of the

People's Assembly seats, with the remainder of the affiliates adding 17 more seats for a

total of 235[63].

On 23 January 2012, el-Katatni was appointed as speaker of the house following

Egypt's elections, thus becoming the head of the legislative arm of Egypt's parliament.

Additionally, in April 2012 the Brotherhood announced that it would field its own

candidate, reversing a long held diktat that no Brotherhood member would ever run for

the presidency of Egypt.[64] Thus, Khairat al-Shater, the Muslim Brotherhood's main

financial supporter and its "long-time chief whip" was nominated.[65] Al-Shater's

nomination, however, was eventually quashed by the ruling military junta. Despite this

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[60]Greg Carlstrom, "Egypt's New Parliament Blocs," *Al-Jazeera* (23 January 2012); http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/interactive/2012/01/201212392416169247.html; Internet, accessed 7 February 2012.

[61]Hill, "Egypt's crowded political arena."

[62] *Ibid.*

[63] Carlstrom, "Egypt's New Parliament Blocs."

[64] Abdel-Rahman Hussein, "Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood to field presidential candidate," *The Guardian* (1 April 2012); http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/apr/01/egypt-muslim-brotherhood-presidential-candidate; Internet, accessed 3 April 2012.

[65]Al-Jazeera, "Profile: Egypt's Khairat al-Shater," (1 April 2012); http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2012/04/20124117205835954.html ; Internet;accessed 2 April 2012.

setback, the Brotherhood's long wait was now over, and legitimate political power had

come at last.

CHAPTER 2

2005-2011: Rise of the "Body Politic"

While the Muslim Brotherhood itself is steeped in history, this chapter will focus

specifically on the five-year period beginning with the Egyptian elections of 2005 and

ending with the beginning of the Egyptian revolution in early 2011. The discourse during

this period, as seen through interviews from Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood spokespeople

and official statements alike, suggests a movement very aware of its precarious position

within Egypt.

On one hand, during this period, it was still an illegal organization, not allowed to

run election candidates under its own banner, and subject to reprisals and mass detention

from the ruling Mubarak regime at every turn. On the other hand, it was the un-official

voice of change within Egypt, attempting to bring together disparate ideologies from the

liberal elites and moderate youth, to the right wing fundamentalist Salfists. The discourse

coming from the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt during this period reflects this balancing

act. As we will see in this chapter, the statements and discussion are seldom extreme or

revolutionary, presumably for fear of alienating one side or another, yet deferring to its

Islamic roots, if not exclusively, at least in some measure. The discourse is always

politically sensitive in nature, showing an aptitude for balancing the old with the new, the

extreme with the moderate and the status quo with change.

This chapter will focus on the discourse of the Brotherhood from 2005 to 2011.

The intent is not to disregard the discourse prior to 2005, but use that year as the

beginning of what would become a balancing act like no other in the history of the

movement. 2005 was a watershed year within the movement. It was the year in which

the movement would openly contest national elections, though not yet under an official

Muslim Brotherhood banner, with its candidates still standing as independents. It was the

year in which Muslim Brotherhood candidates would "officially" garner the support of

20% of Egyptian voters, despite widespread election fraud[66] and a crackdown that sent

hundreds of MB members to jail in May of that year alone.[67] All of this perpetrated by

the ruling Mubarak government to suppress dissenting voices. Most importantly, it was

also the year that many observers said the Muslim Brotherhood entered the

"mainstream".[68]

     This chapter will take discourse from official Brotherhood documents and

interviews from prominent movement members, specifically Mohammed Mahdi Akef, its

chairman during this time, throughout the period 2005-to the end of 2010. It will then

organize these discourses around five themes: The Brotherhood's view on Human

Rights, specifically with regard to women and non-Muslims; their views on religion and

Sharia Law in Egypt; the view on foreign affairs; their views on domestic politics; and,

finally their discourse on terrorism and jihad. Within each section, I will attempt to

dissect what was said, explain the context in which it was said, and how the discourse of

the Muslim Brotherhood was used to influence the various factions identifies in the

introduction, both internally and externally, during this period. Particular attention will

be paid to the Muslim Brotherhood's attempt at being all things to all people.

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[66]Howeidy, "Lessons Learned."

[67]Greg Carlstrom, "Explainer: Inside Egypt's recent elections," Al-Jazeera (15 November); http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/spotlight/egypt/2011/11/201111138837156949.html ; Internet; accessed 11 January 2012.

[68]Hill, "Egypt's crowded political arena."

Human Rights, Women and Non-Muslims

The issue of human rights, specifically regarding those rights afforded to women, is one of the most controversial, and sensitive within the Muslim world. Middle Eastern intellectual Mahmood Monshipouri concludes that the "convergence between certain elements of Islamic feminists and Muslim secularists has pointed to the existence of pragmatic grounds for cooperation between the two."[69] This "cooperation", or at least the perception of it, was front and centre in Brotherhood dialogue during this period. This section will show that although the movement made strides in showing the western world its commitment to human rights during this period, its dialogue aimed at Egyptian consumption told a very different story, specifically regarding the status of women in the political realm. The comments and specific policies of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood during this period are shown to have been made in order to not alienate fundamentalist Islamic sentiments, rather than further women's rights.

During this period the Chairman of the Muslim Brotherhood, Akef, was seen to be the spokesperson for the role of women within the movement and their role in general. In May of 2008, he made the following statement in an interview with the *Elaph* news organization when asked if women had the right to become Egyptian president. His response was: "Even the *ulema* (Muslim Legal scholars) differ with regard to the issue whether a woman can be supreme leader. We have the right to choose between the two positions, and we have chosen the view that this is impossible."[70] Although Akef was

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[69]Mahmood Monshipouri, "The Muslim World in a Global Age: Protecting Women's Rights," *International Studies Journal* 1, no. 1 (Summer 2004): 35.

quite clear about the Brotherhood's current position ("this is impossible") his statement

was equivocal in that he iterated that there is a choice, and it is the Brotherhood's alone to

make. Although the end state of the Brotherhood's policy at the time is clear, Akef

seemed to leave the door open to changes in the future, if necessary. When asked in the

same interview about the seeming conflict between this policy and another Brotherhood

policy of equality of rights for all, he said the following, referring to the imprisonment of

some female candidates in during the 2008 elections: "When several female members of

the movement offered to run in parliamentary elections, what happened to them? Don't

you know that a woman is under the man's guardianship, and he does not want her to

degrade herself?"[71] Here the intimation was that the Muslim Brotherhood's exclusion of

women from the political process has less to do with religion, than with the Mubarak

government specifically targeting women candidates. It is interesting to note that the

dialogue shifted from one of Islamic convention, to one of "protection". Within the

balancing act, these statements appealed internally to the more fundamentalist of the

Brotherhood's supporters, as well as a concession to the ultra-orthodox Salafists.

Women were not the only ones excluded from holding Egypt's presidency,

according to the Muslim Brotherhood. In the same interview described above, Akef had

this to say about non-Muslims, specifically Coptic Christians and the presidency: "The

question of a Copt becoming leader is a point of contention among the Muslim *ulema*.

Some say that it is possible, and some say not. We tend towards the negative but the final

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[70]Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI), "Muslim Brotherhood Supreme Guide: Bin Laden is a Jihad Fighter," *Special Dispatch*, no. 2001 (25 July 2008); http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/0/2795.htm ; Internet; accessed 11 January 2012.

[71]MEMRI, "Bin Laden is a Jihad Fighter…"

decision is up to the people." As with his previous statements, Akef qualified this, presumably to appeal to a wider secularist audience, leaving open the possibility of future compromise by hedging: "the final decision is up to the people."[72] The Chairman, speaking on behalf of the Muslim Brotherhood in these instances, seemed to cater to the Islamists on both of these subjects. One reason for this could be that his comments were made in Arabic to a Middle Eastern news agency for primarily Arab world consumption. The same Islamic leanings cannot be seen when Brotherhood members speak to western media outlets.

In 2008, the European Parliament publically chastised the Egyptian Government for human rights abuses in a resolution adopted in January of that year. Specific mention of the "International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women" was made in the resolution, and was a focal point in the debate surrounding its adoption.[73] Hussein Ibrahim, the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood parliamentary spokesperson at the time, spoke in strong support of the resolution, saying "(t)he issue of human rights has become a global language. Although each country has its own particulars, respect of human rights is now a concern for all peoples."[74] No qualification on the status of women was given by Ibrahim, leaving the impression, at

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[72]MEMRI, "Bin Laden is a Jihad Fighter…"

[73]European Parliament, *European Parliament resolution of 17 January 2008 on the situation in Egypt* (Strasbourg:17 January 2008); http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&reference=P6-TA-2008-0023&language=EN ; Internet; accessed 4 January 2012.

[74]Jack Shenker and Brian Whitaker, "The Muslim Brotherhood uncovered," *The Guardian* (8 Febraray 2011); http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/feb/08/egypt-muslim-brotherhood-uncovered; Internet; accessed 10 January 2012.

least to the Western World, that the specifics of the resolution, including those regarding

the equality of women, were supported by the Muslim Brotherhood.

The Brotherhood's statements during this period were not blatantly contradictory

regarding the role of women within the political process. As such, it appeared the

Brotherhood attempted to find the "pragmatic grounds for cooperation between Islamic

feminists and Muslim secularists."[75] Instead, they were, in fact, more concerned about

alienating the more conservative Islamic wing of its movement, and inviting backlash

from the Salafists, rather than unequivocally support the furtherance of women's rights.

Religion and Sharia Law

Another area in which the Muslim Brotherhood treaded carefully during this

period was the topic of religion and the implementation of Sharia law. Long a sticking

point between the secularists and the Islamists, the Brotherhood attempted to extoll and

support the ideas and values of Sharia, thereby appeasing the Islamists, yet stopping short

of conclusive support of for the implementation of Sharia law. This attempted to assuage

the fears of the west, the secularists within Egypt itself, and those more liberal within its

own ranks. Two examples of the dialogue during this period, again by Akef, pointed to

this dichotomy, and the vagaries of the Brotherhoods discourse.

In his weekly address to Britherhood followers in May of 2007, Akef ruminated

on the role of Islam in democracy. He said: "As to the claim that Islam does not

recognize civil authority, the authority of Islam is democratic, it is genuine liberty, it

provides equality in practice and is transparent, it neither oppresses nor robs any man of

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[75]Monshipouri, "The Muslim World in a Global Age…," 34.

his rights. It is on that foundation and with those values that the Muslim Brotherhood

calls for justice, equality, and liberty."[76] It is interesting to note that Akef neither

mentioned Sharia nor its implementation anywhere in his missive, yet the values it

espouses were very evident. His statement was brilliant in its caution. He supported the

idea of liberal democracy, a value dear to secularists and liberals, by likening it to Islam.

In using the two ideas (democracy and Islam) as complimentary, rather than

contradictory, he did not risk alienating either the secularists or the Islamists.

A year later in an interview, in response to the perveived "ambiguity" of the

Brotherhood's stance on Sharia law, Akef was pointedly asked about the group's plans

with regard to implementation of Sharia if they should come to power in Egypt. Here,

the Chairman was slightly more candid, but still equivocal when he answered: ""If we

come to power, this will mean that the people share our vision. Moreover, don't we live

for the sake of *sharia*? Doesn't the Egyptian constitution say so?"[77] Many Muslim

Brotherhood critics, such as Jonathan Dahoah-Halevi pointed to this as proof of the

Brotherhood's hidden agenda.[78] The reality, however, was slightly more complicated,

and, it would seem, not nearly as sinister.

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[76]Jonathan D. Halevi, "Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood: In Their Own Words ," Jerusalem Issue Briefs 10, no. 27 (6 February 2011); http://www.jcpa.org/JCPA/Templates/ShowPage.asp?DBID=1&LNGID=1&TMID=111&FID=442&PID=0&IID=6003 ; Internet; accessed 10 January 2011.

[77]MEMRI, "Bin Laden is a Jihad Fighter…"

[78]Jonathan D. Halevi, "The Muslim Brotherhood: A Moderate Islamic Alternative to al-Qaeda or a Partner in Global Jihad?," Jerusalem Viewpoints, no. 558 (1 November 2007); http://www.jcpa.org/JCPA/Templates/ShowPage.asp?DRIT=2&DBID=1&LNGID=1&TMID=111&FID=443&PID=0&IID=1920&TTL=The_Muslim_Brotherhood:_A_Moderate_Islamic_Alternative_to_al-Qaeda_or_a_Partner_in_Global_Jihad ; Internet; accessed 10 January 2011.

While it may seem that Akef was supporting the implementation of Sharia law, another, less radical interpretation, was that he was merely supporting the ideals and the morality of sharia, rather than the actual application of it. He was complimentary of the Egyptian constitution which utilizes the principles and values of sharia, such as equality and justice, as the basis for the law, rather than the law itself. This is akin to the way in which western democratic laws use Judeo-Christian principles in the formation of laws, but pragmatically adhere to the practice of separation of church and state. Again, it appeared that Akef was intentionally imprecise in order to avoid marginalizing either wing of the internal Brotherhood membership, as well as pacifying the competing Salafists.

It was this ability, to be as religiously inoffensive as possible to secularists, Islamists and the West alike, that characterised the Muslim Brotherhood's religious dialogue during this period. Although they certainly lost some support from the far right and far left internal and external to their movement, and were simultaneously accused of being too "Islamic" or too "secular", they realized, in the case of religion, they had to appeal to the moderates. The same cannot be said for their dialogue on Foreign Affairs during this period.

Foreign Affairs

Within Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood was seen to be broad based and eclectic, attempting to cater to all sides at once. Its external views during this period, however, were somewhat less encompassing. Case in point was the Israel/Palestine issue. This *cause célèbre* was one that the Brotherhood could squarely get behind, with very little

chance at negative political fallout. This, like the anti-American discourse we will see

later, was a topic which the Brotherhood used to great effect in garnering support

amongst the various factions within Egypt.   Mohamed Badie himself frequently weighed

in, issuing official statements voicing concerns that "(t)he Palestinian suffering seems to

never end with the shortage of food, medication, fuel and shelter" and describes in detail

the apparent Israeli "aggression oppression and tyranny" against the Palestinian people.[79]

Using terms in its official statements such as "Zionist terrorist"[80], in reference to the

Israeli Foreign Minister Avigdor Liberman, the Brotherhood left no doubt as to which

side of the conflict it fell on.

The American influence in Middle Eastern affairs was also something the

Brotherhood made known its opinion on. These are best summarized by Dr. Abdel

Moneim Abou el- Fotouh,[81] a Muslim Brotherhood leader who said in 2004 that "(t)he

Muslim Brothers believe that the Western governments are one of the main reasons for

the lack of democracy in the region because they are supporting dictatorships in the Arab

and Islamic region in general."[82] This anti-western/anti American rhetoric was one of the

few views that has played well to all of its members, as well as most of Egypt (save the

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[79]Mohamed Badie, "MB Statement Regarding Latest Israeli Oppression," *Ikwhan Web* (19 January 2010); http://www.ikhwanweb.com/article.php?id=22708 ; Internet; accessed 22 January 2012.

[80]Muslim Brotherhood, "Morsy: We Reject Lieberman's Zionist Statements Against Hamas," *Ikwhan Web* (25 April 2009); http://www.ikhwanweb.com/article.php?id=19990 ; Internet; accessed 22 January 2012

[81]Of note, Dr. el-Fotouh would eventually leave the MB in 2011 for refusing to relinquish his independent presidential campaign bid.

[82]International Crisis Group, "Islamism in North Africa II: Egypt's Opportunity," ICG Middle East and North Africa Briefing (20 April 2004): 11; http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/Middle%20East%20North%20Africa/North%20Africa/B013%20Islamism%20in%20North%20Africa%202%20Egypts%20Opportunity.pdf ; Internet; accessed 12 December 2011.

Establishment), be they Islamist or secularist. The Brotherhood used statements like this, channelling obvious contemporary sentiments of the Arab world, to further strengthen its populous position. Leiken and Brooke describe their views as "assail(ing) U.S. foreign policy, especially Washington's support for Israel".[83]

Another example of this was on the occasion of President George W. Bush's state visit to Egypt in 2008. Akef issued an official statement on 17 May of that year condemning the visit. In it he said "Arab rulers … should say "No" to injustice and murder instead of confronting their peoples and congratulating occupation forces for their crimes. They should also remove U.S. military bases from our lands."[84] Again, this statement was reflective of the sentiments of the Arab, specifically the Muslim, world during this period, as well as one that is still held to this day. Again, within the context of the balancing act, Akef was clearly playing to all groups within Egypt, with the exception of the Establishment, represented by Mubarak during this period. However, as we will see in its subsequent discourse, the Brotherhood was still very careful not to inflame tensions with the west too egregiously, nor those sympathetic to the west within the Mubarak regime.

Akef's next public statement in an interview only five days later, showed the r*eal politick* involved in the Brotherhood's views, and the softening of the rhetoric with regard to America. On 22 May he said: "Since my appointment as Supreme Guide of the Muslim Brotherhood, I have insisted that no dialogue with (the American Government) take place in the absence of an Egyptian government representative. This is out of respect

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[83]Leiken, and Brooke, "The Moderate Muslim Brotherhood." 107.

[84]Mohamed Mahdi Akef, "The Muslim Brotherhood Condemns Bush's Visit," Ikwhanweb (17 May 2008); http://www.ikhwanweb.com/article.php?id=17115 ; Internet; accessed 3 January 2012.

for the laws and institutions of the state in which I live."[85] Here, the movement's discourse seemed to insinuate that their "hands off" policy towards America had less to do with the U.S.'s role as "occupation forces" in Iraq and Afghanistan, and more to do with the fact the Muslim Brotherhood respected the notion of State to State dialogue.

Regarding the subject of Foreign Affairs, the Muslim Brotherhood's balancing act was more focused on solidifying support within the Egyptian population en masse, appealing to most external players (Salafists, secularists) as well as its internal audience (liberals and conservatives) with a message all could agree to. The exception to this was the establishment, whose western ties were still very strong. The Brotherhood, as was shown, did attempt to balance its rhetoric somewhat, in order to appease the Mubarak regime. However, without a chance of actually forming government, and the diplomatic responsibilities that go with it, the movement's leaders were free to demonize the West and its policies. This approach was well received well by all competing factions within Egypt, and proved to be an issue that needed little finesse or "balancing". This single issue, which all sides could support, was nowhere to be found in the domestic realm, as we will see.

Domestic Politics

The Muslim Brotherhood's dialogue regarding domestic affairs during this period was very interesting for two reasons. The first was that the Muslim Brotherhood's role in Egyptian politics could not be ignored. In 2005 it had contested a number of seats, albeit as independents, in the General Parliamentary Elections and won approximately 20% of

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[85]MEMRI, "Bin Laden is a Jihad Fighter…"

the popular vote translating into 88 seats in the 454 member house.[86] The second item of note during this period was that although the Brotherhood was now a valid and influential political player, three of the four large groups that influenced the Brotherhood from within Egypt at this time, the establishment, the Salafists and the secularists, all disagreed with the decision to participate in the elections. Motives, ranging from the fear of competition (establishment) to the religious (Salafists) to the practical (secularists), all played a part during this period. Eventually, the only group to support the participation of the Muslim Brotherhood in this nascent attempt at democracy were self-described "moderates" internal to the Brotherhood itself. This participatory effect in the democratic process, rather than a revolutionary one, was the source of its status as global "moderates"[87], as well as the cause of friction between the liberals and conservatives within the movement itself.

The Muslim Brotherhood, in its domestic political role was, for the most part, very active during this period in both its deeds and discourse. After a Mubarak crackdown on the Brotherhood in late 2005 resulting in hundreds of arrests[88], the Brotherhood's response was tempered. Rather than calling on open revolt to overthrow Mubarak, the dialogue was restrained, and the Brotherhood's official statement in April of 2006 promised "the Egyptian people that our relentless fight for freedoms and the

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[86] Carlstrom, "Explainer: Inside Egypt's recent elections."

[87] Leiken, and Brooke, "The Moderate Muslim Brotherhood."

[88] BBC News, "Scores arrested in Egypt election," (20 November 2005); http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/4453674.stm ; Internet; accessed 4 January 2012.

respect for human dignity will continue. We will work through every peaceful channel to

regain the rights of our fellow citizens regardless of the sacrifices we make."[89]

The conciliatory tone towards the government was even more evident in 2008

when Akef said "I don't believe we are fighting the government; we are [merely] in

conflict with it. We have no choice but to help and respect the regime, since the regime,

the resources, and security are in the hands of one small group. We are dealing with this

situation with great patience and wisdom, in order to put an end to corruption without

destroying institutions and creating anarchy. We have hopes for [a better] future and faith

in the great Egypt."[90] Although statements like these helped garner some favour from

Mubarak, or at least avoid crackdowns, they did very little to win over the other

competing interests contained within the balancing act.

Due to the Brotherhood's choice to participate in the political process during this

period, Robert Leiken and Steven Brooke note that "Jihadists loathe(d) the Muslim

Brotherhood…for rejecting global jihad and embracing democracy".[91] Conservative

Islamists within the movement, and Salafists external to it, saw this as a betrayal of

Islamic values because "democracy is not just a mistaken tactic but also an unforgivable

sin, because it gives humans sovereignty over Allah."[92] Likewise, liberals from within

the party were unconvinced with the participatory tack. Reformers from the liberal wing

of the movement viewed the Brotherhood's participation in elections during this period as

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[89]Mohamed Mahdi Akef, "Muslim Brotherhood Statement in the Aftermath of Recent Arrests," Ikwhanweb (3 April 2006); http://www.ikhwanweb.com/article.php?id=4494 ; Internet; accessed 3 January 2012.

[90]MEMRI, "Bin Laden is a Jihad Fighter…"

[91]Leiken, and Brooke, "The Moderate Muslim Brotherhood.",107-121.

[92]*Ibid.*

a "mistake"[93], and said that reformers voices were being excluded and by running candidates, the movement caused a "schism between the Brotherhood and reform leaders."[94]

As Middle East expert Mark Lynch put it, the option of "retreating from politics in order to ride out the repressive storm was not only open to them (The Muslim Brotherhood), and indeed validated by leading intellectuals within the movement; it was actively encouraged by their official tormentors (the Mubarak regime)."[95] Some wonder, however, if the "Brotherhood's adherence to democracy was merely tactical and transitory."[96] Critics such as Halevi, believe that the Muslim Brotherhood's participation in the democratic process can be exploited to "establish an Islamic regime which will then obviate democracy…".[97]

Regardless, of how one perceived the ultimate reasons for the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood's politicization during this period, their "determination to proceed with its political party platform in the face of strong deterrent efforts by the regime…speaks more loudly than would mere talk."[98] This further solidified their ideals, borne from a "path of toleration … to find democracy compatible with its notion of slow Islamization."[99]

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[93]Evan Hill, "The Muslim Brotherhood in Flux," *Al-Jazeera* (21 November 2010); http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/2010/11/2010111681527837704.html ; Internet; accessed 21 December 2011.

[94]Hill, "The Muslim Brotherhood in Flux."

[95]Mark Lynch, "The Brotherhood's Dilemma," Crown Center for Middle East Studies Middle East Brief, no. 25 (January 2008); 5.

[96]Leiken, and Brooke, "The Moderate Muslim Brotherhood," 110.

[97]Halevi, "The Muslim Brotherhood: A Moderate Islamic Alternative…"

[98]Lynch, "The Brotherhood's Dilemma," 9.

Samer Shehata and Joshua Stacher summarize the common misrepresentation most

succinctly by saying that "commentary on the Brotherhood frequently leaps to

unsubstantiated conclusions that paint the group as a monolith bent on oppression and

rule by force in the future."[100]

Terrorism and Jihad

Perhaps the most controversial of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt's discourse

during this period was regarding the movement's stance on jihad, and whether or not the

movement implicitly or explicitly supported terrorism. Critics of the Brotherhood

pointed to statements made by prominent members as proof positive that "(t)he Muslim

Brotherhood supports terrorism and jihad…"[101] Others argued that the dialogue was

often taken out of context, poorly translated or misunderstood, and the Brotherhood is

opposed to violence.[102] Still others posited that the Muslim Brotherhood was

intentionally cautious in communicating its platform, as to attempt to be all things to all

people. While on its surface it may seem that all of these views may be mutually

exclusive, the reality is, in an organization as diverse as the Brotherhood was during this

period, there may have been some truth to all of these. The key to understanding the

movement's dialogue during this period is understanding their interpretation of what

constitutes a jihadist versus a terrorist.

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[99]Leiken, and Brooke, "The Moderate Muslim Brotherhood," 115.

[100]Shehata and Stacher, "The Muslim Brotherhood Goes to Parliament."

[101]Halevi, "The Muslim Brotherhood: A Moderate Islamic Alternative…"

[102]Leiken, and Brooke, "The Moderate Muslim Brotherhood," 122.

While most western pundits would agree that Osama Bin Laden was a terrorist, the reality for Brotherhood leaders was not so clear. When asked by a reporter in May of 2008 if he considered Bin Laden a terrorist or a jihad fighter (interpreted as "freedom fighter" in this case), The Muslim Brotherhood Chairman, Akef, responded "Without a shadow of a doubt – a jihad fighter."[103] He further added to his statement by qualifying that he supported Bin Laden's "activities against occupation, but not against civilians."[104] This clarification may seem minor, but underscores the importance of what the Muslim Brotherhood defined as a terrorist during this time, versus what they considered a jihadist. It also adds to the Brotherhood's attempt at balancing what, at least within the Arab world, is not such a cut and dried topic as it is in the West.

Akef further argued in another interview that Allah gave "the occupied, oppressed nations jihad and resistance as a means of achieving freedom."[105] The suggestion in these two statements was clear: the fight against an oppressor and occupying force, "the West" in general and "America" in specific, constituted jihad, and was acceptable. Terrorism, on the other hand, was considered quite differently. Again, the qualifier that fighting an oppressor was a specific right given to men by God was an attempt at pacifying the Salsfists, and more conservative members of its own group.

The Muslim Brotherhood's official stand on terrorism appeared to be quite clear during this period. In an official statement in 2007, in response to one of the Taliban's tactics in Afghanistan (i.e. kidnapping and killing aid workers) the organization said the

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[103]MEMRI, "Bin Laden is a Jihad Fighter…"

[104]*Ibid.*

[105]Halevi, "Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood: In Their Own Words."

"Muslim Brotherhood absolutely opposes such (actions), considering them anti-Islamic"
and "confirmed that Islamic Sharia rates non-combatant foreigners as covenanted."[106]
The same statement went on to say that the "Taliban shall collect its strength for
resistance only."[107]

The Muslim Brotherhood's position on terrorism and its distinction between jihad
during this time was not unique. It was in fact indicative of the greater pan-Arab mood of
the time. Even the extreme Islamist Salfists took great care in differentiating between
jihadists and terrorists. Ragab Hilal Hamida, an Egyptian parliamentarian during this
period, and member of an extreme offshoot of the already right wing Nour party[108] [109],
articulated the difference from a Salafist point of view in a 2006 interview. In it he
detailed "he who kills Muslim citizens is neither a jihad fighter nor a terrorist, but a
criminal and a murderer. We must call things by their proper names!"[110] He further
clarified however, insinuating that Americans and Jews are fair game, saying "(f)rom my
point of view, bin Laden, Al-Zawahiri and Al-Zarqawi are not terrorists in the sense

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[106]Muhammad Habib, "Free All Korean Captives," *Ikwhan Web* (22 July 2007); http://www.ikhwanweb.com/article.php?id=1021; Internet; accessed 3 January 2012.

[107]Habib, "Free All Korean Captives."

[108]Reuters, "Nour Rivals Attempt Office Takeover," *Gulf News* (6 November 2008); http://gulfnews.com/news/region/egypt/nour-rivals-attempt-office-takeover-1.142272 ; Internet, accessed 19 January 2012.

[109]Issandr el-Amrani, "MEMRI Puts its Foot in it," *The Arabist* (13 March 2006); http://www.arabist.net/blog/2006/3/13/memri-puts-its-foot-in-it.html ; Internet, accessed 19 January 2012.

[110]Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI), "Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood MPs: The Koran Encourages Terrorism; 'Bin Laden, Al-Zawahiri and Al-Zarqawi are Not Terrorists in the Sense Accepted by Some'," *Special Dispatch*, no. 1110 (10 March 2006); http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/0/1631.htm#_ednref1 ; Internet; accessed 11 January 2012.

accepted by some. I support all their activities, since they are a thorn in the side of the Americans and the Zionists." [111]

Although there may have been differing opinions on exactly what a terrorist is, the killing of innocents and "noncombatants" was seen to be unequivocally disavowed by the Brotherhood during this time. The notion of jihad, and the struggle against an armed occupier, namely the west, was a different story, and was supported, at least in its discourse during this period, by the Brotherhood. Striking this balance between the militant Islamist jihadist groups like the Salafists endorsed and the outright pacifism espoused by many of the secularists, made this difficult indeed. More often than not, the Brotherhood attempted to appease a pan Islamic sentiment (stopping short of radicalism), rather than a secular one, in order to maintain the balance, and maximize its popular influence.

CONCLUSION

Throughout this chapter, the discourse of the Brotherhood from 2005 to 2011 was analysed and revealed to unveil a balancing act like no other in the history of the movement. Political legitimacy, and a pulpit, specifically the Egyptian parliament, from which to its deliver its message, were hallmarks of this period. What was found, however, was that although the Muslim Brotherhood's messages were as eclectic as the movement itself, its slight deferral to the Islamists, both internal and external to its organization, was the legacy of this period.

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[111]The Middle East Media Research Institute, "The Koran Encourages Terrorism…"

Its discourse on women's rights, for example, was crafted carefully in order not to alienate fundamentalist Islamic sentiments, at what could be considered the expense of furthering women's representation within the Egyptian political system. Likewise, the notion of Christians becoming president was dismissed, at least for the time being, by the Brotherhood's statements.   Likewise, its stance on jihad, and the right of those oppressed to fight the oppressor was supported, as was the movement's provision that Osama Bin Laden, while acting as a jihadist, was within the domain of movement support, rather than his actions as a terrorist. Although it appeared that these comments were specifically meant to play well to the Islamic population (specifically the Salafists), a disclaimer was always included to mollify any groups that might have taken offence.

A number of qualifications on the assertion that the Brotherhood attempted to appease the Islamists first must be made here, if only to show just how eager the Brotherhood was to maintain balance with the other competing interests. The first qualification is regarding the relationship with secularists external to the movement, and the liberal Islamists within its own organization. The Brotherhood was never unequivocal in its stance on anything that would, or could threaten these groups. This paper has pointed out that the Brotherhood left the door open to status of women and Christians in politics saying that "the final decision is up to the people."[112] Likewise, although the *ideals* of Sharia within the laws of Egypt were supported, the *application* of Sharia law was not. These are but a few examples of how the Brotherhood always attempted to leave some modicum of neutrality in all of its discourse during this period.

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[112]MEMRI, "Bin Laden is a Jihad Fighter…"

The second qualification regards the establishment, specifically the Mubarak Government. While advocating a foreign affairs policy that was entirely contradictory to Mubarak's (if not always in substance, at least in tone), especially regarding America and the Israel/Palestinian conflict, the Brotherhood maintained its fragile relationship with the government. This was done by qualifying in official statements that Brotherhood knows and understands who is "really" in charge when it comes to foreign affairs. This, therefore, attempts to strike the balance with the establishment. It is also important to note that the only equivocal statements that the Brotherhood made during this period were those that were seen to be supported by a vast majority of Egyptians. These, as mentioned, were mostly regarding foreign affairs, and required little balance as they were universal in nature.

The movement's views on human rights, religion and Sharia law in Egypt, foreign affairs, domestic politics and their discourse on terrorism and jihad were all analysed in this chapter and shown to be rarely based on radical Islam, political dogma or zealous devotion to one specific cause. Instead, the Muslim Brotherhood's discourse during this period revealed a calculated manifestation of their requirement to be all things to all people, with a slight bent towards the Islamists of Egypt. They were very aware of their role as the voice of change within the country and attempted to bridge the gap between the disparate ideologies of the left and right, while always astutely aware not to senselessly enrage the beast that was Mubarak's regime. The discourse of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt during this period reflected all of this.

CHAPTER 3

2011 to 2012: Power, Politics and the Birth of the Freedom and Justice Party

The events of 2011in Egypt beginning with the sparks of revolution and culminating with the fall of Mubarak, signalled a palpable change in both the words and deeds of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. It was during this time that the often-muted political undertones that had always been evident within the movement became a cacophony, ending in the establishment, and eventual triumph, of the Muslim Brotherhood's now overt political wing, the Freedom and Justice Party. It was also during this time that the discourse emanating from the Brotherhood spokespeople began to change. Gone were even passing references to jihad, or overt support of fundamentalist Sharia law.

What replaced the usual rhetoric, as witnessed in the years preceding and detailed in the previous chapter, was a maturation of the discourse, and a control of the Brotherhood message to such an extent it now rivaled any western political machine. This occurred for many reasons, but most importantly, it was the necessity to appeal to all Egyptians as free voters and not just those members of the various Islamist movements it had sought to pacify in the past. While the Brotherhood message in the pre-revolution era was skewed slightly toward pleasing the Islamists, the pendulum shifted during the post-revolution period to a more moderate message. This is not to say that the many references to Islam were not still there, likewise, the concessions to the conservatives and Salafists. Muslims made up a vast majority of Brotherhood supporters and to ignore this fact would have been political suicide. What was more striking, however, was that the

tone was less fundamental, and the discourse decidedly more focussed on the secularists than it had been in the past.

This chapter will utilise the five themes introduced in the previous chapter, and analyse the discourse from this specific period (2011 to 2012) in order to identify the different participants contributing to the dialogue. Also analysed will be the Muslim Brotherhood's relationship with these different players, and how the movement's message changed in order to appeal to a more mainstream audience.[113] What we will see was that the Muslim Brotherhood, through a more managed and moderate public discourse, positioned itself during this period as not just the *de facto* religious leaders of the Muslim population within the area, but as the legitimate *political* authority within all of Egypt. This achievement had been elusive throughout the previous decades of its history.

The most salient example of this success was the creation of the Freedom and Justice Party, not only to contest the Egyptian elections, but also to act as the mouthpiece for the movement regarding political issues. A strictly political organization like the FJP, supposedly at "arms-length" of the movement itself, was deemed to be much more palatable to support (especially in elections) for those who normally would not support the Muslim Brotherhood. The inclusion of Coptic Christians on the 2011 FJP election slate is but one example of this attempt to reach out to those who normally felt excluded by Muslim Brotherhood issues. This approach was not without its drawbacks, however. Many within the Brotherhood itself felt that this was a selling out of its core beliefs.

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[113] Hill, "Egypt's crowded political arena."

On one side, those fundamentalist Islamists still within the movement disagreed with the FJPs support of a "*supraconstitutional* document, which would guide the drafting of the new constitution and, they feared, force it in too secular a direction."[114] Although the idea of a secular constitution helped to win the support of large number of Egyptians previously untouched by the Brotherhood, particularly Coptic Christians, the other, and possibly more important, reason for this backing was to appease the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF). A new constitution had been a precursor to the full transfer of power from Military rule to the democratically elected Egyptian parliament since the Mubarak regime was overthrown. The SCAF who had retained control over the drafting of the constitution[115] wanted to guarantee "the military - and its budget - freedom from civilian oversight."[116] The Brotherhood agreed that the SCAF should have some input into the formation of the constitution and supported the idea of transferring full authority after it is ratified[117], thereby ensuring the SCAFs implicit, if not explicit, support for the Brotherhood.

On the left, particularly within the youth wing, many felt that the Muslim Brotherhood, despite its polished democratic image, was essentially the same old boys club it had been in the past. The expulsion from the Muslim Brotherhood of reformer Dr.

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[114]*Ibid*.

[115]Nasos Mihalakas , "SCAF's Constitutional Declaration – Uncertainty and Hope for Egypt's Bicameral Legislature," *Foreign Policy Association* (27 Febraury 2012); http://foreignpolicyblogs.com/2012/02/27/scafs-constitutional-declaration-uncertainty-hope-egypts-bicameral-legislature/; Internet; accessed 22 February 2012.

[116]Marina Ottaway, "Egypt's Election, Take One," Carnegie Endowment for World Peace," (2December 2011); http://carnegieendowment.org/2011/12/02/egypt-s-election-take-one/8kl7; Internet; accessed 11 January 2012.

[117]Muslim Brotherhood, "Transferring Power from SCAF Should Take Place after Formation of Constitutional Bodies," *Ikhwan Web* (22 December 2011); http://www.ikhwanweb.com/article.php?id=29453; Internet; accessed 22 January 2012.

Abdel Moneim Abou el-Fotouh in 2011 only exacerbated tensions.[118] The fallout from this was that the more disgruntled from both wings of the party left to join "strict Islamists on one side - the Nour, Building and Development and Authenticity parties - and liberals and leftists on the other - the Wafd, Tagammu and Egypt Freedom parties."[119]

Although some pundits used the departure of these former members as evidence that the Muslim Brotherhood was facing the "prospect of implosion"[120], the aftermath could hardly be called an exodus. In fact, quite the opposite was true. Tempering its strict Islamic rhetoric, by forcing the Brotherhood leaders to ruthlessly toe the party political line, ensured that the Muslim Brotherhood (through the FJP) became all things to all people. The flight of a relatively small number of fringe members to other organizations was more than made up for by bringing larger numbers of moderates into the fold, and only enhanced the success of the balancing act.

As with the previous chapter, I will take discourse from Brotherhood documents and interviews from prominent movement members. This chapter will consider the discourse of the nascent political wing of the Muslim Brotherhood, the Freedom and Justice Party. Established in May of 2011, specifically to contest the parliamentary elections, the FJP became a political juggernaut winning 43% of contested parliamentary seats in the 2011 elections.[121]

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[118]Stephen Glain, "Fault Lines Within the Muslim Brotherhood," *The Nation* (12 September 2011); 22-25.

[119]Hill, "Egypt's crowded political arena…"

[120]Glain, "Fault Lines …", 22.

This chapter's analysis will use the same five themes introduced prior: the group's views on human rights, specifically with regard to women and non-Muslims; their views on religion and Sharia law in Egypt; their take on foreign affairs; their views on domestic politics; and, finally their discourse relating to terrorism and jihad. Throughout, this paper's overarching thesis will be shown to be true during this period as well: that the success of Muslim Brotherhood's balancing act is a function of their prudence and the ability to be, or at least seem to be, all things to all groups within Egypt.

Human Rights, Women and Non-Muslims

The Muslim Brotherhood's position on women and Non-Muslims during this period could best be described as moderate. With one notable exception regarding non-Muslims and their ability to hold the office of the president (which this paper will describe later), the discourse from the Muslim Brotherhood, and by extension the FJP, was relatively temperate, in comparison to the pre-revolutionary era.

The Freedom and Justice Party, in its quest for election success, described its program regarding women as: "(e)nsur(ing) women's access to all their rights, consistent with the values of Islamic law, maintaining the balance between their duties and rights."[122] While this election platform may have seemed, at first glance, relatively benign and uncontroversial, the statement was, in fact, quite equivocal. The conditions contained within the statement, such as "consistent with Islamic law", and "balance between their duties and rights" were red flags to some critics, and revealed the

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[121]Carlstrom, "Egypt's New Parliament Blocs."

[122]Freedom and Justice Party (FJP), "Election Program of the Freedom and Justice Party,"; 24; http://www.scribd.com/ikhwansocialmedia/d/73955131-FJP-Program-En; Internet, accessed 22 Feb 2012.

Brotherhood's true views. Commentator Dioscorus Boles argued that these qualifications

made the FJP's policy "patronising, discriminatory and insulting. Beyond that, one can

easily identify their demagoguery, superficiality, subterfuge, contradictions and

intellectual dishonesty." [123] This discourse, as well as the critics' missives, pointed to the

success of the balancing act. This type of statement allowed the Islamists to be placated

by including the terms "Islamic law", but also appealed to a wider range of voters, such

as women, by their seemingly progressive stance. While the critics pointed to the

"vagueness" of the official statements as proof positive of pandering to the Islamists, the

actions of the movement seemed to point in a slightly different and more progressive

direction.

The Freedom and Justice Party fielded 76 female candidates (out of 500) in the

2011 Parliamentary elections.[124] While the proportion was still quite low, the FJP was

the only party within the "Democratic Alliance" to field any female candidates at all.[125]

Three of these FJP candidates were eventually elected, constituting a full 50% of the total

number of females elected from across Egypt.[126] The FJP, at least publicly, allowed its

Members of Parliament to be openly critical of the way women's issues are handled.

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[123]Dioscorus Boles, "The Position of the Muslim Brotherhood on Women and Children," *On Coptic Nationalism* (15 December 2011); http://copticliterature.wordpress.com/2011/12/15/the-position-of-the-muslim-brotherhood-on-women-and-children-analysis-and-critique-of-the-fjps-parilamentary-election-programe-2011/; Internet; accessed 10 January 2012.

[124]Amani Majed, "Islamist Election Map," *Al-Ahram Weekly*, Issue 1073 (24-30 November 2011).

[125]The "Democratic Alliance" consisted of the following organizations: Karama (Dignity), Ghad (Tomorrow), Reform and Revival, Hadara (Civilisation), Labour, Social Peace, Geel (Generation), the Arab Socialist Egypt and the Liberal Parties. (http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2011/1073/fo02.htm)

[126]Isobel Coleman, "Women and the Elections in Egypt," *Council on Foreign Relations* (12 January 2012); http://blogs.cfr.org/coleman/2012/01/12/women-and-the-elections-in-egypt/; Internet; accessed 17 February 2012

An example of this is FJP MP Dr. Omaima Kamil who "asserted that the way the new formation of the National Council for Women (NCW) was managed was shrouded in mystery and secrecy, adding that there had been no consultations with Egyptian political parties, forces, stakeholders or female activists and experts before the announcement."[127] Another FJP female MP, Aza Al-Garf, also took on the Brotherhood establishment when responding to criticisms that women have largely been excluded from leadership committees post revolution.[128] She argued "(w)omen should have a practical role in all organizations; after all they interact daily with most of the community's elements"[129].

In response to reports that certain parties specifically undermined their own female candidates[130], Al Garf countered that "(t)he FJP equally supported its female candidates funding them and campaigning for them with as much vigor as it did its male candidates. Women in the Muslim Brotherhood have had an active role since the group's establishment over 80 years ago."[131] What she meant by an "active role" is unclear, and dubious if taking into account women's political influence in the movement throughout the years, but even this is seemingly changing. While the role of women, at least according to those within the movement, was changing for the better, the same cannot be

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[127]Muslim Brotherhood, "Omaima Kamil: Freedom and Justice Party Promotes Egyptian Women Welfare, Wants National Council to Fulfill Demands, Restore Usurped Rights," *IkwhanWeb* (17 February 2012); http://www.ikhwanweb.com/article.php?id=29682 ; Internet; accessed 18 February 2012.

[128]Coleman, "Women and the Elections…"

[129]http://www.ikhwanweb.com/article.php?id=29505

[130]Coleman, "Women and the Elections…"

[131]Muslim Brotherhood, "FJP Female MPs Optimistic Despite Low Representation of Women in Parliament," *IkwhanWeb* (3 January 2012); http://www.ikhwanweb.com/article.php?id=29505 ; Internet; accessed 18 February 2012.

said for the role of non-Muslims, at least in terms of aspiring for the presidency of the nation.

The FJP's published election platform was quite clear as to the equality of religious beliefs within Egypt, stating "the Egyptians, Muslims and Christians, are integral parts of the fabric of the one homeland, with equal rights and duties, and without distinction or discrimination, and all together they must remove the injustice inflicted upon them."[132] This being said, in February of 2012, the Supreme Guide for the Brotherhood reiterated a common theme regarding non-Muslims and the presidency.   He said that although the Muslim Brotherhood (and the FJP) does not intend to run a candidate for the presidency, the candidate that they will support "must have an Islamic background."[133] They left open the possibility of a non-Muslim presidential candidate, but are merely saying, truthfully, that it is unlikely that one would ever win. Noticeably gone was the Brotherhood rhetoric seen in the past that would have precluded a non-Muslim from even running. This is indicative of the attempt to bring the secularists into the fold, while in the same stroke, avoiding any offense to the Islamists.

Religion and Sharia Law

Although the topic of religion and Sharia law figured prominently in the periods prior to the revolution of 2011, the topic, at least in Brotherhood discourse, had become relatively muted during the post revolution period. One notable exception to this low-key approach was in the form of comments from Brotherhood Deputy Supreme Guide

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[132]FJP, "Election Program…,"15.

[133]Press TV, "Muslim Brotherhood supports 'Islamic' president for Egypt," (23 February 2012) http://www.presstv.ir/detail/228112.html; Internet, accessed 1 March 2012.

Mahmoud Ezzat in April of 2011. In an interview with Egyptian daily *Al-Masry Al-Youm*, Ezzat declared "the enforcement of sharia punishments will need time, and will only come after Islam is planted in every heart and masters the life of people, and then Islamic punishments can be applied." [134] More telling than the quote itself, however, was Ezzat's almost immediate reaction to seeing his words in print. While stopping short of retracting his statement, Ezzat "filed a complaint with the attorney general, accusing the media of misrepresenting his statements."[135]

Although the statement has been used by critics such as Jonathan Hawlevi as showing the Brotherhood's "true colours", the statement itself, however, was not what it seemed at first glance. The conditions Ezzat described that must be present in Egypt prior to Sharia law being enforced, are impossible, and he, as do the rest of the Brotherhood leadership, knew it. The reason he made such a statement was an obvious attempt to solidify Egyptian religious conservative support, specifically that of the Salafists, and further balance the competing demands of the party.

Notwithstanding Ezzat's comments, the dominant message from the Brotherhood during this period was best summed up in the position articulated by movement spokesperson Mohammad Morsi in an editorial for the Guardian newspaper in February of 2011: "There can be no question that genuine democracy must prevail. While the Muslim Brotherhood is unequivocal regarding its basis in Islamic thought, it rejects any

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[134]Roger Baumann, "Mahmoud Ezzat," *Islamopedia Online* (25 August 2011); http://www.islamopediaonline.org/profile/mahmoud-ezzat; Internet, accessed 7 March 2012.

[135]Michael Jansen, "Muslim Brotherhood leader talks of applying Sharia law," *Irish Times Online* (13 April 2011); http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/world/2011/0419/1224294979030.html; Internet, accessed 22 December 2011.

attempt to enforce any ideological line upon the Egyptian people."[136] While more

explicit than statements in the past, this announcement attempted to maintain the balance

by showing the Brotherhood's new appeal to secularists and less conservative members

of Egyptian (and in this case Western) society, while still acknowledging its Islamic

roots.

Foreign Affairs

In terms of foreign affairs and the Muslim Brotherhood, an understanding that

they, or at least their FJP proxy, now constituted a legitimate, governing entity whose

words had influence in the realm of international policy has marked the post-revolution

period. Most of their foreign policy discourse was of the predictable variety that one

would expect of a moderate political power. Their statements regarding issues in

Libya[137] and Syria[138] during this period are even-tempered and similar to what other

democracies around the world were saying.

As such, the Brotherhood acted in much the same way a moderate governing

political party would be expected to, with respect to foreign affairs. Their discourse was

at times pointed, but sufficiently prudent as to not inflame tensions needlessly, once again

demonstrating the adeptness with which they attempted to balance the competing factions

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[136]Mohammed Morsi, "This is Egypt's Revolution, Not Ours," *The Guardian* (8 Feb 2011); http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/feb/08/egypt-revolution-muslim-brotherhood-democracy; Internet, accessed 10 February 2012.

[137]Muslim Brotherhood, "MB Calls on Libyan Factions to Unite and Draft Modern Constitution," *Ikwahn Web* (21 November 2011); http://www.ikhwanweb.com/article.php?id=29080; Internet, accessed 7 January 2012.

[138] Muslim Brotherhood, "Katatni Presents 6-Point Initiative to Stop Assad Massacres in Syria," *Ikwahn Web* (7 March 2012); http://www.ikhwanweb.com/article.php?id=29754&ref=search.php ; Internet, accessed 17 March 2012.

within their movement, and within Egypt as whole. When a misstep, or unintended "off message" quotation had been seized upon by the media, it was quickly rebuked, clarified or at least modified to be less contentious than the original.

An excellent example of this was the remarks that the Brotherhood Deputy Chairmen, Rashad al-Bayumi, made in an interview to a Japanese TV broadcaster. He said "after President Mubarak steps down and a provisional government is formed, there is a need to dissolve the peace treaty with Israel."[139] This statement was in direct conflict with another statement issued just days earlier by Deputy Supreme Guide Ezzat, stating that the Muslim Brotherhood "would respect the peace treaty with Israel as long as Israel shows real progress on improving the lot of the Palestinians."[140] The apparent contradiction and mixed messaging brought almost immediate international criticism. The Brotherhood called a press conference with its senior leaders Saad el-Katatni, Mohammad Morsi, and Essam el Erian all present, each affirming "that once legitimate parliamentary elections are made than the agenda is that of the people and the people's wishes will then be respected and fully regarded."[141] Further discourse was even more conciliatory, with FJP vice chairman el Erian issuing the following statement in May of 2011 "the Muslim Brotherhood does not threaten Israel, nor is it interested in annulling the peace accord" adding "…it has no intention of cancelling the peace treaty."[142]

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[139]Eli Lake, "Muslim Brotherhood Seeks End to Israel Treaty," *The Washington Times* (3 February 2011); http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2011/feb/3/muslim-brotherhood-seeks-end-to-israel-treaty/print/ ; Internet, accessed 1February 2012.

[140]Lake,"Muslim Brotherhood Seeks End…"

[141]Muslim Brotherhood, "MB: We call for a civil state to serve all of Egypt," *Ikwhan Web* (9 February 2011); http://www.ikhwanweb.com/article.php?id=27992; Internet, accessed 11 February 2011.

The rush to exercise "damage control" by the Muslim Brotherhood in the wake of the Rashad al-Bayumi comments showed just how sensitive the movement had become to any notion of radical or inflamitory messaging. It was even more telling that the newfound moderation in its discourse with regard to Israel, was not catering to its internal audiences, but was used to showcase its willingness to conduct diplomacy on the international stage. The key messages attempted to cast the movement as a group capable of governing a country that is an important regional leader, rather than as an internal protest party. The caution surrounding the balancing act still remained, however. While appealing to more moderates both inside and outside of Egypt with their assurances of continuing the peace treaty with Israel, the qualifications from all statements were still very much evident.

Domestic Politics

Although technically "apolitical" throughout most of their 80 year history, the Muslim Brotherhood relished their role during 2011-2012 time frame as the "new" political face of Egypt. Their transition from outlawed movement to one of domestic political powerhouse was not without its challenges. By any measure, they transitioned well. As hard as the Brotherhood attempted to portray itself to the international community as a moderate version of Political Islam, it tried even harder within Egypt, during this period, to bring all Egyptians under the umbrella of its movement. The

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[142]Muslim Brotherhood, "Parliament Will Decide the Fate of Peace Treaty with Israel, not MB," *Ikwhan Web* (16 May 2011); http://www.ikhwanweb.com/article.php?id=28583&ref=search.php; Internet, accessed 28 December 2011.

organization's discourse is a study in cautiousness, and the attempt to rebrand itself as a movement for all Egyptians, not just Islamists.

This moderate discourse was exemplified by Brotherhood and FJP leaders during the run up to the Egyptian parliamentary elections in 2011. Attempting to set themselves apart from other Islamic organizations, and touting their inclusive nature, the FJPs new Vice Chairman, liberal Brotherhood member Essam al-Erian, said that rather than attempting to dominate the Egyptian elections the Brotherhood would attempt to "build a wide coalition instead." He explained that this strategy was for many reasons, including candidly, the requirement "not to frighten others, inside or outside."   Further drawing a distinction between themselves and the Salafists, Al-Erian continued that "(t)he Muslim Brothers are a special case because we are not seeking power through violent or military means like other Islamic organisations that might be violent. We are a peaceful organisation; we work according to the constitution and the law."[143] This statement was perhaps the most indicative of the shift in the balancing act from one of significant placation of the Islamists, to one of appealing to the moderates. The specific reference tying "other Islamic organizations" to violence, simultaneously solidified the status of the Brotherhood as unabashed, *moderate* Islamists to Egyptians, while at the same time vilifying the Salfists organizations, and painting them as radicals. Clearly, the intent within the balancing act was to appeal to the secularists and moderate Muslims throughout Egypt, in anticipation of the parliamentary election.

In yet another interview, FJP chair Mohammad Morsi further attempted to bring the movement's political aims closer to the centre by extolling the "moderateness" of the

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[143]Shenker and Whitaker, "The Muslim Brotherhood Uncovered."

Brotherhood's message, beginning with the statement that "the tenets of our movement could not be clearer or more unequivocal." He continued by declaring that the Brotherhood, through the FJP "aim(s) to remove all forms of injustice, tyranny, autocracy and dictatorship, and we call for the implementation of a democratic multiparty all-inclusive political system that excludes no one." He concluded with an invective aimed at the Brotherhood's detractors. In it, he dismissed the movement's critics by saying that "accusations that we aim to dominate or hegemonise the political system could not be further from the truth, and all our literature and public statements emphasise that we see ourselves as part of the fabric of Egyptian social and political life."[144] As we have seen throughout this section, that while the argument Morsi put forward regarding the "unequivocal" nature of the Muslim Brotherhood's message may not be entirely accurate, their stated tenets, regarding the removal of tyranny and the implementation of a multiparty system, were acted upon during the Egyptian Revolution. Again the prudence in the statement was evident. While obviously appealing to Egyptian Secularists and moderates, as well as international influences, with the notion of "hegemony" and "all-inclusiveness", the inclusion of Women or Christians as a part of the process was not specifically mentioned. Although one could argue that Morsi automatically included them in his statement when he said the movement's version of Egyptian politics "excludes no one", the fact was that the Brotherhood's own words had, in the recent past, done just that: exclude women and Christians. As with most Brotherhood statements, this omission was so subtle that its ability to be inclusive to all Egyptians, while at the same time being somewhat unclear, was a hallmark of the balancing act.

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[144]Morsi. "This is Egypt's Revolution, Not Ours."

A unique element to the balancing act that the Muslim Brotherhood demonstrated

during this period, was the interaction between it and the military, embodied in the

Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF). The SCAF, who wrested power from

Mubarak, and committed to hand over full power to a democratically elected government

after the presidential elections in June 2012[145] , was believed to be in secret negotiations

with the Brotherhood throughout the post-revolutionary period. This was apparently

done in order to negotiate a timetable for handover of power. Egyptian analysts, in

reference to this "secret deal", concluded that the Muslim Brotherhood "would agree to

support the SCAF's timetable for transfer of power, pledging to refrain from contributing

to any protest movement which may arise."[146] As well, it was reported that certain SCAF

influence within the new government would be continued. The SCAF concession, in

turn, was thought to be the arrangement for the Brotherhood, through its FJP dominated

parliament, to play a major role in establishment of a new Egyptian constitution.[147]

The chairman of the Muslim Brotherhood, Badie, reacted to these allegations by

saying "We do not have a deal with SCAF. We would not give them a blank check. We

do not seek to confront them or any other party or stakeholder in Egypt, either. We all

work for this homeland. We endeavor to preserve the institutions of Egypt."[148] Although

he denied any knowledge of "secret meetings" he did tacitly approve of the timeline put

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[145]BBC News, "Egypt's Ruling Generals to Partially Lift Emergency Law," (24 January 2012); http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-16704551; Internet, accessed 30 January 2012.

[146]Max Spotlight, "What's Behind Egypt's New Balance of Power," *Max Security Solutions* (28 January 2012); http://www.max-security.com/max-spotlight/whats-behind-egypts-new-balance-of-power.htm; Internet, accessed 12 February 2012.

[147]*Ibid*.

[148]Muslim Brotherhood, "Dr. Badie Interview," *Ikwhan Web* (27 February 2012); http://www.ikhwanweb.com/article.php?id=29722&ref=search.php; Internet, accessed 3 March 2012.

forward, saying "We believe you must keep your promise to your people, and reject any change in the timetable you (SCAF) announced."[149] Although Badie unequivocally refuted the idea of any "secret deals" with the SCAF, the notion that the presumptive government in waiting (FJP) and the current government (SCAF) were not talking about conditions of handover of power in some sort of privileged platform, was simply not believable. In this statement, Badie explicitly repudiated the insinuation of dealings with the SCAF, thereby ensuring plausible deniability if anything should go wrong, and also guaranteed the perceived autonomy of the FJP. Simultaneously, he publicly approved of a plan that he had supposedly no input in drafting. This had the dual effect of appealing to the majority of Egyptian voters who were, at that time, becoming less and less enamored with the ruling Junta, as well as publicly throwing their support behind SCAF. These were two seemingly contradictory actions that the Brotherhood managed to balance.

Perhaps the most telling example of the Brotherhood's balancing act was the April 2012 backtracking on a previously held incontestable tenet that no Brotherhood member would ever stand for the presidency of Egypt.[150] In response to a number of high profile members of its organization leaving in order to support Dr. Abdel Moneim Abou el-Foutou's presidential bid, the Muslim Brotherhood fielded its own candidate (something it said it would never do), in Kharait al-Shater, the movement's main financial supporter and "long time chief whip."[151] Although the nomination was

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[149] Muslim Brotherhood, "Dr. Badie Interview."

[150] Abdel-Rahman Hussein,"Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood to Field Presidential Candidate."

[151] Al-Jazeera,"Profile: Egypt's Khairat al-Shater."

eventually vetoed by the SCAF, citing al-Shater's criminal record (he was imprisoned

under Mabarak), the apparent contradiction was not lost, as Dr .Abou el-Foutou was

himself expelled in 2011 for refusing to relinquish his independent presidential campaign

bid.[152]

Terrorism and Jihad

Much like the discussion about Sharia law, the discourse generated by the Muslim

Brotherhood regarding terrorism and jihad had been noticeably different during the post-

revolution period. Since regime change, and especially after the parliamentary elections,

the organization was uncharacteristically silent on the legitimacy of jihad, specifically

when referring to western powers exercising military influence in the Middle East. The

Brotherhood took a much more diplomatic, but no less critical, tone when discussing the

reasons for violence, and who was really to blame. As for the spectre of terrorism, it was

interesting to see that the Muslim Brotherhood's public machinations have resembled

most western democratic nations' language during this period; that being the universal

condemnation of terror, in all of its forms. The Brotherhood condemnation included one

significant difference, however, that being the inclusion of state sponsored terrorism

(deemed as American instigated) as it applies to the Israel/Palestinian conflict.

One of the first examples of the Brotherhood engaging in public debate with

world leaders on the repercussions of "Western" policies with regard to terrorism was in

an article by Hazem Malky, the editor of the Brotherhood's official English language

website, in December of 2011. In the article, rather than the usual rhetoric railing against

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[152] Glain, "Fault Lines …," 27.

western imperialism with the eventual call for jihad (as was earlier shown to be some members' tone as late as 2010), Malky calmly and directly addressed concerns made by former British Prime Minister Tony Blair about the Muslim Brotherhood, and its commitment to democracy. Malky's article, in reference to the Israel/Palestinian conflict, asserted that "…Mr. Blair and alike haven't learned any lessons from the Arab Spring, and are still calling for the same failed disastrous policies of defying the will of the people and supporting unpopular trends…".

Malky went even further, and addressed the heretofore taboo issue of terrorism head on, and linked policies (specifically those supported by Mr. Blair while Prime Minister of the United Kingdom) as serving "to protect their own interests and thus create more dictatorships, breed hatred, violence and terrorism."[153] These statements seemed to express a distinct change in the character of the Muslim Brotherhood from that of a movement of oppressed Muslims, at times bordering on militancy, to one of a stable political organization capable governing a country. This was done by situating its message within the media in a reasonable, practical tone. Within the balancing act, the message itself appealed to a majority of people in the Arab world, and attempted to solidify the group's role as a moderate, yet authoritative voice for the entire region. This voice was also demonstrated through the Brotherhood's attempt to combat Islamophobia within Europe by discussing what it saw as the honest facts regarding terrorism.

The Brotherhood's discourse during this period also attempted to discredit the notion that Islam is a threat to the west, and combat what the organization sees as blatant

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[153]Hazem Malky, "Tony Blair's MB Comments Out of Touch and Misguided," *Ikwhan Web* (30 December 2011); http://www.ikhwanweb.com/article.php?id=29488&ref=search.php; Internet, accessed 7 January 2012.

Islamophobia and the "growing animosity toward Islam throughout Europe."[154] In 2011,

the Muslim Brotherhood published an article that attempted to lay bare the facts about

terrorism in the European Union. Using research from Europol's 2011 terrorism watch

report[155] the Brotherhood indicated that in "2010 Islamist terrorists carried out three

attacks on EU territory, while separatist groups carried out 160 attacks and left-wing and

anarchist groups were responsible for 45." The Brotherhood concluded that "(d)espite

the statistics which indicate that Islam is not the threat, it is often made out to be, anti-

Islam feelings are on the rise."[156]

During this period the Brotherhood, at least on the surface, was a unifying force

for some of the disparate Muslim movements across the Muslim world against terrorism.

As one of four signatories to a joint statement entitled "International Islamic

Condemnation of Bashar Massacres, Support for Syrian Popular Uprising" [157], the group

confirmed its support of the Syrian uprising and "…declare(d) their condemnation of all

forms of repression and terror practiced there and the use any kind of violence in dealing

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[154]Muslim Brotherhood, "Ongoing Right-Wing Extremist Activity in Europe," *Ikwhan Web* (1 August 2011); http://www.ikhwanweb.com/article.php?id=28887&ref=search.php; Internet; accessed 4 January 2012.

[155] Todayszaman.com, "Europe under fire for overlooking right-wing terrorism threats," *Todays Zaman* (26 July 2011); http://www.todayszaman.com/news-251686-europe-under-fire-for-overlooking-right-wing-terrorism-threats.html; Internet, accessed January 2012.

[156]Muslim Brotherhood, "Ongoing Right-Wing Extremist Activity…"

[157]The four other signatories to the declaration were were: The Felicity Party in Turkey; The Islamist Movement in Sudan; The Islamic Party (Jamaat-e-Islami) in Pakistan; and The Islamic Party of Malaysia

with the people's peaceful uprising…".[158] While not directly condemning *terrorism*, the strong language against *terror* itself underscored the more mainstream, less radical personae the Brotherhood had been cultivating during this period, while still balancing the requirement to appeal the more conservative Islam members of its organization.

CONCLUSION

This chapter examined discourse from a wide array of Muslim Brotherhood sources throughout the Egyptian post-revolutionary period (2011-2012), and discussed the implications within the broader Egyptian socio-political landscape. Through the analysis of the Muslim Brotherhood's comments, it was concluded that the Muslim Brotherhood was rapidly becoming, if it already had not become, an extremely politicized organization. This was shown in its softening of its stances on jihad and Sharia law, while tightening its control over the message that emanated from within its own ranks.

This section also traced the beginning and meteoric rise of the Freedom and Justice Party, and examined the political discourse emanating from that organization. Their prudence of message was shown to be even more evident during the 2011 Egyptian parliamentary elections, resulting in a communication strategy that was, at times, intentionally equivocal so that it would appeal to all people at all times. When the balancing act did have to occur in messaging, the shift from favouring the more conservative members of its own organization, and Salafists externally, to supporting liberal and secularists backed ideals was increasingly evident. This, it was concluded, was motivated by many factors, but the major reason was simply to garner votes, and

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[158]Muslim Brotherhood, "International Islamic Condemnation of Bashar Massacres, Support for Syrian Popular Uprising," *Ikwhan Web* (8 February 2012); http://www.ikhwanweb.com/article.php?id=29650&ref=search.php; Internet, accessed 10 February 2012.

ensure Muslim Brotherhood's success at the polls. This tactic was shown to have paid dramatic rewards, with the movement winning the balance of power, and the legitimate authority to govern Egypt.

The post-revolutionary period was truly the metamorphosis of the modern Muslim Brotherhood. It began as a loose umbrella under which a group of disparate, often competing ideas within a pan Muslim social justice movement found a home. Within this period it transformed into a socio-political force, whose every message and dialogue was carefully choreographed to the foster the image of an all-inclusive pan Egyptian organization, moderate enough for all. The result of their increasingly prudent message, and the intricate balancing act was now evident in their overwhelming political success.

CONCLUSION

Motivation, Movement, and Message: What the Future Holds for the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood

This paper analyzed the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood's discourse over the course of a tumultuous eight year period where not only did the role of the organization change significantly, but so did the entire socio-political landscape of the country and the region. The analysis began with a description of the historical context of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. The birth of the movement in 1928, and an exploration of the Brotherhood, over its history, was conducted. The early discourse of the Brotherhood was also introduced in order to provide the reader a basis for analysis to be conducted in subsequent chapters. Next, the paper presented the Muslim Brotherhood's discourse between 2005 and 2011 was, and scrutinized within a framework focussing on five specific themes. These themes were then used to form the basis for the remainder of the paper's analysis.

The paper then analysed the movement's discourse, again focussing on the five themes, during the immediate post Egyptian Revolution period (2011 to 2012). The analysis revealed how the Muslim Brotherhood's message systematically changed in order to become more appealing to the mainstream of Egypt, specifically to garner votes in the elections of 2011/12. All of this was conducted while trying to placate opponents, such as the Salafists and SCAF, whom the Brotherhood would undoubtedly have to collaborate with in any future Egypt. The more moderate messages during this period were shown to specifically contribute to the Brotherhood's success in the 2011

parliamentary elections, garnering the movement its first legitimate political authority in its storied history.

Through this analysis of the Brotherhood's discourse over the course of the two specified periods, this paper demonstrated that the public discourse of the Brotherhood was decidedly dualistic in nature in order to achieve the balancing act we have discussed. On the one hand it had to ensure the appearance of ideological, and eventually political, unanimity within the movement itself. Externally it had to show its moderate stripe, while at the same time appealing to an even wider array of external ideologies.

Internally it had to appeal to its own members, and their specific concept of what the role of the Muslim Brotherhood was, and was becoming. This, in and of itself, was no small task, as within the Brotherhood there were many competing factions, each having just as many opinions as to what the Brotherhood was, and should become. As we have seen throughout this paper, this caused many Brotherhood members, both conservatives and liberals, to leave the fold when they believed the movement was straying too far from what they believed its raison d'etre to be. Prominent members, such as liberal Dr. Abou el-Fotouh, left the organization due to differing opinions with what they saw as the Brotherhood's changing ideology. This goes to show that the way in which this internal balancing act worked, was to be relatively consistent over the two periods. In essence, a "my way, or the highway" approach from the Brotherhood leadership was unswerving.

Externally, however, the Brotherhood's message changed significantly from the pre revolution to the post revolution discourse. Pre-revolution, the Brotherhood strived to maintain this external balancing act by remaining relatively muted on controversial

internal affairs, ostensibly maintaining a facade of relative impartiality throughout the Mubarak era. Understanding that persecution was only a misguided statement away, the movement was less critical of the establishment during this period, and was focussed more on a broad based social justice discourse facing the wider pan Muslim population. Post revolution much of this changed. The establishment of the Freedom and Justice Party led to a marked politicization of their message, which resulted in two specific changes to their external discourse.

The first was the apparent professionalization and discipline of their spokespeople, and a better control on who was allowed to speak on behalf of the Brotherhood. Official statements from the Brotherhood were issued as a matter of course through releases and on its website, and discourse by the Brotherhood's top leadership was more consistent and "on message".

The second major difference was the message itself. Already cautious in the pre revolution period, the prudence of the Muslim Brotherhood's position on any given issue only increased after the fall of Mubarak. Almost immediately after the revolution, the Muslim Brotherhood message changed to become even more prudent. It was through this shift, the Brotherhood seemed to be simultaneously supporting and opposing every major issue from Sharia Law, to the Egyptian peace treaty with Israel.

MESSAGE, MOMENTUM AND MODERATION

The major conclusion is that the Brotherhood's message has intentionally become more controlled, yet at the same time less precise, and more prudent and cautious. This has allowed interpretation of the message to be left to the discretion of the individual

group, which has been shown to be to the distinct advantage of the Muslim Brotherhood.

Likewise, the Muslim Brotherhood's message has undergone a tremendous change in the

eight year period analysed. The demarcation line in their discourse was identified as

occurring just after the revolution of 2011, and the transformation in their explicit raison

d'etre could not be more pronounced.

The Muslim Brotherhood, since its inception, has prided itself on being a

movement of like-minded, Muslim Egyptians whose social welfare role was its principal

belief. As such, the frequent discourse prior to Mubarak's fall was one of an apolitical

nature, frequently foraying into any number of issues, with little in terms of a structured

political media message behind it. The result was a haphazard array of semi-official

"spokespeople" commenting on any number issues, at times contradicting each other, or

the movement's quasi-official party line. Most of this discourse, prior to 2011, as we saw

in Chapter 2, centered around the common refrain of social justice and providing the

means for change rather than being the vehicle itself.

While some could say that this all changed in 2005 with the Brotherhood

ostensibly fielding candidates in that year's election, the true metamorphosis occurred

with the creation of the Freedom and Justice Party in 2011. This was the first time in the

movement's history that it became overtly political, and the chance at governing Egypt

became a reality. The establishment of this organization meant a shift in its mission from

being a *movement*, to that of a *government*. The most evident example of the

Brotherhood's fundamental change to "political animal" was its nomination of al-Shater

to for president. As an organization committed to governing, it was only a matter of time

before it began to look (and sound) like most other governments in waiting. Specifically,

those allowed to speak on behalf of the Muslim Brotherhood, at least publicly, became more controlled.

All of these conclusions can also be used to make some general predictions as to what the future holds for the Brotherhood as it lurches into the post Mubarak era.   The organization's newfound ability to quickly, and radically, change its core principles to suit the political climate of the day clearly signals the social to political shift. This will continue. What remains to be seen is what other heretofore "incontrovertible" Brotherhood values may be at risk of being removed if they are no longer politically expedient? Certainly the more pragmatic nature (at least compared to the Salafists) of the movement may be at risk if the political landscape changes to one of a more conservative Islamist bent. Likewise, relationships with other non-Muslim countries, specifically Israel and America, may become more confrontational, and less accommodating than recent posturing may indicate.

This paper's contention was that the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood's intentional prudence in its public discourse has made its attempt at balancing competing interests both internal and external to the organization largely successful. As well, it was argued that this caution, and overall control of the message, has only intensified since the overt politicization of the movement with inception of the Freedom and Justice Party, immediately following the revolution. Through the analysis of the Brotherhood's discourse during the two selected periods, it was shown that it was this systematic and intentional vagueness of message has contributed to it its present day success. The movement's relatively moderate message throughout both periods (although it became

even more moderate post revolution), allowed it to not only survive during the Mubarak era, but thrive when he was toppled.

The conclusion from of all of this is that it is unclear as to what the future holds for the Muslim Brotherhood. The movement has shown, quite clearly, its willingness to bend in whatever direction is most politically expedient. What remains to be seen, however, is exactly how many of its previously held values are expendable for the sake of political, rather than social, success. It should come as no surprise that the Muslim Brotherhood will continue to change in order to suit the Egyptian socio-political landscape. Only time will tell if the Brotherhood's balancing act and prudence will further strengthen or ultimately challenge al-Banna's original resolve for the Muslim Brotherhood to "plunge…through the turbulent oceans and rend the skies..to conquer every obstinant tyrant."

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