



CLIMB TO THE ABYSS  
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THE MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD  
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#### INTRODUCTION

The failure of the Muslim Brotherhood to remain in power for a longer time was surprising to many of its supporters. Prior to the January 2011 revolution, the Muslim Brotherhood was seen by its supporters and by a significant segment of its opponents as the most organized group in Egypt, and in case of any political change in government, it would be the most prominent candidate to play major roles in this change. In this context, a few months before the January revolution, Stephen Cook wrote a report at the American Council of Foreign Relations in which he expected a political change in Egypt soon, and that the military and the Brotherhood would have the greatest role in determining the outcome of this change .

But what happened after that was surprising to supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood before their opponents. The group not only was unable to stay in power for more than one year, but its exit from power was also accompanied by organized policies adopted by the pro- military coup regime to eliminate the organization at home and paralyze its ability to act or be effective through a security campaign the group has not witnessed since the 1950s and 1960s.

This political failure can be referred to several external factors, such as the regional environment that stood against the democratic transition in Egypt, especially the Gulf states, or the Egyptian political elites that did not have sufficient ability to manage political change effectively and played negative roles in many positions in this regard. In the same context, this failure can be referred to the roles played by the Supreme Council of Armed Forces (SCAF), whether during assuming power in the transitional period or orchestrating a military coup during the first elected civilian President Dr. Mohamed Morsi's one year in power, and ultimately carrying out the coup. All these factors are external factors from outside the Muslim Brotherhood, where the group's ability to overcome or control remains limited.

Instead of focusing on external factors, this research paper seeks to explain the Muslim Brotherhood's failure to manage political change in Egypt by focusing on the internal factors that led to this failure, by extrapolating various sources, and reviewing the events that the group went through on the eve of the January Revolution and subsequent events. The paper concludes that the absence of a clearly

defined and agreed political project was one of the main group's internal reasons that contributed to this failure in managing political change<sup>1</sup>.

The paper relied on peer-reviewed secondary sources that dealt with this phenomenon, such as peer-reviewed academic articles, academic books, and university theses and dissertations that were written about the Brotherhood group during the past ten years.

As a first step, the researcher used the search engine Google Scholar to search for papers written in English that dealt with the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, which were issued after 2011 related to policies or politics. Through the first round of search query, the researcher generated some primary papers that addressed this subject in a focused manner. By checking these papers, the researcher was able to closely access other papers related to the subject in addition to following up on a number of researchers who dealt with this subject on a regular basis. Then in the next round, using the same research engine, the researcher searched for papers written in English that dealt with the economic policies of the Brotherhood issued after 2011. Although Arabic sources dealing with the Muslim Brotherhood in power are many, very few papers of them are published in academic journals. Therefore, the researcher contented himself with focusing on papers that discussed the economic policies of the Muslim Brotherhood, which helped stimulate the state of controversy and positive debate about them.

The research paper focused on economic policies to be an important practical example of the general policies adopted by the group, and because part of the evaluation of this discussion was done through websites and newspaper pages, the researcher returned to the debates and discussions that took place about the economic policies of the Muslim Brotherhood, contributed by researchers and specialists in this field.

To avoid the negative effects of the researcher's personal biases, given that the researcher participated in these events, and in order for the research paper to be more objective, the researcher preferred to rely initially on academic papers written in English by researchers from outside the Arab world, not necessarily because they are the best, as there are distinguished papers written in Arabic by Arab researchers, but in order to choose papers that were mainly academic, analytical and written mainly for academic purposes. The second preferential criterion chosen by the researcher was the papers that relied for their material on personal interviews with members of the Muslim Brotherhood or that were based on field research so that its main conclusions were the outcome of observation and field research.

The paper does not claim that it has made a comprehensive coverage of all the papers that dealt with this subject in English, but it tried to provide a comprehensive and general presentation of the most important ideas and discussions that took place on this subject, although the paper focuses on the

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<sup>1</sup> Steven Cook, "Political Instability in Egypt," Contingency Planning Memorandum No. 4, 2009.



situation of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, it also seeks to add a research contribution that answers a larger question: Why do political movements fail to manage political change during the democratic transition?

Studies of democratic transition have grown over the past few decades, and there have been various theoretical contributions to understanding how democratic transition occurs<sup>2</sup>. Many empirical studies and papers have emerged that try to understand the process of democratic transition and the factors that can affect it in order to determine the chances of success or failure<sup>3</sup>, these studies included focus on several factors, including the role of political elites<sup>4</sup>, political parties<sup>5</sup>, or external factor<sup>6</sup>, and other factors to determine the fate of the democratic transition.

This research paper comes as an attempt to enrich the debate in the studies of democratic transition by focusing on the role of the political project in influencing the way the political process is managed; hoping to contribute to covering a gap that has not been sufficiently studied in the papers dealing with the Arab Spring<sup>7</sup>.

The paper deals with the Muslim Brotherhood as a political movement that seeks to manage Egypt's political change process in favor of its change project. Therefore, the paper focuses on the political programs and policies presented by the Muslim Brotherhood in the period from 2011 to mid-2013. The paper does not focus on the ideational approach associated with policies, Nor the analysis of the intellectual ideas and philosophies presented by the group, or the ideological foundations of these

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Carothers, "The End of the Transition Paradigm," *Journal of Democracy* 13, no. 1 (2002): 5–21, <https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.2002.0003>; Transitions from Authoritarian Rule, n.d.; Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe C. Schmitter, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies* (The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986).

<sup>3</sup> Barbara Geddes, Joseph Wright, and Erica Frantz, "Autocratic Breakdown and Regime Transitions," *Perspectives on Politics* 12, no. 2 (2014): 313–31, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1537592714000851>; Barbara Geddes, "What Do We Know About Democratization After Twenty Years?" *Annual Review of Political Science* 2, no. 1 (1999): 115–44, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.polisci.2.1.115>.

<sup>4</sup> Schmitter, "The Role of Elites in Democratization," *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 23, no. 1 (March 3, 2018): 33–46, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11366-017-9494-7>.

<sup>5</sup> Vicky Randall and Lars Svåsand, "Party Institutionalization in New Democracies," *Party Politics* 8, no. 1 (January 30, 2002): 5–29, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068802008001001>.

<sup>6</sup> Bishara, Azmi. Notes on the External Factor in the Democratic Transition. *Arab Politics*, no. 38 (2019): 7–26. <https://siyasatarabiya.dohainstitute.org/ar/issue038/Documents/Siyassat38-2019-Bishara.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> There are many papers that dealt with the Arab Spring through different perspectives, the following sources include a sample of them: Eva Bellin, "Reconsidering the Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Lessons from the Arab Spring," *Comparative Politics* 44, no. 2 (January 1, 2012): 127–49, <https://doi.org/10.5129/001041512798838021>; Ahmed Abd Rabou, "Arab Spring and the Issue of Democracy: Where Does Middle Eastern Studies Stand?," in *Arab Spring Modernity, Identity and Change*, ed. Eid Mohamed and Dalia Fahmy (Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), 173–204; Larbi Sadiki, ed., *Routledge Handbook of the Arab Spring: Rethinking Democratization* (Routledge Taylor & Francis, 2015).

ideas. Rather, it aims to focus more on current contexts, and how these ideas and visions interacted with the political and economic context so that they be influenced by them and influenced them as well. In other words, the paper seeks to link these ideas written in programs and policies with the surrounding reality in which these ideas moved and interacted with, by monitoring and analyzing this interaction between these visions and ideas on the one hand, with reality and political and economic structure on the other. we can contribute to answering the question: Why has the Muslim Brotherhood not been able to interact with this reality sufficiently?

## CHAPTER ONE

### THE POLITICAL DA'WA FROM OPPOSITION

Before starting to discuss what happened after the January 2011 revolution, we can notice that most of those who joined the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) were motivated by Da'wa rather than political motives. MB did not present itself - explicitly - before 2011 as a political party seeking to reach power. Even in the situations in which it participated in partisan or electoral events, the main motive for this participation was " Political Da'wa " and not to rule or influence in public policy-making.

We use "Political Da'wa" in this research close to the researcher Samer Shehata's use of it as "a form of electoral participation in semi-authoritarian regimes where participating in elections is not primarily about winning seats, influencing policy, or controlling resources, but rather disseminating a group's message and expanding its influence, with the ultimate goal of affecting social and political change"<sup>8</sup> .

Political change and state control were ideas present in Muslim Brotherhood literature and their theories as well, but they were a distant goal, while the immediate goals were to spread the Muslim Brotherhood's Da'wa among the largest number of Egyptians, bring increasing numbers into the group, and gain popular support and sympathy in different situations.

The political goals were present in the discourse and the vision, but they were missing in behavior and practice. The Brotherhood group participated in the last three parliamentary elections before the January revolution, but for reasons not directly related to the political goals, As parliamentary elections at this time are not characterized by a great deal of integrity and transparency, the results can be easily manipulated, and eventually lead to a parliament without any real powers or strength. Researcher Samer Shehata gives reasons to explain this behavior:

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<sup>8</sup> Samer S. Shehata, "Political Da' Wa: Understanding the Muslim Brotherhood's Participation in Semi-Authoritarian Elections," in *Islamist Politics in the Middle East* (Routledge, 2012), pp. 121

**First reason:** that election times provide an opportunity for active political groups within authoritarian regimes to make up for the lack of space for public participation within these regimes and to communicate more with the public. As security grip slightly loosens during the elections, compared to previous times.

**Second reason:** the elections are an opportunity to convey the political message of the Muslim Brotherhood to larger and more diverse groups of citizens, meaning that the elections turn in this way for the Brotherhood as a means of advocacy through which it tries to convey its political messages without implying that the group is really willing to act to reach power or influencing policymaking.

Politics represented in the form of general policies and programs to serve citizens has been absent, and politics, which means the desire to influence or control decision-making, has been absent as well, to be replaced by "Dawa" that is concerned primarily with spreading ideas and gathering supporters, with the presence of local services at the level of districts and neighborhoods.

The context of the Muslim Brotherhood before 2011 provides us with a preliminary overview of the reasons why the political behavior of the Muslim Brotherhood came out after 2011 as it ended, Politics was absent and the da'wah attended. The Muslim Brotherhood was a preaching group with political activities, it wasn't a political group with a popular backer who supported it. The group's goal was to bring people into the organization, not to work to rule Egypt or influence the state's public policy-making. But this is not the only feature of that period, The practice of politics was a reaction against the authority and not the position of the political actor with a set of political and policy biases and goals that he is working to achieve, this is the second feature.

The integrated and homogeneous political project has been absent, and instead it has gained greater popularity by adopting opposing positions against the regime's policies, instead of focusing on developing a political vision from its Islamic perspective, the group focused its attention on providing criticism of government policies and programs and demonstrating weak points, Given the economic aspect, this will be clearly reflected.

Turkish researcher Efram Jurmesh demonstrates this<sup>9</sup>, during Nasser's regime, the version of "Socialist Islam" prevailed among Islamic preachers as it was closest to the spirit of Islam. During this period, the most popular among Islamists was that the main role of the state was to provide basic commodities, and that the government regularly intervene to support the poor and marginalized people, but with Sadat's advent to power, he worked to introduce the "Market Economy" as an alternative economic ideology to what existed during the Nasiriyah period, The Brotherhood's reaction was to support this latest shift as Islam defends private property and encourages investment,

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<sup>9</sup> Evrim Görmüş, "The Economic Ideology of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood: The Changing Discourses and Practices," Journal of Emerging Economies and Islamic Research 4, no. 3 (2016): 60, <https://doi.org/10.24191/jeeir.v4i3.9097>.

in addition, the new economic policies represent an opportunity to show the Brotherhood's opposition to Nasser's previous policies and to show that they were wrong policies, Practically speaking, the Brotherhood has benefited from this new trend through extensive investments inside Egypt, taking advantage of the funds they raised in the Gulf and European countries during their migration period outside Egypt during the Nasiriyah era.

As for the last decade of the Mubarak regime, the neoliberal policies that supported the Market System and willing to reduce government interference in the economy had become dominant. What will be the position of the Brotherhood?

In public and through official statements, it would be politically useful for the group to show opposition to these policies as this would gain more popularity among citizens, but in practice, there was a wide range of businessmen and the upper middle class within the Brotherhood, taking advantage of these new economic policies and did not find there is a problem, However, these voices did not appear during this period, and the tone against these policies remained the loudest. The evidence from this example, that the reaction position of the regime's policies, not the position of the actor was the main driver of the group's positions in politics and public policy, this position - the opposition reaction - did not help the group to produce its own version of its policy and political project.

## CHAPTER TWO

### A HISTORY OF POSTPONED INTERNAL CONFLICTS

Before 2011, it had been well-known among writers and politicians that one of the most important features of the Muslim Brotherhood was the organizational and ideological cohesion that enabled the group to continue and move effectively before the 25th January revolution. However, the 25th January Revolution revealed two remarks:

First, this external form of cohesion was hiding within it a long history of ideological differences between at least two major currents, as we will present later.

Second, whenever the circumstances progressed to reveal these differences, the group resorted to postponing the resolution of these differences through escape to the future strategy which postpones answering these questions, instead of trying to find answers to certain key questions in politics and governance. The group has worked to adopt a large and broad public political framework that ensures that diverse- and sometimes contradictory- views remain within the group.



These general principles agreed upon represented what we might call the "Constitution" through which the group operates, transcends its differences, while at the same time keeping it united before the people. This broad framework contained basic principles such as the fact that Islam is a comprehensive system, non-use of violence, acceptance of democracy and political pluralism, and support for political and social movements that stand against imperialism and foreign intervention.

This general framework has benefited the group in at least two different ways. On the one hand, this framework helped keep the group organizationally coherent. On the other hand, it contributed to improving its image, especially among the political elites especially during comparison to other Islamic groups. Consequently, before January 2011, an impression was generated that the group was ideologically and organizationally cohesive and it was able to resolve many of its political choices thanks to the political experience generated by its members' access to the Parliament and its effective participation in political life. The 25th January revolution proved that this impression was inaccurate.

Organizational cohesion under incoherent ideology is not a new phenomenon for the Muslim Brotherhood, as it has been present in the Muslim Brotherhood for a long time. Starting from its founder Hassan al-Banna, and it became more clearer with the emergence of a post-colonial state and took the form of a postponed crisis before the 25th January revolution. If we go back to Görmüş and her analysis of the Muslim Brotherhood's economic policies, we find that she provided a good example of the impact of the January revolution in demonstrating these political differences within the group. For example, by reviewing the several papers issued by the group from 2004 to 2008 - we find that the group's position on economic policies has a clear discourse against market-economy policy. The papers shows clear opposition to this trend and a desire for greater state intervention to support economic activity. On the contrary, on the political side, the group has shown a greater desire to minimize the role of the state and to leave the wider space for society and its institutions. After the 25th January revolution, we will note that within the group two parallel attitudes have emerged towards economic problems:

In the first line, followers of the aforementioned vision. This vision is reflected mainly in the Freedom and Justice Party program and among the organizational and traditional cadres within the organization. There is another discourse delivered by businessmen and young people of Mohamed Morsi's presidential campaign. In this context, Hassan Malik told Reuters in 2011 that Mubarak's economic policies were on the right track, but they did not work well because of nepotism and corruption. This example is one of the most commonly used pieces of evidence among researchers to demonstrate the existence of differences that reach the point of contradiction within the Muslim Brotherhood when talking about economic policies<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup> Marwa Awad, "Egypt Brotherhood Businessman: Manufacturing Is Key," Reuters, 2011, <https://www.reuters.com/article/egy>



Hisham Jaafar will also reach a closer conclusion on this point when he tries to answer the question: What if the group came to power in the 1950s? Would it have provided economic policies close to neoliberalism or policies closer to socialism<sup>11</sup>? The answer to this question provoked Abdul Hafiz Al-Sawi, a researcher who specializes in economic affairs and who was actively involved within or close to the Economic Committees of the Muslim Brotherhood, to say that the Brotherhood ideology in economic terms is not a neoliberal, but rather "Islamic"<sup>12</sup>. This debate itself is proof that the economic vision was not clear enough to be distinguished from others. These debates also showed that there is no single version of the Brotherhood in economic affairs, but there are multiple versions. The statement of al-Sawi, who stands at one side, is not the same as Malik's statement, who stands at the other side, while both of them belong to the same group!

Khalil Al-Anani explains the reasons for this change in the Muslim Brotherhood's economic position throughout its history and its tendency to adopt policies closer to neoliberalism during the short period of its rule. In this context, the researcher refers to three main reasons that contributed to this situation:

The first reason is the Brotherhood's pragmatism, which is linked to an interpretable ideology in more than one form, allowing the group to change its political, economic, and social positions. As we noted, this reason refers to the brotherhood's ideology, which he addressed independently in another paper within this project.

The second reason is related to the business elite formed within the Brotherhood during Sadat's era benefiting from its open economic policy. Anani explains that these elites have been able to rise within the Muslim Brotherhood and influence the power structure within it so that they have a greater influence in decision-making. These elites have worked to promote "Devout Neoliberalism", that is, neoliberalism that has a moral face and a societal role that makes it different from the neoliberalism that exists in the West, as they perceive.

As for the third reason, it is related to international recognition. The group wanted to appear closer in its economic policies to the international system, and not antagonize it. Adopting neoliberal economic discourse and practices makes it easier for them to bring in foreign investment and international recognition at the same time, according to their perceptions<sup>13</sup>. The group had initial economic

<sup>11</sup> Jafar, Hisham. "The Muslim Brotherhood and the Social Question." Al Jazeera Net, 2020. <https://www.aljazeera.net/opinions/2020/6/23/The-Muslim-Brotherhood-and-the-issue>.

<sup>12</sup> El-Sawy, Abdel-Hafez. "The Muslim Brotherhood and the Social Issue... Another Vision." Al Jazeera Net. Accessed August 16, 2021. <https://www.aljazeera.net/opinions/2020/7/12/The-Muslim-Brotherhood-and-the-issue-2>.

pt-brotherhood-investment-idINL5E7LR4CK20111027.

<sup>13</sup> Khalil al-Anani, "Devout Neoliberalism?! Explaining Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood's Socio-Economic Perspective and Policies," Politics and Religion 13, no. 4 (December 11, 2020): 761–65,

attitudes that kept it cohesive while strengthening its position as an opposition group. But when these ideas were tested practically and began to interact with reality, the differences and disparities that the group tried to overcome emerged.

The group did not provide a distinctive "Islamic" version of the economy. Instead, it provided specific discourse in the written version, and a different discourse and practices were delivered at other moments.

These postponed differences within the group are the result of avoiding answering key questions in politics and economics. This avoidance is one factor, in addition to the group's relationship with the Mubarak regime, which is the other factor through them a framework can help us to understand the group's response to the early days of the January revolution<sup>14</sup>. This response subsequently paved the way for the group's significant establishment and transformation from a politically motivated advocacy organization to one closer to the political party despite its foundation of a political party.

The call for demonstrations on January 25, 2011, was a test of the group's ability to continue to postpone the resolution of its internal political differences. Young people - and the currents that push for greater political participation and openness to other political and community actors – sided with participation in this call. On the other hand, older currents, often in leadership positions, decided not to participate in a call for demonstrations whose source or fate was unknown. As a result, before January 25th, each party decided to do what it believed was right, whoever wanted to participate participated, and those who did not respond did not participate, and the group made a decision allowing this and that.

But the consequences for this mid-way stand weren't good. From day one, the regime began to hold the Muslim Brotherhood fully responsible for everything that is going on. Due to the fear of the regime's brutality or solely taking responsibility for this popular uprising if failed, the organization found itself at the heart of a popular revolution in the squares and streets that it was not prepared for. After the end of the night of February 11th, all the postponed political questions are waiting for quick and urgent answers.

Within a few weeks after Mubarak's stepping down, internal disagreements came out into the open since different answers came from the organization to the same questions. Questions like should the group turn into a political party or continue as it is with new political party act as its political arm? Should MB establish a single political party or support whatever parties it wants?...etc.

The political party's questions and subsequent questions would be the declared reason for the discharge or exit of many Brotherhood youths. This will be the beginning of subsequent developments.

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<sup>14</sup> Lucia Ardevini B A, "The 'Failure' of Political Islam? The Muslim Brotherhood' s Experience in Government" (Lancaster University, 2017). p. 147.

For example, topics such as the way MB should political deal with events after 2011, calming or escalation, getting close to other political forces or the army, and others led to the exit of others and showed bigger political differences within the organization. For example, party establishing and the form of its management, was a cause of the emergence of differences that prompted Ibrahim Al-Zafarani, one of the group's former leaders to establish a party. Also, it pushed Abdel Moneim Aboul Fotouh to announce his candidacy for the presidential elections and so on. With each new question, it seemed clear that the group was looking for answers that could help keep the group more cohesive rather than being keen to get the right and appropriate answers to current Egypt's political situation.

In addition to the above, Morsi's campaign presented the Al Nahda project was a model for illustrating the previous idea. The idea of the Al Nahda project was initially formed as an attempt by the group to reach the blueprint of the so-called "The Civilized Project" that it can present to the people. When it was founded, the project aimed to provide a distinct strategic and civilized project rather than a political or policy vision in dealing with political, economic, and social issues. Those in charge of the project were small and specialized groups that operated independently outside the group's traditional organizational and administrative structures but were in contact with the group's leaders at a higher level. The project began before the January revolution, but the revolution will change its course significantly because it has become necessary for the group to move from "civilized and strategic" to "political and policy" in a few weeks and at a time when Al Nahda project has not yet been completed!

In fact, In this new reality, the group was in a needed of a party program, a presidential candidate's program, and electoral programs for parliamentary elections. So it moved quickly in an attempt to prepare detailed programs without having any previous experience or extensive and in-depth real discussions. The reality has imposed questions in an urgent need of answers and there are no mechanisms or institutions to assist in providing such answers, and there are no internal contexts that allow for developing the answers presented.

The group indeed had parliamentarians, but the nature of the work of most of these representatives was focused on the service side and then the oversight side. Dealing with politics from the position of opposition and not from the position of an actor seeking to change power.

However, the group sought to establish a party platform and parliamentary electoral programs, then the program of the presidential candidate. The absence of an internal extensive and in-depth discussion did not prevent it from clarifying and resolving political and policy trends and biases from presenting party, electoral and presidential programs, and turning the name of Al Nahda project into an electoral campaign for presidential candidate Mohamed Morsi.

The group's behavior and actions at that time could be understood as an example of the empirical model of decision-making during crises<sup>15</sup>. These programs and perceptions are essentially a quick and

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<sup>15</sup> Mohsen, Ahmed. "Ideas and Policymaking in Transition." political studies. Istanbul - Turkey, 2018.

incomplete reaction from the group towards the external circumstance - which is the January Revolution - the group seeks through reaction to focus on achieving specific goals that it has set for itself, with the evaluation in the final stages to see if these goals have been achieved or not, and without the availability of mechanisms or means by which the group can confirm that, during practice, an actual change has occurred in the procedures and policies in the direction desired by the group.

## CHAPTER THREE

### DUAL LEADERSHIP

After 25th January revolution, intellectual and political divisions within the group took institutional and collective forms, exacerbating with Mohamed Morsi's arrival to Egypt presidency as the first civilian elected president. We should remember that prominent youth and groups have already left the group after 2011 due to political differences. These groups acted to establish political parties or participated in other parties and movements.

As for those who remained, they were divided between the Freedom and Justice Party and MB group. The Party was theoretically the political arm of the Muslim Brotherhood. However, inside the Party, some individuals might not belong to the Muslim Brotherhood in addition to MB members that have to support the party that represented them. Party establishment was a turning point through which the divisions were further deepened. Party leaders had a slightly different nature and different orientations from those leaders who managed the group. By putting Khairat al-Shater in a comparison with Mohamed Morsi and putting Mahmoud Ezzat in a comparison with Mohamed El-Beltagy, we can notice that there are clear differences among them that events have revealed them clearly and leading to the emergence of "Dual Leadership" problem.

Dr. Mohamed Morsi won the presidential elections, as the first freely-elected civilian president in Egyptian history. Many factors contributed to the failure of his short stay in power, but if we focus on the internal factors of the Muslim Brotherhood, the duality in leadership between some members of the Guidance Bureau on the one hand and Dr. Morsi on the other hand, in addition to the inability to form a political and social project capable of uniting Egyptians were among the factors that contributed to the collapse of Dr. Morsi's survival in power<sup>16</sup>.

This division was not only at the level of individuals, but also included members from leadership. The group established a political party, at the same time, the group's institutions and committees remained as they are. In both institutions, leaders were working on managing the institutions, but the limits of the relationship between the group and the party - and the independence that the party could

<sup>16</sup> Victor J. Willi, *The Fourth Ordeal: A History Of The Muslim Brotherhood In Egypt, 1968–2018* (Cambridge University Press, 2021), p, 231.



obtain in the face of the group - remained all the time issues that were not adequately resolved or discussed. this division at the level of individuals, and then at the level of leaders, will then move to take institutional forms. Groups of individuals will be organized within the party and this will be their main workplace, while others will choose to engage in political activities through the institutions and committees of the local group; we will eventually be faced with a duality that extends from the top to the bottom.

The political experience of the Freedom and Justice Party's members helped them adopt ideas and paths different from those of the group's Guidance Bureau. Young people who participate in university elections and student activities have formed political convictions other than those formed by the sheiks "The Elders", and the women for whom the public sphere opened for them to participate after the revolution have different ideas and convictions. These different convictions and ideas will express themselves within organizational frameworks other than traditional organizational frameworks, a part will work through the Freedom and Justice Party, another part will work through professional unions, and the third part through student unions, and so on.

Theoretically, all these forms were affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood, and their activities were managed through affiliated committees. However, in practice, it will lead to the formation of different convictions and ideas among the participants in these new paths, which leads to creating a state of heterogeneity in ideas and behavior, this will be evident in the dual leadership between Morsi in the presidency and Al-Shater in the Guidance Bureau.

The late President Mohamed Morsi was violently attacked as the "Substitute candidate." He was the alternative candidate to the main candidate, Khairat Al-Shater, Although the attack was in many ways for partisan and competitive purposes, it had an origin that Mohamed Morsi - President of Freedom and Justice Party and the political arm of the Muslim Brotherhood - was the Substitute candidate for the primary candidate for the Muslim Brotherhood, who is Khairat al-Shater.

The significant signs were clear for observers. when the group wanted to introduce a candidate, they chose from the group leaders, not the party, and Khairat Al-Shater was not the head of the Freedom and Justice Party, although he could easily have been. But the group chose to run the party as if it were a file among other files of the group.

After Mohammed Morsi's arrival, he had to make decisions through which he had to satisfy the people as the President of the Republic, but also to make sure that these decisions would not anger the leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood, from a practical point of view, this is expected behaviour from a man who would not have reached power without the support of the Muslim Brotherhood, so gaining their approval is a logical political behaviour towards the group that supported his access to this position, but the governance management considerations are greater than group management considerations, instead of the group acting as a lever supporting Morsi's presidency, this split in the leadership contributed to delaying a number of decisions because there were different visions to deal

with them. In various situations, Morsi was able to get rid of the group's influence on his decisions and act more independently and make decisions he deemed appropriate, but this did not satisfy all the leaders who saw it as Morsi's attempt to work alone away from the group.

In similar experiments, the head of the party is the prime minister or the president of the republic, and in this case, he works to ensure that both the party and its state apparatus work in harmony for the success of the ruling experiment. If the system is parliamentary, the head of the party will often be the head of the government, and if the system is presidential, the president of the republic will be the head of the party unless the law stipulates otherwise, in which cases the party becomes the popular lever that supports the president or the prime minister in his position. But in the case of President Morsi, the situation was different, as President Morsi, head of the Freedom and Justice Party, but not the most powerful man in the organization. Others within the Muslim Brotherhood who were stronger than it organizationally, led by Deputy Leader Khairat al-Shater.

Some have tried to describe the relationship between the two men as it represents personal conflicts. The paper does not tend to interpret what happened by focusing on certain individuals. Alternatively, It looks from a structural point of view between two institutions: the first is the Muslim Brotherhood, and the second is the presidency institution. As gravity center was within MB, the organization, it was expected that MB would bring to the presidency a person who will follow its instructions. On the other hand, the presidential candidate - to continue in his position- had to prove to those around him and to other political forces that his decisions were made by him and not from any other center.

Morsi was in a dilemma imposed on him by a reality characterized by a clear practical duality of leadership if he satisfies the organization he may make politicians angry; if he satisfies politicians he may get MB leaders angry. This state of political uncertainty and duality has resulted in more wasted times and more difficulty in producing policies and solutions for urgent problems.

## **CHAPTER FOUR:**

### **WHO DECIDES THE FATE OF THE GROUP?**

MB's survival in power didn't last for a long time. MB was overthrown from power through the military coup on July 3, 2013. MB faces the regime's widespread repression against its members. But this suppression is part of the MB's external challenges, which some argue that the MB could have overcome if it had not been faced with internal challenges that erupted afterward.

During 2015 and 2016, the MB will be the focus of media and research follow-up. This time because of its internal disputes that have come to light in a phenomenon previously unknown to the MB. Some considered these disputes as disagreements over the peace/ violence dichotomy. Others saw them as organizational and administrative differences over internal change regulations and mechanisms. The

internal disputes and discussions contained all of the above. There is disagreement over the leadership of the MB and the decision-making mechanisms within it. But the essence of the disagreement was about the essence of MB, the paths it must go through, and the political solutions it should propose in the face of the political crisis it is going through. Because the MB does not have sufficient mechanisms to resolve these differences within it in a healthy manner, was not able to reach to understandings about the answers it will adopt, in addition to the fact that resolving these political differences meant practically abandoning the MB's old form in favor of a new form (or forms), the disputes have turned into a struggle over who controls the wheel so that that person can steer the MB in the path he wants.

The details and topics of these differences were many and complex. After conducting many interviews with leaders at different levels within the organization, Researcher Yasser Fathy concludes that in late 2014 the MB was able to rebuild its organizational structures and build a new leadership with internal organizational legitimacy under the name of the "Supreme Administrative Committee", However, this restoration will bring with it key questions about the course and strategies that the MB must take to deal with its current crisis and will push the new committee to provide "different" answers to it<sup>17</sup>, These new answers will shift from political to organizational disagreements. Political differences over how to manage the crisis, and the course and strategies to be taken, organizational differences over regulations and higher authority, and who has the power to make higher decisions. The August 2014 plan is a good example that can illustrate these disputes.

At the end of 2014, after consultations with entities at different levels within the organization, the Supreme Administrative Committee provided a different answer to how the MB should work in the face of its current crisis. The suggested plan was not the result of clear and pre-existing political preferences expressed by the members of the Committee previously. On the contrary, the Committee's response was a direct result of the liquidity position experienced by the MB after the dispersal of the Rab'a sit-in. This led to the members of the committee, like the rest of the MB, looking for solutions and answers to the new political reality. The new solution reached by the committee will be called "The Creative Peaceness ". However, this solution will cause internal and organizational disputes to erupt into the public.

Contrary to what many believe, these differences did not explode when the new plan was approved. They erupted after its implementation. This means that at the time of its approval, its opponents subsequently had no substantial or major objections to it. Put differently, the content of the new plan was not the real problem, but rather the problem of providing a new answer that could change the content of the "old" MB. the main problem is the change itself, not its content. This is confirmed by Fathy's paper that the evaluation of the "Non-Peaceful Action" Committee after January 2015 questioned the feasibility of the new strategy, both in practice and politically. According to the

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<sup>17</sup> Fathi, Yasser. "The Muslim Brotherhood and the January Revolution (3): Part Three." Political Studies, 2019.

researcher's interviews with one of the leaders of the administrative offices in the Mid-delta region, the evaluation indicated that these actions did not achieve their desired objectives<sup>18</sup>. This confirms two things:

First, the new plan was an attempt for change and not an integrated project that is clearly defined in the minds of its owners and supporters. It was an attempt to provide answers to key questions that have become urgent and cannot be delayed. Given the positions and ideas of those who presented this plan before 2011, we can conclude that they were quick and immediate answers in the face of a severe crisis. But these answers have always been "based on procedural and executive approach focusing on reality's pressure regardless of political reasons behind them"<sup>19</sup>.

Second, the fear of opponents of the new plan was not in the content of the plan itself, but it was a fear that the approach of seeking new and useful answers to the practical situation would continue, which could lead to new paths that the MB had not touched before. The negative consequence of ignoring politics and presenting coherent political programs and projects based on a vision agreed upon has had negative effects during Dr. Mohamed Morsi's short reign. Moreover, it has deepened and posed a threat in the period following the military coup. In those circumstances and pressures, the MB was in dire need of unity, a common position, and an agreed-upon strategy.

In short, what happened during the period from the end of 2014 to the end of 2015 within the Muslim Brotherhood is exactly what the MB has tried to escape over the past three decades by avoiding political programs or answers to key political questions. Disputes were at the essence of the controversies that erupted over political thinking, political objectives, and strategies. These high-pitched differences were carried out under "regime Bombing" and security repressive pressures.

## CONCLUSION

The central conclusion of this paper is that Muslim Brotherhood's political roles in Egypt are part of history and will not be part of the future. This does not mean that the Muslim Brotherhood will disappear completely from the scene or that it will not have some social and religious impact. Most likely, the MB will endure as an organization located abroad, taking advantage of the free spaces available to it in different countries. If the situation in Egypt changes, the MB may have the opportunity to play some influential social or religious roles. However, it is unlikely that MB will have influential political roles unless the regime wants to reconcile with the Brotherhood. Currently, there are no indications that the regime can accept sitting at a political table face to face with a representative of the Muslim Brotherhood. If this happens, the regime's sitting at this table will mostly

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<sup>18</sup> Fathi, Page:33

<sup>19</sup> Fathi, Page:36



be to ensure that the Muslim Brotherhood's sign-on reconciliation is real meaning that it is the last real political action accomplished by the MB.

Why is it unlikely to expect an influential political future for the Muslim Brotherhood?

This expectation is not due to external reasons (such as the suppression of the regime or regional or international powers objections ) but is in essence due to internal causes within the organization itself.

As we have seen in this paper, in order for the MB to continue in politics, it needs to answer several key questions such as: What are its perceptions of the shape of the state it wants to rule? What are their perceptions of the relationship between the state and society? What development version are you seeking to achieve? How will it manage the economy to achieve this version? What is its perception of Egypt's foreign relations and how will it work to achieve these relations? How will it deal with Egyptians' daily problems in health, education, housing, transportation, and local and rural development? and other questions, more importantly, provide answers to urgent questions about the management of the current scene and how to get out of this crisis.

Seeking answers to these questions is not only a task specific to the Muslim Brotherhood but an urgent and necessary need for all political actors and parties aiming to change in Egypt. The choice to focus on the Muslim Brotherhood and their political project stemmed from the MB's significant role after 2011, which had multiple implications for Egypt's political process, But the weakness of the political project - or the lack of clarity of its features - is a general characteristic that exists in most Egyptian political movements and parties, whether those who adopt positions close to the regime' with slightly different details, or who have clear and specific leanings - whether to the right or the left - but cannot present these biases in the form of programs and policies around which citizens gather. Therefore, moving from the major questions to the smaller questions, from thinking holistically to thinking in part, and talking about solutions without just talking about problems, are basic duties of those who want political change. Practical questions about pressing issues such as how to deal with Egypt's debt? How to provide comprehensive and well-quality health care to Egyptians are questions that need to be answered by these political actors.

These questions do not have a single correct answer but have a diverse number of answers. If we return to the Muslim Brotherhood, if the MB wants to correct its political path and agree on a unified answer to these questions, this will practically mean that it will lose the support and affiliation of a segment of its members that may not be satisfied with this answer. MB can unite its members based on religious ideas, but it will be difficult for it to unite them politically. In that case, and if things are done correctly, it is difficult to imagine the existence of a single party representing the Muslim Brotherhood. Rather, the search for these answers will most likely lead to the emergence of different

currents and parties. As a result, there is no political future for the Muslim Brotherhood in its current shape, but its members and former affiliates still have political opportunities in this future.

Economic policies can be an example that illustrates what we mean. If the MB wants to return to politics from a significant position, part of this return needs to provide political answers to the current economic questions that Egypt is experiencing, such as: How to deal with the debt problem that Egypt is currently experiencing? Should development in Egypt depend on attracting foreign investments? Or to encourage and support the local industry and provide the appropriate environment for its growth? And other questions.

If the MB answers these questions favoring an answer at the expense of another one within the framework of a comprehensive vision and an integrated program, it will necessarily lose a segment of supporters who support the MB. This loss is what the MB is working to escape by avoiding providing answers for the time being because if it provided answers, it thinks that it would be supporting the possibility of the emergence of different currents with different political positions with its hands.

Most likely, the coming years will produce different political actors and groups that emerged from - and were influenced by the Muslim Brotherhood. These actors and groups may offer different political versions and answers to these key questions which are completely disparate. So that one division provides an answer while another presents a completely different answer. Parties that may lean a little to the right can emerge and others may move to the left. Expectedly, few parties may adhere more to the Islamic reference. Others, may not give up this Islamic reference, but it adopts a more national and Egyptian position. A third division may abandon this reference temporarily in favor of a transitional phase. We may also see groups seeking to avoid confrontation with the current regime and trying to win over it, and others who will stand against the current regime and work to change it. In all these scenarios, what will define these paths is a fundamental variable: the "capacity" to provide political answers in the form of an integrated and coherent political project capable of motivating after convincing them. The keyword here is "capacity."

Regardless of the content of this political project (or rather political projects), the most important thing is to build the capacity to generate this project. In normal circumstances, political projects are generated through political practice. However, with the absence of peaceful political practice in today's Egypt, the task becomes very challenging. Healthy political practices through which people can build expertise and exploit energies are not available. There are no real political parties through which political cadres can be nurtured and escalated. Therefore, the real challenge now for the current or former members of the Muslim Brotherhood is to work on building this capacity amid these difficult circumstances.

This capacity needs institutions and ideas. Such ideas are generated by professional institutions that work in public policies or reading and following up on political affairs and foreign relations. Over time, these institutions have a greater ability to understand the complexities of Egyptian reality, and to

provide alternatives and suggestions for the problems they suffer from. In that case, an integrated and successful political vision can come out. This is not a comprehensive solution but only the first step on way. There will be a permanent need to maintain and develop the continuity of this capability. Hence comes the importance of qualified institutions that ensure permanence and continuity. This integrated environment of ideas, people, and institutions will be able to generate political projects and generate individuals who can deal with these projects in different contexts. Without this environment, it would be difficult to imagine a change from outside the current governing system.

The Muslim Brotherhood's experience in power has shown that moving from opposition to the government is not an as easy task as some might think. To reach power, some focus on elections and democracy as a single and righteous path. However, the election experience in Egypt shows that success in elections does not mean success in governance and governing sustainability requires more than success in elections. On the other hand, some argue that the path to ruling depends on the possession of power. without possessing sufficient power, it is not possible to imagine ruling, even if you are in positions of the presidency and the House of Representatives.

But even the possession of power does not mean success in the ruling. Absolute power can guarantee the continuation of an authoritarian regime against the will of the citizens, but power alone is not sufficient for the continuation of a regime that seeks to rule for citizens and by the citizens under freedom.

Hence comes the significance of political project through which the process of political change and governance is managed.

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