

Strategies of the Muslim Brotherhood Movement 1928-2007

ISRAEL ELAD ALTMAN

Research Monographs on the Muslim World
Series No 2, Paper No 2, January, 2009
HUDSON INSTITUTE

The views, opinions,
and/or findings con-
tained in this report
are those of the
author(s) and
should not be con-
strued as an official
Department of
Defense position,
policy, or decision.

CENTER ON ISLAM, DEMOCRACY,
AND THE FUTURE OF THE MUSLIM WORLD



Strategies of the Muslim Brotherhood Movement 1928-2007

ISRAEL ELAD ALTMAN



HUDSON INSTITUTE

1015 15th Street NW, Sixth Floor
Washington, DC 20005

202-974-2400

www.hudson.org

© 2009 by Hudson Institute, Inc.
All rights reserved.

Contents

Executive Summary	1
Introduction	5
The Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood	8
Historical Note	8
The Classical Mission Statement	9
The Islamic Order and the Islamic State	10
<i>The Classical Doctrine</i>	10
<i>The Debate on the Islamic State and on the Nature of the MB</i>	11
The Strategy of the Struggle	14
<i>The MB Political Party</i>	14
<i>Reaching Out to Ideological Adversaries</i>	16
<i>Preparing for Power</i>	16
<i>Is the Time Ripe to Seek Power?</i>	18
Jihad	18
<i>The Historical Heritage</i>	18
<i>Jihad against Foreign Occupation</i>	19
<i>The Shi'a and the Unity of the Struggle</i>	19
<i>Domestic Implications</i>	20
Dealing with the U.S.	21
Egypt's Center Party (Hizb al-Wasat)	22
The Syrian Muslim Brotherhood	24
Historical Outline	24
The Objectives	25
The Vision of the Future Syrian State	25
The Strategy of the Struggle	27
Dilemmas of Regional Politics	29

The Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood and Islamic Action Front	31
Historical Outline	31
The Jordanian MB's Struggle over Identity and Orientation.	32
The Challenge to the Jordanian Regime and to Its Alliance with the West	34
Facing the Regime's Counterattack.	35
The Palestinian Islamic Resistance Movement— Hamas	37
Introduction	37
The Evolution of Hamas' Strategies	37
The Islamic State	39
Strategic Dilemmas	39
Notes	43

Executive Summary

The al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun (The Muslim Brotherhood, MB, Ikhwan) organizations in Egypt, Syria, and Jordan have been major political and ideological actors in their respective countries for the last six decades, and the strongest opposition forces there for the last thirty years. Their Palestinian counterpart, Hamas, is the strongest ideological force in the Palestinian territories and has held partial power there since early 2006. To what extent do these organizations share common strategies to attain power? How do their strategies for attaining power differ in the various Arab states?

The short answer is that there is no Ikhwani strategy common to all the branches of the Muslim Brotherhood movement. What characterizes the MB, however, is its adherence to a set of final objectives and a rigid commitment to a core of related principles, combined with pragmatism and flexibility as far as the strategy and tactics of achieving those objectives are concerned. There are no clear timetables to reach the goals, and gradual, methodical progress takes priority.

The Muslim Brothers share an interpretation of history and of the crisis of Islam; a holistic view of Islam as both religion and state; a vision of bringing Islam back to its rightful place; and a number of principles regarding how to make that vision a reality: resistance to foreign occupation and liberation of Muslim countries from all types of foreign domination; creation of the Islamist state, which will implement sharia; unification of the Muslims; and spreading Islam, a universal religion, all over the world.

The combination of rigidity over the final goals

and flexibility on strategies and tactics is compatible with a movement that seeks to be an inclusive mass movement rather than an exclusive, elitist, vanguard organization, and looks at itself not as one more social-political force among others, but as the real Muslim community. This inclusive attitude has allowed the MB, which has viewed itself since its inception as a transnational movement with a universal message, to become a global movement with over fifty national branches. Many of those branches are affiliated in various degrees with the International Organization of the MB, which functions as a fundraising and coordinating body.

Policies of the national branches occasionally contradict each other and reflect local realities and constraints. Some of the national branches go under names other than the MB, sometimes in order to bypass legislation making it illegal to form parties connected to a foreign entity. Still, most national branches act in many respects as parts of one movement and regard the International Organization and its Guidance Bureau as a coordinator and arbiter.

The existence of ambiguities, or “grey zones,” in the MB’s positions on key issues (such as Islamic law, jihad, political pluralism, civil and political rights, women’s rights, and religious minorities) is intentional and reflects a “strategy” of confusing the message.

In general the MB has pursued three main strategies to reach power: missionary work (*dawa*), working through the political process (*siyasah*), and military takeover (*inqilab*). The emphasis on one or more of these strategies has created divergences among the MB national branches, and among competing fac-

tions or different generations inside branches. In many cases MB organizations and their leaders have changed their strategies, sometimes radically, according to changing circumstances, but without losing sight of the final goals.

No MB organization today advocates taking power by force in order to Islamize society using the state's power apparatuses, but the military does figure in some thinking. The national branches are either one organization combining *dawa* with political work, as in Egypt, or a political organization formally separate from the charitable-missionary *dawa* organization, as in Jordan.

The Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, the origin of the global MB movement, has passed through three distinct historical phases, each with its own typical strategies. The first phase, from the MB's foundation in 1928 to the 1952 Revolution, was dominated by the classical MB strategy formulated by the Movement's founder, Hasan al-Banna, namely the educational or missionary (*dawa*) strategy—the Islamization of society and the creation of an Islamic state as a gradual, multi-stage, “bottom-up” process. The rise of a militant faction in the Movement toward the end of this period and the rivalry with the new military regime led to the second phase—dissolution of the MB in 1954 and its harsh suppression by ‘Abd al-Nasir, organizational paralysis, and the emergence of the takfiri factions inspired by Sayyid Qutb. The third phase is that of the “Second Republic,” under Presidents Sadat and Mubarak. Rejecting the isolationist and violent strategies of the takfiris, the MB opted for reform and gradual Islamization “bottom up” through both *dawa* and increased use of the democratic tools made available to them.

The opening of the political process in Egypt after the 1970s produced an ideological adjustment to the new democratic game—the “new Ikhwanism.” Like the classic MB, the “new Ikhwan” strive for the creation of an Islamic state that will apply

sharia. But while the classic MB strategy to reach that goal calls mainly for missionary and educational work, *dawa*, although politics are not rejected, the “new Ikhwan” focus on using the tools of democratic politics as the main strategy to reach power and establish that state. This change has been accompanied by a shift from the classical pan-Islamic orientation of the MB to focusing on the particular territorial state.

Yet “new Ikhwanism” has not replaced the old approach—it cohabitates with it, adding to the ideological confusion. The main force for change in the direction of “new Ikhwanism” in the last two decades has been members of the “middle generation” of MB activists, former leaders of the Islamist student groups in the 1970s, who joined the MB, rose through the ranks as trade union leaders, and engineered the Movement's entry into the political arena. Yet much power in the MB still rests with the “old guard” leaders, who adhere to the classic MB world view and are less open to change in general, and to the increasing politicization of the MB in particular.

Like its Egyptian counterpart, the Syrian MB went through a violent phase. From its foundation in 1945 to the Ba'ath takeover in 1963 it was a reformist social and political movement that sought to bring about the application of sharia through *dawa* and political work within the existing political system, and that participated in elections, parliaments, and governments. But after 1963 it became a revolutionary organization seeking to overturn the Ba'ath regime and set up an Islamic state through armed struggle, which culminated in its total defeat by 1982. Strictly outlawed ever since, and with its leadership in exile, the Syrian MB has reinvented itself as a non-violent Sunni reform movement, claiming to lead the Syrian opposition to the Asad regime and to bring about the establishment of a democratic Muslim state in Syria through democratic means.

Since its creation in 1945 the Jordanian Muslim

Brotherhood, and since 1992 its political arm the Islamic Action Front (IAF), have both pursued two distinct, though related, agendas. One has been the advancement of the general objectives of the Muslim Brotherhood movement—Islamization of society, creation of the Islamic state that will apply sharia, jihad to liberate occupied Muslim lands, and unification of the Muslim Nation. The other agenda has been the promotion of the Palestinian cause, a dominant national concern in Jordan much more than in any other Arab country.

The Jordanian MB was set up with the monarchy's blessing, and for its first three decades enjoyed a symbiotic alliance with the Jordanian state, which enabled it to construct the immense network of charitable institutions, services, and enterprises it made use of to spread its *dawa* and build its political power. That alliance ended in the 1980s, when Islamism replaced Arab socialism and nationalism as the main ideological challenge to the monarchy.

The other main factor in the end of the alliance between the Jordanian MB and the state was the growing domination of the Palestinian element, demographically and ideologically, in the MB. The former alliance of MB and the state gave place to an uneasy coexistence, which has gradually developed into an open political conflict and systematic efforts on the regime's part to contain and reduce the MB's power and influence. The MB's radicalization and overzealous pushing of its Palestinian agenda raise the question of to what extent it was still a Jordanian movement. Thus, while MB movements in other Arab states have in the last two decades moved away from violence toward moderation, the Jordanian movement appeared to be mutating in the opposite direction.

From its foundation in 1946 and until 1987, the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood movement held that the military struggle against Israel, advocated and practiced by other Palestinian groups, was sec-

ond priority. The first priority was Islamization of society. Israel's existence, in the Movement's view, was a symptom of the weakness of the Muslim world resulting from its abandonment of Islam. Only once Islam was revived, and a unified Islamic state created, would it be possible to defeat Israel.

Hamas is somewhat distinct from the other MB organizations. The decision to create The Islamic Resistance Movement (*Harakat al-Muqawamah al-Islamiyyah*, or Hamas) in late December 1987 was actually forced upon the Palestinian MB by the outbreak of the first Intifada. Hamas is the first MB organization to reach power through parliamentary elections. After the failure of the Islamists in Sudan and Algeria, the fortunes of this new experiment of an Islamist movement in power are of crucial importance for Islamist everywhere. Hamas' case is unique, though. Its election victory was achieved not only under foreign occupation, but to a large extent because of that occupation and thanks to the particular political setup of the Palestinian Authority.

Unlike its fellow organizations in Egypt, Jordan, and other Arab states, Hamas is simultaneously a *dawa* movement—seeking to Islamize Palestinian society through education and social work and bring about the creation of an Islamic state—and a “resistance” movement. These two identities were able to coexist successfully until Hamas moved into electoral politics, when the contradiction between being both a government, responsible for the well-being of its population, and an armed revolutionary movement became increasingly difficult to reconcile.

An important issue for all MB organizations as they go down the political road and seek to take advantage of democratic, electoral processes, is how to define the nature of the Islamic state they envision. Most Ikhwani organizations and thinkers adhere to one variation or another of the classical doctrine as defined by the founder, al-Banna. The goal is to set up an Islamic political order, or a state, in which

sharia will rule as the implementation of Allah's rule, which is the only legitimate one. Implementation of sharia is the *raison d'être* of that state, and is more important than the form it takes, whether caliphate or another. The source of legitimacy of that state is its being the rule of Allah; the Quran is its constitution, and the ruler draws his authority from the pledge of allegiance (*bay'ah*) he receives from *ahl al-'aqd wal-hall* who are elected by the people, and from the consultation (*shura*) he practices with them. The ruler must be Muslim and male.

The “new Ikhwani” narrative is in a way an effort to repackage that creed to make it more compatible with current notions of democracy. It argues that the goal is not a religious state or a religious government, but a civil state with an Islamic source of authority where the basis of membership will be citizenship, not religion, and all will be equal in their rights and duties. An alternative version is a civil state with “an Islamic cultural background” (*khalfiyyah thaqafiyyah Islamiyyah*).

Those formulations do not alter the basic creed that the Islamic state is set up in fulfillment of divine will, and its *raison d'être* is to implement divine law, which is the application of divine rule on earth. While the community, or the people, is the source of the authority of the ruler through the institutions of *bay'ah* and of *shura*, the source of sovereignty and legitimacy of the state is Allah. Such a state cannot but be a religious state. No MB organization or thinker has accepted the separation of state from religion.

The MB traditionally shunned forming political partnerships and alliances and joining political fronts or coalitions. The new Ikhwan, with their emphasis on politics, do make overtures to other political forces but do not form long-range, strong alliances. That attitude reflects the secretive nature of the Movement and its fear of being penetrated or that the negotiating involved in political coalition-building could erode the core principles and undermine the *dawa*. The Syrian MB has been adapting this approach in recent years and recently formed the National Salvation Front with former Vice President Khaddam, once the nemesis of the organization, and several other groups.

The trajectories of various Muslim Brotherhood organizations calls into question the optimistic “moderating effect” argument sometimes made for encouraging the participation of Islamist movements in democratic politics and electoral processes. The “moderating effect” argument maintains that once such movements join the system and get closer to political power, they will adapt their ideologies to the new circumstances and to new obligations toward their electoral constituencies. Yet Hamas' winning of elections and becoming the government did little to moderate its principles, and it has not metamorphosed from a violent resistance and opposition movement to a pragmatic ruling political party. The electoral achievements of the Egyptian MB seemed to have imbued its leadership with a new sense of empowerment and reinforced its willingness to challenge the regime but did not make it more moderate.

Introduction

Are there Muslim Brotherhood strategies? If one takes strategy to mean a long-term plan of action, designed to implement a specific goal, with timetables, intermediary objectives, and pre-planned alternatives, then there is no strategy common to all the branches of the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) movement. What characterizes the MB is an unwavering adherence to a set of final objectives and a rigid commitment to a core of related principles, combined with pragmatism and flexibility as far as the strategy and tactics of achieving those objectives are concerned. There are no clear timetables to reach the goals, and gradual, methodical progress takes priority.

What the Muslim Brothers share is an interpretation of history and of the crisis of Islam; a holistic view of Islam as religion and state, which are inseparable; a vision of bringing Islam back to its rightful place; and a number of principles regarding how to make that vision a reality—resistance to foreign occupation and liberation of Muslim countries from all types of foreign domination; creation of the Islamist state, which will implement sharia; unification of the Muslims; and spreading Islam, a universal religion, all over the world. The MB has followed three different strategies to reach power and set up the Islamic state: missionary work (*dawa*), participatory politics, and violence. The use of these strategies has created divergences between one MB national branch and the other and between competing factions or different generations inside branches. In many cases organizations have changed their strategies, sometimes radically, according to changing circumstances, but without losing sight of the final goals.

The combination of rigidity over the final goals and flexibility on strategies and tactics corresponds to the legal (*fiqhi*) strategy of leading Ikhwani jurists, like Shaykh Yusuf al-Qaradhawi, of allowing no tolerance with regard to the fundamentals of the religious law (*al-usul*) and whenever a relevant text (*nass*) exists in the Quran and authentic Sunnah, but permitting flexibility on secondary matters (*al-furu'*) and whenever a text does not exist. This approach is perfectly compatible with a movement that seeks to be an inclusive mass movement rather than an exclusive, elitist vanguard organization, and that looks at itself not as one movement out of many, but as the real Muslim community.

That combination has also allowed the MB to evolve as a global movement with over fifty national branches. In effect the MB has envisioned itself since its inception as a global movement, and its universal orientation is clearly stated in the Founding Declaration of the International Organization of the Muslim Brotherhood, which was set up in 1982 in order to support and coordinate the MB branches, which were spreading globally, and penetrate the growing Islamic communities in the West. The MB, the Declaration says, is a comprehensive Islamic body working to establish Allah's religion on earth; to convey Islam's call to all people in general and to the Muslims in particular; to liberate the Muslim homeland from any non-Islamic rule; to assist Muslim minorities everywhere; to seek to unite all Muslims in one nation; and to erect the Islamic state, which will implement Islam's rules.

The document says also that the MB seeks to prepare the nation for jihad (*'i'dad al-'ummah 'i'dadan*

jihadiyyan) so that it stands as one front against the invaders and the enemies of Allah, facilitating the foundation of the Rightly Guided Islamic state.¹ That seems to imply defensive rather than offensive jihad. This assumption is in a way supported by another MB document that was formulated at the time of the formation of the International Organization of the MB, a plan of action to spread Islam in the world in a gradual, long-term, peaceful process. Entitled “Towards a Global Strategy for Islamic Politics” (*Nahwa Istratijyyah ‘Alamiyyah lil-Siyasah al-Islamiyyah*), the document calls for mastering the art of the possible, without offence to the fundamental principles, and asserts that one must not look for confrontations with the adversaries, either in the local or the global arenas, which could lead to attacks against the *dawa* or those who are engaged in it. It calls for supporting the Movements engaged in jihad in the Muslim world, but makes no reference to jihad outside it.²

In reality the International Organization of the MB heads up a loose federation, or a network, and functions as a fundraising and coordinating body. The International Organization’s Basic Regulations, approved on July 29, 1982,³ indeed envisioned a centralized structure, where the central leadership institutions, in which the national branches are represented—the General Guide, the Guidance Bureau, the Shura Council—constitute the supreme authority whose approval is required for every important political decision made by the national branches. Yet following long power struggles between the Egyptian leadership of the International Organization and the national branches, a practice of decentralism has been followed, based on the principle that each national branch knows which strategy is the most suitable to the local conditions (*Ahl Makkah adra bi-shi’abiha*), and where the International Organization’s leadership advises and coordinates more than instructs. To quote ‘Ali Sadr al-Din al-Bayanuni, the Controller General of the Syrian MB, his organization coordinates its posi-

tions with other Syrian opposition groups, not with other MB organizations. It does explain to the latter its point of view, but makes its own decisions.

The International Organization lost a great deal of its influence over the national branches as a result of the fact that Egyptian MB has monopolized the position of the General Guide, while the Egyptian MB is an illegal organization and faces various limitations on its activities. Furthermore, the General Guides have been mostly expert organizers rather than widely recognized scholars or legal authorities, and were frequently subject to travel restrictions by the Egyptian authorities, which reduced their ability to attend to a global movement. In addition, increasing international financial controls since 9/11 have reduced the fundraising abilities of the International Organization, and hence its influence over the branches.

Policies of the national branches occasionally contradict each other. The Jordanian MB supported Saddam Hussein, and presently supports Bashar Asad, in spite of their persecution of the MB in their countries (in Syria, membership of the MB is punishable by death). Syria has tried to use its being the host of the Hamas headquarters in order to establish contacts with other MB national branches and with the International Organization, but was rebuffed by its Guidance Bureau, whose deputy head is a Syrian Muslim Brother, Hasan al-Huwaiti, and where the Controller General of the Syrian MB, ‘Ali Sadr al-Din al-Bayanuni, is a key figure.⁴ The Kuwaiti branch left the Movement when it opposed the international coalition against Saddam following his occupation of Kuwait. Some of the national branches go under names other than the MB, in many cases in order to bypass legislation making it illegal to form parties that are connected to a foreign entity. Still, the national branches act in many respects as parts of one movement and regard the International Organization and its Guidance Bureau as a coordinator and arbiter among them.

Observers of the MB point to the existence of con-

siderable ambiguities, or “grey zones,” in the MB’s positions on key issues, such as Islamic law, jihad, political pluralism, civil and political rights, women’s rights, and religious minorities. They interpret those ambiguities as the products of the “tensions which remain between the old goals of creating Islamic states, and enacting uncompromising versions of sharia, and the new goal of becoming influential players in a pluralistic, democratic system.”⁵ In reality there is no tension between “old goals” and a new one: the “old goals” are still the goals, and to become an influential political player is not a goal but part of a strategy to achieve those goals. If those MB activists who play political roles do not endorse unambiguous positions, which would have endeared them to the West, on the issues of “grey zones” listed above, it is because endorsing such positions would be against the MB’s core beliefs.

The strategic and tactical flexibility is manifested in a “strategy” of confusing the message. It was the

MB’s founder, Hasan al-Banna, who told his disciples that “in the face of the law it is a mistake to be candid,” and secrecy is necessary in the beginning of any movement to assure its survival.⁶ Al-Qarad-hawi, when asked by a television interviewer to explain his referring to the Turkish AKP as an Islamist movement while the AKP itself does not, retorted: “They do not say so, but what do we care about—that which is said or that which is done? They do not want to provoke the others, but in reality it is known that this is an Islamic party...but they do not want to declare. I am not interested in declaring things, but in that which is done in practice.”⁷ And an article by the Deputy General Guide of the Egyptian MB, Muhammad Habib, on the MB’s English-language website states that the Copts have the full right to assume public posts “*including* that of head of state,”⁸ while the same article in the MB’s Arabic website says “*excluding* that of the head of state.”⁹

The Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood

HISTORICAL NOTE

The Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood (MB) is presently well into the third phase of its history. The first phase, from the MB's foundation in 1928 to the 1952 Revolution, under the monarchy and the British presence, saw the formation of the classical MB doctrine and the early phase of its ideological adaptation to party politics. The rise of a militant faction in the Movement toward the end of this period and the rivalry with the new military regime led to the second phase—dissolution of the MB in 1954 and its suppression by 'Abd al-Nasir, organizational paralysis, and the emergence of the *takfiri* factions inspired by Sayyid Qutb. The third phase is that of the "Second Republic," under Presidents Sadat and Mubarak: rejecting the isolationist and violent strategies of the takfiris, the MB opted for reform and gradual Islamization "bottom up" through *dawa* and operating within the political system. This period witnessed first, from the mid 1970s to the late 1980s, détente with the regime, which initially encouraged the MB's reemergence as a counterweight to the Left, then tolerated its activities, without formally recognizing its existence (the MB is still legally outlawed). That situation allowed for large-scale expansion and recruitment, penetration of civil society institutions, and political activity, including taking part in elections. Then, from the late 1980s to the mid 1990s, the MB's penetration of civil society and its electoral feats started a process of reassessment of the threat on the part of the regime, which has led since the mid 1990s to an open conflict,

with the regime aiming to contain the MB, disrupt its activities, and limit its influence.

The opening of the political process in Egypt since the 1970s produced an ideological adjustment to the new democratic game, generally referred to as the "new Ikhwanism." Like the classic MB, the "new Ikhwan" strive for the creation of an Islamic state that will apply sharia. But while the classical MB strategy to reach that goal calls for missionary and educational work to spread the call to Islam (*dawa*), the "new Ikhwan" opt for using the tools of democratic politics as the strategy to reach power and establish that state. This change was accompanied by a shift from the classical pan-Islamic orientation of the MB to focusing on the particular territorial state.

The move toward a political strategy was challenged by proponents of the third Islamist strategy to reach the Islamic state, that of violent takeover of the state and Islamization top-down. The takfiri factions, disciples of Sayyid Qutb, and ideologues of the jihadi groups in the 1970s and 1980s, rejected as apostasy the ideas of democracy, political pluralism, parliament, man-made laws, elections, and political parties, and objected to any involvement in the Egyptian political system and institutions, as these were non-Islamic entities borrowed from the infidel Western world and serving a *jahili* (non-Muslim) state.

The main forces for change in the direction of "new Ikhwanism" in the last two decades have been members of the "second generation" of MB

activists, also known as the “middle generation” (*jil al-wasat*)—former activists of the Islamist student groups in the 1970s, who joined the MB, rose through the ranks as trade union leaders, and engineered the Movement’s entry into the political arena. Yet much power in the MB still rests with the “old guard” leaders. Adherents of the classic MB world view, and many of them (like the present General Guide, Muhammad Mahdi ‘Akif, and several members of the MB’s Guidance Bureau) hard-line veterans of the MB’s “Secret Apparatus” and graduates of ‘Abd al-Nasir’s jails, these figures have been more cautious and less open to change in general, and to the increasing politicization of the Movement in particular.

The differences of opinion between the old guard and the “second generation” or “new Ikhwan” touch upon the most crucial issues of the Movement’s identity and goals. Hasan al-Banna envisioned the MB as a “comprehensive Islamic body,” spreading the call to Islam (*dawa*) and acting as a legal and moral source of authority for Islam as a whole, and therefore above local politics and parties. Its sights set far beyond Egypt’s confines, its goal is to spread Islam as a world religion and create a pan-Islamic state or a caliphate. One major controversial issue is whether the MB should go on being a global movement and seek the creation of a pan-Islamic state, or should it focus on the territorial nation-state, Egypt. Should it remain a *dawa* movement, transcending politics, or should it transform itself into a political party? What should be the nature of the Islamic state the MB seeks to create: should citizenship in it be based on religion or on territory, and if it is to be a territorial state, how can that state still be Islamic? In the last two decades, the “second generation” has been cohabitating with the old one, as the MB has increasingly been involved in politics, pushed by the “second generation” activists, but no formal change in its nature has taken place. The official ideological line, as represented by the present General Guide and his two deputies, strictly reflects the classic doc-

trine. It has to be borne in mind that the General Guide of the Egyptian MB is also formally the head of the global MB Movement, in his capacity as General Guide of the International Organization of the Muslim Brotherhood. Therefore he is *ex officio* committed to the global nature of the Movement.

The Classical Mission Statement

The MB’s mission statement, formulated by the Movement’s highest source of authority, Imam Hasan al-Banna, is a document entitled “The MB’s Goals” and posted permanently on the Egyptian MB’s official Arabic website. It defines the MB’s goals as follows:¹⁰

We want the Muslim individual, the Muslim home, the Muslim people, the Muslim government and the Muslim state, which will lead the Islamic states, bring together the scattered Muslims and their ravished lands, then carry the banner of jihad and the flag of the call to Allah until the world will be blessed by Islam’s teachings.

The classical MB strategy for reaching that goal, as formulated by al-Banna, was the educational or missionary (*dawa*) strategy. Al-Banna envisioned the Islamization of society and the creation of an Islamic state as a gradual, multi-stage, “bottom-up” process. The first task is to form the Muslim individual by making the individual adopt the MB’s vision; next comes the task of forming the Muslim family, and then, the Muslim society. During these stages, the Movement’s activity should be solely missionary and educational. Only after society as a whole endorses the MB’s Islamic message will the Movement be in a position to start implementing its vision of an Islamic state in public and political life.

And only at that stage should the Movement shift its energies from missionary and educational work to political work. Although al-Banna was actively involved in politics, he held that the MB should focus on education (*tarbiyah*). “When the people have been Islamized,” he argued, “a truly Muslim nation will naturally evolve.”¹¹

The Islamic Order and the Islamic State

The Classical Doctrine

The starting point of the classical doctrine, as formulated by Hasan al-Banna and his disciples, was that the Muslim Nation, weakened and humiliated due to its corrupted religion and to Western political, cultural, and intellectual invasion, had to be restored to true, pure Islam. An Islamic Order (*nizam islami*) had to be created, within which the “Islamic State” would exist.

The most important criterion for defining an Islamic Order was the implementation of sharia in it, which was even more central for that Order than the establishment of the caliphate.¹² The fundamental sources of sharia were the Koran, which in the MB view needed new and clearer interpretation, and the Sunnah, expurgated of falsity. The MB denied the jurists (*fuqaha*) and their *fiqh* any sacredness; rejected slavish worship of tradition; opened the door of *ijtihad* for Muslims to be able to meet their present-day needs; and added the powers given the Muslim ruler to legislate for the general welfare to the traditional legal principles of analogy (*qiyas*) and consensus (*ijma*’).

According to classical MB theory, the Islamic state is bound by three principles: the Koran is the fundamental constitution; government operates on the concept of consultation (*shura*); the ruler is

bound by the teachings of Islam and by the will of the people. The people are the source of the ruler’s authority, and the relationship between ruler and ruled is a social contract in which the ruler is a trustee or agent. The ruler must be Muslim and male, has no hereditary rights, and unless he is removed for legal, moral, or physical reasons his tenure may be for life. He may be called caliph, imam, king, or any other term used in the Quran to designate leadership.

The practice of consultation (*shura*) is mandatory, and operates through the institution of *ahl al-shura* or *ahl al-hall wal-‘aqd*. As the people’s representatives, this institution has the real power in the state. Its members should be elected, but the method of their election is not determined by Islam.¹⁰ The individual has guaranteed rights, including absolute equality, and Muslims and non-Muslims share equally in rights, duties, and responsibilities.¹⁴ Equality is less than absolute as the non-Muslims are referred to as “the people of the pact” (*dhimmis*), and the assertion that the ruler must be Muslim and male.

Involvement in politics did not mean acceptance of the pluralistic, parliamentary political system. The Movement called for the abolition of political parties, because parties create disunity and are therefore incompatible with Islam. Parties, in the MB view, were not necessary for a representative form of government. Democracy required only that there be guarantees of freedom of opinion and of the participation of the nation in government, and parliamentary life was compatible with the teachings of Islam¹⁵ through the principle of consultation (*al-shura*).

But in practice, already under the leadership of al-Banna the MB had accepted participation in parliamentary elections, arguing that the *dawa* should reach not only the popular level, as the Movement had been doing successfully, but also the official level, which is best reached through parliament. Al-Banna reportedly said that he was not opposed to

MB activists participating in elections under the umbrellas of other parties, as a means to spread MB ideas.¹⁶ He would not, however, go as far as forming an MB party. His concept of the MB as “a comprehensive Islamic body” meant that it transcended the political parties and did not compete with them. Entering parliament was justified by a practical argument—the need to look after the implementation of sharia and to use the parliament as a platform from which to promote the *dawa*.¹⁷

But is the Islamic state a territorial one or a united state of all Muslims? Hasan al-Banna’s priority was the struggle for the political independence of the Muslim states and the setting up of Islamic orders in them. That was to him the first, necessary stage for a wider Muslim unity. The next stage should be the setting up of a regional Arab Union; only after a long process of economic, cultural, and political cooperation among the various Muslim states will an Islamic Union be formed. That union will take the form of a league of Muslim states, similar to the League of Nations, whose resolutions will not be binding on the member states. Once it is formed, a caliph will be appointed, who will have a spiritual rather than a political role.¹⁸

The Debate on the Islamic State and on the Nature of the MB

Since resuming its political activities, the MB has adopted a political reform narrative calling for democracy, pluralism, human rights, separation of powers, constraints on the power of the rulers, protection of political freedoms, and independence of the judiciary. Its Reform Initiative of March 3, 2004, supports a republican, parliamentary, constitutional, and democratic political order “in the framework of the principles of Islam.” The initiative affirms that the people are the source

of all power, so that no individual, party, community, or society can claim the right to power unless it is derived from a free and true popular will, and that the MB is committed to the principle of alternation of power through general, free, and fair elections.¹⁹

These last points were made to refute criticism by antagonists of the MB, that the Movement considers itself the custodian of Islam and as such ascribes to itself moral and political authority above everyone else, and that behind its outward support for free elections and alternation of power lies hidden the “one man, one vote, one time” approach. A recurrent point made by “second generation” spokesmen is that the MB does not claim to have a divine custodianship: the MB narrative, they stress, is not divine but human, thus whoever disagrees with it is in disagreement with that particular understanding, not with Islam.²⁰ The Muslim Brothers, moreover, are people from all walks of life, representing all the strata of Egyptian society, and they neither claim divine custodianship nor seek the rule of the *ulama*.²¹

“Second generation” activists, represented most powerfully by ‘Abd al-Mun’im Abu al-Futuh, a member of the Guidance Bureau, see Egypt as their frame of reference and its welfare as the goal of the MB. Abu al-Futuh said, for example, that the MB should not seek power now, because its arrival to power at the present time would not serve Egypt’s interests.²² He has called for the MB to end its global aspirations and become an Egyptian political party, focusing on reform in Egypt. He also declared that the MB’s traditional slogan, “The Koran Is Our Constitution,” is merely an emotional slogan that does not represent the Movement’s political method, which respects the state’s man-made constitution and laws.²³

These “second generation” activists have been insisting further that the MB was not aiming to set up a religious state or a religious government, saying that it sought to establish a civil government and a civil state (*dawlah madaniyyah*) with an Islamic source of authority (*marja’iyyah*), where all the cit-

izens will be equal in their rights and obligations assured by the constitution. By “source of authority,” they explained, they meant Islam as a civilization and as social and political system, consisting of general principles that govern the functioning of a state with a Muslim majority. After all, Islam is not only the faith of the majority, but also the culture and heritage of all, as Muslims, Christians and Jews participated in producing it.²⁴ That civil state will be the basis of citizenship (*muwatanah*).²⁵

They have not provided a clear answer, however, to the question of how the state can be nonreligious when it is set up to implement divine will and in order to apply divine law? Furthermore, the MB old guard leadership continues to uphold the old doctrine as the official line of the Movement. In several missives clearly intended to eliminate any misconception about where the Movement stood (one of them fittingly entitled “The Muslim Brotherhood: Dotting the I’s”), General Guide ‘Akif stated that since its foundation the MB has had two goals: to liberate the Islamic homeland from any foreign domination, which means ending not only military occupations, but also any other form of foreign domination, be it political, intellectual, cultural or economic; and to set up in that homeland a free state that will apply Islam’s rules and implement its social order. The MB, he added, seeks to achieve those two goals in the Nile Valley, in the Arab countries, and in any country blessed by the presence of Islam—Islam being the religion of all mankind since it embraces all aspects of life of all the peoples in every age. The hoped-for Islamic state will be Islamic only if it adopts every aspect of Islam-political, social, moral and missionary.²⁶

Following al-Banna, ‘Akif listed the seven stages required to reach those goals: reforming the individual; forming the Muslim home; guiding the society; liberating the homeland; reforming the government; restoring the international entity of the Islamic *Ummah*; and finally mastership of

the world (*ustadhiyyat al-‘alam*). The Islamic caliphate requires preparatory steps, he wrote, again following al-Banna: cultural, social, and economic cooperation among all the Muslim peoples; alliances, treaties, and conferences among the Muslim states; and the formation of the Muslim League of Nations. ‘Akif pointed to the means of achieving those goals: first, *dawa* and recruitment of the good elements, who form solid pillars for the reform; and secondly the constitutional struggle, designed to make the voice of the *dawa* heard aloud in formal bodies like parliaments, trade unions, and institutions.²⁷ In his description of the means, ‘Akif thus went no further than al-Banna had when he authorized political work as a way to reinforce the *dawa*, not to supplant it. His second deputy, Khairat al-Shatir, stated after the 2005 parliamentary elections that the MB was “a comprehensive Islamic body,” committed to Islam and to calling people to it, and that this mission was much broader than the political aspect, which represents only a small part of MB’s activities.²⁸

Elsewhere ‘Akif wrote that the Muslim Brothers believe that the highest loyalty is to Islam, which does not preclude other, lesser affiliations, like family, tribe, or homeland.²⁹ He caused a public uproar in April 2006 when he made public remarks that expressed his contempt for Egyptian patriotism and his attachment to pan-Islamism.³⁰

Moreover, the introductory section of the aforementioned MB Reform Initiative of March 2004 presents the MB’s purposes as follows:

Our only hope to achieve progress in all aspects of life is by returning to our religion and implementing our sharia....We have a clear mission—working to put in place Allah’s Law. This is to be achieved by forming the Muslim Individual, the Muslim home, the Muslim government, and the state which will lead the Islamic states, reunite the scattered Muslims, restore their glory, retrieve for them

their lost lands and stolen homelands, and carry the banner of the call to Allah in order to make the world happy with Islam's blessing and instructions.³¹

This is obviously the MB's classical mission statement as formulated by Hasan al-Banna.³²

The ambiguity in the position of the MB regarding the nature of the state the MB intend to establish gained in significance following the Movement's electoral achievements in November-December 2005, which made the prospects of its reaching power look less unrealistic than ever. One of the most crucial questions has to do with the status of "the other," of minorities, whether religious or ideological, in an MB-run state, and especially what the status of Egypt's Copts would be. In an article entitled "What Will Happen If the MB Reach Power," published after the parliamentary elections on the MB's official Arabic language site,³³ First Deputy General Guide Muhammad Habib wrote that the MB considers the Copts as citizens who enjoy the full rights of citizenship (*muwatanah*), and that "consequently they have the full right to assume public posts, except for the president of the state." That exception obviously reflects the Islamic principle that non-Muslims can not rule Muslims (al-Banna indeed ruled, one recalls, that the ruler must be Muslim), raises the question what are then "the full rights of citizenship," and indicates continued adherence to the vision of the Islamic state, where Copts are "people of the pact" (*dhimmis*). It should be noted that in the English version of Habib's article, posted on the MB's official English website, the Copts have the full right to assume public posts "including that of the head of state."³⁴

Such ambiguities have been a constant source of concern for Egypt's Copts, but that concern has increased since the parliamentary elections. "Second generation" leaders, like 'Abd al-Mun'im Abu al-Futuh and 'Issam al-'Aryan, attempted to assuage those fears by offering a softer version of the MB's

position on the issue.³⁵ They said that the Brotherhood had decided that the *fatwa* issued in 1996 by the then General Guide Mustafa Mashhur that required non-Muslims to pay the poll tax (*jizyah*) should no longer be implemented.³⁶ This however has not been given an official, obligatory form so far, and when asked about the MB's position regarding the Copts, General Guide 'Akif replied: "We in the MB apply Allah's rules in dealing with them."³⁷

That approach was reflected in the MB's reaction to a ruling (April 4, 2006) by the Administrative Court in Alexandria, which instructed the Interior Ministry to allow several citizens to be issued identity cards stating that the religion of the holder is Baha'i. The MB has traditionally considered the Baha'is as apostates who merit the death penalty. In the parliamentary debate of that ruling (May 3, 2006), MB deputies (Muslim Brethren are elected to parliament as independents) said indeed that the Baha'is were apostates and had to be killed, and declared that they would present a draft law making Baha'ism a crime and the Baha'is apostates.³⁸

In response to criticism of the MB for linking religion with politics, and for seeking to establish a theocracy, 'Akif stated that the MB is actually proud of linking politics with religion, because any conception of Islam that sees it as limited to the sphere of worship (*ibadat*) and morals (*akhlaq*), and that disposes it of leading mankind and of governing human affairs (*siyasat umuriha*), is in contradiction with the truth of Islam as it was brought down by the Prophet Muhammad, and is in defiance of the will of Allah.³⁹ Responding to the same criticism on the MB English language website, his deputy, Muhammad Habib, said: "Islam, as Imam al-Banna said, is a comprehensive program that encompasses all aspects of life: it is a state and a country, a government and people, ethics and power, mercy and justice, resources and wealth, defense and advocacy, an army and an idea, a true belief and correct acts of worship."⁴⁰

The Strategy of the Struggle

The MB Political Party

As mentioned above, the question of whether or not the Egyptian MB should form its own political party, or transform itself into one, has been the subject of debate in the Movement for the last two decades, as the MB has been increasingly taking part in national elections (through partnerships with other parties and through independent candidates), and as its fellow Arab movements have adapted to the new political openness and set up political parties. The latter offered two organizational models—the MB forming its own political party, as in Jordan, or transforming itself into one, as in Yemen and Algeria; and in some cases those parties joined coalition governments.

The proponents of setting up a party have been primarily members of the “second generation,” whereas old guard leaders hold on to al-Banna’s concept of the MB as a comprehensive Islamic body, which is above politics and is dedicated to *dawa*. The old guard give priority to the Movement’s organizational growth and prefer to keep the MB’s political and social program as vague as possible so that it can attract new members and supporters from a wide range of political preferences, and avoid being criticized over its program by political rivals.

This emphasis on building a mass movement with a vague ideological message was disputed for years by those, like Sayyid Qutb, who believed that the MB should instead become a vanguard movement with a smaller but highly screened, indoctrinated, and motivated membership. Hasan al-Banna, in fact, eventually adopted both approaches at once by developing toward the end of his career the “Special Apparatus” within the Movement. Still,

the MB has opted since its reemergence in the 1970s for the mass movement approach, the debate being about whether that movement ought to become a political party.

Several times during the 1980s and 1990s preparations were made to create a party, and in 1995 a group of “second generation” members applied for government permission to establish a new party, the Center Party (*Hizb al-Wasat*). In what appeared to be an independent move, unauthorized by the MB leadership, the founders published a political program whose language and tone were different in some respects from the MB narrative and invited non-MB members and Copts to join, in what appeared to be an effort to convince the government that it was not a religious party, and hence could be licensed. A license was denied, however, as the government suspected that the party was actually a front for the MB. The founders have persisted in their attempts to be licensed, changing the party’s name to “the Egyptian Center Party” in 1998 and then to “the New Center Party” in 2004, so far to no avail.

As to what was behind that move, the founders have asserted that the decision to form a party was genuine, and their own, and that the MB leadership was not informed about it in advance. Others suggest, however, that the old guard leadership, under increasing pressure by the state security apparatus on the one hand, and urged by the “second generation” activists to drop its opposition to forming a party, on the other, decided to test the water: would the authorities grant permission to a party formed by the younger activists and characterized by a moderate discourse? The government’s eventual rejection of the new party’s application clearly marked the limits of the regime’s tolerance of political pluralism, and vindicated the reservations of the old guard as to the enthusiasm of the “second generation” with regard to political participation.⁴¹

A decade after the *al-Wasat* experiment, this internal debate was still on, and the following options were debated:

- The full transformation of the MB into a party open to all Egyptians, Christians included
- The preservation of the Movement as an Islamic nonpartisan society, representing a Sunni source of authority and supporting all political parties that adopt its views
- The formation of a political party while preserving the MB as an Islamic society.⁴²

“Second generation” advocates of the first option argued that it was high time for the MB to become a political organization with a clearly defined and detailed program. Political change in Egypt will be achieved not through *dawa* but through ballot boxes, they argued, and the Movement should transform itself from a *dawa* movement to a political party.⁴³

Proponents of the preservation of the Movement as an Islamic nonpartisan body argue for their part that its electoral achievements were the fruit, not of political work, but of the missionary, educational, and social work of the MB—work that has spread the Movement’s thought and assured it a public following.⁴⁴ Furthermore, they argue, the MB was set up by al-Banna to reflect Islam’s total, comprehensive message: it was formed as a social, missionary, economic and political movement in one, and not just as a political movement. It was the Movement’s social basis that secured its survival. Had it been a political movement only, it would not have survived.⁴⁵

The Movement has opted for a typical MB strategy—keeping up political work alongside its other activities. The state’s absolute rejection of an MB party enabled the Movement to avoid making a new decision on the controversial change. That strategy also allowed the MB to retain its posture as not one party among many others competing for the voter’s support, but as the voice of Islam, speak-

ing for the divine truth, and claiming a moral status that supposedly puts it above the political fray.

In the 2005 parliamentary elections the MB ran only 150 candidates, less than one third of the House’s seats, in a clear message to the government that the organization was not seeking to deny it the two-thirds majority required to introduce constitutional changes. The move reflected the MB’s caution about antagonizing the regime to a degree that might push it to adopt punitive measures that might hurt the *dawa* effort.

The MB’s presence in the nation’s parliament was used as a platform to propagate its positions, focusing on attacking government inefficiency and corruption and promoting human rights and reform of the legal system.⁴⁶ The MB deputies also served as a channel for the organization to hold contacts with representatives of foreign governments.⁴⁷ The MB, however, did not use its presence in parliament to advance Islamic legislation implementing sharia; society is not ripe for that yet, and such a move might frighten certain segments of it. Instead the Muslim Brotherhood’s MPs played the role of the real representatives of the people, expressing the MB’s protests over the government’s inefficiency and corruption, and fighting for liberty and justice.

Asked how successful the MB has been in realizing its core objectives since its foundation, ‘Abd al-Mun’im Abu al-Futuh, one of the most ardent supporters of transforming the MB to a political organization, said that the MB has “first and foremost spread the concept of a universal and comprehensive Islam. There is no longer any wide-spread ignorance of Islam in Egypt. Even the simple village people in Egypt would strongly disagree with the notion that Islam has nothing to do with politics and public affairs. They would argue that Islam is a religion and a state, as stated by Imam al-Banna.”⁴⁸ Abu al-Futuh did not point to the MB gains in the 2005 parliamentary elections, clearly its most important political achievement so far, choosing instead to point to the achievements of the MB’s *dawa*.

Reaching Out to Ideological Adversaries

Cautious about politics in general, the Egyptian MB historically has not followed a strategy of forging political partnerships and alliances with other political actors. The shift from *dawa* only to engagement in the political process (*siyasa*) as well entails, as far as the “second generation” is concerned, exactly that—moving to establish dialogue and trying to form partnerships with other political actors, even with ideological adversaries. This turn toward alliances is necessitated also by the new concepts of the territorial state as the framework and the equality of all citizens of that state.

Highly symbolic in this context was the rapprochement engineered by Abu al-Futuh and others with the Nasserists of the Arab Democratic Nasserist Party. Whereas for old guard MB leaders Jamal ‘Abd al-Nasser was an archenemy, responsible for their movement’s persecution and their own personal travails during the 1950s and 1960s, for second generation leaders the present day Nasserists were potential allies in a common struggle against the Mubarak regime, the US, globalization, and Israel. An alliance with the Nasserists could increase the legitimacy of the MB among elite groups that remain wary of it, and make it harder for the government to isolate the Brotherhood.

This rapprochement met with considerable opposition in the Movement. Some of it came out following a strong verbal attack on Nasser’s personality by an old guard member of the Guidance Bureau. His remarks generated apologies by MB leaders, including ‘Akif⁴⁹ (who had spent twenty years in jail following Nasser’s crackdown on the Brotherhood in 1954). These apologies angered many in the Movement’s ranks, reportedly forcing Khairat al-Shatir, second deputy to the General Guide, to declare that the apologies were merely tactical, and that the attack on Nasser was a true expression of MB belief.⁵⁰

Another conciliatory move, this time toward

Egypt’s secular and liberal elite, was the visit paid on December 13, 2005, by ‘Abd al-Mun’im Abu al-Futuh and another member of his faction, Dr. Hisham Hamami, to the author Najib Mahfuz, considered by many in the MB as a heretic for his book *Awlad Haretna (The Children of Our Neighborhood)*. The visit, and what was said during it, led to furious condemnations from the MB ranks, bordering on labeling ‘Abd al-Futuh an apostate.⁵¹

The internal resistance to those overtures came not only from the old guard, but also from middle-aged and young members, educated in the Movement’s *dawa* institutions and curricula. These curricula, complained ‘Isam al-‘Aryan, reflect the phase during which the MB was persecuted; are imbued with salafi radicalism and suspicion of the other; and should therefore be reformed.⁵²

‘Abd al-Mun’im Abu al-Futuh framed his visit to Najib Mahfuz as a message to artists and people of literature and culture to the effect that the MB is not against creativity and culture.⁵³ Deputy General Guide Muhammad Habib, however, commented on the visit by saying that Abu al-Futuh represented himself only. He declared that the MB “in principle is not against culture, arts and creativity,” and that political reform should include freedom of the press, of criticism and of thought. He emphasized, however, that the people’s representatives should “bring to accountability those bodies or institutions that promote pornography, homosexuality or moral perversion under the guise of creativity. It is essential to subject those so-called creative works to examination and review by specialized and expert people.”⁵⁴

Preparing for Power

Taking power is part of the MB’s project, delineated in its mission statement. In 1994, as the Mubarak regime, wary about the depth of MB penetration of civil society, began revising its former tolerant approach to MB activi-

ty and adopting the tactics of containment and suppression instead, a document attributed to the MB (reportedly found in a raid on one of its offices) outlining its strategy was published in a pro-government weekly.⁵⁵ The document was presented by the government to the court.⁵⁶ While apparently more a discussion paper than an authoritative set of marching orders, the document still shed light on the MB's strategic thinking, setting forth the preparations the Movement should take in order to be ready to rule the country and hold on to power in the face of domestic and external threats. It also reflected the Movement's thinking about coping with the regime's attempts to block the MB's penetration of various social sectors.

There were four areas for action: the "influential institutions;" the dynamic social classes (including creating the means to mobilize them); interaction with the "other;" and the international dimension. The "influential institutions" are the military and police, both of which were selected because they should be neutralized as instruments of the state that confront and weaken the Movement, and because once they are on the Movement's side, they would constitute an important reinforcement of its effectiveness in bringing about change. Additional "influential institutions" are the media, al-Azhar, the legal institutions, and parliament. The social classes to be penetrated are students, workers, professionals, business people, and "the popular classes." The "other" refers to the Copts, the Jews, pressure groups, and the political parties, as well as Islamist groups and thinkers.

The international threat, emanating from the hostile forces—the U.S. and the West—should according to the document be confronted in the first stage by a policy of coexistence, achieved by persuading those forces that it is in their interest to work with the forces that really represent the peoples of the region, and that the MB is a stable and disciplined force. Then should come the second stage—neutralization, in which the West should be

made aware that it is not in its interest to hurt the MB, since on the one hand the Movement does not constitute a threat to the West as long as the West does not obstruct the Movement's preparations to assume power, but on the other hand the MB could influence the West's interests if it does impede those preparations. The third stage consists of reducing the effectiveness of the Western threat by directly affecting the West's interests and by influencing its decision-making bodies using the MB's international dimension, by which is meant leveraging Muslim institutions and individuals in the West to influence decision-making institutions there.

The document stresses that the Movement must prepare and train its cadres for those tasks. Members who will be assigned to penetrate the military and the police, for example, should be trained in doing so without losing their identity, and in handling information effectively, while those tasked with penetrating social groups ought to be equipped with the skills of debate, persuasion, and leadership. Finally, the MB should designate selected teams of people capable of running public institutions to be ready when the Movement assumes power.

It should be noted that when the document addresses the penetration by the MB of the military and the police, a military coup d'état is not envisaged. One would assume that had the authorities come across a documented reference to an MB interest in that option, the government would have made it public. That is not to say that the MB would not use the military or police if needed, but the gist of the whole concept elaborated in the document seems to be that these institutions should be first neutralized as repressive tools of the regime, then prepared to protect the MB once in power, rather than being used as the vehicle for the Movement's reaching power.

One also notes the absence in the document, and for that matter elsewhere in the Egyptian MB thinking, of references to the option of the MB taking part in government alongside the ruling party, or

musharakah. Practiced by Ikhwan old and new in several Arab countries, this option has not been raised by Egypt's "new Ikhwan," let alone by the old guard. The "new Ikhwan" probably assessed that raising such an option would trigger powerful opposition from vast strata in the organization that were reserved in principle with regard to its political role, while the idea was unrealistic as far as the regime was concerned.

Is the Time Ripe to Seek Power?

In the November–December 2005 Egyptian parliamentary elections the MB gained 20 percent of the seats, its largest percentage ever, and could have scored even better had it not been for the regime's efforts in the third and last round to obstruct voting by its supporters. That achievement, followed by the January 2006 Hamas' victory in the Palestinian Authority's legislative elections, raised the question whether the time was not ripe for the MB to seek power.

The MB's message was that the time was not ripe, that the MB was still far away from reaching power,⁵⁷ and that it would get there by democratic means. 'Abd al-Mun'im Abu al-Futuh argued in spring 2005 that the Movement's arrival to power at that stage would not be in Egypt's interests. He explained that due to the given regional and international circumstances, it would be able neither to lead the country nor to take it out of its crisis and realize the people's interest.⁵⁸ The General Guide 'Akif responded that the MB should reach for power, and that the predictions that the world will not accept it in power are no longer valid: The world now supports democracy, he said, and the MB is a democratic organization enjoying wide popularity. It will reach power by winning in the ballots, not on the backs of tanks⁵⁹ [and therefore its rise to power will be accepted by the world]. In March 2007 'Akif characterized all the cases of

Islamists' taking power so far, be it in Sudan, Iran, the Taliban in Afghanistan, Somalia or Iraq as failures, because those regimes were not raised to power by the people's will. The MB would be willing to assume power, he said, only once the people accept its message and want it in power.⁶⁰

It was also suggested that the MB rule will not directly follow the end of the present regime: A transitional period is envisaged, during which liberals and nationalists will hold power, allowing for the consolidation of democracy and freedoms. It could be twenty years before the MB assume a leadership position in Egypt.⁶¹

Those and similar statements were certainly intended to allay concerns in Egypt and abroad regarding an imminent MB move to take power, and to deny the regime a pretext to increase its pressure on the movement. Yet it also seems to reflect its real assessment of the balance of power.

JIHAD

The Historical Heritage

In its first phase, from the founding of the MB in 1928 to its dissolution in 1954, militancy and martyrdom were central virtues in the MB's ethos. Al-Banna told his disciples that they were the army of liberation and the troops of God. The concept of jihad in the MB literature of the time conveyed the sense of fighting (*qital*) leading to death and martyrdom. Jihad, al-Banna argued, was a pillar of the faith and an obligation on every Muslim. God grants a "noble life" to that nation alone that "knows how to die a noble death," he said.⁶² The glorification of death was an important element in his legacy. Death was to him an important end of jihad, and was an art (*al-mawt fann*). The Koran has raised the love of death over that of life, al-Banna maintained, and unless the Koran's philosophy of

death replaces the love of life, which has consumed Muslims, they will not achieve anything. Victory can come only with the mastery of the art of death.⁶³

That approach, crystallized in the 1930s and undoubtedly influenced by the conflict with the British in Egypt and the deteriorating situation in Palestine, had clear implications for the organizational aspect of the MB. In 1935, the category of *mujahid* was added to the existing three categories of membership (“assistant,” “related,” and “active”); the paramilitary units of “rovers” (*jawwalah*) and “battalions” (*kata`ib*) were formed; and in the early years of World War II the Special Apparatus (*al-Jihaz al-Khass*), also known as the Secret Apparatus, was formed out of the most loyal and best-indoctrinated members. The Special Apparatus was the Movement’s arm for special operations, which involved terror attacks against Egyptian Jews, assassinations of Egyptian public figures, including a prime minister, and playing a leading role in the Palestine War.

After its dissolution in 1954 following an attempt by the Special Apparatus to assassinate ‘Abd al-Nasir, the MB abandoned jihad as a tool in its internal struggle, opting to use peaceful means to spread its *dawa* and reach power, while supporting the idea of jihad in the struggle against external enemies of Islam. That led to the emergence in the 1970s of radical groups like *al-Jama’ah al-Islamiyyah* and *al-Jihad* which, under the influence of the Sayyid Qutb’s ideas, practiced jihad against the state.

Jihad against Foreign Occupation

Addressing what he describes as the foreign occupation of Iraq, Palestine, and Afghanistan, the MB’s General Guide ‘Akif has been calling upon all Muslims to support the resistance (*muqawamah*) there. In a missive entitled “Jihad and Martyrdom [*Istishhad*] are the Way to

Glory and Victory,” for example, he stated that Islam regards resistance against occupation “a jihad for God” (*jihad fi sabil Allah*). That jihad, which means actual fighting (*qital*), is an individual religious duty (*fardh ‘ayn*) of the inhabitants of the country under occupation, and it has precedence over the other duties (*fara`idh*). For the people of the neighboring countries, participating in that jihad is a collective duty (*fardh kifayah*), which becomes an individual duty if the occupied people fail to repel the aggressor. If even then the occupation persists, fighting against it becomes an individual duty for Muslims the world over.⁶⁴ In an article outlining the MB’s objectives ‘Akif stated that for the MB, jihad was the most elevated pillar of Islam after “the two testimonies” (that there is no God but Allah and that Muhammad is His messenger), and recapitulated the Prophet’s saying, often quoted by al-Banna: “He who dies and has not fought, and was not resolved to fight, has died a *jahiliyyah* death.”⁶⁵ ‘Akif declared that Zionists, civilians and soldiers, should be killed, because the “Zionist people” as a whole is an armed military that occupies Palestine, and there is no difference between military Zionists and civilian ones.⁶⁶

The Shi’a and the Unity of the Struggle

In reaction to the Sunni-Shi’a conflict in Iraq, ‘Akif issued a missive laying out the legal and practical arguments for the Sunnis to end their conflict with the Shi’a and form a common front with them against the occupation.⁶⁷ Rejecting the position that sees the Shi’a as apostates, he said that if Islam gives non-Muslims the right to freedom of faith and worship, allowing them to live respectably in Islamic society, how can one deny that right to those who agree with the Sunnis on the fundamental principles of Islam and differ with them only on

secondary matters? He called for the formation of a body consisting of Sunni *ulema* and Shi'a *maraji'* whose task would be to spread the culture of Islamic fraternity and make it superior to loyalty to a legal school (*al-wala' al-madhhabi*). He also called for the revival of the Committee for Rapprochement between the Islamic Legal Schools that was set up in the 1940s with the participation of the ulama of al-Azhar, the *maraji'* of Qum, and Hasan al-Banna. 'Akif urged all of Islam's religious authorities to confront *takfiri* thinking, spread *wasati* Islamic thinking, and condemn all criminal attacks on innocent civilians and state institutions, which provide the occupation forces with an excuse to stay in Iraq.

The Egyptian MB welcomed Iran's nuclear program. Deputy General Guide Muhammad Habib said that he believed that the Iranian nuclear program was for peaceful purposes, but if it were to have a military purpose, it would serve to balance the Israeli nuclear arsenal. "It will create a sort of a balance between the two sides, the Arab and Islamic side and the Israeli side." He said that he had no problem with Iran's having nuclear weapons, and that he believed most Egyptians held the same position.⁶⁸

During the July–August 2006 Lebanon War, the Egyptian MB allied itself with the Hizbullah-Hamas-Syria-Iran axis and against the Egyptian-Saudi-Jordanian camp. 'Akif declared that "Islam today regains its role in leading the struggle against the Zionist project."⁶⁹ The MB enthusiastically supported Hizbullah and vehemently criticized Sunni legal experts and political leaders who argued that as a Shi'a organization and as an arm of Iran, Hizbullah must not be supported. The MB declared that it considered the Ja'fari Shi'a as a Muslim denomination that agrees with the Sunnis on the fundamental principles of faith, worship, and morals. The differences of opinion and historical outlook between Shi'a and Sunnah did not exclude the Shi'a from the fold of Islam, it said. Hasan al-Banna himself participated in the efforts made in the 1940s to bridge the gap

between Sunnah and Shi'a that led to the recognition of the *Ja'fariyyah* as the fifth School of jurisprudence. Hizbullah's fighters are Arab, Muslim, and fight a war of resistance against an oppression and occupation that affects all Muslims.⁷⁰

'Akif even announced his preparedness to send ten thousand *mujahidin* to fight alongside Hizbullah in Lebanon and sharply attacked Arab leaders for failing to come to the rescue of the Lebanese people, remarking that had those leaders not been Muslim, "we would have fought against them because they are harder to us than the Zionists and the Americans."⁷¹ A senior MB figure remarked that Hizbullah's Secretary General, Hasan Nasrallah, could portray his son (who died fighting against an Israeli unit in 1997) as a martyr to the Muslim Nation, while others (meaning Egypt's President Mubarak) present their sons as their heirs in power.⁷²

Domestic Implications

Through their posturing as champions of the jihad against Israel, set in stark contrast to the inactivity of the Arab regimes and their implied collusion with the enemies of Arabs and Islam, the MB was thus positioning itself as offering leadership where the state has failed to offer it. From substituting for the state in the area of social services it has been moving to the area of foreign affairs, hitherto the sacred domain of the state. The offer to send volunteers to fight alongside Hizbullah was particularly pointed, because it implied not only a public admission that an MB organization does exist, in defiance of the law, with a pretense of training its members for war, but also that the MB leaders feel that having captured the moral high ground on the issue of standing up to Israel, they should not be constrained from making such public statements. These episodes marked a new level in the rise of MB self-confidence and sense of empowerment, already growing since the 2005 parliamen-

tary elections, and led the regime to increase its pressures on the movement in the following years.

Dealing with the U.S.

The MB's achievements in the 2005 parliamentary elections, along with the defeat of the liberal and secular alternatives, accentuated dilemmas in the West with regard to engaging the MB as a partner in a dialogue on the future of Egypt. There are two approaches in the MB regarding the U.S.: a concept of total conflict with the U.S. that rejected any form of dialogue, and a more nuanced approach, expressing an interest in a dialogue but wrapping it with conditions and reservations that make it hardly likely.

The first approach, reflecting traditional MB attitudes, saw no room for an engagement with the U.S. since the agendas of the MB and the U.S. were in collision.⁷³ General Guide 'Akif, who upholds the basic MB position regarding the total and inevitable conflict of Islam with the West, devoted several missives to portraying the U.S. as the embodiment of evil. He argued that in the new American global order, mankind is divided into classes: first-class humans, Americans and Zionists; second-class humans, Westerners of non-oriental origins; and so on until the tenth class—the inhabitants of the Arab, Muslim, and Oriental worlds.⁷⁴ That global order, which has become a global nightmare, is in reality run behind the scenes by the Sons of Zion.⁷⁵ Since the U.S. raised the slogan “the others are hell” as the battle cry of the war on terror, the international community, and particularly the West, has

followed it. From then on, the view of the U.S. is that whoever joins their alliance is a “democrat,” and whoever disagrees with the means of fighting terror is a terrorist himself or a supporter of terror.⁷⁶ The MB, 'Akif said, has been in the vanguard of those who looked with suspicion at the American call for democracy and freedom, in view of the dark history of American imperialism, its continued aid to despotic regimes, its total alignment with the Zionist project, and its craving for Muslim resources.⁷⁷

'Akif called for an economic boycott of the imperialist states, as well as for a boycott of their cultural products, which according to him are designed to transform thoughts, morals, and behavioral patterns and increase susceptibility to imperialism.⁷⁸

Leaders of the “second generation” of the MB did declare an interest in a dialogue with the US. They welcomed dialogue as a cultural and human value, but “within the context of the MB's revivalist vision of Islam and the implementation of the Islamic sharia.” They pointed to the essential contradiction between what they called the growing American project of empire and hegemony on one side, and the steadily progressing MB project to construct an Islamic reformist revival on the other, which seeks to liberate Muslim lands from any foreign hegemony, be it military, economic, cultural or spiritual; to reform governance in the Muslim countries; and to achieve a real Arab unity and an international Islamic entity (*kiyan dawli islami*).⁷⁹ Still, meetings with official representatives of the US administration can be held, if the Egyptian Foreign Ministry knows about them, if they are in the open, and if they serve the interest of Egypt and the Arab homeland.

Egypt's Center Party (Hizb al-Wasat)

Egypt's Center Party (*al-Wasat*, “the middle way”) was founded in 1995 by a group of “second generation” MB activists who left the MB. The founding of the new party was supported by Shaykh Yusuf al-Qaradhawi and other MB figures abroad. The Egyptian government perceives it as an extension of the MB. The party applied for a license three times, each under a different name (In 1996 as “the Center Party,” in 1998 as “the Egyptian Center Party,” and in 2004 as “the New Center”), but the license was denied. Al-Wasat describes itself as the ideological equivalent of Turkey's Justice and Development Party (AKP), but unlike the latter it is less of a political party and more of an intellectual circle of moderate Islamists and its influence is rather limited.

The circumstances of al-Wasat's formation have been a matter of controversy. According to its founders they split from the MB when they became fed up with the ideological rigidity and authoritarian leadership style and established the new body as a moderate alternative to the MB. According to another version they formed it with the support of at least part of the MB leadership (including Muhammad Mahdi ‘Akif, who nine years later became the General Guide), who sought thereby to test whether the government would permit the existence of an MB political party established alongside the MB, and presumably separate from it, like the Jordanian Islamic Action Front; eventually, however, a dispute broke out between the established MB leadership and the splinter group.

At any rate al-Wasat has positioned itself as an ideological rival of the MB. It points to the existence of two factions in the MB, one of which is reformist and open-minded, and another that is rigid and unfortunately represents the controlling majority, and argues that the MB's mixing of missionary (*dawa*) and political activities is dangerous to the nation. Al-Wasat, on the other hand, calls for the separation of *dawa* from politics and was set up as a civil party. Furthermore, the MB has an ambiguous vision of the Islamic state, and is afraid of democracy: “Even if they call for democracy they do not really believe in it.”⁸⁰

The party defined itself as “a civil (*madani*) party with an Islamic background (*khalfiyyah*),” bringing together all Egyptian citizens, Muslims and non-Muslims, as the basis of membership is citizenship (*muwatanah*). Citizenship is the basis of relations among the Egyptians, and no discrimination should be allowed, be it because of religion, sex, color or race. The phrase “Islamic background” refers to Islam as the religion of the Muslims and the culture (*hadharah*) that has brought together Muslims and non-Muslims.⁸¹

It should be noted that the Islamic identity of the party is given several versions. While in its mission statement al-Wasat is said to have an Islamic “background,”⁸² in another formal document it refers to itself as a civil party with an Islamic “source of authority” (*marja'iyyah*),⁸³ and in an English language interview given to an American institution it is “a civil party with an Islamic reference point.”⁸⁴

Several founding members of the party were Copts, which, al-Wasat argued, proved its commitment to the principle of citizenship (*muwatanah*) and that it is not a religious party despite the fact that several founding members were former MB activists.

The party says that it follows the peaceful democratic method and accepts intellectual and political pluralism, participation (*musharakah*), dialogue, and coexistence among all views and ideas. It seeks to create a civil state, based on the people's rule, since the people are the source of all authority. The rulers in that state will be lay people, ruling in accordance with civil law, not religious scholars or clerics. Al-Wasat affirms the right to form political parties and civil society institutions and endorses full equality between women and men. The criterion for eligibility to public positions like judges or the head of state is competence and capability, not the person's sex.⁸⁵ For al-Wasat, accepting the right of Copts to be eligible for the highest posts is critical having made the inclusion of Copts in the party a major element distinguishing it from the MB, a distinction that it believes justifies its being given recognition as a new party.

Al-Wasat criticizes the concept, advanced by various Islamist movements, of setting up an Islamic state or a caliphate. It argues that the principles of Islam, as they are stated in the Koran and in the authentic Traditions of the Prophet, contain no definition or details of the form of the system of government or the form of the state whose model should be adopted. What those principles do contain are the

values that should govern the state, like justice, *shura*, and equality. Al-Wasat therefore rejects the model of the religious state ruled by religious scholars or clerics, or a state based on membership in a religion, and supports the modern civil state.⁸⁶

But if al-Wasat does not envision a state based on religion, what is the significance of its being a party with an Islamic background (or source of authority, or reference point)? The significance is that al-Wasat describes its main objective as the implementation of sharia. According to the second clause of the Egyptian constitution, sharia is the principal source of legislation, yet that clause has not been implemented. The idea is to implement sharia through legal interpretations (*ijtihadat*) that will advance society, not paralyze it, and will assure a more prosperous and honorable life for Egyptians.⁸⁷

Ten years after its creation, the party is still engaged in a legal struggle over its legitimacy, which actually touches upon its identity. The government justifies its repeated refusals to recognize al-Wasat by arguing that it is not distinguishable from existing parties, while the MB argues that the party's ideology is not different from its own and that it was formed for organizational or personal reasons, not ideological. According to al-Wasat, the government has fought its legal appeals by, among other means, pressuring Coptic founding members of the party to withdraw,⁹⁰ which would substantiate the government's argument that it is a religious party, forbidden under the constitution. A ruling on the party's latest appeal was to be given on September 16, 2006.

The Syrian Muslim Brotherhood

HISTORICAL OUTLINE

The Syrian MB movement went through three distinct historical phases:

1. From its foundation in 1945 to the Ba'ath takeover in 1963 it was a reformist social and political movement, which sought to preserve the Islamic character of Syria and bring about the application of sharia through peaceful means—*dawa* and political work within the existing political system, which meant participation in elections, parliaments, and governments.

2. After 1963 it gradually developed into a revolutionary organization seeking to overturn the Ba'ath regime and set up an Islamic state through armed struggle, which eventually culminated in its total defeat at the hands of the regime in 1982.

3. Strictly outlawed since then in Syria, and with its leadership in exile in Western Europe, the Movement has been transforming itself into a non-violent Sunni reform movement, claiming to lead the Syrian opposition to the Asad regime, and committing itself to bring about change and establish a democratic Muslim state through democratic means.

Those dramatic shifts in the Movement's orientation and strategy were to a large extent the result of social, geographical, and generational struggles for its leadership. Primarily they reflected the historical tensions between the two major factions within the Move-

ment. The Damascus branch of the MB, more middle class, conservative, and politically moderate, which by and large followed Hasan al-Banna's concept of *dawa* and sought an accommodation with the powers that be, held the leadership of the Movement until the 1970s. Its leadership had traditionally been challenged by the northern faction of the MB, with its strongholds in the cities of Hamah and Aleppo, traditionally more zealous (Hamah had been one of the active centers of the Syrian national struggle against French mandatory rule, and it was the stage of the first Islamist armed challenge to the Ba'ath regime, in 1964).⁸⁸ The northern branch produced in the 1960s and 1970s a young generation of militant activists, deeply influenced by the radical ideas of Sayyid Qutb and by the Iranian Revolution. This young generation took over the leadership of the Movement in 1972 and led it into a full-blown jihad against the Ba'ath regime (1976-1982).⁸⁹ The effective elimination of the MB as an organized force in Syria following its defeat, and the fact that many of its leaders and activists have been forced to live in exile ever since, have had a moderating influence on it.

Under the leadership of Controller General 'Ali Sadr al-Din al-Bayanuni, who was elected to office in 1996 and reelected twice since then (and who originates from Aleppo), the Movement has initially followed a strategy seeking to create the conditions that would enable its exiled leaders and activists to return to Syria and engage in legal activity there. The strategy involved indirect contacts with the regime, which led to the release from jail of

several hundred MB members by Bashar Asad shortly after assuming power, in the context of the political openness he initiated. This openness stopped when Bashar ended the “Damascus Spring.” Since the Syrian regime’s relations with the West worsened, and the notion of regime change in Syria started being considered in the West in 2004, the MB has striven to convince both the home audience and Western governments that it is a worthy substitute for the Ba’athi regime.

The Movement has therefore sought to distance itself from its violent past and to depict itself both inside Syria and in the West as a political force supporting liberal democracy and political and ideological pluralism, capable of leading Syria as a stable democracy once the present regime is gone. It set out to prove that it was fully committed to democracy; that it was accepted by and could cooperate with the major ethnic and religious communities and political factions in Syria; that the end of the Ba’ath regime would not spell anarchy in Syria; and that the MB’s participation in change or leadership of the country would not turn Syria into an Islamic state at war with Israel.

The Objectives

The Syrian MB’s stated objectives consist of two layers. One is basically the classic MB doctrine as bequeathed by Hasan al-Banna. The other reflects the current circumstances, aspirations, and constraints of the Movement and is thoroughly “new Ikhwani.” The older layer finds expression in the Movement’s official statement of its identity, principles, goals and means, as set out in documents permanently posted on its official website. That statement is quite similar to that of the Egyptian MB, and like the Egyptian version it reflects the classical doctrine of Hasan al-Banna with a few modern adjustments. (For example, like the

“new Ikhwani” or “second generation” Egyptian MB school, the Syrian movement identifies itself not as “*the* Muslim community” but as “*a* group of Muslims” (*jama’ah min al-Muslimin*), calling for the rule of divine law (*tabkim shar’ allah*) and for Islamic life according to the Koran and the Sunnah.) Following Hasan al-Banna’s concept of the MB, the Syrian MB describes itself as a reform group, a fundamentalist missionary organization (*dawa salafiyah*), a Sufi truth, a political body, an athletic club, a scientific and cultural association, an economic company, and a social idea.⁹⁰

The movement’s stated goals, then, are those formulated by al-Banna and quoted from him: Formation of the ideal Muslim person, leading to the formation of the ideal Muslim home, which in turn will bring about the formation of an ideal Muslim society. That will lead to the selection of the Muslim government, which will apply sharia and bring about the emergence of the “nucleus Islamic state,” which in turn will lead the Islamic states, assemble the scattered Muslims, retrieve for Islam its stolen lands, and lead to the eventual formation of one global Islamic state or the United Islamic States.⁹¹

The way to the Islamic government is “bottom up.” As al-Banna said, the MB should not try to reach power before society has been Islamized through education. When the people are sufficiently Islamized, they will choose an Islamic government out of their own conviction.⁹²

The Vision of the Future Syrian State

With its leadership exiled in Western Europe, the Syrian MB, perhaps more than many of its fellow movements in the Arab world, felt the need to accommodate its outlook to the major developments that have affected Islamism and Syria since the beginning of the

present decade, in particular the events of September 11 and their aftermath—the Western efforts to democratize the Middle East, the U.S. occupation of Iraq, and the regional realignment that occupation has generated. That need to address recent events produced a comprehensive statement of the Syrian MB’s vision of the Islamic state and of its strategy for creating it, in the form of the Cultural Project for Syria of the Future (*al-Mashru’ al-Hadhari li-Surya al-Mustaqbal*), published in December 2004. The ideal state the Project envisions is Syria, to which it refers as “the Arab country of Syria” (*al-Qutr al-‘Arabi al-Suri*), indicating the MB’s commitment to the Syrian state rather than to a wider Islamic entity as its frame of reference (similar to the Egyptian “second generation” focus on Egypt). The timing of the Project’s publication was interpreted as a message that the MB chose to work on political reform from inside Syria rather than cooperate with foreign forces to bring about regime change.⁹³

The document states that the Syrian MB Movement is in a stage of renewal, which is achieved by reexamination of the past, observation of the present, and attempting to look into the future. The MB aspires to be the Islamic movement of the middle way (*al-wasat*), to implement sharia on the basis of the religion’s fundamental principles (*usul al-din*), on the one hand, and to take advantage of human experience, on the other, and the text indeed reflects the influence of Shaykh Yusuf al-Qaradhawi, the leading proponent of wasatiyyah or the middle way. The Project’s point of departure is a belief in a renewed Islam, whose sacred texts and fundamental principles interact with the reality of actual life, in order to actualize the interests of the nation in the framework of the purposes (*maqasid*) of sharia.

The source of the Project, according to the document, is sharia in its two sources, the Quran and the authentic traditions (Sunnah) of the Prophet Muhammad. The Project rereads the *shar’i* texts in

order to reestablish the harmony between the *shar’i* vision and the reality of Syria as an Arab country. It regards Islam as a comprehensive or total religion whose legislation covers all aspects of life, including the spiritual, cultural, economic, and political. In applying Islam to present reality it takes into account the branches of jurisprudence that deal with priorities (*fiqh al-awlawiyyat*) and with the balance between advantages and disadvantages (*fiqh al-muwazanat*). It distinguishes between the absolute and constant Islamic texts in the Koran and Sunnah, which are sacred, and the old and new interpretative judgments (*ijtihadat*) of Muslims, which are subject to revision and debate and are not sacred.

Allah made rule (*al-hukm*) strictly His own, but the divine rules (*al-ahkam al-rabbaniyyah*) take the form of concise general principles, through which the Muslims can make interpretive judgments (*ijtihad*). Man in Islam is the agent of change, because it is Allah’s will that man be a successor on earth (*mustakhlaf*). The Koran allows for freedom of belief, because the Koran says: “Had your God wished so, every one on earth would have become a believer;” and if Islam allows for freedom of belief, the more so regarding all other freedoms. That Islam also accepts, and encourages, pluralism (*ta’addudiyyah*), is evident from these pronouncements of Allah: “I created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you know each other,” and “Had your God so wished, he could have made all mankind one nation.”

The principle of consultation (*shura*) is the most important identifying element of Islamic political life, and the electoral parliamentary government founded on the legality of free and fair elections is one of the means to a practical, modern implementation of that principle. The principles of constitutional government are in harmony with the general purposes of sharia—equality, justice, and consultation. The principle of equality in citizenship between Muslims and non-Muslims (*muwatanah*) was established by the Prophet Muhammad, who

gave the Jews human and civil equality in the famous Medina Document.

The state is thus founded on:

- Islam, in its general foundations (*usul*), as its source of authority (*marja'iyah*). “Our Islamic particularity” (*khususiyatuna al-Islamiyyah*) is the supreme source of authority (*marja'iyah*) of the modern state the MB calls for.
- A contractual bond (*ta'aqudiyyah*), based on free will, between ruler and ruled.
- Equal citizenship (*muwatanah*).
- Political pluralism (*ta'addudiyah*) within the legal bounds of the constitution, where the opposition forces and the institutions of civil society play the role of supervisor and controller of the executive authority.
- Alternation of power through free and fair elections.
- Separation of powers and the rule of law.

The Islamic state, according to the Project, is not a religious state or a theocracy. In Islam there is no infallibility after the Prophet Muhammad, and no priestly class; moreover, the source of all political authority (*wilayah*) is the Nation, whose selection of a ruler and its pledge of allegiance (*bay'ah*) to him are the source of his authority. The MB is not seeking to set up a religious state, but a civil state with an “Islamic cultural background” (*dawlah madaniyyah bi-khalfiyah thaqafiyyah Islamiyyah*).⁹⁴ Like the Egyptian MB “second generation” spokesmen, and those of the Egyptian al-Wasat Party, the Syrian MB uses this formula to allay fears that it is seeking a theocratic, clerical Islamist state.

The constitution should assert, among other elements, the Islamic and Arab identity of Syrian soci-

ety: that Islam is the religion of the state, the fundamental source of legislation and its highest source of authority while the people are the source of powers (*masdar al-sulutat*); that the regime is republican, democratic, and based on consultation (*shura*); and that freedom of faith and the freedom to form political parties are guaranteed. (Note: the freedom to form political parties appears to be limited by the stipulation, quoted above, of political pluralism (*ta'addudiyah*) within the legal bounds of the constitution, meaning that parties whose creed is secularist or atheist might not be permitted).

Women, according to the Project, are equal to men in Islamic law—except for a few cases. For women to devote themselves to their home and to raising children does not mean dispensing with half of humanity. Still, there is nothing wrong with women in all walks of life, including as voters and as elected officials, except for the top leadership positions (*fi hudud al-wilayah al-'ammah*).

The Strategy of the Struggle

A major objective of the Syrian MB has been to allay suspicions among other Syrian opposition movements and the non-Sunni-Arab communities in Syria concerning its real intentions (Sunni Arabs constitute less than 70 percent of Syria's population). The movement has asserted that it neither claims to represent the Muslim community nor to be Islam's trustees over people, and that its way to advance its project is by conducting a dialogue with all intellectual, social, political, and religious factions. It declares that it follows a gradual approach (*tadarruj*) in offering the divine way and in implementing it in real life. It expresses its willingness to cooperate with other patriotic movements and parties on the basis of common denominators that include, among others, recognition of religious, ethnic, cultural, intellectual and political pluralism;

rejection of violence as a means for change; and the adoption of the mechanisms of democratic work.

The MB declares that jihad should be launched against external enemies only and not at home, as its own experience has shown. It pledges that its support for political pluralism is not a means to ascend to power and then monopolize it.⁹⁵ It promises that if it loses in the elections to be held by the transitional government (see below), or in subsequent ones, it will leave power.⁹⁶

The MB has reiterated that it does not seek to rule Syria, but to share power. The political situation in Syria is so bad, it says, after the absence of political life for forty years, that the cooperation of all is needed. The coming phase will be a transition period in which all political forces will participate in addressing what that situation has left behind. The MB neither wants nor is it ready to rule Syria alone, even if this is the result of elections. If it wins elections, it will form a broad-based national transition government, because the situation does not allow for rule by a single party or group.⁹⁷ (Here too one can find a resemblance to the views held by “second generation” Egyptian MB thinkers, who maintained that the demise of the present autocratic regime will be followed by a transitional period that will establish democracy and during which power will be shared with liberal and nationalist parties, as a prelude to the Islamists’ being elected to power).

In 2005 the MB shifted from calling for reforming the Assad regime to calling for its replacement through peaceful means, seeking closer cooperation with other opposition groups, and exploring the position of Western governments. That shift, it argued, came because after five years in power it was clear that the regime was not going to respond to the calls for reforms⁹⁸ and was incapable of reforming itself.⁹⁹ Specifically the MB accused the regime of failure to meet any of its demands, which included the abolition of martial law, emergency courts, and in particular Law 49

banning the MB and making membership in it punishable by death; the release of all political prisoners; and allowing exiled activists to return to Syria (about 5,000 MB members are believed to live in exile, and a slightly smaller number is believed to be imprisoned).

Seeking to reduce fears on the part of members of the military, the Ba’ath Party, and the ‘Alawi community regarding an MB campaign of revenge if it were to take over, al-Bayanuni was eager to send the message that the MB does not wish to see what has taken place in Iraq replayed in Syria.¹⁰⁰ “We will put up for forty additional years with the dictatorship rather than see the Iraqi experience repeated in Syria,” he said.¹⁰¹ “The MB will not reciprocate for Law 49 by a ‘Ba’ath eradication law.”¹⁰²

Al-Bayanuni took two approaches in an effort to alleviate ‘Alawi concerns. One was the reassertion that the MB does not seek a religious state, but a civil state with Islam as its source of authority, where the criterion for rights and obligations is citizenship (*muwatanah*), not religious affiliation, and that the MB does not distinguish between Syria’s social groups on a sectarian (*ta’ifi*) basis.¹⁰³ The other approach was an attempt to draw a distinction between the regime on one side and the ‘Alawi community and the Ba’ath Party on the other. The regime, he asserted, was a family one, and ‘Alawis suffered injustice and persecution at its hands. “The ‘Alawis are our brothers and partners in the homeland,” they suffered injustice like us, some of them opposed the regime, some were persecuted by it, and they will take part in the political change.¹⁰⁴ Al-Bayanuni did not go as far as referring to the ‘Alawis as Muslims, but that could be seen as unnecessary if the criterion for rights and duties is citizenship and not religion.

In October 2005 the MB and other opposition forces signed the Damascus Declaration, which called for the introduction of a liberal democratic system of government. In March 2006 it formed a united opposition block (The National Salvation Front) with former Syrian Vice President ‘Abd al-

Halim Khaddam, who had defected some time earlier. The three key political factions in Syria were present in the Front—the Islamists, through the MB; the Ba’ath, through Khaddam; and the Left. The Front also had a Kurdish presence. The alliance with Khaddam, a central figure in the regime that had crushed the MB, met with some internal opposition in the Movement, but was justified by the argument that, as the Iraqi case has demonstrated, one cannot change the situation in Syria without the support of people from within the regime, the Ba’ath party, and the ‘Alawi community; the MB had called upon people from those entities to join it, and Khaddam had responded to their call.¹⁰⁵

The formation of the Front was intended, *inter alia*, to demonstrate that the removal or collapse of the Assad regime would not have to lead to an Iraqi-style anarchy, and that Syria’s various communities and political factions can cooperate and agree on the democratic change that will follow the present regime’s departure. Indeed, the Front moved to set up a transitional government, which would be ready to assume power once the Ba’ath regime collapses, in order to prevent anarchy. The transitional government would then govern for six months, during which time it would abrogate the present constitution and the Emergency Law and arrange for new elections.¹⁰⁶ The formation of the Front was in line with the “new Ikhwani” strategy of forming alliances (*tahalufat*) even with an ideological adversary if that was politically required, as practiced by Hasan al-Turabi in Sudan and attempted by “second generation” activists in the Egyptian MB.

The peaceful means for change that the MB supports include civil resistance (*muqawamah madaniyyah*), sit-ins, and demonstrations. Indeed, the main priority of the National Salvation Front, according to MB circles, is to prepare the conditions that will lead to a state of civil resistance, which will contribute to bringing about peaceful, democratic change in Syria. Al-Bayanuni has not excluded, however, the possibility of change through a military

group taking power for a transitional period.¹⁰⁷ Assigning the military a potential role in the political change was obviously intended to assure the Syrian officer corps that the MB bore no grudge against them, and to open the way to co-opting them.

Dilemmas of Regional Politics

The Syrian MB has found itself in an awkward position being an MB movement striving to remove the Syrian Ba’ath regime which, as a key actor in the “resistance axis.” Following the Hizbullah-Israeli war of summer 2006, the emergence of the Syria-Iran-Hizbullah-Hamas axis and the support given by the MB movements in Lebanon, Egypt, and Jordan to Hizbullah, and indirectly to Syria, the Syrian MB found itself quite isolated in the Islamist world. Al-Bayanuni admitted (August 10, 2006) that the events in Lebanon froze the activities of the opposition to the Syrian regime.¹⁰⁸ Al-Bayanuni commended the Syrian regime for providing a safe haven for the Hamas leadership, which, he stressed, was a special case. At the same time he lashed out at Hizbullah for making statements in support of the Assad regime and identifying Syria with that regime.¹⁰⁹

Forming positions regarding Israel, Palestine, and occupied Arab territories also posed dilemmas for the Syrian MB. The general MB doctrine holds that the return of occupied Palestine to Islam, by the elimination of Israel, is the key to Islam’s revival and therefore the main priority of Islamist struggle. Yet the prospect that Syria might launch a new war against Israel once the MB takes power might scare away Western governments that could otherwise consider the MB as a potential substitute for the Assad regime. The Cultural Project for Syria of the Future indeed described Palestine as the central problem for the Arab and Muslim worlds, and as the

pivot around which most of the nation's critical issues revolve. The Movement insists, therefore, that the Palestinian resistance be supported, and that all the options for the liberation of the Golan and of all the occupied territories be left open—a euphemism for calling for the liberation of the Golan by force rather than by negotiations. Al-Bayanuni spelt it out in 2002 (when the second Palestinian Intifada was at its height), calling upon the Syrian government to open the Golan front to resistance to the Israeli occupation, stressing that resistance and not peace settlement was the preferable option for dealing with the enemy.¹¹³ Yet since 2004 al-Bayanuni has implied that the MB would be willing, if it reached power, to hold peace talks with Israel if those would lead to Israel's withdrawal from the occupied territories and to the Palestinians' receiving their rights.¹¹¹

After the 2006 war the Movement's *Shura* Council issued a statement (September 1, 2006) in which it supported the right of the Palestinians to liberate their stolen land, establish their independent state,

and return to their homes, as well as their “national democratic choice” (namely the Hamas government) and their right to a free and respectable life (a mild condemnation of the Western sanctions on the Hamas government). It called for an end to the occupation of Iraq and for the national unity and territorial integrity of that country. It then expressed support for Iran's right to acquire the means for scientific power and technological development (namely Iran's nuclear project), but also its concern over Iranian policies in Iraq, in Lebanon, and in Syria itself, and a deep worry over Iranian policies leading Syria in the Iranian-Syrian axis away from its Arab roots, which the MB stresses is the real foundation of Syria's strategic existence.¹¹²

Al-Bayanuni continued attacking Iran, arguing that its regional role was negative and its regional policy sectarian; accusing Iran of expending huge amounts of money on its campaign to spread Shi'ism in Syria; and urging her to stop intervening in internal Arab affairs.¹¹³

The Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood and Islamic Action Front

HISTORICAL OUTLINE

Since its creation in 1945, the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood, along with its political arm the Islamic Action Front (IAF) founded in 1992, has pursued two distinct though related agendas. One has been the advancement of the general objectives of the Muslim Brotherhood movement as described above.¹¹⁴ The other agenda has been the Palestinian cause, a dominant national concern in Jordan much more than in any other Arab country.

One can point to two phases in the Jordanian movement's history. During the first phase, a general similarity in their strategic orientations allowed the Movement to pursue a symbiotic alliance with the Jordanian state, which enabled it to construct the immense network of charitable institutions, services, and enterprises that it has been using to spread its *dawa* and build its political power. That alliance ended in the 1980s due to Arab socialism and nationalism's being replaced by Islamism as the main ideological challenge to the monarchy, and due as well to the growing influence of the Palestinian element, demographically and ideologically, in the MB movement. The previous cooperation gave place to an uneasy coexistence that has gradually developed into an open political conflict and systematic efforts on the regime's part to contain and reduce the MB's power and influence. The MB's radicalization and overzealous pushing of its Palestinian agenda raise the question of to what extent it remained a Jordanian movement.

The Jordanian MB was originally set up with the blessing of King 'Abdullah I as a charitable society and in 1953 became a "general and comprehensive Islamic committee" allowed to spread its call and be politically active. In this first phase it provided the Hashemite regime with ideological and political support, mainly against the onslaught of the Nasserist and other radical secular Arab ideologies in the 1950s and 1960s, but also against radical Islamist organizations like Hizb al-Tahrir (The Islamic Liberation Party).¹¹⁵ Its support of the regime in its struggle against the insurgency of the Palestinian organizations in 1970–71 was of extreme importance for the regime, which consequently sought to make the MB a political and ideological umbrella for the Kingdom's Palestinian inhabitants following the expulsion of the PLO. MB leaders then saw no problem in participating in government, preferably as ministers of education, justice, and *awqaf* or religious affairs, which best suited the MB's *dawa* objectives. In exchange the MB was permitted to operate as a political organization (the only one since the prohibition of political parties in 1957) and given exceptional latitude for action, which allowed it to gain influence and control over government ministries, educational and religious institutions, mosques, economic establishments, medical and social welfare services, trade unions, and the media—all of which helped it conduct its missionary work and deeply penetrate Jordanian society.

In the 1980s, when Islamism replaced leftist and secular movements as the main ideological challenge to the Hashemite monarchy, the MB's agenda started diverging from the regime's policies. Even then the regime sought to use the MB to contain more radical Islamist groups. But the MB itself became radicalized. Following the rise of takfiri and jihadi Islamist factions in the Sunni Arab world, and the Iranian Revolution, the radical, takfiri faction in the Movement became stronger, and its Palestinian component became ever more accentuated.

The gradual political liberalization and relatively open parliamentary elections of 1989 enabled the Jordanian MB to exploit its long-time status as the only legal political organization, as well as its control over numerous civil society institutions and associations, to win about 40 percent of the seats. That degree of success led the regime to issue a new Political Parties Law, which was designed to reduce the MB's electoral power, and did result in reducing its gains in the 1993 elections to 25 percent of the seats, further deepening the rift between the MB and the regime. Shortly afterwards, the signing of the Jordanian-Israeli Peace Treaty in 1994 put the MB firmly in the opposition camp.

It was in the context of these developments that the Jordanian MB decided in 1992 to set up a political party, the IAF (the party claimed that it was not an extension of the MB). One purpose of its creation was to protect the MB and ensure the continuity of its *dawa* and social activities in case the growing tensions with the regime led to measures against its political activities. Another was to acquire a new circle of followers by inducing all the other Islamic groups and independent Islamists in Jordan to join ranks under the umbrella of this new front, presumably separate from the MB. Finally, the new Political Parties Law, which created a multi-party scenario and exposed the MB, hitherto the only legal political organization, to competition with other parties and movements, sharpened the tension between the MB's role as the embodiment

of the universal call to Islam and its role as a political party, competing against those very parties which it is supposed to call to Islam.¹¹⁶

The declared objectives of the IAF are to restore Islamic life and apply sharia in all fields; to prepare the nation for jihad against the Zionist and imperialist enemies, help the Palestinian cause and seek the liberation of Palestine; to work for national unity and liberty and confront imperialist and foreign influence; to establish a system based on democracy and *shura*; and to attend to public welfare.¹¹⁷

The new Political Parties Law and the Jordanian-Israeli Peace Treaty generated an internal controversy over strategy in the MB and in the IAF. The radical faction was opposed to participation in elections under the new law, called for withdrawal from parliament and boycotting of parliamentary activity in protest over the peace treaty, and reiterated its principled rejection of MB participation in the Jordanian government, arguing that the latter was non-Islamic (*jahili*) and therefore illegitimate. In actuality the MB did participate in the 1993 elections and did not withdraw from parliament,¹¹⁸ but boycotted the 1997 elections. The last government in which it took part was the short-lived government of Mudhar Badran (January–June 1991).

The Struggle over Identity and Orientation

In recent years the radical, takfiri faction, most of whose leaders are Palestinians, has been predominant in the MB, and has used its influence over its media and educational apparatus to advance its basically Qutbi position that the Arab regimes are *jahili*, and that the nation state and common citizenship (*muwatanah*) are illegitimate inventions of foreigners.¹¹⁹ Members of this faction stopped short of advocating armed resistance to the jahili regime, and found no problem in participating

in party politics and being elected to parliament. Yet they advocated and pursued a strategy of confronting the regime politically and ideologically, and led the opposition to Jordan's relations with the US and Israel.

In opposition to that strategy stood a moderate, pro-Jordanian faction, which generally favored the strategy of pursuing the MB's objectives by coexistence with the regime and possibly participating in government. It has rejected the confrontational approach, arguing that unlike the situation in countries like Egypt or Algeria, in Jordan the MB enjoyed relative freedom, and should take advantage of the opportunity to use the legislative and executive branches of government to advance its objectives. (In May 2008, the MB elected Sheikh Humam Sa'id, of a Palestinian origin and leader of the radical faction, as Controller General, replacing Salim al-Fallahat who represented the moderate, pro-Jordanian faction)

The predominance of the radicals led to defections from the Movement, like that of a prominent veteran activist who had served from 1962 to 1988 as its Secretary General and left in 2004 accusing it of adopting Taliban and Qaeda-like positions.¹²⁰ Several moderates left the MB in 2001 in order to establish a new party, named the Jordanian Islamic Center Party (*Hizb al-Wasat al-Islami al-Urdunni*), the term "center" referring, as in the case of the Egyptian Center Party, to its moderate approach to Islam. The formation of this new party was probably encouraged by the government, which sought to revive the patriotic East Jordanian dimension of the MB (to the extent that the new party was characterized by some as representing the Muslim Brothers of al-Salt, the past capital of the Principality of East Jordan).¹²¹ It defined itself as a "Jordanian political party whose source of authority (*marja'iyyah*) is Islamic" and claimed that in principle it was neither in opposition to the government nor in support of it. The party held that conducting

peace negotiations with Israel was not objectionable from the *shar'i* point of view, as Islamic history has ample precedents for it.¹²² In the 2003 elections it won two parliamentary seats. Yet by 2004 many senior members, including founding ones, left the party.

It was with the help of the radical faction in the Jordanian MB that Hamas has been able to increase its influence in the Jordanian movement since the mid-1990s. With its external leadership, the Political Bureau, comfortably headquartered in Amman, Hamas used Jordan as its main, rear base for support of its operations in the Palestinian territories and Israel. In its clandestine activities, moreover, such as smuggling weapons from Jordan to the territories, it mobilized and employed Palestinian members of the MB, reportedly without the knowledge of the MB leaders. In 1999 the Controller General at that time, 'Abd al-Majid al-Dhunaybat, who represented the pro-Jordanian faction in the MB, was said to have complained in writing to the Jordanian prime minister and to the International Organization of the Muslim Brotherhood about Hamas' unruly conduct and financial and security irregularities in its activities.¹²³ The Jordanian government then closed Hamas' headquarters in Amman and expelled its leaders, including Khalid Mash'al.

That, however, did not end Hamas' influence on the Jordanian MB and IAF. Thus the IAF candidate list for the 2003 legislative elections reportedly contained candidates who were forced on the party by Hamas (fifteen out the seventeen IAF MPs are Palestinians).¹²⁴ In March 2006 the *Shura* Council of the IAF elected a Hamas member, Zaki Sa'ad Bani Irshid (a Jordanian), as the new IAF Secretary General. Bani Irshid was in the 1990s the chief accountant of Hamas in Jordan, and was arrested for arms smuggling. His candidacy was opposed by the new MB Controller General Salim al-Fallahat, but to no avail. Al-Fallahat himself was reportedly elected due to pressures exerted by Khalid Mash'al on the MB to remove 'Abd al-Majid Dhunaybat,

allegedly responsible for Mash'al's expulsion from Jordan.¹²⁵

The Challenge to the Jordanian Regime and to Its Alliance with the West

Hamas' January 2006 victory in the Palestinian legislative elections, which followed the achievements of the Egyptian MB in the November–December 2005 legislative elections, imbued the Jordanian MB and IAF with new confidence that election victory was theirs to have. This new sense of empowerment led their activists to call openly for an end to the pervasive corruption of the state (a main theme in Hamas' successful electoral campaign) and for the alternation of government in a way that would reflect the real balance of electoral power. The leader of the IAF parliamentary block, 'Azzam Hunaydi, attracted much public attention when he declared, immediately after Hamas' victory, that the Jordanian Islamic movement was mature enough to take over government responsibilities. IAF Secretary General Bani Irshid made no bones about saying that the Jordanian government had never been elected and had no mandate from the people to rule, whereas the MB does represent the people and is ready to take control of executive power in the country.¹²⁶

As a result of the predominance of the takfiri and Hamasi factions in the MB and IAF, these two bodies opposed the regime on the most critical strategic issues. At the heart of the conflict was the fact that while the regime considered its alliance with the US and its relations with Israel as strategic assets, the MB regarded anyone who sided with what it called "the American-Zionist Project," the regime included, as its adversary.

Thus, a religious legal edict (*fatwa shar'iyyah*) issued by a conference of sharia scholars (*ulama*)

held by the IAF in November 2002 declared that the new "Crusader-Jewish assault" mounted by the U.S. against the Muslim world in the wake of 9/11 was more dangerous than all the previous ones, seeking as it did to stop Islamic resurgence and eradicate the Islamic movements; replace the Islamic way of life with the Western version and Islamic conduct with depravity; corrupt Muslim women and Muslim youth; prevent the creation of an Islamic state and the unification of the Muslim world; and enable the Jews to complete their schemes by destroying the al-Aqsa Mosque and building the Temple in its place. The fatwa urged the ulama to take a stand against the policies of the U.S. and its allies in the Muslim countries and to mobilize the Muslim Nation against those policies through an economic boycott of the U.S., prohibition of providing any assistance to U.S. forces in their war against Iraq or any other Muslim country, and a call for jihad in Palestine.¹²⁷

While the Jordanian government supported the political process in Iraq, cooperated with the nascent Iraqi government, and provided the U.S. with facilities, the MB has supported the Iraqi insurgency and designated the resistance to the American occupation as an individual religious duty (*fardh 'ayn*) of every Muslim. The MB rejected as illegitimate all the state structures and institutions put in place by the coalition forces (in stark contradiction, by the way, with the position of the Iraqi MB, al-Hizb al-Islami). Fatwas issued by the IAF's Central Committee of Sharia Scholars on April 17, 2004,¹²⁸ and on August 14, 2004,¹²⁹ prohibited allegiance to the American administration and instructed that all types of cooperation with it be stopped; declared that joining the occupation forces in Iraq or the military and security forces operating under the occupation amounted to a betrayal of Allah, of the Prophet, and of the Muslim community; and qualified as "great sins" (*kaba'ir*) any assistance provided to those forces. In a direct attack on Jordan's King and government, the August 14, 2004, fatwa stated that the ruler who

allies himself with the enemies of his religion and his nation, and who gives them military, material, or political support, becomes one of them.

On the Palestinian issue, while the Jordanian government supported the Palestinian Authority under President Mahmud ‘Abbas and his al-Fatah movement, the MB stood squarely behind Hamas, as a movement and as a government, and its objectives, policies, and tactics. Even the moderate Controller General al-Fallahat stated that “the points of departure of Hamas and the MB are one and the same.”¹³⁰ In trade unions controlled by the MB, such as the Engineers Union, normal union activities were replaced by a variety of actions against the normalization of Jordan’s relations with Israel, and a portion of the annual membership fees was transmitted to Hamas.¹³¹ A fatwa issued by the IAF’s Committee of Sharia Scholars ruled that Jordan’s relations with Israel were in contradiction with sharia and had to be cut off, and that maintaining those relations amounted to betrayal of Allah, of His Prophet, and of the faithful—a direct attack on the King and his government.¹³²

The Jordanian regime considered Iran’s expansionist and nuclear ambitions and the rise of the Shi’a as major threats to regional stability, and regarded Syria as a source of threats to Jordan’s national security. The Jordanian MB, for its part, regarded Iran as an allied Islamist project targeted by the West, and Syria as an Arab state targeted by the US as well, hence an ally, despite the Syrian regime’s persecution of Syria’s MB. The Jordanian MB therefore fully aligned itself with the Iran-Hizbullah-Syria axis. The IAF kept close contact with the Syrian regime and helped it establish contacts with Islamic and Arab organizations that beforehand had refused such contacts.¹³³ The IAF was critical of the Syrian MB’s alliance with former Syrian Vice President Khaddam, and condemned UN Security Council Resolution 1680 of May 17, 2006, which urged Syria to recognize Lebanon’s sovereignty by agreeing to demarcate its border

with Lebanon and exchange diplomatic missions, describing the resolution as provocative and biased and as an interference in Syria’s internal affairs.¹³⁴

Facing the Regime’s Counterattack

The regime’s efforts to weaken the Jordanian MB’s relations with Syria and Hamas’ influence on the MB and in Jordan in general, were accelerated in April 2006 with the dramatic disclosure of the smuggling by Hamas of weapons from Syria to be used in terrorist operations in Jordan, and of its attempts to recruit Jordanians to be sent for terrorist training in Syria and Iran. Still, during the Hizbullah-Israeli conflict of July–August 2006, the MB mobilized thousands of its followers in demonstrations in support of Hizbullah, where the latter’s flags and Hasan Nasrallah’s portraits were hoisted, and the IAF’s Committee of Sharia Scholars issued a fatwa (July 30, 2006) supporting Hizbullah in its war with Israel and condemning the Saudi anti-Hizbullah fatwas.¹³⁵

The war on terror was seen by the Jordanian regime as a global struggle, in which Jordan played a central part. By contrast, the MB viewed it as a war on Islam and on the Islamists, and its public position on terrorist attacks was ambiguous.¹³⁶ This issue exploded when four IAF parliament members, who are also leading Palestinian activists of the radical faction in the MB, paid a visit of condolence to the family of Abu Mus’ab al-Zarqawi, and one of them, Muhammad Abu Faris, hailed al-Zarqawi as a holy warrior (*mujahid*) and a martyr (*shahid*). Abu Faris is considered an authoritative *shar’i* scholar, and his view of al-Zarqawi was given the status of a fatwa in the eyes of many in Jordan.

Al-Zarqawi was “public enemy number one” in Jordan, especially since the terrorist attacks on three Amman hotels in December 2005, for which he

took responsibility. Referring to him as a *mujahid* and a *shahid* meant that the operations for which he was responsible were a legitimate jihad, a holy war against the infidel or apostate enemies of Islam. Abu Faris was implying, then, that Jordanian society was *jahili*. This was a new stage in the radicalization of the MB: Abu Faris and the Qutbi trend had hitherto considered the Jordanian government, and not Jordanian society at large, as *jahili*.

Abu Faris, who had competed against Salim al-Fallahat for the position of Controller General, might have been making that move in order to embarrass and weaken al-Fallahat: had the Controller General condemned the remarks, he would have lost support among the radical grassroots of the Movement; had he not, that would have proven the ideological domination of the radicals in the MB. As it turned out, al-Fallahat vacillated, and after growing public pressure on the MB to state its position he declared that he made a distinction between al-Zarqawi's jihad against the foreign occupation of Iraq, which he commended, and al-Zarqawi's takfiri positions and the killing of civilian Jordanians, which he condemned. But he never condemned Abu Faris, saying only that the latter's "*shar'i* statements" reflected his own personal viewpoint and were the official position of neither the MB nor the IAF.¹³⁷

A political gathering organized by the IAF issued a statement accusing the Jordanian government of, among other things, subjugating Jordan's national interests to those of its "American masters," taking a stand against the Palestinian resistance, and turning itself into a "front trench of the US' war on terror." Controller General al-Fallahat moved to publicly disavow that statement,¹³⁸ but the regime exploited that event, and the general public's displeasure with the MB's endorsement of al-Zarqawi, to increase its pressure on the radical faction in the MB. Abu Faris and another MP were stripped of their parliamentary immunity and sentenced to prison (they were pardoned by the King in September 2006). Hinting at the possible de-legalization of the

IAF, the King made it known that he would not allow those who condone terrorism and *takfir* to participate in shaping Jordan's future. The possibility of dissolving the MB itself was also raised by government circles.¹³⁹ The regime also targeted one of the chief sources of power of the radical faction: following corruption charges, on July 10, 2006, it dismissed the board of directors of the main arm of the MB's social and charitable operations, the Islamic Center Association (*Jam'iyyat al-Markaz al-Islami*), whose capital was estimated at around \$1.4 billion, and put it under governmental administration until its case was cleared in court. That board of directors had been controlled by the radical faction for years.¹⁴⁰

The regime also used new legislation to curtail the MB's influence. The new Law for the Prevention of Terror (passed by parliament on August 27, 2006) authorized the State Security Court public prosecutor to arrest suspects, operate surveillance on their residences, monitor their contacts, and prevent them from traveling. IAF members claimed that the new law was more restrictive of civil rights than the martial laws imposed in the past.¹⁴¹ The amended Law on Preaching, Guidance, Sermons, and Teaching in Mosques (approved by parliament on September 3, 2006) was designed to deny the MB use of mosques to propagate their message, by giving the state the authority to approve mosque preachers. The Law on Deliverance of Legal Opinion (*Qanun al-Ifta'*, approved by parliament on September 5, 2006) was intended to restrict the delivery of fatwas by clerics not authorized by the state, and made Jordan probably the first Muslim state to move legally to regulate the issuing of fatwas.

The confrontational strategy of the radical faction, which pushed the MB to an open conflict with a regime that felt deeply threatened by a host of adverse regional actors and considered the MB to be aligned with some of them, eventually led to an electoral debacle in the November 2007 legislative elections, when the IAF managed to conquer only seven out of the seventeen seats it had previously held.

The Palestinian Islamic Resistance Movement— Hamas

INTRODUCTION

As Hamas was the first MB organization to reach power through parliamentary elections, its January 2006 election victory was a source of pride for its fellow organizations throughout the Arab world. After the failure of the Islamists in Sudan and Algeria, the fortunes of this new experiment of an Islamist movement in power were of crucial importance for Islamists everywhere.

Hamas' case is unique in many ways, though. First, its electoral victory was achieved not only under foreign occupation, but to a large extent because of it and thanks to the particular political setup of the Palestinian Authority. Second, unlike its parallel organizations in Egypt, Jordan, or other Arab states, Hamas obviously is both a *dawa* movement—seeking to Islamize the Palestinian society through education and social work and to bring about the creation of an Islamic state—and at the same time a “resistance” movement. These two identities could coexist easily until Hamas moved into electoral politics, but the contradiction inherent in being simultaneously a government, responsible for the wellbeing of its population, and an armed revolutionary movement, became increasingly hard to reconcile.

Finally, Hamas' decision-making is heavily encumbered by additional factors that do not characterize its fellow organizations in other Arab countries. Its leadership is split between the external group, based mostly in Syria and Lebanon, and the local group (who in turn is split between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank), each with their own dis-

tinctive constituencies, perspectives, and strategic outlook. The strong influence exercised on Hamas by regional actors— Iran, Syria, Qatar, Saudi Arabia—and its involvement in their regional politics also set Hamas apart from other MB organizations.

The Evolution of Hamas' Strategies

From its foundation in 1946 and until 1987, the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood movement held that the military struggle against Zionism and Israel, advocated and practiced by other Palestinian groups, was second priority. The first priority was Islamization of society: Israel's existence, in the Movement's view, was a symptom of the weakness of the Muslim world resulting from its abandonment of Islam. Only once Islam is revived, and a unified Islamic state created, would it be possible to defeat Israel. Beginning in the 1970s, the Palestinian MB constructed a network of social, educational, and medical institutions around its mosques, providing services to the population and forming a parallel social services system, meant to be independent of both the Israeli authorities and the PLO and to serve as a nucleus for the future Islamic state. This network was also used to combat rival ideological factions, the secular nationalists and leftists.

The decision to create The Islamic Resistance

Movement (*Harakat al-Muqawamah al-Islamiyyah*, or Hamas) in late December 1987 was actually forced upon the Movement by unfolding events. The Intifada erupted in Gaza spontaneously, and for over a week had no leadership, while MB rank and file participating in it pressured the Movement to take charge of the uprising. Meanwhile, the rising star of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad organization, which was inspired by the Egyptian jihadists and the Iranian revolution, had no time for the MB's long-term project of Islamizing society, while its anti-Israeli operations gained it popular support and put the MB on the defensive. Finally, there was the fear that the PLO could take the leadership of the Intifada and defeat the MB in the struggle for control of the Palestinian cause. Hamas was set up as an armed resistance organization separate from the MB's *dawa* and social activities, in order to protect the latter from Israeli retaliations. With Hamas' growing importance in the Intifada, however, Hamas gradually became the core of the Movement, and the older structure dealing with *dawa* and social work became subservient to it. The publication of Hamas' Charter in August 1988 formalized its ideological transformation.¹⁴²

Hamas' ideological point of departure is the conflict between the Muslim world and the West, the crisis of Islam caused by the onslaught of the West, and Zionism as the latest wave of that onslaught. The conflict with Israel is Islamic and not national (Arab or Palestinian). The liberation of Palestine by the elimination of Israel is a precondition for the true revival of Islam, meaning that Hamas in its struggle is the vanguard of the Muslim world as a whole. The eruption of the Intifada and the creation of Hamas signified a new phase in the Palestinian MB jihad—a shift from the spiritual and social to the military jihad as the strategy for liberating Palestine. The military jihad, it is believed, will accelerate the return of the Muslim world to Islam, and will be the first step toward the creation of the Islamic state that will defeat Israel.

In Hamas' doctrine, the land of Palestine, accord-

ing to sharia, is an Islamic religious endowment (*waqf*) consecrated for future Muslim generations until Judgment Day. Consequently no one has the right to give up that land or a part of it. The jihad for its liberation is an individual religious duty (*fardh 'ayn*). The conflict with Israel is not over borders but over existence: it can end only when its cause is gone—the Zionist occupation of Palestine. This approach squarely rejects any peaceful solution with Israel; the only solution is Israel's elimination and the subjugation of its Jews to Islamic rule. The Palestinians' present weakness and the unfavorable international conditions are no justification for any Palestinian compromise with Israel. The struggle is long term, and eventually Islam's ability to mobilize all its resources will give it victory over Israel.¹⁴³

The point that neither Hamas, nor for that matter anyone else, can make compromises over Palestine has been made by Hamas' *shar'i* guide, Shaykh Yusuf al-Qaradhawi. For him, Palestine does not belong to al-Fatah, Hamas, or the Palestinians, but to all Muslims.¹⁴⁴

To subvert the Oslo Accords and the process of their implementation Hamas followed a double-pronged strategy. First, it escalated its terror activities against Israel, in order to present the PLO with a no-win dilemma: if the PLO acted against the terrorists it would be discredited on the Palestinian street for collaborating with the occupation, and if it did not, there would be a crisis with Israel. The escalation of terror was also designed to strengthen the opposition of Israelis to the Oslo process. Second, Hamas sought to undermine the legitimacy of the PLO and the Palestinian Authority (PA). Hamas stopped short, however, of openly confronting the PA, fearing its retaliations against its social and *dawa* institutions.¹⁴⁵

The 1996 elections for the PA Legislative Council presented Hamas with a dilemma. Participating in the elections would mean legitimizing the Oslo Accords, would require cessation of all terror operations from the territories, as demanded by the PA's President, Yasser Arafat, and would commit the

Movement to the rules of the parliamentary game, including making compromises. Yet non-participation in the elections would lead to Hamas' political marginalization. Obviously the latter consideration was more important to the Movement's militants in the Territories, whereas the more ideological aspects were emphasized by the leadership abroad. Eventually, following an understanding with the PA, Hamas neither participated in the elections nor boycotted them, allowing a front organization, The Islamic Salvation Party, to participate.¹⁴⁶

The establishment of the PA, and their assessment that the Palestinian people were too tired after six years of Intifada to wage an all-out war and were therefore supportive of the peace process, led some Hamas figures in 1994 to propose a mutual cessation of hostilities. As early on as 1993 Hamas' founder, Shaykh Ahmad Yasin, made a distinction between full peace (*sulh*) with Israel, which he rejected, and a truce (*hudnah*), like the one historically reached between the Prophet Muhammad and the inhabitants of Mecca, defined as a truce Muslims can accept if their enemy is too strong and they need time to rebuild their force, and provided it lasts no more than ten years. To date the idea of a truce has not been adopted as a viable option by the Movement. One reason could be the realization that Hamas' price for it, namely Israeli withdrawal to the 1967 lines, the formation of a fully sovereign Palestinian state in the whole of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and Jerusalem, the implementation of the refugees' right of return, and release of all prisoners, would be a non-starter for Israel.

The Islamic State

Developing a political theory setting forth the precise characteristics of the future Islamic state has not been a major preoccupation of Hamas. Some of the movement's leaders and thinkers expressed support for a multi-party democratic sys-

tem, in which non-Islamic and even atheist parties would be allowed to participate. That position relied on the interpretation of democracy as synonymous with the Islamic principle of consultation, or *shura*. This group supported the Movement's participation in electoral politics in the PA, which gave Hamas resounding victories in the municipal elections of 2005 and the legislative elections of 2006.

A more conservative Ikhwani faction in the Movement, which had been more vocal in earlier years, rejected democracy, in the sense of the people ruling themselves, since in Islam the only legitimate rule is Allah's. It rejected the Western democratic principle of legislation by elected bodies, since in Islam legislation is already made, in the Koran, and man can only make legal interpretations (*ijtihad*). This conservative faction accepted ideological and political pluralism only within the framework of the Islamic faith: only Islamic political parties that consider Islam as the source of authority and the Koran as their constitution should be allowed to participate in elections. According to their interpretation of Islam, the ruler will not be elected directly by the people but by a select group (*ahl al-hall wal-'aqd*), which in turn will be elected by the people. Christians and Jews will enjoy the status given them by the Koran, namely that of *dhimmis*, protected but inferior to Muslims legally and socially.¹⁴⁷

Strategic Dilemmas

Hamas' opting for the reduction of hostilities (*tahdi'ah*) with Israel in 2005 reflected primarily its attrition during the second Intifada, and its intention to prepare the ground for the political aftermath of the Intifada. The *tahdi'ah*, Hamas spokesmen stressed, was not a truce (*hudnah*), neither was it with Israel—it was an internal Palestinian arrangement (it indeed followed the March 2005 Cairo Understandings with al-Fatah), and it was designed to allow the Palestinian

people some respite from the struggle in order to prepare for its coming stages. It was justified by necessity and the national interests.¹⁴⁸

The decision to participate in the January 2006 legislative elections followed the weakening of al-Fatah, particularly after Arafat's death, and Hamas' simultaneous rise in popularity—the more so since the Israeli unilateral withdrawal from the Gaza Strip was appropriated by Hamas as its own achievement. As it turned out, Hamas did not anticipate a victory. It hoped to get just enough votes for it to become a partner in a Fatah-led government where it would hold those social and economic portfolios which are crucially important for it. That was supposed to advance a strategy seeking to gradually replace al-Fatah as the leading force in the PA and the PLO, and thereby take control of the Palestinian national movement as a whole. Hamas also chose to participate in the elections as a way to win political legitimacy in order to counter its classification internationally as a terrorist organization. It judged that it had achieved public support broad enough to enable it to enter the Legislative Council comfortably and promote the interests of its constituency, primarily fighting corruption and anarchy in the PA.

Participating in the elections did not imply acceptance of the legal foundations on which they were based, namely the Oslo Accords and peace negotiations with Israel as the only way to deal with the conflict. The position of Hamas leaders before the elections was that the Oslo Accords were finished; that the legitimacy on which Hamas participated in the elections was based was that of its resistance, not that of Oslo; and that it would never negotiate with Israel.¹⁴⁹ Hamas' election platform avoided reference to some of the thorniest elements in its ideology and in its Charter, like the elimination of Israel and the setting up of the Palestinian Islamic state over the whole of Palestine. The explanation given by Hamas members was that the platform

was a realistic list of the Movement's objectives for the coming four years, during which the elimination of Israel would not be an achievable goal, but that the Movement remained committed to it.¹⁵⁰

The electoral victory of Hamas and its platform—both explicit and unstated—led to the three demands posed by the Quartet to Hamas as conditions for its cooperation with its government, namely to relinquish terror, to recognize Israel and to accept Oslo and the Palestinian-Israeli treaties that followed it. The failure of the Hamas government to accept those demands or find an effective way around them has perpetuated its paralyzing international isolation. This isolation was exacerbated by other Arab regimes' reluctance to help a Sunni jihadi movement consolidate power and serve as model to be emulated elsewhere in the region; and by al-Fatah's efforts to undermine Hamas in order to bring about its collapse, which entailed street violence, killings, and armed clashes between members of the two movements.

The joint Al-Fatah–Hamas Palestinian national consensus plan, known as the National Reconciliation Document or “Prisoners’ Document,” which was drafted in May 2006, and was designed to end internecine fighting and regain international legitimacy for the PA, failed to convince the Quartet that Hamas had accepted its demands. The document called for the Palestinian right to resist the occupation, which means armed struggle; while stating that the Palestinians had the right to self-determination and to establish their state in all territories occupied in 1967, it did not give up on the 1948 lines, nor did it accept the two-states solution; and it did not accept adherence to the treaties. The document did however provide a basis for negotiations over the formation of a national unity government, which was supposed to ease international isolation and pass the onus for the impasse on to the Israeli side. Those negotiations were derailed by the June 25, 2006, attack on an Israeli military post near

Gaza and the kidnapping of an Israeli soldier, Gilad Shalit, by Hamas and other groups.

By summer 2006 it appeared that Hamas was torn between two strategic orientations. The more pragmatic one, represented by Prime Minister Isma'il Haniyyah, was more attuned to the needs of Hamas as a governing body to attend to its population, whose economic and living conditions in general were increasingly deteriorating. This approach sought reconciliation with al-Fatah, pushed for a national unity government, and was probably willing to go along with the Egyptian proposal that the Hamas government accept the Arab Peace Initiative of March 2002 as a way of meeting the international demand that Hamas recognize Israel. That orientation was reportedly supported by Hamas West Bank leaders as well as by leading Hamas prisoners in Israel. Supporters of this orientation favored the national unity government, in effect correcting for the initial formation of the government without al-Fatah, over withdrawal from the government: a withdrawal, in their view, would constitute an admission that the Islamist political option had failed, with obvious regional ramifications, and would disappoint Hamas' voters. But a national unity government would not end Hamas' predicament, because al-Fatah would press for acceptance of its positions on Israel, the treaties, and the abandonment of terror, and would push for negotiating with Israel.

The Hamas hardliners, on the other hand, represented by the external leadership headed by Khalid Mash'al, and supported by the Movement's armed wing, 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, and by several key figures in the Movement's leadership in Gaza, gave priority to the jihadi agenda of Hamas' jihadi agenda; aligned Hamas with the interests of the new rejectionist axis of Syria, Iran, and Hizbullah; and sought to emulate Hizbullah's successes against Israel in July–August 2006 and have a rerun of them in Gaza, and probably later in the West Bank. And whereas immediately after the

legislative elections its leaders saw no contradiction between the Movement's remaining an armed resistance movement and its pursuit of the political and diplomatic tracks as a government,¹⁵¹ by summer they advocated that Hamas give up on the illusion of government and return to the armed struggle, in view of the utter failure of the attempt to reconcile being a government with being a resistance movement. They called for the dissolution of the PA, in order to force Israel to go back to direct and open occupation.¹⁵² They reasoned that the collapse of the Hamas government would only increase the Movement's popularity among Palestinians, who would blame al-Fatah for colluding with Israel and foreign powers to topple that government and thereby deny the Palestinians their democratic choice. They refused to accept the 2002 Arab Peace Initiative because it implied recognition of Israel, and rejected the idea that Hamas join the PLO and thus recognize Israel indirectly.¹⁵³

If the June 2006 attack and kidnapping of the Israeli soldier were indeed initiated by the external leadership in order to compromise the Hamas government and subvert the negotiations over the national unity government, as has been suggested,¹⁵⁴ that would signify the depth of the internal ideological and political struggle within the Movement. Certainly that attack exacerbated the Hamas government's paralysis, as it led to the arrest by Israel of government ministers in the West Bank as well as of Hamas legislative council members. A fresh attempt in September 2006 to ease the international siege of the Hamas government by renegotiating the formation of the national unity government failed, further deepening the rifts between Hamas and al-Fatah. Similar attempts during October failed again.

Thus, a year after its election victory, Hamas was bereft of a political strategy to consolidate its gains and use them effectively to advance its goals—the liberation of Palestine and the Islamization of Palestinian society. The election victory did not lead to the transformation of Hamas from a resistance

movement to a government party. That transformation requires ideological adaptations which, if undertaken, would make the Movement change identity. Instead its positions hardened, with the predominance of the hard line leadership and the organiza-

tion's increasing entanglement with external, regional agendas. In the violent take over of Gaza (June 2007) Hamas the revolution turned its weapons against the presidency of the Palestinian Authority whose government it claimed to be. ■

NOTES

1. “Mustaqbal al-Tanzim al-Duwali li-Jama’at al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin,” Wikalat al-Ahram lil-Sahafah, www.diwanalarab.com, January 29, 2006.
2. Text in Sylvain Besson, *La Conquete de l’Occident* (Paris: Seuil, 2002).
3. Husam Tamam, Tahawwulat al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin, Cairo: Madbuli, 2006, pp. 199-212.
4. Al-Tahir Ibrahim, “al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun wa-Azmat Ikhtilaf al-Ru`yah bayna Qutr wa-Akhar,” *Majallat al-‘Asr*, July 25, 2006.
5. Nathan J. Brown, Amr Hamzawi and Marina Ottaway, *Islamist Movements and the Democratic Process in the Arab World: Exploring the Gray Zones*, Carnegie Papers Middle East Series, 67 (March 2006).
6. Richard P. Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), 31.
7. “Al-Shari’ah wal-Hayat,” al-Jazeera, December 11, 2005, www.qaradawi.net/site/topics/printArticle.asp.
8. “What Will happen if We Take Charge of the Government?,” *IlhwanWeb.com*, February 8, 2006.
9. “Dr. Muhammad Habib Yaktub: Madha lau wasala al-Ikhwan ila al-Hukm?,” *Ikhwanonline*, February 6, 2006.
10. “Ahdaf al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin,” www.ikhwanonline.com/Target.asp.
11. Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers*, 308.
12. *Ibid.*, 232-35.
13. *Ibid.*, 246-47.
14. *Ibid.*, 249.
15. *Ibid.*, 261.
16. Rivka Yadlin, “Democracy and Islam in Egypt,” in *Islam and Democracy in the Arab World*, ed. Meir Litvak (Tel Aviv: Kav Adom, 1997), 77 (in Hebrew).
17. *Ibid.*, 78.
18. “Mawqif al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin min al-Wahdah al-Qawmiyyah wal-‘Arabiyyah wal-Islamiyyah,” *Majmu’at Rasa’il al-Imam al-Shahid Hasan al-Banna*, Alexandria: Dar al-Da’wah, 2002, 191-195.
19. “The Initiative of the General Guide Concerning the General Principles of Reform in Egypt,” www.ikhwanonline.com, March 3, 2004.
20. “Issam al-‘Aryan, “Hadith hawla al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin,” www.ikhwanonline.com, April 10, 2005. “Qiyadi Ikhwani: al-Dawlah al-Madaniyyah Asas al-Muwatanah,” www.islamonline.net, April 9, 2004.
21. ‘Isam al-‘Aryan, “Hadith hawla al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin,” www.ikhwanonline.com, April 10, 2005.
22. “Abu al-Futuh: Wusuluna lil-Sultah ala`n lan Yakhdum Misr,” www.islamonline.net/Arabic/politics/2005/04/article10b.shtml, April 17, 2005.
23. “Qiyadi Ikhwani: al-Quran Dusturuna Shi’ar “Atifi,” *al-Sharq al-Awsat*, May 25, 2005.
24. ‘Isam al-‘Aryan, “Hadith hawla al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin,” www.ikhwanonline.com, April 10, 2005; ‘Abd al-Mun’im Abu al-Futuh interviewed in www.al-araby.com, no. 996, February 12, 2006.
25. “Qiyadi Ikhwani: al-Dawlah al-Madaniyyah Asas al-Muwatanah,” www.islamonline.net, July 9, 2004.

26. Akif's missive, www.ikhwanonline.com. May 5, 2005; 'Akif's missive, www.ikhwanonline.com, February 16, 2006.
27. 'Akif's missive, www.ikhwanonline.com. May 5, 2005; 'Akif's missive, www.ikhwanonline.com, February 16, 2006.
28. Interview in www.al-araby.com, no. 988, December 11, 2006.
29. "Al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun wa-'Awdat al-Sahwah al-Islamiyyah," www.ikhwanonline.com, July 10, 2005.
30. *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*, April 12, 2006; "Nass Hiwar al-Murshid al-'Am...", www.ikhwanonline.com/asp?ID=19619, April 16, 2006.
31. "The Initiative of the General Guide," www.ikhwanonline.com, March 3, 2004.
32. www.ikhwanonline.com/Target.asp.
33. D. Muhammad Habib, "Madha lau Wasala al-Ikhwan ila al-Hukm?" www.ikhwanonline.com, February 6, 2006.
34. Dr. Mohamed El-Sayed Habib, "What Will Happen If We Take Charge of the Government," www.ikhwanweb.com, February 8, 2006.
35. www.asharqalawsat.com. December 11, 2005.
36. Ahmad al-Qa'ud, "'Issam al-'Aryan Yu'akkidu Taraju' al-Ikhwan," www.alquds.co.uk, December 22, 2005.
37. Interviewed by Faraj Isma'il in www.alwifaq.net, February 22, 2006.
38. "Mashru' Qanun li-Nuwwab al-Ikhwan li-Tajrim al-Baha'iyyah wa Takfir Mu'taqidiha," www.ikhwanonline.com, May 3, 2006.
39. 'Akif's missive, "Hawla al-Mashru' al-Siyasi al-Islahi lil-Ikhwan al-Muslimin," www.ikhwanonline.com, December 8, 2005.
40. "Dr. Mohamed Habib on Economy, Political Reform and Israel," www.ikhwanweb.com, March 8, 2006.
41. Al-Ahram, Markaz al-Dirasat al-Siyasiyah wal-Istratijiyya, *al-Halab al-Diniyyah fi Misr*, Vol. 2, (Cairo, 1998), 226.
42. 'Issam al-'Aryan, "Ishkaliyyat al-Tahawwul `ila Hizb Siyasi," *al-Hayat*, February 28, 2004.
43. www.al-araby.com, no. 990, December 25, 2005; <http://harakamasria.org>, January 16, 2006.
44. Rafiq Habib, "Al-Ikhwan wa-Marhalat al-Tamkin," www.ikhwanonline.com, March 28, 2006.
45. Rafiq Habib, "Al-Ikhwan: al-Rajul wal-Risalah wal-Tandhim," www.ikhwanonline.com, March 14, 2006.
46. www.ikhwanonline.com/ik/Article.asp?ID=232498sectionID==251.
47. Ibid.
48. *Islamism Digest*, Introductory, August 2006, www.cfsot.com.
49. "Qadat al-Ikhwan Yastankirun Shata'im Hilal," www.al-araby.com, no. 1002, March 26, 2006.
50. Hamdi Rizq, "Habib, al-Shatir Yatanafasun `ala Khilafat 'Akif," *al-Mussawwar*, April 10, 2006.
51. "Al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun wa-Najib Mahfuz," www.al-araby.com, no. 990, December 25, 2005; "Tafjir al-Ikhwan min al-Dakhil," <http://harakamasria.org>, January 16, 2006.
52. Muhammad 'Izz al-'Arab, "Al-'Aryan: Mutalabun...", <http://harakamasria.org>, February 9, 2006.
53. www.al-araby.com, February 12, 2006.
54. Interviewed by *al-Mujtama'* magazine, quoted on www.ikhwanweb.com, March 8, 2006; www.harakamasria.org. January 16, 2006.
55. "Al-Watha'iq al-Sirriyyah lil-Ikhwan al-Muslimin" ("The Secret Documents of the MB"), *al-Musawwar Weekly*, June 3, 1994, 20-23, 70-73; "Khuttat al-Ikhwan lil-Istila` `ala al-Hukm" ("The MB's Plan to Take Over Power"), *al-Musawwar Weekly*, June 10, 1994, 14-19, 78.

56. In State Security Case 136 for 1996, see “Mubarak wal-Ikhwan,” *al-‘Arabi*, no. 990, December 25, 2005.
57. ‘Issam al-‘Aryan, “Al-Ikhwan wa-Hukm Misr—la Mubarrir lil-Qalaq,” www.ikhwanonline.com, January 28, 2006; Muhammad al-Sayyid Habib, “Madha law Wasala al-Ikhwan ila al-Hukm?,” www.Ikhwanonline.com, February 6, 2006.
58. “Abu al-Futuh: Wusuluna lil-Sultah al’an lan Yakhdum Misr,” April 17, 2005, www.islamonline.net/Arabic/politics/2005/04/article10b.shtml.
59. “Mahdi ‘Akif: Hukumat al-Ikhwan Tuhawir America,” www.islamonline.net, April 17, 2005.
60. Interview in <http://www.alwatan.com.kw/Default.aspx?pageID=84&MgDid=483589>, 27 March 2007.
61. “Inside the MB- an Interview with ‘Abd al-Mun’im Abu al-Futuh,” *Islamism Digest*, August 2006, www.cfsot.com/publications/ISLAMI~2.PDF.
62. Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers*, 206-7.
63. *Ibid.*
64. “Al- Jihad wal-Istishhad huma Tariq al-‘Izzah wal-Nasr,” www.ikhwanonline.com, April 15, 2004.
65. “Al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun wa-‘Awdat al-Sahwah al-Islamiyyah,” www.ikhwanonline.com, July 10, 2005.
66. “‘Akif: La Farq bayna al-Madaniyyin al-Sahayinah wal-‘Askariyyin,” www.ikhwanonline.com, February 9, 2005.
67. “Wahdat al-‘Ummah hiya al-Sakhrat allati Tatahattam ‘alayha al-Mu‘amarat wal-Fitan,” www.ikhwanonline.com/print.asp?ID=18378, March 2, 2006.
68. “Misr: al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun la Yumani’un fi Hiyazat Iran Silahan Nawawiyyan,” *al-Sharq al-Awsat*, April 18, 2006.
69. ‘Akif’s missive, www.ikhwanonline.com, August 3, 2006.
70. “Mawqif Jama’at al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin min al-Muqawamah,” www.ikhwanonline.com, July 29, 2006.
71. ‘Akif’s communiqué, www.ikhwanonline.com, July 26, 2006; ‘Akif’s missive, www.ikhwanonline.com, August 3, 2006; www.alarabiya.net/article.aspx?P=26287; *al-Sharq al-Awsat*, August 21, 2006.
72. ‘Abd al-Mun’im Abu al-Futuh in *al-Araby*, no. 1020, August 6, 2006, www.al-araby.com/articles/1020/060806-1020-inv05.htm.
73. “‘Akif: al-Wilayat al-Muttahidah...,” www.ikhwanonline.com, February 12, 2006.
74. “Huquq al-Insan fi ‘Asr al-Tughyan,” www.ikhwanonline.com, March 16, 2006.
75. “Dimuqratiyat al-Iqsa Masiruha al-Fana’,” www.ikhwanonline.com, December 22, 2005.
76. *Ibid.*
77. ‘Akif’s missive, in www.ikhwanonline.com, April 13, 2006.
78. “‘Akif Yutalibu bil-Tassaddi lil-Haymana al-Amirikiyyah,” www.ikhwanonline.com, March 23, 2006.
79. Al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun wa-Amirika,” www.ikhwanonline.com, December 21, 2005.
80. Interviewed in Carnegie Endowment, *Arab Reform Bulletin*, Vol. 3, Issue 10 (December 2005).
81. “Limadha al-wasat?” www.alwasatparty.com/modules.php?name=Content&pa=showpage&pid=2.
82. *Ibid.*
83. “Nubdhah Ta`rikhiyyah,” www.alwasatparty.com/modules.php?name=Content&pa=showpage&pid=6.
84. Carnegie Endowment, *Arab Reform Bulletin*, Vol. 3, Issue 10 (December 2005).
85. “Barnamej Hizb al-Wasat al-Jadid, al-Mihwar al-Siyasi,” www.islamonline.net/Arabic/doc/2004/05/article02a.shtml.
86. Abu ‘Ala’, Madhi, “al-Dawlah Al-Diniyyah wal-Dawlah al-Madaniyyah, Ru`yat Hizb al-Wasat,” www.alwasatparty.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=286.

87. "Barnamej Hizb al-Wasat al-Jadid, Tamhid," www.islamonline.net/Arabic/doc/2004/05/article02.shtml.
88. Itzhak Weismann, "Sa'id Hawwa: The Making of a Radical Muslim Thinker in Modern Syria," *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 29, no. 4 (October 1993), 602, 616.
89. Eyal Zisser, *Faces of Syria: Society, Regime and State* (Tel-Aviv: Kav Adom, 2003), 256-60 (in Hebrew).
90. "Man Nahnu?" www.jimsyr.com/01ikhwansyria/01_nahnu.htm.
91. Ibid.
92. "Wasa'il al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin," www.jimsyr.com/01ikhwansyria/03_wasayel.htm.
93. Faraj Nimr, "Mulahthat Awwaliyyah 'ala Mashru' al-Ikhwan," www.asharqaiarabi.org.uk, January 3, 2005.
94. Al-Bayanuni quoted on www.ikhwanonline.com, March 19, 2006.
95. 'Ali Sadr al-Din al-Bayanuni, "Jama'at al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin fi Surya," www.jimsyr.com/01ikhwansyria/tajarub.htm, a conference paper dated February 26, 2000.
96. Al-Bayanuni's Islamonline interview, June 26, 2006, www.islamonline.net/Arabic/news/2006-06/26/02.shtml.
97. Al-Bayanuni's Islamonline interview, April 22, 2006, www.islamonline.net/arabic/news/2006-04/22/article10a.htm.
98. Al-Bayanuni's al-Jazeera interview, August 17, 2005, www.jimsyr.com/03rasayel_mokablat/islah.htm.
99. Al-Bayanuni's Islamonline interview, April 22, 2006, www.islamonline.net/Arabic/news/2006-04/22/article10a.htm.
100. Al-Bayanuni's al-Jazeera interview, August 17, 2005, www.jimsyr.com/03rasayel_mokablat/islah.htm.
101. Al-Bayanuni's Islamonline interview, April 22, 2006, www.islamonline.net/Arabic/news/2006-04/22/article10a.htm.
102. www.thisissyria.net/2006/09/01/syriatoday/02.html.
103. Ibid.
104. Al-Bayanuni's Islamonline interview, April 22, 2006, www.islamonline.net/Arabic/news/2006/04/22/article10a.htm; www.thisissyria.net/2006/09/01/syriatoday/02.html.
105. Al-Bayanuni's Islamonline interview, April 22, 2006, www.islamonline.net/Arabic/news/2006-04/22/article10a.htm.
106. "Surya: al-'Isyan al-Madani Sabil al-Khalas lil-Taghyir," www.islamonline.net/Arabic/news/2006-06/03/09.shtml.
107. Al-Bayanuni's al-Jazeera interview, August 17, 2005, www.jimsyr.com/03rasayel_mokablat/islah.htm.
108. www.radiosawa.com/article-print.aspx?id=968698.
109. Al-Bayanuni's Islamonline interview, April 22, 2006, www.islamonline.net?Arabic/news/2006-04/22/article10a.shtml.
110. Quoted by Islamonline, August 22, 2002, www.islamonline.net/Arabic/news/2002-08/22/article71.shtml.
111. E.g., al-Bayanuni's statement on June 26, 2006, www.islamonline.net/Arabic/news/2006-06/02.shtml.
112. "Bayan Majlis Shura Jama'at al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin fi Suryah," www.jimsyr.com/02bayanat_tasryhat/09-02shoura2006.htm.
113. www.thisissyria.net/2006/09/01/syriatoday/02.html.
114. "The Objectives and the Means" of the Jordanian MB, posted permanently on the organization's official site, www.ikhwan-jor.org/ikhwan_jo_ahdaf.htm.
115. Hani Hourani, Hamed Dabbas, Taleb Awad, and Sa'eda Kilani, *Islamic Action Front Party* (Amman: Al-Urdun al-Jadid Research Center, 1993), 15.
116. Ibid., 18.

117. Ibid., 30; IAF's Fundamental Regulations—The Seventh Edition, posted permanently since August 1, 2002 on the IAF's official website, www.jabha.net/body4.asp?field=doc&id=2.
118. Asher Susser, "The Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan: Coexistence and Controlled Confrontation," in *Islam and Democracy in the Arab World*, ed. Meir Litvak (Tel-Aviv: Kav Adom, 1998), 134-39 (in Hebrew); Shmuel Bar, *The Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan* (Tel-Aviv: The Moshe Dayan Center, 1998), 43-52.
119. Mashari al-Dhaidi, "Ahadith fi al-Usuliyah wal-Siyasah," *al-Sharq al-Awsat*, October 10, 2005.
120. 'Ali al-Hawamdeh, "al-Mutashaddidun Saytaru 'ala Jama'at al-Ikhwan," *al-Sharq al-Awsat*, October 20, 2004.
121. Mashari al-Dhaidi, "Ahadith fi al-Usuliyah wal-Siyasah," *al-Sharq al-Awsat*, October 10, 2005.
122. Interview with Dr. Hayil 'Abd al-Hafiz, deputy head of the Party's Political Bureau, Majallat al-'Asr, July 3, 2003, www.alasr.ws/index.cfm?fuseaction=content&contentID=4271&categoryID=19.
123. "‘alaqat Hamas ma'a al-Urdunn minTawattur ila Tawattur," *al-Sharq al-Awsat*, April 20, 2006.
124. Ibrahim Gharayba, "Will the Islamic movement in Jordan be Reshaped?," *al-Hayat*, June 9, 2006.
125. Sami Mahasneh, "Amman: Intikhab al-Mu'tadil Salim al-Fallahat," *al-Sharq al-Awsat*, March 4, 2006.
126. Interview on www.ikhwanonline.com, May 13, 2006.
127. "Wajib al-'Ulama` fi Muwajahat al-Hajmah al-Amrikiyyah," November 2, 2002, www.jabha.net/body5.asp?field=ftawa&id=9.
128. www.jabha.net/body5.asp?field=ftawa&id=4.
129. www.jabha.net/body5.asp?field=ftawa&id=3.
130. *Al-Hayat*, April 20, 2006.
131. Hazim al-Amin, "al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun fi al-Urdunn 'ala Masharif Hiqbah Jadidah," *al-Hayat*, April 19, 2006.
132. "Fatwa Shar'iyyah Sadirah 'an Lajnat 'Ulama al-Shari'ah al-Islamiyyah fi Hizb al-'Amal al-Islami," April 8, 2002, www.jabha.net/body5.asp?field=ftawa&id=15.
133. Al-Zahir Ibrahim, "Al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun wa-Azmat Ikhtilaf al-Ru'yah bayna Qutr wa-Akhar," www.alasr.ws, July 25, 2006.
134. *Al-Quds al-'Arabi*, May 29, 2006.
135. www.jabha.net/body5.asp?field=fatwa&id=1.
136. Halah Halil Salim, "al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun fi al-Urdunn wa-Nihayat al-Tahaluf ma'a al-Hukumat al-Urdunniyyah," www.alqudscenter.org/arabic/pages.php?local_type=128&local_details=2&id1=40, August 7, 2006.
137. Al-Fallahat's press conference, June 13, 2006, www.ammannet.net.
138. www.aljazeera.net, July 6, 2006.
139. Halah Halil Salim, "al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun fi al-Urdunn wa-Nihayat al-Tahaluf ma'a al-Hukumat al-Urdunniyyah," www.alqudscenter.org/arabic/pages.php?local_type=128&local_details=2&id1=40, August 7, 2006.
140. Ibid.
141. www.jabha.net/body0.asp?field=beanat2003&id=19.
142. Meir Litvak, "Hamas: Islam, Palestinian Identity and Jihad," in *Islam and Democracy in the Arab World* (Tel-Aviv: Kav Adom, 1998), 148-53 (in Hebrew).
143. Ibid., 156-59.
144. "Al-Qaradhawi: al-Watan fawqa al-Hizb wal-Islam fawqa al-Jami'," www.qaradawi.net, March 11, 2006.

145. Litvak., 165-67.
146. Ibid., 168.
147. Litvak., 170-74.
148. Khalid Mash'al's interview on al-'Arabiyyah, January 25, 2006.
149. Mahmud al-Zahhar, *Haaretz*, October 26, 2005, and *al-Ayyam*, January 8, 2006; Khalid Mash'al, al-'Arabiyyah, January 25, 2006, and *al-Ayyam*, January 22, 2006.
150. Salah al-Bardawil, www.islamonline.org. January 14, 2006.
151. Khalid Mash'al's interview on al-'Arabiyyah, March 6, 2006, www.alarabiya.net/Articles/2006/03/07/21753.htm.
152. Muhammad Abu Rumman, "Man Yarsum Mustaqbal hamas?" www.alghad.jo/?article=4567, August 30, 2006; Muhammad Yunis, " Hamas Amama Thalath Khiyarat," *al-Hayat*, May 30, 2006.
153. Muhammad Jamal 'Arafah, "Khuttat Hamas lil-Hukm," www.islamonline.net, February 13, 2006.
154. E.g., Muhammad Khalid al-Az'ar, " Hamas al-Ha`irah bayna al-Hukm wal-Muqawamah," Islamonline, June 28, 2006, www.islamonline.net/arabic/politics/Palestine/topic_01/2006/6/06.shtml.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Israel Elad Altman is senior research fellow, the Institute for Policy and Strategy, the Interdisciplinary Center, Herzliya and formerly research fellow, the Moshe Dayan Center for Middle East and African Studies, Tel Aviv University.

ABOUT THIS SERIES

This second series of research monographs on the Muslim world is the product of a research project undertaken jointly by Hudson Institute and the Institute for Policy and Strategy at Herzilya, Israel for the Director of Net Assessment, Office of the Secretary of Defense. The views, opinions, and/or findings contained in this report are those of the author(s) and should not be construed as an official Department of Defense position, policy, or decision.

ABOUT THE CENTER

Hudson Institute's Center on Islam, Democracy and the Future of the Muslim World conducts a wide-ranging program of research and analysis addressed to the political, religious, social, and other dynamics within majority Muslim countries and Muslim populations around the world. A principal focus of the Center's work is the ideological dynamic within Islam, and the connected issue of how this political and religious debate impacts both Islamist radicalism as well as the Muslim search for moderate and democratic alternatives. By focusing on ideology, the Center aims to contribute to the development of American policy options and to effective strategies to prosecute and to win the worldwide struggle against radical Islam.

To learn more, visit [**www.futureofmuslimworld.com**](http://www.futureofmuslimworld.com)

ABOUT HUDSON INSTITUTE

Hudson Institute is a non-partisan policy research organization dedicated to innovative research and analysis that promotes global security, prosperity, and freedom. We challenge conventional thinking and help manage strategic transitions to the future through interdisciplinary and collaborative studies in defense, international relations, economics, culture, science, technology, and law. Through publications, conferences and policy recommendations, we seek to guide global leaders in government and business.

To learn more, visit [**www.hudson.org**](http://www.hudson.org)