

# The Brotherhood's Westward Expansion

*by Ian Johnson*

**T**HE MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD EXERTS ONE OF THE GREATEST INFLUENCES on Islam in the West, both in terms of how Islam is practiced and how governments and the public perceive Islam. Despite the Brotherhood's important influence, the history of the Brotherhood's spread to the West has never been written. This article is an effort to help fill that gap by looking at some key aspects and people involved with its rapid rise over the past half-century.

While there is some evidence that the Brotherhood was active in Europe before World War II,<sup>1</sup> this seems to have been just a one-man operation that left no long-lasting traces. It was Egypt's persecution of the group that sent its organizers abroad in the 1950s. The Brotherhood's European presence was later strengthened by the arrival of economic migrants from Turkey, the Middle East and South Asia who subsequently became affiliated with the Brotherhood. These immigrants, however, did not bring the Brotherhood with them to the West. Instead, the Brotherhood had preceded them, carefully planted by activists intent on creating a safe haven away from the turbulent Muslim world.

## The Munich Mosque

CENTRAL TO THE HISTORY OF THE BROTHERHOOD IN THE WEST IS THE BUILDING of a particular mosque in Munich. Though I have previously described the history of this mosque journalistically and will do so more fully in a forthcoming book,<sup>2</sup> I must briefly summarize it here in order to establish the context of subsequent events.

The Islamic Center of Munich was founded in 1958 by a group of former German Muslim soldiers. These soldiers had served in the Red Army, but were captured by the

Germans and eventually fought for them. After the war, they stayed on in Munich and formed the largest concentration of Muslims in pre-*Gastarbeiter* West Germany. Hoping to advance certain foreign policy goals, the West German government sought to control this group. The idea was that these émigrés would someday return home to run their countries and, out of thanks, support a united Germany's territorial claims east of the Oder-Neisse line.<sup>3</sup>

At the same time, however, U.S. intelligence viewed the Muslims in Munich as an important reservoir of talent to be used in covert intelligence operations in the developing world. It recruited these Muslims and sent them, for example, to distribute leaflets on the Hajj.<sup>4</sup> To counter these American encroachments on “its” Muslims, the West Germans recruited one of the soldiers' wartime imams who had moved to Turkey, brought him to Germany and installed him as head of a Bonn-created office known as the Ecclesiastical Administration of Moslem Refugees in the Federal Republic of Germany (Geistliche Verwaltung der mohammedanischen Flüchtlinge in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland). This office then founded a Mosque Construction Commission (Moscheebau-Kommission e.V.) to unite Munich's Muslims in building a mosque.

Also invited to participate in the mosque project—and here we get to the Muslim Brotherhood—were young Arab students studying in Germany. They, in turn, invited a prominent refugee from Nasser's Egypt to become involved. This was the Muslim Brotherhood's Said Ramadan, who was living in Geneva. Under Ramadan's guidance, the students essentially kicked out the soldiers and took over the project, making it a Muslim Brotherhood center.

When the new Islamic Center of Munich was completed in 1973, it became easily the most important Muslim Brotherhood mosque in Europe. For example, the current head of the *Ikhwan* (Brotherhood) in Cairo, Muhammad Mahdi Akif, served as its chief imam for several years in the 1980s. The Mosque Construction Commission eventually became the Islamic Community of Germany (Islamische Gemeinschaft in Deutschland e.V.), a founding member of several key Muslim Brotherhood groups in Europe.

But how did this happen? The summary above could lead to several erroneous conclusions. It could, for example, create a simplistic, linear history: Egypt-Munich-Europe via Said Ramadan. By focusing on a few individuals, we can correct these misperceptions and draw some conclusions about the Muslim Brotherhood's *modus operandi* in the West. Let's start with Said Ramadan.

## Said Ramadan

IN THE 1940S AND '50S, SAID RAMADAN WAS ONE OF THE MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD'S most important leaders. He married one of Hassan al-Banna's daughters and was a

gifted speaker—he is often referred to as the “little Banna,” and could reportedly recite the master’s speeches word for word. When Egypt banned the group in 1954, Ramadan fled—first to Syria, then to Pakistan. Finally, in the late 1950s, he settled in Geneva.

When Ramadan came to help out the students in Munich, therefore, he was something of a celebrity. His reputation and charisma galvanized the students, prompting them to take over the mosque project. In addition, his standing in the Muslim world and his strong opposition to communism caused CIA operatives in Munich to back him. They sponsored his participation in conferences, for example, and generally helped him keep up his profile in exile.

All these facts help explain Ramadan’s significance at the very beginning of the Muslim Brotherhood’s penetration into Europe. But it is important to recognize that he did *not* represent the particular ideological strand of the Brotherhood that eventually spread across the continent. That strand was advanced by another group within the Brotherhood, one we will meet shortly. So what happened to Ramadan? And what does his downfall tell us about the Brotherhood in Europe?

Ramadan’s pinnacle of influence was probably in 1962, when he helped found the Muslim World League. He had worked tirelessly over the previous decade and a half to unite Muslims in a common cause. Few had as widespread contacts as he—besides the Muslim Brotherhood, he was at home with such old-style clerics as the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, with Pakistani groups like Jamaat-i-Islami and with the rising power in the Muslim world, oil-rich Saudi Arabia. According to one account, it was Ramadan who personally handed King Saud the official proposal to establish the league.<sup>5</sup>

But as that act showed, the Saudis dominated the league from the start. The kingdom controlled all the top posts and funded the group. Ramadan, by contrast, sought to end national divisions within the league, but the Saudis turned the league into their own instrument, and many others in the Brotherhood made their peace with the Saudis. The kingdom, after all, was the site of Islam’s holiest places. It was rich and could support almost any endeavor, from libraries and schools to training centers and an international missionary movement. The Saudi ruling house, moreover, supported a conservative strain of Islam that in some ways was similar to the Brotherhood’s. Many Brotherhood members who were in trouble at home found refuge in Saudi Arabia, and almost all accepted Saudi money.

With the league at their disposal, the Saudis pushed to bring Ramadan into the fold. In 1963 the league wanted to make Ramadan’s Islamic Center in Geneva its first overseas office.<sup>6</sup> Ramadan refused, also rejecting league efforts to turn his magazine, *al-Muslimoon*,<sup>7</sup> into an official league organ. He noted on his written rejection of the league’s offer of money that he was sending the letter from “Islamistan,” a fictive place name indicating that he did not want any country to control him or his work.<sup>8</sup>

The Saudis did not cut ties with Ramadan right away. He still held a Saudi diplomatic passport<sup>9</sup> with the title “Ambassador at large for Muslim World League.” But Ramadan himself would later cut ties with the Saudis, traveling on a Pakistani passport.<sup>10</sup>

For Ramadan developments in Munich must have been a personal blow. While he continued his quest to unite Muslims, the students there were going with the Saudi flow. They were no longer interested in their former mentor, and Ramadan’s protégé Ghaleb Himmat played the role of Brutus. Some of their colleagues speculate that national identity might have been a factor—Himmat was a Syrian and Ramadan an Egyptian. Syria had the second-most vibrant branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, and its chief, Issam el-Attar, arrived in the early 1960s to Europe in exile. Himmat might have wanted to bring Attar to Munich instead of Ramadan. (He would later marry his daughter.) Attar, however, either refused or had no interest. He eventually settled in the German city of Aachen and founded an Islamic center there.

“Later, differences came up between Ramadan and Ghaleb Himmat,” observed Obeidullah Mogaddedi, one of Ramadan’s early followers in Germany who stayed active in the mosque after Ramadan left. “They [the students] drove him out, and he said, ‘I won’t have anything more to do with you.’”<sup>11</sup>

Himmat disagrees. In an interview he said that nationalism or different ambitions were not involved at all. Ramadan, he said, had never played much of a role in the project and later was too busy for it: “He was in a few meetings. After a while he apologized and said he couldn’t go on any longer. I don’t know why. It was a burden for him to struggle for us in Munich.”<sup>12</sup>

In any case, by the mid-1960s Ramadan had made his last commute from Geneva to Munich. He remained a respected figure in the international Islamist movement, later cultivating ties with the new Islamic republic in Iran. But he faded from view, being considered something of an eccentric. As his son Tariq wrote, he spent many years able to follow world events only from afar, prone to “long silences sunk in memory and thoughts and, often, in bitterness.”<sup>13</sup>

## The Arrival of Youssef Nada

AFTER THE INTERNATIONALIST SAID RAMADAN LEFT THE MUNICH MOSQUE, IT became increasingly Arab. A Pakistani chairman was shunted aside. Even Turkish guest workers were unwelcome. The group voted against allowing the Turks to join, saying they would hurt “harmonious cooperation.”<sup>14</sup>

One person who was allowed in was the Egyptian Youssef Nada, another key person in the Brotherhood’s spread to the West. Perhaps more than any other name associated with the mosque, he symbolizes how the Brotherhood has been misunderstood in

the West. Now accused of being a terrorist financier, he is probably better seen as a master organizer—and a link between Europe and the United States.

Nada joined the Muslim Brotherhood in the 1940s and was arrested as a 23-year-old student in the giant 1954 sweep that followed the failed assassination attempt of Nasser. He was released and worked in his family dairy business. In 1960 he obtained an exit visa and went to Austria to study cheese-making technology, which he hoped to bring back to Egypt. He saw a market opening in Egypt for Emmentaler and went to Graz to study its manufacture.<sup>15</sup>

Though not the most gripping start to the career of a future Islamic activist charged with being a terrorist financier, this period demonstrated Nada's doggedness. When his cheese plans failed, he started dealing with Tripoli, became close to the court and got a concession exporting building materials from Austria. Like most of Nada's successful ventures, it was a quasi-monopoly, one that required good contacts but little real business savvy. In the mid-1960s he met Himmat—when, he said, he went to Munich from Graz to participate in a Ramadan fast-breaking dinner—and introduced Himmat to the Libyan court, which promised to fund the mosque.

During the 1969 coup in Libya, Nada's contacts there evaporated, and he said that he had to be smuggled out of the country. His business in ruins, Nada said he had a nervous breakdown and went to a clinic in the German spa town of Wiesbaden. He decided he needed a safe haven to operate and moved to Campione d'Italia, an Italian enclave in Switzerland near Lake Lugano.

Nada and Himmat became inseparable. Himmat asked Nada to join the Islamic Society of Southern Germany (the new name for Munich's Mosque Construction Commission), and in 1971 he did so.<sup>16</sup> Soon Himmat was living in Campione, just a few doors down from Nada. When the mosque governing council met again, it was 1973. At that meeting Ramadan was officially dismissed due to unexcused absences, with Nada voting in support of the action.<sup>17</sup>

## Himmat and Others on the Move

THE DECISION BY HIMMAT AND HIS NEAREST ASSOCIATES TO KEEP CLOSE CONTROL over the leadership makes sense in hindsight. The 1970s were a fertile period for the Muslim Brotherhood and other Islamist groups. They were able to reorganize after years of banishment and imprisonment, and the West—with its freedoms and strong financial and legal systems—was an ideal place to put the movement back together. Millions of Muslims, moreover, had been moving to the West; Europe and North America were no longer fringe places in the Muslim world. They were becoming legitimate parts of the Umma.

A few months before taking control of the Munich mosque in 1973, Himmat attended a key meeting in London. It was probably the first Europe-wide meeting of Muslim leaders sympathetic to the goals of political Islam. Held in London's theater district, the meeting of the Islamic Cultural Centers and Bodies in Europe was designed to establish a network for like-minded groups.<sup>18</sup> Reflecting Saudi Arabia's efforts to dominate organized Islam, the chairman was Saudi. Himmat was elected to the governing council. Also elected was Khurshid Ahmad, a Pakistani activist with Jamaat-i-Islami. (Ahmad had founded the Islamic Foundation in London, which later moved to the village of Markfield outside Leicester.)

The 1973 London meeting's primary significance was symbolic. It served as a signpost on the road—a marker for the future. And though it does not seem to have resulted in a real network, it is important because, like other similar meetings, it illustrates a key point: the network of political Islam in the West was created through determination and persistence. It almost certainly did not happen overnight and was not due to a “master plan.”<sup>19</sup> It was a vision that was vigorously pursued over decades.

These meetings also show another important trend in the West: the blurring of ethnic lines. This trend manifested itself when Ahmad joined the governing council of the Munich mosque in 1982.<sup>20</sup> The mosque's statutes, which had been carefully tweaked a few years earlier to keep out ordinary Turkish guest workers, were now amended again to allow the illustrious Pakistani Islamist onto its governing body. (Another key addition to the council was Issam al-Attar, the charismatic head of the Muslim Brotherhood's Syrian branch whom Himmat had allegedly tried to recruit to the mosque in the 1960s.)

That same 1982 meeting saw the Islamic Center of Munich change its name once again. From the Mosque Construction Commission in 1960, it had become the Islamic Community of Southern Germany in 1963 and now became the Islamic Community of Germany. These changes were not arcane exercises or delusions of grandeur. The body really had transformed itself from a group dedicated to building one mosque to a regional and now national organization that oversaw a chain of mosques and cultural centers. As usual, however, the group's tenuous connection to German Islam—and its role as a political group—was highlighted by Himmat. He sent the minutes of the 1982 meeting to Munich by registered mail from his home in Lugano, 250 miles away. Two years later, the Munich mosque achieved its crowning recognition: Akif's arrival in 1984.

## Akif's Influence

AKIF REPRESENTS A STRAND OF THE BROTHERHOOD THAT HAS TRIED TO MAKE peace with authorities. Unlike Said Ramadan or such theorists as Said Qutb, Akif was eager to be accepted by the government.

Like many veterans of the movement, Akif had spent years in jail. In his case it was a staggering 23 years—from 1954 after the initial crackdown until 1974, when President Anwar Sadat announced an amnesty for all members of the Brotherhood. He was subsequently jailed again from 1996 to 1999 when Sadat’s successor, Hosni Mubarak, initiated one of his periodic crackdowns.<sup>21</sup>

After being released in 1974, Akif quickly linked up with other pragmatists from the movement, such as Yusuf Qaradawi. He also became identified with the journal *Al-Dawa*, which Sadat allowed to be published. It commented on news events from four basic perspectives: anti-Semitism, anti-“Crusaders” (i.e. Christianity), anti-communism and anti-secularism. *Al-Dawa* did not challenge the government, however, and many of its backers were fabulously wealthy, having escaped Nasser’s and Sadat’s prisons for Saudi Arabia. The new, more pragmatic Muslim Brotherhood would make itself acceptable to authorities by toning down its violent rhetoric against the state.

In short, Akif’s group in Egypt was now very similar to the group of people, like Himmat and Nada, who had wrested control of the Munich mosque—first from the former German soldiers, and then from the CIA’s idealistic but ineffective Said Ramadan. They were what Gilles Kepel calls the “neo-Muslim Brotherhood.”<sup>22</sup>

One of Akif’s goals was to reconstruct the Brotherhood’s shattered organizational apparatus. But instead of doing so by firing up activists from below, he wanted to establish a carefully wrought international network of organizations that would be impervious to any single tyrant like Nasser. That took him to Himmat and Nada in Munich. From 1984 to 1987, Akif lived in Munich as head imam of the mosque. The timing was not an accident. The years following Sadat’s assassination were particularly harsh in Egypt. The Islamic Center of Munich was Akif’s refuge. He was its spiritual head, while Himmat ran the formal, legal organization out of Campione d’Italia. Ambassadors from Muslim countries regularly paid visits. Munich was on most Muslim countries’ list of places for visiting dignitaries to visit.

## The Growing Network

THE EUROPEAN WORK OF AKEF AND OTHERS IN THE 1970S ALSO CONTRIBUTED to the Brotherhood’s spread in the United States. In 1977 Nada and Himmat welcomed a group of Muslim activists to Lugano, the resort just up the street from their homes. The meeting was a who’s who of Islamist leaders, including the ubiquitous Yusuf Qaradawi. The Lugano meeting has long been a rumor, but a list of participants has recently come to light, showing its scope and intentions.<sup>23</sup> A key goal was to set up a structure to guide the growth of political Islam in Europe and the United States. The group started out by setting up think tanks to give the movement

ideological firepower. Its most important creation was the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT).

In addition to Qaradawi, the meeting was attended by two Iraqi Muslims living in the United States: Jamal Barzinji and Ahmad Totonji. In 1963 Totonji had helped set up in United States the Muslim Students Association,<sup>24</sup> which became part of the Saudi-run International Islamic Federation of Student Organizations (IIFSO). Totonji became the Saudi group's secretary general.<sup>25</sup> A year after the Lugano meeting, the group decided to establish the headquarters of the IIIT in the United States, largely because of the presence there of Ismail Faruqi, a leading Islamist thinker who had also been at the Lugano meeting. He was instructed to open the center in Pennsylvania, near his teaching post at Temple University, and when he did so in 1980, the papers registering the IIIT were signed by Barzinji.<sup>26</sup>

There were other links to Munich as well. Besides attending the meeting in Lugano, in Himmat and Nada's backyard, Barzinji joined one of Nada's companies the next year—just as he was setting up key North American institutions.<sup>27</sup> While the events might have been coincidental, the work sent Barzinji to Saudi Arabia, which would eventually fund many key projects in North America. And it put him in close contact with Nada, who had experience in setting up Islamic institutions in the West.

Nada also nurtured another stalwart of the political Islamic scene in the United States, Hisham Altalib, who worked for his companies.<sup>28</sup> Nada eventually sponsored Altalib for membership in the Islamic Community of Germany (the new name of the group that had been formed to build the mosque in Munich).<sup>29</sup>

Nada and Himmat even lived in the United States for a short while, and some of their children were born there, according to an Italian intelligence report.<sup>30</sup> Nada lived in Indianapolis, where Barzinji, Totonji and others were in the process of turning their student group into a national movement—duplicating the process that Nada and Himmat had pioneered in Germany. Nada later moved to Silver Spring, Maryland. In another direct parallel to Nada and Himmat's experience in Munich, Nada helped arrange financing for the new national group's headquarters in Indianapolis.<sup>31</sup>

The Brotherhood's U.S. operation can thus be viewed as a clone of its European effort—with even the same people (Nada, Himmat and their protégés) setting up the American structures. This process began soon after the Lugano meeting, when Barzinji held a meeting in Plainfield, Indiana. In Plainfield, a task force was set up that recommended establishing a “broader umbrella organization” to be known as the Islamic Society of North America.<sup>32</sup>

In 1977, the same year as Lugano, Barzinji said he had plans to construct a mosque.<sup>33</sup> It would be funded, he said, by the North America Islamic Trust, a fund headed by Altalib that used Saudi money to buy land and build mosques in North America that would promote Brotherhood-style Islam. The 42-acre site in Indianapolis



soon boasted a mosque, classrooms, residences, a gymnasium and an 80,000-volume library. By the 1980s it was the headquarters of the Islamic Trust, the Muslim Students Association and the Islamic Society of North America.<sup>34</sup>

## The Brothers in America

LIKE NADA AND HIMMAT, THE MEN PUSHING THE BROTHERHOOD IN THE UNITED States were typical neo-Muslim Brotherhood activists—that is, influenced by such classic *Ikhwan* writers as Ramadan and Qutb but more pragmatic and willing to accept Saudi money. Totonji, Barzinji and Altalib were born in northern Iraq, and all three first went to study engineering in Great Britain.<sup>35</sup> They later came to the United States. Totonji and Barzinji set up the Muslim Students Association, winning praise from Qaradawi for coming to the West to “fight the seculars and the Westernized.”<sup>36</sup>

Altalib followed Totonji as head of the IIFSO,<sup>37</sup> the Saudi-Muslim Brotherhood group that, among its activities, translated the works of such classic Muslim Brotherhood theorists as Qutb and al-Banna into Western languages.<sup>38</sup> The IIFSO was also the predecessor of one of today’s most important Muslim groups, the World Assembly of Muslim Youth (WAMY). Headquartered in Saudi Arabia, WAMY aimed to instill in young Muslims the ideology of the Saudi-Muslim Brotherhood. As the IIFSO website explains:

It was out of the IIFSO’s experience of success that the WAMY was born. WAMY was founded in 1972 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, at an international meeting of Islamic workers involved in youth activities and representatives of youth organizations. It was established to help youth organizations around the world implement their planned projects.<sup>39</sup>

Totonji and Barzinji were both key players in WAMY.<sup>40</sup> Totonji served as deputy to its first secretary general, while Barzinji was listed as a board member with an address in Saudi Arabia. This was the time that Barzinji and Altalib worked for Nada, serving on the boards of his companies.

WAMY’s reach extended full circle back to Munich. Until recently, Ibrahim el-Zayat, the current head of the Islamic Community of Germany (the group that grew out of the Munich mosque project), was the western European representative for WAMY.<sup>41</sup> Zayat has said that he only served in WAMY to limit the group’s activities, as he believed that WAMY represented Saudi Arabia’s Wahhabist strain of Islam and wasn’t suitable for Europe. Zayat, however, channeled WAMY money to Bosnian groups that local authorities have identified as fundamentalist.<sup>42</sup>

The overall effect of this Brotherhood campaign on American Muslim life has been—just as in Europe—to narrow what it means to be a Muslim. In 2004 four Muslim groups, including the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA), surveyed U.S. mosques. The findings were telling:

The most comprehensive study, a survey of the 1,200 U.S. mosques undertaken in 2000 by four Muslim organizations, found that 2 million Muslims were “associated” with a mosque and that 70 percent of mosque leaders were generally favorable toward fundamentalist teachings, while 21 percent followed the stricter Wahhabi practices. The survey also found that the segregation of women for prayers was spreading, from half of the mosques in 1994 to two-thirds six years later.<sup>43</sup>

According to John L. Esposito, a Georgetown University scholar with close ties to Islamist thinkers,<sup>44</sup> these Saudi-backed efforts have fostered “the export of a very exclusive brand of Islam into the Muslim community in the United States” that tends to make American Muslims “more isolationist in the society in which they live.”<sup>45</sup>

## Beyond Terrorism

AS WITH THE HIMMAT-NADA STRUCTURE IN EUROPE, IT IS NOT CLEAR THAT THE Brotherhood’s organization in the United States has been involved in terrorism. Totonji apparently had meetings with Sami al-Arian, a convicted member of the terrorist group Islamic Jihad. In a letter seized by U.S. investigators, Arian wrote that he had met with Totonji and Totonji had promised him \$20,000. But searching for such tangential links to terrorism may distract us from seeing a more important point. The 9/11 attacks have focused attention on Islamist links to terrorism—a natural development but one that overlooks the real achievement of these activists: the creation of a robust legal framework for the Islamist cause despite years of setbacks.

Time and time again, activists established bodies that did not fulfill their goals. In the 1960s, for example, Said Ramadan and CIA money set up a pan-German conference of Muslim organizations that never gained traction and fell by the wayside. In the 1970s Himmat attended the pan-European conference held in London. It, too, never fulfilled its promise. But each effort pushed the ball forward a bit—just as the Muslim World League was created only after numerous failures.

In Europe the proponents of political Islam finally succeeded in creating a viable structure to unite the forces of radical Islam on that continent. By 1989 the group that founded the Munich mosque had become a German-wide body of mosques and

cultural centers renamed the Islamic Community of Germany. It, in turn, helped found the Federation of Islamic Organizations in Europe (FIOE). Together with influential groups in France and Britain, it organized FIOE in classic Muslim Brotherhood fashion: as an umbrella group that would set up more bodies dedicated to the movement's long-term goals.<sup>46</sup> Sure enough, in 1990, FIOE established the Institute for the Study of Human Sciences, which was designed to train imams and Muslim elites, as well as a trust company to raise money for the movement's activities.<sup>47</sup> And in 1997 FIOE set up one of its most influential organizations, the European Council for Fatwa and Research.

As for FIOE itself, it has represented European Muslims in meetings with the Vatican and the European Union. Today it has branches in two dozen European countries and is the only pan-European Muslim organization able to lobby effectively across the continent. This success is the true fulfillment of the Muslim Brotherhood's tentative steps in Munich in the 1950s and '60s.

The Brotherhood's legacy in the West is not so much terrorism—although the Brotherhood has endorsed it over the years and continues to do so in the Middle East—as it is the spread of a narrow version of Islam. The Brotherhood's emphasis on Islam as the one true religion and its embrace of anti-Semitism has hindered, rather than helped, Muslim integration in Western societies. Though it may not be a terrorist group, the Brotherhood arguably creates a milieu that is a perfect breeding ground for terrorists—the us-versus-them mentality, the sense of victimization that is the bedrock of extremism and violence.

Western authorities have been slow to understand this distinction, however. After the 9/11 attacks on New York and Washington in 2001, the U.S. government swung hard against the Brotherhood, calling it a terrorist organization. Nada and Himmat were put on a list of “terrorist financiers,” and the list was endorsed by the United Nations.<sup>48</sup> Both men's bank accounts were frozen and remain so today, even though Swiss prosecutors—despite extensive help from the United States—have been unable to pin any charge on them.<sup>49</sup> The allegations and frozen funds have indeed disrupted the Nada-Himmat axis; Himmat resigned from the head of the Islamic Community of Germany, 29 years after taking control.<sup>50</sup>

But these draconian measures have ended up actually helping the movement. With terrorism charges so far unproven in a court of law, the Brotherhood in the West has been—for some public officials and for many western Muslims—exonerated. As in the 1950s, Western officials are once again becoming infatuated with the Brotherhood. No longer viewed as terrorists, the Brothers are now seen as savvy organizers who might be used as a new secret weapon to control Islam. In this sense, the West has come full circle in dealing with the Brotherhood, from fascination in the '50s, to neglect, and now to a reawakened—and wholly naïve—interest.

## NOTES

1. Brynjar Lia, *The Society of the Muslim Brother of Egypt: The Rise of an Islamic Mass Movement 1928-1942* (Reading: Ithaca, 1998), p. 155.
2. The mosque's history is sketched in Ian Johnson, "The Beachhead," *Wall Street Journal* (12 July 2005): A1. The book will describe the mosque's history in full and include some elements of this paper. It will be published by Harcourt in 2008. Its tentative title is *A Mosque for the Taking*.
3. Bavarian Central State Archives. BayHStA Laflü 1894, 6 August 1956, "Grundsätze für die Betreuung nichtdeutscher Flüchtlinge." Thanks to Stefan Meining for pointing out this document.
4. Georgetown University Special Collections: Diplomacy, International Affairs, Intelligence. Robert. F. Kelley papers, Box 5, Folder 5, 1 December 1959 "Memorandum for the Record."
5. Yusuf al-Qaradawi memoirs, according to 27 December 2005 "History of the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood Part One," <http://www.aawsat.com/english/news.asp?section=3&id=3204>.
6. Reinhard Schulze, *Islamischer Internationalismus im 20. Jahrhundert*. (Leiden: Brill, 1990), pp. 247-8.
7. This is the English transliteration of the Arabic on the magazine's masthead.
8. Schulze, p. 248.
9. Swiss Federal Archives, Bern. BAR E 4320(C) 1994/120, Bd. 220, Dossier (4183:0) 420/36 Ramadan, Said, 1960-1988; 23 September 1970, untitled interview with Ramadan.
10. Swiss police records show he began using a Pakistani pass no later than 1980. BAR 21 February 1980, "Rapport de Wanner—inspecteur."
11. 1 February 2005 interview with Obeidullah Mogaddedi. Mogaddedi also believes Himmat wanted to bring Attar to Munich.
12. 1 June 2005 telephone interview with Ghaleb Himmat.
13. Tariq Ramadan, *Islam, the West and the Challenges of Modernity* (The Islamic Foundation, 2001), p. vii.
14. Registerakten, 18 January 1975, "Protokoll," p. 3.
15. This and other details of his life from 2 June 2004 interview with Youssef Nada.
16. Registerakten, 11 April 1971, "Protokoll."
17. Registerakten, 3 November 1973, "Protokoll."
18. *Impact International* (25 May-7 June 1973): 3.
19. An example of the master-plan theory is Sylvain Besson, *La Conquete de L'Occident: Le Projet Secret des Islamistes* (Seuil, 2005). This book relies on documents found at Nada's home that point to a general plan to spread the Brotherhood's ideology to the West. However, the paper is anonymous and no concrete evidence exists that the plan was ever implemented. Such documents are probably illustrative of the general desire to push the Brotherhood's ideology, but not of an actionable plan to do so.
20. Registerakten, 4 December 1982, "Protokoll."

21. 14 September 2004 interview; all prison dates and biographical information are from this interview.
22. Gilles Kepel, *The Prophet & Pharaoh: Muslim Extremism in Egypt* (London: Al Saqi Books, 1985), especially chapter 4.
23. Muhammad Shafiq, *Growth of Islamic Thought in North America: Focus on Ism'ail Raji al Faruqi* (Brentwood, MA: Amana Publications, 1994), pp. 27-28 for complete list of participants. Thanks to Steve Merley for pointing out this book. There is some speculation that this meeting took place in Nada's home, but Nada denies this (2 June 2004 interview) and Shafiq does not mention it taking place there.
24. Muslim Students Association of U.S. and Canada, "A Little Taste of History," <http://web.archive.org/web/20030217143532/http://msa-natl.org/about/history.html>.
25. United Nations Security Council, Letter dated 12 September 1969 from the permanent representative of Jordan addressed to the president of the security council, <http://domino.un.org/unispal.nsf/0/2aa9c8845de74ebb05256562005c2813?OpenDocument>.
26. Shafiq, p. 28.
27. Nada International Anstalt. Liechtenstein corporate registration, Asat Trust, "Zeichnungerklaerung" and 30 January 1978 "Beschluss;" Barzinji left the company in 1983.
28. Ibid. Barzinji and Altalib joined and left the company at the same time.
29. Registerakten, 3 April 1978, "Protokoll," p. 4. It is not clear if Altalib joined.
30. Italian Intelligence report, The Intelligence and Democratic Security Service SISDE Counterterrorism Division 96ter. 6396 -187-A. Re: "B.J." Operation Rome, 6 April 1996. Nada confirmed that his children were born in the United States in 2 June 2004 interview, saying he had "business interests there."
31. SISDE report; also John Mintz and Douglas Farah, "In Search Of Friends Among the Foes," *Washington Post* (11 September 2004): A01.
32. Antar Ibn-Stanford, "A history of Muslim Student Organizations in America and a model constitution," <http://www.angelfire.com/in/muslimscholars/three.html>.
33. "Islamic Trust to Build Mosque," *Indianapolis Star* (5 May 1977).
34. "Islamic Society of North America" in *Encyclopedia of Indianapolis*.
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40. See, for example, Totonji: <http://web.archive.org/web/20030314125221/http://www.wamy.org/english/conferences/speech6.htm>.
41. BAO-USA “Underground Banking” report from German federal police, the BKA, makes this allegation; Zayat confirmed it in a 19 April 2005 interview.
42. Such as Taibah International (BAO report).
- <sup>1</sup>43. David B. Ottaway, “U.S. Eyes Money Trails of Saudi-Backed Charities,” *Washington Post* (19 August 2004): A01, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A13266-2004Aug18.html>.
44. Esposito studied under Ismail Faruqi, one of the most influential Islamists in the United States; see previous discussion on Faruqi’s role.
45. David B. Ottaway, “U.S. Eyes Money Trails of Saudi-Backed Charities,” *Washington Post*.
46. For a more complete description of the group’s foundation, see Ian Johnson “How Islamic Group’s Ties Reveal Europe’s Challenge,” *Wall Street Journal* (29 December 2005): A1.
47. Ibid.
48. United States Department of the Treasury, <http://www.ustreas.gov/press/releases/po3380.html>.
49. See 31 May 2005 press release by Swiss prosecutor’s office: “Ordonnance de suspension des recherches.”
50. Registerakten, 13 January 2002, no title. In the 1 June 2005 interview, Himmat said he resigned because the U.N. designation meant he was unable to sign checks and unable, therefore, to keep the Islamic Center of Munich open.