The Muslim Brotherhood: Origins, Efficacy, and Reach
By
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The Muslim Brotherhood is the most important Islamic organization in the world, with tentacles of influence everywhere, both in the Islamic world but also in the West, wherever its purpose— the establishment of a Sharia-enforcing caliphate—can be achieved. The efficacy of this group can be seen in the fact that, less than a century ago, when it was founded, it consisted of very few members; it was violent and eventually crushed and outlawed; today in Egypt, a MB leader, Muhammad Morsi, sits on the throne of the Middle East's most strategic nation, ironically in the name of democracy, where he is trying to enable the totality of Sharia law in Egypt, even as many resist.

History and Approach

The story of the Muslim Brotherhood, as with many other stories dealing with Islamic importance, begins in Egypt—which still serves as something of a paradigm of the group's strategies and approach in general. Hassan al-Banna (1906-1949), the son of a mosque imam and Sheikh of the Hanbali school of law, founded the Muslim Brotherhood. Hassan incorporated Sufi views, which tend to be more moderate and which teach, among other things, pragmatism and patience. Of course, in an Islamic context pragmatism and patience can easily take on the form of *taqiyya*[1] and *tawriya*[2]—Islamic doctrines that instruct Muslims to deceive when it is perceived to be in Islam's interest—and may well explain how Banna came to develop the Muslim Brotherhood's way of operating, to be discussed further below.

A school teacher and imam, Banna was reportedly very charismatic and pivotal to the subsequent growth of the movement, which, when he started it in 1922, consisted of only a handful of members but had burgeoned to half a million in as little as little as ten years. Banna did one thing that not only gave rise and prominence to the Muslim Brotherhood, but all Islamist organizations as well—including al-Qaeda, which is currently headed by Ayman Zawahiri, a onetime Muslim Brotherhood member: he helped politicize Islam at a time when it was seen at best as a personal matter, in much the same way modern-day Westerners view religion.

To understand this, one must understand the history of the Middle East. A few centuries after the chaotic times of the Islamic conquests, Islamic law, or Sharia (etymologically related to the words meaning "way" and "road") was developed and held sway over Islamic lands, in this case Egypt for centuries. Thus, in this sense, Islam, from a historical point of view, has in fact wholly permeated the politics of Islamic law. For example, courts were all ruled according to Sharia dictates; the caliph, again, according to Sharia, was obligated to wage war, or *jihad*, on his non-Muslim neighbors; and so forth.

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[1] Raymond Ibrahim, "How Taqiyya Alters Islam's Rules of War. Defeating Jihadist Terrorism", *Middle East Quarterly*, Winter 2010, pp. 3-13, http://www.meforum.org/2538/taqiyya-islam-rules-of-war.
[2] Raymond Ibrahim, "Tawriya: New Islamic Doctrine Permits 'Creative Lying'", February 28, 2012, http://www.raymondibrahim.com/from-the-arab-world/tawriya-lying/.

However, a new thing happened in 1798: a Frenchman—an infidel, Napoleon—invaded and conquered Egypt. This heralded a new paradigm—that the infidel West (then and often now seen as Christendom) was stronger, and thus better, than the Islamic world. To appreciate this idea fully, one must first understand that, since the time of the Muslim prophet Muhammad, the veracity of Islam and its Sharia have been tied to its temporal success, its ability to aggrandize and enrich its followers with land and warbooty, including slaves.

When Muhammad was just a "prophet" preaching to the Arabs, he spent a decade with nothing but a handful of followers. But when he styled himself as a warlord, attacking and plundering those who did not accept him as a prophet, and thereby acquiring many victories and even more war booty for his growing number of followers, Arabians acquiesced to him and his message. Thus, from the start, the veracity of the prophet was tied to his military and temporal successes. The Islamic conquests, whereby Islam's invading armies conquered much of the Old World— from India in the east to Spain in the west—were especial proof that the Islamic way, the Sharia, was the right way. The West's conquest and subsequent colonization shook this paradigm to its core, causing the majority of nominal Muslims to turn to the West and essentially westernize.

Accordingly, in the colonial era, and even when Muslims ruled Egypt, lots of reforms were made, the *jizya* was abolished, and political Islam lost its influence. Even if Islam was given formal respect, no self-respecting Egyptian would invoke the Sharia as a way to govern people; they adopted and promoted Western forms—in governance, politics, and even dress and culture. In early 20th century Egypt, especially in the cities, the hijab, or female veil, was a rare oddity. Today it is ubiquitous.

To appreciate this great change, consider the following anecdote. A rare video shows President Gamel Abdel Nasser speaking before a large assembly, and explaining to them how back in 1953 he wanted to cooperate with the Muslim Brotherhood, and met with its leader. According to Nasser, the very first demand of the Brotherhood leader was for the hijab to return to Egypt, "for every woman walking in the street to wear a headscarf." The audience erupted in laughter at this, then, ludicrous demand; one person hollered "Let him wear it!" eliciting more laughter and applause. Nasser continued by saying he told the Brotherhood leader that if they enforced the *hijab*, people would say Egypt had returned to the dark ages (to more laughter), adding that Egyptians should uphold such matters in the privacy of their own homes.

Such was the Egypt that Banna and others inherited. To overcome nearly two centuries of westernization, whereby most Egyptians knew little more about Islam than the five pillars, if that, Banna politicized Islam, making it as it once was. However, he and his followers eventually realized that their message would only resonate if: 1) they took a grass-roots approach to mobilizing Muslims—an approach which inevitably took longer, in this case decades, almost a century, but which as we are seeing has yielded great fruit, and 2) they instituted activism and propaganda, which eventually led to a complex, multi-layered organization, with members from all walks of life, from peasants to professionals . The Muslim Brotherhood took advantage of pre-existing Islamic organizations—politicizing them, Islamizing them, and mobilizing them. Accordingly, many businesses, schools, and other organizations became attached to the Brotherhood, either formally or informally, as they continue to do to this day. Decades of this,

further fueled by the group's humanitarian work with laypeople, led to an immense sense of loyalty to the group and always attracted new recruits.

No matter how humanitarian or social, Banna's message, and the Brotherhood's, was/is always couched in Islamic terms. Whether talking about colonialism, health-related issues, education, or nationalism, everything was articulated through an Islamic framework, subtly re-Islamizing the average Egyptian's worldview. Major themes always hammered out included the loss of the caliphate, the weakness of the fragmented Islamic world, and the need to revive the caliphate and enforce Sharia law—which was and is always portrayed as the supreme guide to justice and fair dealing.

It is significant to note that, though several General Guides of the Muslim Brotherhood have come and gone since Banna, the latter's overall strategy and tactics have generally remained fixed, depending on the vicissitudes of the times, and the MB's capacities and position vis-à-vis its opponents. To be sure, and perhaps inevitably, the MB, once it became relatively powerful, did engage in terror attacks, especially against the Nasser government, and ended up being outlawed. Banna himself was killed by government forces in 1949.

Due to its popularity, the MB was briefly legalized again, but only as a religious organization, and then banned again in 1954 due to its non-stop insistence that Egypt be governed under Sharia. Egyptian officials were assassinated, with attempts on Nasser's life as well. The government retaliated swiftly, outlawing the group, imprisoning and torturing thousands of members, while others fled to sympathetic nations, especially Wahhabi Saudi Arabia.

A few of the greatest MB leaders and agitators were also executed at this time. One member who was executed under Gamal in 1966 is of special note: Sayyid Qutb—today known as the "godfather" of modern Islamism. Perhaps no figure has impacted the modern Islamist movement as this man, who wrote prolifically and voluminously especially during his incarceration, producing two "classics" that are today still staples of any serious Islamist or *jihadi*: (in translation) *In the Shade of the Quran* (a multi-volume exegesis) and *Sign Posts*, a short primer that very well captures the phase-by-phase approach of the Muslim Brotherhood, the need to use both prudence and act only according to the reality on the ground, the chances of success. While Qutb stressed the need for stages, he also popularized the *jihadi* movement by arguing that the Islamic world was not sufficiently Islamic and thus needed a *jihadi* vanguard to overthrow *jahiliyya*, or the pre-Islamic state of ignorance the Muslim world was currently in.

According to the 9/11 Commission Report[3], "Three basic themes emerge from Qutb's writings. First, he claimed that the world was beset with barbarism, licentiousness, and unbelief (a condition he called *jahiliyya*, the religious term for the period of ignorance prior to the revelations given to the prophet Mohammed). Qutb argued that humans can choose only between Islam and *jahiliyya*. Second, he warned that more people, including Muslims, were attracted to *jahiliyya* and its material comforts than to his view of Islam; *jahiliyya* could therefore triumph over Islam. Third, no middle ground exists in what Qutb conceived as a struggle

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[3] National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, *9/11 Commission Report*, Chapter 2, http://govinfo.library.unt.edu/911/report/911Report_Ch2.htm.

between God and Satan. All Muslims—as he defined them—therefore must take up arms in this fight. Any Muslim who rejects his ideas is just one more nonbeliever worthy of destruction."

The influence of the Muslim Brotherhood's Qutb's writings cannot be underestimated, as they are quoted regularly by modern-day Islamists. Even al-Qaeda leader Zawahiri regularly quotes Qutb in his writings. Due to Qutb's popularity with terrorists, the Brotherhood's leadership eventually distanced itself from him, openly advocating instead a non-violent "reformist" strategy from within, which it has followed ever since.

Due to the popularity of the MB—those many decades of cultivating Egyptian society were not for nothing—Nasser's successor, Anwar al-Sadat, released a great many of their number from the prisons and promised to institute Sharia in Egypt, leading to the introduction of the Second Article of the Egyptian Constitution, which made Islamic law (Sharia) the principal source of jurisprudence. (Ironically it is this matter concerning the Constitution and how Islamic it will be that has created a major rift in Egyptian society today, with Muslim Brotherhood President Muhammad Morsi—and all Islamist factions—pushing for an even greater role for Islam, and portraying as "infidels" and "apostates" all who would resist.)

Even so, Sadat's gesture to Sharia was not enough: after he signed a peace treaty with Israel, the Brotherhood and other Islamic groups constantly agitated against him and he was shortly thereafter assassinated in 1981. In the Mubarak era the group was once again formally outlawed even as independent members were allowed in parliament. But both containment and appeasement were too late: the revivalist spirit of Islam was in the air; banning or arresting individuals was not enough.

Accordingly, after nearly a century of Islamic activism and propaganda by the Muslim Brotherhood, the Egyptian worldview that for some generations had been emulating the West as the path to success has diminished by degrees, decade after decade, slowly becoming more Islamic in orientation. With the 2011 revolt in Egypt, which started with moderates and secularists seeking true democracy, all Islamists were released from the prisons—including Egypt's current president—and they now dominate the life of the nation. For the first time, then, not only is the Brotherhood fueling society from a grass-roots level, but from a top-down approach.

Goals, Objectives, and Other Islamists

What is the ultimate goal of the Muslim Brotherhood? Although many Islamic groups have developed since the inception of the MB, many of them born of it, it is significant to note that, by and large, all Sunni Islamic organizations—including al-Qaeda and the Taliban—want the same thing the Brotherhood does: Sharia-enforcing caliphate. They differ primarily on how this goal is to be achieved. Consider the MB's slogan: "Allah is our objective; the Quran is our law; the Prophet is our leader; Jihad is our way; and death for the sake of Allah is the highest of our aspirations."

This credo represents a statement that even the most radical, *jihadi* Muslim would embrace, for it captures all the essentials of radical and *jihadi* Islam, the sort of Islam practiced by terrorist organizations.

Similarly, the Brotherhood's English language website describes the "principles of the Muslim Brotherhood" as including firstly the introduction of the Islamic Sharia as "the basis for controlling the affairs of state and society";and secondly work to unify "Islamic countries and states, mainly among the Arab states, and liberating them from foreign imperialism." In other words, working to unite the Muslim world under a caliphate which it still openly insists is its ultimate goal. Indeed, not too long ago, Muhammad Badi', the current General Guide of the Brotherhood, openly declared[4] that "The Imam [Bana] delineated transitional goals and detailed methods to achieve this greatest objective, starting by reforming the individual, followed by building the family, the society, the government, and then a rightly guided caliphate and finally mastership of the world."

This idea of "transitional goals" and objectives for every stage is captured very well by the Brotherhood's vision and is very easily captured by the one word that appears under the Muslim Brotherhood banner of two swords crossed over the Koran, "prepare"—a word taken from Koran 8:60: "And *prepare* against them whatever you are able of power and of steeds of war by which you may terrorize the enemy of Allah and your enemy and others besides them whom you do not know [but] whom Allah knows. And whatever you spend in the cause of Allah will be fully repaid to you, and you will not be wronged."

In short, the Muslim Brotherhood is dedicated to preparing the way for the coming of the caliphate—which, if history is any indicator, is much more problematic than any one, single Islamic state or terrorist organization: all Islamic conquests of non-Muslim, mostly Christian lands occurred under caliphates, including the Umayyad, Abbasid, and of course, the Turkish Ottoman State.

Now that we have explored some of the history and doctrines of the Muslim Brotherhood, some relevant questions are in order. First, comprehending the motives of the Muslim Brotherhood continues to be difficult for people in the West, whose epistemology for centuries has always separated the realm of religion from the realm of politics. Is the Muslim Brotherhood a political group, or is it a religious group? Such questions plague the West. The fact is, it is both—for in Islam, historically and doctrinally, Islam *is* politics. The word "sharia" simply means "way", that is, the Islamic way of conducting affairs. It governs every aspect of the believer's life (in Islam, all possible acts are classified according to five categories: obligatory, recommended, permissible, not recommended, and forbidden). Muslim authorities are deemed legitimate or illegitimate based primarily on whether they enforce Sharia on society or not. In fact, this has historically been the grievance that the various Islamist and *jihadi* groups—beginning with the Brotherhood—have had against the ruling governments and regimes of their respective nations— that they have not been enforcing Sharia law in society.

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[4] Raymond Ibrahim, "Muslim Brotherhood Declares 'Mastership of World' as Ultimate Goal", Middle East Forum, January 12, 2012, http://www.meforum.org/3151/muslim-brotherhood-world-mastership.

It bears repeating: the overarching goal of all Islamist and *jihadi* groups the world over is the establishment of "Allah's rule" on earth. From its inception, this has also been the Muslim Brotherhood's goal—hence the reason it is heavily involved in politics. The primary disagreement more violent Islamists and *jihadis* have with the Brotherhood has to do with tactics—not the overall vision which they all share: establishment, enforcement, and then spread of Sharia law. *Jihadis* have long argued that, by (at least formally) disavowing violence—that is, *jihad*—and instead participating in politics in order to achieve power and implement Sharia, the Muslim Brotherhood has betrayed the call to *jihad*. For instance, Ayman al-Zawahiri, the current leader of al-Qaeda, was also a former Muslim Brotherhood member when he was fifteen years old. However, he was soon lured by the call to *jihad*, abandoned the group, and joined more radical groups in Egypt, including Al-Gam'a Al-Islamiyya (the "Islamic Group") and Islamic Jihad.

Ayman al-Zawahiri is an interesting case in point concerning the tactics of the Brotherhood and its detractors. Many years after he quit the Brotherhood in the late 1960s when he was a teenager, Zawahiri wrote an entire book criticizing the Muslim Brotherhood. Titled *Al Hissad Al Murr,* or "The Bitter Harvest", Zawahiri argued that the Brotherhood "takes advantage of the Muslim youths' fervor by bringing them into the fold only to store them in a refrigerator. Then, they steer their one-time passionate, Islamic zeal for *jihad* to conferences and elections…. And not only have the Brothers been idle from fulfilling their duty of fighting to the death, but they have gone as far as to describe the infidel governments as legitimate, and have joined ranks with them in the ignorant style of governing, that is, democracies, elections, and parliaments."

Ironically, however, for all his scathing remarks against them, time has revealed that the Muslim Brotherhood's strategy of slowly infiltrating society by a grass-roots approach has been much more effective than Zawahiri's and al-Qaeda's *jihadi* terror. The Brotherhood's patience and perseverance, by playing the political game, co-opting Western language and paradigms, formally disavowing violence and *jihad*, have turned it into a legitimate player in the eyes of many, to the point that the U.S. government has become supportive of it, even though it was once banned. Yet this does not make the Brotherhood's goals any less troubling. For instance, in July 2012, Safwat Hegazy, a popular preacher and Brotherhood member, boasted that the Brotherhood will be "masters of the world, one of these days."[5] Likewise, according to Kamil al-Najjar, who left the Muslim Brotherhood and is currently living under threat of death, "They are trying to deceive the people and they have managed to deceive a lot of Western politicians into believing in them. Their only aim is to control the world with Islam. They know they cannot use force to convert the West, so they use deceit." Even Gamal al-Banna, the brother of the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, had harsh words for the movement his brother founded, saying it totally rejects freedom[6].

Egypt's Salafis—who are identical to al-Qaeda and other radical Muslims in that they seek literally to emulate the 7th century Muslim prophet Muhammed and the earliest Muslims, who were quite violent and intolerant—are another case in point. Released from the jails and now in parliaments around the Arab world, following the "Arab Spring", Salafis represent the al-Qaeda-

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[5] Raymond Ibrahim, "Muslim Brotherhood: 'Yes, We Will Be Masters Of The World'", July 28, 2012, http://www.raymondibrahim.com/from-the-arab-world/muslim-brotherhood-yes-we-will-be-masters-of-the-world/.
[6] See this video: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mTVBohQKfh4.

type Muslims who, while initially contemptuous of the Brotherhood's political game of patience, have seen the rewards the Brotherhood has nonetheless earned, and thus are also trying to "moderate" their approach, leading to some incongruous moments. Thus, while the Salafi Nour ("Light") Party ran in Egypt's elections, engaged in democracy, and otherwise played the political game, they rarely hid the fact that they saw democracy and elections as a contemptible means to one end—Sharia law. Thus, one Salafi cleric appears on video telling Muslims to commit voter fraud if they can to see that an Islamist candidate wins; another portrayed elections as a jihad, saying that whoever dies during voting becomes a martyr. Unlike the Brotherhood, whose members have learned to master the art of *taqiyya* over the course of decades (dissembling has become almost second nature to them), the Salafis—who share the same ideology as al-Qaeda (that is, that open Islam must be practiced now, with force if necessary) have still not fully learned to play the game, and are simply too honest concerning their designs.

It is perhaps ironic that the Brotherhood's greatest opponents at the current time are not Western governments or human rights groups but Egyptians themselves, including a great many Muslims. Western analysts—here I speak of those who understand the threat of the Muslim Brotherhood— sometimes forget that, whatever the Brotherhood's goals are, to a great many of those Egyptians supportive of the group, they see something entirely different. To them, Islam is goodness, and Sharia is justice—so what is so bad about wanting to implement Sharia, as the Brotherhood has long maintained? This is why Muhammad Morsi received slightly more than 50% of Egypt's vote (and that is with widespread allegations of voter fraud). Many Egyptians, used to the humanitarian side of the Brotherhood—as mentioned, like its Hamas offshoot, the Brotherhood won many people over by its social programs—did not think of an overtly Islamist agenda; or, if they did, to their minds an Islamist agenda meant goodness and justice not wholly unlike in the Western sense (which of course many Muslims are still influenced by).

However, mere months after Morsi became president, he began replacing many key governmental and media positions with Brotherhood members. Worse, he introduced a new Constitution that had a strong Islamist element. Many critics pointed out that the wording was always ambiguous, but in all cases, Sharia was portrayed as the ultimate arbitrator in several aspects. Accordingly, Egyptians rose up against Morsi, in protest after protest—arguing that Egypt is not a "Brotherhood organization" to be run like one. At one point, the forcefulness of the attacks drove him from the presidential palace under the cover of dark. Watching some of the videos of average people in the streets is eye-opening. Many of them say things like "May I have died when I voted for you Morsi!" and much more derogatory statements not fit to publish. The main reason such Egyptians are disgusted with Morsi has less to do with Islamism and more to do with the fact that Egyptians are still suffering economically and socially, in fact even worse than under Mubarak. Accordingly, Morsi is increasingly seen as more interested in empowering his group and the Islamist agenda than he is in the betterment of Egypt—as well captured by the previous Brotherhood's General Guide who once declared "the hell with Egypt", indicating that the interests of Egypt are second to the interests of Islam.

The Arab Spring

This leads to the questions of the Arab Spring—which was pivotally important for the empowerment of the Muslim Brotherhood: What was it? Who was behind it? How and why did

the Muslim Brotherhood most benefit from it?   All evidence indicates that the Muslim Brotherhood had very little to do with the beginnings of the January 25 2011 revolution of Egypt, which saw the ousting of 30-years-long ruler Hosni Mubarak. Indeed, in the early stages, the Muslim Brotherhood leadership forbade young members from participating in the revolt—although many did so anyway. There is even a video of President Muhammad Morsi, in the early stages of the revolution, mocking it, saying "What do you think you'll achieve?"[7]

The reason for this reticence was, of course, not because of any great love for Mubarak, but rather because the Brotherhood likely thought that Mubarak would ultimately prevail, quash the revolution, and then quietly target all those leaders who participated. The Obama administration seems also to have shared this view, for it originally expressed support[8] for Mubarak during the early days of the protest, though it later abandoned him.

The Egyptian Revolution, which followed the Tunisian revolution, was fundamentally a product of the huge frustration of the average Egyptian, especially regarding the immensely poor economic conditions, where many college graduates could not and cannot get a simple job—certainly not one to enable settling down and starting a family, which, in Egyptian society, is the norm. However, the only group outside the government that was so well organized and prepared to exploit the situation was the Muslim Brotherhood—the primary oppositional group to the government for decades. Many relatively new Egyptian secular parties, for example, complained that presidential and parliamentary elections were conducted too soon after the fall of Mubarak for them to properly mobilize and campaign. But the Brotherhood was ready. Moreover, as mentioned earlier, the idea of Islam as the immediate solution for all of Egypt's woes had become very popular among especially the less educated Egyptians—who make up the majority of the nation. Nor did the U.S. State Department's meddling help. As Andrew McCarthy[9] put it, Hillary Clinton did "her part to help the Muslim Brotherhood", by pressuring the military to surrender power and portraying its delay to proclaim a winner as "clearly troubling"— words better reserved for the Muslim Brotherhood's anti-democratic tactics.

The Muslim Brotherhood's Reach and Presence

Both formally but especially informally, the Brotherhood's reach is immense. Two reasons account for this: 1) as the oldest and best organized Muslim organization, it has had ample time and experience to expand, network, and propagate its message around the world and 2) the message it is propagating is usually not seen by Muslims as a "Brotherhood" message but rather an Islamic message, hence its popularity and appeal.

This is an important point that needs to be kept in mind as we explore some of the regions where the Brotherhood is present and influencing society. Because its goals are one and the same with all other Islamists—resurrection of a caliphate and enforcement of Islamic law—it often works

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[7] Coptic Solidarity, "President Morsi Originally Mocked Egyptian Revolution", 28 January 2013, http://www.copticsolidarity.org/cs-releases/1155-president-morsi-originally-mocked-egyptian-revolution.
[8] Paul Joseph Watson, "Obama Administration Expresses Support For Mubarak As Protester Shot Dead In Egypt", January 28, 2011, http://www.prisonplanet.com/obama-administration-expresses-support-for-mubarak-as-protester-shot-dead-in-egypt.html.
[9] Raymond Ibrahim, "Did the Muslim Brotherhood Really Win the Presidency in Egypt?", October 31, 2012, http://frontpagemag.com/2012/raymond-ibrahim/did-the-muslim-brotherhood-really-win-the-presidency-in-egypt/.

in unison with other Islamic organizations, making it especially difficult to determine when an organization is a Brotherhood outfit and when it is simply a likeminded ally. This phenomenon occurs also with *jihadi* organizations: all too often individual *jihadis* are in the West conflated with al-Qaeda, under the assumption that all who engage in *jihadi* activities are al-Qaeda members. Yet often the reality is that there is no affiliation—except, of course, in ideology and tactics. Likewise, although many Islamic organizations maintain close symbolic and ideological ties with the Muslim Brotherhood, they remain largely autonomous.

The heart of the Muslim Brotherhood is also the region it was born: Egypt, which represents the core of the movement. The second layer of presence and influence is the region nearest to Egypt, the Middle East, especially Lebanon, Syria, Sudan, Jordan, Iraq, the PA territories, and even throughout the Arabian Peninsula. The third and most recent—and perhaps the most important—region is the West, Europe and North America. Altogether, it is believed that the Brotherhood is present in some 70 countries around the world.

We have already examined the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. As for its next layer of presence and influence, the Middle East, especially those countries closest to Egypt, the following are some of the more important areas where the Brotherhood is known to exist and operate. It is important to note that, as in Egypt, many of these Brotherhood affiliates were founded in direct opposition to the ruling regimes of their respective countries, portrayed as the "moral", "Islamic" substitute for the "secular", "westernized", and, in short, corrupt ruling regimes:

Arabian Peninsula: many Brotherhood members, after being driven out of Egypt in the 1950s and afterwards, found sympathizers and asylum in the Gulf nations. Many of them settled there, influencing those societies, especially by agitating against the authorities. For example, in Saudi Arabia, Brotherhood members formed the Awakening (Sahwa) group, which challenged the legitimacy of the Saudi crown. In nations such as the United Arab Emirates and Qatar, Brotherhood members exploited the media presence there, most notably Al Jazeera, to influence Muslims both in and beyond the region with the Brotherhood narrative and propaganda. Brotherhood members have also, as in Egypt, gained many seats in parliaments throughout the Gulf. For example, in Kuwait, through the Hadas movement; in Yemen through the Islah movement; and in Bahrain through the Minbar party, which, since 2002, has been the largest elected party. Saudi Interior Minister Prince Nayef denounced the Brotherhood[10], saying it was guilty of "betrayal of pledges and ingratitude" and was "the source of all problems in the Islamic world". On the other hand, many Brotherhood members and their descendants who settled in the Peninsula were themselves further radicalized by Saudi Arabia's ultra-Islamic, Wahhabi worldview, bringing it back with them to Egypt and their other countries of origin. The Salafis seem to be the hybrid result of Egyptian Brotherhood mentality mixed with Saudi Wahhabism. Again, this points to the symbiotic relationship that exists between all Islamic groups, for they are all ultimately rooted in the same immutable sources: the Koran and the teachings of Muhammad, as captured in the Hadith, and relayed in the Sunna.

Iraq: under Saddam Hussein, the Iraqi Islamic Party—the largest Sunni Islamic political party and a branch of the Muslim Brotherhood—was banned in the 1960s and forced underground for

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[10] John Mintz and Douglas Farah, "In Search Of Friends Among The Foes. U.S. Hopes to Work With Diverse Group", September 11, 2004, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A12823-2004Sep10.html.

its religious agitations. It reemerged soon after the U.S. toppled Hussein, and has since been a harsh critic of the U.S. while simultaneously taking part in government and in the transitional process.

Iran: although a predominately Shia Muslim country, and the Muslim Brotherhood is Sunni in doctrine, it is clear that the Muslim Brotherhood, the modern-day pioneers of political Islam, have influenced the Shia of Iran. For example, Nava Safari, who founded Fada'iyan-e Islam[11], an Iranian Islamic organization active in Iran in the 1940s and 50s, was highly impressed by the Muslim Brotherhood. From 1945 to 1951 the Fadain assassinated several high level Iranian personalities and officials who they believed to be un-Islamic, including anti-clerical writer Ahmad Kasravi, Premier Haj Ali Razmara, former Premier Abdolhossein Hazhir and Education and Culture Minister Ahmad Zangeneh. Again, it must be stressed that, even within the Sunni-Shia divide, which is very real, much cooperation exists, specifically in the context of resurrecting a caliphate and enforcing Sharia. The prevailing logic is that the greater enemy is the infidel (U.S., Israel, etc.), and that it is beneficial for all Muslims to work together for their subjugation. Then they may resume their internal struggle for overall mastery.

Jordan: the Brotherhood is represented by the Islamic Action Front, which was founded in the 1940s and has deeply influenced segments of society trough charity, propaganda, and indoctrination. At various times, and under various leaders, it has vacillated between militancy—often influenced by Palestinian elements—and the Brotherhood's hallmark approach of patience and perseverance, working with the Hashemite rulers. To be sure, during the 2011 uprisings, the group became much more assertive. Having failed, it has now slipped back into the diplomatic course, calling for internal, peaceful reforms.

In North Africa, west of Egypt, the Brotherhood's existence has again been positioned in the context of resisting secular/corrupt rulers, this time, the colonial powers themselves. For example, in Algeria, Brotherhood members took part in the nation's war of independence from France. Due to their calls for Sharia, they were eventually marginalized by the secular FLN party. In Tunisia, the Brotherhood has had a strong impact on that nation's Islamists, particularly al-Nahda, which was formed in 1989 and was largely inspired by the Brotherhood. Since the Tunisian revolution, al-Nahda has received widespread support, and is the new government's most influential voice. In Libya, Brotherhood members have been present since at least the 1940s, when King Idris offered them refuge from Egypt. After Colonel Gaddafi seized power, he, like all other Arab leaders, seeing the threat of the Brotherhood, worked hard to eliminate them. However, they maintained a presence there, and most notably were involved in the opposition that overthrew Gaddafi.

PA Territories: Hamas, which maintains a militant, *jihadi* wing, is a Brotherhood offshoot, founded during the First Intifada in 1987. Like its parent organization, it quickly became popular with the Palestinian people in large part because of its charitable services. And like its parent organization, over the years it has managed to indoctrinate the average Palestinian Muslim through its propaganda. While Hamas is dedicated to the elimination of the state of Israel, in fact this objective ties in very well with the overall objective of the Muslim Brotherhood: the global resurrection of a caliphate. After all, any number of Muslims—including many influential

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[11] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fada%27iyan-e_Islam.

Egyptian Brotherhood members—maintain that the seat of the caliphate must be Jerusalem. Thus, even though an organization like Hamas seems to be engaged in a "different" endeavor—the elimination of Israel—in fact, this objective corresponds very well to Brotherhood objectives, and is seen as just one more necessary phase.

Syria: the Brotherhood has been present there for decades and, after the Ba'th party took over in 1963, it became the main Sunni opposition force against the Alawite Assad clan. Resonating with the Sunni majority of Syria, the Brotherhood in many ways spearheaded a violent revolt against the then President Hafiz Assad. However, it was crushed in the 1982 Hama uprising. Afterwards, the group was largely politically inactive in the country, although it maintained a strong support network there—a perfect example of the difficulties involved in determining who a formal Brotherhood affiliate is, and who simply shares their exact worldview, and thus is a natural ally and affiliate. The ongoing uprisings against Assad have a strong Brotherhood element, especially among the Islamist/Salafi factions. A recent Washington Post[12] article describes the Brotherhood as playing a "dominant" role.

Sudan: the Brotherhood maintains a significant, though informal, presence, and has played an important role in the mass Islamization campaigns the Khartoum regime has carried out, often in the context of genocide. Brotherhood members make up a large part of the current Khartoum regime, following the 1989 coup d'état by General Omar Hassan al-Bashir[13]. The National Islamic Front (originally the Islamic Chart Front) which grew during the 1960s, with Islamic scholar Hasan al-Turabi[14] becoming its Secretary General in 1964, is a Brotherhood offshoot.

As for the third layer of the Muslim Brotherhood—its newest and perhaps most important layer of presence—the West, in Europe, formerly Christendom, and home of the original infidel *par excellence*, the Brotherhood has made great strides in recent years, growing as it has with the large influx of Muslim immigrants and their offspring in Europe. It operates often under the umbrella of other Muslim organizations, which appear innocuous, such as the Federation of Islamic Organizations in Europe, the Forum of European Muslim Youth and Student Organizations, and the European Council for Fatwa and Research. The group is also involved in setting up a vast and sophisticated network of mosques, schools, and Islamic charities.

Russia: the Muslim Brotherhood is banned there.

United States: the Brotherhood is also in America, where, according to one captured document, the Brotherhood "understand their work in America is a grand jihad in eliminating and destroying Western civilization from within and sabotaging its miserable house by their hands so that Allah's religion [Islam] is victorious over all religions." Accordingly, the Brotherhood has founded and/or works under the cover of several prominent Muslim organizations in America, including the Council on American-Islam Relations ("CAIR"), the Muslim Students' Association

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[12] Liz Sly, "Syria's Muslim Brotherhood is gaining influence over anti-Assad revolt", Washington Post, May 12, 2012, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/syrias-muslim-brotherhood-is-gaining-influence-over-anti-assad-revolt/2012/05/12/gIQAtIoJLU_story.html.
[13] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Omar_Hassan_al-Bashir.
[14] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hasan_al-Turabi.

(MSA), the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA), the Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA), and the Muslim American Society (MAS).

With lots of funding and organization, and a Western willingness to dialogue with Muslims, the Brotherhood has naturally taken over, and received much legitimacy from European governments, convinced as they are that, by giving the most prominent Muslim organizations much representation, Westerners are demonstrating their "tolerance".

The Muslim Brotherhood is the most organized of Muslim organizations; its ultimate goals—establishment of caliphate and enforcement of Sharia—are shared with all Islamists; its tactics of patience and perseverance—and of course dissembling—have proven themselves more effective than violent jihadi tactics; and it is now widely described as a "moderate" organization (indeed, one U.S. official absurdly referred to it as a "secular"[15] organization) and it is thus seen as a legitimate player by many Western governments. There is no doubt that the Brotherhood will continue spearheading the Islamist movement around the world, gaining more and more recruits, both formal and informal, as it edges closer to realizing its ultimate goals.

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[15] FoxNews.com, "Obama Administration Corrects Clapper's Claim That Muslim Brotherhood Is 'Secular'", February 10, 2011, http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2011/02/10/administration-corrects-dni-clapper-claim-muslim-brotherhood-secular/.