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The Society of the Muslim Brothers – An Islamist Political Party? Participation in a Confined Political System

ELISABETA-CRISTINA DINU

Founded by Hassan Al-Banna¹ in 1928, the Society of the Muslim Brothers grew from organized groups of activist students². Concerned with capturing the hearts and minds of the Egyptian educated youth, it arose from within the predominant social cleavage. By the turn of the twentieth century, the central issue of Egyptian identity revolved around two opinion blocks: *the modernists*, whom argued that renaissance was possible only through adopting western values and benefitting from their social, cultural and political products – the solution was the rule of law and secularization; and *the Islamic revivalists* whom considered that Egyptians could benefit from western technological advancements, while concomitantly reinforce Islamic values and liberate Egypt from foreign occupation. Islamic scholars feared “that the liberal secular camp aimed to replicate Atatürk’s national model in Egypt”³, viewing the long Ottoman inheritance as a symbol of the legitimate persistence of Islam in politics.

Springing from “that particular temporal and geographic context”⁴, the party was to grow from Al-Banna’s eagerness to spread the teachings of Islam, the Ikhwan’s Islamist nature becoming an outcome of both the country’s historical context and confessional structure.

THE MASS PARTY

After he graduated, Al-Banna was assigned to teach in Isma’iliyya. He became an informal leader in the community and extended his activism,

¹ Hassan Al-Banna was the son of the ma’dhun, imam and teacher of Buhayra, a small province of Mahmudiyya; he gained a traditional education that culminated with his studies at the Dar al-‘Ulum University in Cairo.

² Groups of activist students were organized by Al-Banna both in the Dar al-‘Ulum and Al-Azhaar University.

³ Gary Wood, Virginia Tech, Tugrul Keskin (eds), *Sociology of Islam*, Brill, UK, 2013, p. 6.

⁴ Richard Gunther, Larry Diamond, “Species of Political Parties A New Typology”, *Party Politics*, vol. 9, no. 2, 2003, p. 171.

mastering direct communication with people⁵, while seeking to penetrate as many sectors of the society. While focusing on the local sources of power⁶, the first mass party dimensions were contoured: the infiltration into the local social groups and the creation of extensive arrays of supportive organizations.

Whilst Al-Banna focused on his activism in Isma'iliyya, he did not forget the student circles he organized in Cairo, and maintained contact “with his friends with whom he had pledged himself to serve the message of Islam”⁷ – from its infancy, the Society possessed political parties’ dimensions: “permanent organization at the local level, with regularized communications and other relationships between units; was concerned with seeking followers at the polls or in some manner strived for popular support”⁸. The organization also performed specific political party functions: articulated to its followers the concepts and meanings of the broader community⁹ and it was intimately involved in recruitment and the selection of future opinion leaders¹⁰. In the first three years of its existence, the Society endeavored the enlargement of its membership; soon, it had headquarters in Isma'iliyya¹¹ and a large base of permanently active dues-paying members that made efforts “to disseminate the party’s ideology and establish an active membership base”¹². The rural environment was favorable for gathering adherents by the activation of the disenfranchised elements of society. The interwar period marked the beginning of the production of statistical data¹³, breaching *the peasant question*: public intellectuals evoked images of rural decay and criminality that could only be answered through social reform, to achieve *rural renaissance*. A complex of new values had to be introduced, since some contemporary views blamed rural poverty on peasant culture. New moral and social education was the solution.

⁵ Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, *The Muslim Brotherhood: Evolution of an Islamist Movement*, Princeton University Press, Kindle Edition, p. 21.

⁶ The local sources of power were the Ulama, the sheikhs of the Sufi orders, the leading families and the social and religious societies.

⁷ Richard P. Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1993, p. 7.

⁸ Joseph LaPalombara, Myron Weiner (eds), *Political Parties and Political Development*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1966, p. 6.

⁹ Articulated to its followers the concepts and meanings of the broader community even if the ultimate aim was to modify them profoundly or even destroy the broader community and replace it with something else.

¹⁰ Joseph LaPalombara, Myron Weiner (eds), *Political Parties...cit.*

¹¹ The building that represented the headquarters of the Society was purchased out of funds coming from local contributors, including the Suez Canal Company.

¹² Richard Gunther, Larry Diamond, “Species of Political Parties...cit.”, p. 178.

¹³ Statistical data regarding peasantry crime and the use of addictive substances among peasants was gathered and soon linked with other social ills, such as literacy. In interwar Egypt literacy levels were very low and progress was minimal. Little more than 10% of the Egyptian population was literate in 1920, reaching only 15% before WW2.

As Inglehart and Norris argue, “the poorest societies¹⁴ live with much greater vulnerability to forces that threaten their existence, so they're more likely than those in developed nations to rely on religion for hope”¹⁵. Thus, interwar Egyptians were a sure target for a religious fundamentalist mass party on the rise that was “seeking to reorganize state and society around a strict reading of religious doctrinal principles”¹⁶.

For al-Banna, it was essential to create an identity-movement that would embody Islamic values and ideals in everyday life, reformulate societal norms and practices to be more Islamic and weave a new identity for Egyptians. Hence, after establishing the headquarter, the Brothers built a mosque, a school for boys, a boys' club, and a school for girls, focusing on its welfare providing dimension, a pattern of establishing local community service projects that would later replicate in other areas.

The Society grew by the outbreak of WW2 to have representative and diverse membership. A magazine¹⁷ was published and weekly lectures were institutionalized, marking “the first stage through which all members must pass, the stage of propaganda, communication and information”¹⁸. As the mass party model, it managed to reach the most sought after social groups in both rural and urban areas: the peasants, the laborers, the civil servants and the students. The “fundamental units of political life became pre-defined and well-defined social groups, membership being bound up in all aspects of the individual's life”¹⁹, therefore individual social choice becoming encapsulated into the mass party.

The Dynamics of Participation

Three factors shaped the nature of the Brotherhood as a political party: (1) the nature of the Egyptian political elites; (2) the quality of the political system and (3) the ideological profile of the party; the (4) organizational structure of the group shall be treated as a response to the former.

¹⁴ According to a Gallup Polls study conducted in 2003, 92% of the subjects that live in countries with a GDP per capita lower than 2000 \$ answered that religion is an important part of their daily lives, compared to 7% in countries with a GDP per capita bigger than 2000 \$.

¹⁵ Steve Crabtree, Brett Pelham, *Religion Provides Emotional Boost to World's Poor*, March 6, 2009, Gallup, viewed 10 Feb. 2014 <http://www.gallup.com/poll/116449/religion-provides-emotional-boost-world-poor.aspx>.

¹⁶ Richard Gunther, Larry Diamond, “Species of Political Parties...cit.”, p. 182.

¹⁷ The press became in time the second largest project of the Society: it began with a newsletter – *The Letter of the General Guide* (1931) that grew in a few months into a journal, *The Majallat al-Ikhwān al-Muslimin*.

¹⁸ Richard P. Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers*, cit., p. 13.

¹⁹ Richard S. Katz, Peter Mair, “Changing Models of Party Organization and Party Democracy – The Emergence of the Cartel Party”, *Party Politics*, vol. 1. no.1, 2005, p. 7.

The emergence of Gunther and Diamond's *Traditional local notable party*, Duverger's *Internally created party* or Aaron's *Personnel party*, was at the early stage of party politics conditioned by the local elite. In Egypt, the power-holding group arose as a result of the faceoff between two institutions of military slavery: the Mamluk and the Ottoman – “this slave-recruited manpower was the backbone of the army and of the administration”²⁰. Both European and Oriental emerging elites had an exclusive nature; yet, the former was an active economic and political actor, while the later had monopoly on the use of force²¹. While Egypt remained a province of the Ottoman Empire, and the dynasty founded by Muhammad 'Ali continued to rule, the Ottoman-Egyptian elites were destroyed by the British intervention in the local army. To balance the economic and the authority crisis, “deft and stiff-necked management”²² was introduced in Cairo, a new Egyptian army being raised beginning with 1882 under British officers, while the local military based elites were deprived of their power.

Thus, Katz and Mair's cadre party era (Fig.1.1), where parties emerged within the intersection of the civil society with the state are fit for the European model; in colonial Egypt, due to the destruction of the local elites the gap persisted between the two (Fig.1.2.), pushing the emergence of political parties directly into the second developmental stage. In theory, in the mass party era, the civil society and the state were linked through the party (Fig. 2.1). Yet, in Egypt the mass party was anchored in the civil society and only attempted to connect it to the state (Fig.2.2.), since conflict was institutionalized through party competition only in theory.

European-style constitutionalism and political pluralism were introduced in Egypt (1923-1952), while the lack of an indigenous politically strong bourgeoisie and the excessive powers of the monarchy were going to impede the experiment. Despite a multiplicity of political parties, elections, parliamentary sessions, and freedom of the press, the constitution was repeatedly ignored and altered. Still the Brotherhood “never rejected

²⁰ Gabriel Piterberg, “The Formation of an Ottoman Egyptian Elite in the 18th Century”, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. 22, no. 3, Aug, 1990, p. 275.

²¹ The military nature of the Egyptian elites can still be counted as a vivid factor in contemporary politics, since overlapping military and political power characterized both post-1952 Egypt and the post-revolutionary power-struggle that followed the 2011 uprising.

²² M.W Daly (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Egypt Volume Two – Modern Egypt from 1517 to the End of the Twentieth Century*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge Histories Online, 2008, p. 240.

participation in parliamentary elections in principle [and] its founder attempted to run for parliament”²³.

As the externally created model²⁴, the Ikhwan challenged the ruling group and demanded representation, having anti-colonial rhetoric and a well-articulated ideology. At the group’s sixth general conference (1941) the Brothers decided to field candidates for parliamentary elections. Seventeen candidates were slated to participate in 1942, with al-Banna as a candidate for the district of Isma’iliyya; subsequently summoned by the prime minister and pressured to withdraw from the race, the Brothers eventually stepped aside. In the second electoral episode (1945) al-Banna and five Brothers ran for Parliament, but amid widespread allegations of electoral fraud all of them were defeated. While the Ikhwan constantly condemned the corruption of the political system, as well as its continued vulnerability to British interference, its alienation from the formal political order was deepened: electoral competition proved to be ineffective, reinforcing the group’s anti-Western attitude and marking the debut of the Society’s transformation into an “anti-system” party. Beginning as “an organization outside and against the political order”²⁵ and after facing electoral disappointment, the group reoriented towards (a) *influencing the king to achieve reform and remained loyal to the throne*²⁶.

The end of the WW2 set off a new phase in the nationalist struggle against Great Britain: by October 1945 (b) *the Brothers organized protests* in seven cities, while a National Committee of Students and Workers was organizing massive strikes. Although a big number of Brothers participated with full power in the strikes, officially “the Muslim Brothers were not ready”²⁷. A pattern can be identified in the anti-system activity of the Ikhwan: 1946, 2008 or 2011, Cairo, Shubra Al-Khaima or Al-Mahalla Al-Kubra, mobilization was achieved through student associations and workers associations or trade unions, while the official position of the Society was not explicitly stated – Brothers were free to participate individually. At a first glance not linked with the Society, the organizations were pre-defined and well-defined social groups that

²³ Amr Hamzawy, Nathan J. Brown, “The Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood: Islamist Participation in a Closing Political Environment”, *Carnegie Papers*, nr. 19, March 2010, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, p. 6.

²⁴ Maurice Duverger, *Les Partis Politiques*, Armand Colin, Paris, 1973.

²⁵ Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, *The Muslim Brotherhood...cit.*, p. 42.

²⁶ A link between Al-Banna and the Palace existed: the founder of the Society was disturbed when “the king and the foreigners’ had come to fear his movement” (Richard P. Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers*, cit., p. 40). A constantly recurring story is that Banna was consulted prior to the appointment of some Egyptian prime ministers and in 1947 he even attended a royal banquet. At one point, the king declared in a discussion with the prime minister: “we erred in smashing the Brothers” (Richard P. Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers*, cit., p. 41).

²⁷ Richard P. Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers*, cit., p. 45.

stood as “the fundamental units of political life”²⁸ and were encapsulated into the Brotherhood.

(c) *The violent stage of the anti-system party* pried in 1947 as a result of the crisis in party leadership²⁹, which activated the secret apparatus simultaneously with the Society’s preparations for intervention in Palestine. By October 1947 Banna ordered the Society to (i) *prepare for Jihad*. Rapid mobilization was possible through the already established Battalions and through the contribution of recruits from among army officers, including some of those that would later participate to the 1952 Revolution.

In January 1948, while Ikhwan battalions were fighting in Palestine, the British controlled government confronted a group of young Brothers in the outskirts of Cairo, discovering 165 bombs and cases of arms; one month later a judge that sentenced a Brother to prison was assassinated by members of the secret apparatus. On November 15th the government forces discovered a meeting of the members of the secret apparatus: “Papers and documents, from [a] briefcase, from memorandum pads, diaries, wallets, and other personal records in the homes of the arrested men provided the first public disclosures of the existence of the secret apparatus”³⁰. The Brothers were charged with (ii) *the intent to overthrow the political system* through terrorism and several accusations of violence. Prime Minister Nuqrashi Pasha was soon assassinated by “a young man dressed in the uniform of an officer”³¹. After several attempts of the Ikhwan to destroy the discovered files, on the 12th of February 1949 the founder of the Society was assassinated by the political police. Authority was naturally passed to the second in command, Salih ‘Ashmawi, proving that the Society met the last political party criterion set by LaPalombara and Weiner: it proved to have continuity in organization, since the duration of its existence was not dependent of the life span of its founder. A shuffling of leadership followed.

Although the party’s determination to achieve its political goals was underlined during the trial, at the conclusion of the court case the order dissolving the Society was lifted. In October 1951, Hasan Isma’il al-Hudaybi, a judge for more than 25 years, was appointed the new Supreme Guide – it was no surprise the sentences were easy.

In the attempt to connect the civil society and the state, the only chance of the Brothers was now to (d) topple the regime, since electoral participation,

²⁸ Richard S. Katz, Peter Mair, “Changing Models of Party Organization...cit.”, p. 7.

²⁹ The split was generated by a moral charge against the Secretary General, ‘Abd al-Hakim ‘Abidin (who was Banna’s brother in law) that split the opinions inside the party in two voices: although the charges could not be proved, some said that ‘Abidin had to be dismissed for purification, while others wanted to acquit him. Another conflict within the party was created around the debate of whether or not the Brothers should cooperate with the Wafd Party.

³⁰ Richard P. Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers*, cit., p. 64.

³¹ *Ibidem*, p. 67.

influence exerted on the king and violence did not generate impact. By May 1952 liberation battalions made out of university students took the streets. Material which would reconstruct the link between the revolution and the Brothers is limited, but it is known that they had strong links with the army³² – “without the enthusiastic support of the Muslim Brotherhood Mohammad Naguib’s movement might already have met the fate of the half dozen Egyptian Governments that preceded it. The Brotherhood was a full participant”³³ and recalled with pride their contribution to the first three days of the revolution. However, the success of the revolution only laid the foundations for the conflation of the state and the army into a form of patrimonialism that was going to impede the post-Arab Spring pseudo-democratization effort³⁴.

By 1954, Nasser had consolidated his position as the head of the government, while the Brotherhood’s repeated calls for the application of Shari’a and its public support for General Naguib had already provoked Nasser’s antipathy. After being subject of an assassination attempt that was blamed on the Society, within a couple of weeks 500 Brothers were in jail, including the leaders. Following a clash between Brotherhood university students and the police, Nasser dissolved the Ikhwan on January 13th 1954, putting an end to the mass party stage of the Society.

Ideological Profile

The Ikhwan’s ideology grew from the Shari’a and a highly conservative reading of Islamic sacred texts and juristic precedents. Partly due to the Brotherhood’s emphasis on action over ideology “its conception of Islamic rule remained vague, framed less as a particular form of government than as a utopian end state offering a panacea to all of the problems confronting the

³² Anwar al-Sadat was the first to connect the Army and the Brotherhood. He was replaced as a liaison by Abd’ Al Mun’im ‘Abd al-Ra’uf, who was known for being among the most active figures of the Free Officers and at the same time chief propagandist of the Society. He began recruitment among army members, generating the officers’ involvement in Palestine, when Mahmud Labib, a former member of the army came to lead the Brotherhood battalions. The recruited officers were brought to the “instruction in the message” that was followed by the formal oath that signified their entrance into the Secret Apparatus, securing their collaboration. Labib’s most important contact with the Free Officers was made through Gamal ‘Abd Al Nasir in 1944, appearing that from this time on the Brothers were in touch with the man that led the revolution.

³³ Richard P. Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers*, cit., p. 101.

³⁴ Eva Bellin, „The Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Exceptionalism in Comparative Perspective”, *Comparative Politics*, vol. 36, second issue, January 2004, Ph.D. Program in Political Science of the University of New York, p.145.

Muslim community in modern times”³⁵. Egypt was wrecked due to the gradual disintegration of the Ottoman Empire and the British occupation, since “Islam is religion and state”³⁶ and permitted the country to fall into “religious, cultural, political, economic, social, legal and moral decadence and impotence”³⁷. Although they considered that Muslims failed their role of preserving the ideals and goals of Islam, “the leading legal minds of the Society observed that the law imported into Egypt, apart from a few exceptions was in agreement with Shari’a and did not violate its general principles”³⁸.

The Society’s *conceptual justification of the ruling class*³⁹ can be treated in terms of supernatural justifications: Prophet Muhammad gave to his followers the final Truth and final Revelation; for these reasons God stands with them, and if the wisdom of the Shari’a and the Qur’an is respected, they shall have absolute legitimacy. From a rational perspective, for the Brothers the people are the source of the ruler’s power, who cannot evolve into a tyrant since he “receives authority from the people, who grant it because he will obey the law”⁴⁰. Paradoxically, reminding of Hobbs, Locke and Rousseau, Banna describes the relation between the ruled and ruler as a social contract. Rejecting hereditary rule, he accepts democracy, as long as it is adapted to the teachings of Islam and the ruler is designated by the people, therefore even elected⁴¹.

The concept of Jihad, viewed by the Brothers as “the legitimate use of force”⁴² cancels the validity of the rational political formula: thus, the source of legitimacy is a set of supernatural beliefs, granting the group infallible legitimacy due to its prophetic nature. The fundamentalist party, “founded to pursue a broad reform agenda”⁴³ is proto-hegemonic by nature, leaving “no room for conflicting interpretations of the religious norms that serve as the basis of the party’s programme and of laws which it seeks to impose on all of society”⁴⁴; due to “its arrogation to itself of the exclusive authority to interpret God’s will – and rejection of the legitimacy of opposing viewpoints”⁴⁵ the Society’s ideology gained a rigid and coercive tone.

³⁵ Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, *The Muslim Brotherhood...cit.*, p. 42.

³⁶ Gerhard Bowering (ed.), *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Islamic Political Thought*, Princeton University Press, Princeton and Oxford, 2013, p. 381.

³⁷ Richard P. Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers*, cit., p. 212.

³⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 241.

³⁹ Gaetano Mosca, *The Ruling Class*, McGraw-Hill Publishers, New York, 1939, p. 167.

⁴⁰ Richard P. Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers*, cit., p. 243.

⁴¹ However, the truthfulness of the fact that a party or an individual is representing the people is not conditioned by the electoral turnout.

⁴² Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, *The Muslim Brotherhood...cit.*, p. 25.

⁴³ Amr Hamzawy, Nathan J. Brown, “The Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood...cit.”, p. 3.

⁴⁴ Richard Gunther, Larry Diamond, “Species of Political Parties...cit.”, p. 182.

⁴⁵ Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, *The Muslim Brotherhood...cit.*, p. 25.

Organization

By the beginning of the 1930s, the Society had a full-time paid clerical and administrative staff and periodically organized general conferences; given its far-reaching objectives, “the organizational development of the party and the scope of its activities were extensive”⁴⁶.

Whilst the hierarchy was based on a tripartite division between the General Guide, the Guidance Council and the Consultative Assembly (Table 1), authority relations within the party were generally undemocratic. As the externally created party model⁴⁷, the Society was centralized, ideologically coherent, disciplined and aggressive in making demands on the system; it relied on an extensive array of supportive organizations, and had two particularly noteworthy organizational dimensions: first, *the welfare providing field apparatus* (Table 2), which grew out of the Ikhwan’s perennial concern for “maximum involvement in worldly affairs”⁴⁸. As a religious fundamentalist party, it mobilized support “by invoking religious doctrine and identity, [and] by performing a wide range of social welfare functions which aid in recruiting and solidifying the loyalty of members”⁴⁹.

The Society’s success was guaranteed by the recruitment of students and teachers and the substitution of the poor public health system, through the dissemination of information and the increase of facilities and personnel⁵⁰. The “foundation of every healthy society was the virtuous individual”⁵¹, bringing about social reform and morality, in accordance with the teachings of Islam. In an environment dominated by political instability and corruption, although not a class based organization, the Ikhwan “disproportionately attracted support from the poor and downtrodden and the marginalized middle class, among whom denunciations of injustice and corruption had a particular resonance”⁵², because no other party in interwar Egypt made issues of social and economic reform an essential part of its platform, but rather focused on their relations with the palace.

The second dimension was (2) *the secret apparatus*. In October 1941 Banna was certain that the British intelligence was planning to exile him and destroy the Society. The threat generated the final stage of the organizational

⁴⁶ Richard Gunther, Larry Diamond, “Species of Political Parties...cit.”, p. 182.

⁴⁷ Maurice Duverger, *Les Partis Politiques*, cit.

⁴⁸ Saad Eddin Ibrahim, *Egypt Islam And Democracy: Critical Essays*, American University Press, Cairo, 2002, p. 36.

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁰ The Brotherhood’s rover units were the first to bring hygienic knowledge and medical care to the countryside in Egypt.

⁵¹ Richard P. Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers*, cit., p. 254.

⁵² Richard Gunther, Larry Diamond, “Species of Political Parties...cit.”, p. 183.

planning: late in 1942, *the special section/secret apparatus* was created. In 1937, the *battalions* (a paramilitary branch) were formed also. These organizational developments corresponded in time with the beginning of the Brothers' concern for Palestine and shall be seen as a form of adaptation of the political party to the political environment. As Al-Banna himself explained in 1938, "secrecy was necessary in the beginning of any movement to assure its survival"⁵³. Inspired initially by the concept of *Jihad*, both the battalions and the secret apparatus were rationalized as an instrument for the defence of Islam and the Society.

THE CATCH-ALL PARTY

The populist socialist single-party system (The Arab Socialist Union) fuelled the metamorphosis of the Brotherhood, which remained a prime target of the state. The anti-system era of the Society that culminated with its proscription, convinced its leaders of the catastrophic results of direct confrontation with the regime. Since outlawed political parties tend to continue functioning underground and exert pressures to re-emerge, the Society reappeared transfigured: it "was cracked down three times but it has always reemerged"⁵⁴.

In 1970 Nasser died and was succeeded in his post by Vice President Anwar Sadat, who called for the correction of the revolution, which included an amnesty to the Brothers and their release from prison (1971 to 1975). Many returned then from exile. Sadat's solution for Egypt's burdensome situation⁵⁵, a shift from left to central-right policy, triggered the discontent of the Society's traditional target groups, making the 1970s subject of the rise of independent Islamist student associations, which grew to join the Ikhwan. Sadat's brave move to make peace with Israel enlivened the feeling of betrayal among Arabs as well; the Camp David Accords generated the perfect opportunity: "resembling a state with its armies, hospitals, schools, factories and companies"⁵⁶, the Society was now competing directly with the state apparatus.

After failing to anchor the civil society into the state, through electoral or violent means, the Brotherhood reoriented towards performing itself the functions of the state that was isolated from its citizens. What started as a complex mechanism of establishing a large base of supporters became an

⁵³ Richard P. Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers*, cit., p. 254.

⁵⁴ Saad Eddin Ibrahim, *Egypt Islam And Democracy...cit.*, p. 36.

⁵⁵ Egypt spent half of its budget on the military, the Sinai Peninsula was under Israeli occupation and its most important source of income, the Suez Canal, was unusable.

⁵⁶ Richard P. Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers*, cit., p. 66.

opportunity to exercise control and substitute the absence of the state, the Society acquiring the “ability to frame the terms of reference through which [Egyptians] filtered politics”⁵⁷. As a result, when the Brotherhood was oppressed it continued to operate as an inert mechanism preponderantly through the field apparatus. Although the central organization was almost annihilated during the Nasser era, the local structures could not be destroyed – once institutionalized, its “organizational structure was ‘frozen’ and became resistant to pressures for change; [therefore] parties may retain sizeable mass-membership bases and institutionalized ties to secondary associations even after the party has adopted a predominantly catch-all electoral strategy”⁵⁸.

After Hudaibi’s death in 1973, the new leader ‘Umar al-Tilmisani asserted that the Society would reject now any violent action against the state: “what concerned the Brotherhood was not the person of the ruler but the type of government and the harmony of its laws with the principles of the Shari’a”⁵⁹. The Ikhwan was now presenting itself as ready to cooperate with the regime, adjusting by its “instinct of self-preservation”⁶⁰ to the constraints imposed by the party system⁶¹. Al-Tilmisani would declare years later: “if one strategy does not succeed, we will abandon it and seek out another strategy [that is more effective]”⁶².

Sadat’s liberalization experiment culminated with ending the ASU: “from March 1976 on, the Union was to feature three formal political platforms, representing the Left, the Right and the Center”⁶³. Following the 1976 parliamentary elections, in which “the regime-backed center platform won an overwhelming majority of seats”⁶⁴, Sadat authorized the conversion of the platforms into legal political parties⁶⁵.

The 1976 parliamentary elections saw ASU’s three factions and 208 independents competing against each other. Brothers ran as independents and six of them won seats in the Parliament. Hence, the Ikhwan succeeded for the first time in linking its supporters to the state, specific party function⁶⁶.

⁵⁷ Peter Mair, *Party System Change Approaches and Interpretations*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1997, p. 21.

⁵⁸ Richard Gunther, Larry Diamond, “Species of Political Parties...cit.”, p. 174.

⁵⁹ Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, *The Muslim Brotherhood...cit.*, p. 30.

⁶⁰ Mona El-Gobashy, „The Metamorphosis of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood”, *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, issue 37, 2005, pp. 373-395/p. 374.

⁶¹ Peter Mair, *Party System Change...cit.*;

⁶² Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, *The Muslim Brotherhood...cit.*, p. 48.

⁶³ Steven A. Cook, *The Struggle for Egypt: From Nasser to Tahrir Square*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2011, p. 139.

⁶⁴ Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, *The Muslim Brotherhood...cit.*, p. 30.

⁶⁵ De jure, the 1971 Constitution already established a multiparty political system and the Shari’a was mentioned as the main source of legislation.

⁶⁶ Giovanni Sartori, *Parties and Party Systems: A Framework of Analysis*, Cambridge University Press, London, 1967.

Resembling an electoralist party, the Society was now focusing on maximizing votes for its independent candidates, while avoiding direct confrontation with the regime. Since “any political activity based on religious considerations”⁶⁷ was prohibited, their conversion into a regular political actor was impeded, reinforcing “the inclination of its senior leaders to remain outside the formal legal system”⁶⁸.

Electoral Politics in the Mubarak Era

Hosni Mubarak’s inauguration as Egypt’s president in 1981 marked the beginning of a new stage in the Society’s development: it expanded its presence in public life and became the leading opposition actor, invoking “the language of democracy to challenge the conditions of its own exclusion”⁶⁹.

The catch-all Brotherhood had a distinct dimension: Mair, Katz, Gunter or Diamond, the catch-all party emerges in functional democracies, where “in an effort to expand its electoral appeal to a wide variety of groups, its policy orientation is eclectic and shifts with the public mood”⁷⁰. In the case of the authoritarian military regime of Egypt, the catch-all party had to respond also to pressures exercised by the system in which it functioned, facing a double dilemma: it had to pose as liberal to be allowed to operate, but not too liberal, so it would not lose its fundamentalist supporters. The internal factional struggles revolved around “which games to prioritize and how to balance the regime and electoral games”⁷¹. The persistence of this double dilemma during the Mubarak years was showcased by the General Guides, whom reassured the movement’s critics on both sides of the ideological spectrum of the correctness of its gradualist approach.

In the May 1984 elections, after the parliamentary electoral system became list-based, the Ikhwan entered into a tactical alliance with the Wafd. With the Society still in incapacity to function legally, the secular nationalist party provided a legal channel, while the Society offered a large base of supporters. Eight seats went to Brotherhood candidates in 1984. In the parliamentary elections of April 1987, the group joined the Socialist Labor Party and Liberal Party⁷², forming the Islamic Alliance. Thirty-six seats went

⁶⁷ Article 5, Egyptian Constitution of 1971;

⁶⁸ Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, *The Muslim Brotherhood...cit.*, p. 43.

⁶⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 46.

⁷⁰ Richard Gunther, Larry Diamond, “Species of Political Parties...cit.”, p. 186.

⁷¹ Mona El-Gobashy, „The Metamorphosis...cit.”, p. 373.

⁷² The two small parties (Socialist Labor Party and Liberal Party) did not even pass the threshold in the previous elections, indicating that the encouraging electoral results of the Islamic Alliance were a direct result of the Brotherhood’s activity.

then to the Society, making it the biggest opposition bloc in the Parliament and enhancing its institutional dimension: represented in the Parliament, the Society was able to influence decision making and hold the government accountable for its actions, becoming a channel of expression by representing the people by expressing their demands⁷³. Without applying legally for a party license and although the NDP's large majority in the assembly limited the Society's ability to initiate legislation the Brotherhood MPs started to influence policy making⁷⁴.

Initially, the catch-all look of the Brotherhood banded its supporters and the state; now the group comprised two factions (Fig. 3): the mass party branches, established by the founder himself and the catch-all arm. The electoralist body had a skeletal existence that succeeded at election time by collaborating with the mass structures, springing into action to perform its primary function, the conduct of the campaign⁷⁵. Unlike the purely electoralist model which utilizes 'modern' campaign techniques such as the mass-communications media, the Ikhwan still relied on the mobilization of party members and affiliated organizations, becoming a hybrid party - its transition towards the electoralist model was delayed by the authoritarian presidential regime. Its behavior in particular affected the quality of the pseudo-democracy, since the Society used "the regime's own references to democracy against it by highlighting the gap between its rhetoric and practice"⁷⁶, focusing as in the early years of the party on the procedural issues of the regime.

Structural Change

The experience as elected public officials of some of the Brothers and "the institutional rules of authoritarian electoral politics"⁷⁷ stirred organizational and ideological transformation.

While the dominant ideological cleavage inside the Society was now between the old guard and the new wave, the middle generation took over during the 90s. Due to their activity in professional environments, the middle-generation Islamists moved closer to Western life-style, engaged in dialogue and

⁷³ Giovanni Sartori, *Parties and Party Systems...*cit., p. 72.

⁷⁴ While dividing their time between dramatic speeches in the plenary session and maneuvering around the NDP agenda, the Brotherhood managed to amend *Law 44 of 1979*. The "Jehan Law" was named after President Sadat's liberal wife and made significant women rights improvements. Soon they were addressing issues like education, housing shortages, electricity grids, and the increase of domestic wheat production and raise of wages of government employees.

⁷⁵ Richard Gunther, Larry Diamond, "Species of Political Parties...cit.", p. 185.

⁷⁶ Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, *The Muslim Brotherhood...*cit., p. 56.

⁷⁷ Mona El-Gobashy, „The Metamorphosis...cit.", p. 374.

cooperation with other groups, departing from traditional self-isolation: “while the higher executive post was still the turf of the older [prison generation], middle aged members formulated policy, acted as spokesmen, and represented the group in the Parliament and professional unions”⁷⁸. More progressive interpretations of Islam were articulated⁷⁹, the Brothers affirming support for party pluralism as a natural expression of God-given differences and seeking to bind “as wide a variety of social interests as possible [to] maximize votes by positioning themselves toward the centre of the spectrum, appearing moderate in their policy preferences and behavior”⁸⁰.

While the Ikhwan’s vocal criticism of the Mubarak regime generated an offensive against it that intensified a week before the 1995 parliamentary elections undermining its ability to run an effective electoral campaign, the factional disputes became for the first time public. In 1996 a Brotherhood reformist branch announced its plans to form a new party submitting a proposal to the Political Parties Committee. The reformists thought that the reason for the group’s failure was the Ikhwan’s status as a technically illegal organization that placed it in a state of vulnerability to repression and impeded its full integration into the political system. The Wasat Party was to be a “civic platform based on the Islamic faith, which believed in pluralism and the alternation of power”⁸¹; it had 74 founders out of which 62 were Brothers. As the catch-all model, the Wasat attempt was pluralistic, had a “shallow organization, superficial and vague ideology, and overwhelmingly electoral orientation”⁸². The old guard opposed the creation of the Wasat, leading to the failure of its institutionalization. Try-outs to establish the party existed in 1998 and 2004; each time the Supreme Administrative Court rejected the initiatives.

“The period from 1995 to 2000, when the Brothers’ best minds were imprisoned”⁸³ transposed the internal ideological conflicts to organizational changes. Reformist trend leaders advocated changes in the Ikhwan’s inner practices in favor of a more democratic distribution of power; how democratic

⁷⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁷⁹ The Brothers even acknowledged, in 1994, that Qur’anic verse 4:34 [“Men are caretakers of women, since Allah has made some of them excel the others, and because of the wealth they have spent. So, the righteous women are obedient, (and) guard (the property and honor of their husbands) in (their) absence with the protection given by Allah. As for women of whom you fear rebellion, convince them, and leave them apart in beds, and beat them. Then, if they obey you, do not seek a way against them. Surely, Allah is the Highest, the Greatest.”] applied only to private life and that women should have the right to vote and to run as candidates in legislative elections, “finding nothing in the Shari’a texts which prohibits them from doing so” (Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, *The Muslim Brotherhood...cit.*, p. 70).

⁸⁰ Richard Gunther, Larry Diamond, “Species of Political Parties...cit.”, p. 186.

⁸¹ Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, *The Muslim Brotherhood...cit.*, p. 81.

⁸² Richard Gunther, Larry Diamond, “Species of Political Parties...cit.”, p. 185.

⁸³ Mona El-Gobashy, „The Metamorphosis...cit.”, p. 385.

the interior decision-making became is hard to acknowledge, but the newly founded committees⁸⁴ indicate an increasing specialization of roles and a reduction in the scope of the sections' activities, specific to catch-all parties, which rely on professionalized staff⁸⁵.

Revolution: Concluding the Transition

The authoritarian regime of Egypt postponed the Ikhwan's evolution to the electoralist model. The Brotherhood's rise was concomitant with the fall of the state-regime, showing their codependence and similarities.

The factors that influenced the equilibrium of Mubarak's personal authoritarian regime were both international and domestic⁸⁶. The West's attempt to reactivate its role as a promoter of democracy overseas since the early 2000s sheltered "autocratic but compliant friends by allowing its client regimes to continue the game"⁸⁷ and made the opposition media "come out of its shell"⁸⁸ in Egypt. In the domestic arena the authoritarian tripod comprised, according to Kassem, *the adoption of exclusionary laws, the use of patronage and skillful cooptation and the coercive apparatus of the state*. The latter proved unable to counter free expression and mass mobilization through the internet, its failure to exert social control becoming a determinant of revolution⁸⁹.

Social determinants of revolution broke out in waves, accentuating the growth and spread of generalized belief in change⁹⁰. The press published reports on corruption, its boldness culminating in 2007 with the rumors that Mubarak was "gravely ill, possibly even dead"⁹¹. The partial liberalization of the media did not stop the police-state from maintaining its coercive nature through ingrained methods, such as arrests of Brothers and various journalists.

⁸⁴ The Society introduced a revised charter, in which no reference was made to the historic norm by which the Supreme Guide remained in his position for life. The Guidance Bureau and the Legislative Assembly were now elected by secret ballot. New divisions were added to the initial structure: the Political Apparatus, the Planning Apparatus, the Committee on Elections and Parliamentary Affairs, the Committee on State Security, and the Committee on Human Rights.

⁸⁵ Richard Gunther, Larry Diamond, "Species of Political Parties...cit."

⁸⁶ Maye Kassem, *Egyptian Politics: The Dynamics of Authoritarian Rule*, Lynne Rienner Publishers, USA, 2004.

⁸⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 3.

⁸⁸ John R. Bradley, *Inside Egypt*, Palgrave MacMillan, New York, 2008, p. 202.

⁸⁹ Ted Robert Gurr, "The Revolution. Social-Change Nexus: Some Old Theories and New Hypotheses", *Comparative Politics*, vol. 5, no. 3, Special Issue on Revolution and Social Change, Apr. 1973, p. 369.

⁹⁰ *Ibidem*.

⁹¹ John R. Bradley, *Inside Egypt*, cit., p. 201.

The event that broke the pattern of the daring game was the *Al-Mahalla Al-Kubra strike*. A few dozen workers, employed at *Misr Spinning and Weaving Company*, took part in a strike that was violently repressed by the state security authorities. In an effort to extend the protest, a Facebook group was created, encouraging people to strike on April 6th⁹². After the group received about 65.000 likes, activists and workers started to prepare carefully the countrywide general strike. According to the official page of the April 6th Youth Association, no one planned to create a movement, but only to support the workers at Al-Mahalla Al-Kubra. Yet, “the aspirations and limits of the urban intelligentsia were demonstrated”⁹³ when the initiative failed in to expand these initially limited labor protests into a general strike.

The Society did not participate officially in any of the uprisings, yet acted through subsidiary organizations, such as the A6YA – treated in this paper as an alias of the Brotherhood faction opposed to the old guard, a group of marginal elites comprised preponderantly of Ikhwan youth⁹⁴. The A6YA’s

⁹² The text which sprung all the 2008 activity was the following: “All national forces in Egypt have agreed upon the 6th of April to be a public strike. On the 6th of April, stay home, do not go out [...]. We need salaries allowing us to live, [...] we need just judiciary, we want security, we want freedom and dignity, we want apartments for youth”. (Abdel Rahman Ayyash, 2 April 2008, *ني فيهم ي حد*, viewed 4 Feb. 2014 < <http://al-ghareeb.blogspot.ro/2008/04/blog-post.html> >).

⁹³ Jeannie Sowers, Chris Toensing (eds.), *The Journey to Tahrir: Revolution, Protest, and Social Change in Egypt*, Verso, US, 2012, p.104.

⁹⁴ In order to prove the existence of a link between the April 6th Youth Association and the Muslim Brotherhood, 300 Facebook profiles of people who liked the official Facebook pages of both groups were analyzed. Out of 300 profiles randomly selected, 270 had the required data public; 10 subjects had no university diploma and 2 were still in high school. All the 258 left were students or graduated recently. The fact that the Brothers have a strong student basis is well known; it shall nevertheless be taken into account that those who have access to internet and have a personal Facebook profile are generally young people that are a part of the middle class. However, what proves the existence of a connection between the Society and the 6th April Youth Association are the domains of activity/fields of study of the subjects, which coincide with the syndicates in which the Brothers are powerful since the mid 1980s: 85 of the subjects are students or activate in the field of engineering; 49 of the subjects are students or activate in the field of medicine or pharmaceuticals; 32 of the subjects study law; 24 of the subjects are students in the field of business and commerce and 21 of the subjects are students or activate in the field of journalism and communication.

The most famous founding members of the Association also fall in one of the categories above: Asma Mahfouz, a 29 year old Egyptian woman that graduated from Cairo University with a BA in Business Administration, was many times credited to be among the precipitating factors. She launched a “vlog”, where she posted videos encouraging an uprising; the most important one was posted on the 18th of January 2011: “Four Egyptians have set themselves on fire, thinking maybe we can have a revolution like Tunisia” (*Meet Asmaa Mahfouz and the vlog that Helped Spark the Revolution* [video file], 1 Feb. 2011, viewed 19 Feb. 2014, <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SgjgMdsEuk>>).

activity was a key element for the mass mobilization of the 25th of January 2011 and underlined three pivotal aspects of the Society: (1) although the Ikhwan was close to completing its transition to the electoralist model, the grass-root structures of the party were frozen and became resistant to pressures for change, the Society maintaining its support and control over the syndicates and student associations; (2) the restraint with which the Brotherhood operated officially during the revolution showcased the experience of an anti-system party proficient in surviving a constant no-clashes fight with the regime – as in 1952, the replicating pattern indicates that without the support of the Society, the uprising would have had the fate of the many protests preceding it; (3) the Ikhwan was one step closer to the catch-all model, since it utilized modern mobilization techniques. The new media was of crucial importance: young Brothers chose Facebook, Twitter and YouTube “to send the news of their mass protests”⁹⁵ proving the weight of “the mass-communications media over the mobilization of party members and affiliated organizations”⁹⁶. The fact that the authorities started harassing Brothers one day before the protests shows not only that the Society was behind the mobilization, but also that the 25th January protests were planned long before the Tunisian uprising.

The structural strain facilitating the revolution, according to which “the potential for collective violence varies with the intensity and scope of socially induced discontent among its members”⁹⁷ was two-dimensional: the rapidly growing population left its numerous youth absent from public life, while the weakened status of the middle class was generalized. The revolutionary marginal elite intellectual movements whom originated in this unrepresented middle class, assembled well-coordinated masses, organizing the 25th of January Tahrir Square mass protests. These individuals are normally a product of state-sponsored university education and oriented towards state-based activities⁹⁸, “structural change transforming their identities and structure and affecting their

Ahmed Maher is a 34 year old engineer, who declared when interviewed in December 2011, by a Jadaliyya journalist: “I created the group in the beginning, and then tried to turn it into a real movement. There were people from the start who agreed with the idea [...] – the co-founders. So our structure consists of a council group of co-founders and coordinators” (Nancy Elshami, 7 Dec 2011, *Internal April 6 Dynamics, Egyptian Politics, and Outlooks for the Future: An Interview with Ahmed Maher*, Jadaliyya, viewed 22 Feb 2014 <<http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/3429/internal-april-6-dynamics-egyptian-politics-and-ou>>). He describes in the same interview the A6YA as an all-encompassing group dealing with different issues.

⁹⁵ Muriel Asseburg (ed.), *Protest, Revolt and Regime Change in the Arab World – Actors, Challenges, Implications and Policy Options*, SWP Research Paper - Stiftung Wissenschaft and Politik German Institute for International and Security Affairs, February 2012, Berlin;

⁹⁶ Richard Gunther, Larry Diamond, “Species of Political Parties...cit.”, p. 185.

⁹⁷ Robert Ted Gurr, “The Revolution...cit.”, p. 364.

⁹⁸ Theda Skocpol, “France, Russia, China: A Structural Analysis of Social Revolutions”, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 18, no. 2, Apr., 1976, pp. 175-210.

opportunities”⁹⁹. In Egypt, these marginal elites were a product of the Ikhwan¹⁰⁰, which not only interceded their fabrication, but channeled their uprising as well, guaranteeing the structural conduciveness that permits or encourages collective behavior and the mobilization of participants for action¹⁰¹.

Mubarak’s public reaction to the *Day of Anger* displayed his belief that “his security forces and military had a tight grip on the country”¹⁰², while he stressed the “impact of infiltrators who tried to force slogans that resulted into innocent victims among the protestors and police forces”¹⁰³. Protests extended and on the 30th the military moved aggressively to take control of Cairo. After Mubarak was presented as meeting with military leaders on the national television, on January 31st the army officials announced they would not use force against the demonstrators, “recognizing the protests as freedom of speech”¹⁰⁴. Mubarak addressed the people again, on February 1st, reaffirming that he would not resign¹⁰⁵. Pressures escalated on February 2nd when pro-Mubarak demonstrators¹⁰⁶ entered Tahrir Square by the thousands, generating prolonged violence. On the 5th the leaders of Egypt’s ruling party resigned.

⁹⁹ Charles Tilly, “Does Modernization Breed Revolution?”, *Comparative Politics*, vol. 5, no. 3, Special Issue on Revolution and Social Change, Apr., 1973, p. 435.

¹⁰⁰ The lack of social assistance and the impossibility of poor families to send their children to school made the state inexistent in relation to its citizens. The gap was filled by the Society’s field apparatus that provided all these social services, concomitantly exercising control over the adherents’ weltanschauungs.

¹⁰¹ Robert Ted Gurr, “The Revolution...cit.”.

¹⁰² Jeffrey Fleishman, Amro Hassan, *Mubarak promises reform, but defends crackdown on protesters*, 28 Jan 2011, Los Angeles Times, viewed 12 Feb. 2014 <http://articles.latimes.com/2011/jan/28/world/la-fg-0129-egypt-protests-20110129>.

¹⁰³ Nile International/Al Jazeera, *Hosni Mubarak's speech to the nation – 28. january (ENGLISH)*, [video file], 28 Jan. 2011, YouTube, viewed 15 Feb. 2014, <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9DtOr6BBOHg>>.

¹⁰⁴ Edmund Sanders, *Egypt's military moves to take control of parts of Cairo*, 31 Jan 2011, Los Angeles Times, viewed 2 Feb. 2014, <<http://articles.latimes.com/print/2011/jan/31/world/la-fg-egypt-unrest-20110131>>

¹⁰⁵ “I am keen to end my political life in a way which provides peaceful transfer of authority [...]. I want to say in a clear language in the next few months of my presidential term I will do my best to ensure peaceful transition of power”(Nile International, *hosni mubarak 01 february 2011 speech on egyptian uprising [video file]*, 1 Feb. 2011 YouTube, viewed 7 Jan. 2014, <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nz5ZkO2jb4s>>)

¹⁰⁶ When pro-Mubarak protestors were captured by opponents, they desperately stated that they were paid by the government to participate; others turned out to be carrying police ids, while dressed as civilians. According to Shadi Hamid, this is an old strategy of the authorities to try to break up the protests: “They’re dressed in plain clothes, and then they’ll usually go and attack the protesters. Egyptians have seen this for quite some time, and that’s why they were able to recognize what was going on fairly quickly” (The CNN Wire Staff, *Who are the pro-Mubarak demonstrators?*, CNN, 2 Feb 2011, viewed 20 March 2014, <<http://edition.cnn.com/2011/WORLD/africa/02/02/egypt.pro.mubarak/index.html>>). The pro-Mubarak protests were an attempt of the authorities to recapture

The Brotherhood emerged as an actor officially one day later, when it participated to negotiations with the vice president, Omar Suleiman. Since the political future of the Society was unclear when protests erupted¹⁰⁷, they did not fully join the protests until it became an obvious mass uprising. As they behaved previously, their position was rather grey – Brothers were free to participate as individuals both to the Mahalla strike and the 2011 uprising; many of them did, without the organization declaring its official involvement.

The motivation of this peculiar stance is that the Brothers wanted to avoid a transformation of the erupting revolution into an Islamic one: first, because it would have had a harmful effect on their electoral future; second, because they reoriented since the Nasser era towards a non-confrontation policy towards the regime. Yet, its members “had a major role in fighting off Mubarak’s goons on Tahrir Square on February 2nd when the Brothers took to the front lines and suffered the majority of injuries”¹⁰⁸.

This episode demonstrated the completion of the process – as a catch-all party, the Society exposed itself to a wider range of opinion, without sliding into a radical religious frame, but rather suggesting to secular Egyptians that they are not radical Islamists, showcasing their “overriding purpose to maximize votes, win elections and govern”¹⁰⁹. Thus, the Ikhwan aligned with secular opposition parties and associated its image with Mohamed ElBardei, proving it had “the resources and social engineering capacities to bring about social change”¹¹⁰.

After the third defiant speech of the president (February 10th) when he stated he will not resign until September, on February 11th, the Vice President announced the resignation of Mubarak. Following his resignation, the position of President of Egypt was officially vacated and replaced by the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, led by Field Marshal Mohamed Hussein Tantawi, who assumed executive control of the state for the following six months, dissolved the Parliament and suspended the 1971 Constitution.

The Army created an eight-member panel to draft amendments to key articles of the constitution. The proposals were released publicly on February 26 and a referendum was organized on the 17th of March 2011. Egyptians have strongly backed the constitutional changes¹¹¹: the turnout was of 41.2%, out of

power: they used camels and horses, indicating that they were the last breath of a dying regime.

¹⁰⁷ Ferry de Kerckhove, *Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood and the Arab Spring*, Canadian Defence & Foreign Affairs Institute, May 2012.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 1.

¹⁰⁹ Richard Gunther, Larry Diamond, “Species of Political Parties...cit.”, p. 186.

¹¹⁰ Robert Ted Gurr, “The Revolution...cit.”, p. 390.

¹¹¹ The PA would be elected by a direct, public and secret ballot; the judiciary’s previous role supervising elections was reinstated, together with its role of final arbiter in the event of legal challenges to parliamentary election results; the PA had to have at least 350

which 77% agreed with the changes. The Ikhwan called for a “yes vote”, while remaining one of the most important political powers together with Mubarak's NDP. Essam al-Aryan called the result a “victory for the Egyptian people”¹¹², while both parliamentary and presidential elections were scheduled.

On the 30th of April 2011 “the popular Islamic movement long banned from politics announced that it has formed a political party”¹¹³: *The Freedom and Justice Party*. The secretary general of the Brotherhood, Mahmud Hussein, declared that the party will be independent from the Ikhwan, but will coordinate with it. As during the protests, the Brothers proved once more that they sought to stay away from the radical religious image. The FJP was a civil party, with an Islamic frame of reference, founded by the Society¹¹⁴. After decades outlawed, the FJP brought the Ikhwan into legality; it was now able to lawfully participate in politics, becoming a fully established electoralist catch-all party.

THE CARTEL PARTY

The cartelization process of the FJP was facilitated by the SCAF's legislative input, displaying what was labelled as the „honeymoon” phase of the SCAF and the Brotherhood. Thus, the FJP showed signs of early cartelization before the parliamentary elections, while betting its best bid: the electoral laws¹¹⁵.

The electoral laws issued by the SCAF after the Egyptian uprising not only gave a leg up to the Brotherhood, but prompted the other political groups aspiring to the legal party status into calling upon the Ikhwan's grassroots basis

members, half of whom had to be workers and farmers. The presidential term was reduced from six years to four years and the president was limited to two terms, installing new criteria for presidential candidates.

¹¹² Yolande Knell, *Egypt referendum strongly backs constitution changes*, 20 March 2011, BBC, viewed 15 April 2014, <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-12801125>>

¹¹³ Amro Hassan, *Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood creates political party*, 30 April 2011, *Los Angeles Times*, viewed 13 March 2014, <http://articles.latimes.com/2011/apr/30/world/la-fg-egypt-brotherhood-20110501>.

¹¹⁴ Official web page of the Freedom and Justice Party, viewed 9 March 2014, <http://www.fjponline.com/view.php?pid=3>.

¹¹⁵ The specifics of the electoral system were established by the May 30 PA Law, which was modified seven times until elections started. However, the final form of the law provided a mixed electoral system: two-thirds (332) of the representatives were elected through a closed-list proportional representation system, in forty-six multiseat constituencies, and the remaining third (166) would be elected as individuals in eighty-three two-seat local districts. The draft law permitted both party-backed candidates and independent candidates to form election lists, while “the 50 percent worker and farmer quota was also included, as required by the March 2011 constitutional declaration”¹¹⁵. The President had the constitutionally granted right to appoint another ten members, raising the total number of seats to 508.

and financing. Although the revised political parties law issued on March 28 maintained the preexisting ban on parties established on the basis of religion and social class, it „required that new parties register five thousand members from at least ten governorates publish their names in two daily newspapers”¹¹⁶. The expenses associated with these requirements obstructed groups with limited resources, implicitly favouring the Brotherhood. Evidence indicates that the Wasat party faced the challenge of establishing branch offices and building a mass constituency in the short time preceding the parliamentary elections by relying on the Brotherhood’s field apparatus¹¹⁷.

The deal with its traditional ally went from *the jure* to *de facto* and soon, the FJP was a part of an Alliance that contained over forty parties, from secular to Salafi Islamists, *narrowing the policy space*. Emerging „with remarkable speed to overthrow a long-standing regime, [it] quickly built a post-revolution consensus and emerged as a hegemonic force”¹¹⁸. Yet, the alliance fell apart, beginning with a few small secular parties; the Wafd Party followed, its leaders feeling that the entire alliance was dominated by the Brotherhood. By October, only eleven parties remained in the alliance and it became more obvious that the FJP was dominating the partnership.

Egypt’s first parliamentary elections after the fall of Mubarak were postponed from September to begin November 2011. On the 28th of November, Egyptians voted in the first free elections since Mubarak’s fall, “yet, the revolution was far from complete”¹¹⁹; various citizen rights were violated during the electoral process, proving that “the formal rules about how political institutions are supposed to work are often poor guides to what actually happens”¹²⁰, the concealed informal rules, based on clientelism and particularism, remaining the real guidelines. The elections, held in three phases¹²¹ were to prove soon that attempting to institutionalize elections and their surrounding freedoms is not enough. The turnout of 54% could be read “as a

¹¹⁶ Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, *The Muslim Brotherhood...cit.*, p. 172.

¹¹⁷ According to Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, when she met Abou Elela Madi in April (Head of the Wasat Party and former member of the Brotherhood), he had just returned from Hurghada and was expected in another town the following day; „in July, he was unavailable to meet because he was attending a party conference in Ismailiyya” (Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, *The Muslim Brotherhood...cit.*, p. 173).

¹¹⁸ Micheline Ishay, „The Spring of Arab Nations? Paths toward Democratic Transition”, *Philosophy and Social Criticism*, nr. 1-11, 2013, p. 3.

¹¹⁹ Jeffrey Fleishman, *Egypt voters endure long lines at polls*, 29 November 2011, *Los Angeles Times*, viewed 7 March 2014, <http://articles.latimes.com/2011/nov/29/world/la-fg-egypt-elections-20111129>.

¹²⁰ Guillermo O’Donnell, „Illusions About Consolidation”, *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 7, no. 2, 1996, pp. 34-51/p. 39.

¹²¹ Different regions proceeded to the polls on November 28th, December 14th and January 3rd.

strong show of confidence in the election process”¹²² while the Society’s superior organization was proven by the results¹²³.

Egypt’s new Parliament held its inaugural session on January 24th 2012; the secretary-general of the FJP became the *Speaker of the House of Representatives*, while the FJP and Salafi parties took the lead in selecting the one-hundred-member Constituent Assembly: half of the seats were allocated to members of Parliament and the other half to constitutional law experts and representatives of various civil and political groups. Approved by the parliament on the 25th of March, more than 66 out of 100 members of the CA were associated with the Islamist trend; many sectors of the society were underrepresented. Although an effective consolidation of power was envisaged¹²⁴, the incapability to build political consensus¹²⁵ was the factor that would inhibit transition from its dawn. The power struggle over the composition of the CA reflected the conflict of interests between Islamist and secular groups in the parliament; the attempt of the FJP Alliance and the Salafis to limit competition mirrored “the basic purpose of a cartel to maximize joint profits [...] through the restriction of competition”¹²⁶, while the Brotherhood’s versatility was to act as a liaison between the ultraconservative Salafis the secular block.

While the liberal and social democratic parties tried to boycott the elections, a group of lawyers and political activists filed a suit with the Higher Administrative Court asserting that the assembly was unrepresentative and demanding it would be dissolved. The Court declared it unconstitutional, since according to the March 2011 Constitutional Decree, the MPs were responsible for electing the Constituent Assembly, but were not allowed to be a part of it. Although the court’s “decision to suspend the assembly took a procedural rather than political angle, it was also clearly addressed to the broader issue of Islamists’ domination”¹²⁷. Thus, the democratic transition’s incipient failure proved to be a result of the gap between formal and informal rules, confirming

¹²² Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, *The Muslim Brotherhood...cit.*, p. 250.

¹²³ The Brotherhood-led Democratic Alliance won over a third of the total casted votes (10.138.134 votes), while the Islamic Alliance, a coalition of three hard-line Salafi parties led by the al-Nur party, came in second with 7.534.266 votes. Parties with a clear secular orientation altogether captured about 20%.

¹²⁴ The Muslim Brothers managed to “build a broad consensus without abandoning completely their ideological core (thereby legitimizing Salafist claims to be the true representatives of Islam)” (Micheline Ishay, „The Spring of Arab Nations?...cit.”, p. 6) but alienated, however, the secular Egyptians and the Copt minority.

¹²⁵ *Ibidem*.

¹²⁶ Mark Blyth, Richard S. Katz, “From Catch-all Politics to Cartelisation: The Political Economy of the Cartel Party”, *West European Politics*, vol. 28, no. 1, January 2005, pp. 33-60/p. 39.

¹²⁷ Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, *The Muslim Brotherhood...cit.*, p. 250.

the lack of legitimacy of the former¹²⁸. Furthermore, in the cartelized environment where parties have tacitly agreed not to compete over certain issues, voters had no effective power over politicians after elections; the Ikhwan proved to misrepresent its intentions and, once placed in power by its voters, to exploit the informational asymmetries to its own advantage¹²⁹.

The FJP's efforts to form a government were also dismissed by the SCAF. By claiming that forming the government was a right reserved to the president, the cabinet nomination was postponed until a new head of state was elected. Thereby, within *the diffusion of ideologies* process as a consequence of the revolution¹³⁰ that facilitated the cartelization process, while forced to cooperate in order to fight against the SCAF, the catch-all behavior of the FJP Alliance and the Salafis was to face structural limits.

While the specifics of the electoral system were being modified seven times before elections, the parties aiming to compete in the parliamentary elections supported a transformation of the electoral system that assumed a shift from voting for individual candidates to voting for candidates aggregated into lists (proportional representation). The shift to a party-list system would force candidates to clarify their positions on various topics via political programmes¹³¹, facilitating the exposure of the Brotherhood's double-identity and jeopardizing the cohesion of any affiliation with other actors of the latter.

The revolutionary conflict may be considered itself a factor that facilitated cartelization, since "conflict among groups is proposed to strengthen group cohesiveness and separateness"¹³². Thus, the SCAF was now supported by secularist parties and competed with the Brotherhood-dominated Islamists. Although the dictator was long gone, the SCAF still exerted pressures on the political system, having almost unlimited powers. The double dilemma of the Brothers did not disappear, but replicate at the level of the Alliance and in relation to the Salafi, proving the limitations of the regime change: "concerted action aimed at transforming a social system or overthrowing a regime is sometimes called revolution, without reference to its impact or outcome"¹³³.

¹²⁸ Guillermo O'Donnell, „Illusions...cit.”.

¹²⁹ Mark Blyth, Richard S. Katz, “From Catch-all Politics to Cartelisation...cit.”, p. 45.

¹³⁰ Charles Tilly, “Does Modernization Breed Revolution?”, cit.

¹³¹ As one civil society activist put it: „When candidates run as independents, they are not forced to develop political programs. By contrast, a list system will force candidates to articulate clear agendas, it will encourage real politics and transparency. Now everyone says they support ‘social justice’, but there is a difference in the approach, say, of the Wafd and leftist groups. Such differences will become manifest in a list system”(Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, *The Muslim Brotherhood...cit.*,p. 173).

¹³² Robert Ted Gurr, “The Revolution...cit.”, p. 381.

¹³³ *Ibidem*, p. 361.

The Presidential Elections

Since the Brotherhood's influence on the constitution making process was weakened, and having a strong majority in the legislative was not offering the possibility to form a government, the best bid was now the presidential election. The Ikhwan's nomination of Khayrat al-Shatir¹³⁴ for president and the push for an Islamist CA exacerbated suspicions, highlighting their attempt to monopolize power.

On the 14th of April 2012, Egypt's Presidential Election Commission removed ten candidates from the future presidential ballot¹³⁵, proving that patterns of authority did not change. All candidates were disqualified on the basis of legal irregularities. The Brothers had now to run their backup candidate, Muhammad Mursi¹³⁶, "a quintessential organization man who was loyal to the old guard and faithful in carrying out their directive"¹³⁷.

The initial round of Egypt's presidential elections took place on May 23rd and 24th. The top contenders were two Islamists and two officials from the old regime: Mursi battled Abdel Moneim Aboul Fotouh for the Islamist vote, while former Prime Minister Ahmed Shafik challenged former Foreign Minister Amr Moussa for secular support. The turnout was of 46% and none of the candidates managed to get majority. Mursi came in first with 24.7% and Shafiq second, with 23.6%.

By June 12th the Parliament had elected a new CA, giving again absolute majority to the Islamists, although the group was now smaller in size – 57 members. In response, due to "a letter sent a day earlier by Tantawi"¹³⁸, on June 14th the SCC (formed of judges appointed by Mubarak) dissolved the parliament. This well-orchestrated move, that occurred two days before the second round of presidential elections aimed at making the Ikhwan loose "its power base in the parliament, [so] Ahmad Shafiq would receive a boost"¹³⁹. This episode proves that the change of "the operating norms of institutional life

¹³⁴ Khayrat al-Shatir is a wealthy businessman that is considered to be the key element in the mobilization of the Brotherhood youth during the revolution.

¹³⁵ Among the disqualified ten candidates were three front runners: Khayrat al-Shatir, Hazim Abu Isma'il (an ultraconservative Salafist) and Omar Suleiman (former vice-president).

¹³⁶ Muhammad Mursi was an engineer with a Ph.D. from the University of South California, a former independent MP (2000 to 2005), and a member of the Society's Guidance office.

¹³⁷ Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, *The Muslim Brotherhood...cit.*, p. 256.

¹³⁸ Edmund Blair, *Egypt's military ruler orders parliament dissolved*, 16 June 2012, Reuters, viewed 2 Feb. 2014, < <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/06/16/us-egypt-election-parliament-idUSBRE85F0L520120616> >.

¹³⁹ David Hearst, Abdel-Rahman Hussein, *Egypt's supreme court dissolves parliament and outrages Islamists*, 14 June 2012, *The Guardian*, viewed 3 March 2014, < <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/jun/14/egypt-parliament-dissolved-supreme-court> >

and more specifically some of their practices and policies, together with the replacement of institution elites”¹⁴⁰ did not occur as a result of the revolution. Although the cartelization of the governing Islamic coalition ensured a limited competition among them, the power struggle between the SCAF and the elected rulers of Egypt proved “the inability [of the latter] to suppress political opposition”¹⁴¹.

The defection of the revolution was the military's willingness to continue to support the old regime customs. First, the SCC ruled that the *Political Isolation Law*¹⁴² passed by Parliament was unconstitutional, clearing the way for Shafiq to candidate and second, the SCC nullified the election results for a third of the seats in the legislative, triggering immediately the dissolution of the Parliament by the SCAF, whom assumed legislative authority until elections for a new parliament were held. The SCC ruling of June 14 that led to the dissolution of Parliament also placed the legal status of the CA in doubt. The voters that supported the third block of candidates were disappointed, and started feeling that they had to choose between two evils: “maintaining the Mubarak regime, or Islamizing the country”¹⁴³; Egyptian democracy “lied in the ability of voters to choose from a fixed menu of political parties”¹⁴⁴. The runoff between Mursi and Shafiq began on the morning of June 16, 2012; “proper procedures were generally followed”¹⁴⁵.

The second ballot of the presidential brought the Salafis and Brothers again on the same side of the cleavage. Despite the frail junctions between the Ikhwan and the Salafis, „Al-Nour and popular Salafi Call preachers campaigned vigorously for Mursi”¹⁴⁶.

Despite the expectance of a low turnout, the percentage of casted ballots increased to 51.9%. Since Mursi's victory was predictable, the army orchestrated another strategic maneuver: the SCAF issued a supplement to the Constitutional Declaration of March 2011¹⁴⁷, enlarging its powers. While the announcement of the official results of the elections was delayed by the election

¹⁴⁰ Robert Ted Gurr, “The Revolution...cit.”, p. 361.

¹⁴¹ Richard S. Katz, Peter Mair, “Changing Models of Party Organization...cit.”, p. 23.

¹⁴² *The Political Isolation Law* had the purpose of blocking high members of the old regime to run for elections.

¹⁴³ Rosefsky Wickham, *op.cit.*, p. 259;

¹⁴⁴ Richard S. Katz, Peter Mair, “Changing Models of Party Organization...cit.”, p. 21.

¹⁴⁵ Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, *The Muslim Brotherhood...cit.*, p. 263.

¹⁴⁶ Jonathan A.C. Brown, *The Rise and Fall of the Salafi al-Nour Party in Egypt*, 14 November 2013, *Jadaliyya*, viewed 3 March 2014, < <http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/15113/the-rise-and-fall-of-the-salafi-al-nour-party-in-e> >

¹⁴⁷ Article 53 of the supplement noted that the SCAF would have full authority over the armed forces, including control of the Ministry of Defense and all military appointments and promotions while Article 60 gave the power to contest the decisions of the CA to the SCAF and the SAC. The supplement also gave senior state officials effective veto power over the provisions of the new constitution.

commission investigating claims of fraud on both sides, protestors returned to Tahrir Square. Fearing that Egypt's military was plotting to hijack presidential elections results to give victory to the candidate it supported, the „expectation that a fair electoral process will continue into an indefinite future”¹⁴⁸ was fading away. The Brotherhood actively participated to these protests, proving both their popular and organizational support and their importance in articulating “the specific claims and counterclaims being made on the existing government”¹⁴⁹.

On the 24th the official results were announced: Mursi won¹⁵⁰. An Islamist had become the democratically chosen president of a modern Arab state. After holding a speech in Tahrir Square, when he declared that “no institution can be above the will of the people”¹⁵¹, Mursi was sworn in on the 30th of June.

Mursi's Presidency: The Rise and Fall

On July 8, Mursi issued a decree reinstalling the dissolved Parliament ordering that it would function until another PA would be elected two months after the new constitution (which was yet to be drawn up). The government's failure to maintain its responsiveness or accountability to citizens after elections¹⁵² fed not only the latent civic discontent, but also the reaction of the SCAF that demanded the cancelation of the decree. While the Brotherhood and secular parties were working to fabricate consensus on the new constitution, Salafi Islamists took the streets (July 29), when „Tahrir Square became the scene of a massive demonstration calling for the establishment of an Islamic state”¹⁵³. Absorbed by the depths of the secular-Islamist cleavage¹⁵⁴, the dynamic of the cartelized Ikhwan indicates its tendency to depart from the civil society “to such an extent that [it would] become a part of the state apparatus

¹⁴⁸ Guillermo O'Donnell, „Illusions...cit.”, p. 36.

¹⁴⁹ Charles Tilly, “Does Modernization Breed Revolution?”, p. 436.

¹⁵⁰ Mursi won with 13.2 million votes (51.7%), against 12.3 million for Shafiq.

¹⁵¹ *Egypt's Morsi defies military in fiery speech*, 30 June 2012, *Al Jazeera*, viewed 26 March 2014, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2012/06/201262916347287161.html>.

¹⁵² Guillermo O'Donnell, „Illusions...cit.”, p. 36.

¹⁵³ Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, *The Muslim Brotherhood...cit.*, p. 193.

¹⁵⁴ „On the one hand, the Brotherhood and the Salafis were part of the same ideological current and any stand taken by the Brotherhood against the Salafis would open it to the charge of having abandoned the Islamic cause. On the other hand, identifying too closely with the Salafi movement would undermine the credibility of the Brotherhood's democratic commitments and threaten the fragile cross-partisan alliances it had forged with secular groups.” (Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, *The Muslim Brotherhood...cit.*, p. 195).

itself”¹⁵⁵. Rather than looking towards the state for resources, the cartelization process occurred as means to achieve the Islamic state, the goal of politics becoming self-referential.

The Society’s activity during Mursi’s presidency indicated an eagerness to monopolize power that grew initially out of the confrontation with the SCAF, highlighting the absence of a fundamental condition for the success of the democratic transition, as identified by Linz: a state of affairs in which “none of the major actors [...] consider that there is any alternative to democratic processes to gain power”¹⁵⁶. Backed up by the lawyers of the FJP that argued that the SCC invalidated only a third of the seats of the Parliament and had no reason to suspend the entire PA, the president restored the dissolved legislative. In the afternoon of the first session of the Parliament, the SCC requested the second time its dissolution threatening the president with criminal charges if he does not conform. During this crisis, the SCC had absolute powers in the absence of a constitution, generating a “power struggle between the elected and unelected arms of the Egyptian state, with the Brotherhood-dominated presidency and parliament at odds with state institutions headed by Mubarak-era appointees”¹⁵⁷.

The first cabinet in post-revolutionary Egypt was appointed in August. In the *Hesham Quandil Cabinet* seven ministers remained in position back from the military regime¹⁵⁸, while the FJP assumed a limited number of cabinet seats in key ministries¹⁵⁹. By now, the FJP coalition and the Salafis realized they shared a mutual interest in collective organizational survival¹⁶⁰, showing an increasing inter-party collusion, cooperation and “interpenetration of party and state”¹⁶¹. The cabinet “reflected the precarious balance of power between the president and the military”¹⁶² and the exhaustion of the Ikhwan’s efforts to include the military into the ruling cartel.

On the 12th of August President Mursi reversed the June addendum that was limiting his powers and returned to his full executive and legislative power.

¹⁵⁵ Richard S. Katz, Peter Mair, “Changing Models of Party Organization...cit.”, p. 50.

¹⁵⁶ Guillermo O’Donnell, „Illusions...cit.”, p. 37.

¹⁵⁷ Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, *The Muslim Brotherhood...cit.*, p. 267.

¹⁵⁸ For example, the Defence Minister, Field Marshal Hussein Tantawi remained in position.

¹⁵⁹ Although in numbers the ministries beheld by the Brothers were not very many, it was obvious that the group dominated key positions: Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (Tarek Wafik), Ministry of Higher Education (Mostafa Mussad) Ministry of Manpower and Immigration (Khaled Azhari), and Ministry of State for Youth (Osama Yassin). The Brothers also controlled the Ministry of Media (Salah Abdel Maqoud), and have been accused several times of trying to control the Egyptian media.

¹⁶⁰ Richard S. Katz, Peter Mair, “Changing Models of Party Organization...cit.”, p. 19.

¹⁶¹ *Ibidem*, p.16.

¹⁶² *Egypt’s Morsi swears in new cabinet*, 02 Aug 2012, *Al Jazeera*, viewed 3 March 2014, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2012/08/201282163659410998.html>.

The defence minister together with the army chief of staff were forced to retire; both Tantawi and Sami Anan became Mursi's advisors, in a move described as "a soft coup against the military"¹⁶³, which marked the end of the Brotherhood's efforts to attach the "old faces" to the ruling cartel. Thus, the hegemonic Brotherhood proved to be incapable of developing a shared worldview among the disparate segments of the population, failing to deliver social/economic goods and ultimately not being able to establish order¹⁶⁴.

The Monopolization of Power

On the 9th of October the president issued a decree pardoning¹⁶⁵ more than 1.000 people¹⁶⁶ – the expansion of presidential powers marked the second stage of Mursi's presidency, while simultaneously the relations with its allies and the military were weakened: the state was used as "an institutionalized structure of support, sustaining insiders while excluding outsiders"¹⁶⁷.

The decision of The Administrative Court of the State Council regarding the constitutionality of the CA was postponed four times, giving time to the parliament to approve the law providing the CA immunity from dissolution. Although the SCAF did not approve the law the Administrative Court referred Law 79/2012 to the SCC, giving the Islamist-dominated legislative more time to draft the constitution. The moment marked the beginning of the third phase of Mursi's mandate: on the 22nd of November 2012, he issued a Presidential Constitutional Declaration giving him sweeping new powers¹⁶⁸. The move was immediately condemned by the opposition, and

¹⁶³ Bassem Sabry, *Egypt's President Morsi in Power: A Timeline*, 22 July 2013, *Jadaliyya*, viewed 5 Feb. 2014, http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/13101/egypts-president-morsi-in-power_a-timeline.

¹⁶⁴ Micheline Ishay, „The Spring of Arab Nations?...cit.”.

¹⁶⁵ Morsi pardoned all Egyptian citizens arrested from the 25th of January 2011 until 30th of June, raising suspicions about pardoning brothers involved in toppling the Mubarak regime.

¹⁶⁶ Jeffrey Fleishman, *Egypt's pardoning of revolutionaries draws praise, cynicism*, 9 October 2012, *Los Angeles Times*, viewed 5 Feb.2014, http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/world_now/2012/10/egypts-pardoning-of-revolutionaries-.html.

¹⁶⁷ Richard S. Katz, Peter Mair, "Changing Models of Party Organization...cit.", p. 16.

¹⁶⁸ First, the investigations of those involved in the pro-Mubarak protests were going to be re-conducted, while "all constitutional declarations, laws and decrees made since Mursi assumed power on 30 June 2012 could not be appealed or canceled" (*Morsy issues new constitutional declaration*, 22 Nov. 2012, *Egypt Independent*, viewed 4 March 2014, <<http://www.egyptindependent.com/news/morsy-issues-new-constitutional-declaration->>). In the fourth article, the time limit for drafting the constitution was extended by two months, Article 5 set that no authority could dissolve the CA or the SC and Article 6 authorized the president to take any measures he considers necessary.

triggered nationwide protests that degenerated into clashes between the president's supporters and protestors.

Concomitant with the monopolization of power, the Ikhwan started losing both Salafi and popular support: the same force favorable to revolution started impeding post-revolutionary consolidation efforts¹⁶⁹. The Society drifted away from the mass-party supportive organizations to the “exclusively professional and centralized [ones], relying increasingly their resources on the benefits and privileges afforded by the state”¹⁷⁰. Due to “technological advance, the secondary support organizations [...] became less valuable than public relations expertise and media coverage”¹⁷¹. Thus, the Brotherhood came to be in incapacity to feed a high level of popular mobilization in their support: the institutional integrity of the state security apparatus was not jeopardized anymore¹⁷², giving it space to maneuver and the opportunity to rally its resources against the Ikhwan. In an effort to preserve the precarious power-struggle balance, on the 23rd December the president appointed 90 Islamist members to the Shura Council (filling the last third of the seats) after the resignations coming from the liberal/Christian block of the CA.

The opposition created the National Salvation Front, which requested the revocation of the PCD, while Mursi focused on organizing a referendum that would validate the Islamist Constitution. Held in two rounds (15th and 22nd December) and with a turnout of 33% the referendum endorsed the constitution¹⁷³; on the 29th, in a televised speech, Mursi formally passed the legislative power to the upper house of the Parliament. The referendum indicates the extensive predisposition of the Egyptian citizens to vote along religious lines; the religious collective identities, although specific to the mass party era were stuck-still by the authoritarian regime, and have two dialectically opposed connotations in the cartelization process: (1) they are the cause for the failure to cartelize the entire arena (including the military), since the decline of religious identities is considered to be a facilitating factor for cartelization¹⁷⁴; (2) they can be considered a facilitating factor for the emergence of the cartel on one side of the cleavage, the Islamist one. The latter connotation explains, as well, the timing of tensions between al-Nour and the Ikhwan breaking out publicly – the Salafis' main objective was to lock Egypt's legal regime into a Sharia framework, thus the validation of the Islamist Constitution lessened the

¹⁶⁹ Micheline Ishay, „The Spring of Arab Nations?...cit.”.

¹⁷⁰ Richard S. Katz, Peter Mair, “Changing Models of Party Organization...cit.”, p. 20.

¹⁷¹ Mark Blyth, Richard S. Katz, “From Catch-all Politics to Cartelisation...cit.”, p. 41.

¹⁷² Eva Bellin, „The Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East...cit.”, p. 146.

¹⁷³ 64% (10.693.911 votes) approving the document and 36% (¹⁷³ 6.061.101 votes) voting against it.

¹⁷⁴ Peter Mair, “The Challenge to Party Government”, *West European Politics*, vol. 31, nos. 1-2, January-March 2008, pp. 211-234.

essentiality of the Salafis' histrionic and conciliatory behaviour in relation to the Brotherhood from then onwards.

On January 5th 2013 the Quandil cabinet was reshuffled, leading to an increase of the Ikhwan's salient presence in the executive¹⁷⁵: all the newly appointed ministers, although officially independent, were "Brothers to the core"¹⁷⁶, enkindling the concerns of the other political actors. Elections for the PA were announced to take place in April, while the SC was working on the electoral legislation.

Losing Grip

While coming closer to the state, the Brotherhood ceased to be a channel of communication for its supporters, whom now "needed to make themselves demands on the party/state"¹⁷⁷. In the following months protests against Mursi marked the beginning of the fourth phase of his presidency: while the Society was struggling to consolidate its position, its "limited capacity to manage change"¹⁷⁸ resurfaced. Although the Brothers negotiated with opposition groups to stop violence, clashes continued in Cairo, reaching the peak in February, when demonstrations were brutally oppressed. Gradually, accusations of abuse against the Mursi regime emerged¹⁷⁹, the Brothers losing popular support, a key element for the success of a revolution¹⁸⁰.

The limitations of the self-protective mechanisms of the cartel were highlighted when the Salafis turned publicly against the Brothers. On the 23rd of January Khaled Alam Eddin, a senior al-Nour member and Mursi's presidential advisor, „openly accused the Brotherhood of exclusionary behavior"¹⁸¹, declaring: „we disagree with the Brothers on the monopoly of power"¹⁸². The

¹⁷⁵ FJP members controlled now also the Ministry of State for Local Development (Mohammed Ali Beshr), The Ministry of Supply and Internal Trade (Bassem Ouda), The Ministry of Transportation (Hatem Abdel Latif).

¹⁷⁶ Al-Masry Al-Youm, *Update: Details emerge on new ministers in Cabinet reshuffle*, 6 Jan. 2013, *Egypt Independent*, viewed 20 March 2014, <http://www.egyptindependent.com/news/update-details-emerge-new-ministers-cabinet-reshuffle>.

¹⁷⁷ Richard S. Katz, Peter Mair, "Changing Models of Party Organization...cit.", p. 23.

¹⁷⁸ Robert Ted Gurr, "The Revolution...cit.", p. 392.

¹⁷⁹ The media showed the police beating protestors, while opposition members claimed they were tortured. On the 4th of February 60 were killed and hundreds injured, while on the 11th, the police arrested 21 protestors in Cairo and 18 in Tanta.

¹⁸⁰ Robert Ted Gurr, "The Revolution...cit."

¹⁸¹ Jonathan A.C. Brown, *The Rise and Fall of the Salafi al-Nour Party in Egypt*, 14 November 2013, *Jadaliyya*, viewed 3 March 2014, < <http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/15113/the-rise-and-fall-of-the-salafi-al-nour-party-in-e> >.

¹⁸² Al-Masry Al-Youm, *Salafi leader criticizes Brotherhood for excluding other groups*, 24 January 2013, *Egypt Independent*, viewed 28 March 2014, < <http://www.egyptindependent.com/news/salafi-leader-criticizes-brotherhood-excluding-other-groups> >.

reversal of the cartelization process intensified on January 30th, when al-Nour and the NSF announced that they shared a common vision; on February 15th the Salafis joined the NSF in their call for a new government. The Brothers were now standing alone.

While the cartel limited the possibility of intra-organizational dissent and minimized the consequences of competition, it also “prevented elections from performing their minimal feedback function”¹⁸³. To maintain balance, the cartel had to institute “neocorporatism”¹⁸⁴ by “reversing the economic setbacks resulting from the uprisings and address the intractable economic weakness¹⁸⁵ that served as the uprisings’ fuel”¹⁸⁶. Their failure to offer privileges to the interest organizations (be they parties, the SCAF, or non-political actors) fast enough led to the gradual destruction of the cartel, inverting the initial consolidation process.

On February 21st Law 2/2013 amending on the LOPA and the LEPR was passed by the FJP dominated legislative. On March 6, the SAC revoked the President’s call for elections and referred Law 2/2013 to the SCC for a ruling on whether the amendments to the LEPR and LOPA laws were constitutional. In the following days the number of injured and dead protestors increased; the ruling of the SCC was pended.

On the 22nd of March the Cairo headquarters of the Society were attacked; several activists were arrested for encouraging violence against the Brothers – “the anti-Brotherhood sentiment was on the rise across Egypt”¹⁸⁷.

As the Brothers’ first desperate move, on the 11th of April 2013 the Islamist dominated SC passed a new electoral law, incorporating most of the amendments introduced in the SCC’s previous rulings, before the SCC issued its final ruling on Law 2/2013. Secondly, on 7 May 2013, the Quandil cabinet was reshuffled the third time: 9 ministers were replaced, increasing the number of the FJP members to 12 out of total 35. Additional to the 12 official brothers, other senior figures of the Ikhwan were named ministers¹⁸⁸, outlining the attempt of the Brothers to counterbalance the loss of the Salafis’ support.

¹⁸³ Richard S. Katz, Peter Mair, “Changing Models of Party Organization...cit.”, p. 23.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibidem*.

¹⁸⁵ The economic situation in Egypt was/is more than problematic,” with one quarter of its 80 million people living in poverty (Abdel-Razek, 2011), and youth unemployment at 25% (World Bank, 2011)” (Micheline Ishay, „The Spring of Arab Nations?...cit.”).

¹⁸⁶ Micheline Ishay, „The Spring of Arab Nations?...cit.”, p. 6.

¹⁸⁷ Bassem Sabry, *Egypt's President Morsi in Power: A Timeline*, 22 July 2013, *Jadaliyya*, viewed 5 Feb. 2014, http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/13101/egypts-president-morsi-in-power_a-timeline.

¹⁸⁸ For example, Yaya Hamed, was named investment minister (Prior to this, Hamed held several marketing and sales positions within Vodafone Egypt), Ahmed El-Gizawi, took over the Agriculture Ministry, Fayyad Abdel Moneim, a specialist in Islamic economics, was appointed as finance minister, while Sherif Haddara (that according to

On the 26th of May 2013 the SCC made its final ruling: first, the structure and the definition of constituencies failed to represent the population fairly; secondly, and most important, the SCC stated that “failing to ban the use of doctrinal or religious slogans or symbols in election campaigning violates Articles 5, 6, 9, 33 and 55 of the constitution”¹⁸⁹. The court decided that allowing the President to change electoral circumstances specified in the law “violates the principle of election integrity and lessens the independence of the High Election Commission and National Elections Commission, contrary to Articles 55, 132, 200, 208 and 228 of the constitution.”¹⁹⁰; the plaintiffs affirmed they were “*regaining the state back*”¹⁹¹. The SCC surprisingly ruled on June 2nd that the SC¹⁹² and the CA, which drafted the December 2012 Constitution, were unconstitutional.

The alterations of the electoral laws served as a safeguard for the Ikhwan’s majority in both the PA and SC. By gaining stronger control of the legislative institutions, the FJP planned to compensate for their loss of popularity, while seizing the state. Concerned with controlling the future electoral processes as well, the FJP attempted, through the February 2013 draft to “change the judicial composition of the electoral committee to be formed in each governorate”¹⁹³; on the 17th of June Mursi named seventeen new governors, out of which seven were Brothers.

After the opposition led by the NSF rejected talks with Mursi, the Brothers sent activists to distribute bread, while the anti-Mursi signature campaign *Tamarod* organized significant protests in Cairo; the Brothers soon announced a pro-Mursi meeting.

After Mursi delivered a rather provocative speech, mobilization was ordered by the Society’s leaders on the 27th of June triggering the mobilization of the army. When millions took the streets (June 30th), the reaction of the army proved once more that “the strength, coherence, and effectiveness of the state’s coercive apparatus distinguishes among cases of successful revolution and

www.aawsat.net, has close ties to the Muslim Brotherhood) was appointed petroleum minister.

¹⁸⁹ International Foundation for Electoral Systems, *Elections in Egypt: The Electoral Framework in Egypt’s Continuing Transition: February 2011-September 2013*, IFES Briefing Paper, USA, October 2013, p. 23.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibidem*.

¹⁹¹ Al-Masry Al-Youm, *Update: Details emerge on new ministers in Cabinet reshuffle*, 6 Jan. 2013, *Egypt Independent*, viewed 20 March 2014, <http://www.egyptindependent.com/news/update-details-emerge-new-ministers-cabinet-reshuffle>.

¹⁹² However, the SC could not be dissolved as a result of Article 230 of the 2012 Constitution – “The existing SC Council shall assume full legislative authority until the new House of Representatives is formed”.

¹⁹³ International Foundation for Electoral Systems, *Elections in Egypt: The Electoral Framework in Egypt’s Continuing Transition: February 2011-September 2013*, cit. p. 18.

revolutionary failure”¹⁹⁴. The Salafis tried to reach compromise with the Brothers, but failed. While the Ikhwan insisted on the democratic right of the elected president to continue his term in office, 10 Egyptian ministers submitted their resignations. The minister of defense issued a statement from the central command of the army, offering a 48-hour ultimatum to the president to conform to the demands of the opposition.

Two days later, the military took over, announcing that Mursi was suspended from office. Change was impeded by the robustness of authoritarianism: the coercive apparatus was still exceptionally able and willing to crush reform¹⁹⁵. The volatility of the consolidation period inevitably facilitated the military coup and the return to the old regime proxies¹⁹⁶.

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Emerging as a religious fundamentalist mass party and morphing into a catch-all party, the Society proved to meet the criteria conditioning the party nature of the group, but failed to complete its post-revolutionary cartelization process, hence impeding the codependent unfolding of democratic outburst and consolidation. Arising „with remarkable speed to overthrow a long-standing regime, it quickly built a post-revolution consensus and emerged as a hegemonic force”¹⁹⁷, but failed to manage the balancing act of democratization.

From normative participation to violence, the Brotherhood’s behaviour has been forced into Catch-All politics since its infancy. Since the XIXth century destruction of the local army was synonymous with the destruction of the local elites, the Egyptian political system was stripped of its first elite-parties developmental stage and, thus, of the emergent connection between the civil society and the state. The Brotherhood was to be born in the midsts of the Egyptian civil society’s interwar cleavage and be chocked there for almost a century.

The resounding systemic democratic failures experienced by the Brothers within their first two electoral episodes (1942 and 1945) not only proved the impossibility of achieving reform via electoral competition, but also substantiated the Islamists’ doubts in respects to the ills of the unfit, western imported customs. Building on the grounds of the Brothers’ electoral disappointment, the concept of Jihad provided them a moral entitlement to use force: basing their political formula on supernatural beliefs, the religious fundamentalist party twisted its electoral journey into violence. After failing to

¹⁹⁴ Eva Bellin, „The Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East...cit.”, p. 143.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 144.

¹⁹⁶ Micheline Ishay, „The Spring of Arab Nations?...cit.”.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibidem*.

advocate reform by influencing the king, in 1947 the Brotherhood activated the Secret Apparatus and the paramilitary branches to intervene in Palestine and orchestrate the Coup of the Free Officers, marking thus the beginning of its anti-system era.

Surviving severe oppression under Nasser through its frozen grass-roots structures, the Catch-All Brotherhood hybrid was born along with Anwar Sadat's amnesty and shift from leftist policy. The liberalization of the economy became an opportunity for the group to substitute the absence of the state through its Field Apparatus, enhancing its impact and facilitating its operationality as an inert mechanism while the Ikhwan was outlawed, whereas the liberalization of the political system made political participation possible: although political activity based on religious considerations was still explicitly banned¹⁹⁸, six Brothers running as independents won seats in the 1976 parliamentary elections, proving the group's willingness to compromise ideologically to enable participation and giving birth to the Society's double dilemma, enhanced by Mubarak's inauguration: it had to pose as liberal to be allowed to function, but not too liberal, so it would not lose its supporters. After acquiring its institutional dimension by connecting for the first time its electorate to the state, while political programmes abided moderation (organically and/or confined), the Ikhwan was feigning centrism in the political arena, but simultaneously sharpening its religious fundamentalist goals within the civil society. The 1987 elections saw the Society becoming the biggest parliamentary opposition block, whilst sharpening its internal division: the catch all politically active youth based skeletal branch was now opposing the old guard mass party.

The completion of the Brotherhood's Electoralist metamorphosis proved the group's dependency on the political regime and, thus, was possible only after Mubarak's resignation – evidenced to be connected to the Ikhwan, the A6YA ensured the Society's use of modern mobilization techniques, electoralist parties' particularity, concluding the transition. Aligning with secular actors, the Brotherhood exposed itself to a wider range of opinion, proving its catch-all purpose to maximize votes. The first legal political identity of the Society, the FJP was (partially) free to lawfully participate in a pluralistic system, warranting the Brotherhood's full Electoralist Catch-all party nature.

Agregating a coalition around it, the FJP won a comfortable majority in the Parliament, aiming to narrow down the number of competing actors, to limit competition and ultimately maximize joint advantages by controlling the composition of the CA. Although fighting against the SCAF's old customs stimulated increased interparty cooperation, the Catch-All behavior of the FJP

¹⁹⁸ Both the 1971 Constitution and the 1977 Political Parties Law banned explicitly any political activity based on religious considerations;

Alliance and the Salafis ran into a structural limit, due to the regime change limitation, factor which contributed to the abrupt end of the cartelization process. Dominated by the power struggle between the elected cartelized coalition (the FJP Alliance and the Salafis) and the SCAF, the post-Arab Spring Egyptian political arena witnessed the inability of the elected to suppress the practices of old regime. Although competition was limited by the ruling coalition, the Society's inability to integrate the military into the ruling cartel led to the president's urge to compensate by monopolizing power, unbalancing the cartel. Thus, the cartel's failure to offer privileges to stakeholders triggered the discontent among its political allies, which culminated with the Salafis' turn against the Brothers. Furthermore, since the cartelization process generates the reversal of the relation between party and voter, finally the Ikhwan's loss of popular support shed through a new wave of anti-Mursi protests.

The SCAF's progressive consolidation of power culminated with Mursi's overthrow and the return to old regime customs. The revolution did not fail, since its failure would have brought about unwanted change achieved by democratic means, but was inhibited by the SCAF orchestrated coup. What would have been the result in the event that the the military would have abandoned its old habits and joined the cartel? I believe that the rhetoric of the Brotherhood is a result of its multiple dilemmas puzzle; the pragmatism and versatility that it has shown for almost a century denote that the inconsequent principles of the group would have not translated into an Islamic state (an indicator is Mursi's position in international politics¹⁹⁹ during his short mandate), but rather displace the same double dilemma that shaped the Society beginning with the 1980s, transferring it to the international arena: pose as liberal so the international community will indulge the existence of the cartel/state, while simultaneously mimic a form of fundamentalism that would allow the group to maintain its supporters both within the electorate and among world leaders.

¹⁹⁹ Based on the continuation of Mubarak's policies, Mursi's position was contradicting the basic principles of the Society, disclosing the group's pragmatism. His first move as a president was a friendly diplomatic letter sent to the Israeli president, in which he expressed his intentions to maintain Mubarak's position. Moreover, on the 14th of July 2012, Secretary of State Hilary Rodham Clinton officially met Mursi, reaffirming Washington's support for Egypt's civilian governance. Furthermore, Mursi's stance towards the Syrian issue was also pro-American and it is well known that the anti-Asaad rebels met several times in Cairo. On the 15th of June 2013 the Egyptian President announced during a speech that Egypt will stop any diplomatic collaboration with Syria, when almost concomitantly the US decided to arm the Syrian rebels. During the same speech, held in the Cairo Stadium, Mursi called for Hezbollah to withdraw from Syria after the Lebanese group joined the battle alongside the Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad and against the rebel Free Syrian Army and Jihadi groups.

Thus, proving that a religious fundamentalist movement is a political party does not offer legitimacy to their worldwide condemned actions, but rather aims to enquire the prerequisites that made these groups venture into undertaking violent actions to generate political impact. If a political party that experienced all forms of political participation concludes that violence is the only efficient means of exerting real influence on the political arena (be it national or worldwide), shouldn't we reassess the perspective from which we rationalize the functionality of a system that only reacts to (attempts of) political representation de facto when the actors resort to violence?

Abbreviations

PCD – Presidential Constitutional Declaration
SCC – Supreme Constitutional Court
CA – Constitutional Assembly
SCAF – Supreme Council of Armed Forces
PA – People’s Assembly
SC – Shura Council
LOPA – People’s Assembly Law
LEPR – Regulation of the Exercise of Political Rights
NSF – National Salvation Front
SAC – Supreme Administrative Court
ASU – Arab Socialist Union
A6YA – April 6th Youth Association

Annexes

a. Figures

Fig.1.1 Parties of the Cadre or Caucus Type (Richard S. Katz, Peter Mair, “Changing Models of Party Organization...cit.”, pp. 5-28/p.10)

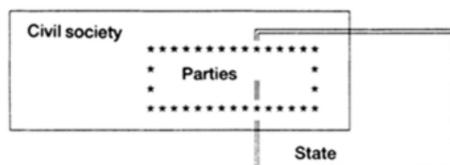


Fig. 1.2 Parties in Egypt in the Cadre or Caucus Era

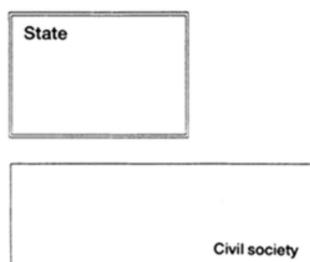


Fig. 2.1 Parties of the Mass Type (Katz and Mair, *op.cit.*, p.11)

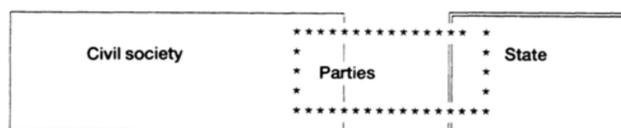


Fig. 2.2 The Society of the Muslim Brothers as a Mass Party

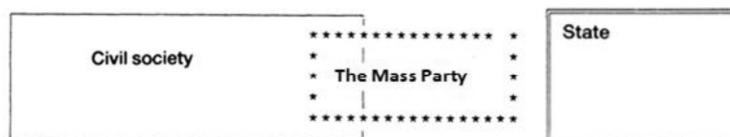


Fig. 3 The Society of the Muslim Brothers as a Catch-All Party

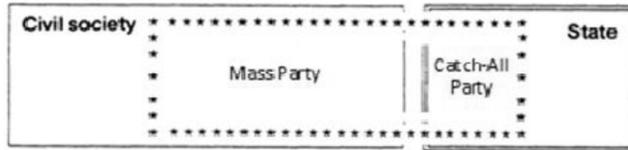
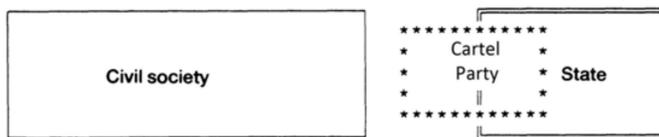
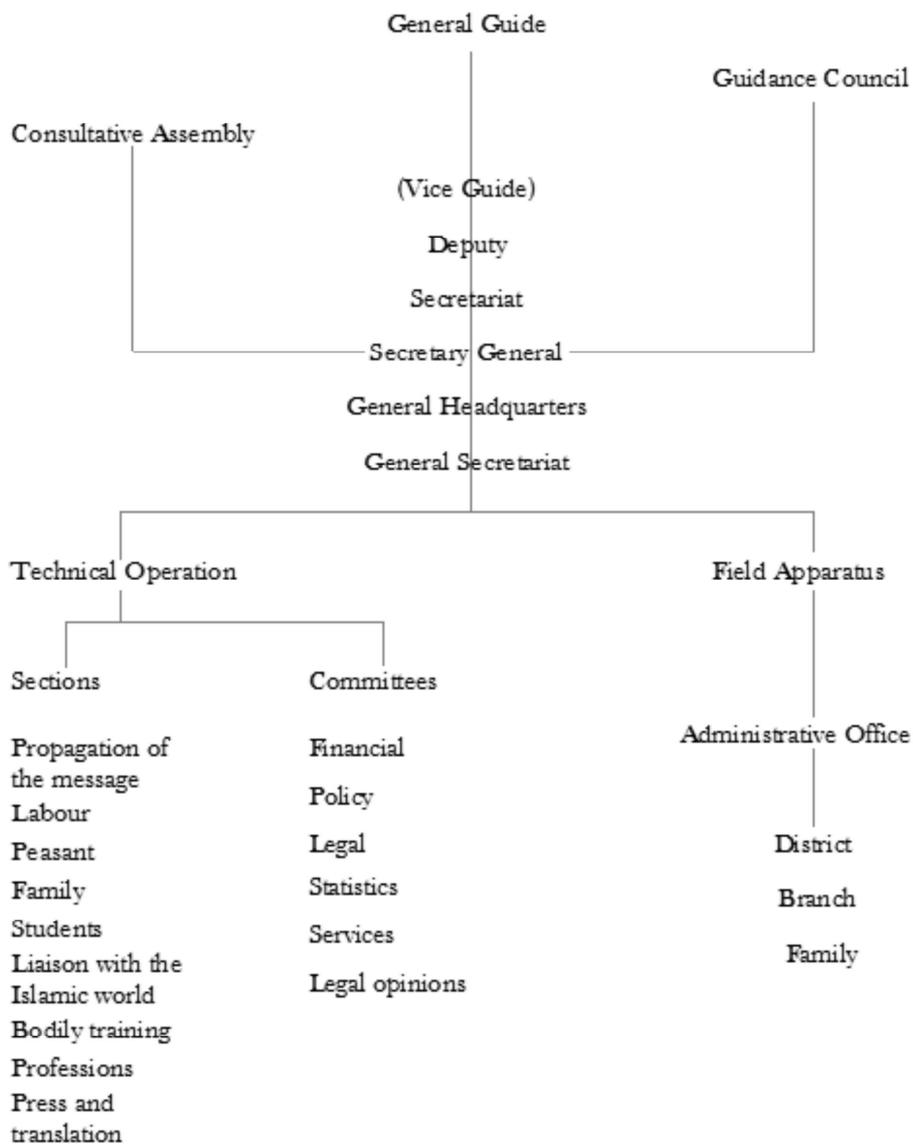


Fig. 4 The Cartel Party (Richard S. Katz, Peter Mair, “Changing Models of Party Organization...cit.”, p. 13)

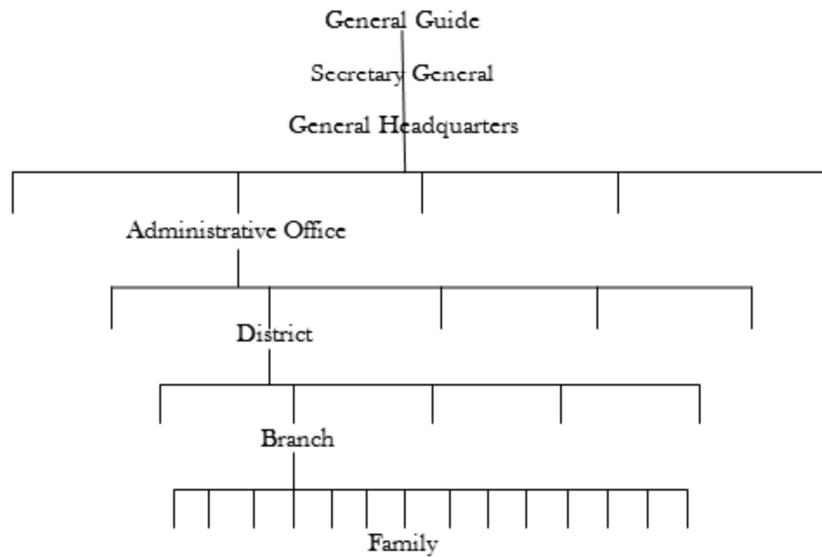


b. Tables

1. General Table of Organization (Richard P. Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers*, cit., p. 164)



2. Table of Organization: Field Apparatus (Richard P. Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers*, cit., p. 177)



The Branch and Family

