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Introduction

As the Arab Uprisings spread across the Middle East in January 2011, the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood's leaders gathered in a town a few hundred kilometres from Istanbul for their monthly meeting. The group had been in exile for the nearly three decades since their failed previous uprising, and its leaders and members were now scattered across the world. For the first time in many years however, the Brothers had reason to be hopeful. The swift overthrow of Tunisia's long-reigning dictator, Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, and the growing protests against the Egyptian President, Hosni Mubarak, had raised the question of revolt in Syria. The Brotherhood's Strategic Planning chief, Molham Aldrobi, later recalled that up until that moment: 'none of us … had imagined or dreamed or had that nightmare—however you want to describe it—that a revolution might happen in Syria because for the 30-plus years since 1980, nothing had happened'.[1]

A new item was quickly added to the Syrian Brothers' January meeting agenda: the leaders would discuss what to do if the wider Arab unrest spread to Syria. This was important because should the country's nearly 50-year-old Baʿthist regime be destabilised, the group's leaders and members might finally be able to return home. The group would need to be ready.

Molham Aldrobi was assigned to prepare a document overnight on what could happen. He presented the brief to the leadership the following day and later explained:

> I drafted a Project Charter called the 'Bashar Leave!' project, and in that document I discussed the special situation of Syria compared to Tunisia and Egypt, and what we as the Muslim Brotherhood needed to do in case revolution erupted in Syria …We were hopeful that something might happen in Syria that would change the situation in Syria to become a democratic country. We wanted these changes to happen peacefully.[2]

[1] Interview with Molham Aldrobi, 13 September 2017. [2] Ibid.

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Excerpt
More Information

But when the unrest finally reached Syria in March 2011, Brotherhood flags or slogans were few and far between in the burgeoning protest movement. Protesters in the town of Zabadani went so far as to formally distinguish themselves from the Brotherhood, holding a placard that declared: 'Neither Salafi nor Brotherhood, my religion is freedom'.[3] Indeed, while the Muslim Brotherhood remained Syria's best-known opposition group, it would face an uphill battle to rebuild a popular base in Syria.

The Muslim Brotherhood in Syria (*al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun fi Suriya*) has played a role in every iteration of Syrian politics since the country gained independence in 1946, including in Syria's parliament from 1947 to 1963. Syria's democratic era came to a close after the Arab Socialist Baʿth Party took power by coup in 1963, marking the beginning of the Brotherhood's long struggle to return to the corridors of Syrian political power. Initially the Syrian Brothers mounted their discontent peacefully through youth groups, study circles and popular protests inside Syria. However, as repression hardened and avenues for political opportunity narrowed over the subsequent decade and a half, the Brotherhood made the fateful decision to take up arms against the Syrian government. In the violent years that followed, membership of the group would become a capital offense. The Brotherhood–government blood-letting eventually cultimated in the bloody 1982 Hama uprising.

The uprising had begun in the early hours of 3 February 1982 in the central city of Hama, although the exact episode that sparked the conflict between the Syrian army and the militants remains disputed.[4] Whatever the cause, once the violence started, government opponents in Hama, including some Brotherhood cells, rose up against the regime, seizing government buildings, and by morning declaring the city 'liberated'. The government responded by closing all roads and communication links to the city, cutting off the up-to-200 Brotherhood militants and others

[3] 'Syria Live Blog - April 23', Al-Jazeera (23 April 2011), https://web.archive.org/web/20110426120021/http://blogs.aljazeera.net/live/middle-east/syria-live-blog-april-23. Note that this page is no longer available on the Al-Jazeera website and must be accessed through a web archive.

[4] The incident that sparked the conflict is variously reported as: a Brotherhood ambush of an army patrol (see Patrick Seale, *Asad of Syria: The Struggle for the Middle East* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988], p. 332.), an army operation to round up individual members of the Brotherhood (see Mark A. VanderVeen, 'Showdown in Syria: An Examination of Islamist Repression and Rebellion in 1982 Hama' [American University of Paris, 2009], p. 2.), the discovery of an opposition hideout by a government patrol (see Fred H. Lawson, 'Social Bases for the Hamah Revolt', *MERIP Reports*, no. 110 (1982), pp. 24–8) or a Syrian army operation to seize a known opposition weapons cache (see Thomas Friedman, *From Beirut to Jerusalem* [London: HarperCollins, 1995], p. 82).

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Dara Conduit
Excerpt
More Information

inside Hama from the group's exiled leaders and outside support.[5] By the time news of the uprising reached the outside world nearly a week later, a fierce battle was underway, with the Syrian government besieging the town's population with heavy weaponry. In just three weeks, up to 25,000 people were killed, and large sections of the city's old quarters were flattened.[6] 1,000 Syrian soldiers died in the battle. As the dust settled in Hama however, it became clear that a significant further price would be exacted from the Brotherhood and its supporters for their defiance: thousands were imprisoned or disappeared, the group's support base was destroyed, and large numbers of the group's followers were forced to join their leaders in a seemingly permanent exile. Exile then created a new challenge for the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood: the struggle for relevance.

Nonetheless, the Syrian state's intolerance of almost all opposition meant that on the eve of the 2011 uprising the Brotherhood still remained one of Syria's most resilient and best-resourced opposition political actors. As one of the few groups with salaried staff, an institutional structure and funds, it was able to use its organisational strength and resources to guarantee itself a seat at the political table. Brotherhood members went on to participate in all of the opposition conferences in the first year of the uprising, and it became a 'king maker' on the new opposition political bodies the Syrian National Council (SNC) and the National Coalition for Syrian Revolution and Opposition Forces (SOC - Syrian Opposition Coalition). Although the influence of these exiled political bodies diminished as the uprising militarised, the Brotherhood's organisational skills nonetheless had endowed it with a significant advantage in early days of the revolt. The disconnect between this early advantage and the Brotherhood's subsequent limited success in the uprising as a whole would later become quite stark.

For all the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood's prominence as the uprising first unfolded however, questions were quickly raised about its ambitions and *modus operandi*. Prominent Middle East analyst Marina Ottaway

[5] Estimates of the number of Brotherhood members that fought in Hama vary from Brotherhood Shura council chief Ali al-Bayanouni's estimate of 20–25 members, to the US Defense Intelligence Agency's report that 200 Brotherhood fighters were within the city. See interview with Ali al-Bayanouni, London (13 September 2015); 'Syria: Muslim Brotherhood Pressure Intensifies (U)', *US Defense Intelligence Agency* (May 1982), p. 11.

[6] Estimates of casualties vary between 5,000 and 25,000 given the secretive nature of the event. Middle East Watch (part of Human Rights Watch) claimed that most credible estimates range from 5,000 to 10,000 deaths, predominantly civilians. See Middle East Watch, *Syria Unmasked* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), p. 20. Nikolaos Van Dam put the death rate at between 5,000 and 25,000 – Nikolaos Van Dam, *The Struggle for Power in Syria* (London: I.B.Tauris, 1996), p. 111.

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Dara Conduit
Excerpt
More Information

queried in April 2011: 'Has it gone underground, how quickly can it be revived, how much sympathy is there still for the Muslim Brotherhood? I have no idea and I don't think anybody else has an idea on that'.[7] This sense of uncertainty remained unresolved a year later, when *The New York Times'* David Kirkpatrick conceded that while the Syrian Brotherhood's violent history was well known, 'not much more is known about the current internal dynamics of the group'.[8] Such observations were remarkable given that the Syrian Brothers' Egyptian counterpart is one of the most thoroughly studied Islamist groups in the Middle East.

It wasn't as though good research didn't exist on the Syrian Brothers: it did, although most of it had been written prior to 1982.[9] It was that the Hama massacre remained one of the few reference points through which Syria and the Brotherhood were known and understood, with hundreds of articles published as the protests broke out reminding readers that the Brotherhood's 1982 uprising was the last major instance of anti-government revolt in Syria by members of the country's Sunni Arab majority.[10] This memory of the Hama massacre – in particular its imagery of violence, bloodshed, radicalism, Islamism, siege, destruction and tragedy – was difficult to reconcile with the group's more moderate

[7] Cited in: Lachlan Carmichael, 'US Hedges Its Bets on Syria: Analysts', *Agence France Presse* (3 April 2011).

[8] David D. Kirkpatrick, 'Concerns about Al Qaeda in Syria Underscore Questions about Rebels', *The New York Times* (21 August 2012), http://thelede.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/08/21/concerns-about-al-qaeda-in-syria-underscore-questions-about-rebels/.

[9] See for example: Hanna Batatu, 'Syria's Muslim Brethren', *MERIP Reports*, no. 110 (1982), pp. 12–36; Umar F. Abd-allah, *The Islamic Struggle in Syria* (Berkeley: Mizan Press, 1983); Raymond Hinnebusch, *Authoritarian Power and State Formation in Bathist Syria: Army, Party and Peasant* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990); Hans Gunter Lobmeyer, 'Islamic Ideology and Secular Discourse', *Orient* 32, no. 3 (1991), pp. 395–415; Hans Gunter Lobmeyer, 'Al-dimuqratiyya hiyya al-hall? The Syrian Opposition at the End of the Asad Era', in *Contemporary Syria: Liberalization between Cold War and Cold Peace*, ed. Eberhard Kienle (London: British Academic Press, 1994); Alasdair Drysdale, 'The Asad Regime and Its Troubles', *MERIP Reports*, no. 110 (1982); Lawson, 'Social Bases'; Alison Pargeter, *The Muslim Brotherhood: The Burden of Tradition* (London: Saqi Books, 2010); Line Khatib, *Islamic Revivalism in Syria: The Rise and Fall of Ba'thist Secularism* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011); Thomas Pierret, *Religion and State in Syria: The Sunni Ulama from Coup to Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

[10] A Factiva search with the keywords 'Syria', 'Muslim Brotherhood' and 'Hama' and date filters 15 March 2011–15 April 2011 produced 156 results, including: Suleiman Al-Khalidi, 'Syrian Forces Kill Three Protesters in Southern City', *Reuters* (19 March 2011); 'Syrian Violence Escalates', *Financial Times* (24 March 2011); 'Syria Crackdown Leaves 15 Dead, Activists Say' (24 March 2011); Praveen Swami, 'Family in Power for 40 Years; Assad's Dynasty' (25 March 2011); James Hider and Nicholas Blanford, 'There Was a Massacre in the Streets but We Are Not Afraid, Say Witnesses', *The Times* (25 March 2011); 'Protests and Shooting in Syria as the Death Toll Climbs', *Al-Arabiya* (25 March 2011).

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Dara Conduit
Excerpt
More Information

recent record. This led Hama to often be seen as the definitive example of the group's character, more instructive than the nearly four decades of organisational history that preceded the event and the three decades that followed. Many observers therefore assumed that the example of the group's violent behaviour in 1982 would be replicated in 2011, with an editorial in *The Australian* noting that were President al-Assad 'to be deposed, it's likely that Sunnis, possibly Muslim Brotherhood extremists, would take over', while Cook declared that the Syrian President Bashar al-Assad 'may be an implacable foe, but he is better than the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood'.[11] Schanzer too affirmed that the al-Assad regime 'is a very nasty regime. Of course, the idea of having the Muslim Brotherhood come in … is equally unpalatable.'[12] It was as though the Brotherhood's true colours were revealed in Hama.[13]

In some ways, this was to be expected. Hama was a watershed moment in Syria's political history, with Leverett observing that, 'How a contemporary Syrian feels about Hama reveals much about his political orientation; how an outside analyst interprets Hama says much about his view of Syrian political culture and of the Asad [*sic*] regime.'[14] To those who supported the government, the Hama massacre served as a grave warning about the destructive and revolutionary threat that Islamists pose to their way of life; a narrative that the Assad regime itself went to great lengths to foment. Ismail found that the Hama events played a 'politicaly formative role':

> Memories of Hama are constitutive of a community of subjects of humiliation, whose lives were stifled or, in the words of Manhal al-Sarraj, "became still." The memories, muted as they have been, feed into sentiments of grievance and a deep-rooted sense of discrimination – a sense that a historical wrong remains unrecognised and that no atonement or reparation has been attempted.[15]

Indeed, for many, Hama represented a tragedy of history that demonstrated the brutality of their leaders and the lengths that they would go in

[11] 'Syrian Leader Must Adapt or Go', *The Australian* (2 April 2011), www.theaustralian.com.au/opinion/editorials/syrian-leader-must-adapt-or-go/news-story/ab29258aaecef4c74e8b614a832e4266, p. 15; Steven A. Cook, 'Unholy Alliance: How Syria Is Bringing Israel, Iran, and Saudi Arabia Together', *The Atlantic* (9 May 2011). www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2011/05/unholy-alliance-how-syria-is-bringing-israel-iran-and-saudi-arabia-together/238084/.

[12] Jenna Lee, 'Interview with Jonathan Schanzer', *Fox News: Live Event* (1 April 2011).

[13] For a more detailed discussion of the development of the narrative surrounding Hama, see Dara Conduit, 'The Syrian Muslim Brotherhood and the Spectacle of Hama', *The Middle East Journal* 70, no. 2 (2016), pp. 211–26.

[14] Flynt Leverett, *Inheriting Syria: Bashar's Trial by Fire* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institute, 2005), p. 35.

[15] Salwa Ismail, *The Rule of Violence: Subjectivity, Memory and Government in Syria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), pp. 133 and 157.

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Dara Conduit
Excerpt
More Information

the name of self-preservation, and also of the huge cost that the Brotherhood was willing to inflict upon the Syrian people. To the Syrian intellectual Yassin al-Haj Saleh, the significance of 1982 went further, representing 'the end point—not to the conflict with Islamists, but to any political rights for all Syrians'.[16] The Hama massacre continued to resonate in the 2011 Syrian uprising, with opposition groups at times strategically deploying the imagery of the Hama massacre to discredit the al-Assad regime.[17]

But the roots of the Hama memory extend beyond Syria's polarised political arena, drawing too from the dominant discourses that guide the understanding of Islamist groups more broadly. Cobb noted that global narratives are often 'downloaded' into local settings, shaping the way in which sense is made of events.[18] In such narratives, Islamist groups are viewed as predisposed to violence or undemocratic behaviour. When such groups call for elections or democratic processes, it is assumed that their commitment to democracy is limited to 'one person, one vote, *one time*', as coined by US diplomat Edward Djerejian in his now famed 1992 Meridian House speech. Djerjian later explained: the comments 'reflected our concern that certain Islamist parties and groups in the region would use elections as a vehicle to come to power only to undermine the democratic electoral process in order to stay in power'.[19] Like Djerjian, Talhamy concluded in 2012 'though in many ways the [Syrian] Brotherhood's official political platform is a model of Islamist moderation and tolerance, it is less a window into the group's thinking than a reflection of its political tactics'.[20] Such behaviour is often viewed as intrinsic to the 'facts' and 'truths' of Islamists and often Islam more broadly, ensuring that many of the events that have taken place in the

[16] Yassin al-Haj Saleh, *Impossible Revolution: Making Sense of the Syrian Tragedy* (London: Hurst, 2017), p. 236.

[17] AFP, 'Syria Opposition Commemorates Hama Massacre', *The Telegraph* (2 February 2012), www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/syria/9056350/Syria-opposition-commemorates-Hama-massacre.html; Phil Sands, 'Government and Protesters both Invoke Hama Massacre of 1982', *The National* (7 July 2011), www.thenational.ae/news/world/middle-east/government-and-protesters-both-invoke-hama-massacre-of-1982 (parenthesis added); Alain Gresh, '"The Bullets Killed Our Fear": Syria Waits for Ramadan', *Le Monde Diplomatique* (1 August 2011), http://mondediplo.com/2011/08/03syria.

[18] Sara Cobb, *Speaking of Violence: The Politics and Poetics of Narrative in Conflict Resolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 6.

[19] Edward P. Djerejian and William Martin, *Danger and Opportunity: An American Ambassador's Journey through the Middle East* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2008), p. 22.

[20] Yvette Talhamy, 'The Muslim Brotherhood Reborn: The Syrian Uprising', *Middle East Quarterly*, Spring (2012), p. 33.

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Dara Conduit
Excerpt
More Information

Middle East are attributed to the nuances and ‘irrationality’ of Islamist movements. In this regard, the Hama massacre, the infamy of which probably dwarfs the renown of the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood itself, played into these expectations, becoming an Islamist event par excellence and confirming to some the group’s primordial propensity to violence and rebellion, which is supposed to be common to all Islamist groups. Very few commentators considered the contra; that the Hama massacre itself may have been an aberration for an otherwise mainstream group. Although the book does not seek to understate the Brotherhood’s responsibility for events, it underlines the importance of interrogating whether the Hama memory has distorted knowledge on the group.

So, as the 2011 uprising unfolded, expectations of the Brotherhood often fell into the well-worn binaries ascribed to other Islamist movements, as a group that was violent *or* democratic, secular *or* dogmatic, but rarely something in between. The Brotherhood was variously depicted as a threat to Syria’s future and its secular path, or a force for good in the fledgling opposition movement, while the Syrian uprising itself was often viewed through the lens of an existential battle between the secular Assad regime and the fanatical Brotherhood. This led to the understatement of the scale and diversity of the country’s existing and emerging opposition movement, the overstatement of the Brotherhood’s significance, and perhaps most significantly for this book’s line of enquiry: the oversimplification of the Brotherhood’s history and character, limiting the ability of observers to predict how the Brotherhood would fare as the 2011 uprising developed.

Rethinking the Brotherhood

This book uses the gap in understanding, the prominence of the violence narrative and the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood’s perceived significance on the eve of 2011 as a starting point to examine the ways in which the Brotherhood’s past informs the choices it has made in the uprising. It observes the Brotherhood’s history from its founding moments to 2011 in order to identify its formative experiences and key characteristics, and to examine how these features changed over time. The book argues that it is these historical experiences, contexts and wounds that most strongly influenced its entrance into – and subsequent underperformance in – the 2011 uprising. It builds on the early works of scholars such as Batatu, Abd-Allah and Hinnebusch, as well as Lefèvre’s 2013 *Ashes of Hama* by using additional Arabic-language primary sources, interviews, recently released archival documents and the lessons of five

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Dara Conduit
Excerpt
More Information

further years of Syrian war.[21] It complements Lefèvre's chronological account by explaining the Brotherhood thematically to more closely investigate the group's core features, although takes a less optimistic view of the Brotherhood's organisation and promise.

The book employs a Constructionist qualitative research methodology[22] because the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood is a socially constituted organisation and product of the social world. Its history has been defined by the interactions between individuals, making Constructionism an important tool because of its acknowledgement of the inevitability of finding accounts that reflect slightly different truths: 'people build or construct their understanding of the external world—that is, they interpret it'.[23] The research was not expected to uncover a repository of accepted facts and 'truths' on the group. In fact, it was clear from the moment that the research was conceived that the Brotherhood's deeply contested history would preclude the discovery of an uncontested account of the past. It is not that every participant or source rewrote history (although some did), but that they have interpreted events through their own lenses, ensuring that each data set had emerged from a different set of experiences and social reality. Other methodologies – including many of those in the positivist tradition – would treat conflicting data as problematic and perhaps worthy of annulment. In contrast, the Constructionist approach enabled the use of conflicting perspectives to enrich the analysis, particularly when it came to assessing the organisational health of the Brotherhood.

The research incorporated multiple qualitative methods with a strong emphasis on primary source material. Primary documents, one-on-one interviews and archival material are the building blocks of the book. Sources were based in either Arabic or English. The three separate research methods were chosen to provide 'a confluence of evidence', enabling the triangulation of findings to enhance data integrity.[24] The three methods also enriched the data, which if left to a single method could be vulnerable to bias or agenda. Indeed, as Mouton and Marais noted, 'by employing different methods of data collection in a single

[21] Batatu, 'Syria's Muslim Brethren'; Abd-allah, *The Islamic Struggle in Syria*; Hinnebusch, *Authoritarian Power*; Raphaël Lefèvre, *Ashes of Hama: The Muslim Brotherhood in Syria* (London: Hurst, 2013).
[22] Herbert J. Rubin and Irene S. Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data* (Thousand Oaks: SAGE, 2012), p. 16.
[23] Ibid.
[24] Thomas R. Lindlof, *Qualitative Communication Research Methods*, 3rd edn (Thousand Oaks: SAGE, 2011), p. 274; Elliot Eisner, *The Enlightened Eye: Qualitative Inquiry and the Enhancement of Educational Practice* (Upper Saddle River: Merrill/Prentice Hall, 1998), p. 110.

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Dara Conduit
Excerpt
More Information

project we are, to some extent, able to compensate for the limitations of each'.[25] Where necessary or appropriate, primary sources were complemented by secondary sources.

The research initially examined official Brotherhood documents, including published political programmes, official statements issued by leaders, editions of the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood newspapers *al-Nadhir* (which was published in Arabic, with excerpts published in English across Europe and the USA) and *al-Ahd*, and Brotherhood members' own account of the Hama massacre *Hama Masaat al-Asr*. Document analysis was chosen as the first avenue of research because it provided a data set to be built on and verified through the subsequent interview process. Although official documents are vulnerable to agendas, bias and half-truths like any other source, they provide insight into the way the Brotherhood communicated with its supporters and how it wanted to be portrayed at certain important junctures. While human accounts have been modified by reflection and memory, historical documents are exactly preserved, offering a window into the Brotherhood uninfluenced by the passage of time.

The second second step of the research process drew data from human sources, including personal documents and memoirs written by Brotherhood and Fighting Vanguard members (most of whom are now dead), as well as one-on-one interviews. Efforts were made to talk to members and source documents from all three Brotherhood factions, as well as members across all three generations. The documents included memoirs written by Adnan Saadeddine (former leader), Said Hawwa (former ideologue), Ayman Shorbaji (former Fighting Vanguard leader) and Abu Musab al-Suri (former Fighting Vanguard Member/Brotherhood military trainer), and letters written by Brotherhood and Fighting Vanguard figures to their supporters and the leadership. The book also used documents found in the US raid on the al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden's house in Abbottabad, Pakistan, including one letter thought to be written by Bin Laden himself.[26] These personal documents were complemented by interviews given by Brotherhood leaders in both the

[25] Johann Mouton and H.C. Marais, *Basic Concepts in the Methodology of the Social Sciences* (Pretoria: HSRC, 1996), p. 92.

[26] Unknown author, ND 'SOCOM-2012–0000017-HT – Letter found in Osama bin Laden's Abbottabad, translated by the Combatting Terrorism Center at West Point, thought to be written by Osama bin Laden'. The letter was assessed by Lahoud et al. as being written by Osama bin Laden. See Nelly Lahoud et al., 'Letters from Abbottabad: Bin Ladin Sidelined?', Combatting Terrorism Center at West Point (3 May 2012), www.ctc.usma.edu/v2/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/CTC_LtrsFromAbottabad_WEB_v2.pdf, p. 58.

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Dara Conduit
Excerpt
More Information

English and Arabic-language press over a period of nearly 40 years. In addition, 20 one-on-one semi-structured interviews were conducted with senior Muslim Brotherhood members (mostly from the Aleppo branch of the group), former Brotherhood members (including from the Hama and Damascus branches), non-Brotherhood Syrian Islamist opposition figures and secular Syrian opposition figures. Every person interviewed had been linked to the Brotherhood in some way, either as a member or former-member, associate, or as the child of a Muslim Brotherhood member (past or present) that had grown up in a Syrian Brotherhood community in exile. All of the non-members had worked closely with – and often competitively against – the group, either historically or as part of the 2011 uprising. Some Brotherhood members and Syrian activists generously participated on the condition of anonymity.

It is acknowledged that interviews are not without flaws. Humans can forget or repress memories, make mistakes, exaggerate or lie. Some participants will have agendas of their own.[27] These considerations formed part of the research design from the outset and garnering fact and exact truth from all participants was not expected. When information was uncovered purporting to be fact, it was triangulated with other participants from a range of backgrounds, as well as with the other data sources (as is discussed in further detail below). At times, the variation in accounts enriched the data considerably.

The research also incorpated archival material produced by Western governments working in the Levant from the early 1940s until today. Although Western archival sources require a thorough consideration of Orientalist bias,[28] the bias is of a different nature to that inherent in Brotherhood-centric sources, so acted as a balance of sorts. Archival material was found to be particularly useful in shedding light on the broader socio-political context surrounding the Brotherhood's emergence and activities. It was also helpful, because like document analysis, archival research is free from the concerns of 'reactivity' inherent in the interview process, where participants may respond differently because they know they are being observed.[29]

Significant thought was given to balance between sources and data reliability. Possible concerns that using so many Muslim Brotherhood sources could skew the research findings in line with the group's own

[27] Lindlof, *Qualitative Communication*, p. 173.
[28] See Edward W. Said, *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient* (London: Penguin Books, 2001).
[29] C. James Goodwin, *Research in Psychology: Methods and Design* (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, 2010), p. 388.

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