

THE FOURTH ORDEAL

The Fourth Ordeal tells the history of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt from the late 1960s until 2018. Based on over 140 first-hand interviews with leaders, rank-and-file members and dissidents, as well as a wide range of original written sources, the story traces the Brotherhood's re-emergence and rise following the collapse of Nasser's Arab nationalism, all the way to its short-lived experiment with power and the subsequent period of imprisonment, persecution and exile. Unique in terms of its source base, this book provides readers with unprecedented insight into the Brotherhood's internal politics during fifty years of its history.

VICTOR J. WILLI completed his doctorate at the University of Oxford and his Master at the University of Zurich. He is currently employed by the World Economic Forum in Geneva, Switzerland, focusing on the geopolitics and economics of the current Middle East.

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THE FOURTH ORDEAL

A History of the Muslim Brotherhood
in Egypt, 1968–2018

VICTOR J. WILLI



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NOTE ON TRANSLITERATIONS AND REFERENCES

This book uses a simplified version of the *International Journal of Middle East Studies* (IJMES) transliteration system. For the sake of readability, I decided to dispense with most of the paraphernalia that are usually employed in academic scholarship, and instead rely on a number of simple rules of thumb. As such, the definite article before names and places has been dropped, except where the full name is used or where grammatical construction requires it (e.g. ‘Hassan al-Banna’, but ‘Banna’ instead of ‘al-Banna’). Expressions or names of Arabic origin appearing in the main text are spelled without diacritics. Familiar expressions of Arabic origin that are found in the 2005 edition of the *New Oxford Dictionary for Writers and Editors* (e.g. Quran, Sharia, mujahideen, etc.) are spelled in non-italicized form. Less familiar or technical expressions of Arabic origin that cannot be found in the said dictionary are spelled in italics in the text, and they are also listed in the glossary section in the end. Names of well-known individuals and organizations are written in their most commonly used English form (e.g. ‘Gamal Abdel Nasser’ instead of ‘Jamal ‘Abd al-Nasir’; ‘al-Qaida’ instead of ‘al-Qa‘ida’). Names of less well-known individuals and organizations are spelled using the marks for ‘*ayn* (‘) and *hamza* (’), except in cases where there exists a widely used preferred spelling in English (e.g. ‘Issam al-‘Arian’, but ‘Khaled Said’ instead of ‘Khalid Sa‘id’). Names of institutions, places, and social and political movements and parties are similarly spelled using the marks for ‘*ayn* and *hamza* (e.g. ‘Rab‘a al-‘Adawiyya’, ‘Jama‘a Islamiyya’, etc.).

The titles of books, articles and other written or audio-visual sources of Arabic origin, when mentioned in the main text, are provided in translated form, followed by the transliteration in simplified Arabic in brackets. When quoted in the bibliography and the footnotes, however, the titles of Arabic works are given in their fully transliterated form, while the names of authors and publishing houses are given in their simplified form. Translated direct speech such as cited oral sources are spelled in a more colloquial form in English (e.g. ‘don’t’ instead of ‘do not’).

NOTE ON SOURCES

The story presented here is based on more than 140 recorded oral history interviews with current and former Brotherhood members across all organizational levels, consisting of one to several hours each. Interviews were conducted between May 2012 and January 2019 in Cairo, Alexandria, Doha, Istanbul, Ankara, London, Manchester, Liverpool, Berlin, Munich, Geneva and other places. Most of them were transcribed as well as translated from Arabic into English. Some sources were anonymized due to potential security risks. These sources are marked with an asterisk in the footnotes and in the Bibliography.

Interviewees can be grouped into four categories, according to criteria of similarity in hierarchical positions within the Brotherhood, socio-economic status and level of education.

The first category consists of Brotherhood leaders who are either members of the Guidance Office or have occupied high-level positions in the Freedom and Justice Party or one of Morsi's two cabinets. These individuals had typically university degrees and came from the professional classes.

The second group consists of middle-ranking cadres responsible for leading either a region, branch or family, as well as other rank-and-file members. Individuals in this latter group did not always have any formal organizational function, but supported the Brotherhood with menial and logistical tasks. They were typically of urban lower middle-class backgrounds and only in some cases had a university education.

The third group consists of individuals who had left the Brotherhood shortly before or after the uprising of 25 January 2011, either on a voluntary basis or because they had been forced out. Many of these dissidents were university educated or belonged to the class of students and young professionals.

The fourth group consisted of all those who, while not part of the Muslim Brotherhood, had either been eyewitnesses of specific events described in this book, or claimed otherwise privileged knowledge of the Brotherhood's internal workings. This group includes individuals from across Egypt's political and ideological spectrum, including Sufis, Salafis, Azharites, secular or religious revolutionary activists, leftist, Nasserists, socialists, communists, as well as

politicians, businesspeople, NGO workers, journalists, researchers, authors, police officers, secret service agents, taxi drivers, and a wide range of everyday Egyptians. All primary sources are listed under 'Primary Oral Sources' in the Bibliography section.

This material was complemented by hundreds of written sources that were published by the Brotherhood either on an institutional basis or individually by one of its members or dissidents. This material included memoirs, prison-writings, pamphlets, magazines, scholarly or historical works, as well as legal documents governing the Brotherhood's national and international organization, such as its official Statutes and By-laws. Another source of written information came from the Brotherhood's various online domains, including Ikhwanwiki.com, Ikhwanonline.com, Ikhwanonline.info, Ikhwan.site, Ikhwanweb.com, as well as various social media accounts that were either associated with these websites or with individual members. Finally, hundreds of leaflets and other memorabilia collected during rallies and protest marches, including a library of graffiti and street art, as well as a broad range of audio-visual material taken during the various sit-ins, became part of the source base. Some of this material figures in the plate section of this book while the majority can be accessed at www.thefourthordeal.com.

For the sake of readability, authors of secondary sources are not usually cited within the main text, but are referred to in the footnotes and the bibliography. This is not to denigrate the important and substantive contributions many scholars and journalists have made, but is intended as a means to avoid diverting readers' attention to this or that author or this or that academic argument, rather than the story of the Muslim Brotherhood itself. However, I would like to list some of the most important scholars and authors on whose works I have drawn in writing this book. From the scholarly community, these individuals include (in alphabetical order) Khalil al-Anani, Abdulla al-Arian, Nathan Brown, Courtney Freer, Patrick Haenni, Shadi Hamid, Raymond Hinnebusch, Hazem Kandil, Gudrun Krämer, Brynjar Lia, Richard P. Mitchell, Carry Rosefsky-Wickham, Robert Springborg, Mariz Tadros, Hussam Tammam and Barbara Zollner. In addition, I have drawn on the accounts of a number of outstanding journalists whose reporting has vitally contributed to the writing of this story, including Sarah Carr from *Mada Masr*, Mohamed Fahmy from Al Jazeera, Patrick Kingsley from *The Guardian*, David D. Kirkpatrick from the *New York Times*, Bel Trew from *The Times* and the freelance journalists and researchers Abderrahman Ayyash, Tamer Badawi, Yasser Fathi, Osama al-Sayyad and Ahmed al-Talawi.