THE ANATOMY OF AN OPPOSING SUNNI MOVEMENT IN SYRIA: THE MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD
(*AL-'IḤWĀN AL-MUSLIMŪN)*

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Abstract

In this study, such questions as how the Muslim Brotherhood did emerge; how did it develop; what kind of effects had it on the Syrian politics, will be answered. As a strong opposition movement which had a wide base and a solid organizational structure, how did it try to spread the invitation at homes, mosques and teahouses; and by this way finding an echo at the base of society especially among rural people, how did it influence the Syrian people and the political line of Syrian State, will be evaluated. The formative phase of the movement, its administrative structure, the classes which formed its base, its interaction with other intellectual movements, the attitudes of the Baath Party to the secularism and its role on Syrian politics, and the transformation with Bashar al-Assad period, will be discussed. In addition, events in Hama, the repercussions of the

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Arab Spring and the effects of Muslim Brotherhood to the Arab Spring process, will be examined.

Keywords: The Muslim Brotherhood, Syria, The Opposition Movement, Hama events, the Arab Spring.

Özet

Suriye'de Sünnî Muhalif Bir Hareketin Anatomisi: Müslüman Kardeşler (İhvân-ı Müslimîn)

Bu çalışmada, güçlü bir muhalif hareket olan, geniş bir tabana ve sağlam bir organizasyon yapısına sahip olan Müslüman Kardeşler'in neden ortaya çıktığı; nasıl geliştiği; Suriye siyaseti üzerinde ne gibi etkisi olduğu sorularına cevap aranacaktır. Hareketin evlerde, mescitlerde ve kahvehanelerde kısaca halkın bulunduğu her ortam ve mahfilde daveti yaymaya çalıştığı, bu şekilde başta taşra olmak üzere toplum tabanında geniş bir yankı bularak Suriye halkı ve Suriye devletinin siyasi çizgisine nasıl etki ettiği değerlendirilecektir. Hareketin kuruluş aşaması, idari yapısı, tabanını oluşturan sınıflar, diğer fikri akımlarla etkileşimi, ayrıca Baas Partisi'nin laiklik anlayışına olan tutumu, Suriye siyasetindeki rolü ve Beşşar Esad ile gelen dönüşümü tartışılacaktır. Hama olayları, Arap Baharı'nın yankıları ve Müslüman Kardeşler'in Arap Baharı sürecine etkisi de incelenecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Müslüman Kardeşler, Suriye, Muhalif Hareket, Hama olayları, Arap Baharı.

Introduction

The Muslim Brotherhood is one of the major Islamic movements,[1] and one of the Arab worlüds' most prominent and main political opposition group which was founded in Egypt in 1928, as a spiritual, religious, and collective movement.[2] Syria was the second region where the Muslim Brotherhood

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1   "The Moderate Muslim Brotherhood". http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/62453/robert-s-leiken-and-steven-brooke/the-moderate-muslim-brotherhood, [Retrieved: 14.10.2012].

2   Enver Abdülhadi Ebû Taha et al., **el-Ahzab ve'l-Harekât ve'l-Cemaatü'l-İslâmiyye [Sects, Factions and Islamic Community]**, Merkezü'l-Arabî li-dirâseti'l-İstrateciyye, vol. I, Damascus 2000, p. 255.

spread, since in the 1930s, when Syrian people were trying to achieve national liberation and independence from French mandate, many Syrian students had studied abroad at al-Azhar University in Egypt. For instance, the founder and the first leader of the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria Sibai Mohammed, together with Hamid Mustafa participated in a number of classes of al-Banna, the founder of Muslim Brotherhood, in Egypt.[3] This process provided the Muslim Brotherhood organization in Syria to be built on a solid conjecture.

The main difference that separates the organizational structuring of the Muslim Brotherhood from the other organizations is the fact that it educates its members, intellectually and politically, under the application of a comprehensive program of Hassan al-Banna's "novation (tajdid project)". The organization, which was simply trying to spread "the invitation" at homes, mosques, and coffee shops and on every platform, resonated at the base of society, particularly in rural areas.[4] Thus, it tried to reach its goal, which was to manifest Islam, strive for social injustice and eradicate of poverty and corruption according to the laws of Islam.

Throughout this study, the reader will find the answers of the following questions such as why did Muslim Brotherhood emerge? How did it spread among the people? What were its effects on the Syrian politics?

In this study, as a leading opposition movement that is reaching a broader base and a powerful organizational structure, what kind of structure and ideological background has determined Muslim Brotherhood to reach that power and what sort of state policies has affected the development of this movement, will be revealed. A study of the structure of this organization and its internal workings will be analyzed by referring the emergence and structure of the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood movement, its interaction with intellectual streams and its role in Syria politics, and its conversion in Bashar al-Assad

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3   Adnan Sadeddin, **el-İhvânu'l-Müslimûn fî Suriye Zikriyat ve Müzekkirat [The Muslim Brotherhood in Syria]**, Dâru'l-Amr, vol. I, Amman 2006, pp. 31-32.

4   David Dean Commins, **Historical Dictionary of Syria**, Scarecrow Press, Lanham 1996, p. 160.

period.

Methodologically, the material for this study was developed through a process of textual analysis that has been applied to the data collected from various sources, such as articles, commentaries, and other texts have been scanned, classified and the necessary coding procedures have been applied. By this way, a broad anatomy of Muslim Brotherhood was analyzed and discussed.

1. The Emergence and Structure of the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood Movement

a. The Establishment of the Movement

The basis formation of the movement's largest business bodies were charitable religious associations of local organizations which operated independently of each other.[5]According to the dominant view in the 1930s, when the Syrian people were trying to achieve independence from the French mandate, the first step of the official movement of the Muslim Brotherhood started to operate in Aleppo with 11 people, under the name of "Dar al-Erkam" at the beginning of 1937.The founders of the association were Omar Bahaeddin, Emir Abdulkadir Husseini, Ahmed Bengasli, Fuad al-Catalysis, Wahhabi Abdul Sami al-Tanci who were part of the middle class with noble responsibility. The reason why Aleppo was the first centre of the organization was its being the economic capital of Syria, as well as the region with the highest population density. It was keeping close ties and had close border with the newly established Republic of Turkey which enhanced the strategic importance of the region.[6]

Hanna Batatu, with a broader historical perspective, was looking at the

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5   Philip S. Khoury, "Muslim Brotherhood in Syria", **The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World**, Oxford University, Newyork 1995, p. 191.

6   The Writing Board, **el-İhvanü'l-Müslimun: Neş'etun Meşbuhe ve Târîhun Esved: el-Ardu ve'l-Cüzûr [The Muslim Brotherhood]**, Mektebü'l-İ'dâd, vol. I, Damascus 1984, p. 41.

situation of the Muslim Brotherhood association, "Dar al-Erkam", underpinning the name of the process with Islamic history and with a discomfort when Muslims of Aleppo passed to the hands the of the French from the Ottomans after the First World War. Because, once the governance changed hands in Syria, Aleppo which was the largest and most important city; besides, between the years of 1919-1925, approximately 89 thousand Armenians emigrated from Turkey to Syria. Industrial capabilities and business skills of this newly migrated group did not only disrupt the balance of the class in the city, but also overturned the position of the merchant class. In the late 1930s, when the port of Alexandria, The Cukurova Region, Baghdad railway, crossing from northern Syrian territory along with the cities of Gaziantep and Urfa, separated in the First World War, Aleppo was deprived of the door opening to the sea, of the natural market field, and of its inner parts, and it resulted in the entrapment of the trade in the domestic market. These processes paved the way for establishment and the spread of the ideas of the Muslim Brotherhood movement.[7]

Damascus, where would be one of the most important centres of the organization after Aleppo, was headed by Mohammed Mubarak as the "Muslim Youth Association"; in the city of Homs, under the leadership of Mustafa Sibai, it was named as "Muhammad Youth", in Deir al-Zoras "God's Assistants' Association", and in the city of Hama, under the leadership Hassan al-Banna's close friend, Hamid Muhammad, the association organized as "Muslim Brotherhood".[8] For the advancement of the movement, these associations regulated congresses in a more systematic way, and in the 1938 Congress, they determined their headquarters in Aleppo.[9] The organization that performed first three congresses here, in 1943, took the decision to regulate the organizations creating sub-units of every branch in the congress in Homs. In their own words,

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7   Hanna Batatu, "Syria's Muslim Brethern", **MERIP Reports**, (November-December 1982), No: 110, p. 16.

8   "Tarihu'l-İhvâni'l-Müslimîn fî Suriye", http://www.ikhwanwiki.com/index.php, [Retrieved: 05.11.2012].

9   The Writing Board, **op. cit.,** p. 41.

for the purpose of the resurrection of the Islam, and to save the society from the influence of West, they started their activities within the framework of the general invitation method, in the public places such as coffee houses, mosques and masjids/prayer rooms.[10] In this system, which continued until 1945, when "Muhammad Youth" organized a congress in Aleppo, declaring to unite all the branches of the organization in order to cooperate more strictly, and deciding to continue their activity in Damascus, bringing together all the representatives of the organization under the same roof. To be compatible with the objectives of the organization in Egypt, it was believed that the organization should have the same name and principles with the Brotherhood in Egypt, and in August 1946, under the chairmanship of Mustafa Sibai, the organization united and named as "Muslim Brotherhood".[11] No doubt the reason why he was chosen for this task is the claim that he established a secret organization against the British in Egypt and Iraq, and consequently he lived in a very heavy prison life. [12]Moreover, he was the first person who organized an armed resistance against the French in Syria.[13] The first official connection of the movement with Egypt occurred in the beginning of 1945, and visits of Abdurrahman al-Saati and Abdulhakim Abidi to Iraq and Damascus played an important role on this.

Despite the fact of the existing link between the centres of Egypt and Syria, some conjunctural differences prepared the ground for the organization in Syria to take on a more independent structure. It is an important detail that the organization in Egypt had a more complex and decentralized political structure, and pursued Hassan al-Banna's principles, whereas the organization in Syria was gradational and more centralized. On the other hand, Egypt was

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10 David Dean Commins, **Hisrorical Dictionary of Syria**, Scarecrow Press, Lanham 1996, p. 160.

11 Olivier Roy, **Siyasal İslamın İflası [The Bankruptcy of Political Islam],** (trans. by Cüneyt Akalın), Metis Press, İstanbul 1994, p. 149.

12 Hilal Görgün, "Mustafa Sıbai", **TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi (DİA)**, **(The Encyclopaedia of Islam of the Turkey Religious Foundation)**, vol. XXXI, p. 357.

13 Muhammed Mustafa Sıbai, **Mustafa es-Sıbai: Bi-Aklami Muhabbihi ve Arifihi**, [Mustapha al-Sıbai.] Daru'l-Varrak, Beyrut 2000, p. 130.

not ethnically diverse as Syria, which was the most important and determining factor between two centres.[14] In addition, short time after the establishment, the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood took the parliamentary life, playing an active role in the construction of the future of the Syria. However, the organization in Egypt had waited for 10 years to be politically structured which draw a different characteristic from Syrian Brotherhood.[15] For this reason, even though both organizations had the integrity, in terms of organizing, yet had independent portraits in terms of administration.[16]

b. The Administrative Structure of the Organization

In principle, Syrian Muslim Brotherhood, moving compatible with headquarters of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, implemented the shura [council / şûrâ] system; and task distribution was organized in accordance with a hierarchical order. Organizational units of the organization were divided into four.[17]

Head Office: The headquarters which was the top step of the organization, located in the capital, Damascus. The central, in which the high-committee took part in, was managed by Murshid / president. The president was determined with the votes of the council of 25 members or with the elections organized annually in national congresses.

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14 Rıdvan Ziyade, "el-İhvanu'l-Müslimin fi Suriye ed-Din ve'd-Devle ve'd-Demokratiyye" **[The Muslim Brotherhood in Syria: Religion, State and Democracy]**, **Merkezü'l-Misbar li'd-Diraseti ve'l-Buhus,** United Arab Emirates 2009, p. 88.

15 Joshua Teitelbaum, "The Muslim Brotherhood and the 'Struggle for Syria': 1947-1958 Between Accommodation and Ideology", **Middle Eastern Studies**, No: 40, (2004), p. 135.

16 Tuba Yıldız, "Suriye'de Sünnî Muhalif Hareket Olarak İhvân-ı Müslimîn" (As an opposition Sunni Movement in Syria, the Muslim Brotherhood), **Master Thesis, Institute of Social Sciences at Istanbul University,** İstanbul 2012, p. 51.

17 Hasan el-Benna, **Risaleler**, (trans. by Mehmet Akbaş et al.), Nida Press, İstanbul 2010, p. 487.

Central Office: It was the unit that came after head office. In the legislation, the branches established in every region had to have a centre, and these branches had to provide a report about administrative, social and cultural activities to the centre.

Segment: It was rendered with the division of the units into small of authorities. The president was sometimes determined by election, sometimes by high administration. In this system, which is a similar type of district headmen, each segment is responsible for a specific district.

Usre: It was the smallest unit of the organization consisting of 5-11 people, and a chairman was appointed called "Nakib" for each group. The age and cultural homogeneity were essential in these group's weekly meetings. This unit had a particular importance to the organization. It provided a strong sense of cohesion and fraternity to the members of the organization.

Each member, before commencing to his mission in the unit he has joined, has to make "the Brotherhood Oath":[18]

"I swear in front of the supreme God to abide to the principles of the Muslim Brotherhood, at any stage of invitation I'll never act according to my own personal interests, I will defend my brother's right, and always protect their secret, and I will obey the decisions (of the organization) even though it doesn't correspond with my own view."

After this step, a vertical system is created between the members. The members ranging from 7 to 12 are responsible for the administrative sections, determined by centres. In addition, keeping a tight relationship between the upper and bottom echelon, it is aimed to create a union that provides internal security.

The organization has also legislative, executive and judiciary mechanisms. The election of the member has great importance, because the legislature is

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18   Adnan Sadeddin, **op. cit.**, p. 146.

determined by the shura council members. Because, giving the authority of shura council to the competent people, and determining, how the organization is going to move, its goals and where it will stand, namely it is basis point for its vision. Political projects are prepared, the analyses are made, budgets are inspected and the regulations are made at the board. There is the general president, and the upper stage authorities at the top of executive. The practices to be followed by the organization are related to the handling and execution of the cultural and social projects. The justice system is composed of two separate steps. In the high court where the first step created, the general murshid and the works of the first-tier members, the projects wanted to be implemented and the legality of the decisions taken, are supervised. In local court of law, variety of topics is discussed, such as the resolution of disputes that may occur between members.[19]

Through these committees, those are to be established in each segment in control of the urban centres, the educational activities were carried out in the fields of youth activities, labour organizations and humanitarian assistance. There were the evening education for workers in the primary and the secondary schools. In particular, the *"fütüvve"* [نظام الفتوة] groups (youth movements) had a special place in Muslim Brotherhood schools.[20] These groups, who had taken semi-military training in such schools, played an important role in the formation of the foundations of military bases of the Muslim brothers.[21] The Muslim Brotherhood, in order to increase the level of welfare of the society, as well as education and training activities, by setting up relief funds to the families with low income or no income, and by helping to strengthen the social solidarity, it was fulfilling the task of strengthening cultural context at the

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19   Fadi Şamiyye, "el-İhvanu'l-Müslimun ve Taliati'l-Mukatile ve'l-Alaka mea's-Sulta" [The Muslim Brotherhood.], **Merkezü'l-Misbarli'd-Dirasati ve'l-Buhus**, August 2009, pp. 154-155.

20   Yohannes Reissner, **el-Hareketü'l-İslamiyye fi Suriye: Mine'l-Erbainiyyat ve Hatta Nihayeti Ahdi Şişakli [Islamic Movement in Syria.],** el-Rayyes Books, Beyrut 2005, pp. 133, 136.

21   Adnan Sadeddin, **op. cit**, Vol. II, p. 21.

same time. The "Poor's Day" was the most obvious example of this situation.[22] General sports clubs were opened in many places, such as the Latakia, Cabiye, and Qadisiyya with committees providing services in different areas based on the characterization of Hassan al-Banna's *sports community*. Nevertheless, the research centres and the associations for women activities were established.[23] A similar fund created in a similar manner like Egypt for these activities. It tried to save the economy from external dependence by establishing weaving mills in Aleppo and Damascus, despite their small size. These works were a clear indication of active role of Muslim Brotherhood in Syria in every layer of society.

c. The Classes Forming the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood's Base

The dominant power in Syria, throughout French mandate and till the independence process, between the two world wars, was traditional urban elites and the landowner bourgeois. They were the ruling/dominant class, although many classes emerged after the independence. In addition, the French, by promoting ethnic and religious minorities in Syria, and weakening Arab nationalism, endeavoured to strengthen the position they were in. In this context, it was aimed to establish an Alewi state in the north, a Sunni state at the centre and a Druze state in the south. With a Christian state in Lebanon, Syria, divided into five separate autonomous regions within the framework of ethnic and religious differences, such as: Jabal al-Druze, Aleppo, Latakia, Damascus and Scanderoon.[24] Minorities who have taken support economically and politically, have also supported the French government, joining an indigenous army called "Special Eastern Mediterranean Union" which was created in order to take the

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22 **Ibid**, Vol. I, p. 195.

23 Tuba Yıldız, **op. cit**, p. 51.

24 William L. Cleveland, **Modern Ortadoğu Tarihi [Modern Middle East History],** (trans. by Mehmet Harmancı), Agora Kitaplığı Press, İstanbul 2008, pp. 243-244; M. Akif Okur, "Fransız Manda Yönetimi Döneminde Suriye" [Syria During the French Mandate], **Orta Doğu Siyasetinde Suriye [Syria in The Middle East Politics],** Ed. by Türel Yılmaz &Mehmet Şahin, Platin Press, Ankara 2004, pp. 9-10.

control of the region. It was one of the most important supports for the French government. This situation, paved the way to bring minorities to prominent positions in the Syrian army, particularly those of Nusayris, and thus to play a role in the political crisis in the future. Moreover, this situation was also influential on establishing a single denominational authoritarian regime, which was simply provided by elimination of the Sunni domination, and pulling the army into a political life by military coups.[25]

By the 1950s, the land reform became effective, which was prepared in order to break the power of the bourgeoisie. With the liquidation of the bourgeoisie, the middle class had filled their gap with their own nationalist discourse. This class, which drew the attention in Syrian politics, played an important role in the construction the Muslim Brotherhood. For this reason, in contrast to Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, the organization in Syria gained weight in urban centres rather than in rural areas. Although the movement spread in the villages where the density of population is less, these villages weren't carrying rural features and were consisted of large centres those are linked to urban centres.[26] In this context, in the early years of the organization, the members had middle-class background, such as merchants, workers, teachers, lawyers, engineers, and ulamas rather than peasant. In fact, this structure had resemblance to the urban middle classes those formed the core of the movement in Egypt.[27]

In distinction between urban and rural areas, one also should not ignore the existence of sectarian differences. Ideologically, although the Brotherhood tried to be equal to all religious beliefs, it couldn't find support from towns and villages of west of Hama and Homs where religious minorities are in populated.

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25 Doğan Şentürk, **Ortadoğu'da Arap Birliği Rüyası Saddam'ın Baas'ı [Saddam's Baath the Arab League Dream of the Middle East],** Alfa Press, İstanbul 2003, p. 13.

26 Ömer Faruk Abdullah, **Suriye Dosyası [The Syrian File], (**trans. by Hasan Basri), Akabe Press, İstanbul 1988, p. 99.

27 Richard P. Mitchell, **The Society of Muslim Brothers**, Oxford University Press, Londra 1993, pp. 328-330.

However, the people who have lived in urban areas and have formed the middle and lower layer of the Sunnis have headed the Brotherhood's establishment and development stages. In addition, the political intrigues played an important role on the Brotherhood's inability to spread in the less developed regions. When the Brotherhood pursued its regional activities in one of the villages of Damascus, in Menin, in 1946, the attitude of the mayor of the region was a one of significant example of this.[28]

The small-scale traders and ulamas those played an important role in the infrastructure of the organization, had a great impact on the development of the organization in the early years. Since, the small-scale artisan and merchant classes, in terms of both economy and quantity, were important. The traditional big landowners and their business partners who were several hundred families were shaken and lost power. However, the number of small-scale artisan and merchant classes reached nearly a quarter million people in 1970.They were important in terms of population, since they were composing 1/6 of the general population. Therefore, the organization has the tendency to get support of the small-scale middle-class merchants in each period.[29]

In order to expand its influence by the working class and merchant class, the organization, establishing workers' committees, made some union activities with trade members. Consequentially, it was able to add to its base the 70% of the working class in 1970's.[30] When Sunni majority, who had a say in state's economy in the post-independence period, surrendered disproportionately to "Alewi - Nusayri" minority administration in 1970's, in a high percentage, the opposition forces were seen as Muslim Brotherhood. Because, the Muslim Brotherhood also pulled a wide range of students, teachers, engineers and the

28 Reissener, **op.cit**, p. 143.
29 Hanna Batatu, **op.cit**, p. 16.
30 Reissener, **op.cit,** p. 138.

liberal professionals of urban merchant families on its side when it was the most obvious and powerful opponent of the Assad regime in 1970s. By educating them, these factors contributed to increased militanism and the periodical gap among young people. Despite the fact that the number of Muslim Brotherhood had risen in a bumpy way since its beginning, the number of its members reached approximately to ten thousand in the late 1970s.[31] The organization systematically started to create the military wing and renewed, and began to acquire a different character on its ground. It was the young population who were on their 20's and 30's and had a profession, played an active role against the regime.[32]

2. Muslim Brotherhood and its Interaction with Intellectual streams

a. The Ummah Concept against the Arab nationalism

The nationalist movements in the early 19[th]century in Europe began to gain momentum in the last period of the Ottoman Empire on its own territory. The nationalist movement, which started in Balkans, and brought demands for independence jumped to the Middle East geography. At the end of the World War I, in the Middle East where the Ottoman rule endedup, the idea of Arab nationalism which was committed against English and French blend into the Arab culture and pan-Arabism with Islamic perspectives in the 1920s. The politicization of the nationalism concept in Syria was materialized by the Baath Party. When it was founded by Orthodox Christian Michel Aflaq and Sunni Muslim Salahattin Bitar in 1943, its basis was to create a single Arab nation. This new entity emerged to build a modern nation-state and obtain a respectable place in the international arena, as well as innovation and transformation which the Arabs needed. The founder and ideologist of the Baath, Michel Aflaq, emphasized that Arab nationalism was entirely related to the Arab spirit;

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31   Philip S. Khoury, "Muslim Brotherhood in Syria", **The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World**, Oxford University, Newyork 1995, p. 193.

32   Hanna Batatu, **op.cit**, p. 20.

and the language, history and traditions were all external factors.[33] Salahattin Bitar emphasized that the united Arab nation was divided by the imperialist powers, a re-resurrection (Baath) was needed, and this renewal was a moral and religious process. To be Arab and regain Arab consciousness did not mean to be Muslim will or to be religious. The national struggle against imperialism required the Arab unity at the first step.[34]

Despite the fact that the Muslim Brotherhood reached to a large base of the intellectuals, students, and the urban middle class, and gained the support of Syrian Sunnis with Pan-Arabism ideology by the 60s, the party's division into two as "nationalist" and "progressive" reduced the effect of its power in 1963. The party, which was reinvigorated by Hafez al-Assad's coup in 1970, mostly consisted of by Alewis, turned its attitude into effort to retain power after a while. For Syrian Sunnis, Baath was non-religious radical regime that deprived the traditional elite of power, social and economic rights.[35] In 1980s, when ethnic politics turned into an ethnic war with Hafez al-Assad, it resulted in the collapse of the Pan-Arabism ideology. As the formation of the majority of people in power was from Alewis, it caused the party lose to its legitimacy. Upon this, the Muslim Brotherhood intended an Islamic state, with the ideology of ummah, which would defence the rights of all ethnic and religious minorities.[36] The universal ummah approach which was trying to keep away its fundamental dynamics from racism and sectarian fanaticism, in a sense, aimed to bring together the all Muslims under the same roof, after the establishment of the Republic of Turkey, in order to fill the gap after the

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33 Macid Khadduri, **Political Trends in the Arab World: The Role of Ideas and Ideals in Politics**, The Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore 1970, p. 155.

34 John Galvani, "Syria and Baath Party", **MERIP Reports**, No: 25, February 1974, p. 5.

35 Milton J. Esman, Itamar Rabinovich, **Ortadoğu'da Etnisite, Çoğulculuk ve Devlet**, (trans. Zafer Avşar), Avesta Press, İstanbul 2004, p. 225.

36 The Writing Board, **el-Ahzabu's-Siyasiyye fi Suriye el-İhvanu'l-Müslimun el-Hizbu'l-Ba'si'l-Arabi'l-İştiraki [Political Factions in Syria: The Muslim Brotherhood and The Baath Party],** Daru'l-Ruvvad, Şam 1954, p. 192.

abolition of the Caliphate which was put into effect on 3rd of March 1924.[37]

b. The Islam Socialism against the Arab Socialism

The phenomenon of socialism, which was brought in order to find a solution to the social problems towards the end of the 19th century, started with Gamal Abdel Nasser in Egypt and spread over the Middle East territory over a short period of time, and it was designated as an ideology and a slogan for the Baath Party in Syria, and combined with nationalism, it started to diverge from western socialism and took on a new identity.[38] In this way, throughout the phenomenon of nationalism the fruit for socialist struggle would be provided more quickly. In short, the socialism means would be used for the ideal form of government, the nationalist policy. Because, it was obvious that the Arab countries wouldn't materialize an economic development alone; and they wouldn't stand up against West's capitalist and communist policies. In addition, socialism was not only an economic order, but also a lifestyle, according to the Baath Party. It was a bill that composed of junctions those ensured the continuation of a life of dignity, by achieving a minimum standard of living in a society.[39] The socialist economic system was clearly stated in the 13th Article of the constitution that "the state economy is an economy that trying to prevent all kinds of exploitation" in 1950s. The Baathist regime was enthusiastic, to provide individual freedom with socialism, and also to add Arab unity to socialist ideology, and thus it greatly resonated at the base. However, the Muslim Brotherhood rejected everything that lacked of Islam, and explained that everything the socialism suggested had already been within the context Islam.

c. The Understanding of the Secularism of Baath Party and the Muslim Brotherhood

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37   Hasan el-Benna, **op.cit**, p. 254.

38   Hilal Görgün, "Sosyalizm" (The Socialism), **DİA**, Vol. 37, p. 385.

39   Macid Khadduri, **op.cit**, p. 156.

The principle of secularism in Syria which was strongly emphasized since the foundation of the Baath Party was not in the form that overlaps Syria's traditional Islamic structure. Baath Party's emphasis on secularism in the congress in 1951, gave point to the separation of religion from politics and the need of religion being reflected to society by liberating it in its field.[40] In this case, it meant that Islam removed from public sphere and was imprisoned into private sphere.[41]

The basic argument Muslim Brotherhood used against Baath Party who followed a secular policy to the religion and state, was the idea that "the relation between religion and state is compatible; if the duty of state is to ensure solidarity among the people, the religion, having a great function to achieve this aim, will materialize it in the best way." [42]

The Brotherhood's Islamic-oriented method gained momentum as a result of secular ideology emphasized by the Baath regime that took power in 1963. In the period after 1960, Baath clarified its stance on religion and implemented the decision of giving religious education only in small mosques. Additionally, property of foundations was seized and secularism was included into the system by transferring these structures to the general administration.[43] This understanding, which was emphasized by Baath regime, was a sign of the beginning of a conflict with the traditional Islamic sphere. On 25 April 1967, in a magazine called "Ceyşü'ş-Şa'b / the People's Army" which belonged to military, the anti-religious discourses [44] ["the state is godless and comparing

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40 Mustafa Sıbai, **Günümüz Meselelerine İslami Çözüm [Islamic Solution to the Issues of Today], (**trans. Abdullah Yalçın), İklim Press, İstanbul 1987, p. 12.

41 Kamel S. Abu Jaber, **Arap Baas Sosyalist Partisi: Tarihi, İdeolojisi (the Arab Baath Socialist Party: History, Ideology),** (trans. Ahmet Ersoy), Altınoluk Matbaası, Ankara 1970, p. 155.

42 Mustafa Sıbai, **op.cit**, p. 12.

43 Bülent Aras & Şule Toktaş, **Güvenlik, demokrasi ve istikrar sarmalında Suriye ve Afganistan [Syria and Afghanistan, in the cycle of Security, Democracy and Stability**], SETA Press, Ankara 2008, p. 37.

44 Olivier Carre-Gerard Michaud, **Les Freres Musulmans (1928-1982)**, Editions

everything that belongs to religion with ancient artefacts in museums"] brought about the protests led by the Muslim Brotherhood and caused civil disobedience by tradesmen who closed their shops. Because, according to the Muslim Brotherhood, there was no relevance between Assad's secular regime and the secular regime applied in West, and this regime was so ruthless to Islam and Muslim. In the regional conference organized by Baath Party in 1978, the decisions such as ''the support for co-education, restriction of private religious institutions and stopping the assignment of students graduated from these institutions'' were in position that verified Muslim Brotherhood's claims. This policy, which was identified by Moshe Maoz as ''an arrogant and incomparable secularism'', aimed the reduction of religious trend on the base of public.[45]

Zuheyr Salim, one of the spokesmen of Brotherhood, stated that "Muslim Brotherhood doesn't consider that secularism is against religion, secularism requires living independently, in every sphere including religion; at this point secularism is not against religion, but it is against the dictatorship." [46]In today's Syria, the Brotherhood's leader, Mohammed Riad al-Shakfa, by stating that they don't take the example of secularism in Turkey, principally put forth his objection by saying ''if secularism gives freedom to religions, we can accept this; if it applies pressure at any religion on behalf of secularism, we cannot accept it''.[47] In addition, it is stressed that once the principle of secularism is contrary to this very basic doctrine, its implementation will not be possible. In the conference of June 2012 which, named *the change in Syria*, and held in Antalya, Muslim Brotherhood has objected to the secular government which is

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Gallimard, Paris 1983, p. 133.

45 Moshe Maoz, **Asad: The Sphinx of Damascus A Political Biography**, Goerge Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London 1988, p. 150.

46 "Suriye İhvan-ı Müslimin'i: "Laiklik, Din Karşıtlığı Değildir" [The Syrian Muslim Brotherhood: "Secularism is not Anti – Religion"], http://abna.ir/data.asp?lang=10&Id=306691, [Retrieved: 02.11.2012].

47 "Suriye Müslüman Kardeşler'den Asad Yönetimine Uyarı" ["A Warning from the MuslimBrotherhood in Syria to the Assad Management"], http://istanbul.mazlumder.org, [Retrieved: 22.10.2012].

adopted aftermath of al-Assad's regime, and the session chairman, Allazgani, stressed in the declaration that they don't accept the statement of "Syria is a free country with a democratic constitution that separates the religion and state affairs". During the meeting, Ibrahim Hariri, one of the representatives of the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood, clearly expressed that both Alewis and Sunnis must have equal rights; on the other hand they are against to secular administration in Syria.[48]

d. The Role of the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria Politics (1946 - 1964)

Having gathered under the same one roof in 1946, Syrian Muslim Brotherhood movement made up one of the most important steps of their political infrastructure. Moreover, during the same period, the manifesto entitled as "Objectives and Principles", was indicative of transformation of benefit associations those made up the organization into a modern party association. In 1947, when Marufed - Devalibi in Aleppo, Mahmoud Şakfa in Hama, Mohammed Mubarak in Damascus, participated in the elections with Hassan al-Banna's suggestions, and Mohammed Mubarak's acquisition of parliamentary seats and ministries, didn't escape from the attention the political elite and Syrian government. Al-Banna, described the results of the election in Syria as "the official representatives of the ideology of Islam's victory in the parliament for the first time".[49]

With the coup Colonel Hosni Zaim, the changing ideological and political balances led Muslim Brotherhood to alter the method of the political orientations, and social activities in 1949. At the end of March 1949, upon

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48 "Suriyeli Muhaliflerin 'Laiklik' Arzusu" ["The Syrian Opposition's 'Secularism' Desire"], http://www.habereditor.com/news_print.php?id=77747, [Retrieved: 05.11.2012].

49 Joshua Teitelbaum,**op.cit**, p. 138.

the coup which was materialized by the Sunni General, Hosni Zaim, the new government at first shut down the borders, and banned newspapers and magazines to be published. However, the headscarf ban against women, the oil pipeline agreements with American companies (TAPLINE), positive steps taken against Israel with the support of the U.S. was interpreted as the Western powers involved in the coup. The main issue Zaim concerned was the reforms on behalf of the regime gathered a great response at the base of Muslim Brotherhood and mutual challenge between these groups.[50] Zaim, who outlawed the Muslim Brotherhood organization with the other political parties, challenged with his words. After the coup in one of the local newspapers in Egypt they said [51]"*even though death will be at the end, I will not give up fighting with communism. When it comes to the end of communism, I will finish up the Muslim Brotherhood. I do not want to fight with both of them at the same time.*"

The Brotherhood, in response to Zaim's statement, sent a message to the armed forces, a statement signed by Omar Bahaeddin al-Emiri, published in Manar magazine, on 9 April 1949. The Brotherhood emphasized they were struggling for a society in which the human and religious values would be dominated, and this was their only ambition. In this context, the Brotherhood demanded quick financial reforms from the government, and wanted them to enforce applications those were in line with the principles of constitution, and valued the honour and dignity of the people.[52]

Syria, with a coup on 14 August 1949, was under the control of Sami Hınnavi. The political parties began to reorganize in his period due to the limited freedom. The Brotherhood benefiting from the change in the

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50 Patrick Seale, **The Struggle for Syria: A Study of Post-warArab Politics 1945-1958**, I. B. Tauris, London: 1986, p. 62.

51   Joshua Teitelbaum, **op.cit**, p. 140.

52 Adnan Sadeddin, **op.cit**, Vol.1, p. 282.

administration, published Manar journal (which was closed in Zaim's period) second time under the name of "Manar al Jadid / New Manar". In the meantime, the Brotherhood, which was also interested in foreign policy, was one of the groups that initiated a reaction for Hınnavi's merger plan with Iraq. Because, Iraq's pro-British attitude and the view of the monarchical form of Baghdad made the Brotherhood uncomfortable, although this merger could provide the convenience for the achievement of political and religious ambitions of Brotherhood.[53]Another response to Sami Hınnavi's merger initiative came from Baathist authorities. The desire to join the two countries echoed as a sound of the imperialist complot, and as a coup. On 19th of December, the third coup which took place in a year was effectuated by Edip Çiçekli.

The period after the coup, the elections in December 1949, in fact, was an important step for the Brotherhood taken towards Syria politics. The movement, by means of the propaganda which effectuated in public places, established "Islamic Socialist Front" coalition which was composed of many representatives of Islamic society and independent politicians, and sent three important names, Mustafa Sibai, Muhammad Mubarak and Mehmed Emin Tarakçi, to the parliament. This situation was an important success compared with the Syrian Baath Party, and the Syrian Communist Party.[54] Mustafa Sibai, went into action immediately after the elections, and prepared an action plan on domestic and foreign policy, and published as a detailed work in "Manar" journal about the socialist Islamic groups, on 16 May 1950.[55]

Mustafa Sibai, primarily, leaned over the Palestinian issue in foreign policy. In this context, he was planning to unite all the Islamic countries to establish an army for Palestine, and to strengthen the mutual social and economic relations.

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53   Joshua Teitelbaum, **op.cit**, p. 140.

54   Derek Hopwood, **Syria 1945-1986: Politics and Society**, Unwın Hyman, London 1989, p. 84.

55   Haşim Osman, **el-Ahzabu's-Siyasiyye fi Suriye es-Sırriyye ve'l-Aleniyye [Political Factions in Syria],** Beyrut 2001, p. 206.

In domestic politics, he envisaged the concept of equality and justice against the colonial power in anticipation of a republican system within the constitutional framework.[56] The political advantage which the organization gained not only came into prominence only in a pluralist competitive environment, but also it offered to the Christian democratic parties in Europe or the United States the opportunity to be in an Islamic party model.[57] This was the most important thing that Mustafa Sibai perhaps planned and clamped down for the organization. For this reason, on the one hand he supported the policy of the socialist Islamic facade with the radical economic reforms, on the other hand he envisaged an economic co-operation with the Soviet Union, and also suggested idea of the Islamic socialism, targeting to prevent communism in this way. In fact, by the conjuncture of the period, the Soviet Union was seen as a lesser evil against Israel; Maruf al-Devalibi, one of the representatives of the organization, stressed on this issue that rather than to be morsel of Israel, they rather preferred to be a Soviet Republic,on10 April, 1950.[58]

The Brotherhood, which sent 33 representatives to the 142-membered parliament in the elections of 1951, captured a political success; however, while advancing successfully in active politics, it was interrupted by General Edip Çiçekli's second coup in November 1951. Çiçekli, whose father was a Turk and mother was an Arab, implemented harsher policies than the first coup, and in 1952 he decided to take the administration on the base of military, like Hosni Zaim did. In this context, he firstly dissolved the Communist Party, the Arab Socialist Baath Party and the Socialist Islamic front, then all associations, social bodies, and non-governmental organizations. He banned civil servants and trade unionists to participate in political activities. The Muslim Brotherhood had its share of this implementation and the entire agencies of this organization were terminated.[59]However, in 1953 among the

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56 Adnan Sadeddin, **op.cit**, Vol.1, p. 290.

57 The Writing Board, **el-Ahzab ve'l-Harekat ve'l-Cemaatü'l-İslamiyye [Sects, Factions and Islamic Community],** p. 257.

58 George Cebbur, **Suriyye: 1918-1928**, Mektebetü'l-Ebcediyye, Şam 1993, p. 68.

59 Patrick Seale,**The Struggle for Syria: A Study of Post-war Arab Politics 1945-**

leaders of the political parties, Ekrem Horani, Michel Aflaq and Salah al-Din Bitar, who were exiled in Lebanon, Mustafa Sibai also took a place.[60] Çiçekli, who wasn't satisfied with all these, in order to passivize the Brotherhood's strong base of students, he banned all student activities with his iron fist for a potential resistance.[61]

When Çiçekli decided to cross a constitutional regime in 1953, with the new constitutional draft, Syria changed the current parliamentary system with presidential system, on 21st of June 1953; and Çiçekli started working as the new president of Syria on 10th of July. In September, Çiçekli who explained to legitimate all parties, which wouldn't let any discrimination such as race, and sect, opened the door for the return of the exiled leaders to the Syria. Upon this, the Brotherhood, which returned to Syria from Lebanon at the end of September, under the leadership of Mustafa Sibai, came together in the light of new developments, shifted their political positions to social and religious field, saying,"the activists are more in the political arena, than social life".[62] After the second Çiçekli coup in 1951, the movement which remained weak carried out political activities through the mass media and public movements, parallel with the developments of the Egyptian Brotherhood in 1954. When Gamal Abdel Nasser decided to expurgate the Brotherhood from Egypt, he arrested, and executed many of its members and prohibited their activities in 1954. This was the reason why Syrian Muslim Brotherhood carried out their political activities behind.[63]

Many leaders, who pioneered the Movement in Egypt, had scattered to other regions such as Gulf countries and Pakistan, particularly to Syria after Nasser's oppression. While the harsh policy of Nasser against Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt had great repercussions in Syria, the Baath Party and

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1958, p. 121.

60   Joshua Teitelbaum, **op.cit**, p. 150.

61   Derek Hopwood, **op.cit**,p. 84.

62   Joshua Teitelbaum, **op.cit**, p. 150.

63   Ömer Faruk Abdullah, **op.cit**,p. 98.

pro-communism movements assumed an attitude of anti-Nasserist manner, and joined Syrian Brotherhood protests, which made the Brotherhood stronger at the base. Moreover, the Brotherhood also began to propagate its work through the media. Especially in the middle of the 1950s, the wave of communism which began to spread to the Arab countries while Soviet Union was supplying weapons during Arab-Israeli wars against Israel, and it was in the side of Syria, the Brotherhood became active to spread Islamic values in the society within the framework of the invitation in order to prevent communist tendency. In 1954, just prior to Nasser's intervention in Syria, Sibai, who had taken the chance of democracy and freedom in Syria, sent a letter to the Ministry of Interior, and asked for permission for the resumption of the activities of the Brotherhood. The Muslim Brotherhood, which obtained a license within the framework of laws, quickly began to carry out to materialize its organizations.[64] The Brotherhood was able to establish a strong bond with the issues of Arab and Islam world throughout the magazines such as "eş-Shihab", "Müslimûn" and "Hadaratü'l-Islam" those published the same year and continued to be published until the Egyptian-Syrian unity. Despite these positive developments at the base, when Çiçekli government was overthrown by Colonel Faisal al-Atasi[65] in 1954, a new political crisis started in Syria and upon Gamal Abdel Nasser's tough policies against Egyptian Brotherhood, Syrian Muslim Brotherhood decided not to participate in the election of 1954. Why the Brotherhood didn't take an active role in politics at that time was its prediction that the appearing table wouldn't change. Since, the Syrian people who acted radically on the issue of anti-Nasserism, changed its direction with changing table in the Egyptian politics. Nasser, who nationalized the Suez Canal, and criticised Baghdad Pact[66] fiercely, became a national hero. For this

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64 Haşim Osman, **op.cit**, p. 218.

65 Sabahattin Şen, **Ortadoğu'da İdeolojik Bunalım: Suriye Baas Partisi ve İdeolojisi [The Ideological Crisis in the Middle East: the Syria Baath Party and its Ideology],** Birey Press, İstanbul 2004, p. 184.

66 Baghdad Pact (1955-1958) is a security and defense organization established between Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan and the United Kingdom to prevent the impact of the Soviet Union in the Middle East. It was established in February 1955 as the

reason, the Egyptian-Syrian agreement of 1958 created a great joy among the people, especially among the Baathist party; however, the organization fell into a big concern. The Brotherhood was right about its anxiety, when it was directly under pressure of the state, upon the merger of Syria and Egypt. On March 12th 1958, within the framework of the law of the closure of the all political parties, the branches of the Movement were raided, many members were arrested and without being questioned they were imprisoned. Gamal Abdel Nasser, who had been elbow to elbow with Muslim Brotherhood once, struggled to erase Muslim Brotherhood from the territory Egypt and Syria.[67] He did not only dissolve the organization inside, but also spread propaganda that the Muslim Brotherhood was American and Israeli agents in the Arab world. This situation caused the Brotherhood to maintain their activities underground, during the United Arab Republic (UAR) between 1958 and 1961. The United Arab Republic ended with the coup effectuated by Sunni officers in Damascus, led by Colonel Karim al-Nahlavi in September 1961. It was also striking that the officers who performed this coup, assigned the officers from the same sect and region to the strategic points.[68]

The split of the United Arab Republic represented the transition to a new stage for Syria, and the Brotherhood as the Muslim Brotherhood, which participated in the first elections on December 1st 1961, put the names such as Isam Attar, Abd al-Fattah Abu Gudde, to the parliament, who would be the leaders of the Brotherhood later on. Nazim al-Qudsi became the president and Maruf al-Devalibi, the right-hand man of the Brotherhood, became the

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Baghdad Pact, however, in 1958, upon the withdrawal of Iraq, a new covenant was made including the United States. In 1979, upon the withdrawal of Iran, Pakistan it was ceased to exist.

67   David Commins, **op.cit**, p. 160.

68   Nikolaos Van Dam, **Suriye'de İktidar Mücadelesi: Asad ve Baas Partisi Yönetiminde Siyaset ve Toplum [The Struggle for Power in Syria: Politics and Society in the Administration of Asad and the Baath Party], (**trans. by Semih İdiz, Aslı Falay Çalkıvik), İletişim Press, İstanbul 2000, pp. 60-62.

prime minister.[69] The Muslim Brotherhood members, who were appointed to the key positions such as Ministry of Health, Ministry of Justice, and Ministry of Agriculture made some activities about restructuring the land reform, and made various political attempts concerning the cancellation of statehood which was a decision taken during the United Arab Republic. This activity, perhaps, was the most prominent feature that separated the Brotherhood from other political structures. However, the Baath coup on March 8th1963, followed by the Muslim Brotherhood-Baath crisis in 1964, tucked the Brotherhood into a new political vortex. The new management, Baath, which attempted the first clear sanction against the organization, decided not to put Isam Attar the Syrian territory after his return from pilgrimage. Attar started his life in exile in Germany and tried to manage the organization there; though he was against the armed struggle, he was considered as a relentless opposition leader against Baath.[70]

a. 1964 Hama Incidents

The two ideologically different organizations, the Baath and the Muslim Brotherhood, were ranking in the same line until 1960's on the subjects of Palestine problem, the agricultural reforms and the military dictatorship opposition. In 1947, the Brotherhood, in a congress which they held in the Umayyad Mosque, decided to form a board to oppose the UN General Assembly decision, which divided Palestine; and Salahattin Bitar said he would attend the board as Baath representative. In the same way, the Baath, which strictly criticised the nearly elimination of Egyptian Brotherhoods against the Nasr policy, declared that they, in all ways, would stand by the Brotherhood in 1952. However, the political life that Syria experienced in that turbulent period, the ideological changes with the replacement of the Baath people, and differentiation of doctrinal bases, could not prevent the tension between

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69 Haşim Osman*, **op.cit**, p. 221.

70 Richard Hrair Dökmeciyan, **Arap Dünyasında Köktencilik: Devrimci İslam [Fundamentalism in the Arab World: The Revolutionary Islam],** (trans. by Muhammed Karahanoğlu), İlke Press, İstanbul 1992, p. 130.

these two movements. Ekrem Hourani, who formed the Socialist Arab Party with the Baath in 1953, was the first person to break this relation between the Baath and the Brotherhood. Hourani who defined the Brotherhood as 'Band of uncivilized workers', caused a tension between the Baath and the Brotherhood by telling that the Brotherhood need to be destroyed under Nasr's feet.[71]

The relation, which was cracked between the Baath and the Brotherhood, triggered the tension between the Ihwan supporters and the supporters of Arab socialism that was combined with nationalism in Hama. The infiltration of both parties into student groups prepared young and dynamic people ready to fight. Along with this, a few of the nationalism trials of the Baath that turned no positive results following the Baath administrative takeover with a military coup in 1963,the cuts in public servants' wages in the ratio of 25%-40%, and the rising of unemployment and inflation rates, made the uneasiness in Syria public, and became more visible. The civil uneasiness, in addition to economic recession, was giving the signs of civil war in Syria. In this way, when 1964 incidents were investigated, the combination of economic recession and social dynamics ignited the wick in Hama incidents.

Since the mid-1950's, the Arab Movement against the Islamist among the students resulted in an outrage which lasted 29 days in Hama. On 7th of April, a student in Madrasa al-Uthman Hourani erased the sentence on the board '*La hukme illa Hizbu'l-Baath: There's nobody other than the Baath to establish rules.*' and wrote '*La hükme illallah: There's nobody other than God to establish rules.*' This changed the historical circle in Hama. Starting with the arrestment of the student who erased the sentence, the death of a student who protested the apprehension of his friend, was rearguard factor in the beginning of severe reaction among the people of Hama. The appointment of the religion teachers to other cities by the Ministry of Education after this event raised the intensity of reaction. The public who learned the incident, rushed to

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71 The Writing Board, **el-Ahzab ve'l-Harekat ve'l-Cemaatü'l-İslamiyye, [Sects, Factions and Islamic Community],** pp. 266-267.

the streets, the tradesmen closed their shops, and sermons were read against the government in mosques, the chant 'Ya Islam! Ya Baath!' was all over the city in a short time. In some of the demonstrations, with the leadership of Marwan Hadid[72], some protesters' covering themselves with shroud and sheets showed that the campaign against the Baath turned into a Jihad.[73] Emin Hafez, who tried to survive from the crisis by giving some constructive options to the Syrian public, could not prevent the rising tension among people. Hafez, who responded to the increasing protests, resulted from the police making the shops open and owners of the shops' resisting them, sent the army to Hama. The military forces, upon entering the city, menaced the people by bombing the Sultan Mosque in Hama which was the central point of the protests since the mandate government. The attitude of government resulted of the death of presumably seventy people, and at the same time showed the reaction to the people who resisted to the existing government. On 16th of April, The Sunni president Emin Hafez could not risk his power to be damaged among his base in the events which ended with the intervention of religious people like Ibrahim Çiçekli, Muhammed Hamid and Halid al-Shakfa who was the father of existing leader Riad al-Shakfa. He formed a board to provide peace in the region and ordered his army to withdraw from the city.[74] According to the

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72 Marwan Hadid was born in Hama as a child of rich family. Growing in the organization of the Muslim Brotherhood in Hama, Hadid played a major role in the development of organization. Marwan Hadid who was also a scholar of the science with a reputation, met to Sayyid Qutb in Egypt for agricultural engineering education. As an important follower of Qutb, Hadid returned to Syria to escape from the death penalty which Nasser gave to him in 1965. Marwan Hadid was not afraid of public struggle against the Baathist regime until the 1970s, and was seen as a great danger to the regime. He was captured and imprisoned during the military forces clash in Damascus in early 1976. Marwan Hadid, who died the same year in jail, constituted one of the major milestones for the Brotherhood. Indeed, jihadist movement began to be announced immediately after the death of Marwan Hadid was indicative of his struggling spirit. (Ömer Faruk Abdullah, **op.cit**, p. 116.)

73 "Ahdas Hama 1964", http://www.ikhwanwiki.com/index.php?title, [Retrieved: 06.11.2012].

74   Adnan Sadeddin, **op.cit**, Vol. 3, p. 47.

existing leader of Ihwan Brotherhood, Riadal-Shakfa, the events took place in Hama was the indicative of the seeding of sectarianism:

"The Baath, who took control in 1963, had his first dispute with Muslim Brotherhood in Hama in 1964.In a high school in Hama, the army used real bullets and we had our first martyr named Nizar Cevvad. Yes, Marwan Hadid organised a march to protest the incidents with the people majority of whom were students. But, the army attacked with heavy weapons. The group, of which, Marwan Hadid was the leader, took shelter in Sultan Mosque. The protesters, who said they would surrender, exited from the mosque without weapons. But, the soldiers fired against the armless people and many people became a martyr at that time. This is the major sign that the government's manner is not dialogue, but bullets. That term, Emin Hafez told Hama scholars that 'The Alewis try to destroy Hama. Let this city survive from this.' This indicated the sprawling of sectarianism. The civil rebellion were stopped but sectarianism didn't end."[75]

The Hama incidents were accepted to be an important sign of political blockage in Syria. The relations among Nasr supporters who supported rebellion and the Baath supporters came to an end. The Ihwan Brotherhood, which resurrected with the division of Egypt from Syria in 1961, became the apparent leading force of separations between the public and the administration. Taking part in the demonstrations in 1964, and having their first bloody fight with the regime, the organization received an important role as 'Sunni opposition act' even if it lost most of its supporters.[76]

b. The First Crack in the Organization: Aleppo and Damascus

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75   Tuba Yıldız, **op.cit**, pp. 98-99.

76   Sabahattin Şen, **Ortadoğu'da İdeolojik Bunalım: Suriye Baas Partisi ve İdeolojisi [The Ideological Crisis in the Middle East: the Syria Baath Party and its Ideology],** Birey Press, İstanbul 2004, p. 245, Beşir İslamoğlu, **İslami Hareketin Tarihi Seyri [Viewing the History of the Islamist movement.],** Denge Press, İstanbul 1993, p. 273.

Disintegration

The ultimate victory of Israel in the Arab-Israel war that began on 5 June 1967, and lasted only six days, with the loss of Golan Hills which had a strategic importance to Syria, weakened the idea of Arab League, even in Syria. The Arabs, who had lost all the wars since 1948, no longer tried to collaborate against Israel under Pan-Arabism, but to conserve the status quo and regain the lost lands. By any means, the wars caused a fiasco of Arab nationalism, constituted the beginning of disintegration, and delivered serious criticisms and the leadership crisis in traditional Baath regime. The radical group, which was under the leadership of Marwan Hadid of Ihwan, who took the defeat as insult, necessitated the direct intervention to the regime, and made a call that the Brotherhood must be reorganised. This resulted in the first cracks in the organization.

Contrary to the Aleppo Team, including Said Havva, Abd al-Fettah Ebu Gudde and Adnan Sadeddin, and Damascus Group publicly supporting jihad against Regime, which was led by Isam Attar, who took the duty from Mustafa Sıbai in 1957, and exiled after the military coup in 1963, did not approve armed fight considering the incidents more pragmatically. Apart from this, Idlib, Hama and Deir al-Zor groups, who proclaimed neutrality, declared to stay neutral until head office found a solution to the conflict.[77] The voting in 1971 made the disintegration between two groups more apparent, and Isam Attar from Damascus gave his place to Adnan Sadeddin, who came from radically inclined Aleppo School.[78] Attar's refusal to cooperate with Sadeddin, was the main reason of the disintegration, lasted along with the 1970s.

Adnan Sadeddin, who took the management, began to draw the new path of the organization in a systematic way of armed fights. Even if the first attempts were not rewarded by the public because of al-Assad's reforms, and the

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77 Adnan Sadeddin, **op.cit**, Vol. 3, p. 257.

78 Hilal Görgün, "İhvan-ı Müslimin" ["The Muslim Brotherhood"], **DİA**, Vol. 1, p. 583.

liberalization in economy, the defeat in Arab-Israel war in October 1973, and the Golan problem remaining unsolved, prepared the basis of investment to the armed forces. Marwan Hadid, who drew attention with the protests against al-Assad regime, died as a result of harsh torture under arrest in 1976, provoked the jihadists to oppose to regime for the Muslim Brotherhood. The main reason that sparked the Muslim Brotherhood was the intervention of Syria into civil war in Lebanon. Hafez al-Assad's support to Maruni Christians instead of Muslim guerrillas in Lebanon merely criticised at the beginning. However, the refusal of Palestinians help, called from al-Assad, and as a result of this, the slaughter of Palestinians in the Tel Zaatar Camp, became a turning point for the Muslim Brotherhood.[79] The Brotherhood, who thought that their own army would fight against Palestinians, likewise, started demonstrations against al-Assad and his regime, who cooperated with King of Jordan, Husain, and did not stand by Palestine Liberation Organization (PCO) and Palestinians in "black September" operation on18 September 1970. The Muslim Brotherhood, which revived especially with the attendance of college students decided to embark on armed act. Later to change the name as "the Fighters of Ihwan Brothers", "Hizbollah's Pioneer Fighters", introduced the jihad to last ultimate victory and needs to process according to various phases by starting a series of protests which targeted police stations and some offices of the Baath party.[80]

c. The Critical Change in Syria Constitution in 1973

Hafez al-Assad, who was the first Nusayri - origined president of Syria Republic, started the first religious crisis of his many, by combining legislative, executive and judiciary organs under his control and forming a nation state under his personal monarchy, and ignited the fuse. Upon the change in the

new constitution which was accepted in 31 January 1973, the condition of

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79 Richard Hrair Dökmeciyan, **op.cit**, p. 132.
80 Ömer Faruk Abdullah, **op.cit**, p. 120.

president's being Muslim were removed as a contradiction to the Syrian traditions. The expression: "Syrian Arab Republic is democratic, populist and socialist republic."[81] which was placed instead of state's and president's being Muslim condition in former constitutions, did not pleased neither religious men, Syrian public nor the strongest opposition of base, the Muslim Brotherhood.

Rebellions which started in Hama and Homs spread to other regions in a short time. Said Havva, who defined the new constitution as secular and unreligious, with the support of Sunni scholars, published a manifest that protested new constitution and al-Assad regime. The uprising which grew systematically, turned into a rebellion with the propaganda of the Muslim Brotherhood. Many people died in clashes between army and the public. Said Havva, Ali Sadreddin al-Beyanuni and Muhammed Ali Meşal were arrested. The public, on the one hand, continued protests; on the other hand, organized bomb attacks into state organs. Hafez al-Assad, even if re-added the condition of president's being Muslim to stop the rising rebellion, could not close the gap between his bases. Because, the public believed that not only the president, but also the state's religion must be Islam. Thus, al-Assad's pragmatic attitude towards religion with his secular policy could not prevent rising Sunni power except increased the violence.[82]

Even if it was accepted with the proportion of 97 %, the Constitution crisis clinched the perception of al-Assad's being 'Anti-Islam' in publics' mind. Hafez al-Assad was trying to please the public by giving large-scaled compromises while in the struggle of soothing the reaction against him. The president who started to show off by wrapping himself in the Islam, was going to the Umayyad mosques for Friday Salahs, interestingly opening schools in the name of Quran education.[83] However, none of these were the practices

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81 "İslamiyyun Suriye Beyne'l-Gam ve'l-İstikbad",
http://www.ikhwanwiki.com/index.php?title, [Retrieved: 04.11.2012].

82 Henry Munson, **op.cit**, p. 127.

83 Carsten Wieland, **Syria at Bay: Secularism, Islamism and PaxAmericana**, Hurst & Company, London 2006, p. 78.

that would answer the question: Were Nusayris Muslim?" To attempt for this, al-Assad, by gathering about 80 Alewi religious men, published an official explanation that their guide was Quran and their sect is a branch of Shiah-İsnaaşeriyye.[84] Together with this, he tried to release the obstacle of religion by receiving a fatvah from Musa el-Sadr, Lebanon Shiah council president, that "Alawism is Shia-Muslim".[85] In the problem of Islam-Alawism, he talked with Sunni scholars in media, took photos while praying in mosques; and his visits to Saudi Arabia for umrah were actually no more than refreshing his Islam image.[86]

d. The 1982 Hama Incidents

The most severe and cruel of the clashes which started between the Muslim Brotherhood and Hafez al-Assad in 1970's, and had social, political and sectarian basis, started in uprisings in 1980 and reached the peak in Hama in 1982.The number of the deaths, which is today counted to be'5000 to 40000', was written in the history as the sign of the biggest massacre which an Arab state made to his own public in recent history.[87]

The rising Nusayri dominance with al-Assad period, sharing Aleppo soils to Nusayris, in equations resulting from immigration from rural to urban

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84 Rıdvan Ziyade, **Senevati'l-Havf fi Suriye: el-Hakika ve'l-Adale fi Kadıyyeti'l-Muhtefin Gısriyyen fi Suriye [Years of Fear in Syria.],** w.place, w.date, p. 28.

85   Daniel Pipes, **Greater Syria: The History of an Ambition**, Oxford University, New York 1990, p. 186.

86   Ayşegül Sever, "Bağımsızlıktan Bugüne Suriye-Baas Partisi, Asad Dönemi ve Sonrası" [From Independence till now Syria and the Baath Party, Asad Eraand Afterwards], **Değişen Toplumlar Değişmeyen Siyaset Ortadoğu [The Changing Societies unchanging Politics of the Middle East],** (ed. by Fulya Atacan), Bağlam Press, İstanbul 2004, p. 211; Tayyar Arı, **Geçmişten Günümüze Ortadoğu: Siyaset, Savaş ve Diplomasi [From the Past and to the Present the Middle East: Politics, War and Diplomacy],** Alfa Press, İstanbul 2004, p. 474.

87   Taha Kılınç, **Ortadoğu'dan Notlar [Notes from the Middle East],** Pınar Press, İstanbul 2011, p. 239.

caused that opposition of the base to support the anti-regime movements. The Neo-Baath group, which was seen to be the radical side of Baath party and led by Nusayri-originated officers like Hafezal-Assad, Salah Cedid and Mohammad Umran, could not prevent itself from rivalry among soldiers, in-party power struggle and counter-coup as well as they formed a symbiotic relations with the army. Upon rural-origin minorities' becoming determinant in the party, it is observed that religious bonds by Alewis against Sunnis penetrate in the struggle for power at first, and regional and tribe bonds penetrate in the struggle between minority members afterwards.[88] The manipulation of sectarian, regional and tribal bounds in the power struggle was concordant with Baath ideology which focused on breaking the dominance of Sunni elites on Syria. The organization regarded as a model which was needed in the fight against anti-Sunni Muslim opposition.[89]

Furthermore, al-Assad's indifferent attitude towards Palestinians in Lebanon in 1976 cut the hundred thousands of dollars coming to Syria from Saudi Arabia and Gulf countries. The Baath's inadequate policy which was worsening socio-economic situation of the country started to disturb the Sunni elites from Damascus, along with the middle class, consisting of doctors, advocates and engineers while unearthing the uneasiness of tradesmen, workers and craftsmen.[90]In addition to this, al-Assad's sectarian discrimination in army and security, his forming an army consisting of Alewis instead of Sunni and Durzi officers, played an important role for opposing movements to increase their violent discourse at the base. Being Alewi who was the victims of series

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88   Sabahattin Şen, **op.cit**, p. 234.

89   Nevin Yazıcı, "Suriye Siyasi Tarihi" ("Syrian Political History"),

http://www.21yyte.org/tr/yazi6619-Suriye_Siyasi_Tarihi.html#_ftnref53,   [retrieved: 30.11.2012].

90   Yasin Atlıoğlu, **Beşşar Esad Suriye'sinde Reform: Demokratikleşme-Güvenlik İkilemi [Reform in Bashar al-Assad's Syria: Democratization and Security Dilemma],** Tasam Press, İstanbul 2007, p. 53; Eberhard Kienle, **Ba'th Versus Ba'th: The Conflict Between Syria and Iraq (1968-1989)**, I. B. Tauris, London 1990, p. 153

of assassinations, especially important Alewi leaders such as, the rector of Damascus University, al-Assad's consultant, Muhammed al-Fadil, Şeyh Yusuf Sarim and Nadir Husari, prepared the conditions of Sunni - Nusayri conflict.[91]

Hatred against the oppressive attitude of the regime became apparent when a bomb attack was held on Artillery School in Aleppo, the majority of which were Alewi students in 1979.Most of the dead students, which was about 60,being Alewi caused the government to rage upon the Muslim Brotherhood. Eventually, in the manifestation, which was published by Minister of Internal Affairs, Adan Dabağ, the Muslim Brotherhood was accepted as responsible. The severe manifestation of Hafez al-Assad, involved not only the Muslim Brotherhood, but also every thought against his regime and the Baath.al-Assad, initially went towards all unions those remained indifferent to his calls and "the Revolutionist Uprising". The Chamber of Advocates and Engineers' Union, which protested the regime, published manifestos to set the democracy and freedom in the country, called for a general strike in March of 1980.al-Assad, who answered with his own style to these strikes, abolished and took control of the unions, with the reason of their intervening in the politics, and with their intention of showing the power of the public to government. This was, by any means, a sign of public's being colonized by the state.[92]

On the 23rd of December 1979, and in party's 7th general congress on the 6th of January 1980, a decision was held to fight against all the movements that were believed to be terrorist-oriented. Rifaat al-Assad explained that the government started to lose control, bureaucratic system collapsed, public did not fulfil their responsibility in this issue and, if necessary, the blood must be responded with blood and public should be ready for this.[93]After the war

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91   Nikolaos Van Dam, **op.cit**, p. 147.

92   Hans Günter Lob meyer,"Al-dimuqratiyya hiyya al-hall? The Syrian Opposition at the End of The Asad Era",**Contemporary Syria: Liberalization Between Cold War and Cold Peace**, (ed. by Eberhard Kienle), British Academic Press, London 1994, pp. 81-101.

93   Patrick Seale, **Asad: es-Sıra' ala el-Şarkı'l-Evsat [Asad: Revolution in the**

decision held in the general congress in 1980, an intimidation operation was started alongside the whole country. On March 1980, the helicopters, those were sent to the Cisr al-Shugur region under the leadership of Brigadier General Ali Haydar, left the region with hundreds of dead.[94] The army which entered the Aleppo after a few days, destroyed the city and commander Şefik Fayyad was shouting: "*I am ready to kill thousands of people, as long as the city would be cleansed from the rats called Ihwan Brotherhood.*"[95] Fayyad, after three days of this explanation, was killed in an ambush by the Muslim Brotherhood, together with his seven officers.[96]

In the operations, the members of the Muslim Brotherhood not only in the cities, but also in the prisons, were unquestionably hanged without any inquiry. At this point, it was not important for the government that members were related to the uprisings or not.[97]After a year, on 26th of June 1980, with an unsuccessful attempt of assassination towards Hafez al-Assad, everything was ended, and the operations were made in almost every region where the Muslim Brotherhood was. Besides, many members of the Muslim Brotherhood were killed after severe tortures in Tedmür prisons.[98]

The biggest shock to Brotherhood was the decision -which is still valid- ,taken by the Public Parliament in 7th of July 1980. The parliament, by signing an order brought death penalty to the membership of the Muslim Brotherhood with the condition that the regretful ones would be forgiven if they separate

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Middle East], el-Müessesetü'l-Amme li'd-Dirasat ve'n-Neşr ve't-Tevzi', w.date, p. 529

94   Süreyya Salih et al., **Hama ah...**, (trans. by İsmail Ağaoğulları, Harun Ünal), Gölden Press, İstanbul 1985, p. 36.

95   Patrick Seale, **op.cit.,** p. 532.

96   "Asadın Sağ Kolu Fayyad Öldürüldü" (Asad's Right-Hand Fayyad was Killed), **Milli Gazete**, 12 Şubat 1982.

97   Taha Kılınç, **op.cit**, p. 241.

98   Necib Ghadban, "el-Hareketü'l-İslamiyye fi Suriye ve Afaku't-Tehavvülü'd-Demokrati" ["Islamic Movement in Syria"], **Merkezu'l-Misbar li'd-Diraseti ve'l-Buhus**, p. 64.

within 30 days from the organization.[99]

In the first half of 1980, al-Assad regime started operations against members of the Muslim Brotherhood. The arrests and afterward the deaths continued gradually until 1982. The Muslim Brotherhood responded to the violence in the same way and made bomb attacks in 17 August 1981 to Board of Ministers and then, on the 3rd of September to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. On 2 February 1982, the tension between regime and opposition reached its peak. The uprising that the Muslim Brotherhood started in Hama, where was known to be the central net of the Brotherhood, turned into a massacre when the army of al-Assad entered the city. Together with Hama, in Sermeda and in the villages that were in the North of Aleppo, the systematic operations started. The regions that were plundered by tanks were bombed for days. In the cities those turned into swamps in a short time, many people without identifying as a Sunni or civil were arrested and many of them were killed.[100] On April 8, Syria closed her Iraq border and explained that all the supports that may come from Iraq to the Muslim Brotherhood for the fight were avoided.[101] In the same way, Syria, closing her Lebanon border because of the clashes between her soldiers and Palestinian soldiers, showed that she was determined to lock the organization in Hama.[102]

The Muslim Brotherhood, which eliminated the first shock, called for an uprising by counter-attack against the regime. The organization took allegiance till death from public, by surrounding the police stations and state houses, tried to take the control of the city. By the way, in the second day of the siege, the

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99 Haşim Osman, **op.cit**, p. 224.

100 Cengiz Çandar, **Ortadoğu Çıkmazı [the Middle East Deadlock],** Seçkin Press, İstanbul 1988, p. 106.

101 Moshe Maoz-Ayner Yanıv, **Syria Under Assad: Domestic Constraints and Regional Risks**, Croom Helm, London 1986, p. 136.

102 "Suriye, Batı sınırını Kapattı" ["Syria Closed its Border with the West"], **Milli Gazete**, 22 Şubat 1982.

47[th]division's leaving the army and attending the Brotherhood, groups tied to the 21[st]division, moving from Tedmür airport to Hama airport, and resisting to security forces, formed an advantage for the Brotherhood.[103]According to the explanation from Damascus Radio, Hafez al-Assad, instead of the groups those left, called the Nusayri groups in Lebanon led by General Suleyman Hassan to fight against the Brotherhood.[104]Along with this, Rifaat al-Assad's defence groups, 90% of which were consisted of Nusayris, blocked the uprising by residing in strategic points of Hama and neutralized the siege.[105]

Started on the 2nd of February and lasted 24 days, and with the most optimistic estimation according to Syria Human Rights Organization's report, the number of deaths was 40.000 and the lost people were above 20.000.[106]For this reason, al-Assad named the 1982 massacre as "rebellion" and tried to make the best of a bad bargain. However, some groups and clubs with the name of "Assosiation Pour La Defense Des Libertes et Des Prissoniers Politiques en Syrie (Association for the Defense of the Freedoms and Political Prisoners in Syria)" in USA and Europe, started campaigns opposed to the government. The magazine "al-Minber" published in Arabic, English, French and German prepared by the clubs, succeeded to announce the massacre to whole world.[107] Even if it harmed the image of al-Assad in international community, he started tight control on public and filtered every establishment from public that he considered to be dangerous. In an official explanation on the 26th of February, al-Assad, with the relief of mutiny, declared that clashed completely ended.

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103 "Suriye Ordusu İkiye Bölündü" ["Syrian Army was Divided in Two"], **Milli Gazete**, 14 Şubat 1982.

104 "Suriye Ordusundan Mücahidlere İltihaklar Gittikçe Artıyor" ["The joining to Mujahideens from Syrian Army is Increasing Steadily"], **Milli Gazete**, 18 Şubat 1982.

105 Nikolas Van Dam, **op.cit**, p. 189.

106 "Syria Human Right Commitee", http://www.shrc.org/data/aspx/d3/53.aspx, [Retrieved: 28.10.2012].

107 Cem Başar, **Terör Dosyası ve Suriye [the File of Terrorism and Syria],** Uluslararası Araştırma Merkezi (İNAF) (International Research Center), Lefkoşa 1996, p. 37.

Raymond Hinnebusch, who defined the sectarian-regime clash between 1980 and 1982 as the revolt of political Islam to state, summarised the Brotherhood's situation and al-Assad's late practices as the Political Islam war.[108] The rise of Political Islam had already developed as the publics' muslimization as an answer to the unreligious, unjust and inefficient governments rather than a reaction to modernist culture.[109]

The Muslim Brotherhood was defeated and got injured in Hama, stepped back from Syria upon their headquarters being destroyed. At least, they knew very well how the regime would answer to themselves or any opposing voice. The leaders who were exiled or escaped from operations symbolized, in some way, the separation of the Muslim Brotherhood from Syria.[110]However, this separation didn't isolate the activities of the Brotherhood altogether. The Brotherhood continued their activities in Arab countries, especially in Jordan, and in Europe.

Ali Sadreddin al-Bayanouni from Aleppo, who was elected in 1996, on the contrary to the Hamans' hostile attitude, by showing more moderate attitude, accepted to make secret deals with the government. Hafez al-Assad got what he wanted, eliminated the opposition destructively. However, the deaths made Sunni community more marginal. The public was completely a stranger to the government.[111] Hafez al-Assad, in order to avoid a new Hama incident, wanted to take control by infiltrating into the alienated public with his "Real Islam" strategy. Therefore, he gave some compromises to the Brotherhood, in addition making new mosques, establishing religious schools. Al-Assad, who executed

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108 Raymond Hinnebusch, "Suriye'de Devlet ve Sivil Toplum" [State and Civil Society in Syria], (trans. by Hakan Özdağ), **Avrasya Dosyası (Suriye Özel) [Eurasian File (Syria Private)]**, Ankara 1995, Vol. 2/3, pp. 14-15.

109 Samir Kassir, **Arap Talihsizliği [Being Arab/Considérations sur le malheur arabe]**, (Trans. Özgür Gökmen), İletişim Press, İstanbul 2011, p. 39.

110 Carsten Wieland, **op.cit**, p. 80.

111 Robert G. Rabil, "The Syrian Muslim Brotherhood", **The Muslim brotherhood The Organization and Policies of a Global Islamist Movement**, (eds. Barry Rubin, Palgrave Macmillan), New York 2010, p. 79.

double-edge policy to the Brotherhood, made middle-level peace talks with the leaders. After that, gradually 6500 people in prisons were released. He permitted the returns of Abd al-Fettah Ebu Gudde, the leader in exile, and some members, with the condition of their being Syrian individuals.[112]

1. The Transformation with Bashar al-Assad

After death Hafez al-Assad's, the longest ruling Syrian leader's death, there was not any crisis contrary to the expectations. Al-Assad gave the signs of turning his system into a dynasty by putting his sons in the public eye already. Basil al-Assad's, who were seen as heir of execution till 1994, suspicious death turned eyes to the other heir Bashar al-Assad. After the necessary conditions were obtained in constitution, al-Assad the son, was elected as the new president after his father's death by heart attack in June 2000.Basharal-Assad,who started his new duty by testifying under oath in public council, assigned Abd al-Halim b. Said Khaddam and Mohammed Zuheyri to primary position in the cabinet.[113]

Even if they came from same families, putting the differences between father and son resulted in the change of winds in Syria. While the father al-Assad was seen a traditionalist man raised in Syrian village, Bashar, as an ophthalmologist, educatedin London, created more modern and more conscious image. These differences made the public to hope that new reformation term would start.[114]Aware of this, Bashar al-Assad, on his 6th month in power, started a series of reforms in the name of "*Spring of Damascus"* by saying:[115] "*Today, we need the change more than anytime*." At that time, terms such as democracy,

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112 Rıdvan Ziyade, **op.cit**, p. 96.

113 Volkan Aydos and Meltem Duran, **Suriye Ülke Etüdü [Syrian Country Study]**, İstanbul Ticaret Odası (Istanbul Chamber of Commerce), İstanbul 2000, p. 26.

114 Ramazan Kılınç, "Asad Sonrası Suriye'de Değişim İmkanı" ["The Exchange Availability after Asad in Syria"], **Stratejik Analiz: Aylık Uluslararası İlişkiler ve Stratejik Araştırmalar Dergisi [Strategic Analysis: Quarterly Journal of International Relations and Strategic Studies]**, July 2000, Vol. 1/3, p. 12.

115 Alan George, **Syria neither Bread nor Freedom**, Zed Books, London 2003, p. 31.

freedom and human rights were used much more than ever.[116]

The cancellation of martial law applied since 1963,amnesty to political prisoners in Syrian prisons, the regulations related to the freedom of speech and press in the name of reformations, came with some good news including banned the Muslim Brotherhood. Bashar al-Assad gave gradual freedom to the Brotherhood.380 of 600 prisoners, who were released, were the members of the Muslim Brotherhood organization.[117] Additionally, al-Assad gave permission for printing and selling the books of the ideologies, once in blacklist, like Sayyid Qutb, Mustafa Sıbai.[118] The Brotherhood, who hoped to resuscitate with Bashar rapidly slide into political platform. The Brotherhood took al-Assad's moves as a new sign and expected to play main roles in constituting new Syria. On 3 May 2001, they published "Misak al-Vatani (National Honour Pact)" and in fact, were reminding themselves to Syria and Syrian people and tried to indicate that they could work cooperatively with opposing groups.[119] On 23rd of August 2002,the Brotherhood leaders gathered with socialists, nationalists, left wingers and Islamists with the number of about 50 people in London to sign Syrian National Pact. In the same year, the leader of the Brotherhood, Ali Sadraddin al-Beyanuni, expressed that problems would be rapidly solved when al-Assad opened the doors for other groups and cooperated with them.[120] Al-Assad listened the calls from the Brotherhood, contrary to his father, however, paid strict attention not to cross his own lines. For this reason, he obviously rejected three demands of Beyanuni: (1) Releasing of all members of the Brotherhood in prison, (2) returning of those who were exiled and (3) the

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116 Oytun Orhan, "Suriye Dönüşüm ve Türkiye" ["Syria Transformation and Turkey"], **Stratejik Analiz: Aylık Uluslararası İlişkiler ve Stratejik Araştırmalar Dergisi [Strategic Analysis: Quarterly Journal of International Relations and Strategic Studies]**, Ankara 2005, Vol. 65, p. 18.

117 Alan George, **op.cit**, p. 40.

118 Yvette Talhami, **The Syrian Uprising the Muslim Brotherhood Reburn**, Middle East Quarterly, w.place, Spring 2012, p. 34.

119 Eyal Zisser, **Syria, The Bat'h Regime and the Islamic Movement: Stepping on a New Path**, The Muslim World, January 2005, p. 56.

120 Alan George, **op.cit**, p. 41.

cancellation of death penalty law made by his father's wish.[121]

At the end of 2004, the Muslim Brotherhood published a manifest named "Meşru' li's-Suriyye Müstakbel (Political Project for Syria's Future)". In a more refined project, demands of an Islamic constitution, democratic reforms, freedom of thought, diversity, the superiority of law and the equality were repeated. The organization signed Damascus Declaration, which included the basic matters like the draft of democratic change, reviewing general security system with the opposing groups such as the National Democratic Community, the Democratic Kurdish Pact, Civil Action Committees, the Kurdish Democratic Front, the Future Party, and the Syrian Human Rights Committee. The purpose of this was to bring the Syrian opposition together, who were scattered. In the declaration, in which Islam was stressed ideologically, the democratic changes were provided as basic approach, a gradual and peaceful agreement was demanded in which there was power transfer with periodic elections.[122]

By July 2006, Israel-Lebanon war, which started with Israel's entering to Lebanon, changed the extent with the intervention of Syria. The Brotherhood silenced and stopped its activities against Syrian government who propagated against Israel and blamed Israel for the war.[123] After this strategic change, Sadraddin al-Beyanuni, meeting with ex-assistant of President Abdu'l-Halim Khaddam in Brussels in March 2006, founded the "National Liberation Front" of Syria. Some cracks were raised from movement's parts. Abdu'l-Halim Khaddam had known al-Assad since his childhood and married to a woman from his family. Khaddam, who had also influence on Hama events, his opposition wouldn't last long against the regime.[124] The Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt objected this partnership due to Khaddam's role in al-Assad regime and important names such as Faruk Tayfur explained that he withdrew from

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121 Yvette Talhami, **op.cit**, p. 35

122 Robert G. Rabil, **op.cit**, p. 82.

123 Yvette Talhami, **op.cit**, p. 35.

124 Daniel Pipes, **op.cit**, p. 184.

the front. Riad al-Turk told that a possible agreement which included Khaddam may result in civil war.[125] Beyanuni believed that, with the help of Khaddam the talks with Washington would come about, and it would be easy that the regime may lose power. Therefore, still weird it was, he continued his partnership with Khaddam.

The Muslim Brotherhood, which in order to accommodate in the politics of Syria, re-engaged the liberal democratic openings, and had gathered all of the anti-regime opposition under the same roof since 2001, and was calling the new regime for liberal democracy in "the National Front "in 2006, although it did not believe Bashar al-Assad would give concessions to opposition groups, despite he showed a positive image in the international arena.[126]

a. The Reflection of the Arab Spring and the Brotherhood's Effect to the Process

In January 2001, the Arab Spring, which started with a Tunisian man firing himself to protest the regime and making a domino effect to Libya, Egypt and Yemen, later to all Middle East. In March 2011, two women speaking on the phone ''Zeyn al-Abidin in Tunisia, Mubarak in Egypt had gone, same to us.'' indicated the footsteps of revolution in Syria. The women, who were taken in custody, were released after severe tortures. After a while, similar to the beginnings of Hama incidents in 1964, the sentence that was written on the board by children in Der'a "*eş-Şa'b yüridu iskâtu'n-nizam (The people want the regime to fall)",* the most important motto of revolution, caused the intervention of Syrian forces.[127] The response of soldiers with guns to the protesters, who rushed to the streets as a result of torture of two women and children, caused indignation and spread through the Syrian towns and villages.

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125 Yvette Talhami, **op.cit**, p. 36.

126 Seth Krummrich, **Shaping Jihadism: How Syria Molded The Muslim Brotherhood**, Naval Postgraduate School Monterey, California 2007, p. 43.

127 Turan Kışlakçı, **Arap Baharı [The Arab Spring]**, Mana Press, İstanbul 2011, p. 212.

The factor that differentiated Syria from the others in the "Spring process" was that the opposition in Syria was in the dilemma of "ıskat-ıslahat/ overthrow-reform". In other countries, there were no words that regime would reform, however in Syria,the question from the beginning was that what was more useful: the expatriation of the regime or its staying and making reforms? Bashar al-Assad, who feared foreign intervention as in the case of Libya, thought that initiation of reform efforts would end the chaos and turmoil in the region. Along with this, in Syria, where there had been public demonstrations and protests against regime, and regime's constant superiority and not losing its power on public showed that people did not want this system anymore and needed more than reforms. In this concept, the opposition, defending that any reforms would not make any difference, and did not accept any option but collapse of the regime.[128] Riad al-Shakfa, who defended this opinion and the loss ofal-Assad's legitimacy, suggested that, upon al-Assad's leaving, there would be unity in Syria and, parallel to this, in all Islam regions.[129] Besides, al-Shakfa said that the Brotherhood was not pioneers in revolution nevertheless, as it was a people movement; they were supportive of the revolution.

In the sixth month of uprisings, the national parliament that was announced on 15th of September 2011 formed a rising point in Syrian politics for the Brotherhood. Riad al-Shakfa, who told that they stick to the national parliament, expressed that the parliament defended the revolution and the revolutionists with all their potential, and they were doing an international

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128 "Suriye Arap Baharının Neresinde?" [Where is Syrian the Arab Spring], http:// www.stargazete.com/acikgorus/suriye-Arap-bahari-nin-neresinde-haber363890. htm, [Retrieved: 03.11.2012].

129 "Riyad Al-Shakfa: Esed Giderse İslam Coğrafyasına Birlik Gelebilir" [Riad Al-Shakfa: If Asad goes, the Union comes to the Islamic Geography], http://www. haberler.com/riyad-al-shakfa-esed-giderse-islam-cografyasina-3594186haberi, [Retrieved: 04.11.2012].

struggle to expatriate the regime, and the Brotherhood would do everything to achieve this.[130]The explanations of the Brotherhood objecting any foreign intervention but if the public security was the question, they would only trust Turkey government, and would accept the Turkey's intervention, were among the topics of revolution that interested Turkey.

On 25th of March2012, they published a manifest that explained what type of a state they wanted under the name of "Ahd ve Misak min Cemâati'l-İhvani'l-Müslimîn fi Suriye (Honorary Pact of Syrian Muslim Brotherhood Movement)". In the manifest starting with "For a free country and honour of citizens…",the organization stressed that they were trying to form more equal, more free and more civil environment for Syria. In the manifest of 10 topics, the Brotherhood gave the priority to civil state and the constitution that would involve all segments of community. The Brotherhood, which especially stressed the principle of separation of powers, believed that, Hafezal-Assad gathered all the authority to himself in 1973; and they believed to eliminate all the laws those are in force at present.[131]

CONCLUSION

Ottoman Empire's starting to break up at the beginning of the 20thcentury, Western states' struggle to be dominant power in the Middle East and the games played, confronted the people in Arab region with the dangers of colonization. Because of this, the people, who rose to obtain national independence and challenge the West, who wanted to be the primary force in region, formed various trends which were organizational and ideological. Muslim Brotherhood became known in Syria after Egypt when Middle East experienced an identity problem and led in almost all the communal transformations of public revival.

The main factor that made the Muslim Brotherhood different from other

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130 "Teşkil'i Meclis'i-Vatani li'l-Muaridati's- Suriye",http://www.aljazeera. net/programs/pages/047439fa-122b-4245-b119-b7012ab6e900,   [Retrieved: 03.11.2012].

131 "Ahd ve Misak Min Cemaati'l-İhvani'l-Müslimin fi Suriye", 25 Mart 2012.

organizations was that it targeted to grow the members ideologically and politically by practising the program upon community, which was formed in concordance with the "tajdid project" produced by Hassan al-Banna. To achieve this, the organization, which tried to spread the invitation in every place of society gained attention from the public, firstly from the rural areas. The oppression and violence to eliminate strong opposition in Syria, and the Islamist groups who were inspired by them, started the footsteps of revolution calls in Syria shortly after the revolution winds in Tunisia in January 2011. In the turmoil resulted from the ethnic and religious harmony, apart from socio-economic reasons, steps to protect the freedom of belief and national freedom of Syria in which there were always dispute among the Sunnis, Alewis (Nusayris) Dürzis and other minorities for sectarian and tribal conflict, prioritized the Brotherhood for the opposition. With these basic core doctrines, they were accepted as the organization, liberated Syrian and the Muslim soils that were oppressed under domination, ended the clashes by diminishing power of upper-class in society and seen as a reformist movement which obtained social justice.

The Syrian Brotherhood tried to progress by keeping its image fresh in the eye of society for the political balances which started in 1949 and constantly changed by the serial coups in Syria. Their having followed an anti-Baath policy since 1964 put an insuperable distance between the regime and the organization and triggered bloodshed. The Syrian people, who were oppressed under a government which were above limits, having been made powerless systematically by strong mafia, being like the old Soviet Republics with the Chinese police state way[132] made the Brotherhood to be accepted in the public and spread over other places. The breaking points in the social, political and sectarian clashes between the Brotherhood and Hafez al-Assad, who took control in 1970, were Hama incidents and the murder of the members in the Syrian prisons without any interrogations. The unsuccessful trial of assassination to Hafez al-Assad in 26 June 1980, cut the relations between government and the Brotherhood completely, and any membership of the organization would be killed by the decision taken by Public Parliament.

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132 Kassir, **ibid**, p. 39.

The organization, which was defeated in Hama, ended radical actions and stepped back from Syria after destruction of their headquarters. However, the activities of leaders', who were exiled and escaped from destruction operations, were going unnoticed. Moreover, the Brotherhood, which signed Damascus Declaration in 2005, and National Pact in 2004 after Syria National Front in 1990, repeated that they had a say in Syrian political life.

The USA, who was in bad relation with Syrian government for a while, condemned al-Assad for his violent attitude and in 18 August 2012, called for his stepping back because he lost his legitimacy. A few months later, the USA organised a meeting to form an opposition with the attendance of most countries, in Doha, the capital of Qatar. According to the USA, the Syrian National Congress (SNC) failed as the members were out of the country for 20, 30, and 40 years. They lived far from the truths in Syria. They could not gather all the opposition forces in one group and failed. To do this, a broad-based anti-Assad organization should have been established against Assad, in which everyone could find a place in it.[133] In this context, on 11th of November 2012, the merger of Syrian dissidents under one roof in the name of "the Syrian Opposition and Revolutionary National Forces Coalition" under the leadership Sheikh Ahmad Moaz al-Hatib showed the determination to achieve their objectives.

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