

One of the strengths of the book is that it has an extensive and in-depth study of the existing literature on the theme, which broadens the reader's knowledge. The conclusion to each part of the discussion helps the reader comprehend it in a better way. While important for moving the discussion along, a few details also start to repeat themselves occasionally. There are several places in the text where the reader could become perplexed and have a lot of unanswered questions. First, the book claims to go beyond the liberal tradition and offer an alternative, but it seems that even if the discussion does not end, it at least centers on liberal ideals. One point that can be made is that multiculturalism is a by-product of liberalism. Second, the book does not offer a justification for why multiculturalism should be widely accepted in Muslim societies. Third, how much of their population qualifies as a majority and what does the

term "Muslim majority" mean? Fourth, it is not clear throughout the book who the takers of "Muslim democracy" are. And lastly, does the word "Muslim" give new meaning to the concept of democracy? Probably it would have been better to call it a "multicultural democracy" rather than a "Muslim democracy."

To sum up, *A Political Theory of Muslim Democracy* is a fresh, timely, and groundbreaking work for readers and academics interested in the current philosophical debates ranging from liberalism, modernity, and multiculturalism to religion and politics. It is also a rich source of reference for those who are interested in the debates surrounding the Muslim world and MENA region politics. Additionally, it is a valuable contribution to the literature on democracy, secularism, and the public sphere, especially in the emerging field of comparative political theory.

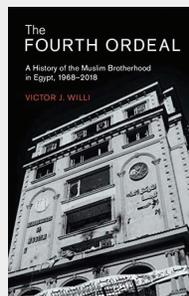
The Fourth Ordeal: A History of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, 1968-2018

By Victor J. Willi

Cambridge University Press, 2021, 489 pages, \$82, ISBN: 9781108902649

Reviewed by Ömer Şipal, Ibn Haldun University

Ordeals were commonplace during the colonization period for the people of the Middle East and the states alike. This is no surprise. With the colonized powers gone, contrary to the dreams of lives without ordeals, expectations of ending the issues in the region have not been met. The old normalcy has become the de facto reality for those in the region and on occasion the de jure of peoples' lives. Egypt in general and the Muslim Brotherhood have



been a vivid embodiment of these kinds of ordeals. *The Fourth Ordeal: A History of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, 1968-2018* written by Victor J. Willi, a book on "the fourth ordeal" befalling the Brotherhood after the coup d'état in 2013, is a narration of a history culminating in one of the bloodiest periods of Egypt's modern history. The book details this narration by passing through the first ordeal of 1949, the long second ordeal of the

1950s and early 1960s, and the third ordeals of the second half of the 1960s (pp. 7-9).

Chapter 1 talks about the basics of the Muslim Brotherhood as an organization. Before giving details about the skeleton of the organization, the author touches briefly on the precursor to the organization's founder Hasan al-Banna. Jamal al-Din al-Afghani's, Mohammed Abduh's and Rashid Rida's efforts to resist colossal Western challenges through Islamic modernism were great inspirations for al-Banna. "While al-Banna was the first to articulate the idea of Islam as a 'complete and comprehensive' religion with such clarity," the author argues, "he stood within the intellectual tradition of Islamic modernism" (pp. 18-19). Perhaps what makes this chapter important is its focus on the ideology and the structure of the organization. Ten pillars of the oath are introduced. Then the author dwells upon the strategic plan concerning how an Islamic state will be actualized. The last part of the chapter touches on the "Brotherhood's indoctrination process" (p. 36) and the "organization of chart of the Brotherhood" (p. 43). The comment that the success of recruitment depends mainly on "the personal relationship between the recruiter and the recruit" is the last point needed to be highlighted.

Chapter 2 is about the rebirth of the Brotherhood from the ashes in the prisons. With the death of the second General Guide Hasan al-Hudaybi and Umar al-Tilmisani the third Guide, a new era began for the Brotherhood. The chapter is a survey of how this era started and ended up with a full-fledged brand-new organization. The sudden death of Gamal Abd al-Nasser on September 28, 1970, opened new venues for Islamists in Egypt. Anwar al-Sadat replaced Nasser and to promote himself opened the floodgates of Islamic currents. It was against this background that "the Broth-

erhood witnessed a period of renewed growth and organizational expansion" (p. 51). Al-Tilmisani played a pivotal role in this growth because he "rejected the use of violence as a matter of principle, and instead sought to steer the Brotherhood towards its original mission: the spiritual education and moral rectification of Muslims by calling them to the methods and principles of Islam as envisioned by Hasan al-Banna" (p. 51). His efforts to spread the Brotherhood's call among university students on campuses mattered a lot because in this way the incipient organization coopted a lot of students into its structure. The chapter ends with al-Sadat's assassination resulting from his peace process with Israel.

Chapter 3 traces the rising visibility of the Brotherhood both in public and political spaces and the consequent state's crackdowns against it. The 1980s were the years when the young Brothers became active members of first professional syndicates and then parliament. This active involvement in politics and by extension rising popularity of young cadres like Abul Futuh, Khairat al-Shaitar, and Issam al-Arian began to disturb political elites. This discomfort on the side of the state would be the main reason for the acceleration of the state's repression in the second half of the 1980s. It was against this background that senior figures who had been active members during the second and third ordeals began to take the reins and marginalize the cohort of the 1970s. The death of al-Tilmisani in 1986 opened these seniors' ways for more control over the organization, which meant that "their vision conflicted with the aspirations of an upwardly mobile class of former student activists" (p. 101).

Chapter 4 initially surveys how the Brotherhood tapped into the negative effects of structural adjustment of the Egyptian economy

and grew its social base through its social charity activities and secondly focuses on intensifying repression on the part of the regime. In the early 1990s, the Mubarak regime could no longer tolerate the rising popularity of the Brotherhood after the 1983 and 1987 elections demonstrated that the popularity gained through charity activities could be transformed into political capital, which meant an existential threat to the authoritarian regime. While this repression was ongoing, a transformation of the social base (p. 163) was happening within the Brotherhood. Migrations from rural to urban centers diversified the social base and strengthened the senior figures' power. Upon increasing state repression, these seniors maintained a firm grip on the organization by especially tapping into the above-mentioned changing social base. As a result, the Brotherhood withdrew toward the end of the 1990s.

Chapter 5 concentrates on the developments paving the way for the so-called Arab Spring. A watershed moment not just for the Brotherhood but for the whole world was the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center in New York. These attacks, perhaps surprisingly, opened new venues for dissenting political groups. The aftermath of these attacks saw many protest movements, especially ones organized by the younger generations. This new wave of democratization was called the Cairo Spring (p. 204). While these developments were underway, the senior guards were gaining ground against the cohort of the 1970s and the younger generation. Toward the end of the first decade of 2000 hopes of democratization, contrary to expectations, waned.

Chapter 6 discusses the Tahrir revolution and the rise and fall of the Brotherhood. Starting in Tunisia, the popular uprising reached Egypt and at last toppled the Mubarak re-

gime. Among the reasons leading to the revolution, the author highlights “the courage and determination of a small group of activists who managed to mobilize hundreds and thousands –and in some cases even millions– of citizens into the streets and squares of Egypt” (p. 233) was the most decisive one. With the deposal of Mubarak, a new era began for the Brotherhood. They founded the Freedom and Justice Party and ran for seats in the parliament. Step by step the Brotherhood became the number one democratically elected power in the Egyptian political landscape. But this process was replete with many problems, perhaps the most important of which was the charge of “the Ikhwanization of the state.” This fraught process led to the coup in the end and started the fourth ordeal.

Chapter 7 is a close survey of “the greatest crisis the Muslim Brotherhood had witnessed so far” (p. 305). The chapter gives a panoramic view of events unfolding immediately after the coup of 2013 until 2018. According to the author, this period saw a “growing confrontation between a new class of second-rank apparatchiks in Egypt and the traditional leaders abroad” (p. 306). The state repression following the coup paralyzed the Brotherhood. Many senior leaders of the Brotherhood were incarcerated and others were forced to leave Egypt. This was the real reason behind this two-headed leadership within the organization. Although the organization, according to the author, has tried to benefit from changing alliances in the Middle East, it has not been successful in converting this into political capital so far.

The book tries to frame the current predicament the Muslim Brotherhood is experiencing within the internal conflict between two schools of thought: “an energetic Islamist intelligentsia around Umar al-Tilmisani” and “a group of hardliners of the first cohort”

(p. 389). Although these internal disputes between the middle generation and the old guards have been addressed in the relevant literature, understanding the current chaos in light of this tension between the two schools of thought is quite enlightening. And because

of this, the book, in my humble opinion, can be accepted as a contribution to the literature concerning the Muslim Brotherhood. Future scholars of the Brotherhood will benefit from it to understand what happened to the organization after the bloody coup.

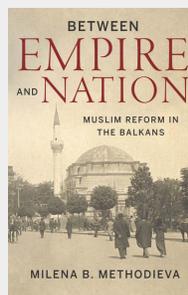
Between Empire and Nation: Muslim Reform in the Balkans

By Milena B. Methodieva

Stanford University Press, 2021, 344 pages, \$65, ISBN: 9781503613379

Reviewed by Faika Çelik, Celal Bayar University

The modern Bulgarian state was founded in 1878 on former Ottoman territories. It became the first Balkan Ottoman successor to inherit a considerable Muslim population, accounting for more than a quarter of the inhabitants of Bulgaria. After providing an overview of the Muslim community in the newly established Bulgarian nation-state, this study explores in detail the emergence and development of a cultural and political reform movement among the Muslims of Bulgaria. It also addresses how they “navigated between empire and nation-state and sought to be a part of an increasingly wider modern world” (p. 1). As perceptively observed by Methodieva, “There is a considerable body of scholarship on the Muslims and Turks of Bulgaria in various languages” (p. 4). Nevertheless, most of the studies on the subject take a rather long *durée* approach, spanning a hundred-year period with a particular focus on assimilationist policies carried out by the Bulgarian state in the 1980s. This study, however, by focusing on the period between 1876 and 1908, aims to shed light on the experiences of the Muslims in the three decades



after the end of Ottoman rule in Bulgaria, a period which has “remained understudied” (p. 4). Yet, more significantly, by focusing on the reform endeavors among the Muslims of Bulgaria during this period, a topic “almost completely neglected” (p. 4) by the current scholarship, the study deliberately seeks to provide a narrative on “Muslim perspectives and agency” (p. 5) on modernity, nationalism and belonging by shifting the focus “away from the prevailing state-centered approaches” (p. 5).

This study is based on Ottoman and Bulgarian archival records and a variety of newspapers and periodicals published by the Muslims of Bulgaria. Among these sources, periodicals published by the local Muslims, such as *Muvazene* (Equilibrium), *Tuna* (Danube), *Uhuvvet* (Brotherhood), *Balkan*, and *Gayret* (Zeal) are read very closely and excerpts from these are presented throughout the study. Methodieva notes that “Ottoman and Bulgarian archival records provide valuable information about Ottoman and Bulgarian aspirations, as well as insights into the context that engendered the