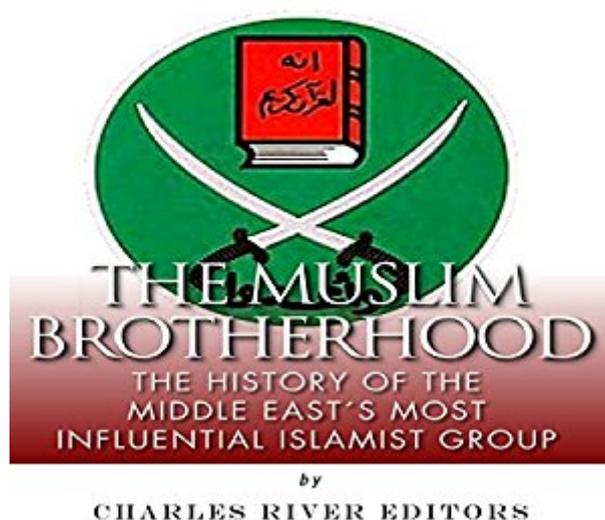


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# The Muslim Brotherhood: The History Of The Middle East's Most Influential Islamist Group



## Synopsis

In 2011, Egypt quickly became one of the most active countries during the Arab Spring, with Tahrir Square in Cairo becoming the focal point of both violent protests and peaceful political demonstrations. Inspired by the protesters in Tunisia, beginning in January 2011, Egyptians rallied to the square and in the streets by the thousands, marching, protesting, and calling for the fall of then-President Hosni Mubarak. Throughout the next several months until the overthrow of Mubarak in February 2011, millions of protesters from a wide range of socio-economic, ethnic, and religious backgrounds demanded a regime change across Egypt. As significant as it was for the Egyptian people, the Egyptian Arab Spring was a key turning point for the Muslim Brotherhood - Egypt's largest and long-oppressed opposition group. The Brotherhood played a key role in organizing demonstrations, pitting the Egyptian and world media against the Mubarak regime, and orchestrating violent riots and clashes between civilian protesters and the Egyptian security forces, further portraying the regime in a negative light. But it was after the revolution that the Brotherhood truly reaped its rewards; it formed a legal political party and ran in the subsequent parliamentary elections, winning a large number of seats that were previously unavailable to them. Then, in June 2012, the Brotherhood made history in Egypt when it successfully managed to install its candidate Mohamed Morsi as president. Perhaps no group was more surprised by the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood's swift and largely unopposed rise to power than the Brotherhood itself; for decades, the group had suffered a long history of severe oppression and internal crises, but in the political environment created by the Arab Spring, it only took less than two years for the Brotherhood to control the Egyptian government.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The Muslim Brotherhood is a very brief overview of the birth, growth and spread of one of the most influential Islamist groups in the Near East. At a mere 50 pages, it provides a solid, broad background to the group's turbulent political activities in Egypt in the 20th century, with a few pages outlining the spread of the Brotherhood into Lebanon, Yemen and Syria. As a primer, there is much to recommend here: the major players in the development of its ideology and the political leaders who alternately persecuted members and tolerated (or even encouraged) its involvement in political life are introduced - but there is little detail or depth. It is precisely this lack of detail and depth that makes the book problematic. There was nothing mentioned of the Brotherhood's role in providing social services and only the briefest of references were made about how Sufism and Salafism shaped and influenced its early ideology, with no supporting details. The methods of its spread and the reasons behind its popularity with political prisoners in Egypt during the Nassr regime was also mentioned in passing, but again without any detail or facts to provide depth or support to the claim. As a result, the book reads more like a vague, broad summary of the organization than a scholarly exposition on the underlying factors behind its popularity and why it was understood as a threat to the political system of Egypt (beyond the most obvious reason of a failed assassination attempt on Nassr.) As an introduction and overview, this is a nice start, but it lacks any of the synthesis, analysis or critical evaluation of the movement that I had hoped for and expected.

This brief, concise overview of the Muslim Brotherhood is timely and informative. The author accomplished an interesting, insightful and revealing narrative that spans a tremendous amount of material. The story starts in Egypt and spreads throughout the globe. The author explores the variety of different philosophical ideas and the different objectives that the Brotherhood adheres to. In addition, the unadorned prose allows the reader to grasp the somewhat confusing and unfamiliar philosophical arguments. I especially respected the balanced and non judgemental manner in which the material was presented.

Very informative and very helpful to understand the situations as they were and why they are what they are now. Bill

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