

the national minority government are more or less costly depending on the regional governing circumstances.

Some of the examined traits that boost the stability and efficacy of minority governments may be specific to the Spanish case, such as parliamentary institutions that strongly tip the balance in favour of the government; the fact that all minority governments fell rather short (between 7 and 20 seats) of an absolute majority up to 2015; the relatively open-ended nature of the territorial model; and the tight vertical integration of statewide parties through

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Ranko's book (originally the author's 2012 University of Hamburg PhD thesis) addresses the Muslim Brotherhood's (MB's) self-portrayal against the Egyptian regime's portrayal of the movement during the Mubarak period (1981–2011). It is an investigation of how the MB presented itself to the Egyptians through its behaviour and its ideology as expressed in the movement's political writings and press statements, and how this altered during Mubarak's government (p. 17). Ranko has analysed two bodies of text. The first represents the MB, and the second represents the state's view. She addresses the two corpora with the same question: 'How is the Brotherhood portrayed?' (p. 34). The key contribution of the book lies within a framework based on a combination of Migdal's 'State-in-Society' approach with the concept of Gramsci's 'War of Position'. The Migdal approach is an approach to studying domination and change. It 'explicitly conceives of interactions between the state and societal actors in a way that seeks to avoid overt state-centredness' (p. 30). Ranko conceptualizes Gramsci's War of Position as the struggle between the regime and the MB to win over each other. The MB attempts to create societal hegemony by winning the hearts and minds of the people, while the regime aims to contain the credibility and attractiveness of the MB through disseminating a negative 'counter-picture' of the movement (pp. 32–33).

The struggle of the MB and the Mubarak regime is discussed in four phases. In each, the author discusses the material features of the War of Position, the ideational aspects of MB and finally how the MB's behaviour and ideology have developed in the light of the material and

which they can impose the political exchanges to their regional branches. This notwithstanding, Field convincingly shows how her framework can be applied cross nationally beyond the book's main case study, in both unitary and decentralized states. All in all, this work stands as a vital contribution to the scholarship of coalition politics and multilevel politics, contributes to key debates in both fields, and provides an insightful and comprehensive framework for furthering their study.

ideational struggle with the regime. In the first phase (1981–1987), at a material level, the MB participated effectively in the Egyptian professional syndicates and engaged successfully in the social and welfare institutions that raised its popularity. The regime's propaganda, therefore, portrayed the movement as a noble actor in the religious-cultural realm but incapable in the political realm. The MB portrayed itself as a moderate movement and presented itself as a 'wannabe counsellor' to the state in cultural and religious affairs (p. 107).

In the second phase (1987–1995), the relationship between the two rivals became increasingly confrontational, as the movement became the largest opposition in Egypt. The movement transitioned from portraying itself as the regime's counsellor to the political opposition. The increasing influence of the MB, therefore, provoked the regime which, in turn, set out several measures to curb the movement's influence. The state attempted to disseminate a tarnishing image of the MB and focused its discourse on portraying the movement as 'the enemy of the nation' and 'a threat to national security' (p. 122). However, all of the state's measures that were aimed at curbing the movement's success, and to discredit it in the public eye, failed. Thus, in the third phase (1995–2000), the regime resorted to repression and entirely excluded the MB from governmental institutions and civil society.

In the last period (2000–2011), the regime gradually lifted the restrictions they imposed on opposition parties due to internal and external pressure (especially in the context of the United States' Greater Middle East Initiative). This gradually helped the MB to achieve an extraordinary presence in both civil society and parliament that made the movement the most influential organized opposition force in Egypt. Therefore, 'when the state began to revive its narrative of the Brotherhood as the enemy of the nation, the Brothers set out to counteract this with an alternative narrative' of their own. Moreover, the movement alleged that the regime 'was the actual foe of the nation and which posed an acute threat to Egypt's national security' (p. 155). The MB portrayed itself as the force that was able to deliver the political reform.

Ranko argues that, as a rejoinder to the highly negative image that the state drew of the MB, it attempted to present itself as a non-violent and moderate movement which is in line with legal political framework. The group, therefore, increasingly engaged with and accepted many liberal democratic tenets such as party pluralism and rotation of power through elections. Wickham (2013), however, maintains that the MB not only accepted such tenets but also adopted them as part of its agenda which induced change in the movement's rhetoric and behaviour. Wickham believes that political participation generated new actual behavioural and ideational patterns inside the MB, such as toning down their obligation and adherence to the application of sharia.

In the last chapter, Ranko suggests that because of Mursi's fall and the MB's exclusion in 2013, there is evidence that the MB's War of Position had not been fruitful as they had failed to establish 'hegemony' or 'intellectual leadership' over the Egyptians (p. 199). The book ends, however, by stressing that it is vital for the MB to maintain its popularity by portraying itself as a moderate and non-violent movement. It also warns that the longer the exclusion and repression period continues the potential for radicalization only increases. Accordingly, it advises that a potential MB radicalization can be avoided by including the movement in the political sphere 'while simultaneously subjecting it to a critical media discourse' (p.201). This, in turn, would keep it striving to maintain its popularity through presenting itself as a non-violent moderate group (p. 201). However, one could challenge this suggestion as the regime's accommodation policy towards the MB did not curb their quest for power. On the contrary, it shielded them while disseminating and gaining more popular support, highlighted in the outcome at the ballot box.

However, the book fails to provide an explanation as to why it is important to us as readers to know how the MB portrayed itself during Mubarak's era. Nevertheless, I argue that understanding how the MB portrays itself would partially explain its success in gaining and maintaining popular support. Yet, the weakest part of the book is its methodology. We are told in the methods section (1.5) that the study relies on interviews and content analysis. Bearing in mind that the main objective of the study is to analyse how the MB portrayed itself against the regime, it is questionable what the interviews add to the study. It is also unclear what criteria were employed to choose the interviewees and it appears that the interviews were conducted

randomly without any rigorous explanation. In addition, all the interviews are anonymous (the list of the interviewees includes experts on the MB and Egyptian politics (eight people), non-MB opposition activists (three people), representatives of the Mubarak regime (two), ex-members of the MB (four) and members of the MB's top leadership (four), parliamentarians (two) and youth/MB website management (one)), which means that as readers we do not know how credible these sources are and to what extent they are familiar with the MB's politics. Moreover, and more importantly, nothing about the ethical approval process is mentioned.

Regarding the use of content analysis, many issues also arise. First, the section provides nothing about the data corpora sample or if a census of all materials was used. Second, nothing was mentioned about that unit of analysis either. Third, in qualitative content analysis, researchers can support the trustworthiness of their study by reporting the process of the method accurately; however, we find no such explanation. Fourth, because meaning is subjective and a single piece of text can be interpreted differently by different scholars, a certain reliability coefficient is needed but nothing is revealed about this either.

There is also a real lack of rigour in referencing other sources, which consequently paints some of the interview findings as unique rather than additional evidence. For example, on page 69, it is mentioned that Anwar al-Sadat's signing of the peace treaty with Israel in 1979 was a landmark in his relationship with Islamists and this eventually motivated the Islamist group al-Jihad to assassinate him (p. 54). She cited this from her interview with ex-member of al-Gamaa al-Islamiya in 2010. Such information is available in the literature and has been repeated for decades.

Despite the methodological issues discussed above, overall it is a good book for understanding the War of Position between the regime and the MB and in predicting the shape of the future relationship between the MB and the Egyptian regime. That said, while the book's main objective is to analyse the way the MB presented itself to the public, the sections that deal with this issue receive less attention due to the major focus of the analysis centring on the War of Position between the state and the MB.

Reference

Wickham CR (2013) *The Muslim Brotherhood: Evolution of an Islamist Movement*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.