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# MB, Sisi's Favorite Scapegoat 7 Years of Deception

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## MB, Sisi's Favorite Scapegoat – 7 Years of Deception

Asmaa Shokr

Since its inception, the military regime in Egypt has relied for its survival on adopting a strategy of exaggerating antagonism against the Muslim Brotherhood. From the era of Gamal Abdel Nasser, through the era of Anwar Sadat and then Hosni Mubarak, up to the era of Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi, the Muslim Brotherhood has been stigmatized as 'enemies of religion and the homeland' and accused of seeking to destroy the State, in addition to other allegations that have escalated during the era of Sisi, since he has overthrown Egypt's first democratically elected civilian president in 2013.

In one way or another, the military regime in Egypt has greatly succeeded in demonization of the Brotherhood, especially after the July 2013 coup, making the group a scarecrow to deflect attention from real crises and problems and delay any talk about or demands for respecting human rights; adopting democratic mechanisms and transfer of power; calling for justice, freedom and equality; or discussing the economic situation and fighting corruption – as these issues are all postponed until the phantom battle with that illusionary enemy ends.

Therefore, the group has become the military regime's only scapegoat it uses to justify its failures. Although this has become apparent both internally and externally, the regime continues to use it in addressing various crises, always blaming the Brotherhood for its mistakes.

### Key crises the regime blames Brotherhood for:

#### The fall of Andalusia!!

After the military coup of July 3, 2013, TV presenter Mohamed Al-Gheiti said in a program on one of the Egyptian official TV channels, that the Brotherhood of "Bani Amer" were behind the fall of Andalusia about 5 centuries ago, and that the Muslim Brotherhood today will be the main cause of the fall of Islamic nation in the twenty-first century!

Although the fall of Andalusia was 526 years ago, and the inception of the Muslim Brotherhood was less than a hundred years ago, the pro-regime mouthpieces idiotically promote that the Brotherhood had been behind the fall of Andalusia hundreds of years before the group was founded.

## Water poisoning

In April 2015, a state of panic and anxiety prevailed in Egypt after 500 tons of phosphate were spilled in the River Nile when a ship affiliated with the Armed Forces capsized in Egypt's southern Qena governorate (after it crashed into the Dndara bridge), and petroleum materials leaked into drinking water in Alexandria Governorate.

At that time, Dr. Mokhtar Gomaa, the Egyptian Minister of Wakfs (endowments), accused the Muslim Brotherhood of poisoning the Nile waters, without providing any proof to support this allegation. "The Brotherhood's criminal actions targeting the essentials of life at home... their attempts to poison the Nile water ... are unbearable betrayal and a crime against humanity," Gomaa claimed.

## New Zealand Massacre

On March 15, 2019, the New Zealand city of Christchurch witnessed a horrific massacre, where 51 people were killed and 50 injured in mass shootings at two mosques in a carefully planned and unprecedented atrocity

Although the 28-year-old Australian Brenton Tarrant, who espouses extremist white supremacist ideas, was charged with committing the massacre, however, the Egyptian media had another view. An anchor on the Egyptian government-owned television surprised viewers by asking a guest on the phone whether he believed that the presence of political opposition refugees belonging to the Muslim Brotherhood in New Zealand was the reason behind inciting the right-wing movement to carry out the terrorist attack in Christchurch. But the funniest thing was that her guest, a former senior officer in the Egyptian army, replied, "Undoubtedly!"

Also, Major General Nasr Salem, director of the Egyptian military Intelligence, said he does not believe there is a difference between the Muslim Brotherhood, to which the former Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi belonged, and ISIS, although ISIS considers members of the Brotherhood as infidels! However, Salem added: "If the Muslim Brotherhood members really traveled to New Zealand and established activities there, then this is an indicator that there is an anti-Islam party backing the group!"

## Crocodiles in the Nile waters

In 2016, social media activists shared a video clip monitoring the emergence of a crocodile in the Ismailia Canal in Mostorod area, Matareya district of Cairo Governorate while a number of citizens were gathering in front of a strange object in the canal water.

On Sunday 31 January 2016, Prosecutor General Nabil Sadiq received a communication (No. 1226 of 2016) from the Egypt Protection Front, which is closely related to the Egyptian security services, against the Muslim Brotherhood's general guide, Dr. Mohamed Badie (who has been in prison), accusing the Brotherhood of throwing crocodiles in the Nile waters, with the aim of spreading fear and dismay among Egyptians, and harming the Sisi regime. The communication filed to the Prosecutor General attributed the causes "to the fact that most of the employees in charge of the Ismailia and El Mariotia canals belong to the Muslim Brotherhood"!

## Blocking sewage pipes

On November 6, 2015, the Egyptian Ministry of Interior announced the arrest of 17 members of the Muslim Brotherhood in Alexandria, accusing them of causing floods (due to heavy rain over several days) in the coastal city, through "blocking sewage pipes and throwing concrete mixtures inside them to impede the discharge of water ... and creating a state of mass discontent against the existing regime".

## Overpopulation

In 2019, Amr Hassan, the rapporteur of the National Population Council (NPC), said that the events of 2011 (Jan. revolution) affected the overpopulation and the birth rate in Egypt, noting that the Muslim Brotherhood was the main cause of the population explosion due to their lack of belief in the idea of birth control and promotion of childbearing during their rule, without providing evidence to support his claims.

## Al-Warraq Crisis

Although the Warraq Island crisis is a social crisis of the first degree, between the people of the island and the regime, in light of the government's desire to control the island and sell it to investors; however, people's refusal to hand over the island and their resistance to the police and army forces pushed the Sisi regime to exploit the Muslim Brotherhood's scarecrow. The Egyptian authorities

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accused the Brotherhood of standing behind this crisis (although almost all of the group's leaders and most of its members have been in prison since the 2013 military coup).

## Coronavirus

After the government's failure to control the coronavirus crisis in Egypt, the pro-regime media outlets and figures launched a severe attack on the doctors that announced their resignation in protest against lack of care from the regime, accusing them of belonging to the Muslim Brotherhood. Some of these media outlets even went further by adding more accusations: such as treason and abandoning responsibility, demanding doctors to act like police and army officers and soldiers who maintain their work despite the armed attacks they are exposed to.

## Shubra El-Bahou events

In April 2020, residents of Shubra al-Bahou village, Aga, Dakahlia Governorate, refused the burial of Dr. Sonia Abdel Azim, who died from the coronavirus. Dr. Sonia, 64, passed away at Abu Khalifa isolation hospital in Ismailia, and her body was transferred to her late husband's grave-site in Shubra al-Bahou village for burial, before it was denied by angry villagers who expressed concern that the body would spread the infection. However, the security forces later dispersed the protesters and allowed the deceased doctor's burial.

Instead of blaming those responsible for this shameful act, the Ministry of Interior issued a statement, accusing the Brotherhood of being behind the events, an allegations which was intensively covered by the pro-regime media outlets to defame the group, the regime's favorite scapegoat.

## Conclusion

The military regime in Egypt will not stop using the Muslim Brotherhood as a scapegoat to justify its failure, and a scarecrow to spread fear and panic among people to stop any demands for change and push the Egyptian people to accept all the decisions, policies and practices of the authoritarian regime, no matter how unjust they are. In this way, the people will never think about holding the regime accountable, because all these issues are postponed until the phantom war that the regime is promoting ends. Therefore, the military regime believes that its survival mainly relies on intimidating the people as the only way to subjugate them and drive them to believe everything said to them.

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Despite the failure of the military regime to run the country for more than sixty years, it still blames the Muslim Brotherhood in attempt to justify its failure, as if the Brotherhood were ruling the country from the time of Nasser until the era of Sisi.

The media loyal to the ruling regime in Egypt which largely defend its policies, play a pivotal role in directing the public opinion to ensure survival of the regime, noting that the pro-Sisi media follow the same policy that was adopted during the era of Nasser.

However, the attempts by Sisi's media arms proved to be unsuccessful. After blaming the Brotherhood for the crisis suffered by doctors, the Doctors Syndicate hold the Ministry of Health responsible for the suffering of doctors during the last period. The syndicate said in a statement, "Unfortunately, cases of failure of the Ministry of Health to fulfill its duty towards protecting doctors have been recurrent...".

The Egyptian regime's use of the Muslim Brotherhood as a scapegoat, blaming them for the government's failure to control the coronavirus crisis strongly indicates that the whole matter is out of control, and that the crisis is expected to further deteriorate in the coming days.