

Chapter III Performance of Rural Notables in the Egyptian Parliament in a Multiparty System

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Introduction

In the Egyptian parliament, there are rural notables that have occupied the seats of parliament in the same electoral district over generations—from the monarchical period until now. For a long time, the Egyptian parliament was occupied by hereditary members of the parliament from specific parliament families. These families have been called “parliamentary families” (“*usra barlamāniyya*” in the Arabic language), and have always been the main actors in modern Egyptian politics. The expression “parliamentary family” has been used or heard largely in the discourse of social political sciences, and also the term is widely acknowledged by Egyptians. These families have changed their political positions quite flexibly, according to the changes in regimes and administrations; they also survived the political changes enacted by Nasser (Jamāl al-Dīn Nāṣir), justified the July revolution of 1952, by impeding the removal of “feudalism,” which the rural notables were largely responsible for upholding. They managed to keep their positions by maintaining networks of their own families or alliances via marriage with other influential rural notables. Nevertheless, even though such families are mentioned frequently in Egyptian politics, the concept of “parliamentary families” has not been defined until now and researchers have used the expression in their own manner.

In this article, I focus on the parliament families, which have been contributing members of their family to the parliament (MPs) since the monarchical period until the Mubarak (Muḥammad Ḥusnī Mubārak) regime. I attempt to shed light on how such families integrate into the autocratic system as well as their roles that have been fulfilled in order to support successive administrations.

1. Parliamentary Families in the Egyptian Parliament

In this section I define the concept of the parliamentary family and discuss its experience of the Nasser and Sadat (Muḥammad Anwar al-Sādāt) regime before the introduction of the multiparty system.

1.1. Definition of Parliamentary Families

To define what parliamentary families are, I focused on the parliament from 1924 to 2000.¹ There were ten parliaments from 1924 to the July revolution and twelve subsequently until 2000. I defined the parliamentary family, the family which has won the seats before the revolution, more than 3 times and after the revolution more than twice. As for after the revolution, in order to attach importance to the continuation of the same lineage, parliamentary families need to have a seat at least once in parliament during the Mubarak era. Adopting this definition, eighty-eight families have been regarded as parliamentary families. These eighty-eight spread all over Egypt except in the desert area, but relatively many families are concentrated in central and southern Egypt. As for the composition of such families before the revolution, most parliamentary families consist of large landowners. Although different professions are represented in the parliament, parliamentary families can be distinguished as big landowners from middle landowners. As Baraka has pointed out,² the parliament tended to be dominated by big landowners.

1.2. Parliamentary Families under Monarchy

In Egypt, the long-term occupation of seats is not a phenomenon unique to the autocratic regime; instead, it is a phenomenon that has been observed from the very beginning of the history of parliaments. The family names observable in the first parliament of 1866 can also be seen in the current list of MPs. However, during 1866 to 1923, when the first parliament was established and independence from British occupation, this phenomenon was more or less limited with respect to its frequency of occurrence and spread. It was after 1923 that the Wafd Party of Sa'd Zaghlūl and the anti-Wafd were the helm of the state by turn, that the phenomenon became common all over Egypt, from Aswan (Aswān) to Alexandria (al-Iskandariyya). To be precise, the portion of hereditary MPs in a single parliament increased in the 1930s when the political struggles between the Wafd and the other parties over in charge of the government intensified.

1.3. Parliamentary Families after the 1952 Revolution

1.3.1. Nasser Era

¹ The names of MPs can be referred to the minutes of the Egyptian parliaments.

² Magda Baraka, *The Egyptian Upper Class between Revolutions 1919–1952* (Oxford: Ithaca Press, 1998), 250.

The circumstances around parliamentary families changed drastically in the July revolution of 1952. The revolutionary council abolished the monarchy and all political organizations, not to say that the political parties were forced to suspend their activities. And the urban and rural notables, big landowners and entrepreneurs, all of them were regarded as ruling class which symbolizes “feudalism” in the ancient regime and the revolutionary regime adopted the policy of oppression during the Nasser era. The new administrators did not exclude parliamentary families from being subject to the hardship, because parliamentary families constituted the crucial parts of the former Egyptian ruling class. Parliamentary families, especially the families that owned large expanses of land became the targets of the oppression. And as the inevitable result, most of the parliamentary families possessing large agricultural land were shut out of the new regime and lost their seats in the parliament, which they had kept for a long time.³

As for the middle landowners, they were not direct targets of Nasser’s oppression; instead, their influences were enlarged in the new political system by filling the huge vacancy that was created by the absence of the people in charge of administration and legislation under the new regime.

1.3.2. *Sadat Era*

The time of the political revival of the parliamentary families with large agricultural land was after Sadat took whole possession of the control. After Sadat took over the office subsequent to Nasser’s death, he encountered the predecessor’s unwelcome legacy. He encountered resistance from the enthusiastic ‘Alī Ṣabrī, Nasser’s right hand, as well as from leftist groups. Sadat succeeded in getting ‘Alī Ṣabrī and leftist groups out of his regime, by taking advantage of certain members of the old-ruling class, which felt a sense of lack of satisfaction with Nasser’s devotees.⁴ The old-ruling class including parliamentary families supported Sadat to regain political power that Nasser had deprived them of.⁵ Thus, he successfully expelled all activities of the anti-Sadat groups. Since then, parliamentary families

³ Suzuki Emi, “Ejiputo ni okeru gikai kazoku no keifu” エジプトにおける議会家族の系譜 (The lineage of parliamentary families in Egypt), in *Chūtō, Chūō Ajia shokoku ni okeru kenryoku kōzō: Shiitataka na kokka, honrō sareru shakai* 中東・中央アジア諸国における権力構造——したたかな国家・翻弄される社会 (Power structure in the Middle East and Central Asian countries: Society at the mercy of tough state), ed. Sakai Keiko 酒井啓子 and Aoyama Hiroyuki 青山弘之, *Ajia keizai kenkyūjo sōsho* アジア経済研究所叢書 1 (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten 岩波書店, 2005), 71–109. (This article is written in Japanese language)

⁴ Hamied Ansari, *Egypt: The Stalled Society* (Cairo: The American University Press in Cairo, 1986), 153–69.

⁵ Ibid.

have become the central actors that execute the roles of supporting the NDP-dominated system from the side of the legislation.

2. Formation of the NDP Structure: Introducing a Multiparty System

From this section onwards, I address parliamentary families under the multiparty system. Before turning to the performance of the parliamentary families, I explain the workings of the ruling party, as the National Democratic Party (NDP) gains incomparable power.

Since the end of the October war, Sadat began to address domestic issues. He announced the open-door policy, propelled the open economy on the one hand and started the introduction of a multiparty system on the other. In April 1974, Sadat referred to the possibilities of the transformation from the one-party to the multiparty system and established three kinds of political organizations (*minbar*) which represented the political stances within the Arab Socialist Union (ASU): *wasat* or the centrists, *yasār* or the leftists, and *yamīn* or the rightists.

Moreover, in 1977, a complete multiparty system was declared. Sadat let Mamdūḥ Sālīm be the head of the Arab Socialist Egyptian Party (Ḥizb Miṣr al-‘Arabī al-Ishṭirākī) as succession of *wasat*. Muṣṭafā Kāmil Murād of the right led the Liberal Party (Ḥizb al-Aḥrār). And from the left, the National Unionist Progressive Party (Ḥizb al-Tajammu‘), was formed under the leadership of Khālīd Muḥīy al-Dīn.

In February 1978, the New Wafd Party was approved under the leadership of Fu’ād Sirāj al-Dīn who was once the secretary general of the old Wafd Party before 1952. Since the old Wafd had constituted the most influential political entities organized by landowners and the single party that had branches in each prefecture of Egypt, the revolutionary government of Nasser targeted to dissolve and remove it from the new political system. The New Wafd was the first that the Sadat administration approved to form since they were dissolved in 1953.

However, once the New Wafd showed signs of organizing antiestablishment acts taking in the old-ruling class, Sadat, who was anxious of the raise, began to strengthen the regulation of the activities of the political parties. Sadat prohibited the party leader Fu’ād Sirāj al-Dīn from engaging in party activities and finally ordered the cessation of political activities of the New Wafd. It was said that Sadat, at the time of introducing a multiparty system, intended to give the inside and outside world the impression of political liberalization by approving the Wafd,⁶ which was considered to be a symbol of resistance to the British occupation in the time of

⁶ Ninette S. Fahmy, *The Politics of Egypt: State-Society Relationship* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2002), 61.

monarchy.

He thought that Wafd, a wreckage of the past, might not be a threat to his regime after more than two decades of its suspension. The reasons why Sadat converted the original policy and banned the Wafd again are considered as below.⁷ First, the party conference of New Wafd was the one supported by the old-ruling class contrary to Sadat's expectations; moreover, he considered the possibility that this power may be a threat to the regime in the near future.

Second, confronted with the food riot in 1977 and dysfunction of the Arab Socialist Egyptian Party with which Sadat had entrusted the responsibility for governance, Sadat felt it was necessary that a one-party system prevail again.

In July 1978, Sadat declared the dissolution of ASU and formation of a new party, instead of the Arab Socialist Egyptian Party in the anniversary speech of the July revolution. In August, the party was named the National Democratic Party (NDP) after the National Party of Muṣṭafā Kāmil, who had led the resistant movement to the British occupation in the beginning of 1900s. In September, the head of the Arab Socialist Egyptian Party resigned and as many as 250 party members joined to NDP.

In the parliamentary election of 1979, the NDP gained 347 seats among 390, paving the way of the formation of the NDP-dominated parliament. As for the parliamentary families, 39 candidates or 11.8 percent were elected. Among the 39, 33 belonged to the NDP. Here we notice that not all the members of the parliamentary families belonged to the NDP at the time of the formation of the NDP; however, in the course of time most of them joined the NDP.

Next year, in 1980, the first NDP general conference took place, where Sadat was nominated as the head of the party, Mubarak as the vice-head, and Fikrī Makram 'Ubayd as the secretary-general. People often describe the NDP as a successor of ASU due to the fact that its substance of hierarchy structure is almost as same as ASU. And as I mentioned above, within this political structure, the relationship between Sadat and the notables who were politically oppressed in the Nasser era gradually intensified.

Though it is said that the notables in the ruling party was not influential enough to affect the remaining substance of ASU,⁸ the distinction between the government, the NDP, and the parliament became ambiguous.

3. Notable Families after the Introduction of the Multiparty System

In the present parliament the NDP occupies about 80 percent of the seats—that is,

⁷ Fahmy, *The Politics of Egypt*, 193.

⁸ Ansari, *Egypt*, 153–69.

the Egyptian legislative organ is under the defector dictatorship. However, in the beginning of the multiparty system of 1976, the possibilities for increasing the portion of the opposition parties in the parliament was not none. In due time, through elections, the chances of gaining vital positions in the parliament decreased progressively, and the role with which successive administrations entrusted the parliament came to be limited to passing the law draft presented by the NDP executives and giving the passed laws legitimacy in the name of the people. Eventually, people regarded the parliaments as the places wherein the pre-established harmony have always been observed.

3.1. New Wafd and Notable Families

Considering the party to which the notable MPs are belonging, we have to pay attention to the relationship between the New Wafd and notable families who were traditionally affiliated with the old Wafd. Although the New Wafd is a different from the old one, as Fu'ād Sirāj al-Dīn, one of the leaders of the old Wafd, is taking the post of the party's head as in the monarchal era, several present supporters hail from the wealthy class of landowners.⁹ Another person who symbolize the continuation of New Wafd with the old is Ḥusām Badrāwī. He is also from the prominent notable family and a grandson of both Fu'ād Sirāj al-Dīn and Badrāwī 'Āshūr, who owned the enormous expanse of land next to the king of Egypt before the 1952 revolution. This example might be an extreme one that represents the bourgeoisie of the Wafd, but it is true that many old-time landowners felt sympathy to the party that held up the name of the Wafd. Many are inclined to think that until now, traditional landowner families are inclined toward supporting the New Wafd. However, in reality, the Wafd is losing its popularity from the old supporters rapidly except for certain core members who are always on the side of Wafd. At present, most of the rural landowners, who are considered to be the main supporter and also used to stand as candidates from the Wafd, are joining the NDP.

In considering the tendency of the parliamentary families' belonging to the political parties, it is important to emphasize that the MPs before the revolution were not bound by the party to which they belonged; rather, they were frequently changed parties. Certain questions are worth asking. What happened to parliamentary families in the Nasser regime when all political parties were dissolved and none existed except the ruling organization? Why did most notable families that supported the Wafd before the revolution turn out to be supporters of the NDP, although the Wafd was led by the same leader as that during the monarchy? The

⁹ Raymond A. Hinnebusch, "From Nasir to Sadat: Elite Transformation in Egypt," *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies* 8, no. 1 (Fall 1983): 84–93.

following may be considered to be the reasons.

First, almost all the notable families, especially those that had yielded MPs over generations, were already integrated into the one-party system of ASU, during the Nasser and Sadat regimes. Therefore, it was no wonder even for notable families to join the NDP and not the Wafd, once the multiparty system was introduced.

Second, from the beginning, Sadat's multiparty system intended to exclude the political power that had the potential to become an opponent to the government, such as the Wafd. The ground is that Sadat repeatedly arrested Fu'ād Sirāj al-Dīn and ordered the suspension of his political activities. In addition, three political organizations that were introduced as a precursor to the multiparty system did not include Wafd, and just about six months after the approval of the Wafd formation in February 1978, party activities were banned following the arrest of its leader Fu'ād Sirāj al-Dīn. In the election of 1979, without the leader, Wafd participated in it, encountering several obstacles. All of Sadat's actions against the Wafd drove it into a disadvantageous situation in regard to collecting supporters.

Third, the election policy of Wafd in the 1980s accelerated the alienation of the old supporters. It is true that among the old Wafdists from the notable families, there were some who belonged to the NDP from the beginning; however, there were certain families that strongly supported the Wafd. However, the tide turned unfavorably for Wafd, once the new election system was introduced in the election of 1979. This system stipulated that the parties that failed to acquire more than 8 percent of all votes lose the right to send MPs to the parliament. This clause of elimination confused the election policy of Wafd. In order to avoid the absence in the parliament, the leaders chose an unexpected measure. That entailed forming an alliance with the Muslim Brotherhood in the 1984 election. These two organizations were incompatible with each other from their political point of view. Wafd had been emphasizing more or less the secular trend, and Muslim Brotherhood was of course an organization based on the religion of Islam. Because all political activities of the Muslim Brotherhood were severely banned by Article 4 of the Law No. 40 of 1977 (Law of Political Parties),¹⁰ the members have been running for the election in the capacity of the independent.

Although in the election of 1987, Wafd broke the alliance with the Muslim Brotherhood, it could not prevent the estrangement of the old Wafdist, which resulted in a greater loss of trust. Further, boycotting the election of 1990 drove the Wafd to the corner even further, which consequently lost the opportunity to establish itself as the main opposition inside the parliament. Such an absence in the parliament

¹⁰ By the amendment of the Egyptian Constitution in 2007, this article was stipulated not only in the Law No. 40 of 1977, but in the constitution as well. It means that even the ruling of the Supreme Constitutional Court can not legalize the activities of the religious organizations, because the court is not authorized to issue the ruling concerning the constitution.

spurred further detachment from the party among the old Wafdists. The Ḥamādī family of Sohag (Sūhāj) is an example of notable families that sent Wafdist MPs to several parliaments before the revolution. In the 1980s, although Aḥmad Ḥamādī, the Wafdist MP, had a seat in both the 1984 and 1987 parliaments, he stood as a NDP candidate in 1990 election and was elected. Afterward in his comment, he attributed the reason for leaving the Wafd to the alliance with the Muslim Brotherhood in the 1984 election.¹¹ The Ṭaṭṭāwī family of El Faiyum (al-Fayyūm) was a family that sent some MPs as both Wafdist and non-Wafdist members, before the 1952 revolution. Aḥmad Ṭaṭṭāwī, without joining the NDP at the time of its establishment, became the MP of the Arab Socialist Egyptian Party, immediately after most members left it and joined the NDP. Subsequently, he left the Arab Socialist Egyptian Party and joined the Wafd; he also seceded from Wafd for the same reason as Aḥmad Ḥamādī. Further, Aḥmad Nabīl Abū Sa'ūd, a former Wafdist, from the Abū Sa'ūd family of El Faiyum, display the same reason for leaving the Wafd.

Thus, in addition to that Wafd had a character of limited support from the landowners, many notable families of landowners abandoned the Wafd. However, there was a time to get wider support from the public.

Aḥmad Yūnis, the leader of the federation of agricultural associations in the Sadat era, attempted to make these organizations more independent from state intervention, in order to render the agricultural policy more favorable to the people who engage in agricultural management. To implement this policy, Yūnis tried to make agricultural associations vote for the Wafd so that the Wafd could become a strong opponent to the NDP,¹² which, at the time, was adopting a policy that was favorable to farmers rather than landowners. This attempt failed when Sadat removed Yūnis from his position. However, it is noteworthy that the Wafd was regarded as a source of political power that had the potential to be the main opposition in the parliament at the time of the introduction of the multiparty system.

We can be fairly certain that there was the possibility for the Wafd to develop as a main party, considering that it gained the backing of a specific class to a certain extent. Being affected by policy failures in the 1980s, Wafd lost its popularity and consequently, seats in the parliament throughout 1990s. Moreover, the difficult period for the Wafd did not end and in 1999 Fu'ād Sirāj al-Dīn, the leader and symbol of the party, passed away and internal conflicts over the position of the leader broke out. As a result, people were alienated from the Wafd even more quickly, among the remaining old Wafdists, and in the 2000 parliament election, the situation aggravated for Wafd as it acquired merely seven seats.

¹¹ Maḥmūd Nafādī, *Nuwwāb Miṣr 2000* (Representative of Egypt in 2000) (Cairo, 1996), 94.

¹² Fahmy, *The Politics of Egypt*, 210.

Further, incidents occurred recently that have given another blow to Wafd. Ayman Nūr, considered to be a future leader, left the party after losing a battle with Nu‘mān Jum‘a over the post of a new leader. Consequently, Nūr set out to form a new party, the Ghadd Party (Tomorrow Party), in 2004 and requested for establishing the new party, which was approved by the Political Party Committee affiliated to the Consultative Assembly (Majlis al-Shūrā). This drove the younger generations of Wafd to leave the party and join Nūr’s party.

3.2. Relationship between Parliamentary Families and the NDP

At this point, I want to clarify the actual relationship between parliamentary families and the NDP (to be precise—the top-level executives at the NDP). It is not easy to analyze this accurately; however, the indicator of whether they were able to acquire official recognition of the party candidate during the time of the election is available. In Egypt, there has been a phenomenon wherein most elected independent candidates change their belonging from independent to the NDP, immediately after the election. This tendency became more conspicuous after 1990. And we can see among those who joined NDP from independent, some names of the parliamentary families. For example, in the election of 1990, in a certain electoral district, there was a family which had occupied seats nearly all the elections during the 20th century. A member of the family stood as a independent and as soon as he won, he joined NDP. Parliamentary families, which keep the seats for a long period, have strong supports from their electorate. From this example, we can understand that not all the parliamentary families can get official recognition from the NDP executives.

On the other hand, there are parliamentary families that always obtain official recognition in every election and are appointed to important posts in the NDP. In the Egyptian elections, although most of those elected win in a runoff, not in the first vote, the families mentioned above were mostly elected by an overwhelming majority in the first vote. These include Kamāl al-Shāzli, a member of the Political Bureau of the NDP, Yūsuf Buṭrus Ghālī, minister of finance, and Yūsuf Walī, a member of the Political Bureau of the NDP and the vice prime minister for about two decades.

After all, we can say that the relationship between parliamentary families and NDP executives varies from family to family, and it is hard to describe distinctive common features as a whole. However, at least it is clear that these families are not opponents of the NDP in an active sense. That is to say, the political elites possessed a weak sense of belonging to the political parties. The view of the Mubarak administration toward the multiparty system is shown in the words of Yūsuf Walī: The political opposition does not exist in Egypt.¹³

¹³ Interview to Yūsuf Walī (April 2002).

4. Roles of Parliamentary Families in the NDP Structure

What kind of roles do the NDP members from the parliamentary families play in the parliament? The most noteworthy feature of their party posts is represented by the number of important posts they occupy in parliament committees. There are eighteen committees in the parliament; the chairman and two vice-chairmen are elected within three days of the opening session.¹⁴ Many NDP members from the parliamentary families have served in a variety of executive posts in the committees up to the present. In the committees of the seventh parliament in 1995, we find 10 executives from the parliamentary families in seven committees. The members from the parliamentary families have occupied the positions in the following committees: economics, constitution and legislation, petition, agriculture and irrigation, youth, information and culture, education and science, and national defense. Of these committees, the Agriculture and Irrigation Committee is the one wherein the highest numbers of members of the parliamentary family have occupied high positions until the present. Since Egyptian rural society is highly dependant on agriculture; it is important that MPs to be reelected, give the local communities benefits in the field related to agriculture. That is why, a large number of MPs, regardless of the parties they belong, are affiliated to the Agriculture and Irrigation Committee. Their occupying of important posts in this committee enhanced their presence. In the course of time, MPs from the parliamentary families came to form power as to exert much influence on all MPs and the parliament management.

At this point, I would like to highlight the roles of the parliamentary committee and its substance. The bylaw of the parliament stipulates that the main function of the parliamentary committees are to create and to bring up bills for discussion, and to supervise the activities of the government. In reality, the committees do not take the initiative in preparing a legal draft.¹⁵ The actual tasks of the committees are as follows: inquiry into the bill before putting it on the agenda and coordination of the meeting between the NDP executives, the administration, and each opposition parties. As mentioned earlier, in a complete session organized twice a week, MPs are liable to give the highest priority to the issues which might attract their own constituencies' concern, and rarely put much importance on the revision of bills. Moreover, as the term "MP in name only" indicates, a large number of absent MPs in the full session become a subject of discussion.

In the parliamentary committees, which are the pivot in parliamentary activi-

¹⁴ *Majlis al-Sha'b al-Lā'iha al-Dākhiliyya* (Bylaw of the People's Assembly) (Cairo: Jumhūriyyat Miṣr al-'Arabiyya, 2000), article 11.

¹⁵ Waheed Abdel Maguid, ed., *The Nature of Parliamentary Performance for Members of Parliament: Mechanism and Obstacles Field Study* (Cairo: Group for Democratic Development, Parliament Watch Program, 1998), 57.

ties, their important positions are nominated by the NDP executives before the committee election.¹⁶ Therefore, all positions within the parliamentary committees are generally regarded as managerial posts of the NDP. That is to say, most posts within the parliament are influenced by NDP decisions.¹⁷

The point I would like to emphasize is that NDP's nominations of parliamentary families for high positions in the parliament have a crucial meaning. Parliamentary families traditionally engaged in parliamentary management account for high positions all along. It seems that the Mubarak administration has been trying to pass the bill that is expected to encounter significant difficulties in the process of enactment by nominating the MPs from parliamentary families as committee chairman and vice-chairman. In short, by appointing MPs from notables such as the parliamentary families to the NDP's core members, the government encourages them to pass the bill. Moreover, in rural societies, parliamentary families' successive ruling enabled the NDP to execute its policy instead of that of the government.

The situation of Egyptian parliament that is occupied by the MPs interest in agricultural matters and that MPs are mainly discussing agricultural issues, has been observed before the 1952 revolution. Though Nasser expelled the old-ruling class, including big landowners and industrial capitalists, those who Sadat tried to revive the personal expelled by the Nasser regime are substantially different. Sadat, on the other hand, controlled the parliament management smoothly by appointing two MPs and agricultural experts from parliamentary families to important positions. One was Sayyid Mar'ī and the other, Muḥammad Abū Wafī'a; both are connected to the Sadat family by building a kinship connection via marriage. Hinnebusch pointed out four elites that led the Sadat administration in the Sadat era: 'Uthmān Aḥmad 'Uthmān, the biggest contractor in Egypt; Sayyid Mar'ī, an agricultural expert who served as the minister of state (land reform); Muḥammad Abū Wafī'a, an arbitrator of MPs; and Mubarak, the incumbent president.¹⁸ The most important point is that among the four—Sayyid Mar'ī, who manipulated his network among rural notables, was appointed as a minister of agriculture in order to manage the parliament. This appointment strengthened the relation between the administration and the parliament.

Instead of the four, in the Mubarak era, the person who was in charge of man-

¹⁶ *Taqyīm Adwār In'aqād Majlis al-Sha'b: Dawr al-In'aqād al-Thānī min al-Faṣl al-Tashrī' al-Sābi'*, al-Taqrīr al-Sanawī al-Awwal (Evaluation of the roles of the People's Assembly: The second ordinary session in the seventh legislative term, First annual report) (Cairo: Jamā'at Tanmiyat al-Dīmuqrāṭiyya, Barnāmiḡ al-Marṣad al-Barlamānī, 1999).

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Raymond A. Hinnebusch, "Egypt under Sadat: Elite, Power Structure and Political Change in a Post-Populist State," *Social Problems: Official Journal of the Society for the Study of Social Problems* 28, no. 4 (April 1981): 446.

aging of the parliament was Yūsuf Walī, an agricultural expert like Sayyid Mar‘ī. Yūsuf Walī was also from the prominent parliamentary family in El Faiyum and in 1982, a year after Mubarak became the president, appointed as a minister of agriculture, and in 1985 he also held the post of secretary-general of the NDP. We can say that the NDP's domination over the parliament during the Mubarak era was further strengthened compared to the time of Sadat.

Considering the characteristics we have seen herein as NDP-leading legislation process and NDP-centered chain of administrative command, we can say that Mubarak's parliament policy is much more sustainable than that of Sadat.

In addition to Yūsuf Walī, the name of Abū Bakr al-Bāsil must be mentioned. He was the chairman of the Committee of Agriculture, hailed from the parliamentary family in El Faiyum, and played important roles in parliamentary management in the Mubarak era. Al-Bāsil's family was one of the most prominent landlords that represented El Faiyum and occupied all the seats in the same electoral district consecutively, since the parliament of 1924.

The most famous member of this parliamentary family is Muḥammad al-Bāsil, who was one of the founders of old Wafd Party and expelled to Malta with Sa'd Zaghlūl. According to the reports presented by the Feudalism Abolition Committee, the al-Bāsil family was made up of 154 members, forty-eight of which owned about 2,700 feddan of land and 15 were subject to the requisition of the land.¹⁹

Then, what is the reason for appointing these two MPs from the parliamentary family? What should be noticed is that they are both from the El Faiyum Prefecture. El Faiyum is highly dependant on the agriculture and about 72 percent of its population are engaged in the agricultural sector.²⁰ Some parliamentary families have traditionally dominated most of the parliamentary seats. To pass bills without interruption, it was very natural for Mubarak to let the persons who function in both the NDP and parliament assume the post of the minister of agriculture, chairman of the Committee of Agriculture, and the NDP secretary-general, in order to get MPs from all over Egypt together and coordinate the parliament. As agricultural issues were mainly discussed in the parliament, Yūsuf Walī, minister of agriculture and the NDP secretary-general attended the parliamentary session and committees most frequently of all the ministries.²¹ After the session or committees, many MPs crowd-

¹⁹ Muḥammad Rashād, *Sirrī Jiddan min Milaffāt al-Lajna al-'Ulyā li-Taṣfiyat al-Iqtā'* (Top secret of the dossier of the Higher Committee for the Liquidation of Feudalism) (Cairo: Dār al-Ta'āwun li-l-Ṭab' wa-l-Nashr, 1977), 292.

²⁰ Muḥammad 'Abd al-Raḥman al-Sharnūbī and Muḥammad Kamāl Luṭfī, *Muḥāfaẓat al-Fayyūm* (The Fayoum Prefecture) (Cairo: al-Majlis al-A'lā li-l-Thaqāfa, Lajnat al-Jughrāfiyā, 1997), 72.

²¹ Ali El-Sawi, ed., *Assessment of the Performance of the People's Assembly: The 4th Legislative Session of the 7th Chapter 1998/1999*, Summary Report (Cairo: The Group for Democratic Development, 1999), 16.

ed around him in pursuit of mediation and arbitration.²² Although the task of mediation or arbitration is not written in the party platform, it is considered to be one of the most important roles of a NDP secretary general.

The following results were obtained: the NDP executives needed people like Walī and al-Bāsil who could connect the parliament and NDP.

5. Sign of Losing Political Power of the Rural Notables

Although the parliamentary families still maintain a stable presence both in central and local politics until now, they are losing the power to collect votes from their own constituency in recent years—that is, the number of parliamentary families that can be elected is falling every year. This tendency has become more prominent after the 2000 election. The number elected from parliamentary families varies according to prefecture and region. There are 33 parliamentary families in the Delta area, and 44 in central and southern Egypt. As parliamentary families are holding on to their seats for some generations, they have much a greater advantage than newcomers that wish to stand as candidates. However, the ratio of parliamentary families that can be elected is declining in the Mubarak era. For example, in the 2000 election, in the Delta area, sixteen families stood as candidates, of which, only nine were elected. Indeed, the ratio of the decrease in those elected in Buheira (al-Buḥayra) is outstanding among all. In central and southern Egypt, even though the number of those elected is relatively high compared to the Delta area, it is also decreasing every election. In the 2000 election, 26 families of 44 stood as candidates, and 15 of 26 were elected.

One reason for the decrease is that their power of collecting votes weakened. The constituents are coming to vote of their own free will without being affected by those in power, in most cases of parliamentary families. The point which could be observed is that the relevance of the ratio of the parliamentary families to be elected and the members of Muslim Brotherhood. At this point, there is not sufficient evidence to decide they are mutually related, but at least it seems likely that they have contradictory interests. The reason for this is that in recent elections, in the area where Muslim Brotherhood succeeded remarkably, candidates of parliamentary families lose their seats on the contrary.²³

²² Fārūq Fahmī, *Al-Wuzarā'...Nuwwāb fī Majlis al-Sha'b* (Representatives in the People's Assembly) (Cairo: Dār al-Taḥrīr li-l-Ṭab' wa-l-Nashr, 1995), 15.

²³ Suzuki Emi, “2000 nen Ejiputo jimmin gikai senkyo: Mushozoku kōho tōsen genshō ni miru yotō, kokumin minshu tō hihan” 2000年エジプト人民議会選挙——無所属候補当選現象にみる与党・国民民主党批判 (The Egyptian parliament election in 2000: Critical voters and independents' victories), *Gendai no Chūtō* 現代の中東 (The contemporary Middle East) 31 (2001): 47–48.

At this point, I want to highlight the prefecture wherein the Muslim Brotherhood won seats. Although there is not enough data for analyzing the election policy of this organization, each prefecture has its own tendency. In the 1984 election, in which the Muslim Brotherhood participated in alliance with Wafd, candidates of the alliance included twelve members of the Muslim Brotherhood of which ten won seats. These twelve members contended the election in the following prefectures: Cairo (al-Qāhira) 2, Alexandria 3, Gharbiya (al-Gharbiyya) 2, Ismailia (al-Ismā'īliyya) 1, Giza (al-Jīza) 3, and Beni Suef (Banī Suwayf) 1. This shows that there is substantial support in large cities like Cairo, Giza, and Alexandria, on the other hand in rural area especially southern Egypt they get little support, or at least they were not able to stand as a candidate in 1984. As for Beni Suef, the candidate contested the election in the Beni Suef city, not very far from the Giza. It might be suitable to regard this electoral district as a suburb of the city, not a rural area. In the 2000 election, the Muslim Brotherhood won 17 seats. The tendencies of places are as same as 1984,²⁴ that is, Cairo 4, Alexandria 3, Gharbiya 5, Sharqiya (al-Sharqiyya) 3 and each from Buheira, Damietta (Dimyāt), Port Said (Būr Sa'īd), Giza, and El Faiyum. The elected are mainly in the cities not southern Egypt. The common tendency among these prefectures is that they are highly dependant on the industries. In sum, it seems that the Muslim Brotherhood has a stronghold in the cities rather than villages or rural areas.²⁵

On the other hand, the ratio of the victory of parliamentary families mentioned above are stuck at the bottom inverse proportion to the Muslim Brotherhood. The number of those elected from the parliamentary families in the Delta area is much less than those in central and southern Egypt. In the Delta area, in the 1995 and 2000 elections, although nobody from these families won, five of ten from the Muslim Brotherhood, 50 percent of its candidates, could get seats, regardless of disturbance caused by the authority. This winning percentage of the Muslim Brotherhood is highest in Egypt.

Then, what would be the reason for the relative weakness of the Muslim Brotherhood in the elections in central and southern Egypt? Here I have to emphasize that weakness in the elections never means that they are not active in the regions; instead, there are considerable supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood in these areas. These became obvious after the 2005 election where the name of the

²⁴ Suzuki, "2000 nen Ejiputo jimmin gikai senkyo," 55.

²⁵ Hudā Rāghib 'Awaḍ and Ḥasanayn Tawfīq Ibrāhīm, *Al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn wa-l-Siyāsa fī Miṣr: Dīrāsa fī al-Taḥālufāt al-Intikhābiyya wa-l-Mumārasāt al-Barlamāniyya li-l-Ikhwān al-Muslimīn fī Zill al-Ta'addudiyya al-Siyāsiyya al-Muqayyada (1984–1990)* (The Muslim Brotherhood and politics in Egypt: Research on the electoral alliances and parliamentary performance toward the Muslim Brotherhood under the restricted political pluralism [1984–1990]) (Cairo: Markaz al-Maḥrūsa li-l-Buḥūth wa-l-Tadrīb wa-l-Nashr, 1995), 160.

Muslim Brotherhood or its slogan “Islam is the solution” in Arabic *al-Islām huwa al-ḥall*, were almost officially approved for the first time in the Egyptian election and the Muslim Brotherhood won an unprecedented number of seats, 88. As I mentioned above, the seats that the Muslim Brotherhood managed to win until 2000 had been concentrated in the Delta areas, and almost no seats had been seen in central and southern Egypt. However, in the 2005 election, the most remarkable victory of the Muslim Brotherhood was observed in central Egypt such as El Faiyum and El Mīnya (al-Mīnyā). Most of MPs from these prefectures had been from parliamentary families and had been serving as NDP executives. Therefore, until the 2000 elections, NDP candidates had succeeded in enjoying sweeping victories. This is certainly a new phenomenon and the outcome of the next election in 2010 is not very clear at this stage.

There are some reasons that its popularity does not connect directly to the election. The central and southern Egypt, the areas that are far from Cairo, are more dependent on the subsidies from the government for developing any public infrastructure. Therefore, the society is inevitably formed on the basis of patron-client relations. In particular, in tribal societies like those in central and southern Egypt, all forms of management and activities are executed on the bases of the tribes, that are strongly connected to NDP. In such societies, apart from their personal sympathy, people are becoming more realistic with regard to the understanding of who can bring the actual benefit to them.

And one more reason has to be considered. In this region, collective voting has been carried out since the beginning of 20th century, when the election system was introduced to the Egyptian society. People have been casting their votes according to the instructions from their local leaders. The local leaders have maintained a good relationship with the ruling party for a while.

Conclusion

Parliamentary families have played crucial roles in modern Egyptian history. They continue to be important political actors even in the future. However, they may have no choice but to alter their forms of being. One obvious feature at the moment is that their influences have relatively lessened at least in the parliament. Until now, parliamentary families have survived a number of regime changes by transforming their appearances from monarchy to republicanism, from a multiparty system to one-party system, and to a multiparty system again. It is not clear if they dare to cooperate with the religious power or stand against them. Today since it is the time when the Mubarak administration is confronted with new political trends, we need to keep our eyes on where the Mubarak regime goes to.

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