INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL HISTORY

Inventory of the collection of the

COMMUNIST PARTY OF EGYPT (CPE)


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# Introduction

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INTRODUCTION

History

After the Communist party of Egypt dissolved itself in 1965 and was united with the Arab Socialist Union (ASU), many of its members were demoralized. They remained unconvinced of the wisdom of the decision to become completely associated with Nasserism and tried to maintain an independent stance. The desastrous results of the Arab-Israeli war in 1967 provided them with the opportunity to create a nucleus of a new communist movement. Regarding themselves not yet capable of reestablishing a full-blown communist party, the group called itself Jama'at bi-la Ism, `The Group Without a Name'. It published several leaflets under the name of Ahmed ‘Urabi al-Misri, the famous national hero who had led the revolt against the British in 1882, and during the October war in 1973 the group started to publish al-Intisar (Victory). Gradually al-Intisar became a regularly published periodical. When the capitalist and pro-Western policy of Sadat became more obvious, the group decided to reestablish itself as a Communist Party. In January 1974 it formed a founding Central Committee, which issued a lengthy document enumerating the minimum conditions for establishing a Communist party; in August it published a draft programme for action for the Egyptian popular forces, and on 1 May 1975 the group finally declared itself the renewed Communist Party of Egypt (CPE).

The high theoretical level of the CPE is evident in the numerous analyses it produced of Egypt's political and economic situation. In July 1975 the CPE issued its first programme report in which it described Egypt as having joined a common alliance with capitalist and imperialist forces of the United States, Israel and the rich oil states of the Gulf. The pamphlets and leaflets the CPE issued during the 1970s and early 1980s point out the inter-relationship between Egypt's integration into the capitalist world, the peace with Israel and its increasing isolation in the Arab world. Egypt's growing dependency on the United States was also related to the weakening of the Palestinian resistance and the outbreak of the Lebanese civil war.

In June and July 1978 the politbureau of the party met to formulate a new programme of action to respond to the deteriorating economic and political developments. In its programme the CPE called for the immediate overthrow of the `parasitic capitalist regime' of Sadat, the rejection of the capitulation policy with Israel, the mobilization of the masses to liberate all occupied Arab land, and the return of Egypt to the progressive Arab camp. In September 1980 the CPE held its first party congress. The congress produced five documents: the party programme, its bylaws, an organizational report, and two working papers - `The National Democratic Front in Egypt' and `Consolidation of the Egyptian Communist Movement.' In 1984 the CPE held its second congress and in 1987 it nominated four of its well-known leaders as candidates to participate in the
general elections. Because the party was banned from running the elections, its candidates were supported by the Tagammu' Party as individuals on nonparty lists through the publication of their campaign propaganda in its newspaper. The CPE's basic platform consisted of the repeal of the Camp David accords and the call for the end of Egypt's political, economic and military dependence on the United States. In addition, all international agreements conducted by the Egyptian government since May 1971 should be reevaluated.

The collection

The collection of the Communist Party of Egypt was acquired with the assistance of Dr. Rif'at al-Sa'id. In 1995 it was brought to Amsterdam from Minsk in White Russia where the collection was kept in the custody of an Egyptian émigré during the 1980s. The collection is probably a `shadow' or `reserve' archive of the CPE consisting mostly of duplicates of documents. It is not an original archives in the strict meaning of the word: it doesn't contain, for instance, correspondence by the Central Committee. Some sections of the collection do, however, appear to be parts of the original archives, such as the extensive and unique documentation of the meeting of the Central Committee in November 1984, which contains minutes of the meeting, adopted resolutions and the four discussed working papers (see nos. 2-14). Although the collection is not complete, it does give a unique insight into the thought and strategy of the CPE on account of the diversity of the documents, ranging from congress papers, resolutions and lengthy analyses used for determining the strategy of the party, to specialised activities of the CPE such as its student movement. In addition, the collection contains leaflets and pamphlets issued by the CPE on internal Egyptian and foreign Egyptian affairs; several party periodicals such as al-Intisar, al-Nashra al-Tanzimiyya and al-Wa'y; and furthermore newspaper clippings and other documentation collected by members of the CPE.

At the end of 1997 the arrangement of the collection, which wasn't properly arranged, has been started. Documents relating to the same subjects have been grouped together and series have been made of resolutions by the Central Committee, of communiques and of copies of party periodicals. In January 1998 the work has been completed. The size of the collection is 1 m.

Consultation

Access is free.
GENERAL

Congresses and meetings of the Central Committee


2-14. Minutes of the November meeting of the Central Committee held in 1984, with draft proposals, analyses, resolutions and other documents on strategy and other subjects. 1984. 13 covers.


5. Analysis concerning the social and economic situation of Egypt: *hal taqifu Misr ‘ala masharif tawr ijtimai‘i jadid?* November 1984.


10. Comments of different comrades and synopsis of the debates on the four discussion papers submitted during the meetings. November 1984.


13. Copy of the debates and resolutions concerning the four papers on party
strategy, the political analysis of the position of the communist movement in Egypt and the front, the internal organization of the party and the social and economic situation in Egypt: *al-Majmu‘a al-awla min al-taqarir wa-l-mulahazat ‘ala waraqat al-arba‘a al-akhira al-ma‘ruda li-l-munaqasha*. November 1984.


Resolutions by the Central Committee

21. Resolution concerning the strategy of the party taken during the second session of September 1981. 11 pages.
22. Resolutions adopted by the Central Committee during its session of 29 November 1985.
PARTICULAR

Foundation and programme
NB. See also 1, 16 and 18.

27. Pamphlet announcing the foundation of the CPE. 1 May 1975. 1 cover.


Internal affairs


30. Internal communique of the Central Committee: January 1984. 1 cover.


Commemorations

36-37. Leaflets issued in commemoration of the seventh anniversary of the foundation of the CPE. 1 May 1982. 2 covers.

Analyses and strategy

38-49. Analyses of the political and economic situation in Egypt and strategic
45. Report on the strategy of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the national front: *Diktaturiyya al-brulitariyya wa-l-dimuqratiyya.* Parts I and II. No date.

**Communiques**

50-54. Communiques issued by the Central Committee of the CPE. 1984-1988. 5 covers.

**Propaganda**

57. Leaflet demanding the right for workers to strike. July 1981.
60. Leaflet concerning the Egyptian political situation. 1 December 1985.
61. Leaflet denouncing the legal left-wing opposition. 4 February 1986.
63. Leaflet denouncing the government policy of Mubarak following his trip to Washington. 4 July 1986.
64. Leaflet denouncing the intention to cut food subsidies. 18 June 1986.
70. Leaflet concerning the speech of Mubarak on terror. 26 January 1988.

84. Leaflet denouncing Sadat’s foreign policy. September 1981.
85. Leaflet in support of the Palestinian people. 30 March 1982.
86. Leaflet in support of the Palestinian intifada. 30 March 1982.
89. Pamphlet concerning the trip of Arafat to Cairo. 13 February 1984.
96. Leaflet concerning Libya. 1 April 1986.
97. leaflets celebrating the 70th anniversary of the Russian revolution. 1987.

**Party periodicals**


**Relations with other communist parties**

114-120. Pamphlets and joint communiques issued with other regional communist parties. 1975-1985. 7 covers.
114. Letter to foreign communist parties announcing the foundation of the ECP in 1975. 1 May 1975.


121. Correspondence with the editorial board of the communist quarterly al-Nahj with its contributors, and a few irregular issues of al-Nahj. 1987-1989. 1 folder.

Union of Democratic Egyptian Youth (UDEY)

122. Draft programme and statutes of the youth organization of the CPE, the Union of Democratic Egyptian Youth (UDEY): Mashru’ barnamij wa la’iha Ittihad al-Shabab al-Dimuqrati al-Misri. N.d. 14 pages. N.d. 1 cover.


123. Communique on the foundation of the UDEY in Havana. 7 August 1978.

124. Communique of the UDEY against Camp David issued from Havana. 7 August 1978.


129. Joint statement of the student organization of the CPE and the Democratic Arab Students in Great Britain. 25 September 1981.


132. Interview with the secretary of the UDEY, Nabil Ya’qub. N.d.
Relations with other youth organizations

133. Statements and letters in English, French and Spanish issued by the World Federation of Democratic Youth in support of UDEY. 1977 and 1981. 1 cover.

134. Translation of an open letter addressed to the Egyptian ambassador written by the International Greek-Arab Union, with Greek newspaper clippings denouncing Sadat's repressive measures. 1981. 1 cover.


137. Translation in Spanish of the pamphlet of the UDEY on education. N.d. 1 cover.

138. Leaflet in German of the Komitee zur Verteidigung der Freiheiten in support of Egyptian activist prisoners. 1984. 1 cover.

139. Copy of Shabab al-'Arabi, 2 August 1982. 1 cover.

DOCUMENTATION


142. Pamphlet against the Camp David Accords: Bayan min Hizb al-‘Ummal al-Shuyu’i al-Misri hawl ittifaqiyya Camp David. N.d.


146-148. Leaflets, pamphlets, communiques and reports issued by different Palestinian liberation organizations. 1982-1986. 3 folders.

146. Leaflets, pamphlets and communiques issued by Fatah, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), the Palestinian Communist Party and other organizations relating to the split within the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) in 1983-1984 in the North of Lebanon, the so-called Abu Musa affair. 1983-1984.

NB. Probably collected by a delegation of the ECP in Beirut.


149. Newspaper clippings of foreign newspapers concerning the foundation of the CPE in 1975.


151. Newspaper clippings concerning youth and student affairs in Egypt in Egyptian newspapers. (cover).

152. Newspaper clippings concerning youth and student affairs in Egypt in Egyptian newspapers. (cover).


159. Clippings of Egyptian daily newspapers concerning the issue of democratization. 1984.

160. Clippings of Egyptian newspapers and party papers concerning the general elections of 1984.

161. Clippings of Egyptian newspapers and party papers concerning the general elections of 1984.
162. Clippings of Egyptian newspapers and party papers concerning the issue of Arab relations and pan-Arabism. 1984.
164. Clippings of Egyptian and Arab newspapers concerning the radical Islamic movement. 1985.
165. Typed transcript of an article published in the Canadian Tribune and The Daily World. 19 February 1984. 1 folder.