

The Muslim Brotherhood's Concept of Education

by Ehud Rosen

A CONTROVERSIAL PROPOSITION IS MADE BY THE MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD and by others on its behalf. The claim is that the Brotherhood represents a moderate version of Islam and as such has a vital role to play in countering terrorism and extremist ideology. One of the principal ways in which the Brotherhood claims it is able to counter extremism is by offering religious education to those Muslims who are at-risk for radicalization. This is especially the case in Western countries, where the Brotherhood and its allies have sought to persuade authorities that they have far more credibility and influence with at-risk Muslim youth than any non-Muslim ever could, and that as Muslims, they know how best to deal with Islamist extremism by teaching Muslims properly about their religion.¹

A forceful argument can be made that the basic premise of this proposition—that the Muslim Brotherhood is a voice of moderation and a potential bulwark against jihadism—is false. The history of the Brotherhood movement shows, in fact, that it has operated by and large not as a firewall against jihadism, but as a fertile incubator of radical ideas in a variety of locales.² The roots of many, if not most, of the violent Islamist movements of Sunni Arab provenance—from Hamas to al-Qaeda—can be traced to the Muslim Brotherhood.

Despite this well-established history, the Brotherhood routinely dismisses its connections to violence, stating that Islamists who have engaged in violence have formally left the Brotherhood and often renounced it prior to their embrace of jihadism. (Perhaps the most frequently cited example of this latter point is the one-

time Brother and now leading al-Qaeda ideologue Ayman al-Zawahiri, who famously criticized the Brotherhood in his 1991 book *The Bitter Harvest* [*al-Hisad al-murr*] for forsaking the Islamic obligations of *jihād*.) Moreover, others will point out that research on the Brotherhood has concentrated—unduly, perhaps—on the movement’s past political activism and proclivities toward *jihād*, while giving short shrift to the Brotherhood’s purportedly “non-political” work as a social welfare provider, as a religious missionary organization, and as an educational movement. Due in part to these apologetics, a new conventional wisdom has emerged holding that the Brotherhood may have once been radical and violent, but has since moderated and is now largely a civil society movement interested in political engagement and dialogue.

Considering the Brotherhood’s continued support of terrorism in Middle Eastern conflicts, it is difficult to be persuaded by these claims of moderation. But it is also crucial to examine the merits of the Brotherhood’s additional claims that it can be a force for moderation through religious education. This short paper aims to consider these claims in light of the educational concepts and methods first articulated by Hassan al-Banna, the Brotherhood’s founder, and the ways in which his contemporaries and subsequent generations of Brotherhood activists have attempted to implement these theories in practice.

Educating a New Society

IN THE 1920S, A NEW MIDDLE CLASS OF YOUNG AND EDUCATED PROFESSIONALS known as the “new *effendiyya*” was becoming increasingly active and influential in Egypt. The aspirations and political sensibilities of this largely urban class had been deeply shaped by European ideas. But as the global economic recession set upon Egypt in the 1930s, bringing with it a drastic reduction in living standards and growing unemployment rates, many within the *effendiyya* soon became disenchanted with modernist ideals. The young Egyptian parliamentary system, ineffective at dealing with the economic turmoil, was perceived as corrupt and hopelessly sectarian, and the public’s impatience and disillusionment with the existing order began to rise.³

The members of the new *effendiyya* aspired to create a new movement aimed at strengthening and unifying the Egypt nation and the Arab and the Islamic world as a whole. When their leaders addressed the public, they began to stress the importance of Egypt’s Islamic heritage and culture, and sought to promote a revival of Islam as a substitute to western principles. They railed against the injustices and cruelties of European imperialism and began organizing protests against the British. Meanwhile, a new religious revival was sweeping through Egypt, spurring on the

rapid growth of an assortment of new *salafiyya* reform movements. These religious activists protested both the influence of western culture as well as Egypt's traditional Muslim authorities, who were blamed by some for failing to prevent Egypt's colonial domination in the first place. In the salafi view, traditional Muslim scholars provided little direction in coping with the great political challenges facing modern Muslim societies, including their backwardness and weakness relative to western nation-states.

The Society of the Muslim Brothers began as one of these salafi movements, and gradually became the largest and most important of them all. Many of the society's early leaders and thinkers did not come from traditional Islamic backgrounds, but instead emerged from the ranks of the new *effendiyya*. They had been reared on western culture and ideas, but had ultimately found little social or spiritual fulfilment in them. As Richard Mitchell's seminal study *The Society of the Muslim Brothers* has demonstrated, the intellectual inspiration for the early brothers were salafi revivalists like the pan-Islamist Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, Muhammad Abduh (the rector at al-Azhar University who originally coined the term "*salafiyya*"), and perhaps most importantly Rashid Rida, who through his career gave salafi reformism as a whole a decidedly more reactionary direction.

While all of these revivalists have been credited as the intellectual architects of modern salafism, it was the Egyptian schoolteacher Hassan al-Banna who, through his creation of the Muslim Brotherhood in 1928, emerged as the organizational genius by first providing the salafi movement with a vehicle for implementing its agenda.⁴ That agenda was described by al-Banna in expressly revolutionary terms: He understood the Brotherhood's call to return to Islam as a call for a "greater revolution" that was more significant than the modern French or Russian revolutions because Islam combined radical political change with sweeping reforms of the nation's economic, mental, and spiritual life.⁵

According to Abbas al-Sissi, a prominent early member of the Brotherhood, the society sought thorough-going Islamist reform in at least six areas. These consisted of the following: First, in the field of knowledge, the society would seek to re-interpret the Quran and the *sunna* in ways appropriate to the present time, thus correcting absurdities and doubts, and purging Islamic belief of impurities that, in the Brotherhood's view, had made the Muslim Nation weak. Second, the society would seek to unite the Egyptian nation and other Islamic states around common principles, creating an Islamic bloc that could struggle against foreign cultural and political dominance in a joint fashion. Third, in the economic field, the society would fight corruption, and assist in bringing about a national revolution in agriculture, industry and trade. Fourth, in the social field, the Brotherhood would raise the standard of living, seeking to achieve a balance between various social classes while fighting

disease, poverty and illiteracy. Fifth, in the national field, the Brotherhood would seek to liberate Egypt from British colonial rule, and would contribute in the struggle to release all Arab and Muslim countries from foreign occupation. While strengthening Arab unity, the society would strive towards Islamic unity. Sixth, in the international field, the society would participate in establishing world peace on the basis of Islam, and set in place a new world order founded on the Islamic principles of brotherhood and justice.⁶

In al-Banna's view, the key to achieving this radical reform and establishing Islam as a "comprehensive order" (*nizam shamil*) lay in education. Of course, he also spoke about the equally important and necessary activities of armed *jihad* and of *dawa*, or of spreading the movement's message through preaching and mission so as to prepare and mobilize the people to implement the movement's revolutionary agenda. But at a basic level, the very success of *jihad* and *dawa* required men and women with the desire and abilities to conduct both of them well; the basis of any successful movement or society, al-Banna clearly understood, were the individuals and groups of people that comprised it.

And yet, among his contemporaries, he found the drive and capacity needed to transform society along Islamic lines to be in woefully short supply. Creating this new society therefore required a strategy of formal and informal education (*tarbiyah*) to nurture a new generation of Muslims committed to reviving and implementing Islam in all realms of human activity.⁷ By developing a system for cultivating new Muslims for a new society, al-Banna believed that Egypt at large could be transformed, and that the Muslim Nation (*umma*) as a whole would eventually be restored to its lost power and glory.⁸

Al-Banna's Educational Method

AL-BANNA'S FAITH IN THE POWER OF EDUCATION TO BRING ABOUT RADICAL social change formed the core of his teaching. In his earliest writings, he signed himself as a professional "educator," and his first published pamphlet—which was entitled "A Memorandum on Religious Education" and published in 1929, only months after the Brotherhood movement itself was created—provided an outline of his educational theory.

The purpose of education, as al-Banna saw it, wasn't simply to impart knowledge, whether religious or secular. Rather, he sought in education the achievement of a comprehensive moral edification (*tahdhib*) and the shaping of fully Islamic personalities whose manners, way of thinking and sense of moral duty were defined entirely in accord with the Brotherhood's religious and political *dawa*.⁹ Al-Banna

contrasted this ideal of a fully formed Muslim personality who possessed a “sincere faith” with the light-hearted or weak belief that he perceived in his contemporaries, and which he tirelessly professed to despise.

Al-Banna was a staunch critic of Egypt’s educational system, citing it as a principal reason for his country’s modern woes, backwardness, and weakness relative to the West. He observed that graduates of Egypt’s schools lacked very basic knowledge of their cultural traditions, and most importantly, left them with no burning sense of obligation for the welfare of their fellow Muslims, to the Muslim Nation, and to God.¹⁰ To remedy this, he felt that these schools required a complete curricular and spiritual overhaul. He sought to create an educational method that would develop Muslims into sincere believers, equipped mentally, physically and spiritually to carry out the work of Islamic reform and revival.¹¹

A leading purpose of the Brotherhood since the movement’s creation has been the development and implementation of this educational theory. Mahmud Abd al-Halim, one of the movement’s founders and key early intellectuals, underscored this idea when he said that the basis of the Muslim Brotherhood’s *dawa* is education.¹²

The influence on al-Banna’s thinking of early salafi reformers like Afghani and Rida has been widely acknowledged and discussed. What scholars have often overlooked, however, is the influence on al-Banna’s teachings of Western ideas, and in particular, of European educational methodologies. Al-Banna was himself a graduate of the Dar al-Ulum school for teachers in Cairo. Dar al-Ulum was established in 1871 as a modern alternative to the traditional Islamic education offered by al-Azhar University and similar institutions at the time. Its curriculum aimed to provide its students with both religious as well as secular education using Western pedagogical methods. As a young man, al-Banna became attracted to cutting-edge European theories of holistic education, and he sought to incorporate these concepts into his system of religious education, albeit with an Islamic aim. In his memoirs, for instance, al-Banna recalled the experience of opening the Brotherhood’s first official school, which was established in 1931 in the town of Isma’iliyya, above the society’s first mosque. He expressed deep appreciation for holistic educators like Maria Montessori and Friedrich Froebel, saying that he could actually picture them teaching in their own schools. In the Brotherhood’s new school, he added, the tools of these Western educators would be employed in a new Islamic framework that “coincides with the current Islamic tendencies and hopes... [that are] fed by the [Brotherhood’s] *dawa*.”¹³

The curricular basis of al-Banna’s instruction in sincere faith was, naturally, the Quran and the *sunna*. A student was expected not simply to memorize the Quran, but taught to internalize its lessons and principles, at least as these were understood by the Brotherhood, so that he applied the *sharia* in everything he did. Al-Banna’s successor as the society’s general guide, Hasan al-Hudaybi, explained in his book *Our*

Constitution (Dusturina) that the Quran provides detailed practical commandments and regulations concerning each and every aspect of daily life, including the proper relationships that people should have with others in their home and community.¹⁴ As such, by working to implement the *sharia* in all aspects of his life, the sincere believer transforms the community around him; in time, a collective of believers transforms the Muslim Nation as a whole.

Al-Banna also stressed the importance of teaching patriotism and love for one's homeland and for the Muslim Nation.¹⁵ This meant instilling in youth a sense of civic responsibility, a desire to combat the ills of poverty, illiteracy, disease and crime, and to build in modern society's place a new exemplary society based on Islamic social justice and fraternity.¹⁶ To accomplish this, education needed to inculcate in each Muslim a sense of obligation toward other Muslims, before all others, and to teach them how to cooperate with each other for the achievement of larger purposes.¹⁷ Physical education also figured prominently in al-Banna's educational method. He felt that athletic training served to balance body and soul, and that involving youth in sports and physical competition served to build their self-confidence and strengthen their sense of camaraderie and spirit of cooperation.¹⁸ He also believed physical training was a vital component in preparing young souls for armed *jihad* in the way of Islam.¹⁹

From very early on, the training of teachers was a top priority for the movement. Al-Banna was especially concerned, even anxious, to ensure that teachers were properly trained, since they were the cornerstone of any program of education, and had the special responsibility of nurturing the new generation.²⁰ The qualities that make a good teacher became a recurrent theme in the society's educational literature. According to Said Hawwa, a key educationalist theorist who led the Brotherhood's Syrian branch from 1978-1982, the teacher should demonstrate a number of character traits, and should be held to the highest of moral and intellectual standards. The teacher should, among other things, be content with little material wealth and comfort and never be jealous of others. He should see his duties to God and to the Muslim Nation as paramount, and also that these obligations are best fulfilled through selfless work on behalf of the Islamic revival movement. He should be able to explain and instruct others in the Brotherhood's *dawa* in a clear and persuasive manner.²¹ A teacher should also be compassionate and tolerant towards students, be interested in educating children and youth, and able to gain the students' trust.²²

Inspired by al-Banna's holistic educational theories, soon after its creation the Brotherhood began establishing an informal network of schools and prayer circles throughout Egypt. For the most part, these schools conducted classes in the evenings or on Fridays. The focus was on memorizing the Quran and the Hadith and learning salafi doctrine. Students were also encouraged to develop their oratory skills, which

were seen as vital for *dawa*, and to engage in athletic activities. In 1935, during the society's third conference, al-Banna claimed that the Brotherhood was operating over 300 *kutab* classes devoted to Quranic study across Egypt.²⁴

In 1931, the Brotherhood established its first formal school offering a range of classes for boys in Isma'iliyya. Two years later the movement established a school for female students to teach them Islam and to prepare them for their future roles as wives and mothers. Teachers in each of these schools were tutored by other teachers who had a higher rank than themselves in the Brotherhood's hierarchy.²⁵

By the 1940s, the society's educational program had become increasingly standardized, much like modern curricula in the West. It included instruction in practical subjects such as writing, reading, mathematics, rhetoric, personal health and hygiene.²⁶ But the primary emphasis of the Brotherhood curricula was on the study of Islam, and students were encouraged to master a variety of fields of Islamic knowledge. These fields included the Quran and Quranic interpretation; the *sunna*, including different schools of Islamic thought; jurisprudence, including its historical development and the works of outstanding Muslim scholars; the Islamic principles of social work and social justice, with a focus on Egypt; the Prophet's biography (*Sira*).²⁷ Unsurprisingly, the syllabus used in this program was heavily laden with the works of classical revivalist scholars like Ibn Taymiyya and with the Brotherhood's own luminaries.

A paramount concern of the society's educational program was with training and equipping people with the skills to spread the society's religious and political message of Islamic reform and revival. The number of books written by Brotherhood members on the subject of *dawa* attests to its early importance for the society.²⁸ In al-Banna's view, only a comprehensive educational system could produce such competent preachers (*dai*). Al-Banna stated that the preacher's faith needed to be pure and that he needed to inspire his audience with the Islamic spirit so that they would collectively advance the society's *dawa* "like an iron wall." In 1951, the society's general guide Hassan al-Hudaybi called for the establishment of at least one school in every administrative office of the society, devoted entirely to training people in the Brotherhood's *dawa*; and in 1953, the society also founded a *dawa* academy in its Cairo headquarters.²⁹ These new institutions aimed primarily at the cultivation of competent preachers (*du'a*) who could compete directly with both traditional and government-employed religious scholars for the hearts and minds of ordinary, and especially young, Egyptians.

Preparing the Way

DURING THE REIGN OF KING FAROUK, THE BROTHERHOOD SENT HASSAN AL-BANNA'S early writings and other important pamphlets by society authors to the king, to relevant ministers and to clerks, in an attempt to persuade the government to adopt the movement's educational plan. On occasion, the Brotherhood also co-operated with the government on anti-illiteracy campaigns and other national initiatives.³⁰ Even Said Qutb—who began his career as a teacher in the Egyptian Ministry of Public Instruction—followed in al-Banna's footsteps, calling on the government to bring all of Egypt's schools under governmental supervision, so they could implement the movement's educational ideas.³¹

The Brotherhood collaborated with the Free Officers when the latter seized control of the Egyptian state in 1952. The society had hoped to implement an Islamic order by positioning itself as the “moral guide” of the nationalist revolution and the ultimate source of religious authority over the new government's policies. But under the rule of the nationalist and secularist President Gamal Abdel Nasser, the Brotherhood's opportunities to implement their educational plan from the top-down evaporated.

During the late 1950s, many Brothers who fled from Nasser's brutal repression found their way to Saudi Arabia, where they had been granted positions in Saudi schools by Saudi rulers sympathetic to their cause. Saudi Arabia provided refuge to prominent Brotherhood intellectuals like Said Qutb's brother, Muhammad, who both taught and was free to publish important works written by himself, his brother, and other important Brotherhood ideologues. It was in exile from Egypt that the Brotherhood was perhaps most successful at implementing its educational ideas in a formal way. Some Brotherhood refugees obtained posts at the Islamic University at al-Madina, which was founded in 1961. With the Brotherhood's help, Saudi Arabia hoped this university would be an alternative to Cairo's al-Azhar University, which by 1961 had come under strict Nasserist control.³² Another important institution in this vein was the King 'Abd al-'Aziz University in Jeddah, established in 1967. Thanks to this relative freedom afforded to the Brotherhood in exile, as well as an infusion of Saudi petro-dollars, we know in hindsight that Saudi Arabia was one of the main platforms from which the Brotherhood's *dawa* started to spread internationally.

In Egypt, the society's *dawa* may have been obstructed by Nasser's repressive policies, but it nevertheless continued to spread through the informal educational organizations and networks that the Brotherhood's founding generation had created. The first initiatives in this regard came with the formation of the Ranger Squads (*firqat al rihlat*). Created by al-Banna himself, the purpose of the squads was to prepare

young men for spreading the *dawa* and engaging in *jihad*. In 1935, the squads were transformed and re-named the Rover Scouts Division, and its regulations were put in writing shortly thereafter. All members had to be at least 17 years of age (later the minimum age was lowered to 15). The organization's stated objective was to instil in young men a spirit of healthy competition, to learn discipline and to have a sense of responsibility for themselves and for the Muslim Nation.³³

The establishment of the Rover Scouts was a critical development in the Brotherhood's public educational efforts; by canvassing villages and disseminating the Brotherhood's various publications, the scouts became an effective vehicle for spreading the society's *dawa* throughout the country. The scouts also served as a social welfare corps, delivering basic health and other services to poor and rural communities. In this way, the Brotherhood began to enlarge its base to include the countryside. The Brotherhood also founded the Muslim Sisters as a framework for recruiting and training female activists. In 1947 the Sisters published their first pamphlet describing their organization's goals. These included taking part in social *jihad*, or struggle aimed at the establishment of Islamic social justice, and ensuring that families retained values based on Islam.³⁴ The Sisters, which by 1948 included at least 5,000 members,³⁵ also played an important role tending to detainees' families during Nasser's campaign to suppress the society and maintained lines of communication between society members in and out of prison.³⁶

The Norwegian scholar Brynjar Lia has demonstrated that al-Banna had been deeply impressed by the militaristic youth groups established in fascist Italy and Nazi Germany. With the creation of the Rover Scouts, he sought to implement an Islamic version of these European youth movements that would instil in young Egyptians an ethos of chivalry (*futuwa*) and martial honor.³⁷ In 1938-9, the Rover Scouts were formally registered in the Egyptian National Scouts Movement.³⁸

The scouts organized sporting events, and starting in 1938, began to host summer camps. Al-Banna himself took part in the first camp, which included religious education, a range of social activities, and physical and military training.³⁹ Each member was to be educated in such a way that he became consumed with the concept of *jihad*. The Rover Scouts organized marches and parades; their songs and anthems were saturated with religious themes, and celebrated *jihad* and martyrdom.⁴⁰ With time, the Rover Scouts became gradually radicalized, and some scouts joined the Brotherhood's paramilitary wing known as the "Secret Apparatus" (*al-Nizam al-Khas*).⁴¹

As part of a new overall strategy for the movement, al-Banna introduced the battalion (*katiba*) system in 1937. The battalions were comprised of 10-40 people between the ages of 18 and 40. These were not military organizations *per se*, but they would meet for one night every week to pray, to eat, and to sleep together in a communal

and almost barracks-like atmosphere. The battalions also organized excursions into the countryside (*rihla*) and youth camps (*muaskar*) that involved study of the Quran and salafi doctrine and physical fitness training.⁴² The founding purpose of the battalions, according to Abd al-Fattah el-Awaisi, was to strengthen “the ranks [of the Brotherhood] through becoming acquainted and socializing with others, through harmonizing souls and spirits, through [providing members with group support for] resisting usual habits, and through practicing the forging of the best of bonds with God, to draw victory from Him.”⁴³ It was to a battalion audience that Banna delivered his famous lecture detailing the psychological, spiritual and practical formation of the Muslim activist.⁴⁴

From 1938 onwards, the battalions and scouts operated in a complementary fashion with each other, and in most cases, an adult battalion member would have previously been a scout. In 1940, the Rover Scouts were reorganized, and they assumed new control over youth education, which had previously been the battalion’s responsibility.⁴⁵

In 1943 both the battalions and scouts were incorporated into a broader network of cells that were individually referred to as a family (*usra*).⁴⁶ Each family was made up of a cell of five and later more activists who maintained close personal contacts with one another. Each family chose a *naqib*, or group leader, to represent it before the administrative council of the society’s local branch. Four families were linked together into what was called a clan (*ashira*); five clans constituted a group (*raht*), and five groups formed a battalion (*katiba*). Among other things, this family system provided an educational framework for preparing its members for the Rover Scouts as well as for the Special Apparatus.

The whole system of families was in turn supervised by a central committee that was originally chaired by al-Banna and based at the Brotherhood’s Cairo headquarters. Each family member was charged with fulfilling a range of duties. These included the personal obligation to maintain the Islamic character in one’s conduct and home; social obligations, which included forming fraternal bonds with other Muslims, attending weekly meetings, and partaking in other group activities such as fasts, prayers and Quranic study; and financial obligations, which included contributing a portion of one’s income to a “solidarity fund” that was used to help other family members in need. A portion of this money also went to the Brotherhood’s headquarters, where it funded an Islamic social welfare company.⁴⁷

These informal educational networks have proven to be remarkably resilient, cohesive, and effective over time in building the capacity to spread the Brotherhood’s *dawa*. Mustafa Mashhur, who served as the Brotherhood’s fifth General Guide in Egypt from 1996-2004, has stated that this cellular network remains the primary organizational basis of the Brotherhood’s operations to this day.⁴⁸ El-Awaisi has further

stated that the families presently operate within Egypt, and in much the same way as al-Banna had originally intended. The family, el-Awaisi argues, citing al-Banna, remains essential for rearing activists committed to Islamic reform; the family “defines sincere brothers, making it easy to contact them and to direct them towards high ideals. It will strengthen the bond that unites them and raises their fraternity from the level of talk and theory to the level of actions and operations. It will soon yield capital—for the Muslim Brothers—out of nothing.”⁴⁹

Onward, Brotherhood Teachers

SINCE THE BROTHERHOOD’S FOUNDING, HASSAN AL-BANNA’S VISION FOR fostering a new Islamic society through education and other initiatives has indeed produced considerable capital for the Islamist movement. As the French scholar Gilles Kepel (among others) has written, the Brotherhood’s *dawa* has evolved an “ideological universe” that is currently, in important respects, a “dominant cultural force in the Arab Middle East.”⁵⁰ The society has also given rise to major political movements in key Middle Eastern countries, and thanks to the various institutions it has established—including its formal and informal networks of educational institutions—the Brotherhood has managed in many locales to form a parallel ‘society within a society,’ or what has also been described as the basic “infrastructure of an Islamic republic” within already existing nation-states.⁵¹

It is also clear that Hassan al-Banna’s original educational concepts and methodologies are still operative within these networks in a variety of contexts—including in the West.⁵² In his 1999 book *The Muslim Brotherhood*, Shaykh Yusuf al-Qaradawi—who is perhaps the most prominent contemporary devotee and interpreter of Hassan al-Banna’s thought, and who is immensely influential in the Middle East and in Europe—celebrated the society’s “seventy years of *dawa*, education (*tarbiya*), and *jihad*.”⁵³

Throughout this book as well as in his other works, Qaradawi frequently returns to the theme of education, stressing the special role that education has and must continue to play in the Islamist revival and reform movement. For example, he describes the continued propagation of the Brotherhood’s *dawa* around the world as an urgent necessity (*darura muliha*) whose fulfilment is in part dependent on the further development and success of religious education.⁵⁴ In addition to the practical necessity of training the next generation of activists and preachers, he explains, the Brotherhood must seek to inspire in Muslims everywhere a belief in the Islamic movement’s final victory, and a belief that the achievement of the society’s founding vision of establishing a new Islamic world order is a requirement imposed on all Muslims by God. This belief, he adds, should properly be understood as an integral

and indispensable part of sincere Islamic faith.⁵⁵ As such, education in the right belief (*tarbiya imaniyya*) is vital to the Islamic movement's efforts to transform contemporary socio-political realities and create a new Islamic order.⁵⁶

Moreover, Qaradawi explains that the Brotherhood's holistic approach to education has been centrally concerned with *jihad*. Like al-Banna, Qaradawi affirms that *jihad* is a legitimate and important part of Islam and thus of Islamic education. While physical training is an important element of this, he points out that a proper jihadi education doesn't simply involve training for combat or terrorism. A jihadi education focuses on the formation of Muslims who are committed entirely to Islam, and seeks to inculcate in the younger generation a spirit of courage, unflinching obedience and self-sacrifice to the cause of Islam.⁵⁷ Qaradawi explains that the cultivation of this jihadi spirit among the young was one of the key priorities in Hassan al-Banna's educational strategy, adding that, "each individual of this generation [tutored by al-Banna] is a soldier of belief, not a soldier for reward; [the properly educated activist is] interested in giving without receiving, and sacrificing with no [expectation of personal] gain."⁵⁸

Qaradawi maintains that an educational plan to ensure that the younger generation possesses both right belief and a jihadi spirit is vital to the Islamic movement's future. Education, in this respect, is essential to the fullest implementation of Islam in all realms of human knowledge and action, in both *dawa* and *jihad*.⁵⁹ Education remains "the single way to change society, to build the people, and to achieve [the Brotherhood's] aspirations" of transformation and the establishment of an Islamic socio-political order.⁶⁰

Unfortunately, an exhaustive critical study of Brotherhood educational ideals and actual practice in the contemporary world has yet to be undertaken. But as the history of the movement shows, the Brotherhood's militancy and radical activism cannot be readily separated from its purportedly "non-political" activities in the realm of education. Moreover, as the statements of Qaradawi among others make clear, the radical vision and agenda of Islamic reform upon which the Brotherhood was founded remains very much operative to this day, including and perhaps most especially in the movement's educational philosophy and practice. In light of this, the claim that a Brotherhood education can be a potential force for moderation should be seriously questioned.

NOTES

1. In the U.K., this approach is supported by some British officials as well as by non-government groups such as the Conflicts Forum (<http://conflictsforum.org/what-we-offer/>). The forum, whose members

- include former U.K. and U.S. intelligence and government officials, aims at “listening to political Islam, and recognizing resistance” by, among other things, holding dialogues with a variety of Islamist groups, including those that use terrorism. Additionally, organizations such as Anas Altikriti’s Cordoba Foundation have received U.K. government funding for media and public relations training for young Muslims in the U.K. Altikriti, who is the son of the Iraqi Brotherhood leader Usama al-Tikriti, was the second president of the Muslim Association of Britain (MAB), which is widely acknowledged as the British branch of the Brotherhood.
2. See for example, Hassan Mneimneh, “The Islamization of Arab Culture,” in Hillel Fradkin, Husain Haqqani, and Eric Brown, eds., *Current Trends in Islamist Ideology* vol. 6 (2008), pp. 48-65.
 3. Israel Gershoni and James P. Jankowski, *Redefining the Egyptian Nation 1930-1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 1.
 4. Richard P. Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 321.
 5. Hasan al-Banna, *Ahadith al-Juma* (Beirut: Manshurat al-asr al-hadith, 1972), “Thawrah,” pp. 121-126.
 6. Hasan al-Banna, *Al-Imam al-shahid hasan al-banna yatahadath ila shabab al-alam al-Islami* (Beirut: Dar al-Qalam), pp. 26-27); Abbas al-Sisi, *Hasan al-Banna: mawaqif fi-al-dawah wa-al-tarbiya* (Alexandria, Dar al-Dawah, 1982), pp. 138-139.
 7. Al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun, *Qanun al-nizam al-asasi li-hay’ at al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin al-amah* (Cairo: Dar al-Ansar, undated), pp. 10-11.
 8. Anne Sofie Roald, *Tarbiya: Education and Politics in Islamic Movements in Jordan and Malaysia* (Lund, Sweden: Religionshistoriska Avdelningen, Lunds Universitet, 1994), p. 113.
 9. Hasan Ahmad al-Banna, Ahmad Muhanmmad al-Sukari and Hamid Abduh Askariyya, *Mudhakkira fi al-talim al-dini*, (Egypt: al-Matbaa al-Salafiyya, 1928), p. 3.
 10. Ibid, pp. 7-8.
 11. Ibid, p. 10; Hasan al-Banna, “*Al-Imam al-shahid hasan al-banna yatahadath ila shabab al-alam al-Islami*”, pp. 179-180.
 12. Mahmud Abd al-Halim, *Al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun: ahdath sanaat al-tarikh* (Alexandria: Dar al-Da’wah, 1979), p. 136.
 13. Hasan al-Banna, “*Mudhakkirat al-dawah wa al-daiyah* (1966), pp. 85-86.
 14. Hasan al-Hudaybi, *Dusturuna* (Cairo: Dar al-Ansar, 1978), pp. 6; 9-10
 15. Ahmad Rabi, Abd al-Hamid Khalaf Allah, *Al-Fikr al-tarbawi wa-tatbiqatuhu lada Jamaat al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin* (Egypt: Al-Azhar University, 1981) p. 139.
 16. Hasan al-Banna, *Majmuat al-rasail li-al-Imam al-shahid, Hasan al-Banna* (Beirut: Muasast al-Raisala, 1965), “Bayna al-ams wa-al-yaum,” pp. 250-255.
 17. Utman Abd al-Muiz Raslan, *Al-Tarbiya al-siyasiyyah ind Jamaat al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin fi-al-fitra min 1928 ila 1954 fi Misr* (Cairo: Dar al-Tawzi wa-al-Nashr al-Islamiyya, 1990), p. 429.
 18. Ibid, p. 440.
 19. Hasan al-Banna, “*Mudhakkirat al-dawah wa al-daiyah*,” p. 122.
 20. Abd al-Halim, pp. 229-230.
 21. Said Hawwa, “*Al-Madkhal ila da’wat al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun*,”(Beirut: Dar Amar, 1988) p. 174.
 22. Rabi and Khalaf Allah, pp. 166-168.
 23. Hasan al-Banna, *Mudhakkirat al-dawah wa-al-daiyah*, pp. 85-86; Rauf al-Shalabi, *Al-Shaykh Hasan al-Banna* (Cairo, 1978), pp. 140-145.
 24. Hasan al-Banna, *Majmuat rasail - Risalat al-mutamar al-khamis*, pp. 270-271; 274.
 25. Rabi and Khalaf Allah, p. 164.
 26. Ibid, pp. 23-25.

27. Raslan, pp. 498-499.
28. Al-Banna wrote the forward to the book *How Do We Proselytize People? (Kayfa nad'u al-nas)* written by a Brotherhood member, saying he is glad that such a book has been written; another book, *The Preachers' Card (Tadhkirat al-dua)*, by al-Bahi al-Khuli acquired al-Banna's dedication.
29. Raslan, pp. 501-502.
30. The Muslim Brotherhood is seen today as a leading opposition organization in many countries. However, in its formative stage the movement made an effort to cooperate with the Egyptian government on a range of educational policy matters. In 1935, for example, it sent a delegation to Najib al-Hilali, Minister of Education, which succeeded, among other things, to moving Islamic studies to the beginning of the school day. In 1946 the society was officially invited by Muhammad Hasan al-Ashmawi, Minister of Education, to participate in the governmental program to fight illiteracy. Moreover, important Brotherhood pamphlets, among them "Toward the Light" (1946), were sent to the king and important figures.
31. Sayyid Qutb, "Naqd kitab mustaqbal al-thaqafah," pp. 36; 44-45.
32. Dore Gold, *Hatred's Kingdom: How Saudi Arabia Supports the New Global Terrorism* (Washington, DC: Regnery, 2003), p. 90.
33. Rifat al-Said, *Hasan al-Banna: Mata ... kayfa ... wa-limadha* (Cairo: Maktabat Madbuli, 1977), p. 510.
34. Muhammad Shawqi Zaki, *al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun wa-al-mujtama' al-Misri* (Cairo: Dar al-Ansar, 1980), pp. 195-198.
35. Mitchell, p. 201.
36. Rifat al-Said, p. 73.
37. Brynjar Lia, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers in Egypt* (Reading: Ithaca Press, 1998), p. 167.
38. Ibid, p. 168
39. Raslan, pp. 517-518.
40. Ibid, p. 406, refers to "Risalat al-anashid" (1935); Abd al-Halim brings the words of their anthem, pp. 165-166.
41. Brotherhood leaders and ideologues today see the Palestinian struggle in the 1930s and 1940s as the ultimate expression of the education towards *jihad*. But it appears that they exaggerate the role played by the Brotherhood in this struggle. This has probably been influenced by the activities of Hamas, the Brotherhood's Palestinian branch, which was established in the 1980s.
42. Roald, p. 118.
43. Abd al-Fattah M. El-Awaisi, "Jihdi Education and the Society of the Egyptian Muslim Brothers: 1928-49," *Journal of beliefs and values*, (vol. 21 no. 2), October 2000, p. 216
44. Hasan al-Banna, "Mudhakkirat al-dawah wa-al-daiyah," pp. 150-151.
45. Awaisi, p. 218.
46. Ibid, p. 215.
47. Khalaf Allah, pp. 188-189.
48. Mustafa Mashhur, "Al-Imam Hasan al-Banna ... wa-maalim ala al-tariq" in Hasan al-Banna, *Fiqh al-waqa* (Cairo: Dar al-Kalimah, 1999), p. 244.
49. Awaisi, pp. 220-221
50. Gilles Kepel, "The Brotherhood in the Salafist Universe," in Hillel Fradkin, Husain Haqqani, and Eric Brown, eds., *Current Trends in Islamist Ideology*, vol. 6 (2008), p. 24.
51. Youssef M. Ibrahim, "Jordan Feels Change within as Muslims Pursue Agenda," *New York Times*, December 26, 1992.
52. In her 1994 book on Islamic education in Jordan and Malaysia, the Swedish scholar Anne Sofie

Roald discovered that the formal educational program of the Brotherhood's Jordanian branch was especially well-developed. This was due in part to the relative openness of the state to the Brotherhood, as well as to the Brotherhood's involvement in the educational ministry. In addition to the Quran and the Hadith, the syllabus of this program includes significant works of Brotherhood ideologues and other prominent figures known to have influenced the Brotherhood doctrine over the years. In addition to Hasan al-Banna, Said Hawwa, and Said and Muhammad Qutb, Roald cites such names as Fathi Yakan, Abd Allah Azzam, Yusuf al-Qaradawi, the South Asian revivalists Maulana Mawdudi (founder of the Jamaat-e-Islami) and Abu al-Hasan al-Nadwi. Many of the books she particularly refers to are actually known for their anti-Western and pro-Jihadi views. These include Said Qutb's remarkable interpretation of the Quran, *In the Shade of the Quran (fi zilal al-Quran)*, as well as *Milestones (Maalim fi-al-tariq)*. Roald also identifies Fathi Yakan's *What is Meant by Belonging to Islam? (Madha yani intimai li-al-Islam)* as an important work. In this treatise, Yakan explains, among other things, that a Muslim's obligation to God can only be fulfilled by belonging to an Islamic movement that struggles to make Islam the dominant social and political force in the world. See Anne Sofie Roald, *Tarbiya: Education and Politics in Islamic Movements in Jordan and Malaysia* (Lund, Sweden: Religionshistoriska Avdelningen, Lunds Universitet, 1994)

53. Yusuf al-Qaradawi, *Al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn: 70 'amman fi al-da'wah wa-al-tarbiyah wa-al-jihad: bi-munasabat murur sab'in 'aman 'ala tasis Jama'at al-Ikhwān al-Muslimīn wa-khamsin 'aman 'ala istishhad muassis al-Jama'ah Hasan al-Banna* (Cairo: Maktabat Wahbah, 1999).
54. Ibid, p. 11.
55. Ibid, p. 78.
56. Ibid, pp. 73; 75.
57. Yusuf al-Qaradawi, *Al-Tarbiya al-Islamiyya wa-madrasat Hasan al-Banna* (Cairo, Maktabat Wahbah, 1979), pp. 39-40.
58. Ibid, p. 76.
59. Yusuf al-Qaradawi, *Awlawiyat al-Harakah al-Islamiyya fi-al-marhalah al-kadimah* (Cairo: Maktabat Wahbah, 1991), p. 16.
60. Yusuf al-Qaradawi, *Al-Tarbiya al-Islamiyya*, p. 6