

HASAN AL-BANNA

RKUD 3030 : METHODS OF DA'WAH
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A Brief Background of Hasan al-Banna's Life (1906-1949)

Hasan al-Banna was born in 1906, to a licentiate, prayer leader and religious teacher who was also a watch-repairer. al-Banna was hence given a rigorous religious orientation and was exposed to Sufi influence from a young age as he participated in the *al-Hassafiyya* Sufi order. The order followed the Shari'ah strictly and sought to correct public morality at the same time as Christian missionaries extending their outreach by helping orphans¹. What went on to shape al-Banna's outlook is the nationalistic activism that broke out during al-Banna's teenage years, after the First World War as Egyptians demonstrated for the removal of the British occupation. al-Banna then got involved in Islamic reform societies to later establish another reform society, the *Hassafi Welfare Society* with some friends². al-Banna later continued his studies for 4 years at *Dar al-'Ulum* in Cairo. There, he witnessed first-hand the secularist and Western influences at play. When he graduated and was posted to teach at Ismailiyya in 1927, a Suez Canal town where the British had set up their military camps, he was again exposed to foreign domination and its detrimental effects. Their presence had widespread impact on the social and cultural life and exacerbated the social inequalities there³. He was particularly concerned about educated Egyptians being swept by Western ideas who would then have the propensity to reject Islam. al-Banna was determined to reform the un-Islamic practices of the town. He set out to the coffee-shops (*qahawi*) to revive the message of Islam, which to his pleasant surprise, attracted the people. One day in 1928, six of his followers came to him to ask him to lead them. From then, the Muslim Brothers (*al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun*) was formed.

The core objective of the Muslim Brotherhood was initially to propagate the true Islam with the motto "Islam as a way of life"⁴. As al-Banna was very much inspired by pan-Islamic and reformist notions of modernists Jamal al-Din al-Afghani and Muhammad Abduh, he dreamt of a return to the times of the 4 Righteous Caliphs⁵. With that, he strove to put an end to foreign control in Egypt. The Brotherhood went on to establish more branches in the Canal Zone areas in the few years after its formation. From 3 branches in 1931, it grew to a nation-wide movement of more than a hundred branches by 1936⁶. Within 10 years of its founding, the Society had its own press, periodicals and

¹ Ali Rahnama, 2005, *Pioneers of Islamic Revival*, Zed Books, p129.

² Brynjar Lia, 1998, *Society of the Muslims Brothers in Egypt, The Rise of an Islamic Mass Movement 1928-1942*, Garnet Publishing Limited, p27.

³ Ibid, p30.

⁴ Gamal al-Banna, younger brother of Hasan al-Banna in 2016 "*The Brotherhood : Investigating the Muslim Brotherhood – Documentary*", 8:36-37min. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5C1NyDnGfW8>

⁵ Charles Wendell, 1978, *Five Tracts of Hasan Al-Banna (1906-1949) A Selection from the Majmu'at Rasa'il al-Imam al-Shahid Hasan al-Banna*, University of California Press, p3.

⁶ Lia, *Society of the Muslims Brothers in Egypt, The Rise of an Islamic Mass Movement 1928-1942*, p53.

programmes⁷. al-Banna also took an inclination towards politics with the aim of establishing a fair land (*baldatun tayyibah*) and eradicating corruption and injustices by those in power. The Muslim Brothers started campaigning against the British occupation and in 1948, a Muslim Brother assassinated Egypt's Prime Minister, Mahmoud an-Nukhrashi Pasha who was deemed to be a puppet to the British imperialist. In a matter of one and a half months after the Prime Minister's assassination, al-Banna was killed by secret police⁸.

Looking back at his short life, one wonders how was al-Banna so successful that his small group of 6 followers in 1928 ballooned to become a global movement of branches in 70 countries⁹ and multiple organisations set up across the world espousing his ideas up till today? In fact, by 1937 The Muslim Brotherhood was founded in Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Palestine, Syria, Lebanon, Morocco, Bahrain, Hadramawt, Hyderabad, Djibouti and Paris¹⁰ and by 1944, there were more than 800 branches in Egypt¹¹. There is a myriad of reasons why. For the purposes of this paper, we will deliberate on 3 main reasons, amongst others. The first was that al-Banna had a clear objective in wanting to elevate Islamic understanding of people of various levels of education and place in society, in a time of degrading morality. Secondly, al-Banna used different ways to reach to the different groups of people from oral speeches to regular articles and publications and even personal letters to rulers. Last but not least, al-Banna was comprehensive in his overall strategy and showed foresightedness in his planning and execution that saw the Brotherhood springing up beyond the shores of Egypt.

Hasan al-Banna's Da'wah Methodology – His Emphasis on Islamic Education

al-Banna was clear in his initial goal of moral reform through education – developing Muslims to understand Islam correctly¹². He swiftly operationalised this objective into words and actions. al-Banna broadcasted the need for reformation as he vehemently criticised the foreign powers for exposing Muslims to immoral ways and non-Islamic practices. He held that Islam was the solution to all aspects of people's lives and created the balance between the spiritual and practical realms¹³. He

⁷ Rahnama, *Pioneers of Islamic Revival*, p132.

⁸ Ibid., p133.

⁹ David Bukay, 2008, *From Muhammad to Bin Laden Religious and Ideological Sources of the Homicide Bombers Phenomenon*, Transaction Publishers, p206.

¹⁰ Lia, *Society of the Muslims Brothers in Egypt, The Rise of an Islamic Mass Movement 1928-1942*, p155.

¹¹ Ibid., p285.

¹² Ibid., p37.

¹³ Ahmad S. Moussalli, 1999, *Moderate and Radical Islamic Fundamentalism: The Quest for Modernity, Legitimacy, and the Islamic State*, University Press of Florida, p108.

first wrote an article in the Islamic journal, *Majallat al-Fath*, highlighting his growing concern about the plight of Muslims with the foreign-responsible deviations from Islam. In addition, he also took a stab at the Egyptian elite class for allowing the socio-economic disparities to grow. While he partly blamed the al-Azhar scholars for contributing to the society's inaccurate interpretations of Islam, he attributed Muslims' vulnerability to Western influence of immorality, atheism and injustices also to Muslims' lack of understanding of their own religion¹⁴. With that belief, he emphasised a lot on the importance of Islamic education (*tarbiya Islamiyya*) in his articles and speeches¹⁵.

al-Banna walked the talk. He not only spoke about the importance of Islamic education and chided those who had a part in the deterioration of morals and Islamic teachings; he proactively took part in its delivery as well. To reach out to various groups of Muslims, he gave lectures to the young educated people at Islamic reform societies as well as preached at the coffee shops and mosques. When the Brotherhood formalised, he started a School of Moral Discipline (*Madrasat al-Tahdhib*) where Qur'an recitation, memorisation and commentaries were taught alongside prophetic traditions, history of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and his Companions (ra) as well as other practical and spiritual matters. He merged both religious knowledge and practical abilities such as public speaking skills¹⁶, which we would uncover to prove very useful. al-Banna had evidently recognised the concept of *waqi'iyah* (reality) into his *da'wah* framework. With the intent to increase the "moral upbringing" (*tahdhib*) of the members, they were also given practical guidance on the spirit of brotherhood and selflessness. He was not just idealistic, but pragmatic as well. All in all, to ensure that the different branches of knowledge were well-understood by people of various levels, al-Banna communicated them in a simplified manner.

After the construction of its first mosque, the Brotherhood built a school for 200 boys above its first mosque and a girls' school followed suit shortly later¹⁷. As if that was not enough, al-Banna also managed night schools for the workers and peasants to equip them with the necessary Islamic knowledge and practical skills to engage in *da'wah*. In the 1930s, the practical portions were developed further and special courses for propagandists were introduced to prepare young Brothers to become propagandists or *du'ah*. al-Banna created a twenty-page tract to prepare the *du'ah* for preaching to various levels of society. Later, as the Brotherhood expanded and students'

¹⁴ Rahnama, *Pioneers of Islamic Revival*, p133.

¹⁵ Lia, *Society of the Muslims Brothers in Egypt, The Rise of an Islamic Mass Movement 1928-1942*, p37.

¹⁶ Ibid., p37.

¹⁷ Ibid., p40.

membership increased exponentially, al-Banna made an effort to speak to the student population of the Brotherhood by way of weekly Tuesday talks named known as *Hadith al-thalatha*¹⁸ and Thursday lectures. The Brotherhood also went on to develop a systematic expansion of Qur'an schools to eradicate illiteracy (*muharabat al-ummiyya*) at the end of the 1930s while the young ones continued the tradition of spreading the teachings at the coffee shops and unconventional places¹⁹ as well as the countryside.

Hasan al-Banna's Da'wah Methodology – His Exhaustive Outreach Approach

al-Banna's worldview was that Islam is a comprehensive religion for all, including both the masses and the privileged²⁰. This influenced his approach as he exhausted different means to promote his ideas and garner support from various groups of society. His myriad of methods included writings that appealed to the learned, public speaking sessions in unconventional spaces that attracted the non-mosque goers, forming personal bonds with students that greatly increased the student affiliation to the Brotherhood, *da'wah* tours in the countryside through the local notables and reaching out to the state leaders of the country and Arab world in a bid for Islamic governance and justice. On top of al-Banna's use of mass media such as articles, speeches and tracts, the Brothers had employed marches, rallies, chants, banners, posters and leaflets to increase the Brotherhood's visibility²¹.

al-Banna regularly wrote in *Majallat al-Fath* which readily gave him space for his articles²². The Brotherhood then established its own newspaper, *Jaridat al-Ikhwān al-Muslimin*, in 1933 and other internal publications which acted as vital vehicles in circulating al-Banna's ideologies. al-Banna produced a set of tracts where he presented his views articulately and persuasively at length citing Qur'anic verses, hadith and views of Islamic jurists as evidence²³. In the tracts, he also exhorted his members to remain focused on the goals and work of the Brotherhood and the Islamic mission as a religious obligation to uplift the society, based upon their belief and fear of God. With his frequent reminders of God to the people, the *rabbaniyyah* or divinity characteristic is clearly prevalent in al-

¹⁸ Gudrun Kraemer, 2009, *Hasan al-Banna*, Oneworld Publications.

¹⁹ Lia, *Society of the Muslims Brothers in Egypt, The Rise of an Islamic Mass Movement 1928-1942*, p111.

²⁰ Moussalli, *Moderate and Radical Islamic Fundamentalism: The Quest for Modernity, Legitimacy, and the Islamic State*, p108.

²¹ Kramer, *Hasan al-Banna*.

²² Lia, *Society of the Muslims Brothers in Egypt, The Rise of an Islamic Mass Movement 1928-1942*, p30.

²³ Wendell, *Five Tracts of Hasan Al-Banna (1906-1949) A Selection from the Majmu'at Rasa'il al-Imam al-Shahid Hasan al-Banna*.

Banna's *da'wah* efforts. The tracts had also undoubtedly helped to align and unite the Brotherhood as well as assisted to develop a strong resolve, unwavering firmness and deep-seated beliefs in the Brothers. He also restarted another serious scholarly Islamic journal – *al-Manar*²⁴, although he maintained that academic material was limited in its outreach. On a whole however, his stellar writings earned him his popularity and enhanced his reputation.

He resolved to build a new generation of young Muslims who would use new ways of mass media to engage particularly the educated youth, who were ignorant of Islamic teachings and charmed by the liberal Western practices. His excellent oratorical skills drew the educated ones to listen to him. His first novel approach of preaching at the coffee shops is something to be applauded. This way, he could reach out to people who may not be frequenting the mosques and may not be familiar with true Islamic teachings. His sessions at the coffee shops should be viewed as supplementary to the teachings at the mosques, rather than a mock of the latter. At a time when Internet and social media had not yet existed, the Brotherhood took this unique outreach exercise at the coffee shops a step further, where its various branches would later preach at places where people would least expect such as weddings and funerals²⁵.

With al-Banna's vision to mobilise the young to disseminate ideologies, students who joined the Brotherhood were given a special place. al-Banna stated in his tract 'To the Youth and Especially the Students', that "...[The youth are] the firm pillar of any developing and nascent nation." He gave these students personalised attention and took great care in forming close relationships with them. The Brotherhood's Rover Scouts was formed and it held summer camps with sports, religious and social elements as a non-intrusive tactic to attract the young and acquaint them with the religion. This plus their parades with loudspeakers²⁶, led to the recruitment of more students. al-Banna had himself made time to give weekly hadith talks on Tuesdays and lectures on Thursdays to the student body. The Brotherhood also acted as a source of support for educated youth from rural backgrounds who moved to the cities for studies²⁷. The numbers swelled and student conferences became a feature of the Brotherhood, on top of its regular annual conferences for all. Both types of conferences were to communicate, align and reinforce al-Banna's vision, goals and actions to the entire Brotherhood. al-Banna's model of rallying passionate, idealistic and energetic young students

²⁴ Kramer, *Hasan al-Banna*.

²⁵ Lia, *Society of the Muslims Brothers in Egypt, The Rise of an Islamic Mass Movement 1928-1942*, p33.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p 171.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p86.

has been replicated till this very day as student associations sprang up in Britain, France, Germany, Netherlands²⁸ and United States of America.

Others outside the city area were not forgotten. al-Banna made visits to the poor countryside of Egypt to ensure that his *da'wah* had spread to the villages and towns. He made it a point to make the local mosque the first stop each time he visited these areas. Nothing was without purpose and this again showed his intelligence and astuteness. With al-Banna's religious inclination and by him giving them their due respect, he easily won over the religious leaders of the local communities. This allowed the Brotherhood access to the networks attached to the mosques and the local authorities. The solid training that al-Banna gave the people including regular men in both religious ideologies as well as oratorical skills proved beneficial. With those networks, the Brothers became quick disseminators of al-Banna's ideas to towns and villages in Egypt²⁹ as they preached in the local mosques and prayer places in the village with much ease and sizeable audience, unlike other rivals of the Brotherhood. The Brotherhood also organised Islamic feasts to celebrate certain occasions such as the Prophet ﷺ's Birthday, where the Brothers would use loudspeakers and pamphlets to publicise their lectures. These networks became an important supply of followers for the Brotherhood. al-Banna and the Brothers later continued to earn the trust and support of the locals as they extended social work into the towns and villages with lower classes and poorer areas³⁰.

al-Banna's resolve to reach as many people included the rulers and leaders. He touched base with Islamic leaders from around the region via telegrams to inform them of the movement and by 1935, the Brothers had established connections overseas³¹. He then wrote letters to the King of Egypt, its Prime Minister and Ministers in a bid to establish an Islamic rule and exterminate corruption. The Brotherhood had also earlier reached out to King Fu'ad to clamp down the work of missionaries. In his letters, al-Banna called for social justice and an elevation of Islam in Egypt while his tract states that only one fifth of the people possess education and that 90% are susceptible to physical infirmity³², presumably due to little or no access to healthcare. He advocated that it was the duty of

²⁸ Ed. By Roel Meijer and Edwin Bakker, 2012, *The Muslim Brotherhood in Europe*, Columbia University Press, p1-23.

²⁹ Lia, *Society of the Muslims Brothers in Egypt, The Rise of an Islamic Mass Movement 1928-1942*, p37.

³⁰ Ibid., p112.

³¹ Ibid., p154.

³² Wendell, *Five Tracts of Hasan Al-Banna (1906-1949) A Selection from the Majmu'at Rasa'il al-Imam al-Shahid Hasan al-Banna*, p32.

the government to attend to the people's needs and carry out the Islamic cause³³. al-Banna's bold move to connect with the leaders emulated the steps of Prophet ﷺ as Prophet ﷺ too had similarly written to the Byzantine, Persian, Abyssinian, Egyptian, Bahrain and Syrian leaders to invite them to Islam.

Hasan al-Banna's Da'wah Methodology – His Comprehensive, Foresighted Strategy & Execution

With the view that Islam provides a complete framework for all affairs, al-Banna had a well thought-out strategy on how he was going to yield reforms in religious, social and political matters, amongst others³⁴. His vision was for Islam to permeate all aspects of life, thereby his *da'wah* strategy and execution inculcated this *al-shumul* or comprehensiveness. His approach to make his vision come true included firstly, building the society from bottom up, that is from the individual; secondly, uniting the people based on common beliefs and values, with an open concept as well as by creating social justice and equality; and thirdly, being self-sufficient in funding and resources to avoid being subservient to any other cause besides Islam.

al-Banna's plan was to start with religious education. He recognised the need to produce an unshakeable spiritual strength in the people, rather than the need for material resources. Hence, he prioritised building a strong creed in the people. As a teacher familiar with pedagogy, he also focused developing the religious education on practical aspects instead of theoretical ones. Coupled with the spiritual conviction, the practicality helped the Brothers to implement the religion in real-life contexts and operationalise the ideologies. In a short span of 20 years from his first teaching stint until his death, al-Banna managed to establish what he had set out to do – to raise the Islamic knowledge and practice amongst the people amidst inevitable unIslamic influences of opulence, selfishness and depravity of that time. His baby steps accelerated and took off. From publishing articles at the same time as roaming the coffee shops, he went on to build schools that taught a myriad of theological and practical subjects to all categories of people – children, youths and adults – from all sorts of backgrounds.

New generations of preachers, teachers, administrators and leaders were formed from his training programme which allowed the Brotherhood to extend their outreach and expand their scope of

³³ Lia, *Society of the Muslims Brothers in Egypt, The Rise of an Islamic Mass Movement 1928-1942*, p67.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p54.

work effectively, without compromising on the quality of their work. An efficient framework of “train the trainers” began to take place. With more qualified manpower, the organisation could spread its outreach from the cities to the rural countryside, increasing its support base. This endeavour to raise as many Muslims to be strong in their Islamic faith and practice was based on the idea that these individuals would then build a family based on those principles which would in turn develop a solid *ummah* who would be capable and inclined to establish an Islamic governing system³⁵. His foresight in prioritising what was needed produced rippling effects even during his short lifetime.

With a vision to unite the *ummah*, al-Banna espoused the genuinity and sincerity of the bonds between Muslims, in his tract. Literally, it is about the Muslim brotherhood. He maintained that differences are unavoidable³⁶ and stressed the need to evade theological controversies that could break the Muslim solidarity. He held that our commonalities were greater and had even attempted to bridge the Salafi-Sufi as well as Sunni-Shi’a divide³⁷. His *da’wah* style was to permeate *al-alamiyah* (universality) of Islam to the people, regardless of the sect, tribe or nation they were from.

Still on uniting people, al-Banna made *da’wah* to all people, regardless of their religiosity levels. He did not show any distinction in his interactions with people as he adopted an ‘open-door policy’ and accepted Muslims who were not fully practising Islam as he believed that they would repent. He quoted a scholar, Muhammad Sa’id al-’Urfi in his Memoir who advised him not to close the door on people who ‘come short of fulfilling all their duties towards God’ yet be wary of those who pray but will cause harm³⁸. Here, al-Banna utilised *taysir* (easiness) and *takhfif* (moderation) in his *da’wah* policy. This flexible demeanour of not just preaching to the converted must have allowed the regular folk to freely join al-Banna’s sessions and causes without feeling inadequate, which eventually helped in increasing his influence amongst the wider population.

Another strategy al-Banna used to unite the people was to remove stereotypical barriers between the people. al-Banna was known to have given opportunities, or even favoured the lay men. Social justice was one of the top agendas of the Brotherhood and they strove to reduce the gap between

³⁵ Larry Poston, 1992, *Islamic Da’wah in the West: Muslim Missionary Activity and the Dynamics of Conversion to Islam*, Oxford University Press, p67.

³⁶ Wendell, *Five Tracts of Hasan Al-Banna (1906-1949) A Selection from the Majmu’at Rasa’il al-Imam al-Shahid Hasan al-Banna*, p57.

³⁷ Lia, *Society of the Muslims Brothers in Egypt, The Rise of an Islamic Mass Movement 1928-1942*, p82.

³⁸ Kraemer, *Hasan al-Banna*.

the echelons. al-Banna appointed a carpenter³⁹ to be his assistant in Ismailiyya and an ironer to head the School of Moral Discipline. One of the reasons of an internal dispute in the Brotherhood was due to al-Banna's decision to double the salary of the prayer leader and the handyman⁴⁰. He was reframing the people's minds with the idea of equality among the people, as what Islam enjoins and that promotion should be based on merit, not on class. al-Banna had no qualms with placing lay people from the lower rungs of the educated class in esteemed positions and to award them their due wages. This non-elitist approach and meritocratic principle adopted by al-Banna naturally resonated with the lay men who were far remote from traditionally upper-class-dominated opportunities and earned him the approval of the masses. In addition, as programmes and reforms were advocated by the non-elites in the Brotherhood, this heightened the credibility of the movement. Yet, at the same time, he maintained ties with the elites that allowed the Brothers to enlist them for help when necessary⁴¹. al-Banna demonstrates in his thoughtful strategy which stemmed from his value of equality, the power of mobilising the masses and keeping the notables close through shared ideals.

On top of eradicating social classes, social justice was also in the form of caring for the needs of the poor and sick. Not wanting to wait for change by the government and as the Brotherhood's capacity increased, al-Banna took it upon himself and the Brotherhood to provide charity and social services. Their first pharmacy was established in 1933 for the public, followed by health clinics and hospitals. By 1938, the hospital in al-Mansura was treating 50-100 people per day and offered free medicine⁴². Such community-focused welfare appealed to the masses and even doctors to join the Brotherhood and its selfless social causes. This effort increased the Brothers' visibility amongst the people and was a covert and subtle strategy of showcasing the Brothers' concern for humanity from their love for God, inevitably appealing the masses to the religion of Islam. Furthermore, not only was the cause commendable. To establish relatively large institutions such as clinics and hospitals, the Brotherhood must also have been a well-organised structure to have facilitated such rapid mobilisation of forces to build these public amenities. Championing humanitarian causes in the name of *maslahah* or interest for the people was in itself a *da'wah* strategy that al-Banna utilised.

³⁹ Lia, *Society of the Muslims Brothers in Egypt, The Rise of an Islamic Mass Movement 1928-1942*, p39.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p60.

⁴¹ Ibid., p281.

⁴² Ibid., p111.

Last but not least, another key tactic al-Banna used was that he was careful not to be dependent on funding from government or political parties so as to maintain a free rein over its programmes, services and ideologies. This was surprising as al-Banna was himself a government employee. The Brothers obtained the required monies from internal fund-raising, subscriptions and donations⁴³. They were also cognizant not to be reliant on a single organisation lest it may stop its funding. This is a useful consideration for *da'wah* organisations as being indebted to others may colour their objectivity, agenda as well as in the Brotherhood's case, political orientation. al-Banna maintained that to be politically apathetic is not Islamic. As the Brotherhood grew in their resources, scope of work and support base, political interest became inevitable for the organisation as it became increasingly clear that the political party in power needed to have an Islamic orientation to implement an Islamic order and defend the Shari'ah Law in the country. Despite the challenges of being financially autonomous and self-sustaining, al-Banna's Brotherhood grew larger and larger by the day. The sheer fact that the Brotherhood was able to fund its projects and programmes reflects its ability as an organisation to run fund-raisers and seek contributions efficiently and successfully. This foresightedness and grit to remain autonomous from any affiliations to the government or organisation allowed al-Banna and the Brotherhood to continue pressing for the ideal Islamic holistic system.

Conclusion

Hasan al-Banna was a powerful da'i who practised as he preached, walked the talk and put words into actions. He was also an extremely visionary, determined and remarkable individual who had full conviction in the religion to bring about winds of change. The institutionalised challenges such as foreign control, indifferent government officials and depraving morality did not shake al-Banna's resoluteness in his vision of the ideal state of the Muslim nations and their people, and his tenacity to realise it. He established how the foreign influence was in direct opposition to the religion of Allah swt. He was a man clear in his goals and who did not merely relay his ideologies but who carried them out. Knowing that education shapes people's worldviews and therefore actions, al-Banna started his work on increasing Islamic knowledge amongst the people to guide them to Allah swt and to ensure that they know their objectives in life. He was also radical in that he took to the coffee shops and showed importance to the regular folk who were neither religious, held high ranks nor had material wealth. He was wise in utilising the various modes of public engagement from writings to speeches to tours in order to suit the level of the audience and managed to rally the lay people,

⁴³ Lia, *Society of the Muslims Brothers in Egypt, The Rise of an Islamic Mass Movement 1928-1942*, p281.

local dignitaries, students, the educated as well as the elites to increase his support base and disseminate his philosophies to the wider public. He united the people with his prolific writings and eloquent speeches on shared goals. Charity, social work and political involvement became newer arms of the Brotherhood as it sought comprehensiveness in its work and beneficial outcomes. Yet, al-Banna managed to keep the Brothers independent of external funding so as to keep true to their vision, objectives and values.

Throughout his *da'wah* efforts, al-Banna was consistent in entrenching *rabbaniyya* (divinity) and *insaniyyah* (humanity) in his programmes as he frequently drew the people back to their purpose of life as servants of God yet took into account the limitations of the people. He also practised *taysir* (ease) and *takhfif* (moderation) in his dealings with people and embedded *waqi'iyyah* (reality) in his teachings as he wanted to prepare the Muslims with relevant skills. In addition, al-Banna attempted to bridge the divide between Muslims with *al-'alamiyyah* (universality) of Islam. As he gained support by taking into consideration the *maslahah* (interest) of the people, over time, al-Banna's movement garnered increasing *haymanah* (hegemony) over the people. His *da'wah* also had the characteristic of *shumul* (comprehensiveness) as he used Islam to relate to all grounds of life and did what he could in his capacity to establish *baldatun tayyibah* (a fair land) by a just government.

The worldwide inspiration for Islamic groups and societies and their Islamisation today is testament to Hasan al-Banna's lasting legacy and the success of his work. Almost 70 years on, he remains an individual widely-studied by both Muslims and non-Muslims. As with anyone and anything, there are rooms for improvement to al-Banna's *da'wah* methodology. In his defence, he was young and his experience took place on the go. His death at an early age also meant that he did not live till his golden years to be able to improvise his *da'wah* and the Brotherhood movement based on his wealth of experiences. It was also a turbulent time in Egypt. The extent he achieved in his young and short life cannot be belittled and is by far one of the greatest accomplishments of modern Muslim *du'ah*. We have much to learn from studying the life of Hasan al-Banna as a *da'i*.