

A Bridge to Inter-Religious Co-operation: the Gülen–Jesuit Educational Nexus

by Michael David Graskemper

The Gülen movement's educational mission is, at its core and in its praxis, remarkably similar to the centuries-old Jesuit educational tradition. It can be argued that both educational movements are united in a *shared* mission today – a deep concern for the spiritual freedom of the individual and a commitment to the betterment of the world. Both movements seek to instil values such as honesty, dedication, compassion and tolerance. To achieve this goal, students are offered a narrative of the past as a foundation on which to build an understanding of the modern world. Furthermore, they are educated holistically – in ethics and social justice as well as the sciences – what Gülen calls a 'marriage of mind and heart'.

This paper focuses on four shared values of education: commitment, responsibility, virtue and service. Within this framework, themes found in the Gülen educational movement, such as the Golden Generation and the concept of *hizmet*, are compared to similar Jesuit notions such as A.M.D.G., *cura personalis*, and 'Men and Women for Others'. Differences and nuances are also addressed in the paper. The discussion aims to highlight the importance of values-oriented education in the modern world. The Gülen–Jesuit educational nexus is one positive bridge to inter-religious understanding and, importantly, collaborative action.

Panel:
Gülen Movement in Peace
Building and
Conflict Resolution

Venue:
D202,
Clement House, LSE

27.10.07 Panels	Parellel Session 1	Parellel Session 2
9:30-11:30		
13:00-15:00		Presentation: 07
15:10-17:00		

Michael David Graskemper (BA in Theology, Xavier University, Cincinnati, Ohio, where he focused on History, Classics and Peace Studies; MA in Religious Studies, John Carroll University, Cleveland, Ohio): Coordinator of the Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Islamic Studies Program at Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass., and a curriculum development assistant at Harvard Law School's Program on Negotiation. Currently on leave from a Masters in Theological Studies at Weston Jesuit School of Theology, Cambridge, Mass., to do coursework in Islamic Studies and languages at Harvard. His publications include: 'Reflections on the Third Flash of Bediüzzaman Said Nursi', *The Fountain* 52 (Oct.–Dec/ 2005). Research interests: religious education; inter-religious dialogue and conflict resolution; Sufism, Ottoman history; Islamic art and literature.

**Michael David
Graskemper**

md.graskemper@gulenconference.org.uk