



27.10.07

SATURDAY

Dialogue Work Through NI-TECA, a Gülen-inspired Organisation Based in Northern Ireland

by *Jonathan Lacey*

Panel:
Gülen Movement in Peace
Building and
Conflict Resolution

Venue:
D202,
Clement House, LSE

26.10.07 Panels	Parallel Session 1	Parallel Session 2
9:30-11:30		
13:00-15:00		Presentation: 06
15:10-17:00		

Until the peace agreement of 1998 the Catholics and Protestants of Northern Ireland were pedantically focused on what separates these two identities. Following the end of the decades-long ‘civil war’, reconciliation has led to increased migration to the region, which now hosts more than 20,000 people from ethnic minority backgrounds. This means that there are now more than just two identity communities in Northern Ireland.

This paper focuses on an unlikely actor in this peace-building endeavour, a Turkic religio-cultural organisation, the Northern Ireland–Tolerance, Educational and Cultural Association (NI-TECA), inspired by the Turkish Islamic scholar Fethullah Gülen. The paper relies on ethnographic work and qualitative interviews conducted with members of NI-TECA, and draws on the writings of Fethullah Gülen and others to explain the organisation’s principles and policies as implemented by NI-TECA. The paper also reflects on the global influence of Fethullah Gülen’s ideas, of which the existence and work of NI-TECA is an illustration.

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Jonathan Lacey: studying for a PhD in the Department of Sociology in Trinity College Dublin, where he completed an MPhil in Ethnic and Racial Studies. Part-time research assistant with one of Intel’s Senior Ethnographic Researchers, focusing on Independent Living for older people. Current interests: the sociology of religion, social movements and global networks.