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27.10.07

SATURDAY

The Educational Theory of Fethullah Gülen and its Practice in South Africa

by *Yasien Mohamed*

Panel:
Education and Common
Values in Practice

Venue:
D202,
Clement House, LSE

26.10.07 Panels	Parallel Session 1	Parallel Session 2
9:30-11:30		Presentation: 02
13:00-15:00		
15:10-17:00		

This paper deals with the educational thought of Fethullah Gülen and its application in a school in South Africa. It will attempt to demonstrate the effectiveness of the school, both academically and in the promotion of universal moral values. The Gülen school provides an alternative both to the Muslim private school and the general private school. Unlike the latter, it gives more attention to moral values, and unlike the former, it is open to all learners irrespective of religious persuasion. It provides a service to society in the transmission of knowledge to humanity, and in cultivating moral values such as responsibility, tolerance, respect, reliability and compassion.

The paper is divided into three parts: First, it introduces the problem of educational dichotomy within the Turkish context since 1924, and how Fethullah Gülen attempted to reconcile science and religion, at least theoretically. Second, it presents the educational philosophy of Fethullah Gülen, especially his moral philosophy as inspired by Miskawayh's (d. 1030) psychology of the soul and his view of the role of the teacher, both in the transmission of knowledge and moral values. Third, it discusses the practice of Gülen's educational philosophy in South Africa, with special reference to Star International School, Cape Town, covering the religious motivations of the teachers, the moral ethos of the school, and educational problems and challenges.

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