

Contribution of the Gulen Movement in Educational Reforms

Thesis for M.Phil

Islamic Thought and Civilization



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ABSTRACT

Fethullah Gulen is a Muslim scholar of Turkey who is a preacher, philosopher who have clear and effective concepts about the need and value of education in progressing societies. He is the motivating force behind a very original and humanistic movement called *Hizmet* Movement' which is a Turkish word meaning service movement. This emphasis of Gulen on education and selfless social service soon took the form of a movement commonly known as the *Hizmet* movement. This *Hizmet* Movement is thus a social movement. The name *Hizmet* in Turkey means self-less service. The Movement grew from a small group of people associated with Gulen in the late 1960s to millions of his fans and followers at the end of the century. The *Hizmet* movement's success is based on volunteer efforts on the part of people inspired and motivated by the elite vision of Fethullah Gulen. It began as a local service by a group of parents, teachers and students, and small business owners who gathered around the Turkish social philosopher Fethullah Gulen in the city of Izmir in Turkey. Since then the movement has continuously grown so much so that over the last 40 years it has become a transnational educational service program with hundreds of professional associations.

Gulen observed that social problems cannot be overcome without education because it is education which improves the level of men to a status of a new generation which has all the knowledge and approach to understand and resolve social problems. Therefore this movement greatly contributes towards the spread of education in Turkey and in other parts of the world through schools. The Gulen-inspired schools are religiously neutral institutions promoted by generous, entrepreneurs, altruistic teachers and devoted parents. Using high quality teaching methods and achieving high level academic results, many of these schools rank among the best educational institutions in their countries. Each school uses the curriculum of the host country, with English as the main language of teaching. These schools provide scholarships for the students who cannot afford tuition. In addition, these schools are symbols of peaceful

coexistence and selfless service to all nations. They also serve as a stage for interfaith harmony and world peace, especially in strife-torn areas such as Afghanistan, Macedonia, Iraq, Philippines, Kenya and Bosnia. Regardless of their area, these schools are symbols of harmonious interfaith and intercultural relationships; and dedication to the service to humanity in parallel to the global and transnational character, the Movement heavily engaged in interfaith dialogue, in anticipation and prevention of the so-called clash theories that would be promoted by others. Gulen has been among the first people who tried to promote religious and social harmony through interfaith dialogue. He is the pioneer and the main force behind the current trends in promoting harmony among civilizations.

I dedicated my M.Phil thesis to my parents who have always helped and encouraged me during each and every moment of my life and appreciated my academic achievements. What I am today is due to their prayers.....

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Student's Declaration

I Fatima Ejaz hereby declare that this thesis **“Contribution of the Gulen Movement in Educational Reforms”** for M.Phil Islamic Thought and Civilization is my own work. It is a record of work carried out by and has not been submitted in any previous application for a degree in any other educational institute

Signature.....

Date.....

Research Completion Certificate

It is certified that Miss. of Islamic Thought and Civilization Department, M. Pill (session), has carried out our research work entitled “.....” under my supervision.

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