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## INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF RELIGION IN SCHOOLS TO INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

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### **Abstract**

*Education is closely associated with religion. Education is the doctrine of morals and intelligence of the mind and religion is belief in God with the teachings of worship and obligations. Religion prepares a comprehensive norm that underlies life educational purposes. Educational institutions have played their significant part in the production and reproduction of European warfare. Nationalist curricula in history, national language and literature, social sciences and religion typify many school systems. Educational institutions are theoretically the opposition to those of religion: critical exegesis of all texts and the subjection of all theories to rigorous attempts at falsification are the commonplace expectations of educational institutions. All too often, however, religious organizations are actually in charge of schools and even universities. Of course state sponsored educational systems have other objectives, which take precedence over the pursuit of knowledge, in particular social control and nation building. It is in these two areas that the alliance between church and state in the control of the reproduction of knowledge is at its most symbiotic. Schools and universities, ostensibly the key intuitions of modernization and modernity, are in actuality one of the main sites for the production and reproduction of religion.*

**Keywords:** Education, Religion, Institutions, Modernization, Knowledge



## **A. Introduction**

Humans and religion seems to be a relationship that is natural. Religion itself united in the nature of human creation. Materialized in the form of submission, longing for worship, as well as virtues. When in running their lives, humans deviate from the values of nature, then psychologically it will feel a kind of “moral condemnation”. Then spontaneously emerge guilt or sin. If man seen from his relationship with religion, it can be said that religion can make people become believers and able to perform all the responsibilities as a human being (Yusoff & Hamzah, 2015).

Humans are creatures of God are not created by chance. Humans described using various pensifatan; ranging from the best and noble creatures, intelligent and creative, to being weak but arrogant and careless as well as stupid.

Education is the doctrine of morals and intelligence of the mind and religion is belief in God with the teachings of worship and obligations. Religion prepare a comprehensive norms that underlie life educational purposes. This norm is stable because it stems from the norm that comes from God. man who gradually realized within the scope of time and religion that prepare and give birth to a very meaningful educational purposes. Education is closely associated with religion. Even religion is a cornerstone for education. Science education based on religion implies that religion is a source of inspiration to develop the science to develop a science or educational concepts and implement Education (Muttaqin, 2015).

The destructive and inhuman influence of religion on humanity has rarely been so evident or so widespread as in the first decade of the twenty-first century. The Catholic condemnation of condoms as a means of preventing the spread of Aids, promulgated by the late Pope, has contributed to the spread of HIV. The Zionist ideology has formed part of the commitment to the establishment and continuation of Israeli settlements in the West Bank and (formerly) Gaza. Oppressive regimes in South East Asia – Myanmar is the extreme but not the only example – appeal to Buddhist quietism in their subordination of ethnic groups and their commodification of women. Islam’s

subordination of women persists from Bangladesh to Morocco, from Berlin to Bradford. Hindu fundamentalism, democratically favoured, is on the ascendant in India with a consequent deterioration in the conditions of lower status groups and women, as well as in intercommunal relations across the subcontinent. The apparent resurgence of belief and practice, widely labelled as fundamentalism, has contributed to religious and quasi religious conflict in, to name but a few examples, Afghanistan, Iraq, Kashmir, Tibet, Sudan, Armenia, Timor, Xinjiang, Bosnia, Kosovo, Northern Ireland.

Religious ideology has been used in the past to justify the most blatant acts of inhumanity such as the involvement of England in the slave trade. It is essential at the outset to correct the notion that it is other people's religions which have had and have a deleterious effect on politics. Not that this is this new. Crusades and jihads, religious intolerance, persecutions and inquisitions have a long history, not least in Europe. Jewish people fleeing the murderous intolerance of the Catholic Monarchs, after the fall of Granada in 1492 and the political institutionalisation of the first inquisition, found sanctuary in Salonika and Istanbul. These cities of the Islamic, Ottoman Turks had a politics of religious tolerance which was not to be found in western Europe, Catholic South or Protestant North, for at least two further centuries. The Jewish population of Thessalonica, with its own language as well as religion, thrived for four and a half centuries until it was exterminated by the Nazis during the German occupation of Greece (Mazower, M. 2001b).

The religious warriors of today explicitly draw on the vocabulary as well as the traditions of the past. Bush referred to his invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq as a crusade. Those resisting American occupation of the Sunni areas of Iraq refer to American troops as crusaders. Serbian genocide in Bosnia was justified as a war against the Turks. Catholic Croats were condemned as Ukase. Serbian control of Kosovo is justified in terms of a battle against the infidel Turks over five hundred years ago (Judah, T. 1997; Judah, T. 2000).

It is of central importance to understanding the role of educational institutions in modern and modernising states to be clear about the role of religion in contemporary politics. Schools and universities, ostensibly the



key intuitions of modernisation and modernity, are in actuality one of the main sites for the production and reproduction of religion. The fall of Byzantium, the sieges of Jerusalem or Derry, the defeat at Kosovo Palje and control of Jerusalem by Israel since recognition trump as well as the massacre of the Palestinians by the Zionist Israel are regularly played out in schools as well as churches and mosques. The explicit teaching of religion and religiously (and, relatedly, nationalistically) inscribed versions of history are commonplace in schools and universities throughout the world (Leirvik, O. 2004; Nelson, J. 2004; Shibata, M. 2005; Sirozi, M. 2004; Soon-Yong, P. 2004; White, J. 2004; Zambeta, E. 2000) .

The belligerent consequences of nationalist education policies have been examined elsewhere (Coulby, D. and Jones, C. 2001). What further falls to be addressed is the way in which state policies have facilitated the perpetuation of religion in the face of modernity and allowed religious institutions in their turn to shape the knowledge and society of the modern world. It is necessary to understand the ways in which control and quasi-control of schools and universities have allowed religious institutions to place limits on features of modernity such as individualism, scientific enquiry and cosmopolitanism. Of course such an examination may well also discover that the institutions of religion, especially at a local level, have been involved in defending the poor and oppressed against the forces of both globalisation and national tyranny.

## **B. Educational Institutions as the Institute of Enlightenment Knowledge**

There are many meanings, not all of them anti-religious. At the same time, scientific and technological enquiry and experiment finally rose to prominence through their impact on the industrial revolution in England. The industrial revolution led to the institutionalisation of science and technology in schools and universities in Russia and France and belatedly in England itself. Political notions of rights and participatory government impacted on revolutions in America and France which in turn led to further revolutionary and counter-revolutionary theorising. Education came to be seen both as one of



these rights and as a way of pushing forwards the Enlightenment project itself to an ever wider group of people and to cover an ever wider and widening field of knowledge (Shibata, 2005).

Peter and Catherine had attempted to bring the Enlightenment to Russia but serfdom and entrenched Orthodoxy persisted. The Ottoman Empire still dominated the Balkans in 1789 and Orthodox religion rather than the Enlightenment was able to attach itself to nascent independence fervour. It was the armies of the Revolution and of Napoleon that brought Enlightenment ideas into the Catholic Europe of Austria, Italy and the Iberian Peninsular which hardly ensured their instant welcome. In Spain, in particular, the Catholic church was able to identify itself with the movement for national resistance. No one state was identified with the Enlightenment (Lvina, 2015).

While rulers as various as Catherine and Robespierre espoused its principles they nowhere took root before 1815. England, the country of science and the industrial revolution, fought against political progress in America and France. France, the country of revolution, was transformed into an invasionary and imperialistic power in much of Europe and was sunk into reaction in 1815 by the reinstatement of the Bourbons (Gooby, 2015).

The anti-revolutionary forces in England and the monarchist principles enforced elsewhere by the Vienna Treaty ensured that traditionalistic, religious and anti-Enlightenment forces had significant influence in the period when national school systems began to emerge in Western Europe. Not much later, when the Greek War of Independence began the break up of the Ottoman Balkans, the Orthodox church was able to identify itself, even if retrospectively, with the new nation and its struggle. When a national school system was established in England it was controlled by the churches. When schools were established in the new state of Greece and then spread north into the Balkans, as invasionary institutions, their nationalism was inscribed by the Greek language and Orthodoxy (Koliopoulos, 2002; Mazower, 2001).

Religious control of old universities remained strong in Oxford and Louvain. Only after further revolutionary upheaval did a truly secular



education system emerge in France itself, and even here private, religious education is still tolerated. Communism brought full secular education to the Soviet Union after 1917 and to Eastern Europe from 1945. After the collapse of 1989-1991 and the subsequent break up of Yugoslavia, religious control and religious content have returned with various degrees of severity. In some states like Hungary and Slovakia the churches have literally re-possessed many of the schools. In Turkey the Kemalist ideal of secular education was successfully challenged during the 1970s and Islamic secondary education is now widespread (Mango, 2004).

It has been argued that schools to a lesser extent, universities were the key institutions of nation building during the nineteenth century. Further it has been urged that educational institutions replaced those of religion as the key agencies of state endorsed social control (Archer, 1984). But this is to underestimate the control and influence that religious institutions retained over the emerging state educational systems in so many countries of Europe. The key institutions of the Enlightenment were infiltrated from the start by the forces of tradition and in many states this remains the case. Furthermore, where revolutionary forces – Bolsheviks, Ataturk, the Soviet occupation, Tito – established secular educational systems, these have in the main failed to survive.

Certainly the schools have been the institutions of nation building and nationalism but these forces themselves have frequently been religiously controlled and inscribed. Schools reproduce religious nationalism in post-independence Greece and Ireland and in post-Communist Poland. In Northern Ireland, in a breathtaking failure of state intervention, there are two sets of religious school systems, one ostensibly state but in practice Protestant and one Catholic. These reproduce mutually hostile versions of the nation and of identity and have played a major part in dividing the community and encouraging sectarian conflict (Coulby and Jones, 2001; Nelson, 2004). Religious nationalism still thrives in the schools of the United Kingdom (Gooby, 2015).

This is not to say that the Enlightenment failed. In intellectual and educational terms the spirit of collection and enquiry triumphed; the spirit that believed that the natural and civilisational universes could be gathered,





rationally organised and understood (Sloan and Burnett, 2003). It is this spirit of undaunted enquiry, that relentless search for increased understanding in all areas of rational thought that has characterized the impact of the Enlightenment on the knowledge of schools and universities. Despite the differences and limitations of its individual thinkers, it is within this strand of the Enlightenment that religion confronts a clear antithesis. This strand of enquiry was in many cases secular and indeed anti-clerical from the outset, Gibbon as well as Voltaire. It was to prove devastating in its consequences for organised religion and belief, despite their control of educational systems. In geology as well as natural history, indeed in studies into the origins and nature of the biblical texts themselves, the Enlightenment spirit of enquiry undermined the teachings of the bible. As increasing areas of knowledge were opened to the flood of rational enquiry the terrain of inerrancy disappeared. Religion became no longer a matter of knowledge but of faith, furthermore of a faith which had to stand in the face of an ever increasing and varied amount of well established knowledge. The publication of *On the Origin of Species* in 1859 represented both a culmination and a symbol of this process. Darwin had delayed publication for fear of the effect his work would have on organised Christianity and the controversy he provoked was profound and is still surprisingly ongoing.

To this extent the full extent of the Enlightenment project may be said not to have yet been reached. Voltaire, Diderot, Kant and Hume set out to make rationality the centre of human thought and discourse. It would transform every sphere of human activity, not least politics, science, education and the family. Especially in its French manifestation Enlightenment thought was explicitly anti-religious. Yet as the dual revolutions (Hobsbawm, 1975) swept across the world from Manchester and Paris it became evident that the Enlightenment had not subordinated the influence of religion. Indeed religion had succeeded in infiltrating the institutions of modernity itself. In many western European states, Protestant and Catholic churches took control of the emergent schooling system and of its associated curriculum. In the newly independent state of Greece the





Orthodox church was inscribed on the control and content of the new schools. By the late twentieth century the madrasas of Pakistan were educating the Taliban of Afghanistan and those of Cairo the Kurdish separatists of eastern Anatolia (Kandiyoti, D. and Saktanber, A. 2002).

### **C. The Influence of Religion on Educational Institutions**

The influence of religion on educational institutions has served the perpetuation of traditional practices in gender relations and the family. It has linked with nationalism to further the exacerbation of within-state and between-state conflict. The explicit teaching of oppositional religion and culture in schools has exacerbated and perpetuated conflict in, not least, Northern Ireland. Yet this influence of religion is rarely highlighted by educational commentators. Indeed to conduct a literature search on education and religion is a dismaying experience. The Anglophone literature is dominated by confessionalist writing. Recently this literature has taken on the discourse of “values” (Cairns, J., Lawton, D. and Gardner, R. 2001).

The themes are how to teach religion in schools; how religious education benefits children’s development and, most astonishingly, how religious education is a valuable part of interculturalism (Cush, D. 1999). Those committed to a progressive, science-based, interculturalist (Enlightenment project) education seem content to ignore the impact of religious institutions on the control and content of school and university education (for a rare exception see White, J. 2004 and for a refreshingly polemical onslaught see Dawkins 2007).

To take the example of England, it might have been expected that a government committed to greater equality and the elimination of child poverty would have progressed towards a secular, comprehensive school system where each child followed the same curriculum and had an equal chance of success. This has not been the case of New Labour in England where the growth of further religiously controlled schools has actually been encouraged. The state funding of schools for religious minorities, such as Moslems, Sikhs, or Greek Orthodox has been increased. Whilst



this is clearly defensible in a context where Christian denominational, as well as Jewish schools, thrive, in practice in many cities it adds an important additional divide in communities already fractured along the lines of race (Ward, 2008).

Local education authority schools have been encouraged to affiliate themselves with either Protestant or Catholic churches, thereby facilitating further ethnic division. Meanwhile in Northern Ireland the communal divisions perpetrated by a religiously segregated school system are allowed to fester. It is tempting to explain this as little more than the religious inclinations of former Prime Minister Blair. In fact it is a manifestation of New Labour's attempts to pander to what are seen as the populist politics of the middle class. New Labour believes that religiously affiliated schools (discipline, respect, uniforms, homework etc) are popular with the middle class. In actuality, of course, a significant majority of people would prefer religious institutions to be kept out of schools (Taylor, M. 2005).

The wider point being that religions have been able to maintain and expand their position via educational institutions and thereby exacerbate the hierarchical structure of schools and the cultural division of communities. (Diocesan advice to Church of England schools actually urges them to redouble their proselytizing teaching to offset the decline in church attendance) (Acosta, 2016).

As modernity has widened to many countries and deepened into social consciousness there has become a predominant attitude that religion and religious institutions are beyond criticism (Dawkins, 2007 is particularly good on this). This has coincided with an increase in religious participation in some states, Turkey as well as the USA. The discourse of interculturalism, especially in its educational form, is associated with this complacent attitude towards religion. Who would not prefer tolerance to intolerance? And the religious histories of the Netherlands or the Balkans are not ones to associate religious intolerance with peace and prosperity. But it is a paradox of freedom that tolerance should not tolerate intolerance. The extreme version of intercultural education has been total



cultural, if not epistemological, relativism. In many ways this was an exceptionally useful device, especially in so far as it deflected criticism away from non-Western culture. How can the perpetrators of the Spanish inquisitions condemn Aztec human sacrifice? How can the countries that conducted the slave trade criticism current authoritarian regimes in Africa? (Coulby, D. 2005).

Furthermore, critics of this relativist approach have all too often, overtly or covertly, come from a confessionalist "values" perspective. The distinction between cultural and epistemological will not resolve the issue because ultimately what is being debated is a normative issue. Was the apartheid regime in South Africa wrong? Not economically retrograde, not culturally relative but morally and politically wrong? It was indeed. That people should not be treated unequally on the basis of the colour of their skin is the foundation-stone of interculturalism. This position cannot be relativised. Nor can the subordination of women in so many of the world's religions be complacently ignored. It is not Islamophobia to demand social, political and economic rights for women in Muslim families and counties. Nor need such a demand ignore the continued economic subordination of women in Europe and North America nor violence against them in the street and the family in these states. The prostitution and enslavement of girls and women in Myanmar and Thailand reveals a facet of institutionalised Buddhism which cannot be ignored.

In some schools in the USA and England the conflict between tradition and modernity has come into the open in the school curriculum. In these schools Protestant groups and individuals have condemned the teaching of Darwinian biology and insisted that creationist beliefs ("intelligent design") are taught alongside or even instead of science. In the USA these initiatives are happening at local and in a few instances state level. In England they have been facilitated by national legislation which gives control to rich organisations or individuals who act as benefactors to a particular type of school. Whilst intercultural respect and tolerance might extend to the teaching of any belief (no matter how foolish) in the family or religious institution, it is difficult to find any rationale whereby the institutions of the state are suborned to the teaching of material with no scientific acceptance. In sociological terms the

relativisation of the politics and conduct of science is a perfectly legitimate pursuit: epistemological relativism is not impossible (Feyerabend, P. 1978a; Feyerabend, P. 1978b).

But in educational terms children and young people, in the institutions of the state, who are taught religion when science is widely accepted in their societies are being made into guinea pigs for an experiment in neo-traditionalism. Children and young people have an entitlement to science beyond the prejudices of their family and community. The politics and the economies of the UK and the USA need the skills of science not the mantras of tradition. The task of education is more to defend these entitlements and generate these skills than to embody the voice of tradition within the institutions of modernity.

As Marx observed there is something essentially anti-intellectual about religion. Its attraction to the thaumaturgic, the miraculous, and the magical tends to make it defy science. In many forms, not least Protestantism, it totally privileges belief over knowledge and experience. Its soteriologies can depend not on knowledge or even good works but on acts of belief or even on predestination (MacCulloch, D. 2004; Kishlansky, 1997).

Many religions focus on another world at the expense of this one; the gaze shifts from actuality to ideality. Their focus on community and their various eschatologies all too readily divide the world into binary and potentially oppositional factions, them and us, the damned and the saved. This anti-intellectualism can be seen in those religions which orientate themselves around a sacred text. There is a paradox here in that it is these same religions which have led to an astonishing outpouring of intellectual energy of the how many angels can dance on the head of a pin variety. To believe infallibly in the truth of a book (inerrancy) is essentially a conservative act since the text, whether Genesis or *Das Kapital*, is inevitably a product of the past and ignorant of the believer's context. To privilege one book over many is an act of wilful ignorance and necessarily distances the believer from the rest of human knowledge (Sim, S. 2005). To believe in a book inevitably places the believer at the mercy of interpreters, of hermeneutics, of angels and pin specialists. The



politics of the twentieth century in China and Pakistan as well as Europe is replete with bigots, book in hand, conducting the atrocities of intolerance.

It is necessary to stress the anti-intellectualism of religion because schools and universities, by contrast, are at least ostensibly the institutions where knowledge is transmitted and produced. Educational institutions are theoretically the opposition to those of religion: critical exegesis of all texts and the subjection of all theories to rigorous attempts at falsification are the commonplace expectations of educational institutions. All too often, however, religious organisations are actually in charge of schools and even universities. Of course state sponsored educational systems have other objectives, which take precedence over the pursuit of knowledge, in particular social control and nation building. It is in these two areas that the alliance between church and state in the control of the reproduction of knowledge is at its most symbiotic.

At the historical moment of the establishment of state education systems, in England and Wales, say, or Greece or Belgium, churches were able to snatch control and influence as a political compromise between tradition and modernity. In the hundred and seventy years since then religious influence has remained prevalent in these systems because the state has utilized the forces of religion for its own projects of reproduction, control and national aggrandizement.

Finally, as has recently been shown (though in the event unsuccessfully) in Spain, churches are able to mobilize powerful forces against reform of their role. Or in Indonesia, as pioneered by a group of community organizations such as the FPI, HTI and others in their action with the action name 212.

#### **D. Educational Institutions and Ideas of Civilization Culture**

It is important to contest the clash of civilisations notion which can be used to underpin these isolationist arguments as well as those which invoke crusade or jihad. There is no fundamental clash between Europe and Islam; they have co-existed peacefully in many times and many places. The clash is between tolerance and intolerance and in this the European and Christian side has far from the monopoly of virtue. Recent



events in Iraq and Israel are fuelled much more by struggles for land, water and oil than they are by any ideological difference. Certainly the rhetoric of clash of civilisations is always there to be taken up by the unscrupulous and the murderous, as it was in Anatolia in 1923, but the conflicts between groups do not occur to this grand plan. In Northern Ireland Christians have not needed Islam at all to ignite their own insular clash of civilisations. The wars in Yugoslavia were between Catholics, Orthodox and Muslims; they were more about nationalist history (to say nothing of theft) than about religion (Ignatieff, 1999; Judah, 1997; Simms, 2001). As Kundara mocked: In Europe people do not go to war to control the future, they go to war to control the past. After 1492 most wars in Europe have been between Christians.

Educational institutions have played their significant part in the production and reproduction of European warfare. Nationalist curricula in history, national language and literature, social sciences and religion typify many school systems, such as England and Wales, Republic of Cyprus or Serbia. They play their part in encouraging and exacerbating conflict and delaying cosmopolitan tolerance and internationalism. In Greece, Turkey, Republic of Cyprus, Poland and Northern Ireland there is a distinct religious element to these nationalist curricula.

One of the more apparently progressive positions taken by Europe in response to the increased urban diversity was that associated with interculturalism and with postmodernist. Starting from a position that no culture is superior to another, that Europe itself had a history of slave trading, imperialism and genocide and so was in no position to take a position of cultural superiority, postmodernist was associated with a tolerant educational response and with the attempt to foster interculturalism. In France and Turkey this position was associated with the notion that Muslim girls have the right to wear headscarves to school and university.

In France the headscarf ban seems to have defended the secularist position of educational institutions. A space has been created within



educational institutions where the bodies of young women are free from the inscription of religious regalia. In Turkey the headscarf issue is at the forefront of the Islamic fight back against Kemalist modernization (for a radically different take on the religious costume issue see Gordon and Newburry, 2007; Magos 2007; Moore, 2007).

Postmodernity has offered theoretical and political protection to traditionalistic beliefs. If no culture is superior then all cultures are to be permitted, even encouraged ("celebrated"). Postmodernity's hostility to grand narratives was particularly focussed on the Enlightenment. Thus, by the end of the last century, Enlightenment values - rationality, tolerance, participatory democracy, science, the key values surely of schools and universities - were under attack from two directions: from the traditionalists who had infiltrated the institutions of modernity from the very start and from the postmodernists anxious to defend the rights of Muslim fathers and brothers to control the sexuality of their wives, daughters and sisters.

In the United Kingdom these attacks have resulted in a significant increase in schools falling under control of the Church of England and the Catholics, to more separate religious schools and to concomitant racial and class segregation between schools. This racial (and associated social class) structuring of an education system can actually serve to exacerbate religious difference and conflict. It is currently under threat in schools and universities in Europe from three directions: from the traditionalistic, religious forces which retain and even, in England and Turkey, extend their control over educational institutions; from the new traditionalistic presence in Europe of which fundamentalist Islam is but one example; from the doctrines of postmodernity which extend theoretical protection to these and other traditionalistic forces.

## **E. Conclusion**

Religion and education are intimately connected. Religion requires education for dissemination efforts, deepening, and the passing on of values, norms, and the knowledge that even includes various aspects of





life. For this purpose, stood educational institutions based on religion, both managed formally or informally. These educational institutions also then exist that teach disciplines which are considered secular or not directly related to religious issues.

In the empirical condition, the case of tidal relationship between religious educational institution with secular educational institutions. It can not be separated from social and political processes that occur in society. The state as an institution that has the authority to force played a role in making the education system governing educational institutions based on religion and secular educational institutions. Then comes the process of fusion between the religious education with secular education, both in the institutional, management mechanism, or the material being taught. Outside of this fusion process, is imposible occur also conflict and struggle for influence between the two.

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