



The Education Curriculum of Afghanistan Leads the Battle between Islam and Secularization

Afghanistan is one of the helpless countries which has been occupied by the United State (US). It is a country full of destruction, extermination, poverty and breakdown of public health, security and infrastructure. Secularism marched in from Western governments with the claim of liberation from misery, but caused only war and disaster. The desperate youth are trapped in the colonized country and still dreaming of progress and education. But quickly they must wake up and realize that with the current state of the country, it is impossible to achieve an adequate education which helps the Youth population to truly rise. This is in contrast to the education system which existed in the period of the Islamic Khilafah which on its re-establishment will provide an education system which leads the Muslim Youth and the whole society to a real Elevation (Nahda).

The education system is one of the ways of preserving an ideology in a civilization. For this reason it is very important what the education curriculum intends. Afghanistan's education system has been as inappropriate as its politics. In the time of the Taliban, the Education was in the main, only for men and the focus point of the Education system was in the Qur'an schools and Madrasas. Other education was not considered so important. Since the toppling of the Taliban regime, under the combined efforts of Afghan and International experts, the Education curriculum has been changed. As soon as Karzai's government was placed in power it began to reform education along secular lines, hoping to appear progressive. The secular organizations supported the removal of particular Islamic beliefs from the curricula and educational materials upon the basis that it viewed them as reflecting cultural, religious and gender prejudices and under the assumption that eliminating them would be a strategic entry point towards a meaningful life. The goal behind this reform is the secularization of the Education System in Afghanistan and thereby the transformation of the young generation into a workforce that serves the interests of colonial governments. This 'Secularization process' involves the transformation of a society away from close identification with religious values and institutions and towards non-religious values and secular institutions. It refers to the historical process in which religion loses social and cultural significance. As a result of secularization, the role of religion in modern societies becomes restricted. In Islam there is no detachment of religion from life, like in the Western civilization. Islam is the basis for all actions and viewpoints in life (using the halal and haram as the gauge). In contrast, secularism states that religion should be a private, personal, and voluntary affair that does not impose upon the social life and education system. Therefore, the enemies of Islam promote that Secularization, Democracy and Gender Equality are the cornerstones of enduring peace and progress in Afghanistan and the youth must see religion and education along these lines and away from Islam. They execute different strategies to secularize the education system and to distance the youth from true Islam as a complete way of life.

In the last decade, the removal of Islamic beliefs in educational materials and curricula in Afghanistan has received attention from certain Western donors, Non-Government Organisations (NGO) and international organizations. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) published in its Education-Fact-Sheet in July 2016 that they support a strong education system in Afghanistan that includes professional teachers and high-quality learning materials and methodologies to bring more democratic values and development. For example, in the curriculum, topics such as equality and 'peace education' has been introduced by the Minister of Education with the support of the Basic Education Program for Afghanistan (BEPA). The new schoolbooks focus also on the western concept of Gender Equality, and the capitalist viewpoint on globalization and modernization. Islamic issues such as the names of Allah, Jihad etc. have been omitted from schoolbooks, because

they think that with this method they can distance the youth from Islam and distort it to only a religion which is limited to worship. The Islamic studies subject is limited to the memorization of the Quran Ayaats without knowing the meaning of them. Most attention in the curriculum is placed on the English Language. Many lessons are in Dari and English, even mathematics.

Since the US war started in October 2001, USAID has spent at least \$868 million for education programs in Afghanistan only to privatize the educational institutions to steer the thinking of the youth according to the colonial preference. The NGOs even use a community based school model which is built on the traditional Quran school structure to introduce secular subjects. Besides all this, the mass media, the internet, virtual social networks, the learning of foreign languages and the promotion of particular books are tools being used to introduce the youth with the world outside Afghanistan and adopt liberal and secular values.

Furthermore, it is not only the Education Materials which existed before the time of colonialization by US, which were criticized and abolished, but also the Islamic Schools (Madrassas) have been defamed. On the one hand the secular forces claim that the Madrassas are institutions which teach extreme Islamic concepts which are a result of the Taliban regime and that they don't bring progress to the society, but only extremism. They accord that most of the Taliban leadership come from Madrassas. This is a false accusation of the link of Islam with terrorism. The goal of this negative propaganda is to scare parents into not sending their children to Madrassas. After the attack on the American University of Afghanistan, *Afghanistan Times* published on the 25th August 2016, "*Education is best weapon to fight extremism. Anti-Afghanistan elements know that educated people fight ideologies with ideologies and ideas with ideas. They do not go to the battlefield but they fight extremism brilliantly because they know that the pen is mightier than sword*". With these words, they want to represent Islam as a violent backward religion, which is not compatible with those who are educated.

On the other hand USAID and NGOs support the establishing of the so-called modern Madrassas which promote secular democratic values and connect these with Islam. Their motto is "Moderation not elimination is the realistic policy alternative given the dynamics of education". Therefore, in the Islamic Schools they teach about Khilafah as it is just a history topic and about the Shariah law that it is not practical today. According to the Ministry of Education, the curriculum of the Islamic Education system is being revised to include Islamic studies as well as general education content such as mathematics, science, social sciences, national languages (Pashto and Dari) and English. That means that the Ministry of Education looks at Islam only as a school subject and source of information and they do not want it to have more influence on human life than that.

The image of the oppressed Afghan woman is also used as propaganda to promote the idea of secularization and democracy. The US is anxious to promote girls' education. However, under the deceptive cover of liberation of the woman and empowerment, they want to use education to instill Muslim women in Afghanistan with liberal values and other ideas from secularism and use these westernized women to be advocates for the Western culture and system in the society. Many organizations are active in promoting the so-called liberation of Afghan women through education. Organizations for the protection of women's rights, youth organizations, literary circles, intellectual clubs and student associations are some of these institutions which are being used to achieve this agenda. One example is the Organization of Promoting Afghan Women's Capabilities (OPAWC). This was established in 2003 by a group of women eager to do something proactive, concrete and achievable to empower Afghan women. They support women in gaining an education but it is in order to make them 'independent of men' and essentially rebel against the Islamic concept of male guardianship in marriage and family life. Another organization is the Afghan Women's Educational Center (AWEC) which is committed to promoting human rights and gender equality, and working towards the abolishment of any kind of discrimination and violence against women and children through raising awareness and advocacy, and through the delivery of social services. Their vision is also to enable women and children to access their human rights defined upon the basis of Western concepts such as civil society democracy (a

system based upon man-made law) and gender equity which promotes the idea that men and women should have the same rights and duties as individuals, in family life and society. The abolishment of discrimination therefore as they see it, would also include removing Islamic laws that differentiate between men and women in particular rights and roles. USAID has also many empowerment Education programs. The aim of these are to build the capacities of women to participate more effectively in the development of their communities and families in order to strengthen democratically-elected institutions of civil society that give a greater voice to women and that deepen grassroots participatory governance. Through these organizations and many others, the Afghan woman is confused. She strives for education but at the same time she thinks that she must be equated with men in all areas of life and free herself from religion in order to achieve true liberation.

The fact is that the aim of education in Afghanistan is to secularize the youth population. The US wants to create a society which is full of a skilled pool of workers who grow up upon the democratic values. The global and long-term plan of the colonial forces is to exterminate the honorable Deen of Islam, uproot the Islamic values from society and convert the Muslim youth to the secular personalities so that they become their slaves. Their aim is to not only wage a physical war against the Ummah but to also lead another war within in the minds of the Muslim society, especially the young generation, namely the ideology war. The colonialists want to reprogram Muslim societies such that they overflow with the secular ideas of democracy and liberal freedoms which are incompatible with the Islamic Ideology. They want to repress the Islamic concepts and ideas within states.

The Muslim Youth will only achieve true elevation through the education system of Islam. The aim of this Islamic Education system is to build an Islamic foundation in the youth which generates a glorious Islamic Personality as well as to create an abundance of scholars, scientists, and innovation so that the state governed by Islam excels in progress and development and becomes the leading power in the world, delivering the message of Islam across the globe and taking mankind from the darkness to the light. Indeed, it was by establishing the Islamic Aqeedah as the basis of the state and of education under the Khilafah of the past that made the Muslim Ummah the dominant nation in the world for centuries.

The dire state facing Afghanistan and the rest of the Muslim world will not be resolved by creating more personalities who mistakenly search for progress in the corrupt secular system that failed to secure the educational and economic aspirations of men and women across the globe, including in the West. The Muslim youth of Afghanistan and Muslims generally must realize that the current secularized education system in Afghanistan is not the right one which can bring the society and their country the progress and development they wish. The Afghan Muslim youth and Muslim population at large must commit themselves to the struggle for the re-establishment of the Khilafah (Caliphate) based upon the method of the Prophethood. Only the revival of Islam, the Khilafah and the Islamic Education system under the shade of the Khilafah will bring real benefit to the Muslim youth and the entire Ummah.

﴿ قُلِ اللَّهُمَّ مَالِكِ الْمُلْكِ تُؤْتِي الْمُلْكَ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتَنْزِعُ الْمُلْكَ مِمَّنْ تَشَاءُ وَتُعِزُّ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتُهْذِلُ مَنْ تَشَاءُ بِيَدِكَ الْخَيْرُ إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴾

“Say, “O Allah, Owner of Sovereignty, You give sovereignty to whom You will and You take sovereignty away from whom You will. You honor whom You will and You humble whom You will. In Your hand is [all] good. Indeed, You are over all things competent.” [3: 26]

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