ETHNOCENTRISM IN EDUCATION IN THE MUSLIM WORLD

by

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As an introduction to the subject of ethnocentrism in education in the Muslim world it is necessary to consider, at least briefly, whether the negative attitude to ethnocentrsim in education, prevalent in the Western world, is applicable without any qualification to a non-Western culture such as that of the world of Islam.

The term ethnocentrism has been created by the American sociologist William Graham Sumner, and its dictionary definition is "the emotional attitude that one's own race, nation, or culture is superior to all others." Since this attitude usually takes the form of wariness and distrust of outside groups, and is often accompanied by a complement of strongly negative views of them, it is not only understandable but inevitable that there should be a general consensus among liberal-minded educators, whether teachers or educational planners, that ethnocentrism must be kept out of the school curriculums. The ideal upheld by all modern educational establishments in the Western world is a curriculum on all levels of education that is free of ethnocentrism, and that imbues the pupils and students with general, universal human values, although, I must interject right here, there is no consensus either internationally or within individual countries on what precisely those universal human values are - but that is a problem which cannot be discussed in our present frame of reference.

However, this ideal nowhere excludes the teaching of such non-universal, nationally determined values as patriotism, love of country, self-identification with the nation, appreciation of national achievements in the past and the present, and commitment to efforts to secure and improve the nation's future. Whether in the West or elsewhere, the schools of all nations attempt to develop young persons who have the necessary knowledge,

understanding, and holding of values and ideals that will lead them to satisfying and competent roles as citizens of the state. Central to such education is the furthering of the nationalistic and patriotic goals of the society. Therefore the school curriculums in every country comprise courses in civics and social studies which make the attainment of these goals possible.

The question then arises, can one, on any theoretical ground, find fault with this type of studies? The answer, undoubtedly, must be, no, there is nothing wrong with it. As long as mankind is divided into nations, ~~kfflyerhmlsgmmibbhakyqmmayahaga~~ each with its territory, language, interests, history, and culture, it is inevitable that each national society should endevor to mold its future members in its image. Where then does ethnocentrism as an evil come in? The answer to this question must be sought along the dividing line between two positions which can be designated by the commonplace terms healthy patriotism and bigoted chauvinism.

The patriot loves his/her country, but, at the same time, recognizes the validity of the love other nations have for their countries. He may feel "right or wrong, my country," but understands that citizens of other countries may have the same feeling about theirs. He may be proud to be an American, a Russian, or an Egyptian, but recognizes that other nationals have the same reasons and the same right to be proud of their countries. Hence he is convinced that peaceful cooperation between his and other countries as equal partners serves best the interests of both mankind in general and his own country in particular. An educational system that inculcates these feelings and convictions in its charges can be termed by nobody ethnocentric, nor condemned on ethical grounds.

The educational ethnocentrism that we do condemn is one that includes some of the aforementioned tenets, but puts the emphasis beyond them. It

teaches what we called bigoted chauvinism. It insists that all other races,
languages, societies, nations, cultures are inferior to one's own, and con-
cludes from this that one's own nation has the right to dominate other
nations, and, more than that, has the obligation to acquire and exercise
the power to do so. Nazi Germany was the most odious example of the inhuman
lengths to which such a doctrine can lead, and of the culpability of an
educational system which indoctrinated the young generation with an ethno-
centrism which turned it into the willing, nay, enthusiastic, tools in carry-
ing out all governmental policies, including genocide. Another example,
on a different level to be sure, is that of Soviet Russia, which only today,
seventy years after its great Revolution, has begun to modify its own brand
of Communist ethnocentrism which, in theory, called for world domination,
and in practice resulted in the armed subjugation of a chain of weaker
countries ringing her borders. Again, it was a state-controlled doctrinary
educational network, suffused with ethnocentrism, that created the subsoil
in which such a system could thrive. A third example, taken from the con-
temporary Muslim world, is that of fundamentalist Iran in which religion-
based educational conditioning produced a young generation willing and
eager to kill and be killed in a hopeless fratricidal war that by now has
lasted almost twice as long as World War I or II.

These examples which, alas, could easily be multiplied from all over
the world, demonstrate the disastrous effect ethnocentrism in education
can have on the nation that practices it, as well as on its neighbors, or
even on mankind as a whole.

As educators, sociologists, and anthropologists, we are faced with
a task of prime magnitude when we come to tackle the problem of ethnocent-
rism in education. We must be master navigators to know how to steer ~~edu~~
~~~~ education clear from the Scylla of

ethnocentrism, without being caught in the Charybdis of a curriculum devoid of national, ethical, and cultural values. The task is, admittedly, formidable; but what is at stake is of such magnitude - nothing less than the future understanding among nations - that no effort must be spared to find a satisfactory solution.

Coming now to my subject proper, ethnocentrism in Muslim education, or in education in the Mulslim world, I am confronted by a number of initial difficulties. First of all, there is the question, already alluded to earlier, whether the very term ethnocentrism is applicable to the Muslim world. Ethnocentrism, we shall recall, is "the emotional attitude that one's own race, nation, or culture is superior to all others." We note that this definition does <u>not</u> include the attitude that one's own <u>religion</u> is superior to all others. That attitude is identified by another term, of lesser currency: religio-centrism. This distinction is most relevant to our considerations because the common denominator upon which the designation Muslim world rests is neither race, nor nation, nor culture, but precisely religion.

In fact, the religion of Islam is not only the main common feature, but the only common element that unites such racially, nationally, and culturally diverse populations as, say, those of Mauritania, Syria, Yemen, Iran, Turkestan, Pakistan, and Indonesia, all of whom are parts of the Muslim world. It is the power of Islam that alone infuses all these peoples, amounting to some 900 million, with a feeling of commonality that has no parallel in Christianity, the other global religion. Muslims speak of the <u>al-umma al-Muhammadiyya</u>, the "Muhammadan community," often loosely translated as "the Muhammadan nation," whereas the Christians of the world do not think of, or term, themselves "the nation" or "the community of Christians." What this means is that when dealing with the "world of Islam,"

There is no "Christian Bloc" in the United Nations, but there is a "Muslim Bloc," formed by all the Muslim nations in that body.

one cannot properly speak of ethnocentrism; only the term religio-centrism
is applicable.

The phenomenology of religio-centrism is largely similar to that of ethno-
centrism, with this important difference: ethnocentrism is anchored ei-
their in biological differences such as race or genetical heredity, or not
in man-made values such as nation and culture. Religio-centrism bases it-
self on supernatural sanctions: on the belief that God has imparted the
best or the only true religion to one's own community. Divine sanction is
always a more powerful motivation than human sanction; this is why, until
modern times, the bloodiest wars man has fought were religious wars - but
that again is a subject we cannot deal with here.

The second difficulty lies in the nature of the Muslim world. Scholars
who discuss ethnocentrism in education, or any other aspect of ethnocentrism
education for that matter, in the democratic West, in Communist Europe, in
India, or in Latin America, as they do in other papers presented to this
committee, have as their subjects segments of the human race which inhabit
a definite world area, and share a basically common cultural heritage. The
Muslim world differs from these in that it extends halfway across the globe,
its member nations, despite the strong Islamic bond that unites them, are
the carriers of widely differing cultures, and it comprises populations
which physically belong to the Caucasoid, Negroid, and Mongoloid subdivisions
of mankind.

It should be noted in this connection that while the religious center
of Sunni Islam is Egypt, and of Shi'i Islam Iran, both of whom venerate,
of course, the holy places in Mecca and Medina, the largest concentrations
of Muslim populations lie far to the east of these Middle Eastern states.
Egypt in 1987 had an estimated population of 52 million; Iran - 50 milli-
ons, while Indonesia had 175 millions, of whom an estimated 150 million

were Muslims; Bangladesh had 107 million Muslims, and Pakistan 104 millions.

One has to keep these figures in mind in order to understand that the term

"Muslim world" denotes something very different from the "Middle East," let

alone the "Arab world."

The third difficulty lies in defining what precisely is meant by "Muslim

education." Here the Western analogy is not the national education served

by the public school system of any country, but the private educational net-

work maintained in Christian countries by the Catholic Church. The Catholic

schools, while using in each country the national language as the medium

of instruction, and satisfying the national curriculum requirements of each,

provide a type of education that is suffused with the Catholic religious

spirit, and consider it their major goal to produce good Catholics.

In this respect, the situation is similar in the Muslim countries, but

again with one important difference. In the Western world, the Catholic

religious schools represent nothing more than an available alternative edu-

cation for which Catholic parents can opt if so they wish. The secular edu-

cational system does not provide instruction in religion, and is available

to members of all denominations. In the Muslim world an analogous situation

exists in only one country, Turkey, where the educational system has been

secularized in 1924, but even there, after World War II non-compulsory

religious education was reintroduced in both primary and secondary schools.

In the other Muslim countries there is no separation between church

and state, which means that education is simultaneously both secular and

religious. In the government-controlled centralized school systems the

national language is the medium of instruction, the curriculums comprise

all the secular subjects prescribed by the ministries of education, as well

as likewise obligatory courses in religion centering on the Koran. This

fact alone guarantees that education in the Muslim world is heavily suffused

with Muslim religio-centrism. Since the group I have the honor to address

is not composed primarily of Arabist or Islamologists, it seems in order

to quote a few passages from the Koran in order to show to those not fami-

liar with it to what extent and how emphatically the holy book of Islam

insists that Islam is not only the best but the only true religion.

Take, for instance, Sura 41:6-6: "Woe unto the idolaters who give not

the poor-due and who are disbelievers in the hereafter."

Or Sura 61:7: "Who doth greater wrong than he who inventeth a lie against

Allah when he is summoned to al-Islam?"

Or Sura 5:3: "This day I have perfected your religion for you and com-

pleted My favor unto you, and have chosen for you as religion al-Islam."

Or Sura 5:10: "And they who disbelieve and deny Our revelation, such

are rightful owners of hell."

In the same Sura, vv. 13-14 Muhammad says that because the Children of

Israel broke their covenant, God "cursed them and made hard their hearts,"

and that the Christians forgot of what they were admonished by God, because

of which God "has stirred up enmity and hatred among them" (cf. also 5:64).

In Sura 5:18 Muhammad teaches that the Jews and Christians are not "the

sons of Allah and His beloved ones" - despite their claim to both - and

this is why Allah chastises them for their sins. The Prophet also warns

the Muslims: "Take not the Jews and Christians for friends"(Sura 5:51; cf.

also v. 57). He characterizes the Jews and Christians as making efforts

"for corruption in the land, and Allah loveth not corruption" (5:64).

These quotations could easily be added to, but they should suffice to

show to what extent religio-centrism is built into the Koran and is apt

to influence those who are taught that the Koran is the immutable word

of God, and whose attitude to non-Muslims is shaped from early childhood

on by Koranic doctrine. As long as the instruction in the Koran is in the

hands of orthodox religious teachers, these passages are taught as absolute, sacred and eternal truths, without any attempt at elucidating them from the historical context of their origin. It is here that the absence of religious reform in Islam most crucially manifests itself.

A related factor that must be taken into consideration is that Islam is based on the Koran to a much greater extent than Judaism is on the Hebrew Bible or Christianity on the New Testament. In Judaism and Christianity the teachings of their original holy book have become the basis of religious doctrine and practice in forms transmuted by later authoritative interpretations. In Islam such developments have taken place to a much lesser extent. Thus the five basic religious duties of Islam, known as "the five pillars of the faith," are based directly on the Koran itself, and so is the sixth, that of the jihād, or "holy war." Just as, in theory, Islam prohibits armed conflict between Muslims, so it imposes the jihād as a sacred duty, as a perpetual obligation, on the Muslim community as a whole, which continues to exist as long as the universal domination of Islam has not been achieved.[1] In practice, of course, neither the prohibition of fratricidal war, nor the duty of engaging the non-Muslims in a jihād has been and is being observed at all times and in all places. But the theoretical and ideal religious duty of imposing Islam by persuasion, and, when necessary, by force of arms, has never been abrogated, and whether or not emphasized in the school curriculum, is known to all Muslims to exist and to be as much part of the basic religious duties, as are the acknowledgment of the oneness of God, fasting, praying, almsgiving, and pilgrimage.

Throughout the centuries of Muslim history the school was an adjunct of the mosque, which meant, first of all, that schools existed only in the settled urban and rural segments of Muslim society, but not in their nomadic contingents which played such an important role in the history of

Middle Eastern Islam. Nor did every village have a school: many villages had neither a mosque nor a school. Those schools that did exist were, as a rule, one-room institutions headed by one single teacher, employed on the basis of his ability to write and his knowledge of the Koran, and paid usually in kind by the village. There was no central supervision or control over these schools. In them, as a pamphlet published in 1963 by the Arab Information Center in New York describes it, "the teacher would be sitting on a low stool, with a textbook in one hand and a long bamboo pole in the other, while thirty small boys on the ground around him were repating verses [from the Koran] in a singsong way, learning them parrot fashion."[2] This type of education was the only available one in most of the Muslim countries, and it is described in almost identical terms in studies dealing with the history of Arab education, from Iraq in the east to Morocco in the west. Of Iraq, a UNESCO report states that in "the traditional Arabic mullah school... small groups of boys under the direction of a religious teacher memorized religious lore in a monotonous and repetitive manner."[3] Similarly in Morocco, "the village mosque school [was] completely free of any direct non-local control..." and the school master's "primary concern was to lead his students through exercises in the memorization of the Koran, although some instruction was given in writing the Arabic script. Once the students had memorized the Koran they graduated..."[4]

As can be seen from these examples, the traditional muslim school admitted only boys and not girls, and taught them primarily to memorize the Koran. This is one of the main reasons why the Koran has had throughout history and down to the present time such an unparallelled influence on the outlook and attitudes of the Muslim peoples, and why traditional Muslim education has produced a Muslim modal personality so emphatically religio-centered, or, if you will, religion-directed.

In the Western world, beginning with the late 18th century, religious education became gradually supplemented, and then supplanted, by secular education, and at the same time education was rapidly expanded so as to embrace more and more of the total population. In the Muslim world no corresponding processes have taken place to this day. Religion has remained part of the school curriculum, and even at present ~~madrasa~~ school attendance is still far from being universal. For the time being, in most Muslim countries one-third to one-half of the weekly periods is devoted to religion, the Koran, and Arabic.[5]

The problem looming next to that of religious education is that of the education of girls in the Muslim countries. In traditional Muslim education schooling was confined to boys. Girls were not given any formal schooling; their education, socialization, and enculturation were entrusted entirely to the mothers and other older female family members. Incidentally, this difference between the education of boys and girls contributed significantly to the maintenance of the low position and segregation of women in Muslim society which today seems to be coming back in some Muslim countries. As a heritage of this old situation, school attendance of girls lags behind that of boys everywhere in the Muslim world. In 1975 the percentage of girls in the total school ~~school~~ enrolment in the Arab countries from which infor- ~~MATIONISXAVAILABLE~~ mation is available ranged from a high of 48% in Qatar, and 47% in Jordan and Lebanon, to a low of 11% in the Yemen Arab Republic.[6]

Thus Muslim education is still characterized by three hereditary factors: a predominantly religo-centric curriculum, which, however, is nowhere considered a handicap; a lower schoolattendance of girls than of boys, which is considered a handicaps by the more advanced Muslim countries; and the school attendance of only part of the school-age population, which is considered a national handicap by all Muslim countries.

Of these three factors the first, religio-centrism, as the Muslim equi-
valent of Western ethnocentrism, is in the focus of our present delibera-
tions, and hence a closer look at it is in place. But it so happens that
because religio-centrism is not perceived as a problem in the Muslim world,
the government-directed efforts are centered primarily on making education
general, and secondarily on increasing the number of girls attending school
so that it should come as close as possible to that of boys. These were
the issues on which several conferences of the ALESCO - the Arab League
Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization - have focussed, and the
November 1977 Conference of Ministers of Education in the Arab states, which
met in Abu Dhabi, was forced to conclude in its report that the goal of
"achieving a compulsory primary education by 1980" was not achieved, and
would not be achieved in the foreseeable future.

As far as the position of religion is concerned, modern developments
in the West have greatly reduced the similarities that had existed between
that of Christianity in the Western world and that of Islam in the Muslim
countries. Christianity has, since the 16th century, undergone great re-
ligious upheavals which had the twofold effect of breaking up the monolithic
Church into many sects and denominations, and of loosening the hold religion
had exercised over the minds of people in the Middle Ages. In the Muslim
world, while sectarian separatism is not unknown, it never approached the
fragmentation of Christianity, and as for the hold religion had over
the people, there has been no discernible loosening. Quite
to the contrary:the last ten or twenty years have witnessed a resurgence
of religious rigorism, usually referred to as fundamentalism, in several
Muslim countries, prefigured by Wahhabism is Arabia, and most recently
manifested by Khomeinism in Iran. These developments have seriously affect-
ed the Muslim world, and resulted, among other things, in a tightening of

the religious reins on education.

In this connection it is instructive to have a glance at the relationship between cultural achievement and public education in the world of Islam. In most periods of Islam's history of thirteen centuries, and in most places where it had become the dominant religion, public education was one of its weakest aspects. While culture in the world of Islam had reached great heights within a century after the death of the Prophet Muhammad, and the Muslim peoples became the undisputed leaders in the Old World in such varied fields as mathematics, geometry, astronomy, medicine, philosophy, poetry, historiography, law, etc., after the Renaissance this leadership passed to Christian Europe, due partly at least to the increasing emphasis the latter put on public education. The overwhelming majority in the Muslim countries was illiterate even in the Golden Age of Arab culture, and the concept that every person should go to school and learn the three R's remained foreign to the Muslim world until it was introduced by the European colonial powers after World War I. Throughout the previous centuries the educated, literate elite in the Muslim world, the developers and carriers of the great Islamic civilization, constituted a very small minority in the midst of great masses of unschooled, illiterate Muslim populations.[8] For an European observer traveling in the Muslim world in the Middle Ages this was nothing unusual. However, while in Europe from the 18th century on education began gradually to spread to the population at large, in the predominantly conservative Muslim world no comparable development took place. As a result, by the 19th century, the Old World comprised three different types of cultures: a literate culture in Europe, where literacy was on its way to becoming universal; a non-literate culture in Black Africa whose indigenous cultures did not comprise the art of reading and writing, and an illiterate culture of the Muslim world, situated between the former two,

where an age-old literacy, preserved by a small elite existed in the midst

of an illiterate majority population. This situation, especially after the

industrical revolution of Europe, became detrimental to the Muslim world,

which, because of its illiteracy and general conservatism, lagged more and

more behind the Western world in power, until it fell victim to European

expansionism and colonialism.

The educational weakness of the Muslim world, which, as we have just

seen, is a heitage from the special socio-religious circumstances of the

Muslim past, still besets the Muslim countries today. This is manifested

in the ongoing struggle against illiteracy and for education that began

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with the European colonial domination of the Muslim world, and greatly

intensified after the withdrawal of Europe from the area in the wake of

World War II, by which time all the Muslim countries had adopted the Western

view that literacy was a fundamental cultural value and that its attain-

ment had to be made available to all members of the nation.

Statistics - themselves a Western concept introduced into the Muslim

world by the European powers - are still undeveloped and unreliable in many

Muslim countries, but whatever data are available show that literacy is

on the increase, although still far from catching up with that of the de-

veloped countries. I am enclosing a statistics ~~table~~ of illiteracy in

the Muslim world; the data are based on the latest UNESCO Statistical

Yearbook of 1987, but are in several cases 17 or more years old. They ~~table~~

shows that even in the 1980's in some Muslim countries three-quarters or

more of the population was still illiterate, and that illiteracy among

women is still higher in all Muslim countries than among men. (according

to the 1962 figures, in Saudi Arabia, the republic of Yemen, and Somalia

100% of the female population was illiterate, and even as late as in the

1970's and 1980's 92% of the women in the People's Republic of Yemen, 95% in Afghanistan, and 85% in Bangladesh and in Pakistan were illiterate. Tese figures explain why in these countries, and to a lesser extent in the other Muslim countries as well, the primary major educational task envisioned is the eradication of illiteracy, and the question of religio-centrism in education is not considered to be anything of comparable urgency.

The way to the eradication of illiteracy leads, of course, through compulsory, general, primary education. Legislation in this respect is still far from adequate. In seven of the 21 Arab states there is still no compulsory education; in five more the law requires only six years of school attendance, but it is a law that, in practice, cannot and is not enforced, especially in rural areas where children of seven or eight years of age are needed as helpers in the agricultural work of their families.

Still, the school enrolment has shown impressive gains in the last two decades. In 1970, the total school enrolment in all the Arab states was 16.6 million; by 1985 this had increased to 38.9 million. The gain for women was smaller: in 1970 the female enrolment was 35% of the total, in 1985 - 41%.[9]

Ideally, the problem of religio-centrism in the Muslim school systems should be tackled now, simultaneously with the continued efforts to make at least a few years of education mandatory and actually available to all male and female children from the age six on. After World War II several Ministries of Education in Muslim countries began to introduce educational planning, aimed, it is true, primarily at expanding the school system, which they rightly consider the task of the greatest urgency, but secondarily devoting attention to questions of curriculum construction.

At that time, during the period of struggle for Arab independence, Arab educational authorities planned national systems of education which were

to cover all the Arab-inhabited lands. Discussing the establishment of

such national systems in the Arab countries that had been under French and

British domination (Egypt, Iraq, Palestine, Transjordan, Syria, and Lebanion),

two educational researchers, Matthews and Akrawi, advocated a curriculum

that would lay "special emphasis on the national language [Arabic] and na-

tional history and geography and on the bringing up of ~~abiding~~ citizens who

owe allegiance to the country and are willing to do service for it, who are

capable of exercising their rights as citizens and sharing in the responsi-

bilities of running the country in all phases of life." Such an educational

System, the authors felt, should cultivate "native arts and crafts, dances,

folklore, and music, some useful and fine customs and traditions, and all

that goes to create a local atmosphere, a general background - in brief, a

national spirit and character," and it should reflect "the genius and pe-

culiar character of a nation..."[10] This curriculum could, without any

                be adopted
change,/in any Western school system. Conspicuously missing from it is any

reference to the Koran and to Muslim religious instruction. Twenty years

later an Arab educator supplied the missing feature. Munir A. Bashshur

wrote in 1964: "Arab educators draw on three main sources to derive their

educational objectives: the Islamic faith and cultural tradition, national

aspirations and sentiments, and Western philosophy, culture, and technology."[11]

And another twenty years later, the Arab League Educational, Scientific and

Cultural Organization, in designating the aims of Arab education, put the

emphasis exclusively on Islam and Arabism: "Today's Arab education aims at

bringing up an Arab generation that is aware, enlightened, believing in God,

and faithful to the Arab homeland."[12] We note that the reference to Islam

has been changed to a reference to "believing in God," undoubtedly as a

concession to the Christian Arabs. In actuality, instruction in the Koran

and Islam, as we have seen above, constitutes a major part in the curriculum

of the Arab and Muslim school systems.

Depending on how the courses on the Koran, Islam, Arab history, etc. are handled in the schools, they can fall anywhere between religio-centric inbdctrination at one end of the scale, and civics teaching, or citizenship education, to which I referred at the beginning of this paper, at the other. As I observed in my book The Arab Mind, in view of the history of Arab-European, and, more generally, Muslim-European, relations, it is understandable that the Arabs (and the Muslims in general) should "exaggerate the role Arab culture played in preparing the ground for the great European upsurge beginning with the Renaissance," and it can therefore be expected that their educational approach should be closer to the religio-centric end of the scale than is its Western equivalent to ethnocentrism. As that most astute student of the Arab world, Wilfred Cantwell Smith, remarked, "The Arabs feel more intimately the early glory of the past Muslim-Arab greatness than do any other Muslim groups; and feel more tautly the nostalgia. The Arab sense of bygone splendour is superb."[13] And, among the Arabs as well as among the other Islamic peoples, as Bernard Lewis has observed most recently, "Islam is still the ultimate criterion of group identity and loyalty."[14] This being the case, it is inevitable that educational policy-makers in the Islamic world should insist that the inculcation of Islamic religio-centrism be an essential part of the school curriculum.

To come back, in conclusion, to the issue raised in the beginning of this paper: the problem is not the inculcation per se of Muslim religious consciousness by means of education, but the manner in which this is being done, and the extent to which it is coupled with a negative stereotype of the non-Muslim world in general and of the Christian West in particular. Were it the case, e. g., that Iranian Shi'ite Muslim fundamentalism insisted on nothing more than imbuing school children with a love of traditi-

onal Muslim values, or rather their specific Iranian Shi'ite variety, even including the segregation and veiling of women which in that context has a certain defensible validity, one would in principle have no grounds to decry it. When, however, these teachings are coupled with a characterization of America as the "Great Satan," with preachment of hatred not only toward the Christian world but also toward fellow Muslims of a different religio-political persuasion, one must condemn it as pernicious religio-centrism whose introduction into the school curriculum can cause grave damage to the minds of the future Iranian generation.

In fine, it requires constant vigilance on the part of liberal-minded Muslim educators to make sure that the teaching of legitimate and positive religio-centric self-valuation as an educational goal, which is the Muslim equivalent of what we in the democratic West call civics, does not degenerate into a posioning of the young minds with a chauvinistic xeniphobia and a religio-centric jingoism. If the deliberations of this committee will make any contribution to advancing this effort, we shall have performed a most valuable service to Muslim education.

Notes

1. cf. T. Tyan, "Djihad," in Encyclopedia of Islam[2], 2:538-40.

2. Bayard Dodge, History of Education in the Arab World, New York: Arab Information Center, 1963, p. 2.

3. Victor Clark, Compulsory Education in Iraq, Paris: UNESCO, 1951, p.15.

4. Bernard G. Hoffman, The Structure of Traditional Moroccan Rural Society, The Hague: Mouton, 1967, pp. 117-18. ~~InxEgyptxxllxweeklyxperiodsx~~

5. Cf. e. g. in Iraq, Clark, op. cit., p. 26. In Egypt, 13 weekly periods of 45 minutes duration are devoted in every one of the six years of primary school to religion and Arabic out of a total of 26 to 33 periods. In grade 2 one, and in grades 3-6 three periods on geography, history and Egyptian society are added, so that in these four upper grades of the primary school

16 out of the total of 33 weekly periods, or almost half of the total, are devoted to religious and civic studies. Cf. Byron G. Massialas and Samir Ahmed Jarrar, Education in the Arab World, New York: Praeger, 1983, p. 83. In Jordan the situation was similar, with 15 to 17 weekly periods out of a total of 28 to 35 devoted to these subjects, Massialas, p. 84.

6. Massialas, pp. ~~XXXX~~ 228-29.

7. Massialas, p. 74.

8. Cf. Raphael Patai, The Arab Mind, New York:Scribner, 2nd ed., 1983, pp. 289, 325-26.

9. Source: UNESCO Statistical Yearbook 1987, tables 2.1; 2.2; 2.4.

10. Roderick D. Matthews and Matta Akrawi, Education in the Arab Countries of the Near East, Washington, D. C.: American council of Education, 1949, pp. 573-74.

11. Munir A. Bashshur, The Role of Two Western Institutions in the National Life of Lebanon and the Middle East, 1964, p. 15, as quoted by Massialas, p. 27.

12. Mithaq al-Wahda al-Thaqafiyya al-ʿArabiyya wa-Dustur al-Munathama ("The Arab Cultural unity Charter and the Constitution of the Organization"), Tunis: ALESCO, n. d., as quoted by Massialas, p. 27.

13. Wilfred Cantwell Smith, Islam in Modern History, p. 94, as quoted by R. Patai, The Arab Mind, p. 297.

14. Bernard Lewis, The Political Language of Islam, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988.

Table 1. Illiteracy in the Muslim World

Country	Year	Age Group	Percent. of Illiterates Total	Male	Female
Mauritania	1977	6+	82.6	–	–
Morocco	1971	15+	78.6	66.4	90.2
Algeria	1982	15+	55.3	42.7	68.3
Tunisia	1980	15+	53.5	38.9	67.7
Libya	1973	10+	49.9	33.1	69.9
Egypt	1976	10+	56.5	43.2	71.0
Sudan	1973	10-49	68.6	55.2	82.1
Somalia	1975	10+	45.2	39.1	52.1
Syria	1970	15+	60.0	40.4	80.0
Lebanon	1970	10+	–	21.5	42.1
Jordan	1979	15+	34.6	19.9	49.5
Iraq	1985	15-45	lo.7	9.8	12.5
Saudi Arabia	1982	15+	48.9	28.9	69.2
Rep. of Yemen People's Democr.	1962	15+	97.5	95.0	100.0
Rep. of Yemen	1973	10+	72.9	52.3	92.1
~~Oman~~	~~not available~~				
United Arab Emir.	1975	10+	43.7	39.6	55.8
Kuwait	1980	15+	27.2	27.3	26.9
Bahrain	1981	15+	30.2	23.5	41.4
Qatar	1981	10+	48.9	48.8	49.1
Turkey	1984	15+	25.8	14.1	37.5
Iran	1976	15+	63.5	51.8	75.6
Afghanistan	1979	15+	81.8	69.7	95.0
Pakistan	1981	15+	73.8	64.0	84.8
Bangladesh	1981	15+	74.5	64.5	84.7
Indonesia	1980	15+	32.7	22.5	42.3

Table 2. School Attendance in the Muslim World

Percentage of Those With No Schooling at All

Country	Year	Age Group	Total	Females
Morocco	1971	15-19	76.6	84.2
Algeria	1971	15-24	52.9	69.7
Tunisia	1984	15-19	24.7	36.3
Libya	1973	15-19	27.9	53.1
Syria	1970	15-19	40.8	61.9
Lebanon	1970	25+	45.6	59.5
Kuwait	1980	15-19	24.6	25.9
Bahrain	1971	15-19	26.0	38.6
Qatar	1981	10+	48.9	49.1
Turkey	1980	15-19	18.5	24.5
Pakistan	1981	15-19	65.6	75.7
Bangladesh	1981	15-19	59.8	67.6
Indonesia	1980	15-19	11.2	14.2

Source: UNesco Statistical Yearbook 1987, tables 1. , and 1.4.
No data are available for the countries not listed.