

REFORMING ALAZHAR & RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1. Sheikh "Muhammad Abduh"(1849-1905) the Head of Islamic verdict in Egypt & most Islamic countries in his time defined his goal of religious reform as "*Liberating the thinking from the blind & restrained copying of the preceding scholars & to retrieve the religion understanding to the days of "Salaf", that is the days of the prophet & his companions, that where the religion is taken only from its original source "Quran" before the appearance of the many Fiqh & scholar disagreements & creeds.* The sheikh emphasized the great importance of mindful thinking & rationale in the religious reform . He said that the interpretation of those preceding scholars was within their own & age knowledge & culture & understanding, which maybe different than our days . The sheikh calls for the reading of Quran as it is as revealed to the Prophet & conveyed to the believer & disbeliever in the days of prophet before any interpretations appeared .
2. The Sheikh clearly declares that *the only immune whole perfect text is the Quran & all other religious texts & books are not immune & can be debated & rejected or accepted,* thus his way was to crosscheck any religious text against Quran , so if it is fully compatible with Quran then it can be accepted , & if incompatible , then it is to be rejected & if it was difficult to decide if it were compatible or incompatible , then it is up to the human mind in how to consider it
3. Also the sheikh emphasizes that Quran is first & last a book of religion & not a book of physics or space or medicine & that Quran talks about universe signs in general just to give us examples of God existence & power, & not to detail scientific rules & information & this was an answer to those who try to derive numeric & detailed scientific theories from Quran
4. About those preceding scholars , the Sheikh also says that the world develops & there are new happenings & inventions & evolvments in every age , thus the old books did not tackle all modern life issues & what is pitiful that many of these old books are contradicting causing conflict & severe disagreements & sometimes war & killing between muslims . It should also be understood that any scholar judgment given at certain time & place & conditions & to certain people is relevant to these parameters & cannot be considered a general judgment , moreover these judgments are merely human effort & thinking which can be right or wrong & that re assessing & criticizing these judgment is a religious duty & must & that there is no nation that can develop unless it evaluates criticizes s & rectifies & improves & develops its ways of thinking
5. The Sheikh as the Head of Islamic verdict body & as a director in the board of directors in Al Azhar University started reforming the administrative system of Al azhar & introduced to the educational curriculum books of general knowledge & science & math's & geography & history & philosophy & started scrutinizing & *filtering the Azhar religious education curriculum from all what is contradictory to Quran & from the twisted deceptive concepts justifying killing & raping & looting & hostile acts under "jihad " & women repression under 'piety'"*& he called that such subjects should be replied to & refuted by Quran & prophet (pbuh) proven biography & he warned that such religious education in Azhar which is also transpired to most Islamic countries could lead to blood baths & killing & chaos & terrorism & hatred to religion & the warnings of the Sheikh

were proven true in what we see in our 21st century of killing & robbery kidnapping & raping & crimes by those who wear a religious mask to justify their crimes

6. The sheikh religious educational reform plan for schools students addressed three categories; a) elementary school education students B) higher school education students c) school teachers of religious curriculum in school

A) Religious curriculum for elementary school students & this to include

i. A short concise general book in belief agreed upon by the different Islamic castes & creeds without going into any disagreement subjects, citing only Quran verses & the sahih hadith in compliance with Quran & presenting the common beliefs & aspects between our belief & the Christianity & a quick view of the differences & how islam calls for co existence & good relations with non muslims & that any difference should not cause conflict in addition to a general short book of what is halal & haram in islam as per Quran & also showing the good manners & traits & the bad ones

ii. A general short book of the prophet & his companions biography & story showing their good manners & ethics & great deeds which led to the quick wide spreading of islam

iii. The above books are to be in the language of the students either Arabic or Turkish or other tongues

B) Religious curriculum for higher school students & this to include

i. An introductory book in the art of logic & mindful assessment & the art of debating

ii. A book in beliefs citing mindful & logical clues & proofs & abiding by the moderate Islam & understanding Quran as is in its direct easy words without complications & avoiding the disagreement subjects between Islamic creeds & some knowledge about Christianity religion & how islam compliments theirs & all God religions & emphasizing the importance of good co existence in Islam

iii. A book with some more detail on halal & haram & good & bad ethics

iv. A book with some more details on the prophet biography & on the Islamic spreading & victories

v. The above books are to be in the language of the students either Arabic or Turkish or other tongues

C) Religious curriculum for school teachers teaching religion curriculum & this to be

I. The know how principals & art of Quran interpretation, because Quran is the secret of success to muslims & Quran should be understood from its most direct straight way as is in the Arabic language , as Allah just revealed it without any complications , & if ever any extra books

are needed for interpretations , then these should be the books that give the direct meanings of the Arabic difficult words without insinuations or complications

II. Art & knowledge of Arabic language

III. Art /science of hadith conditional to taking Quran as the ultimate & final source of judgment & cross checking every hadith including the sahih against Quran

IV. Art of religious ethics & manners & behavior

V. Art of Fiqh (jurisprudence) principals so as he can assess the opinions of scholars

VI. Art of old & modern history including the Prophet biography

VII. Art of speech & oration & debate & logic rudiments & sciences

v111. Art of evaluating & assessing beliefs & creeds