ISIM Newsletter 4

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A Sufi Apocalypse

At first glance, the arrival of the year 2000 AD seems unlikely to provoke any great reaction – much less spiritual anxiety – among most Muslims. Any Western 'centurial mysticism' surrounding the date 1 January 2000 AD vanishes, after all, in the Hijri calendar equivalent of Ramadan 24, 1420. But despite the outward irrelevance of the Gregorian 2000 to most of the *ummah*, one Islamic mystical brotherhood – the Naqshbandi-Haqqani order – finds the advent of the year 2000 one of several powerful symbolic events in which traditional Sunni ideas of the 'Last Day' intersect with the millennial expectations of a new generation of European and American converts to Islam.

DAVID DAMREL

The Naqshbandi-Haqqani order, with roots in Turkey, Cyprus, Lebanon and Syria, has emerged since the mid-1970s as one of the most visible and fastest-growing Sufi orders in Western Europe and North America. The success of this conservative, *shariᶜah*-minded spiritual movement in attracting Europeans and Americans to both Islam and Sufism stems from a number of sources. The order's teachings promote time-honoured and appealing mystical themes that include spiritual growth, love, respect for the natural environment and religious toleration, all of which, the order insists, are epitomized in the *sunnah* of the Prophet Muhammad. The message is effectively distributed to a wide following on the internet, in books and pamphlets, and through a well-organized network of national Sufi centres and local circles that gather for weekly *zikr* (a communal ritual that 'remembers' Allah). The two main leaders of the order, Shaykh Nazim Haqqani and his deputy Shaykh Hisham Kabbani, reinforce these teachings and cement powerful personal ties with their followers through almost constant touring and travel.

Also included within the order's teachings – but by no means its major focus – are sporadic references to an eclectic and complex apocalyptic scenario that is grounded firmly in Sunni eschatology but driven by mystically inspired visionary insight into current events, politics, and the future. The result is a vision of troubled times ahead that resonates powerfully with certain modern Western audiences, whether Christian, Muslim or avowedly non-religious.

Rise of the Order

The Naqshbandi-Haqqani order is a modern branch of the larger well-known Naqshbandi order, a Sufi brotherhood that took its name and inspiration from the 14th century Central Asian mystic Khwaja Baha' al-din Naqshband. Historically, the Naqshbandis have enjoyed enduring popularity and are active today especially in Turkey, Afghanistan, the Balkans, Pakistan, Uzbekistan, India, northwestern China, Bangladesh, Malaysia and Indonesia. Linking the Naqshbandis across these diverse ethnic, social and historic settings are a set of defining features: an uncompromising Sunni orientation, emphasis on *shariᶜah* and *sunnah*, and a tradition of full social and political participation in the world.

Shaykh Nazim Haqqani (b. 1922) is the 'grand-shaykh' and namesake of the Naqshbandi-Haqqani lineage. The son of a junior Egyptian colonial administrator in British Cyprus, Shaykh Nazim's spiritual education began in Istanbul; later, in Damascus, he joined the order under Shaykh ᶜAbd Allah Daghestani (d. 1973). Deputed to Cyprus, Shaykh Nazim 'spread spiritual guidance and Islamic teachings' for seven years before eventually returning to Syria.

Naqshbandi-Haqqani hagiographies portray the period from the early 1950s until 1974 as one of intense spiritual activity for Shaykh Nazim, marked by lengthy retreats and extensive preaching tours in Syria and Cyprus. He encouraged people 'to leave atheism, secularism and materialism and to come back to God,' but his criticisms of the Cypriot coalition government led to his expulsion in 1965 and his eventual return to Damascus.

The Haqqani branch, based around Shaykh Nazim's distinctive practice, emerged in 1973. Empowered by the spirit of the Prophet Muhammad, Shaykh Nazim began his mission 'to spread the light of Islam into the European countries.' He travelled first to London and, encouraged by the followers of Gurdjieff protégé John G. Bennett (d. 1974), established a centre. Each year since then, Shaykh Nazim has made it his custom to spend Ramadan in London before returning overland across Europe to the Middle East, halting en route to teach about Islam and the Naqshbandi order. His efforts expanded to include South and Southeast Asia, and by the late 1980s the Haqqani branch claimed to have followers all over Asia, including thousands in Pakistan and over 20,000 disciples in Sri Lanka.

Shaykh Nazim's first trips to the United States and Canada were in 1991, with the result (according to Haqqani literature) of over 10,000 people becoming Muslims and Naqshbandis. That same year, Shaykh Hisham Kabbani (Shaykh Nazim's son in-law and spiritual deputy) was named shaykh of the order in the Western Hemisphere and ordered to reside in the United States. Today Shaykh Hisham oversees a network of twenty-three mosques, centres and retreats, anchored by a 'convention and retreat centre' on farmland in Michigan and by his own residence in northern California.

The 'signs of the Hour' and the Mahdi

The Naqshbandi-Haqqani order is virtually alone among contemporary Sunni groups in its accent on the Mahdi, the 'signs of the Hour' and the end of this world. By virtue of their mystical visions, status and insights, the Haqqani shaykhs claim deep insight into the unfolding events of the imminent 'last days'. Traditional Sunni eschatology is built around the Qur'an's urgent, vivid images of cosmic anarchy (the 'signs of the Hour') and from a wealth of related Prophetic traditions. The decline of society and cataclysmic events in the natural world announce the 'Last Day', which climaxes in the physical resurrection and ultimate judgement of all human beings. For Sunnis, belief in this final day is part of *iman* ('faith'), just as knowledge of precisely when these events will occur is Allah's alone. But if the certainty of these eschatological events is agreed upon, the complex details of the apocalyptic script are not. The events, their order and the precise roles of such figures as ᶜIsa (Jesus) and the Mahdi ('the rightly-guided one') and Dajjal (the 'Deceiver') are shadowy and contested in a rich and unwieldy literature of Muslim chiliastic traditions.

For the Naqshbandi-Haqqani shaykhs, however, mystical illumination allows no confusion about the proper understanding of the traditional Sunni sources – the Dajjal and the Mahdi are presently alive, Armageddon is imminent, and vast, profound changes loom in the world. In 1992, Shaykh Hisham assured his listeners:

'We are the only group expecting Mahdi and Jesus' coming very soon. We are on the right track. We have met them.'

Moreover, the shaykhs maintain a visionary spiritual connection with the two figures.

'What I am telling you is according to true vision, not vague or imagined. Mahdi (s) and Jesus (s) are among you.'[1]

The Naqshbandi-Haqqani shaykhs present an idiosyncratic and complicated agenda for the last days, all anchored with references to historic Muslim thinkers as diverse as Ibn Kathir and Ibn Al-ᶜArabi. At one point England will peaceably convert to Islam, and hidden saints will operate in Germany and China. Global Pax Americana will ensue before World War III erupts around Turkey. Billions will die before Mahdi and ᶜIsa appear to slay Dajjal and inaugurate their miraculous reign of love, justice, peace and happiness. Afterwards, the world and time will conclude with the final judgement.

Shaykh Nazim has been tapped for a special role in these last days. The Mahdi, presently occulted in a cave in the 'Empty Quarter' in the Arabian Peninsula, has charged Shaykh Nazim with the spiritual preparation of his 'helpers' – the Muslims and non-Muslims who will rally behind the 'rightly-guided one' when he declares his redemptive mission.[2] Ignoring occasional Muslim criticism of their prophecies and 'fortune-telling', both Shaykh Nazim and Shaykh Hisham selectively share their mystical foreknowledge of coming events. On some 'secrets', however, they are silent, maintaining they have not yet received the Mahdi's permission to speak.

Ecumenical Apocalypticism

The Haqqani shaykhs mix traditional eschatological motifs with their own mystical interpretations of current times: the result is a shifting, event-driven script of the 'last days' that is at once timely and timeless. Shaykh Nazim's specific (and elastic) end-time predictions have ranged to explain new figures (such as the Russian ultra-nationalist Vladamir Zhirinovsky) as well as dramatic developments including the Gulf War and the fall of Communism. This ability to relate even the most unexpected events to a larger explanatory framework – that is, to draw eternal meaning from the 'chaos' of the ephemeral world – may be the most powerful lure of almost all contemporary apocalyptic movements world-wide.

There is much room within the evolving Naqshbandi-Haqqani mystical exegesis of world events for sharing apocalyptic themes and imagery. Striking examples of this borrowing abound. Shaykhs Nazim and Hisham speak easily of 'Armageddon' and 'World War III', the 'Anti-Christ' and the 'Saviour', in their discussions with Muslims and non-Muslims in Europe and North America. Both shaykhs also offer (and revise) their predicted beginnings for the last days (which have included 1987, 1989, 1991, 1993 and 2000) in the Gregorian and not the Hijri calendar. Though all the symbols noted above can have an Islamic provenance, they are also instantly and unmistakably familiar to many Western audiences in an entirely different context. The Haqqanis employ this shared apocalyptic vocabulary to poignantly emphasize how Islam and Islamic spirituality are vital to the lives of even their non-Muslim listeners.

Despite the frequent and spectacular failures of Naqshbandi-Haqqani apocalyptic prophecy, the order's popularity continues to rise. This is a salient clue to a deeper function of 'Mahdism' in Naqshbandi-Haqqani rhetoric. For, while it may be curiosity or concern over the 'last days' that might draw some initiates to the order, these initiates are able to find satisfying reasons to stay

Continued on page 6

The Golden Chain of Spiritual Transmission

The Prophet Muhammad — *Abu Bakr as-Siddiq* — *Salman al-Farsi* — *Qassim ibn Muhammad ibn Abu Bakr* — *Jaᶜfar as-Sadiq* — *Tayfur Abu Yazid al-Bistami* — *Abul Hassan Ali al-Kharqani* — *Abu ᶜAli al-Farmadi* — *Yusuf al-Hamadani* — *Abul ᶜAbbas, al-Khidr* — *ᶜAbdul Khaliq al-Ghujdawani* — *ᶜArif ar-Riwakri* — *Abu ᶜAli ar-Ramitani* — *Abu Yaᶜqub Yusuf al-Hamadani* — *Muhammad Baba as-Samasi* — *Sayyid Amir Kulal* — *Muhammad Baba'uddin Shah Naqshband* — *Ala'uddin al-Bukhari al-ᶜAttar* — *Yaᶜqub al-Charkhi* — *Muhammad al-Maᶜsum* — *Muhammad az-Zahid* — *Darwish Muhammad Sarwish* — *Muhammad Khwaja al-Amkanaki* — *Muhammad al-Baqi billah* — *Ahmad al-Faruqi al-Mujaddidi* — *Muhammad Sayfuddin al-Faruqi al-Mujaddidi* — *Muhammad al-Badawani* — *Shamsuddin Habib Allah* — *Muhammad Khwaja al-Amkanaki* — *ᶜAbdullah ad-Dahlawi* — *Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi* — *Muhammad Sayfuddin al-Faruqi al-Mujaddidi* — *Muhammad al-Badawani* — *Muhammad Effendi al-Yaraghi* — *Abu Ahmad as-Sughuri* — *Abu Muhammad al-Madani* — *Khwaja Mahmud al-Anjir al-Faghnawi* — *ᶜUbaydullah al-Ahrar* — *Muhammad Baba as-Samasi* — *Sayyid Amir Kulal* — *Muhammad Baba'uddin Shah Naqshband* — *Ala'uddin al-Bukhari al-ᶜAttar* — *Khalid al-Baghdadi* — *Muhammad Sayfuddin al-Faruqi al-Mujaddidi* — *Sayyid Nur Muhammad al-Badawani* — *Muhammad Effendi al-Yaraghi* — *Abu Ahmad as-Sughuri* — *Abu Muhammad al-Madani* — *Sharafuddin ad-Daghestani* — *Ismaᶜil Muhammad ash-Shirwani* — *Jamaluddin al-Ghumuqi* — *ᶜAbdullah al-Faᶜiz ad-Daghestani* — *Shaykh Muhammad Nazim Adil al-Haqqani* — *Khas Muhammad Shirwani* — *Muhammad Nazim Adil al-Haqqani*

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ISIM Newsletter 5
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ISIM Newsletter 6
Deadline: 15 May 2000
Published: July 2000
ISIM Newsletter 7
Deadline: 15 September 2000
Published: November 2000

The ISIM solicits your response to the ISIM Newsletter. If you wish to contribute to the Newsletter, style sheets may be obtained upon request from the ISIM Secretariat or on the ISIM website. In order to offer update information on activities concerning the study of Islam and Muslim societies, along with news on vacancies, grants, and fellowships, the ISIM relies on its readers. The information will be made available on the ISIM Website.

The ISIM Newsletter is a tri-annual publication of the International Institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern World (ISIM). Responsibility for the facts and opinions expressed in this publication rests solely with the authors. Their views do not necessarily reflect those of the Institute or its supporters. The ISIM Newsletter is free of charge.

Editorial

The Millennium is not an Islamic event, but it developed into a global event making it difficult to ignore or avoid. Eschatological sentiments feed on global occurrences such as the increase in armed conflicts, population crises, and the digital phantom of the Millennium Bug, but also on the desire for the fulfilment of prophecies of justice and social equality. The growing sense of global interdependency – in particular in frames of (potential) conflict of interests or, conversely, of consensus – grants reliability and authority to advocates of universalist schemes, including those elaborating upon the notion of equality through the New Media and those building upon seemingly more traditional religious concepts. The champions of the information revolution may well be critiqued for their social optimism (Lawrence, p. 9), but their appeal is strong and the experiments impact on society (Lotfalian, p. 8). The millenarians may not be representative of the larger communities of faith, but they are too indicative of the fluidity of devotional practice and narrative. The remarkable mix of images and ideas taken from diverse religious and spiritual traditions and discourses by the Naqshibandi-Haqqani leadership (see cover), combined with the extensive geographical spread of this Sufi order, illustrates the complexities of the current movements of people and ideas. The order embraces what are thought to be Christian concepts of the End of Time, synchronizes with the Gregorian calendar, and addresses concerns of a broader public in the West in order to further its spread, in particular in North America. This trend of fusion is not restricted to clearly transnational organizations such as the Naqshibandi-Haqqani organization, also in the Middle East one finds a vivid Arabic eschatological discourse in which elements adopted from Western millenarianism play a prominent role. The shared historical sources of this particular religious genre may partly explain this phenomenon, but, evidently, apocalyptic imageries are open to a great variety of signs and omens, thus globalizing the Millennium 2000 and making it relevant to – at the least some – Muslim audiences. The inclusion of recent and current events, for instance the Gulf War and the wars in the Balkans and in the Caucasus, also puts the West on the apocalyptic stage, even allowing for the endorsement of Western Clash of Cultures and End of Histories theories (Furnish, p. 22). Merchandizing the Millennium occurs in the Muslim World, too, albeit not on a scale comparable to the West. It is mostly a highly fused phenomenon in which elements from ancient traditions are freely combined with high-tech imageries of global consumerism. In Gizeh, for example, a golden top is airlifted on the largest pyramid when the hour of the Millennium strikes, a costly event which arouses opposition from various circles, including Muslim ones.

But it is not only the final hours of a century that set the stage for transcultural experiments: the constant migration of people and ideas can also be a catalyst to experimentation elsewhere. The romantic encounters between Pakistani men and Philippine women in Hong Kong and the subsequent conversion of the latter to Islam are a case in point (Hawwa, p. 10). Several contributions to this issue show that the line between defending and inventing tradition is blurred in societal debates on what is considered fashionable and socially desirable in the context of migrant communities. Transnational in character, migrant communities are not only confronted with views and customs of local majorities, but also become part of local communities through schooling, career and intermarriage, a process that put their social, religious and/or national identities to the test (Van den Bremen, p. 7; Amiraux, p. 30; Buitelaar p. 29; Lewis p. 28). The situation of old Muslim minorities differs from that of migrant communities in that they put greater stress on preservation (of local majority status; see Attan , p. 11) or on the idea(l) of re-establishing their communities (Armijo-Hussein, p. 12; Szajkowski p. 27). A remarkable situation exists in an area where the Muslim World converges with that of Ethiopian Christianity: repeated collective migration from the one religion to the other (Abbink, p. 24). In other cases not people but spirits seem to have migrated, as in the case of Muslim Shamanism of Central Asia (Garrone, p. 15).

Naturally, debates on fashion and social codes are also very common in predominantly Muslim societies (Popenoe p. 5; El Guindi p. 6;; Ahmad, p. 16; Ensel p. 23). What makes the debates in these societies more pertinent is, perhaps, the different political significance of Islam – being the religion of the majority of citizens or the religion of state, or both. In Europe, the US or China, Islam is on the political agenda, but those speaking in its name do not, or hardly ever, set the agenda, albeit that in the Balkans Muslim votes count (Chukov, p. 26). In many Muslim countries Islam is integrated into the political system in the sense that governments and oppositional groups make use of its institutions and vocabulary, and like their constituencies ascribe to its general values. Political uses of Islam are not new phenomena, and the political relevance of Islam to modern state building has been recognized by many, starting with the Ottomans (Rogan, p. 19). At present its political potential often favours linkage between political and religious elites (Noor, p. 13; Van Hoven, p. 25). In internal or external conflicts modern Muslim conceptions of political rights and wrongs challenge alternative expressions; and often, as in the cases of Kashmir and Jordan/Palestine, the political appeal of Muslim groups transgresses state boundaries (Rao, p. 17; Al-Khazendar, p. 20-1).

Research on societies and their systems of beliefs can only be pursued in a successful manner when criticism is expressed. Subsequently, reviews of recent research, even state of the arts reports, are vital. In this issue the study of Islam in Sub-Saharan Africa (Brenner, p. 31) and in Post-Soviet Russia (Bobrovnikov, p. 32) are critically reviewed. News on institutes, projects and conferences relevant to the study of Muslim societies and communities constitutes another pillar of this *Newsletter*. Given the multitude and wide variety of initiatives, both old and new, ISIM would like to invite as many contributions to this category as possible, also in view of the development of an electronic guide. Linking of research – also to the study of non-Muslim societies – and access to results of research remains problematic. Apart from conducting original research, ISIM aspires to connect the various traditions, trends and aspirations in the broad field of the study of Muslim society and to help in making them accessible. ✦

DICK DOUWES
editor

NEWS

The University of Nijmegen Joins the ISIM

It is with great pleasure that the ISIM welcomes the University of Nijmegen as a full partner in the Institute. The University of Nijmegen – located in the east of the Netherlands – is one of the largest Dutch national universities. Founded in 1923 as a result of the emancipation of the Catholic community in the Netherlands, the university developed into one of the main centres of learning in the country. Today, it offers 73 training courses, attracting well over 12,000 students, and employs nearly 4,000 staff members distributed over 9 faculties.

Over the last decades, the University of Nijmegen has contributed strongly to the development of the study of Islam and Muslim societies in the Netherlands and beyond. The regional emphasis at the various relevant departments and institutes (Middle Eastern Studies, Anthropology, Centre for Women's Studies, Religious Studies, Third World Centre) is on the Middle East and North Africa. However, Sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia, as well as migrant communities in Europe, constitute part of the research interests.

The University of Nijmegen was involved in the early stages of discussions leading to the foundation of the ISIM. With its participation, the ISIM strengthens its national basis. Profiting from the expertise in Nijmegen, the new input enables the ISIM to further expand its activities. As is the case for the other participating universities, a special ISIM Chair will be established at the University of Nijmegen. The appointment will be announced in the next *ISIM Newsletter*, but may well be published on the ISIM Website and elsewhere earlier.

VACANCY

ISIM Chair: University of Amsterdam

The ISIM and the University of Amsterdam invite applications for the ISIM Chair for the Study of Contemporary Islam at the University of Amsterdam, at the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences. This faculty organizes 11 degree programmes, an extensive international study programme and conducts a series of research programmes at 8 institutes. The faculty employs over 400 permanent staff members and counts more than 7,000 students. A multidisciplinary approach and international cooperation are actively encouraged.

Candidates should:
- possess an established international reputation in the study of contemporary Muslim societies from the social science perspective;
- have extensive knowledge of one or more regions and be well versed in comparative social science research;
- have a strong record of field experience;
- have wide-ranging academic contacts, particularly in the Muslim world;
- have an excellent command of languages relevant to their field of research as well as fluency in English; and
- have experience in teaching and supervising postgraduate programmes.

The holder of the ISIM Chair will be expected to carry out the following tasks at both the ISIM and the University of Amsterdam:
- develop research programmes and conduct research within the framework of the two institutions;
- teach classes and provide supervision to undergraduate and graduate students; and
- contribute to various other academic activities such as conferences and special lectures.

This ISIM Professorship is a full-time position for a maximum of five years with the possibility of extension. Female candidates are especially encouraged to apply.

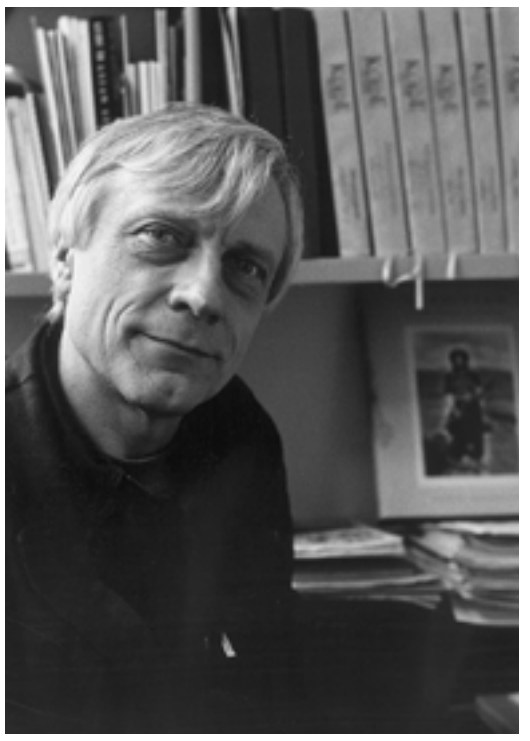
Review of applications will begin on 1 March 2000.
Applicants should send a full CV, including list of publications, to: Prof. Muhammad Khalid Masud
ISIM, P.O. Box 11089, 2301 EB Leiden, The Netherlands

Institutional news

APPOINTMENT

ISIM Chair at Utrecht University
Professor Martin van Bruinessen

Martin van Bruinessen initially studied theoretical physics and mathematics, only later turning to anthropology and Islamic studies. When still a student in physics, he took a number of long trips to the Middle East that aroused his lasting interest in the region. He then followed courses in anthropology and started learning Turkish and Persian. After a few years as a mathematics teacher, he received a research grant for fieldwork among the Kurds, which allowed him to spend two years in the Kurdish-inhabited parts of Iran, Iraq, Iran and Syria. He received his PhD from Utrecht University in 1978, with a thesis on the social and political organization of Kurdistan. One of the major themes in this thesis concerns the social and political roles of Sufi orders (especially Naqshbandiyya and Qadiriyya) among the Kurds. This work was established as one of the key texts on Kurdish society, and it was translated into various languages, including Turkish, Kurdish and Persian.*



Van Bruinessen has frequently revisited Kurdistan, and has published numerous articles on Kurdish society and history, with a strong emphasis on the place of religion. In order to give his work more historical depth, he took up Ottoman studies and worked on a number of Ottoman sources about Kurdish society. Some of this work was published as an edition and analysis of one of the major 17th-century sources on Kurdish society, Evliya Çelebi's famous travelogue (*Evliya Çelebi in Diyarbekir*, Brill, Leiden, 1988).

Meanwhile, Van Bruinessen had moved on to another part of the Muslim world, Indonesia. A stroke of good luck landed him a temporary research position at the Royal Institute of Linguistics and Anthropology (KITLV) in Leiden, which allowed him to spend considerable time in Indonesia (1983-84). His first research project was concerned with whether the Islamic resurgence and Islamic radicalism were triggered by rural-to-urban migration and relative deprivation, as has often been asserted to be the case in the Middle East. Instead of starting with Muslim radicals, however, he decided to look at the situation of rural-to-urban migrants who clearly experienced relative deprivation and register their responses. He lived in an urban slum in Bandung (West Java) for almost a year. Not surprisingly, perhaps, he found little radicalism but a lot of magic and mysticism and discovered that 'traditionalist' Islam remains very vital in a modern urban setting.

Van Bruinessen's next Indonesian experience was to be when Indonesia's Institute of Sciences (LIPI) invited him as a consultant for field research methods (1986-90). He took part, *inter alia*, in a large research project on the worldview of Indonesia's ulama, carried out by Indonesian researchers. This position enabled him to travel throughout the Muslim parts of Indonesia and get to know numerous ulama and Muslim intellectuals. Having encountered many ulama affiliated with the Naqshbandiyya, he began collecting material for a systematic survey of that Sufi order (published as a book in Indonesian in 1992: *Tarekat Naqsyabandiyah di Indonesia*, Mizan, Bandung).

In 1991, after a brief period in the Netherlands and in Kurdistan, he returned to Indonesia to teach sociology of religion and related subjects at the State Institute of Islamic Studies (IAIN) of Yogyakarta, within the framework of the Indonesian-Netherlands Cooperation in Islamic Studies (INIS). He remained there until early 1994, and wrote, among other things, a book on the 'traditionalist' Nahdlatul Ulama, which is probably the largest organization in the entire Muslim world. Van Bruinessen spent altogether almost nine years in Indonesia and has published numerous articles in English and four books in Indonesian on various aspects of Islam in Indonesia.

Since 1994, Van Bruinessen has taught Turkish and Kurdish studies in the Department Oriental Languages and Cultures at Utrecht University, with a one-year interruption as a guest professor of Kurdish Studies at the Institute for Ethnology of Berlin's Free University. He was involved in drawing up ISIM's research profile and was initially a member of the academic committee but withdrew from it to apply for the ISIM chair at Utrecht University.

His present research interests include shifting religious and ethnic identities in Turkey, the transformation of Sufi orders in modern urban settings, contemporary developments in Muslim socio-political thought and civil society, and transnational Muslim networks. ✦

* A revised English version was published in 1992 as Agha, Shaikh and State: The Social and Political Structures of Kurdistan, Zed Books, London.

Institutional activities

MUHAMMAD KHALID MASUD

ISIM Cairo Meeting

The ISIM is organizing sounding board meetings in the intellectual capitals of the Muslim world. The first of this series was held in Beirut last May. In October 1999, an ISIM delegation visited Cairo for a joint meeting with the Center for the Study of Developing Countries at the Faculty of Economics and Political Science (FEPS) of Cairo University. The ISIM delegation also visited a number of other institutes in order to explore the possibilities of cooperation, in particular in view of the collection of local printed materials. The choice for Cairo was an obvious one: the city has been a centre of Islamic learning since the early days of Islam and has been a cradle of reformist, modernist and revivalist movements in the last two centuries. This city of teeming millions has a large number of publishing houses that produce an abundance of Islamic literature, demonstrating the scholarly vitality of the city that also hosts major trends in Islam today.

The main objective of the sounding board meeting was to discuss the problematics in the study of Islam in the modern world. For this purpose, a two-day workshop (October 26-27) was organized at the Center for the Study of Developing Countries at Cairo University. Dr Mustapha Kamel al-Sayyed, the Director of the Center, provided information on the dynamics of the organization. Hasan Hanafi, a leading intellectual, presented the keynote address. He surveyed the major trends in Islamic Studies and stressed the need for mutual understanding and cooperation between the western and non-western scholarship for the study of contemporary Islam. The first day a number of scholars of Cairo University as well as from various other institutes such as the American University of Cairo, the Centre d'Études et de Documentation Economique, Juridique et Social (CEDEJ) and the Al-Ahram Centre, presented their current research. The second day consisted in a presentation of the ISIM research pogrammes and plans and a panel discussion.

The second objective was to explore the possibility of cooperation for the recruitment of students for the ISIM. For this purpose the Netherlands-Flemish Institute in Cairo (NVIC) organized a seminar. In cooperation with the CEDEJ, a number of potential PhD students from the region, including the Sudan, were invited. The students presented their research work and discussed the possibilities for further research. A number of Dutch and Flemish PhD students who conduct research in Egypt also participated.

The ISIM delegation paid visits to several institutes and publishing houses in order to introduce the Institute and to explore possible cooperation with them. Muhammad Khalid Masud gave a talk on 'Shatibi's Philosophy of Islamic Law and its impact on Modern Muslim Thought' at al-Azhar. Other visits included the Al-Ahram Center for Strategic Studies, the International Institute of Islamic Thought and the American University. A short courtesy visit was made to the Mashikhat al-Azhar.

Local printed materials

The ISIM was especially interested in the possibilities for the acquisition of local printed materials, in particular gray literature and ephemera, and local periodicals. This type of literature is vital for the study of contemporary movements and trends but is not generally acquired by university libraries. The ISIM has initiated the production of an index of recent scholarly publications on contemporary Islam and Muslim society in local languages. Existing reference tools like Index Islamicus provide information only about materials published in Western languages. Equally significant research material in non-Western languages often goes unnoticed. ISIM plans to publish this index as an annex to its Newsletter and on its Website. This project enables the production of analytical bibliographical surveys and of state of the arts surveys in the region. ✦

Muhammad Khalid Masud is the ISIM Academic Director.

Participants in the Cairo Meeting:

- Mona Abaza *(American University of Cairo)*
- Saif El-Din Abdel-Fattah *(FEPS/IIT)*
- Ola Abou Zeid *(FEPS)*
- Wadouda Badran *(FEPS)*
- Martin van Bruinessen *(ISIM)*
- Dick Douwes *(ISIM)*
- Han den Heier *(NVIC)*
- Raufa Hasan *(Centre of Women Studies, Sana'a University)*
- Iman Farag *(CEDEJ)*
- Hasan Hanafi *(Faculty of Philosophy, CU)*
- Dina Khawaga *(CEDEJ-FEPS)*
- Muhammad Khalid Masud *(ISIM)*
- Hoda Mitkis *(FEPS)*
- Nivine Mos'ad *(FEPS)*
- Hala Mustafa *(Al-Ahram Center)*
- Nadia Mustapha *(FEPS)*
- Mustapha Kamil Al-Sayyed *(FEPS)*
- Mohammed El-Sayyid Selim *(FEPS)*
- Iffat Al-Sharqawi *(Ain Shams University)*
- Gino Schallenberg *(NVIC)*
- Sami Zubaida *(Berkbeck College, University of London)*

Joint seminar report

ED VAN HOVEN

Transformation Processes

Transformation Processes and Islam in Africa was the theme of a conference held on 15 October 1999 at the African Studies Centre (ASC) in Leiden, the Netherlands. The conference was co-sponsored ISIM.

The conference addressed the various ways in which Islam is making its presence felt, not only in the regions of the continent which for centuries have belonged to Islam's sphere of influence, but also those that until recently have remained virtually untouched by Islam. Dutch research on Islam, having traditionally focused on Indonesia and the Middle East, testifies to the renewed interest in sub-Saharan Africa, a field which is rapidly gaining importance at the international level. These issues, as well as the role Islam plays as a vehicle of economic, political and ideological reorientation in many African societies, connecting them to broader society and appealing to more universal ideas and values, were discussed by Professor Wim van Binsbergen (Philosophy Faculty, Erasmus University Rotterdam) in his opening speech.

Professor Muhammed Khalid Masud, Academic Director of the ISIM, discussed the notion of transformation in Islam as a complex phenomenon of a public and sacred nature. Professor Louis Brenner (keynote speaker) from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS, London), elaborated on the kind of transformation represented in the case of the volunteer association, the model of Muslim socio-political organization in contemporary Mali. One of the questions raised by Professor Brenner was whether the epistemic shift from esoteriscism to rationalism, to which his well-documented paper testified, is in fact a product of the increasing influence of Islam or a consequence of the conflicting social and political forces of the societies to which Muslims belong. The second keynote speaker was Professor Lamin Sanneh from Yale University (USA), who raised the issue of mobility and liminality, physical as well as symbolic, in the processes of transformation and the contested identities they generate. Drawing on the work of Van Gennep and Victor Turner, and the latter's notion of communitas in particular, Sanneh isolated various types of marginality of which 'prescriptive marginality' exemplified in the *hijra* is particularly relevant for the understanding of Muslim movements in sub-Saharan Africa.

Travelling from the west to the east of Africa, the various contributions to the conference brought to light the multifaceted manifestations of Islam and Islamic identities on the African continent. Marloes Janson (CNWS, Leiden University) discussed the attempts of the female bards, who colour the streets of many Gambian towns, to legitimize their often-contested profession in terms of an Islamic discourse. Kirsten Langeveld (University of Utrecht) argued that in the neighbouring Casamance region (Senegal), the Jola Kumpo mask performance is under severe attack by Muslims though it still remains a (supernatural) force with which to be reckoned. Ed van Hoven (CNWS, Leiden University) examined the various attempts to 'muridize' Senegal's national culture, and the efforts of the state to mould political affiliation in terms of the sheikh/murid relationship.

The role of Islam and the motivation to travel of the Fulbe pastoralists living in Central Mali was discussed by Mirjam de Bruijn (Leiden, African Studies Centre), while Frauke Jäger (Berlin, Germany) analysed the adaptation of Islam to specific socio-religious contexts with examples from Northern Nigeria and Northern Cameroon. The role ethnicity plays in the process of conversion to Islam in the North West Province of Cameroon was discussed in the combined presentation of Caroline Angenent (Leiden, LISOR) and Anneke Breedveld (African Studies Centre, Leiden). That Islam in this region is receiving new impulses with the Islamic movements opting for purification with far-reaching consequences for the moral discourse on gender relations, was argued by José van Santen (Department of Anthropology, Leiden University). Karin Willemse (Department of Non-Western History, Erasmus University Rotterdam) discussed the phenomenon of Islamism in the case of West Sudan and showed that Islamic discourses on gender entail both femininity and masculinity.

Further south, in Tanzania, Marc de Meij (IIMO) analysed the Muslims' attitudes towards the pluralistic state and the role of Swahili as a religious language. Wim van Binsbergen closed the conference with a well-documented analysis of the role of Islam as a constitutive factor in so-called African traditional religion. ✦

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Summer Academy – Working Group Modernity and Islam

GEORGES KHALIL

Notions of Law and Order

The 4th International Summer Academy of the Berlin-based Working Group Modernity and Islam (see *ISIM Newsletter 2*) took place from 13-25 September 1999 at the Fondation du Roi Abdul-Aziz Al Saoud pour les Etudes Islamiques et les Sciences Humaines in Casablanca, Morocco. About 30 junior and senior scholars from various disciplines and geographical backgrounds discussed questions relating to 'Notions of Law and Order in Muslim Societies' at one of the major research institutions in the Muslim world. The Summer Academy was directed by Professor Gudrun Krämer from the Institute of Islamic Studies of the Free University of Berlin.

ISIM, the Institute of Islamic Studies of the Free University of Berlin, and the Wissenschaftskolleg will cooperate in academic meetings in 2000 and in the Summer Academy 2001.

Since 1996 the Working Group Modernity and Islam has been organizing annual two-week summer academies as an attempt to internationalize its scholarly programme. So far more than 100 junior and senior scholars from about 20 different countries, with their disciplinary backgrounds ranging from anthropology to psychology, covering regions from the Maghreb to China, have participated in Summer Academies that were held under the themes of 'Modernity and Islam', 'Processes and Counter-Processes of Modernisation', 'Crisis and Memory' and 'Notions of Law and Order in Muslim Societies'. They have taken place in Berlin, Beirut and Casablanca and have been funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research.

The scholarly programme of the Working Group Modernity and Islam tries to link research undertaken *in* the Muslim world to research *on* the Muslim world carried out in Germany and other parts of the non-Muslim world. The programme is not confined to contemporary Middle Eastern studies but rather emphasizes systematic questions related to the complex phenomenon of modernity, including its historical dimension.

The Summer Academy is primarily addressed to doctoral and post-doctoral researchers, offering them a forum to present and discuss their research. The programme differs from the normal lecture-hall or conference set-up, since the main contributors are the young researchers themselves. Leading international scholars participate in the Academy as tutors, adding their own methodological concerns and questions. The idea is to draw up a sort of interim status report that can be integrated into the work of the young as well as the more established scholars.

Under the quite provocative title of 'Notions of Law and Order in Muslim Societies' discussions focused on issues such as the rule of law, legal interpretations of the law, the role of the practitioners of the law, law and gender, law as a political symbol, good governance, legal reform, change and pluralism, techniques and methods of legal development, the use of legal sources for social history as well as moral discourse, social discipline and order. Working days were long and rather intensive with discussions being based on the projects of the participants and a collection of basic readings, which had been made available to the participants in a reader. Working days started with a lecture by one of the tutors and closed with a plenary session in which a recent paper or article by the tutor was discussed, to be continued in the evening in more informal settings. A number of guest lectures by renowned Moroccan scholars and intellectuals linked the academy work to the ongoing debate on law and order in the host country. Most of the time, however, was devoted to discussions within working groups of five to seven participants and two tutors, where the projects of the participants and the general themes were debated. As the academy had a workshop character, the major challenge for everyone was to present and rethink his or her work, which in most cases was highly specialized, relating it not only to the overall topic of the academy but also making it relevant to the other participants.

As shown by their written evaluation, the participants found the Summer Academy exhausting but also stimulating in terms of helping them to broaden, clarify and refine their approaches as well as to meet and communicate with colleagues.

The Summer Academy 2000 will be held at the Institute of Islamic Studies of the Free University of Berlin on the theme: History and Historiography. New Perspectives of Research. *The deadline for applications is 15 January 2000.* ✦

For a full list of participants, see ISIM Newsletter on the ISIM website.

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MISCELLANEOUS

ISIM MPhil Programme in Islamic Studies

The one-year ISIM MPhil Programme in Islamic Studies was inaugurated in November 1999. The programme is interdisciplinary in approach and focuses on Islam and Muslim societies in the context of modernity and globalization. It consists of five courses and a thesis. Seven students, from Egypt, Germany, Indonesia, Lebanon, and Pakistan as well as the Netherlands, were admitted to the programme in this first year. In addition to the academic staff of ISIM and participating universities, a number of internationally renowned scholars are involved in teaching. In December, Brinkley Messick (Columbia University) lectured the MPhil students. Others, including Richard Bulliet (Columbia University), Reinhard Schulze (University of Bern), and Stephen Humphreys (University of California, Santa Barbara) will follow suit in 2000.

The MPhil prospectus for 1999-2000 and an application form may be requested from the ISIM. Review of applications will begin on 1 January 2000.

VACANCIES

New ISIM Fellowships

The ISIM invites applications and research proposals for various fellowships throughout 2000. Applications from candidates in all fields of the social sciences, humanities and religious studies will be considered. All candidates should be competent in academic English.

The ISIM fellowships include:

- *PhD Fellowships*: ISIM PhD fellowships are granted for a period of up to 4 years. The applicants should hold an MA degree or similar qualification in their field. Most of the PhD fellowships are placed within one of the ISIM Research Programmes. However, innovative individual PhD research proposals are also invited.
- *Postdoctoral Fellowships*: ISIM postdoctoral fellowships are granted for a period of up to 2 years and are available to young scholars who have received their PhD degree less than 5 years prior to application.
- *Visiting Fellowships*: ISIM visiting fellowships are granted for a period of up to 3 months. Some of these senior research fellowships will be offered upon invitation, others will be awarded in open competition.
- *Sabbatical Fellowships*: the ISIM offers facilities to academic staff of participating and other universities to conduct research. In specific cases, the ISIM makes funds available to finance the temporary replacement for teaching at the home university.

For more information on the various fellowships and to download an application form, see the ISIM Website: http://www.isim.nl
or write to: ISIM Fellowship Programmes, P.O. Box 11089, 2301 EB Leiden, The Netherlands

Anthroplogy of the body

REBECCA POPENOE

Islam and the Body: Female Fattening among Arabs in Niger

Is there a specifically Islamic vision of the body? Given the nuanced nature of cultural understandings of the body and Islam's own variable expressions, this question is probably unanswerable, and indeed poorly phrased. Phrased another way, however, the question of the relationship between Islam and the body becomes more interesting: how do bodily practices in different Muslim societies articulate with different versions of lived Islam? My research among Arabs in remote northwestern Niger on the aesthetic of corpulent female bodies, and the practice of force-feeding young girls to achieve it, speaks to this issue.

The approximately 20,000 Arabs who today live in the Azawagh region in Niger arrived there a century ago from what is now Mali, and before that lived further north in what is now Algeria. Resembling the Moors of Mauritania in their use of Hassaniyya Arabic, a nomadic way of life until recently, and the fattening of girls, they call themselves simply 'Arabs', but I have chosen to call them 'Azawagh Arabs' after the region where they reside.

Fattening among Arabs of the Azawagh

While a corpulent female aesthetic is common in societies around the world, the practice of fattening is less so, though it too occurs in many places, including among Tuaregs who are neighbours to Azawagh Arabs and Moors, and in a number of sub-Saharan African and Pacific societies. Many visitors to the Sahel and Sahara have commented on the female aesthetic there previously. Ibn Battuta had already remarked on it among Berbers in what is now Mali in 1356; in 1799 the Scottish explorer Mungo Park wrote poetically about 'a prevalent taste for unwieldiness of bulk' among Moor women; numerous European explorers and colonialists made passing reference to it; and, in the 1980s the French anthropologist Aline Tauzin finally put it in a more ethnographically sensitive light in her writings on Mauritania.

The practice among Azawagh Arabs is, in brief, as follows:

> When a girl of the higher caste loses her first baby teeth, an older woman is charged with overseeing her fattening process *(al-bluuḥ)*. Until the girl reaches puberty, she is given a large bowl of milk or porridge several times a day and is enjoined to empty its contents, under threat of physical force at times. As a girl goes through puberty, she slowly 'learns the value of fatness herself' and no longer needs an overseer, though if she has the good fortune to be married, her mother-in-law may encourage her progress. Adult women continue to try to maintain their fat by ingesting large quantities of grain, washed down with milk or water.

There are complex ethnotheories of nutrition and fattening that prescribe what foods to eat when and what foods to avoid, all closely bound up with the maintenance of proper 'heat' in the body. Women with stretchmarks and folds of fat are celebrated in song as well as everyday conversation.

When I asked men and women directly why girls fattened and why women strove for such corpulent forms, they answered me in one of three ways: 'because it is good/attractive (*zayn*)', 'because men like it', and 'because it makes a girl grow into a woman faster'. My own research, based on one and a half years in the Azawagh in the early 1990s, found that behind these simple utterances lay a more complex story. This story, though focused on notions of appropriate male and female behaviour, sexuality, and health, was not unrelated to Islam. Before I explore these connections in more detail, however, I want to say something about 'Islam' in the context of Azawagh Arab life.

PHOTO: REBECCA POPENOE

Young unmarried women (some divorced) at a baptism.

Islam for Azawagh Arabs

Unlike many other nomadic Arab peoples, for whom Islam has been described as something of a backdrop to more immediate tribal or ethnic concerns, the Azawagh Arabs, both men and women, asserted their Muslim-ness above all other aspects of their identity. They consider themselves to be direct descendants of the companions of the Prophet, and hold their own Muslim-ness to be of a higher, truer standard than that of the peoples around them. Although they themselves hold their Islam to be 'true Islam', I want to distinguish their form of lived Islam from Islam as some essentialized category. The Islam of the Arabs of the Azawagh shares elements with Muslims everywhere, but also has its own local particularities.

Although no one I spoke with ever connected the practice of fattening to Islam (as, say, people in some societies mistakenly claim for female circumcision), the practice nevertheless contributed to a life that was in keeping with Azawagh Arabs' lived understanding of Islam. For heuristic purposes I divide these connections between Islam and fattening into two categories: ideas about the sexes and reproduction, and ideas about the body.

Islam and Fattening

The three 'simple' answers I received to the question of why girls fattened were grounded on three unstated assumptions about the sexes and reproduction which found legitimation in a particular reading of Islamic scripture: (1) that men and women should be as different from one another as possible, because God decreed that it should be so, and fattening enhanced this difference; (2) that desire was born of this difference and that desire was positive, if acted upon appropriately, and fat was sexy in its extreme difference from masculinity; and (3) that a girl's (and a boy's) God-given duties were to marry and produce children, and that fattening speeded up a girl's ability to reach this goal, by bringing her more quickly to puberty. In these ways the self-evident attractiveness of corpulent women was at least indirectly grounded in a vision of the sexes and of the life course that Islam upholds. To fatten, therefore, is a way for a girl to accede to a God-given order, for it constitutes an active embracing of sexual difference, as well as an embracing of woman's destiny and purpose as a Muslim.

Islam also provides reinforcement, if you will, for a particular way of understanding the human body. During one of my first weeks in the field, an incident occurred that brought this home to me. While making a rest stop on a trip, I pricked myself on a thorn, and quickly sucked off the drop of blood that emerged. A teenage boy in the pick-up truck we were travelling in turned and said to me immediately: 'Muslims don't do that. Things that come out of one's body are not pure.'

By requiring ablutions, the emptying of all bodily wastes, and the cleaning of all sexual fluids from the body's surfaces before every prayer, Islam could be said to send a strong if unarticulated message: that the body as the physical icon of the person is most holy and most valued by Allah when uncontaminated by the flows, accretions, and processes of regular physical life. By forbidding prayer when there is any kind of discharge from women's bodies, Islam portrays the uncontained, unbounded, leaking body as problematic, and holds up the whole, 'closed' body as pure and desirable. That is, while the body in many ways constitutes a vehicle for religious expression (ablutions, prayer postures, wearing of amulets), some aspects of bodily nature, especially women's bodily nature, are perceived as profoundly contradictory to the body that Islam upholds as pure and virtuous. This, at least, seemed to be the way in which Azawagh Arabs 'read' Islam.

'Openness' and 'Closedness'

This particular Islamic understanding of the body played itself out in one of the most common tropes used by Azawagh Arabs to analyse illness: 'openness' and 'closedness'. Sickness was widely considered to be due to and to result in bodily 'openness', and an attractive and desirable woman should be 'closed', as well as 'hot' (the two qualities indeed go together). Women, with their many natural openings (mouth, anus, and especially vagina), needed to be particularly careful to keep their bodies closed. Fattening contributes to the 'closedness' of the body in several ways: by closing off the body's openings amidst swelling flesh; by increasing the 'heat' of the body, which keeps the body from leaking; and by making it physically more difficult for women to move about, thereby containing them in less danger-laden inner spaces of the tent or yard.

This trope not only made sense in light of Islamic rules about the necessary state of the body for prayer, but was also itself applied to Islamic scripture. For example, the body's 'openness' and 'closedness' was a central trope of the creation story as it was related to me by an old woman. Both Adam and Eve bit into the apple, but for Adam it stuck in his throat, creating the Adam's apple, while for Eve it flowed right through her, creating her menstrual period. Eve's punishment was, in a sense, that the female body became plagued with uncomfortable and impure secretions, while the male body was able to contain things and keep its boundaries clear, enabling life in spirit- and wind-laden open, public spaces.

The struggle of women against their bodily 'openness' emerged in another religious context as well: how heaven was imagined. In addition to flowing milk and the ever-present company of female relatives, women's representations of heaven also included bodily wholeness and containedness. In the words of one young woman, in heaven, 'you won't defecate, or have mucous, or be sick.'

In short, while Azawagh Arab women's bodily practices were in no way determined by Islam or even read explicitly as grounded in Islam, they fit with ways of understanding the body that were also upheld by the Islam of Azawagh Arabs. Even though fattening and notions of the body's 'openness' and 'closedness' almost certainly have their roots in a pre-Islamic world, local expressions and understandings of Islam, and local ideas about the body, coincided with and reinforced one another. In this particular context, it may not be inappropriate to speak of *an* Islamic vision of the body. ✦

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Veiling

FADWA EL GUINDI

Veiled Men, Private Women in Arabo-Islamic Culture

Research on the contemporary Islamic movement that emerged in Egypt in the 1970s, after the Ramadan war, revealed a centrality of the dress code adopted by the *Islamiyyin* (Islamic activists), which has spread throughout the Arabic-speaking and Islamic region. The newly constructed dress form was visible and dramatic. Too much focus, however, was on the fact that previously secularly dressed college women had adopted conservative clothing, which includes veiling.

'The veil' had become problematized in the 1970s – not the conservative dress code. And gradually there was an avalanche of discourse and publications on 'women's Islamic veiling'. Most used a 'women's studies approach' which confined the issue to women's clothing and behaviour, invariably presenting it as reflecting women's invisibility and anonymity, linking veiling to seclusion and seclusion to institutions such as 'the harem'. Reductionist explanations ranged from female subordination to patriarchal ideology to women's nature. Ethnographic evidence challenged these observations and claims.

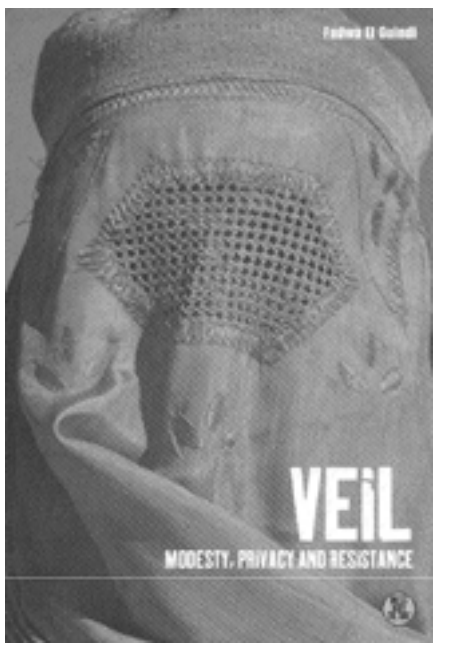
Upon close examination it was revealed that the code underlying the dress should be the focus and not the dress form per se. Indeed the disproportional focus on women's veiling is misleading, and once this was re-framed it became evident that men (college youth) were also 'veiling' as it were. In one sense they materially veiled by wearing the *kufiyya* as head cover. But they also used it on specific occasions to partially cover their face.

In the course of my fieldwork, I personally observed one such incident which occurred on the university campus in Cairo. This turned out to be ethnographically and analytically revealing:

> It was during the semester when college lectures were in session, and I was engaged in fieldwork, that is, spending time on campus observing and talking with students in and outside the movement. While I was with women students in the women's lounge, a man knocked on the door.
>
> The women scrambled for their hijabs and qina's. Moments of confusion and tension passed, after which the man knocked again on the door. Finally, although still unsettled, the women leaders among them invited him in. I looked out of the door and saw a man in a gallabiyya (an ankle-length white, unfitted gown with long sleeves). He pulled his kufiyya (head shawl) over his face and entered very cautiously, literally rubbing against the wall trying not to look in the direction of the women until he reached a curtain diagonally hung in the corner of the room. He went behind it and sat facing the women from behind the curtain. That is, it was the man who both face-veiled when with women and sat behind the hijab (curtain). His shadow showed him lifting the kufiyya off his face and letting it down to his shoulders, but keeping it on his head.
>
> He proceeded to discuss Qur'anic suras, particularly those pertaining to the hijab, according to the interpretation by Mawdudi (1972, 1985; see note 119). The women asked him questions, and mildly challenged some of his comments, but all in all did not seem to be awed by or subservient to his performance. They were abiding by their own self-imposed rules of ritualized cross-sex encounters in public space. After about thirty-five minutes, he excused himself, and went through a ritualized exit, similar to his entry.
>
> *Veil: Modesty, Privacy and Resistance,* p. 118.

Through both this incident and additional observations, and also after examining text and ethnography, it became evident that in order to understand the phenomenon of veiling, the study cannot be restricted to the superficially obvious or the obviously visible (women veiling). It must, rather, extend to intangible spheres and hidden codes. The 'dress' movement, as it turned out, was carried out by men and by women, and was similar in manifestation among both.

The empirical inference that men do 'veil' opened the research exploration further and led to findings on men's veiling in various Arabo-Islamic contexts. This challenged single gender explanations for veiling. And it was not a matter of 'add men and stir'. The overall approach was to be reconsidered.



The commonly produced linkage of *harim* with seclusion and sex derives from a perspective that embeds the phenomenon of the veil (and its assumed environment, the harem) in the sphere of gender, rather than in the broader contexts of society and culture. First, the ethnographic evidence explored in this study shows that veiling occurs without seclusion and seclusion occurs without veiling. Analysis of historical records reveals that seclusion of women more accurately describes Christian (Mediterranean/Balkan) culture than it does Muslim society. And in the Christian culture seclusion is more associated with religion and religious concepts of purity which are absent in Islam. Finally, there is a need to fill the historical gap in the scholarly coverage of women's roles.

The veil is clearly a complex phenomenon. The research which led to the publication of *Veil: Modesty, Privacy and Resistance* comprised a journey into history, scriptures, ethnography, poetry, and even photography. A search was conducted through different bodies of data and across national borders. How far back does the evidence for this practice go? Who practised it? Is it everywhere the same phenomenon? Does it have the same meaning across eras, empires, and religions? The quest for answers became a voyage of discovery.

Accordingly, the veil was examined in many contexts in a synthesis of many sources of data. In addition to ethnography and historical materials, the study consulted Arabic Islamic-textual sources as well as contemporary and historical materials to produce a new understanding. The procedure I used in exploring text was contextual and relational. Segments of text relevant to my subject were examined against other segments in the same source. That is, a relevant concept that is located in a particular *ayah* in a *sura* was examined against its presence in other *ayahs* in the same *sura* and also in other *suras*. Information in the Qur'an was examined against *tafsir* and in *hadith*. This procedure had to be systematic to yield the observations and meanings I was able to derive. These are then examined against ethnography.

Drawing upon these various bodies of knowledge, the analysis of the veil reveals a fundamental code underlying many aspects of Arabo-Islamic culture, which embodies related concepts that are meaningful in textual and social contexts. I contend that the modesty-based code (modesty-shame-seclusion) represents an ethnocentric imposition on Arabo-Islamic culture. Clustering these notions obscures the nuanced difference that is characteristic of Arabo-Islamic culture. The modesty-honour gendered opposition is equally inappropriate.

In the course of this anthropological exploration it became evident that veiling consists in a language that communicates social and cultural messages, a practice that has been present in tangible form since ancient times, a symbol ideologically fundamental to the Christian, and particularly the Catholic, vision of womanhood and piety, and a vehicle for resistance in Islamic societies.

The veil is currently the centre of scholarly debate on gender and women in the Islamic East. In movements of Islamic activism, the veil occupies centre stage as a symbol of both identity and resistance. The veil, veiling patterns and veiling behaviour are therefore, according to my analysis of Arab culture, about sacred privacy, sanctity and the rhythmic interweaving of patterns of worldly and sacred life, linking women as the guardians of family sanctuaries and the realm of the sacred in this world. I argue for the centrality of the cultural notion of privacy, as one that embodies the qualities of reserve, respect and restraint as these are played out in fluid transformational bi-rhythmic space. Dress in general, but particularly veiling, is privacy's visual metaphor.

My argument (developed in Part II of the book) is that veiling in contemporary Arab culture is largely about identity, largely about privacy – of space and body. I contend that the two qualities, modesty and seclusion, are not adequate characterizations of the phenomenon as it is expressed in the Middle East. In their social setting, veiling proxemics communicate exclusivity of rank and nuances in kinship status and behaviour. Veiling also symbolizes an element of power and autonomy and functions as a vehicle for resistance. It was no accident that colonizing powers and authoritarian local states both consistently used the veiling of women (and dress form for men as in Iran and Turkey) as their theatre of control. ✦

Fieldwork for the book was conducted in Egypt and was complemented by observations from research trips to the Arab East, South Asia, and Andalusian Spain. Support was provided by the UCLA African Studies Center, the Ford Foundation, and the Fulbright Fellowship programme.

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Continued from front page: A Sufi Apocalypse / *by David Damrel*

even when the predictions are discredited. Explaining the year 2000 – and not the year 1420 – becomes the point of entry to a larger project of inviting a generation of Europeans and North Americans to discover Islam. 'Last day' imagery serves as a timely and effective teaching tool with which the shaykhs drive home to their followers more subtle spiritual teachings about the afterlife, mystical praxis and Islam. The Haqqanis speak to modern millennial anxieties, religious disenchantment, interest in prophesy, and the search for spiritual truth – familiar themes informing some of the most diverse and dynamic expressions of spirituality in the modern West – and change the conversation from one about the end of this world to an Islamic dialogue concerned with life in the next. ✦

Notes

1. Shaykh Muhammad Hisham Kabbani, (1993), *Mercy Oceans Secrets of the Heart*, Haqqani Islamic Trust, Fenton, Michigan, p. 10. I am grateful for Mr Mateen Siddiqui's help in clarifying the meaning of this passage.

2. Shaykh Muhammad Nazim Adil al-Haqqani an-Naqshbandi, (1994), *Mystical Secrets of the Last Days*, Haqqani Islamic Trust for New Muslims, Los Altos, California, pp. 125-129.

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Veiling

CINDY VAN DEN BREMEN

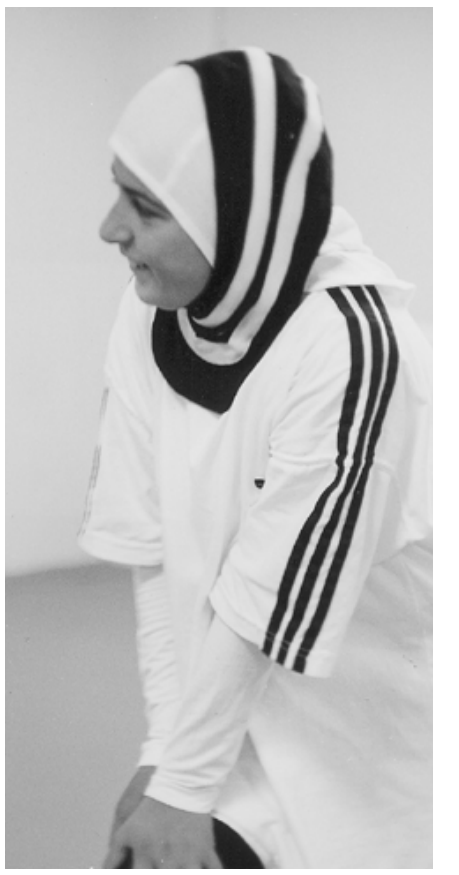
A Modern Interpretation of the Headscarf

Veiling has been – and still is – the subject of much discussion in Europe, the Netherlands being no exception. Some argue that the veil counters women's rights. Others even see it as a provocative gesture against European values. From a seemingly more practical point of view, the question of safety has also entered the debate on wearing headscarves, in particular during sports activities.

Since the arrival of migrant labourers with their families in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and with it the appearance of the headscarf in public life in Europe, the practice of veiling has become a major issue. This also holds for the Netherlands. The scarf was not associated with fashion, but rather with the issues of cultural discord and discrimination against women. Although in Western fashion the wearing headscarves was a major trend in the 1950s and early 1960s, veiling by/of Muslim women has become the subject of debate in terms of whether it contributes to or inhibits the integration of Muslims in European societies.

Instances of being forbidden to wear headscarves in the Netherlands have occurred with some frequency. Muslim girls and women here have filed many a complaint with the Committee for Equal Treatment, a state institution created to fight discrimination on grounds of race, gender, and conviction. Some years ago, this committee declared that no-one should be denied the right to wear a headscarf, however, more recently the same committee stated that the commonly worn headscarves created a possible danger during sports activities. It was suggested that girls simply wear a swim cap with a high turtleneck instead. No Muslim girl took this alternative seriously. Many continued to skip gym class. Because it is held that gym class is meant to stimulate team building and interaction among students, the controversy may constitute a hindrance to further integration.

As a designer, the veil poses an interesting challenge for me: how to come up with a solution which combines Islamic precepts with Dutch regulations and expectations. I had to design a new headscarf that is safe for sports and at the same time covers the head, hair and neck. I also had to avoid reproducing an already-existing solution, such as a hood or a cap. These alternatives are an offer without engagement. Therefore, I designed an accessory with its own originality and charm; one that refers to the headscarf and thus carries its religious value. At the same time, due to the stigmatization, I wanted to create something that did not too literally refer to religion. That way it would be seen as simply an accessory – wearing it not necessarily meaning one is a Muslim. Many Muslim girls and women that I interviewed during my research complained that they constantly felt that they had to defend their choice of wearing a headscarf.



▲ **Outdoor model**

▼ **Skate model** **Aerobics model** ▶

Tennis model

PHOTOS: CINDY VAN DEN BREMEN

While designing the sport headscarves, I did not only focus on the target group: I designed a head-cover that is still suitable for Islamic purposes, yet without having to convey that message. I created a line of sports accessories that can be worn by anyone, regardless their choice of function, religion or even gender. Four types emerged, each with special colours, materials and shapes depending on the particular sport. For instance, for the 'tennis model', I looked into conventional tennis clothing for women, which includes a short skirt. However, many Muslim women would never wear such a skirt. Nonetheless, since it is so characteristic of the sport I assimilated it in the collar. I also designed a black and white tricot 'Aerobics model', a dark and light grey lycra 'Skate model' with neon accent, and a dark red fleece 'Outdoor model'. During the design process I asked Muslim girls for their opinions. Since I myself do not wear a headscarf, their feedback on the choice of design, material, colours and the way they close was vital. This cooperation proved interesting and useful, as it revealed, for example, the importance placed on the fact that the headscarf should not make noise and that using a zipper at the neck is uncomfortable. Besides visiting the various organizations that deal with Muslim women, I also sought the advice of an Imam so as to have my designs judged in terms of Islamic regulations. He was very enthusiastic about this undertaking.

My choice to undertake this subject was not only motivated by the will to help resolve the problem of Muslim girls in gym class, but also to create awareness in the Western world that many women do actually choose to cover themselves. In the Netherlands, the opinion that 'all girls wear them because their fathers tell them to', and that 'all women wear them because their husbands tell them to' is far outdated. Many girls who are born in the Netherlands but raised with the culture and values of their immigrant parents, find themselves struggling with identity. They are, in the eyes of some, still 'foreigners' and yet to others they are perceived as 'Dutch': perhaps they are both. While emphasizing their individuality, they find comfort in wearing the headscarf – symbolic of their religion and beliefs. Many women even experience wearing the headscarf as a freedom. They can interact and integrate without loosing their own values and without being judged by their own community. ✦

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Science and Technology

MAZYAR LOTFALIAN

Understanding Muslim Technoscientific Identities

With Islamic resurgence, there has been an increased concern that science and technology are not value-free agents that can be appropriated and expropriated without inducing social and cultural violence. There is a complex relationship between culture, religion and society on the one side, and science and technology on the other, that is far from being value free. The way people understand and adopt this relationship between culture, science, and technology, can be termed 'technoscientific identities'. This relationship has seldom been explored in the Islamic world.

It can be argued that the resurgence of Islam and the changes in the identity of secular states in the Islamic world have opened up new spaces for the transformation of technoscientific identities, creating a 'metalinguistic landscape', a landscape of global scope. There are different modalities of discourse that are interacting, each making a linguistic landscape. Ideas and concepts, whether technological or discursive, are formed in these landscapes and affect one another.

Technoscience and Islam in debate

In the late 1800s, the Islamic reform movement Salafia, facing the onslaught of Western scientific and institutional discursive practices, sought to prevent the perceived marginalization of Muslim tradition. Al-Afghani argued that science in the West is the continuation of the medieval Islamic science and therefore Muslims can adopt it while remaining Muslim and following their traditions. In this interpretation, science and the effect of European planning were understood as inherently and potentially Islamic. Science and discursive planning, such as Timothy Mitchell explores in his account of the effects of European colonial powers on the urban structures and life in Cairo,* were understood not in the context of the modern epoch as a set of interrelated episteme, but rather as a disjointed body of objects that might even bear Islamic roots. This moment was marked by intellectual debates on the relevance of Western science (such as Darwinian evolution or Galileo's astronomy) to Islam and the creation of new imaginaries through the work of cultural translation (e.g., theatre and cinema, or the formation of the 'new curious individual' as a knowledge seeker). These debates came to an end around the 1920s, when secular states adopted a hegemonic view of science as universal, value and culture free. Consequently, Islam and other local cultural traditions were increasingly rendered irrelevant.

The debates over the identity of technoscience have been re-opened in this turn of the century. Now, however, a new condition frames the relationship between technoscience and the Islamic world. This condition can be illustrated in the following way: first, with the resurgence of Islam, which is a source of cultural and political identity formation, the structure of state and of scientific and educational institutions is undergoing some changes and/or challenges. Second, there is a new emerging discursive view, based on both Islamic metaphysical foundations and historical developments of the West, that sees the West as an epoch, a set of interrelated episteme. Third, references to Islamic metaphysical foundations have become de-localized, travelling through transnational movements of people and technological devices such as the Internet. And fourth, Muslim experiences of modernity/post-modernity are multileveled, trans-local, and interactive.

Competing discourses

The quest of Muslims in the late 20th century is to find appropriate cultural and institutional models for implementing science and technology. Islamic countries today are far different from the time when Europeans arrived in Egypt, for instance, and 'found' it 'unplanned' and 'undisciplined', as they set out to subject Egypt to new disciplined spaces in order for them to be understood according to new rules of scientific methods. The late 20th-century Islamic world is a construct of hybrid norms and forms: on the one hand, scientific discourses from the West define life and its natural milieu through instrumental reason. On the other hand, Islamic discourses challenge this adoption of Western epistemology based on instrumental reason. The condition of technoscience, therefore, consists of competing discourses about how science and technology should be implemented, taught, and practised.

'Science studies' as an interdisciplinary approach to the study of science and technology is scarce in the contemporary Islamic world. In this project I am attempting to delineate the relationship between science, language, religion, culture, and society. The complex relationship among these categories is what I refer to as technoscientific identities. The problem about which is being theorized here has to do with understanding the fluid scene where many levels of discourses, institutions, and individuals are interacting. Current work on the philosophy of language is an important contribution to the study of Muslim technoscience. The relationship of language, culture and science can be understood as a set of linguistic enactments that construct institutional, epistemological, and cultural bases for science and technology.

Linguistic enactments are discursive and performative articulations of ideas that float between individuals and institutions. These articulations, in turn, are indexical of some events, including: the demise of medieval Islamic science and the effort to explain its historical and cultural roots; the reform movement of the late 19th century to revive Islam and reconcile it with modernity and the attendant emergence of the epochal understanding of the West; and, most recently, what one might call the demise of the secular state and the role of Islam as a political force for the reconfiguration of the state in the global context. These events have played deconstructive roles in recent reconfiguration of Muslim technoscientific identities. However, the articulation of these events into institutional settings must be understood in the larger discursive field of many competing modalities. There is a global context for the latter where multi-mediations, actors/institutions/technologies, frame the dynamics of change. This is what is referred to here as the metalinguistic landscape.

Malaysian experiences

To illustrate the ways in which technoscientific identities are shifting, Malaysian experiences of institution building can be considered. The resurgence of Islam in Malaysia since the 1970s has aimed to recast the socio-political structure of the country. The result has been the creation of many intellectual, academic, and non-governmental interest groups and agencies that suggest new policies to, or criticize, the Malaysian government. In 1984, Islam was introduced into the national curriculum of primary and secondary education. Almost ten years later, in the 1996 Educational Act, yet a different direction was forged when the government allowed for the privatization of the universities, thus ending the enforcement of a national unified curriculum and yielding the creation of a variety of private schools. Foreign universities could now establish themselves in Malaysia and Malaysian universities could open branches in the region.

The effect of these changes in socio-political structure, e.g., the global Islamist movement and changes in the state, is evidenced in the establishment of transnational universities and institutes, such as the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT), based in the US, the International Islamic University (IIU), and Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC). The resurgence of Islam in Malaysia, by drawing on Islamic metaphysical and cultural norms, has become a mobilizing force for social change, affecting Malaysia's technoscientific identities. Debates that are indexical of larger global concerns of Islam, such as the epochal understanding of the West, have been localized and have been translated into particular institutional discursive frames.

In addition, there is the appropriation and expropriation of technoscience as instrumental reason. Whereas the appropriation of the latter from the West has typically been associated with the emergence of the secular state, in the present condition this is happening in different ways. An interesting case is the joint project between Malaysia and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) to open a university of science and technology, in that in the initial planning, the desire was to include the actual physical layout of MIT. The idea behind importing the MIT model as an institution formed through Western epistemology based on instrumental reason, reflects the view of Western science as embodied in the cultural, social and spatial ways in which it is practised. The hegemony of neo-liberal political economy allows this appropriation to take place in a manner similar to that of the earlier part of the 20th century. However, what has changed is the landscape in which competing programmes co-exist, namely, the Islamic institutions that have been emerging alongside Islamic resurgence. The apparent lack of understanding of the designers of this initiative, as well as other political events such as the crisis over Anwar Ibrahim, point to the complexity of this current landscape of competing discourses.

These institutional discourses are situated in global/local modalities. For example, Islamization can be seen in the local institutionalized forms of affirmative action and education curriculum as well as in the global project of Islamization. Other instances include the rise of inter-regional educational activities. These modalities become scenes of constant dialogue between these different articulations of foundational ideas, discourses, and programmes, interacting and affecting one another in the metalinguistic landscape.

The deconstructive role that the resurgence of Islam has played needs to be theorized in this performative landscape in order to be able to draw reconstructive programmes. What can the recent debates over technoscientific identities in Malaysia teach us? In this context of different modalities that cut across and also constitute the landscape of technoscientific identities, the Islamic challenge is aimed at the hegemonic discourses of technoscience. The remaking of technoscientific identity is not programmatic. Rather it is a performative act of meaning making, through dialogue among emerging views, a process of revealing what will be the future of Muslim technoscientific identities. ✦

Note

* T. Mitchell, (1988), *Colonizing Egypt*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

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Debate

BRUCE LAWRENCE

Neither Civil nor Info Society offers Muslims the Hope of Global Equity

There is a new stress on civil society. It has come in the aftermath of the Cold War, and in some sense it still perpetuates the Cold War. Equated with private property, the market, and pluralistic culture – the familiar teleological mantra of neo-liberalism – civil society is trotted out as the answer to all issues of global competitiveness and national reconstruction.

The history and current deployment of the use of civil society apply but obliquely to Arab civil society, as is apparent from the most significant study yet on this crucial topic: R. Augusus Norton, *Civil Society in the Middle East*, 2 vols. (E.J.Brill: Leiden, 1995-1996). The scope of this edited volume is vast and includes an overview of Middle East and North Africa, and then country-by-country analyses. If the lessons for civil society in the Middle East are sober, they depend on grappling with an elusive term that does not resonate at the same level for all researchers. In the preamble to a study of the Jordanian case, we are told that:

> 'In traditional western writing … civil society has been associated with the development of capitalism, with the right to private property, and the need to protect other individual (initially, male) rights … Civil society is defined by three elements: associational life (including political parties outside the state), citizenship (meaning full rights and responsibilities), and civility in interaction … It is concerned above all with a liberalization process, with carving out an even larger realm for civil non-state, associational activity and for civil rights.'

A quite different, more nuanced, model of civil society appears elsewhere in the same volume. On the one hand, 'civilian rule, citizenship, civisme, civility, civil liberties – all are remedies to different forms of despotism and all are evoked by the term "civil society". …Yet not all these remedies go together and none of them is easily achieved … The protection of individual liberty, for instance, proscribes imposing conformity of values or identity upon the citizenry and hence contributes little to nurturing the solidarity democracies require. Civil liberties and civic spirit may then be modestly conflicting goals, and (we should not be surprised) that democracies everywhere experience a conflict between the goals of liberty and community.' Neither of these definitions, or the cases they explore, calls into question the relevance of civil society to Arab/Muslim societies. Not so in the case of Gaza. When we look at the evidence of Gaza, civil society appears in a starkly different light. Sara Roy, author of the essay on Gaza, challenges extant models of civil society as they apply, or do not apply, to Gaza. She begins by posing a contrast between the liberal pluralist model and the Marxist model *à la* Gramsci:

> 'The liberal pluralist model posits an arena of potential freedom where citizens can engage in voluntary associations apart from, but not in opposition to, the state. By contrast, the Gramscian model privileges civil society over the state. It sees civil society as a weapon against capitalism, not an accommodation to it. Civil society becomes the sphere of resistance, where those who are marginalized, dominated, and exploited can struggle against state control. Who struggles? The family, political parties and labour unions, indeed, all those who are intent on mobilizing opposition to state-directed, capitalist-motivated hegemonic practices.'

In a deft move, at once original and productive, Roy then goes on to note how both models – the liberal pluralist and the Gramscian resistant – presume a certain kind of state. Both presume that there is a unitary state, but with limited powers. They also presume that pluralism is invariably good, at once welcoming difference and promoting tolerance. Further, they presume that there exists a kind of social contract about what counts as good. Finally, they aver what Michael Walzer calls 'speaking in prose', that is, a normal life. Yet Roy goes on to demonstrate that neither of these models can apply in Gaza because neither the state nor the society is unitary; not only moral consensus but even normality are elusive, if not fictive. The result? 'The possibility of civil unrest', concludes Roy, 'appears greater than the capacity of civil society to address it.' Let us call this the Liberal Model (of civil society), in a phrase from Michael Gilsenan, Turned Inside Out.

Even while there is keen attention to the benefits of civil society in many quarters, there are also other moves to go beyond the traditional concept and use of civil society. If Roy questions its applicability in the desperate circumstances of current day Gaza, others note that it no longer applies at the top end of the global/local hierarchy, to those empowered by the Information Age. It may be time to explore a radical prospect: civil society has been, or is about to be surpassed by, cyber society.

Are we perhaps witnessing not merely new forms of social practice and labour that limit the utility of civil society, as in Gaza, but also the rapid shift from a state-civil society model to an all-pervasive information society? Whether we call it an information society or cyber society, its very possibility underscores the radical technological shifts that envelop both the state and its adjuncts, including civil society, especially but not solely in Western Europe and North America. It was Marshall Hodgson, the major Islamic historian of the 20th century, who warned us in an essay published over 30 years ago (in 1967) that the speed and scope of technicalism would overwhelm not only Orientals but also Occidentals: both the West and the East would be transformed by 'the expectation of continuous innovation' and its (often unintended) consequences.

Among the major respondents to technicalism has been Manuel Castells. A Berkeley urban sociologist, Castells has tried to theorize the unexpected advent of the computer and also to assess its long-term social impact. Looking at what Hodgson termed the latest phase in the cumulative history of the whole Afro-Eurasian Oikumene, Castells calls it the Information Age. Like Hodgson's earlier trilogy, Castells' *The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture* (Blackwell's: 1996-98) is at once spatially comprehensive and boldly predictive. Castells traces how computer-driven telecommunications have intensified global interactions at the same time that they have created innumerable networks which reconfigure indeterminate, atomized groups of individuals into new virtual communities. What is emerging, in his view, is a global network society. The dark side of the Information Age does not escape Castells. He notes how informational politics renders the state less powerful in its supervisory, regulatory and disciplinary functions, and most conservatives would welcome that shift, but informational politics also reduces the protective and redistributive functions of the state, which most liberals would not applaud. Moreover, Castells laments the 'black holes of informational capitalism'. They give rise to social exclusion and the rise of what he terms 'the fourth world'. The radically divided benefits of the Information Age portend a global economy that is at once mercurial and criminal, and its outcome may well be a prolonged experience of the 'New World disorder'.

Central to Castell's argument is the role of world cities, and world cities as the sites of immigrant experience. It is, above all, urban location that defines the current diasporas of the post-Vietnam and now post-Cold War eras, in both North America and Western Europe. Among those refining and developing an urban accent for the immigrant experience in late 20th-century America is the feminist theorist, Saskia Sassen. Her *Globalization and its Discontents: Essays on the New Mobility of People and Money* (1998) documents the pernicious effect of 'cyber-segmentations' or increasingly disparate and unfair distribution of economic wealth, social benefits and life options. For Sasken globalization is above all the hyperlinkage of global cities through international nodes which constitute a new transterritorial 'centre' of global economic activity. Yet it is difficult to give specificity to particular groups of immigrants, mostly labourers from third world countries, who participate in this system from the margins even while seeking citizenship on new terms. Civil society drops out of the discourse, except insofar as it is inflected through the international human rights agenda, and the specific groups with whom we began this survey only reappear as foreign others – not the domestic others who are both Arab and netizens. Jon Anderson has made a singular effort to address what he calls 'cybernauts of the Arab Diaspora'. Yet electronic mediation in transnational cultural identities has impacted overseas Arab emigres, exiles, labour migrants, students and new professionals unevenly, yet they are often glossed as global citizens, difficult to analyse socio-economically or to identify with particular cities, whether in Western Europe or North America.

To the extent that the Internet has begun to connect the global with the local, the overseas with the home, we are told that 'the members of Middle East diaspora communities most able to reconnect with the homelands through the Internet are (above all those) engaged in business, at least initially.' In other words, the commercial classes and those related to them who need commerce-enabling information still have the greatest access to, and use of, the Internet. And so information technologies remain inherently conservative. They reinforce global capitalist structures and asymmetries, as Sasken has demonstrated, and they do not augur a new or revisionist notion of civil society. What we are likely to see as the lure of cyberfantasies expands is the further marginalization of the already marginal.

Euro-American elites, together with their Asian, African, and Arab counterparts, will continue to project interests and promote options via the Net, but most of their energies will be directed to non-political goals; neither a new civil society abroad nor a reconstituted civil society at home is high on their list, and to the extent that the undervalued become less visible as also less empowered, we may well wonder how socially transformative the revolution, which Castells has deemed the biggest since the invention of the Greek alphabet in 700 BCE, will be. Muslims, especially the urban poor in Africa and Asia, will likely be the least of its beneficiaries. ✦

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East Asia

SITHI HAWWA

Religious Conversion of Filipino Domestic Helpers in Hong Kong

Islam is one of the fastest growing religions in the world and is often perceived as the favourite of the discriminated against and economically underdeveloped. It has drawn a huge influx of converts in recent decades, despite endless assertions about the declining influence of religion in the lives of people in the wake of modernization and globalization. Islam's manifestation and continuity in Hong Kong is surprising because religious affinity is less recognized or rewarded. The popular religions here are Buddhism, Taoism and Christianity, adherents to Islam constituting only 1% of the population. However, a notable number of conversions to Islam amongst Filipino domestic workers in Hong Kong are occurring.

According to Hong Kong's Majid Ammar Mosque, conversions in the territory average 60–70 per year, and more than 70% are Filipino domestic helpers. The vast majority are women. This, added to the fact that there is a long history of bitter relations between Muslims and Christians in the Philippines, makes the confluence of these factors unique in the worldwide experience of conversion to Islam.

Filipinos in Hong Kong

Migration is not a new phenomenon, especially not to Filipinos, since their country has been facing severe economic crisis for well over two decades. What started as a temporary measure to alleviate economic pressure, has became a permanent way of life for many Filipinos. Hong Kong became a popular destination due to its proximity to their motherland and the higher wages. In the early 1970s, Hong Kong began to experience enormous urbanization and industrial development resulting in a huge demand for labour. Local women escaped domestic service for regulated and well paid factory jobs, which led to a shortage of female domestic workers in Hong Kong. Filipinos became the best option because of their reputation for language skills, educational levels and pleasant personalities. Initially employed by a few expatriate community members, their number steadily rose to 141,000 (September 1999), making them the largest non-Chinese community in Hong Kong.

PHOTO: ANONYMOUS

Conversion ceremony of Filipino women held at the Masjid Ammar Mosque in Wanchai, Hong Kong.

Filipinos nonetheless comprise the most disfavoured community in Hong Kong. Discrimination is reflected in particularly strict immigration rules and pay slashes for domestic workers by the Hong Kong Government, public criticism of their weekend gatherings in public spaces, and labour abuses such as the inordinate monitoring of their work areas by employers. These are only a few examples; many others occur more subtly. Filipinos resist this discrimination by forming strong social networks among themselves, which become the primary agency through which Filipinos come into close contact with Pakistani men, giving rise to the circumstances conducive to potential conversion. Apart from romantic involvement and inter-marriage with Pakistani men, their prior contact with Muslims, work experience in the Middle East, influence from converted family members, employers or co-workers, dissatisfaction with their former religion, mere curiosity, or a desire for enlightenment also motivate potential converts. Pakistani migration to Hong Kong began during the colonial era, when most served as policemen and soldiers. Many now work as private watchmen and security guards.

Religious conversion is not an impulsive overnight decision and many converts undergo a difficult period of transition. Often converts are seen as deviant and face ostracism from their own group. Financial, emotional and social support derived from among new organizational and social ties provides inner strength to endure such challenges. Many of the converts undergo several or all of the following stages.*

Context, Crisis and Quest

Though Pakistanis and Filipinos in Hong Kong possess ample similarities – such as their relatively low status in Hong Kong, a large component of single people, the large size and minority status of each group, and English language ability – there are two sharp distinctions – their educational attainment and religious affiliation. Filipinos are generally credited with high educational attainment where as Pakistan's literacy rate is low compared to the developing world's standards. As far as the religious difference is concerned, Islam is predominant in Pakistan, while Catholicism is the dominant religion of the Philippines. These similarities and differences play an important role in their relationship.

Marital laws in the Philippines, such as the denial of divorce, severe restrictions on birth control methods and a legal ban on abortion, can result in marital dissatisfaction and single motherhood. At the same time, marriage in Pakistan is viewed as an obligation toward family and arranged marriage is the rule, sometimes leaving little room for romance. Migration to Hong Kong gives both the Filipinos and Pakistanis greater autonomy and a sense of liberation. They try to exert their influence over their new marital choices here. The Hong Kong government's restrictive rules on the entrance of the domestic workers' families forces many of the women to live a single life. At the same time, the Pakistani men's perceived fear of the influence of alien culture on their immediate family members results in a similar situation. Both may have already established a family back home.

The lower position of women in Pakistan, especially non-Muslim minority women, is reflected in Pakistani men's treatment of Filipinos in Hong Kong. Often, ill treatment results in conflict relationships. Women have told me that they react to such powerlessness by converting to Islam. In doing so, they empower the men and seek to obtain moral identity, gain respect among the men and secure themselves protection from harassment by men in their public and private lives. Catholic and Islamic laws concerning inter-marriage, economic responsibilities toward their respective families, cultural differences between the two ethnic communities, and their immigration status in Hong Kong become factors influencing marital success. Employment conditions in Hong Kong such as the compulsory one paid 24-hour holiday per week and statutory holidays, the absence of immediate family pressure to conformity, strong social network, the recognition by the mosque of their immediate needs, and above all, their need for a physical space to escape the stigma attached to their gathering at public places, all favour the conversion of Filipinos.

Encounter and interaction with the advocate

One person stands out as a prominent figure in Islamic conversion in Hong Kong: Sister Madiha, a Filipino convert who assists the newcomers. Under her guidance, three hundred women have already embraced Islam in 5-6 years. Her nationality, language, religious background, Islamic and biblical knowledge, and occupation are very appealing to the newcomers. Being a Filipino domestic worker with a fluency in Tagalog and English, and herself a convert, Sister Madiha becomes the ideal model for sisters undergoing conversion.

The mosque provides a comprehensive training programme that includes comparative religion lectures, Islamic knowledge classes, elementary Arabic lessons, Quran reading sessions, open forums and discussion of the converts' social problems. It employs various retention programmes, such as conversion ceremonies where previous converts are invited to witness new converts pronounce the *Shahadah* (declaration of faith), converts gatherings, and picnics. Converting to Islam requires one to exhibit certain expected public and private behaviour and the women face resistance from their employers, friends and family in the course of performing their new religious obligations.

Commitment and consequences

The first recognition of a convert as a Muslim comes from the conversion ceremony, a symbolic ritual that marks the first day of her transformed religious life. The basic obligations of Islam, including the wearing of *hijab*, consumption of *halal* food, and the performing of the five daily prayers exert enormous pressure on the converts. Some balance the religious obligations and situational context of Hong Kong by abstaining from pork, but not from other non-*halal* foods, such as beef or chicken. Some wear loose clothes, instead of the *hijab*, and may pray during the absence of their employers or during their leisure time instead of praying at the times designated by Islamic laws.

Though the women are primarily brought to Islam through their boyfriends, one cannot discount their genuine strength of belief. If their relationship with the man is stronger during their transition period (from Christianity to Islam), most turn into committed converts. Many women face physical, psychological, financial and marital problems and are conflicted over many issues, such as the position of a converted woman whose Christian husband refuses to convert along with her, how to avoid staying alone with a male employer, how to handle pork when cooking for employers, how to justify wearing the *hijab* to the employers, how to avoid confrontations over religion with their family and friends and how to convince the family to carry out Islamic burial arrangements.

Gender and conversion

Though there is little evidence from previous studies as to whether women or men most often convert to Islam elsewhere, the overwhelming majority of the converts among Filipinos in Hong Kong are women. The main reason is that there is an imbalance in the population distribution of Filipinos in Hong Kong based on gender. The intensity of religious faith of Filipino women and their prior tendency to shift among different denominations within Christianity are also instrumental in facilitating conversion.

The general slow down of the economy in Hong Kong, particularly the inability of the Mosque to fund sisters in terms of financial crises, the absence of a physical space for converts with terminated contracts, and the unwillingness of fellow Muslims to employ the converts, leave them vulnerable to reversion to their former religion. In some cases Muslim men behave in ways that dissatisfy many of the women, whose lack of knowledge of Islam allows them to make gross generalizations about the teachings of Islam and cultivate negative images of Islam and Muslims, thus sometimes contributing to reversion. ✦

Note

* See also Louis R. Rambo (1993) *Understanding Religious Conversion*. Yale University Press.

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East Asia

ELIZABETH ATTANÉ

Fertility and Identity: Muslims in Xinjiang

With the end of the reign of the Manchus who governed the Chinese Empire for three centuries, and with the advent of the Republic (1911), the minority issue took on a dimension impossible to imagine in 19th-century China. Aware of the fragility of national cohesion in this immense land of heterogeneous population groups, Sun Yatsen, founder of the Republic, still minimized the influence of minorities, affirming the supremacy of the Han, the majority ethnic group and founders of one of the first Chinese dynasties. The question of numbers quickly became a focus of debate. Proclaiming that, of a population total of 400 million inhabitants at the time, the minorities represented only slightly more than 10 million, Sun Yatsen implicitly called upon them to disappear into the Chinese melting pot. The statistics published at the time, however, contradicted the President's assertions by listing 26 million non-Han Chinese.

In China, the 55 national minorities (*minzu*) recognized (nearly 120 million persons today, 10% of the total population) are identified on the basis of ethnic, cultural, and – paradoxical for a country led by an officially atheist party – religious criteria. Ten of the 55 minorities are adepts of Islam, the most important of which together constitute a total of 18 million persons: Hui (approximately 9 million), Uygurs (7.5), Kazakhs (1.2) and Kirghizes (0.2).

The 'cooked' and the 'raw'

The Hui, descendants of Arab and Persian merchants that had settled by the thousands in China beginning in the 7th century, and the Muslims of Central and Western Asia brought by the Mongolian army in the 13th century, belong the category referred to as the 'cooked' (*shou*, cooked by the civilization, submissive, acculturated). By marriage with Han women, the Hui were able to assure their reproduction, but this exogamy led to their rapid sinization: they would no longer be distinguishable from the Han (customs, traditions, physical appearance) apart from their religion, Islam, and the constraints which it imposes (dietary prohibitions, particularly severe in the rejection of pork, the most appreciated meat of the Han).

Uygurs, Kazakhs and Kirghizes belong to the category of the 'raw' (*sheng*, unrefined, independent, having kept their original culture). Their largest majority being concentrated in Xinjiang (Chinese Turkestan), this category forms the most visible Islamic community in China. Cousins of the Turkic speaking Muslims of the ex-Soviet Republic borders, they speak Turkic languages and consider Chinese a foreign language; they have rich cultural traditions, common to those of Central Asian Muslims, and have nothing in common with the Han. Their only connection was made under constraint, after the capture and annexation of Xinjiang by the Qing in the 18th century.

The communist regime in 1949 broke off, at least in its discourse, from the homogenizing views of the nationalists by insisting, contrary the latter, on the multinational character of China. However, according to the facts, it was under this regime that the policy of sinization by population transfer began to veritably boom. Thus, between the censuses of 1953 and 1964, the number of Han in Inner Mongolia had doubled, passing from 5.1 to 10.7 million. In Xinjiang, the number had multiplied by seven (from 330 thousand to 2.3 million), and further doubled between 1964 and 1982. More so than its discourse, these colossal population displacements of Han in the border zones translate, at best, the strategic fears, and at worst, the hegemonic views of the central power. Migration alone, however, does not suffice.

Indeed, parallel to this population policy with its assimilationist aims – yet in order to avoid aggravating the political and strategic contention – China conceded substantial privileges to the frontier minorities in demographic terms. This was done, however, at the risk of seeing, in the end, the effects of divergent demographic growths jeopardize Han supremacy in these regions.

Is religion influencing fertility?

In a national context of strict limitation of births, China allows its minorities a much greater demographic growth than that of the Han. Accordingly, in the latest population census of 1990, Uygur women, Kazakhs and Kirghizes, had an average of two times more children than Han women and 1.5 times more than Hui women, the latter nonetheless being Muslim. These minorities of Xinjiang have thus not obeyed the general rule: while there was a rapid decline in fertility rates for the Han (the average number of children per woman dropped from 5.2 in 1970 to 2.6 in 1990) and for the Hui (5.5 in 1970, 3.1 in 1990), they continued to bring a higher number of children into the world, 6 in 1970, and still 4.6 in 1990 (Figure 1).

The behaviours of the Hui, Chinese Muslims, have evolved parallel to those of the Han, with hardly one child more on average. Remaining completely disconnected with the Muslim minorities of Xinjiang, the Hui, a group that is geographically diffused and mixed with the Han population, have adopted as it were the reproductive norms of their surroundings. The cultural factor has clearly held pre-eminence over the religious factor: the Hui, by their fertility, are much closer to the Han than to their Turkic speaking co-religionists.

The phase difference of the Uygurs, Kazakhs and Kirghizes in relation to the Han, and all the more so in relation to the Hui, was substantial: throughout the 1980s, the women of these minorities gave birth to at least two more children each than the Han or Hui women. Was this demography, significantly disconnected from the rest of the nation, to be the precursor of the vague attempts at autonomy or independence that were to become exacerbated especially in the decade that followed?

The Chinese birth control policy, more tolerant towards its minorities than towards the Han, played an incontestable role in widening the gaps in fertility. But that is not the only reason. Although many Sunni Muslims are critical towards birth control, the high fertility rates of the people of Xinjiang are not imputable to a religious factor alone: we have seen that Islam did not by any means impede the fertile transition of the Hui, themselves Sunni Muslims. However, the high fertility of the Turkic speaking populations, which naturally translates into a more abundant population, seems to reinforce the centripetal inclination. It is indeed disconcerting that their fertility is far superior to that of their cousins in the ex-Soviet republics (Uzbekistan, Kirghizstan, etc.) and is even greater than any other Turkic speaking area in the world, where fertility has fallen to a level below those of developing countries.

The example of the Hui demonstrates very well that the *stricto sensu* religious factor actually has little influence on the process of transition in fertility rates. Furthermore, it leads one to conclude that the atypical behaviours of the Xinjiang Muslims entail another dimension, which could well be political.

High fertility to affirm identity?

Following the example of other minority groups aspiring, if not to autonomy, than at least to obtaining greater recognition, the Turkic speaking Muslims of Xianjiang seem to have found, in this high fertility, a means to affirm their ethnic identity and to reinforce their resistance to the Han. The Hui, who are spread across the territory in a rather homogenous fashion, who are today strongly sinized and have never had their own territory, greatly differ from the Uygurs, Kazakhs and Kirghizes, who have cultivated a strong sense of identity – bound to their geographic concentration in their own territories where they hold the majority – which has given rise to ethnic, cultural, and even separatist claims.

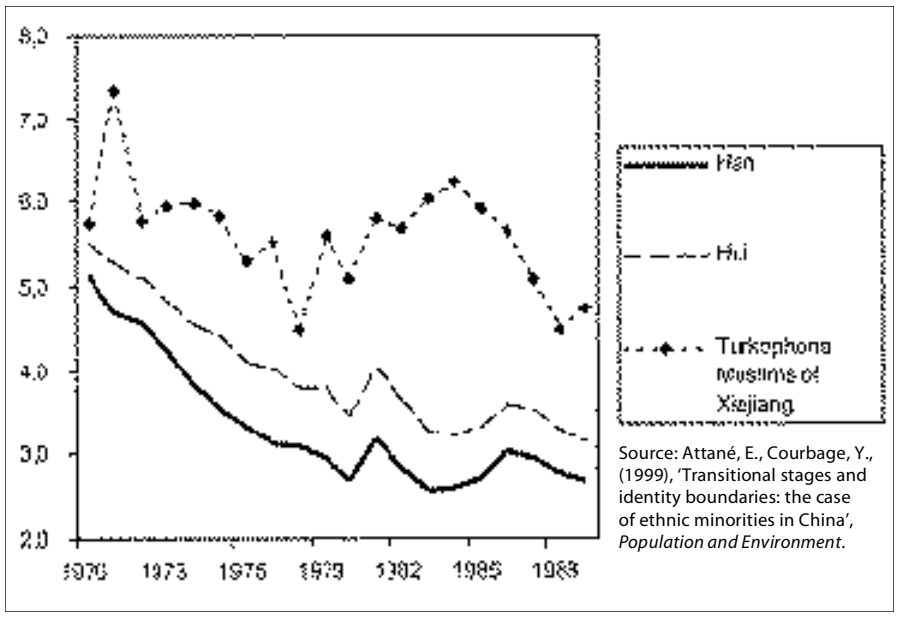
Xinjiang ('new frontier') has only been part of China since 1759, when it was conquered by the Manchu dynasty. From then until 1949, only ten generations went by, which is relatively short when considered in the light of the collective memory of a people, and their sinization is but superficial. Moreover, contrary to the Hui, these Turkic speaking peoples had their sights set on places of 'high civilization': those being Istanbul, Samarkand or Boukhara, rather than Peking. During this period, the links with the central powers remained very loose, to such an extent that on several occasions Xinjiang found itself in a situation of quasi independence. Since 1949, Xinjiang has been increasingly firmly tied with China and is the target of massive colonization: from 7% in 1953, the percentage of Han within its total population has risen to 40% today. In this context, maintaining a high level of fertility – even higher than that of their Kazakh or Kirghiz neighbours in the ex-Soviet republics, an average of one child more – seems to be the most elementary means, but perhaps eventually the most efficient, to resisting the Chinese invasion.

China, apparently contravening its own long-term interests, concedes to minorities occupying the most sensitive zones of friction – Tibetans of Tibet and Muslims of Xinjiang in particular – the privileges important in terms of limitation of births, thus authorizing a demographic growth far greater than that of the Han. Because Islam remains, China being no exception, a political force to be reckoned with, the Chinese government is in a way bound to satisfy the need for ethnic and religious affirmation of the peoples of Xinjiang, this region being an important strategic zone as well as a precious link to the Muslim world and the oil emirates. Hardly being able to counter their native traditions, China tried to dilute the effects of their natural growth rates through Han immigration.

However, this policy seems short-sighted. If the current rhythm of Muslim population growth in Xinjiang is maintained (+2.5% annually, compared to the +1.5% for the Han) it will double between 1990 and 2020. It will then become – should the installations of Han migrants in Xinjiang cease – with its 18 million people, a majority of approximately 70% in this region, as compared to its slightly over 50% currently.

At present, China is attempting to fill in the gaps by waves of controlled migrations, and is using repression to maintain its hold on Xinjiang: closing Koranic schools and mosques, imprisoning imams, confiscating religious works, and arresting dissidents. But can the nation-state resist much longer the centripetal manifestations, especially when these receive the reinforcement of such an impressive demography? ✦

Figure 1. Evolution of the average number of children per woman for the Han and the principal Muslim ethnic groups, 1970–1990



Source: Attané, E., Courbage, Y., (1999), 'Transitional stages and identity boundaries: the case of ethnic minorities in China', *Population and Environment*.

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East Asia
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Resurgence of Islamic Education in China

In the years immediately following the end of the decade known as the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), the Muslims of China[1] lost no time in rebuilding their devastated communities. After ten years of intensive and often violent persecution by government forces in which all forms of religious expression were outlawed and hundreds of religious leaders were imprisoned, Muslim communities throughout China began slowly to restore their religious institutions and revive their religious activities. The re-establishment of educational institutions plays a vital role in this still ongoing process.

The first priority of Muslims in China was to rebuild their damaged mosques, thereby allowing communities to create a space in which they could once again pray together, but also so that the mosques could reassert their role as centres of Islamic learning. Over the next two decades, mosques throughout most of the country organized classes for not only children and young adults, but also for older people who had not had the opportunity to study their religion.

When asked how to explain this recent resurgence in Islamic education, religious leaders, teachers, students and members of the community cite two main reasons: a desire to rebuild that which was taken from them, and the hope that a strong religious faith will help protect their communities from the myriad of social problems presently besetting China in this period of rapid economic development.

Early Islamic education in southwest China

First settled by Muslims from Central and Western Asia in the Yuan period (1271-1368)[2], Yunnan has for centuries attracted Muslim students from throughout the region and the country. As early as the Ming period (1368-1644), Muslim scholars from Yunnan were invited to teach in other parts of China, and scholars from outside were invited to teach in Yunnan, thus creating networks linking the Muslims of Yunnan with Muslims in the rest of China and Southeast Asia. Throughout this period, Islamic education took place in mosques and was known as *jingtang jiaoyu* (education in the Hall of the Classics). Beginning in the late Qing period (1644-1911), Muslims were once again allowed to make the pilgrimage to Mecca and study in the major centres of learning in the Islamic world. During this period several Muslim scholars from Yunnan studied abroad and when they returned they started a movement to revitalize Islamic studies there by translating the most important Islamic texts into Chinese, rendering them more accessible.

PHOTOS: JACQUELINE M. ARMIJO-HUSSEIN

Students in the girls' evening school class in a village in central Yunnan.

While in other parts of China Islamic education has always concentrated on the study of Arabic, Persian and Islam, in Yunnan the tradition has always been one of *Zhong-Ah bing shou* (Chinese and Arabic side-by-side education). In the past this consisted of intensive instruction in classical Chinese, whereas today it includes the study of modern Chinese with Chinese history and culture, together with Arabic language and Islamic studies. All the Muslim teachers and scholars with whom I have spoken have emphasized the importance of mastering the Chinese language and studying traditional Chinese culture and history. One explanation given to me by a leading imam was that 'while we are proud of the fact that our ancestors were Arabs and Persians, we must acknowledge that today we are Chinese, and in order for us to strive forward we must use both of our legs.'

A graduation ceremony for *ahong* (from the Persian *akhund*) who have completed their studies in a village in central Yunnan.

'Educate a woman, educate a nation'

Another area in which Islamic education in Yunnan is unique concerns the role of women. Of the twelve major independent Islamic schools, four are for women only, and most of the other schools, while predominantly male, do allow women to attend. The female graduates of these schools have taken a very active role in spreading Islam. Most become teachers themselves upon graduation, either working in Islamic schools that are already established or helping to establish new schools in poorer regions. Several recent graduates have also established Islamic pre-schools and after-school programmes for Muslim children.

The women with whom I spoke expressed clearly and confidently the importance of Islam in their lives, their commitment to Islamic education, and their determination to educate others. I met several young women who had volunteered upon graduation from Islamic colleges to teach in remote impoverished villages, isolated from friends and family. I also met several exceptionally strong-willed women who had established independent Islamic girls' schools. One spoke of the fundamental role women played in society and the importance of the role of education; for as she put it, 'by educating a woman, you educate a nation.' Sitting in a small village in a remote part of China, she listed to me the various ways in which a young girl's education could have a major impact on the health and social well-being of her future children and grandchildren. Another woman in a large industrial city in northwest China spoke to me about how she established a women's Islamic school, which had quickly grown, and now had over 500 full and part-time students ranging in age from 5 to 85. In addition to offering a wide range of day and evening classes, the school also was very active in community development work in the more impoverished Muslim villages in the region.

Expanding networks

While travelling to different relatively remote regions of China, I was struck again and again by the extent to which Muslim villagers were informed not only about the situation of their co-religionists living in other parts of China, but also about the latest issues concerning the Muslim communities throughout the world. This phenomenon is in part the result of the large number of Chinese Muslims travelling to different regions of China to study, but also the increasing number of students who go overseas to study. Although there are no official records kept, it is estimated that there is a total of between 500 and 1,000 Chinese Muslims presently studying in Egypt, Syria, Pakistan, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Libya, the Sudan, Turkey, Malaysia, and Indonesia. Al-Azhar has the largest number, with approximately 300 students. Most of the students are sponsored by their family and community, and receive a small stipend at whichever Islamic university they attend. The students at Al-Azhar spoke of the difficulty in adapting to life in such a crowded and overwhelming city, but were also very cognizant of the importance of Al-Azhar and its role in Islamic history. Some, however, expressed disillusionment with the realities of living in a modern Muslim society. For the Muslims of China, who have always been a small minority amongst the Han Chinese majority and who have survived for centuries isolated from the rest of the Islamic world, often experiencing intense periods of persecution, the idealistic expectations they have of Islamic countries can become the basis of considerable disappointment.

The students studying in Damascus seemed the most content. They spoke enthusiastically about their studies, the Syrian people, and their lives in Damascus. With over 100 Chinese students studying there and a constant flow of new students and visitors from China, they were able to keep abreast of conditions back home. I was also able to meet with a student who had graduated from an Islamic university in Iran. Little is known of the students studying in Iran, for almost all of those who have completed their studies there have chosen to stay. Indeed, this student spoke very highly of the quality of the education and living conditions of the Chinese students in Iran.

As this research project continues to expand, I will interview Chinese Muslim students studying in other centres of Islamic learning throughout the Muslim world, as well as return to China several times over the next few years to document their impact on their communities upon their return. How their experiences overseas influence their identities as both Muslims from China and members of an international Islamic community, is one of the issues that will be addressed. Recent studies of globalization have all focused on Western cultural influences, ignoring among many other important movements, the globalization of Islamic values. However, by concentrating on the role of international centres of Islamic learning, one can reveal both the independent as well as interrelated flows of different Islamic educational traditions throughout the world. ✦

My present interest in the resurgence of Islamic education is the result of several years living in Kunming, the provincial capital of Yunnan Province in southwest China, where I first carried out my doctoral research and then wrote up my dissertation. Upon completing my dissertation, which concentrated on the early history of Islam in China, I decided to begin fieldwork on contemporary issues facing the Muslim minority population of China today. After several months travelling to different regions and meeting with Muslim villagers and religious leaders, I came to the conclusion that a study of the recent resurgence of Islamic education would provide a significant contribution to our understanding of Muslim society in China. Through the course of this research, which concentrated on southwest China, but included interviews with Muslims living in the northwest, I learned of the increasing number of students studying overseas at Islamic universities. I subsequently travelled to the Middle East to interview students there as well.

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Notes

1. The combined population of these Muslim groups is presently conservatively estimated to be over 20 million.
2. The degree of government control on religious activities varies from region to region. Government control in Xinjiang is the strongest, and there even small schools within mosques are not allowed.

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Southeast Asia

FARISH A. NOOR

Islam vs Secularism? The New Political Terrain in Malaysia and Indonesia

The political drama in the Malay archipelago continues to be played out in terms of the traditional Malay-Indonesian shadow theatre: the Wayang of Kerajaan. But it is impossible to deny that the latest developments in Malaysia and Indonesia have also marked a major shift in the political terrain of the two countries, with the Islamic parties and movements there poised to enter the charmed circle of *kerajaan* politics once again. This is something to which both the governments and the intellectual communities of the region cannot be indifferent.

The results of the recent Indonesian elections were quite surprising for many observers of Indonesian politics. Up to the last minute, there were those who felt that victory for either the liberal democrat Megawati Sukarnoputri or the conservative B. J. Habibie was certain. It was expected that the Muslim parties in the middle would have made strong gains, and that popular Muslim leaders like Abdulrahman Wahid and Dr Amien Rais would eventually rise to take up the role of kingmakers in the new government. But few could have guessed that the mantle of the state would fall onto the leader of the Nahdatul Ulama, one of the two biggest Islamist movements in Indonesia, Abdulrahman Wahid himself.

Observers, experts and laymen alike, are now stumped to give adequate answers and explanations for this radical turn in Indonesian politics. For years, the Indonesian state has tried to ensure that Islamist organizations and parties would never be allowed to mobilize strongly enough as to be able to challenge the status quo. The Indonesian army (ABRI) played its part in keeping the so-called 'threat' of political Islam at bay, even when the appearance of Islamic groups such as the Islamist separatist movement in Aceh, North Sumatra, actually represented the genuine grievances of poor and alienated Indonesians who felt that their rights had been trampled on by the political elite based in Jakarta.

But the signs were there for those who were able to see them: from the late 1980s, the Indonesian elite began to accommodate itself to the changes in the public's mood. The government opened up Islamic think-tanks and research centres, and began to patronize Islamic conferences and intellectuals. It was clear that the powers-that-be in Jakarta could not afford to neglect the demands of this massive constituency outside the corridors of power. When Dr Amien Rais declared that he and his movement, the Muhammadijah, would no longer support the Suharto government in 1998, it became clear to all that the Islamic consensus had been broken and that the Islamist movements were no longer going to tolerate the excesses and corruption of the Suharto clique. The rest is history.

Today in neighbouring Malaysia, a similar scenario seems to be on the verge of unfolding. After decades of uninterrupted rule, the Malaysian government which is made up of the ruling National Front (Barisan Nasional) alliance and led by the Conservative-Nationalist UMNO (United Malays National Organisation) party, is facing the worse crisis of its history.

The biggest gains in the 1999 Malaysian election (though not necessarily in terms of parliamentary seats) were made by the Islamic opposition Parti Islam Se-Malaysia (PAS). PAS has been the major nemesis of UMNO since the 50s, and its tactic has been to slowly whittle away support for UMNO from the Malay-Muslim constituency that happens to be the main supporter of both parties. (Because of the polarized nature of Malaysian race-centred politics, voters tend to vote along racial, rather than ideological lines. The Malays have traditionally split their votes between the conservative UMNO party and the Islamist PAS party. It is easy to see why PAS has scored a victory here: the Party has effectively placed itself on the political map of Malaysia as the main opposition party in the country, brushing aside the liberal and leftist alternatives, the DAP, PRM and PKN. The Islamist discourse that PAS espouses has become part of mainstream political discourse in the country, and like it or not, all the other parties are forced to recognize that a new agenda has been laid on the table.

Flawed perceptions

Why is it that the Malaysian government and the UMNO party in particular have managed to lose so much support from the Malays? To compare Malaysia to Indonesia would be unfair, for the simple reason that the two countries are literally worlds apart. Yet both the Malaysian (and Indonesian) political elite have miscalculated on several major points: Malaysia and Indonesia remain essentially Islamic countries where the majority of the populations are Muslim (60% in Malaysia, 90% in Indonesia). Thus it is clear from the start that the governments of both countries could not neglect the culturally specific demands of their respective electorates. What made matters worse for the rulers of both countries was that the ruling elite were seen to enjoy a standard of life so radically different from that of the masses.

Secondly, the governments of both countries made the mistake of neglecting Islam and Muslim concerns at the beginning, and later compounded the error by trying to domesticate Islam when it was seen as a 'threat' to their political and economic livelihood. In Indonesia, the rulers regarded many of the Islamist movements as essentially rural concerns run by backward peasants and village preachers. The Islamic party in Malaysia was likewise treated as a farmyard phenomenon. Later when these Islamist movements and parties grew more powerful, the governments of both countries tried to defuse the threat they felt by trying to co-opt the Islamists into the dominant power structure. In Malaysia, this happened when the UMNO party co-opted the leader of the Islamic youth movement, Anwar Ibrahim, into the government. Anwar later rose to become the Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia until he was removed and arrested in 1998. But by then the Islamists had penetrated into practically every adjunct of political, governmental, economic and educational life in the country. The co-optation of Islamists in Indonesia did not help the Suharto government either, as they later withdrew their support from him during the 1997-1998 crisis.

Thirdly, the governments made the mistake of thinking that they could force their own Islamic agenda on a passive electorate who would follow them obediently. Malaysia experimented with its own version of 'official Islam' from the 1980s, as soon as Dr Mahathir Mohamad came to power. Dr Mahathir's own brand of progressive Islam seems rational and acceptable enough to most sensible people: He opposed the fanaticism and intolerance that can be found in other parts of the Islamic world and called on the Malay-Muslims to be open-minded, worldly and practical in their orientation.

But unfortunately for the government in Malaysia, Islamic discourse, like political discourse in general, is not something that is easily controlled and policed. Despite the many measures made to develop a progressive brand of modernist Islam in the country (via initiatives such as the International Islamic University, the Islamic Research Institute, the state's Islamic Centre, etc.), there has now appeared a more popular brand of Islamist discourse which is shaped by developments both at home as well as abroad. Developments in foreign lands such as the Gulf War, the continuing struggle in Palestine, the persecution of Bosnians and Chechnyans, and the emergence of extremist Islamist movements in the Arab world, have all contributed to the formation of a new politicized Islamist discourse that has taken a life of its own and is beyond the control of the state.

Enter the new discourse

This is why the political and economic crisis that began in 1997 that affected Malaysia and Indonesia were quickly reconfigured on Islamist terms and turned into a religious struggle against the incumbent political leadership of both countries. It is ironic that Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who first introduced the Islamization programme to Malaysia, is now being attacked by young Islamists on the grounds that he is 'secular' and 'un-Islamic'. Unflattering comparisons between him and the Shah of Iran, the Pharaoh of Egypt, and the devil himself have become the norm in the Islamist jargon of the streets. The prevalence of this popular Islamist discourse will shape the terrain of political struggle in the years to come, and undoubtedly create new political frontiers and political identities in the process.

In the past, political struggles in the Malay archipelago have been configured along the lines of secular politics where the main objectives were winning control of the state and distribution of resources. But today the struggles have been injected with an ethical and religious dimension as well, colouring the actors and agents concerned and upping the stakes in the contest itself. The Malay political world made up of Malaysia and Indonesia will now be battling for more than control of governments and the machinery of state. What has become the objective of political struggle is the soul of the people themselves. Trying to grapple with this new development will be a task in itself. The governments of Malaysia and Indonesia therefore need to address the rapidly changing socio-cultural terrain of their own communities in order to make sure that they will not be wrong-footed in the future. With Islam now firmly planted on the political map as one of the most important (and unpredictable) variables, the elite in Malaysia and Indonesia need to be conscious of how they proceed. The cost of failure will be great, for it will have serious implications for the creation of democratic space and civil society in both countries. ✦

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Southeast Asia

MARTIN RAMSTEDT

Muslim–Hindu Relations in Contemporary Indonesia

The collapse of the Soeharto regime has undermined the three legitimatory pillars of the Indonesian state: the much acclaimed economic development of the country is thwarted; the alleged preoccupation of the Indonesian government with economic and political equity has been recognized as the rhetorical decorum of 'crony-capitalism'; and the lauded socio-political stability has finally erupted in social unrest and perturbation, gradually dissolving the 'social glue' provided by Indonesia's 'civil religion', the *pancasila* philosophy. The repressed ghosts of nationalist imagination – political Islam and the disruption of centre-periphery relations – walk again. Apart from gender, 'religion' became an issue in the run for presidency.

Ever since the independent, unitary state of Indonesia came into being in 1950, Indonesia's 'Hindus' have had to fight against cultural and religious discrimination on the part of the central government in general and the Ministry of Religion, representing mainly the interests of the Muslim majority, in particular. First of all, it was not until 1958 that 'Hinduism' was recognized as 'religion' by the Ministry of Religion. Since religion was defined as being a universal and monotheistic creed, based on a holy book which had been conceived by a holy prophet in divine revelation, recognition was initially granted only to Islam and Christianity. The various 'animist' traditions throughout the Indonesian archipelago were classified as primitive and superstitious belief systems, which were destined to be transformed into local variants of the modern Indonesian culture by the modernizing policy of the Indonesian government and by the spread of religion. The Balinese immediately reacted to the threat of being proselytized by either Islam or Christianity by redefining the tenets of their traditional belief system, originally called 'Shiva-Buddha-Religion', and by reforming those aspects of their culture that were not in keeping with the modernist requirements of the Indonesian government. Having streamlined their theology and ritual practices according to the definition of religion by the Ministry of Religion, they succeeded in achieving the recognition of 'Hinduism' in 1958.

New order Hinduism

With the onset of Soeharto's 'new order', 'Hinduism' became the umbrella-institution for various other local traditions (i.e. Aluk To Dolo and Ada' Mappurondo of the Sa'dan- and Mamasa-Toraja as well as the tradition of the Towani Tolotang in South Sulawesi, Pemena of the Karo-Batak, Kaharingan of the Ngaju- and Luangan-Dayak in Central and East Kalimantan) whose adherents have turned to 'Hinduism' with the hope of being able to continue their ritual practices under the protection of a more tolerant religion. The integration of these new 'Hindu sects', as they are called, into 'Indonesian Hinduism' has nurtured the prejudice against Hinduism still prevailing among Muslims and Christians. Until today, Hinduism has frequently been accused of being polytheistic and animistic, hence of not being a 'religion', or at least a religion equal to Islam and Christianity. During the Soeharto regime, Indonesia's 6 million 'Hindus' were protected against attempts at Muslim and Christian proselytizing by the government party GOLKAR and by the army both of which promoted 'religious tolerance' as one tenet of the state ideology, the so-called *pancasila* philosophy. Since the fall of Soeharto and the subsequent de-legitimization of GOLKAR, the army, and the *pancasila* philosophy, the non-Balinese 'Hindus' have again become the target of Islamization and Christianization.

Since October 1998, the sensitive relations between Indonesian Muslims and 'Hindus' have suffered a further setback from what has come to be known as the 'A.M. Saefuddin Affair'. The whole affair started on 14 October 1998, when the Minister for Nutrition and Horticulture, A.M. Saefuddin, who had then recently joined the vanity fair of those competing for the Indonesian presidency in the 15 November 1999 elections, was asked by a journalist to assess his chances *vis-à-vis* Megawati Soekarnoputri, the popular daughter of the charismatic former president Soekarno. Megawati had just won massive support as a presidential candidate at the congress of the Fighting Indonesian Democratic Party (Partai Demokrasi Indonesia, PDI, Perjuangan), taking place in Bali from 8-10 October 1998.

The ambitious minister boasted that his chances against Megawati would be very good, since he himself is male and a Muslim, whereas Megawati is female and a Hindu, insinuating that the Muslim majority of the Indonesian people would not approve of a Hindu president.

When accusing the liberal Muslimah Megawati of being Hindu, Saefuddin referred to a photo which had been published in several Indonesian newspapers. It showed Megawati joining the prayers in one of the Balinese temples. This breach of orthodox Muslim convention was hitherto considered to be quite a normal act for Indonesian politicians and bureaucrats visiting Bali. That it was now made an issue by Saefuddin aroused massive protest and demonstrations in Bali.

Saefuddin himself is a representative of the more radical faction of Indonesian Islam. Besides, he shared much common ground with B.J. Habibie, the short-serving successor of Soeharto. Like Habibie, Saefuddin studied engineering in Germany and is hence also a member of the Union of Alumni from German Universities (Perhimpunan Alumni Jerman) and the Union of Indonesian Engineers (Persatuan Insinyur Indonesia). He is furthermore a member of the Guiding Council of the Committee for the Co-operation for Indonesian Muslim Boarding Schools (Majelis Pimpinan Badan Kerjasama Pondok Pesantren Indonesia) and a member of the Council of Experts of the Association of Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals (Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Indonesia, CMI), which was headed by Habibie before he became president.

Both moderate and fierce critics of Saefuddin in and outside Bali agreed that his statement had unnecessarily dragged private matters of religion and belief into the political arena, even that he had selfishly tried to use religion against his political rival. Criticism differed, however, on whether Saefuddin had scorned Hinduism in general and whether he had therefore violated the principle of religious tolerance prescribed by the *pancasila*, which is still supposed to be the ideological basis of the Indonesian state.

Hindu protests

When, due to Balinese pressure, then President Habibie agreed to demand an official apology from his minister, matters began to escalate, for Saefuddin's apology rang a rather contemptuous and insincere note. In response to his half-hearted apology, Bali went into strike and continuous demonstration, demanding that Saefuddin be removed from office and stand trial for having endangered the national unity. Several Balinese even went so far as to threaten to call for an independent Balinese state (Negara Bali Merdeka), should their demands not be granted by Habibie.

The demonstrations and strikes were actively supported by most segments of Balinese society including representatives of the tourist industry and a considerable number of Muslims living in Bali. During the demonstrations and strikes, every Hindu Balinese wore white traditional clothing usually donned during prayers, rituals and ceremonies. People even brought along some musical instruments (*baleganjur*), which are normally used in ritual processions, and sang ritual songs like traditional Balinese *geguritan* and India-derived *kirtan*. Hundreds of banners cursed A.M. Saefuddin and threatened, for instance, to throw him into a box together with pigs. The decorum of the public protests revoked similar actions of Balinese self-defence which took place at the beginning of this century, i.e. the dramatic *puputan* or ritual self-destructive fights against the Dutch colonizers.

Smaller demonstrations also took place in Jakarta, Bandung and Surabaya where there are large numbers of Balinese students, government officials and businessmen. In the other 'Hindu' areas in Indonesia, protest was almost non-existent. There, the 'Hindus' belong to the politically, economically and educationally marginalized minority even among their own respective ethnic groups, the majority of which have already either converted to Christianity or Islam. Hence, they often do not dare to protest against a kind of cultural racism which they have come to regard as almost normal. The Balinese, on the other hand, who have developed a strong affluent middle class, have a very strong Hindu identity. And it is their religious symbols that have frequently become the target of religious defamation. Recent examples are the scandalous photo of a Balinese offering containing a golf ball which was published in the brochure *Bali Kini* in order to advertise the respective tourist facilities of the island, or the plans to build a huge Garuda statue in the south of Bali in order to greet tourists arriving by plane. In 1995, Bali-wide demonstrations attempted in vain to prevent the construction of the Bali Nirwana Beach Resort right next to the famous Tanah Lot Temple. Since that time, protest against (Muslim) Javanese selling Balinese religion to the tourist industry has never really subsided.

In spite of Balinese agitation, Habibie eventually refrained from removing A.M. Saefuddin from office. The president closed the whole affair after another official apology had been forwarded by the recalcitrant minister. Meanwhile, some prominent *ulama* and Muslim intellectuals had urged the Indonesian Council of Islamic Theologians (Majelis Ulama Indonesia, MUI) to issue a *fatwa* on whether a woman can or cannot become president. On 7 November 1998, the same day that Saefuddin apologized for the second time, an Islamic Congress (Kongres Umat Islam) voted against women becoming president or vice president. On 1 June 1999, this vote was officially expressed in something stronger than a *fatwa*, i.e. in a so-called *amanat* – a mandate of the Indonesian Muslims represented by the Indonesian Council of Islamic Theologians. During the actual elections for presidency in October 1999, it became apparent that the Muslim vote prevented a woman – at the least for the time being – from becoming president of Indonesia, notwithstanding her large popular support. ✦

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Central Asia

PATRICK GARRONE

Baksylyk: A Muslim Declination of Shamanism

It was in Central Asia that the shamanism of the Turko-Mongolians and the Islam of the Arabo-Persians were to meet. This zone is bordered by the Caspian Sea, Afghan Turkestan to the south, Hindu Kouch, the Pamirs, the Tian Chan and Altaï to the east, and southern Siberia to the north. Today, several states, in part or in whole, are found in this quadrilateral: Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tadjikistan and Afghanistan. The ancestral shamanism of the Central Asians had to, after the Muslim take-over (8th century), progressively compromise with Islam. The result was an Islamized shamanism generally known as *baksylyk*.

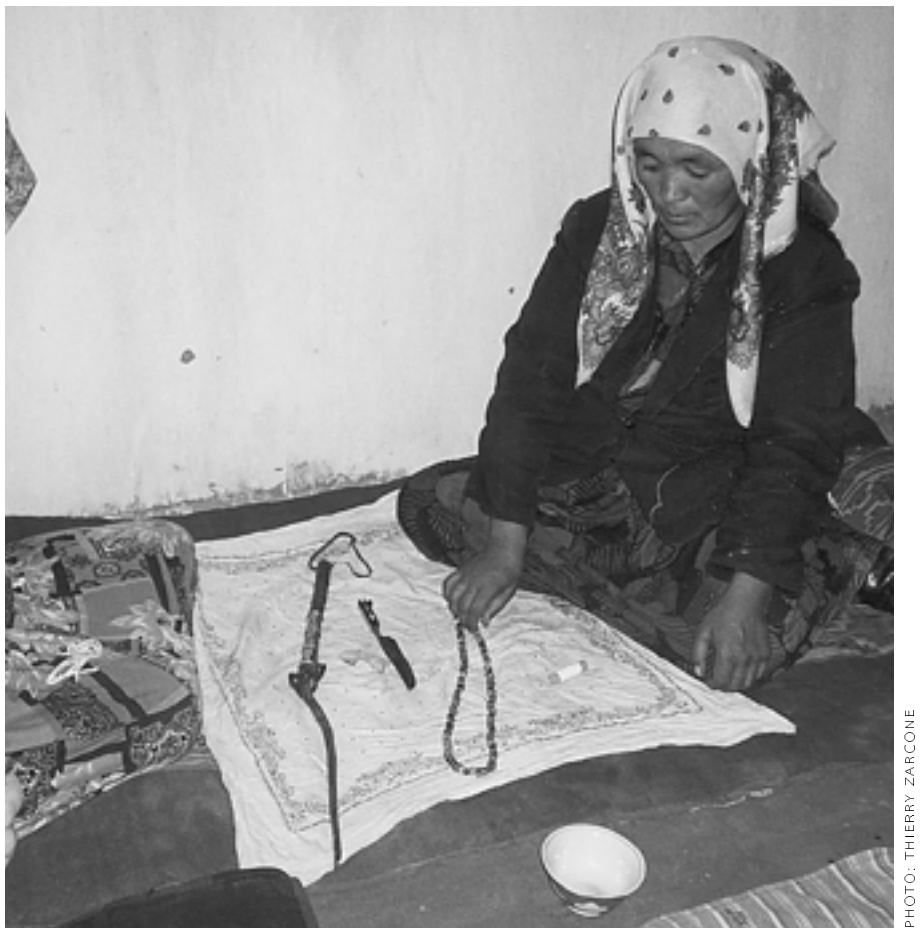

PHOTO: THIERRY ZARCONE

A female *bakshi* using the whip and the knife for healing; Alta Valley area (on the border between Tajikistan Pamirs and Kyrgyzstan).

The term *baksylyk* can be translated as 'to do the *baksy*'. Its officiant is in fact, most often, called *baksy*, *bakhshi* or *bakshi*. The latter are local variants of a common root. The theories which attribute a Turkish or Chinese origin to *bakshi* (this form of the word is used henceforth) are insufficiently sustained. The term, in fact, is derived from the Sanskrit term for Buddhist monk, *bhikshu*. *Bakshi* did not always refer to the Central Asian Islamized shaman as it does today. It has designated the Buddhist priest, the secretary to Turk chancelleries, the wandering bard and even a dignitary of the Mogul army. However, from the 13th and 14th centuries, *bakshi* took on, in Central Asia, the sense of shaman, while conserving some of the preceding meanings elsewhere.

Two types of *baksylyk* coexist.* One, northern (nearly all of Kazakhstan, certain regions of Kyrgyzstan and Chinese Turkestan), results from an environment marked by nomadism. The other, more southern (Uzbekistan, certain regions of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Afghan Turkestan), is the expression of a sedentary environment. The 'nomadic' *baksylyk* has a paroxysmic character, more evocative of traditional shamanism. This type of *baksylyk* is less Islamized, the Muslim influence exerting itself more strongly in the sedentarized zone. The 'sedentary' *baksylyk* allowed a number of the characteristics of the original shamanism to fade.

Generally, men officiate in the 'nomadic' *baksylyk* and women (*baksha*) in the 'sedentary' *baksylyk*. The reason for this stems from the greater presence of Islam in the urban zones of Central Asia. Shamanism, even if it was more or less impregnated with Islam, was placed in the periphery of social life and was recuperated by the women. It otherwise went beyond Syr-Daria where the incessant movement of the populations prevented Islam from profoundly penetrating the society. Shamanism thus remained masculine there. However, the exceptions are not rare of the *bakshi* officiating in the 'sedentary' *baksylyk* and the *baksha* in the 'nomadic' type.

The ritual

The *bakshi* continues to intercede with the Invisible but carries out, as does the northern Siberian shaman, rituals that interest the entire community. He intervenes only upon the request of individuals or small groups. The most important affair of the *bakshi*, who does not wear a specific costume, is the healing session during which he combats the Evil Spirits responsible for the illness. In order to do so, he is aided by his Tutelary Spirit; itself often assisted by Auxiliary Spirits of inferior rank. The *bakshi* receives these spirits by various means: inheritance (for example, gift of an ascendant), voluntary quest (for example, by sleeping close to a tomb of a saint) or by the decision of spirits that appear in a dream or in 'reality'. The election of the *bakshi* is accompanied by an illness or an accident which occurs before, during or sometimes after the status has been conferred. Theoretical instruction of the Elected one then calls for the intervention of an experienced *bakshi*.

For each of the two *baksylyk,* a structure type can be deduced. In the 'nomadic' variant, divination – prerequisite for establishing a diagnosis – habitually consists in playing the *kobuz*, a sort of rudimentary violin, in order to call upon the spirits and be informed by them. The *bakshi* can also burn the shoulder blade of a sheep or execute numerical combinations of rocks and deduce teachings by observing them. Divination is in principle separated from the session as such. The latter generally takes place during the night, inside of a dwelling (tent or house) and an offering to the spirits in the form of an animal sacrifice (often sheep or goat) is necessary. The *bakshi* and the ill person are in the middle of the audience. Playing the *kobuz*, the *bakshi* invokes the figures of orthodox and popular Islam as well as spirits. He describes the arrival of the latter and captivates the audience by recounting the stories of the Invisible. He urges his spirits to combat the forces of Evil. He lets his *kobuz* fall, swirls around, gesticulates, covers the Evil Spirits with his imprecations and, at the height of the trance, he testifies, by such exploits as walking on razor blades or by licking incandescent fire, to his condition as superior to that which is profane. Screaming and imitations of animal cries succeed one another while he hits the ill person so as to expulse the Evil Spirits. In order to do so, he may only use his hands or one instrument. One of the most widespread techniques consists is utilizing one part of a sacrificed animal (often the lungs) to beat the ill person and then disposing of it, for it is held that it is then charged with bad influences (the ideal model of this expulsion is that which is effectuated by the 'hole of smoke' of the tent, opening to the Invisible). The session ends with feasts regulated by diverse proscriptions.

Sedentary and nomadic variants

The *baksylyk* of the 'sedentary' type is much less violent and paroxysmal than his 'nomadic' counterpart. Islam has left a more visible mark on this type and the ritual is far more codified and formalistic. Divination here also constitutes a necessary precondition, clearly separated from the actual ceremony. The *bakshi* (or the *baksha*) interrogates his spirits by invoking them through chants supported by playing his *dojra*, drum consisting of a circle of wood set with chimes over which animal skin of a specially sacrificed animal (goat) is stretched. The skin is spangled with drawings made with the sacrificial blood (e.g. sun, moon). Reflective surfaces, such as a mirror or a glass of water in which one throws cotton, sometimes serve in divination. Once the diagnosis is established, the *bakshi* can envisage a cure session.

The above assumes a character less public than that of the 'nomadic' *baksylyk*. The reason for this discretion stems from the pressure exerted by Islam. The session can take place day or night, the two types being equally attended. The women generally aid the *bakshi*. They have to be in a state of ritual purity with respect to Muslim prescriptions and 'know the *namâz*' (prayer). The ill person – blindfolded, head covered with a white cloth, certain parts of the body anointed with the blood of a sacrificed animal (often a goat) before the ceremony, and the *bakshi* up against his back – is placed in the centre of the room in which the participants occupy three sides. The open side principally indicates the direction of Mecca. Placed in front of the ill person, on a carpet, are a bowl filled with the sacrificial blood, a glass of water, a plate of flour, a couple of bills of money and lit candles. In each of his hands, as well as on his head, bouquets of lit candles are placed momentarily, being removed at the beginning of each ceremony. Herbal fumigation is conducted as well.

The session consists in repeating, until the ill person is healed, the ritual models called *khalqa*. During a *khalqa*, the *bakshi*, beating his *dojra*, invokes his spirits by beginning songs of a Muslim character. His aids signal the arrival of the spirits by belching, yawning and gurgling. In order for the course of treatment to be successful, during a *khalqa*, a trance must seize the ill person and the aids of the *bakshi*, the latter doing nothing more than simply accompanying. The ill person (to whom several symbolic hits are given) and the aids then improvise a sort of *dhikr jahrî* (chanting out loud) that the *bakshi* leads. At the closing of the *dhikr*, the group exits the room after the ill person takes hold of a coloured fabric from among those laid out near him. The colour of the cloth should correspond to that of the Evil Spirit that appeared to the ill person during the trance. Once outside, one removes the cloth and thus the Evil Spirit. All re-enter the room and the *bakshi*, as always, accompanied by the *dojra*, sings in order to dismiss the Auxiliary Spirits and render the ill person his freedom. He then purifies those who have assisted by depicting circles around them with his *dojra,* rustling the chimes. He sometimes practices divination in their honour. The evening closes with feasts where the part of the sacrificed animal that was not disposed of or that would not be taken by the *bakshi* is eaten.

The two types of sessions that have just been succinctly evoked have various local variants and have only been presented here in general terms. In certain zones, even hybrid forms of *baksylyk* can be found to take part in two models simultaneously. To treat these aspects would have been beyond the scope of this article, but they are well worth further reading as they comprise part of the extraordinary wealth of Islamized shamanism in Central Asia. ✦

Note

* Apart from *bakshi* and its variants, one principally finds, designating Central Asian Islamized shamanism: *porhan, parhon, parihon* (Persian *parî khwân*, *parî*, 'fairy, spirit' + *khwândan*, 'to read, to call'), *tabup* (Persian *tabîb*, 'doctor'), *hodzha* (Persian *khwâja*, name of a lineage of honour), *folbin, falchi, palchi, palbin,* or *palbun* (*fâlbîn*, from Arabic *fâl*, 'destiny, oracle' + Persian Tadjik *bîn*, from *didan*, 'to see') *darger* and *kinnachi* (Uzbek *kinna*, 'bewitchment' + *chi*, indicating activity). Despite several particularities, these differently named shamans reveal as essential that which one would say of the *bakshi*.

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South Asia

MUJEEB AHMAD

Da'wat-i Islami: An Aspiring Transnational Movement

There has been considerable attention for the working and significance of the Tablighi Jama'at, established in 1927, but little has been done to study the origin and rapid expansion of the more recently formed Da'wat-i Islami (Invitation to Islam), whose motto is 'love for the Prophet and Medinah'. The Da'wat-i Islami was launched by Mawlana Muhammad Ilyas Qadiri in 1981.* Today, the spate of green turbans, its trademark, can be seen not only in the rural areas of Pakistan, but also in its metropolitan cities.

When the military regime in Pakistan in 1977 banned all political activities and parties, Islamic political parties were shocked for they had launched the mass movement for Islamic Order *(nizami-i Mustafa)* that paved the way for the military take-over. The military legitimized its rule on a religious basis shared by these parties. The three main religio-political parties, the Jama'at Islami, the Jam'iyyat Ulama'i Islam and the Jam'iyyat Ulama'i Pakistan were hoping that the new regime would allow them a broader role. They had jointly campaigned for the establishment of the Islamic order and now were experiencing a dilemma: should they support the new military regime or not?

The Jam'iyyati Ulama'i Islam and the Jam'iyyat Ulama'i Pakistan both furthered the implementation of the Hanafi school of law. They, however, differed on certain details. The former was supported by the Deobandis while the latter by the Barelwis, the Ahl al-Sunnat wa'l Jama'at, popularly called Sunnis. The Deoband, a reformist educational institution established in India in 1867 was critical of a number of popular religious practices to which the Barelwis adhered. Contrary to these two parties, Jama'at Islami criticized both groups for their adherence to Sufi orders and law schools; they favoured a puritan interpretation of Islam. The three soon fell apart on the question of supporting the new regime. The Jama'at Islami joined hands with the regime while the Jami'iyyati Ulama'i Islam publicly supported it. The Jam'iyyat-i-Ulama'i Pakistan decided not to cooperate with the Martial Law Regime.

The Jam'iyyat-i Ulama-i Pakistan, founded in March 1948, was the leading religio-political party of the Barelwis. This state of isolation and political dormancy was the main cause of frustration among the young Sunni Barelwi intelligentsia. Da'wat-i Islami emerged as a catharsis to this desperate state of affairs. In response to the leadership crisis among Sunni Muslims and the frustration of young and middle class Sunnis, Dr Muhammad Tahir ul-Qadiri (born in February 1951 at Jhang Saddar, Panjab) founded the Idarah-I Minhaj ul-Qur'an (Institution of Qur'anic Path) in October 1980 in Lahore. His intentions were to enter into the political arena under the guise of religion. Later, in May 1989, he formed a political party, Pakistan Awami Tehrik (Pakistan People's Movement). However, because Mawlana Ilyas Qadiri was more respected as a religious and devout scholar and more clearly associated with the Barelwis when compared to Tahir ul-Qadiri, the former managed to obtain a constituency among a large number of Sunnis. Nowadays he is known as the *amir-i ahl-i sunnat* (Leader of the Sunnis) among his followers.

The Da'wat-i Islami, catapulted by the Sunnis, comprising middle and lower-middle strata of the Pakistani society, was founded on the principles of *da'wah* (invitation) to follow the *sunnah*, prophetic way. It aimed to promote and deepen the love for the Prophet and the early community of Muslims in Medinah. The movement stands for the revival and resurgence of Islam through preaching. Its main characteristic is to preach 'what is righteous and what is forbidden'. The members of the Da'wat-i Islami are so keen on following the *sunnah* that they always wear white clothes, a green turban and a *miswak* (a wooden stick used in place of a toothbrush) in their pockets.

The Da'wat-i Islami advocates the universal brotherhood among the Muslims. The Hanafi school of thought of the Da'wat-i Islami is the official school of the movement, but followers of the other rites count among its members. Since the primary objective is to promote unity among the Muslims, theological and political controversies are discouraged in the Da'wat-i Islami.

Expansion of the movement

During its early days, the Da'wat-i Islami held its weekly meeting at the Gulzar-i-Habib Mosque, Soldier Bazar, in Karachi every Thursday after the evening prayer. After recitation from the Qur'an and the salutation of the Prophet, one of its preachers would give a speech on a spiritual and moral topic, followed by a speech of Mawlana Ilyas Qadiri, who explained day to day problems in terms of Islamic law. The following day, after the Friday prayer, a small group of preachers, under the leadership of Mawlana Qadiri, visited other quarters of Karachi. They offered the remaining prayers at the central mosque of the area. In between prayers, Mawlana Qadiri briefed local residents about the basic teachings of Islam. The Da'wat-i Islami expanded rapidly in Karachi; in one year's time these weekly meetings began to be held in some 300 mosques. From Karachi, the movement expanded quietly in the Sindh and then throughout Pakistan. It then became conspicuous and influential, and started to spread over other parts of the world, thus constituting a veritably transnational *tablighi* movement.

There is no secretive nature of the Da'wat-i Islami or any long-term/short-term strategic agenda. However, it struggles for the implementation of the *nizam-i Mustafa* (the system of the Prophet) in Pakistan through peaceful preaching so as to create an Islamic society. In addition to the weekly meetings in the various larger and smaller cities and towns of Pakistan, it holds its annual meeting in different metropolitan areas of Pakistan. Thus far, it has held annual meetings in Karachi, Hyderabad, Lahore and Multan. The Da'wat-i Islami established secretariats in both Karachi and Lahore, naming them Faidan-i Medinah (Blessing of Medinah).

In nearly every city of Pakistan, the Da'wat-i Islami has established religious schools and libraries. It has its own edifying literature, the most important of which is *Faidan-i Sunnat* (Blessing of the Sunnah), (Karachi: Maktabat-ul Medinah, N.D.) compiled by Mawlana Qadiri. In this voluminous work, Mawlana Qadiri narrates the *sunnah* of the Prophet regarding affairs of daily life. Besides *Faidan-i Sunnat*, some booklets, lectures and speeches of Mawlana Qadiri recorded on audio cassette are also regarded as sources of inspiration for the members of the Da'wat-i Islami. The Da'wat-i Islami also publishes works by other Barelwi scholars, particularly works of Mawlana Ahmad Rida Khan Qadiri Barelwi (1856-1921).

The Da'wat-i Islami has a considerable hold on its members. From the very beginning, it was a centralized movement, revolving around the personality of Mawlana Ilyas Qadiri. The centre in Karachi, authorized *amir* (chiefs) of provinces, cities and towns to work in accordance with the directions of the centre. Local *amirs* come regularly to the centre for training and guidance. So as to have close contact with the different branches of the Da'wat-i Islami, Mawlana Qadiri regularly travels all over Pakistan. The members must show their commitment to the Islamic way of life as is reflected compendiously in his *Faidan-i Sunnat*. The centre discourages the reading and discussing of anything other than the *Faidan-i Sunnat* in the weekly meetings. In addition to male participants, it has a considerable enrolment of Pakistani women.

Although the Da'wat-i Islami is supported on its aims to build character in its individual members, particularly the young generation, and to establish religious institutions, it nevertheless attracts diverse criticism about some of its practices. Its over-emphasis on wearing the green turban not only irritates common Muslims, but also scholars are reluctant to endorse it. They do not consider wearing the green turban as compulsory (*sunnat-i mu'akkadah*). In fact, they hold that any type of cape, or white or black coloured turban can be used to cover one's head. Leading Barelwi scholars also object to calling Mawlana Ilyas Qadiri the *amir-i ahl-i sunnat*. Da'wat-i Islami requires each of its members to become a *murid* (pupil) of Mawlana Qadiri. The critics of the movement regard this as a reflection of his desire to maintain control over this entire rapidly expanding, even perhaps transnational movement. ✦

Note

* Mawlana Qadiri was born in July 1950 in a Karachi-based Memon family. He is a *khalifah* (vicegerent) of Mawlana Muhammad Diya' uddin Ahmad Qadiri Madni (1877-1981), a Sialkot-born religious scholar, who migrated to Medinah in 1910.

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South Asia

APARNA RAO

Self-Determination in Kashmir: Identity, Islam, and the Search for Justice

This past year has witnessed India and Pakistan battling over an area that has known little peace since 1947. While the two states speak of 'nationalism', 'secularism' or 'Muslim unity', and various Islamist organizations call for *jehad*, most Kashmiris speak of 'self-determination' and 'Kashmiri identity'. The idea of self-determination as independence was first formulated in 1947 by the last Hindu Dogra Maharaja, Hari Singh. The concept of a distinct Kashmiri identity (*kashmiriyat*) evolved in the 1930s with a movement, explicitly involving both Muslim and Hindu intelligentsia, against feudal-cum-colonial rule. The notion of a discrete Kashmiri citizenship goes back to the 1920s, when Kashmiri Hindus, facing competition from Punjabi Hindus, pressed for a formal definition of 'state subjects'.

With South Asian decolonization and the creation of Pakistan and India in 1947, the Kashmiri struggle attained international proportions. While Hari Singh signed the conditional accession of the state to the Indian Union, and India and Pakistan fought their first war, the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) was formed to free Kashmir from both India and Pakistan. The United Nations cease-fire declaration in 1949 split Jammu and Kashmir into roughly 65% (east and south of the cease-fire line) and 35% (to the west and north) controlled by India and Pakistan respectively. The Pakistani portion is inhabited mostly by non-Kashmiri Sunni Muslims, with Shias in pockets. The Indian portion consists of several distinct areas, the Valley, inhabited overwhelmingly by Kashmiris (largely Sunni, with Shia, Hindu and Sikh minorities), being the most problematic.

Till 1953 efforts towards social justice continued: feudal rule was abolished, and land and tax reforms were undertaken by the National Conference (NC) government under Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah. Welcomed especially by the unbelievably poor rural Valley Muslims and lower-caste Hindus to the south, they antagonized wealthy Muslims and Hindus, notably the landed gentry, who received no compensation. The NC's urban popularity continued, largely because of Abdullah´s adherence to *kashmiriyat*. While the Valley waited impatiently for the promised plebiscite, to the south, citing Indian nationalism, the communal and obscurantist Praja Parishad – many of whose members were adversely affected by the land reforms – and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh incited fear among Hindu and Sikh refugees from Pakistan about renewed atrocities by Muslims, were a plebiscite to take place. Against this background the 'Delhi Agreement' was signed in July 1952, spelling out the mutual limits of authority of the Kashmiri and Indian states and reneging on the promised plebiscite. It denied the ethos of *kashmiriyat* and was never accepted by most Kashmiris. All vestiges of democracy were shed in 1953 with Abdullah's dismissal by the Indian government and his incarceration till 1968.

While crushing dissent, India now embarked on creating a consumer culture. The Valley had a dense structure of ties cutting across trade, bureaucracy, artisanship, cash crop horticulture and politics. Both those who wanted independence and those who favoured accession to Pakistan – and these included many among the Muslim landed gentry and the mercantile class – were part of these networks. Political opponents were now co-opted into the system of economic benefits, primarily through Indian subsidies. Little moral opprobrium was attached to the massive corruption that resulted, since 'Indian money' was involved. A middle class emerged which could ill afford to be openly anti-India, while participating in a sullen opposition to Indian rule. Economic gains percolated down to the villages, but migration to towns continued and the number of unemployed youth grew. With issues of social justice neglected, muffled dissent and unabated Pakistani propaganda, the idea of Kashmiri nationalist resistance also grew. The Algerian struggle against France, the Vietnam war and the Palestinian movement all had their impact. Working-class Muslim teenagers often demonstrated, many being routinely arrested, manhandled, and humiliated.

The emergence of religion as a factor

In 1972, following the third Indo-Pakistan war and the formation of Bangladesh, India and Pakistan signed the 'Simla Accord', explicitly ignoring the wishes of the Kashmiri people. Also in 1972, while members of the Plebiscite Front were debarred from contesting elections, the Indian Congress Party ensured the Jama'at-e Islami (JI) a victory against the NC in five seats. The notions of *kashmiriyat* and self-determination appeared more dangerous to Indian rule than Islamic fundamentalism. Politically, the JI remained weak and won only one seat in the first and last fair elections in 1977, but it was inculcating fundamentalism and inciting hatred and contempt for non-Muslims in schools in villages where state schools often existed only nominally. Hindu fundamentalists now also began inculcating a brand of Hinduism entirely alien to Kashmir. Between 1933 and 1986 the Valley witnessed no communal riots, yet mutual mistrust and an uneasy co-existence characterized Muslim-Hindu relations.

By the 1980s, facing increasing competition from Muslims and feeling discriminated against by the Kashmir government, many educated Hindus took up jobs in India. Simultaneously, increasing migration among Muslim professionals to the Gulf and the West and the resulting remittance economy created a nouveau riche, whose opulent lifestyle clashed with that of the conservative working and lower-middle classes. While socio-economic disparities grew, middle and lower-middle-class Muslims aspired to greater political power. With the NC repeatedly giving in to blackmail by the Congress, most Kashmiris looked for an alternative political party. Hoping to crush opposition, the Congress played the 'religious' card and harped on the differences between Kashmiri Muslims and Hindus; Pakistani propaganda echoed this theme. Political and economic conflict was interpreted in 'religious' terms by all concerned, and increasingly Kashmiris sought solace in orthodox forms of their respective religions. The Iranian revolution, the Soviet ('India's friend') defeat in Afghanistan, India's cold shouldering the Afghan resistance, the rise of the Central Asian republics and the Sikh movement for 'Khalistan' now encouraged Kashmiri Muslims to conceive of their own empowerment in terms of Islam. With Kashmiri Hindus increasingly considered pro-Congress, hence pro-India and thus anti-Kashmir, Kashmiri identity became synonymous with Kashmiri Muslim identity.

Resorting to arms

Indian policy now changed from co-option to confrontation, and in 1987 the Muslim United Front (MUF), a conglomeration of opposition groups voted for by some 60% Kashmiris, was declared defeated. Waves of strikes, assassinations, bomb blasts, kidnappings and arson swept the Valley, peaking in 1990. The components of the MUF formed armed outfits (Al Barq, Al Fateh, Al Jehad, etc.), and thousands took up arms supplied by Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence (ISI); the first of these grew into the armed wing of the JKLF. Coming from urban families who had failed to penetrate the existing economic networks, the militants were dangerous to the Indian state, but also to the Kashmiri ruling class. A violent movement contesting the appropriation of resources by a chosen few was imminent. Aspiring to political power, expecting more direct help from Pakistan and the West, and under-rating the Indian army, the middle class supported the militants, setting aside internal socio-economic contradictions and averting the dangers of *fitna*. With ISI training and arms, the militants proclaimed *jehad* for political justice and *kashmiriyat*. This justified extortion, kidnappings, and forcible entry into wealthier Muslim homes; monetary 'contributions' were accepted in lieu of taking up arms.

The attempt to combine radical Islam with *kashmiriyat* failed, however. The call for *jehad*, coupled with the murder of some Kashmiri Hindus, threats to many others, and the Indian campaign to depict the issue as a 'communal' conflict terrified the vast majority of Kashmiri Hindus into accepting Indian help to flee the Valley. With their rapid departure, the concept of *kashmiriyat* died; but its demise was inevitable anyway: *kashmiriyat* meant little to Srinagar´s wealthy Muslim Punjabis, who largely favour accession to Pakistan, rather than independence; *kashmiriyat* was irrelevant for the 'liberation' of areas outside the Valley; the mystically-oriented Islam typical for the Valley and part and parcel of *kashmiriyat* was suspected by the funding agencies. Hence, *kashmiriyat* was discarded and replaced by more militant Islamic concepts (e.g. *jehad, mujahid, shahid*, *Nizam-e Mustafa*). Though attempts to enforce veiling, attendance at Friday prayers and a ban smoking all failed, women's hair dressing salons and cinema houses were forcibly closed, cosmetics and alcohol were prohibited and bands of armed youngsters combed the bye-lanes to check on proper behaviour. Islamic guerrilla groups – Allah Tigers, Al-Umar Mujahidin, Hizbullah, Ikhwan-ul Mujahidin – multiplied, with the mainly rurally recruited Hizb-ul Mujahidin (HM), the JI's armed wing, dominating from 1990 onwards. India responded with about 400,000 soldiers and militia, who battled the militants, but also shot many suspects and resorted to extreme physical and psychological repression. Soon countless families grieved over those killed, tortured, or raped; thousands were arrested; hundreds disappeared without a trace, and hundreds are still in prison.

With arms and money flowing in, factional shoot-outs escalated. By 1993 several Afghans, Sudanese, Palestinians and Yemenites joined the battle; the JKLF no longer received much Pakistani help and became a prime target of the HM. To survive, it declared a unilateral cease-fire in 1994 that led to its further splitting and to many of its men joining the Jama'at-ul Ulema-e Islami (JUI)-linked Harkat-ul Ansar/Harkat-ul Mujahidin or the Markaz-ul Dawa-ul Irshad-linked Lashkar-e Toiba (LT), demonstrating that no discrete boundaries divide 'fundamentalists' from 'non-fundamentalists' – simply shades of grey representing varying ad hoc strategies based on different aspects and degrees of faith and on attempts to fulfil personal commitments to principles of specifically Islamic justice. These principles are also instrumentalized by various organizations – the JI, the JUI, the ISI – to fight their own battles in Kashmir.

To curb in-fighting, many militant organizations, including the JKLF and the JI, formed the All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) with the common objective of pressing for 'self-determination' and the establishment of a society that is in keeping with Islamic values. By spring 1999 there was relative peace in the Valley, with hundreds of armed ex-militants from various groups employed by the Government to take suspects and terrorize their kin. Like the Afghan Hizb-e Islami and the Al-Badr Mujahidin, the APHC supported the 1999 invasion by Pakistan and the United Jehad Council (an apex body of fourteen Islamic organizations) in northern Kashmir; as the LT put it, this is 'a war between Islam and paganism'. More than ever before, the concepts of 'self-determination' and 'Kashmiri identity' defy definition. ✦

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Middle East
NAYEREH TOHIDI

Student Movement: The Harbinger of a New Era in Iran

The Islamist regime in Iran is in crisis, ideologically, economically and politically. A more visible sign of this crisis manifests itself in the factional conflict between the ruling conservatives who support an absolutist theocracy, i.e. the supreme rule of the jurisprudence (*velayat-e faqih*), and the reformists who are after a sort of Islamic pluralism, democracy and rule of law. But a more subtle and profound dimension of the present crisis is reflected in the growing disillusionment and frustration among the Iranian youth and students vented against the conservative's repressive policies.

Neither any opposition group, the eight-year war with Iraq, nor the often-blamed 'Great Satan' has dealt as serious a blow to the authority and legitimacy of the ruling Islamists in Iran as have their own children. Today, two decades after the 1979 Revolution that gave power to the Shi'a clerics in Iran, the majority of the children born and raised under the Islamist regime, do not identify with its ideology and dictated behavioural codes. The failure of the Islamic Republic in its cultural and ideological projects has recently manifested itself during two exhibitions of defiance by the youth: the spontaneous national jubilation over a game between Iranian and American football players in Lyon in June 1998, and the massive nation-wide student demonstration against state-run repression in July 1999.

Students have constituted one of the most dynamic forces in the recent history of Iran. They played a major role in the movements that paved the way to the 1979 Revolution and the downfall of the Shah. In the establishment of the Islamic Republic (IR) too, a large segment of the student body played a key role by taking over the American Embassy in 1980 and creating the 'hostage crisis'. The clerics then effectively manipulated students' passion and the 'hostage crisis' towards their own goals in the struggle for the state power, eliminating liberals, seculars and leftists from various organs of power, and eventually consolidating a theocratic rule. In their 'Cultural Revolution' campaign, the Islamist clerics pitted Islamist students against other groups and pursued violent suppression of any student organization supportive of secular and Islamic dissident trends on various campuses. They carried out ideological cleansing of faculty and administration and began screening student admissions on the basis of ideological and moral standards as necessary steps towards the 'Islamization' of universities. When this campaign met with resistance, the Revolutionary Council issued an order to close universities for two years beginning on 5 June 1980.

The success in suppressing the independent student movement and the subsequent co-optation of students and universities that lasted for over 15 years played a crucial role in the consolidation of the clerics' rule. They have been keen on closely linking traditional religious seminaries and modern universities, turning for example, the main quad of the Tehran University campus into the site of weekly Friday prayers led by conservative clerics.

In line with its initial populist nature and ongoing revolutionary rhetoric, the IR has promoted mobilization of the youth and students, especially during the war with Iraq. But this politicization of the youth, like that of women, has gradually turned into a double-edged sword for the conservatives, who have increasingly lost their influence on the direction and nature of student activism. Many Islamic Associations of Students, originally supported and even founded by these clerics, have taken on a life of their own, becoming real players in the current power struggle. One can witness a rebirth of dissident student movement – this time ironically among the very students hand-picked by the ruling clerics themselves, for example, the two leaders of the recent student uprising, Tabarzadi and Mohammadi.[1]

Several factors have contributed to this rebirth of pro-democracy student activism. For one, Khatami's election in May 1997 in which the massive participation and supportive votes of the youth and women played a crucial role, was a result of the profound change in the political culture of Iran. Students' sense of victory about the surprising results of the presidential elections was a turning point in the recognition of the significance of their own political role. Moreover, a subsequent slow lift of the totalitarian hold on the cultural and intellectual domains of society gave rise to new currents of political and cultural expression among students.

During the past two years, a series of peaceful student rallies was held around political and non-political grievances relating to freedom of press, political prisoners, housing issues, and quality of food in dormitories. Such protests, however, have been quickly dispersed or crushed by the police and vigilantes (Ansar Hezbollah) that are still under the control of the ruling conservatives. Furthermore, Khatami's reform efforts have been sabotaged and interrupted by totalitarian Islamists through various means, including constant pressure on progressive press, intimidation, terror and the assassination of a number of prominent opposition leaders, writers and intellectuals.

Another turning point resulting in further erosion of legitimacy and sanctity of the clerical rule in the eyes of the students was the violent raid of student hostels by the police and plain-clothed security forces in July 1999. Instead of punishing the perpetuators of violence, hundreds of students were arrested and sentenced to long prison terms. For instance, Ahmad Bateni, the student pictured on the cover of the *Economist* magazine (7-15-99), holding the bloody shirt of another fellow student, was sentenced to 10 years in prison. Voicing its outrage, the pro-reform *Khordad* daily wrote: 'Holding a bloody T-shirt is a crime, but making a T-shirt bloody is not a crime!'[2]

Demographic and social change

To better understand the significance of the prospective trends in student activism, it is necessary to account for certain structural and demographic transformations that have turned the Iranian society of the late 1990s into one very different from that inherited by Khomeini in 1979. Recent drastic demographic change, due in part to the pro-natal policy of the state and its reinforcement of motherhood as the primary role of women in the war-stricken years of 1980-1988, has shifted the character of the population in Iran, the size of which doubled between 1978 and 1996. Over 70% of Iran's 65 million people are now below 25 years of age. It is no surprise that the majority of those arrested during the July crackdown on students were under 20.

Along with demographic changes, there have been both quantitative and qualitative changes in the student body. Except for a brief period of decline in the number of university students – from 140,000 before the revolution to 117,148 after the 'Cultural Revolution' (1982-83 academic year) – there was an annual growth rate of 13% for the 1980s and still a higher rate after the war with Iraq. Prior to Khatami's election there were 1,150,000 students in universities and higher education institutions.

Since the revolution, the ethnic, class, and gender composition of the student body in universities has also changed in important ways. After the 1979 Revolution, the number of rural and lower class students in state universities increased tremendously. The exodus of many upper and upper-middle class students to universities in foreign countries, purging of secular students, the admission policy based on moral and ideological standards and also admission quotas for war veteran family members, resulted in an increase in the proportion of students from traditional, poorer and provincial backgrounds in state universities. Ten years later, the gender composition of the students began to change dramatically. In 1999, for the first time in the history of Iranian higher education, the number of female students in universities surpassed that of male students by about 20,000 (4%).[3] Regardless of their background, these students have now come to represent the aspirations and orientations of a new urban middle class, rather than those of the rural or the bazaar subcultures.

'The futureless future-makers'

The recent shift in the state's population policy toward family-planning and the successful decline in the fertility rate are too late to address the huge demands of the new generation of youth for education, jobs, and leisure. By the late 1990s, facing increasing unemployment, high inflation, and bleak economic outlook, many students lost hope in being able to secure a decent future. Student activists sarcastically ask the ruling clerics: 'Why are you calling us "future-makers" while you have left us with no future (*ayandeh-sazan-e bi-ayandeh*)?'

Since Khatami's presidency there has been a decrease in the intrusion by Islamist vigilantes into the private lives and personal choices of the youth and women, and the dress and behaviour codes have also been less strictly monitored. Yet, the sense of despair among many youngsters continues. The recent crackdown has further intensified insecurity, resentment, and above all the identity crisis among the youth.[4] An alarming rate of depression among young girls in certain parts of Iran, like Qum, has been documented by official reports.[5]

The new student movement is still in flux, inexperienced and loosely organized. So far, students' demands for freedom of thought, of assembly, of press, and of political prisoners, as well as their demands for rule of law and security, have been raised in a voice of reason and in a non-violent manner. The predominant discourses among student activists are still very similar to those used by the new reform movement reflective of the 'new thinking' among Islamic liberal and leftist intellectuals as well as within secular nationalist trends. While one hopes for a peaceful and constructive evolutionary process of reform, there is a continuous and violent interruption in that process by the retrogressive forces. The lack of profound improvement in the legal system, civil and human rights, and economic conditions could result in a revolutionary explosion, especially among the increasingly restless and outraged youth. ✦

Notes

1. See, for an excellent analysis on the recent student movement, Ali Akbar Mahdi, 'The Students Movement in the Islamic Republic of Iran', *Journal of Iranian Research and Analyses*, 15, November 1999, p. 5-46.
2. Cited in the Tehran daily *Asr Azadegan*, November 15, 199, p. 2
3. See Mahdi, p. 14-15.
4. Saeed Madani, 'Shouresh-e Novo-Javanan' (Rebellion of the Youth), *Iran Farda*, 57, 17 Shahrivar 1378 (August 1999).
5. See, e.g., the report by Azam Kamgouyan, *Zanaan*, No. 57, Aban 1378/November 1999, p. 60.

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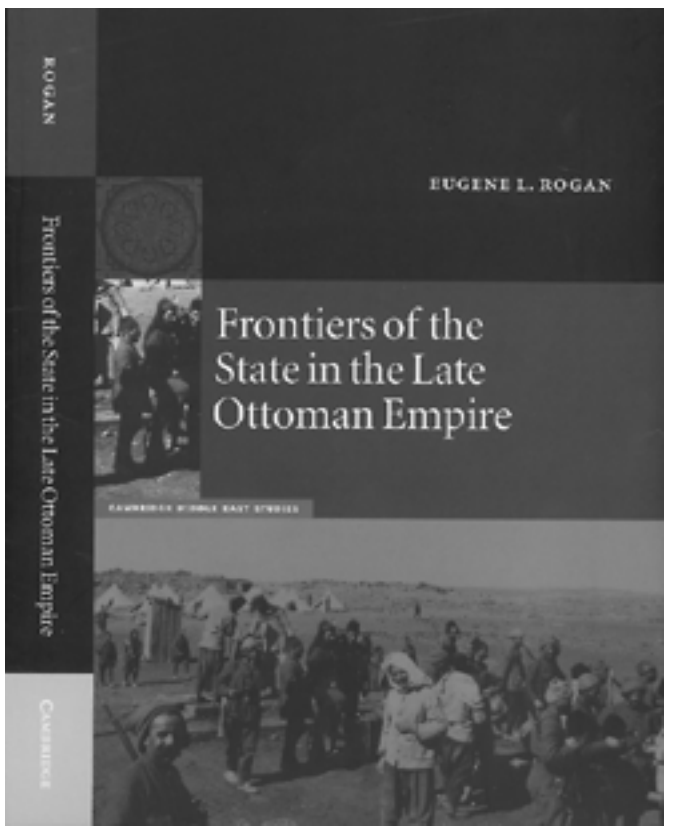
Middle East
EUGENE ROGAN

Ottoman Muslim Missionaries and the Transjordan Frontier

Western missionaries are credited with introducing many changes to Middle Eastern societies in the 19th century. Their influence on the Ottoman state is less well known. Competing with Protestant and Catholic missionaries for the minds, souls, and bodies of its Arab subjects, the Ottomans adopted Christian missionary methods to beat them at their own game.



The south-eastern corner of Ottoman Syria lay beyond the reach of the government's authority until the second half of the 19th century. A thinly-populated contact zone between the desert and the sown, the peasants and Bedouin of Transjordan had more in common with each other than they did with the urban cultures of neighbouring Jerusalem, Nablus and Damascus. This was particularly true in terms of spiritual affairs. Far from the centres of orthodoxy, the residents of Transjordan had grown highly unorthodox in their religious practices. The large Christian minority abstained from alcohol and pork and some Christian men were known to take a second wife when the first failed to conceive. The Muslims, for their part, imposed none of the restrictions on Christians common in urban Syria or Palestine. Christians were free to ride the same size mount as Muslims, to wear any colour of the rainbow, and to trade insults and blows with Muslims as among equals when they had a falling out. Indeed, it was even reported that Muslims would take their infants to be baptised by a Greek Orthodox priest to protect them from harm.

An Open Door

Following the establishment of direct Ottoman rule in northern Transjordan in 1867, Christian missionary societies were quick to enter the field. British and German Protestants of the Church Missionary Society (CMS) and French and Italian Roman Catholics dispatched by the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem were attracted by the high degree of tolerance which they encountered in Transjordan. Not only could they hope to win over large numbers of Greek Orthodox Christians, but they believed Transjordan to be the one place in which they might win Muslim converts – particularly among the Bedouin tribes.

The missionary societies provided a wide range of social services hitherto neglected by both the Ottoman religious authorities and the state, such as education and medicine. They embarked on ambitious building projects to provide churches, schools and clinics. Initially, they met with support and even gratitude from the local Ottoman officials. By the 1880s, however, the Ottomans moved to impose stricter limits on Christian missionary activities in Greater Syria, and in Transjordan in particular. The missionaries responded by turning their attention to the southern reaches of Transjordan, to the Karak district, which still lay beyond direct government rule.

In February 1888, CMS missionaries Henry Sykes and Frederick Connor set out on a tour of Madaba and Karak to assess the prospects for mission work there. Connor was most enthusiastic: 'If the CMS avails itself of the present opportunity, it will gain an undisputed footing in Kerak before the Turkish authorities enter it.' Here was a tolerant society reminiscent of the Transjordan of the 1860s. 'The people are only nominal Moslems, and have not the same fanaticism as Moslems of Palestine and Syria. The door for evangelization in East and West Palestine is practically closed; in the Kerak district it is open.'

As it turned out, the CMS only opened its mission in Karak after the Ottomans entered the town in 1893. The Latins too re-established their mission in Karak in 1894. The Ottoman state they confronted was determined not to allow agents of foreign powers to disrupt their delicate work in Transjordan's newest frontier. The Ottoman government had to provide the services which they forbade missionaries to deliver. They recognized the dubious religiosity of the tribesmen at the Transjordan frontier. The problem was more aggravated the further one moved south. Ottoman assessments of the inhabitants of the Karak district did not differ from those of the missionaries. As the governor in Damascus wrote in 1894:

> 'Although there are in excess of 50,000 Muslim tribesmen estimated to be living within the region of Maʿan [i.e. southern Transjordan, including Karak], they have long been born into savagery and ignorance of Islamic religious duties and regulation of prayer. …One does not encounter one man in a thousand who performs his prayers… Given the absence of mosques and prayer rooms it is only natural that they should abandon prayer, for even if they so desired there are no places of worship to be found.'

The Ottoman response

To forestall missionary work among Muslims, the Ottoman government sought to build on the Muslim identity preserved among those who observed none of the outward practices of Islam. On entering Karak, the Ottoman government sought to endow its new regional capital with a Friday mosque. The governor of Syria petitioned the Imperial Palace with the drawings and costings for a new structure built on the site of the ancient mosque 'founded by Faruk [i.e. the Caliph ʿUmar] at the time of the [7th century] conquest of Syria, destroyed five or six centuries ago.' The cost of constructing the mosque, with a school attached, was estimated by army engineers in the region of 300,000 piasters. Over the next two decades, old mosques were restored and new ones built along the length of the Transjordan frontier, by local initiative and with government support.

The Ottomans were equally concerned to counteract the proselytizing of Christian missionaries among Muslims. The state consistently sought to provide spiritual guidance to Muslim communities within reach of European missionaries. For example, to counteract the work of Christian missionaries in the Hawran in 1886, the provincial authorities in Damascus dispatched Quranic teachers to work with the tribes, 'provided with a tent and a camel to carry it when the tribe removes from place to place.' Similarly, Sultan Abdülhamid II called for the posting of 'village preachers' (*köy imamlari*) to every village in those districts of rural Syria where 'Muslim children are sent to schools opened by foreigners.' He also called for the provincial printing presses to publish books and treatises for distribution as a means of reaching the literate.

These calls for Quranic teachers to work among the tribes and for village preachers became particularly acute after the Ottoman entry into Karak, given the determination of the Latin and Protestant missionaries to make inroads among the Muslims there. In 1896, the CMS was represented by Frederick Johnson, an accredited medical doctor. The audacity of the British medical missionary was confirmed in April 1897 when Dr Johnson travelled the short distance from Karak to Qatrana to visit 'the Hajj Pilgrims on their outward journey with the idea of discovering the existence or not of opportunities for the Medical Missionary.' He met with the 'Pasha of the Hajj' and other officials and, not surprisingly, was dealt a warning six months later from the British Consul in Damascus 'enclosing a copy of a Note Verbale received from the Sublime Porte in which further complaint is made of your action in the matter of proselytism among Moslems.'

Muslim missionaries

Ottoman officials continued to follow the work of European missionaries in the Karak district very closely. The governor in Damascus sent a telegram to the imperial palace in December 1898 with the familiar refrain of 'Latin and Protestant foreign missionaries opening unlicensed schools and educating wild and uncivilised Arab Muslim children devoid of Islamic beliefs.' However, his solution was to imitate the societies they sought to suppress, and to dispatch Hanafi Muslim 'missionaries' (*misyönerler*) to the Karak district to work in pairs among the tribes on state salaries of 150 piasters each. Similarly, the office of the Sheyhülislam dispatched salaried preachers to remedy the ignorance of Islamic practice in Maʿan in July 1899.

The news of the Muslim missionaries was received with alarm by the CMS, and dismissed with derision by the Latins. CMS missionary Henry Harding wrote to a British supporter in 1899 asking him 'to sympathize with my feelings on learning that the Turks are sending fourteen fully trained Moslem missionaries to Kerak, and these are on their way now.' The Dominican priest Antonin Jaussen claimed that the Muslim missionaries made little impression on the natives of the Karak region. Some results were obtained in getting the Bedouin to observe the fast of Ramadan, though respect for the fast was localized: more fasting in the town, less among the plateau lands of Karak, and no observation at all among such independent tribes as the Bani Hamida, Bani Sakhr and Huwaytat.

The injunction to pray five times daily, he claimed, was even less respected. According to Jaussen, the Bedouin found the prostrations of prayer dishonourable and dismissed the practice as 'the prayers of the *efendis* (officials)'. Once having learned to pray, Jaussen claimed the knowledge was only used out of political motives as part of 'official life' when visiting government offices in town. He cited as an example members of the Huwaytat tribe who 'had themselves initiated in the *art* of prayer and submitted to those practices only when they went to the *Saray* (government offices).'

It is regrettable that our records provide no local reactions to the Ottoman missionaries to balance the opinions expressed by such interested parties as the Catholic and Protestant observers. All that can be said of the European accounts is that they confirm the dispatch of Ottoman missionaries. In all probability, the Hanafi missionaries met with no more success than the Protestants or Catholics in trying to impose new values on the people of Transjordan. For when, in 1910, the people of Karak revolted against the state's centralizing initiatives, they sacked the Friday mosque along with all the other structures built by the Ottoman authorities as another symbol of repressive state rule. ✦

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Middle East
SAMI AL-KHAZENDAR

The Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood's Perceptions of the Palestinian Issue[1]

The positions and beliefs adopted by the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) on aspects of the Palestinian issue, particularly in the 1980s and 1990s, are of major interest as they directed MB policies and enabled it to mobilize opinion against Jordan's foreign policy regarding Palestine. The framework of the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood's views on Palestine was based on the Islamization of the Palestinian question by the prophetic claim that Jerusalem-Palestine is one 'Islamic land' and by asserting the religious duty of Jordan to play a strategic role in defending an Islamic cause. Also, they believe that the conflict with Israel is a religio-civilization conflict, not a political one, between Islam and Judaism.

For the MB the Palestine problem is central. The liberation of all of Palestine (including the land controlled by Israelis in 1948) is considered as both a religious and an Arab nationalist duty, given the historic importance of Jerusalem and Palestine as an 'Islamic land'. The MB was deeply concerned with the Palestinian issue at an early stage and shared the belief that Jordan had a special role to play, based on its proximity to Israel and its vulnerability to Israeli ambitions. The MB also believed that the land of Jordan is, in an eschatological sense, 'the land of mobilization and constancy' *(Ard al-Hashd wa al-Ribat)* for the whole Muslim world in its battle for the liberation of Palestine. This religious perspective is taken from the MB's understanding of the meaning of a *hadith*, in which it was reported that the Prophet said Muslims will fight and defeat the Jews one day before the end of the world, and that the place of Muslims will be on the east side of the Jordan River, while the Jews will be on the west side (i.e. the so-called East and West Banks). Most *hadith* compilations mention that the Muslims will be victorious in the fight against the Jews, but they do not indicate the place of battle, excepting one famous *hadith* transmitted by Nur al-Din 'Ali al-Haythami (d. AD 807) in his *Majmaᶜ al-Zawa'id wa Manbaᶜ al-Fawa'id*.[2]

The MB's literature and interviews with its leaders confirm that it continues to believe in these prophecies. They have, in fact, become a source of the MB's philosophy and ideology regarding the Palestinian issue. MB leaders believe that the Muslims will liberate the whole of Palestine and will gain a religious victory in their battle with the Jews, in accordance with the Prophet's promise. As it was succinctly put by Yusef al -Azam, a leading MB figure and former minister of social affairs: 'The victory is inevitable but it needs a long breath.'

The MB also believes that Israel was created as a foreign 'infection' in the Islamic world and that its expansion is motivated by the ambition to divide the Arab and Islamic world. The MB's view of the Jews is based on many Quranic verses and historical events. The MB has described the Jews as 'dishonest', 'defilers of the prophets', 'liars', 'God's adversaries', and 'corrupt'. The distinction between Jews, Zionists, and Israelis is not made clear by the MB, although it does recognize Judaism and the Jews as a religious community, but essentially the MB believes that conflict with the Jews and Zionism is a conflict between two opposing civilizations based on religion.

> 'The political involvement of the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) in Jordan goes back to the establishment of the state. It was established upon Jordanian Independence in 1946 with King Abdullah's approval. It formed many offices and branches in Palestinian cities such as Jerusalem and in the West and East Banks. It participated in the 1948 war against the Jews in Palestine, under the first MB leader, Abd al-Latif Abu Qaurah. The MB joined with other members of the IMB (International Muslim Brotherhood) in mobilizing Arabs to participate in the war. They trained fighters, collected money, bought weapons, cooperated with the other popular Arab organizations and with the Arab League, and exerted popular political pressure on the government to become more effective in the struggle.'

From the MB perspective, to give up Palestinian, Arab, and Islamic rights in Palestine is unacceptable as far as the Islamic Shari'ah and faith are concerned. Not a single inch of the land 'blessed by Allah', the first *qiblah* (the Muslims' prayer orientation) for Muslims, nor the third most sacred shrine in Islam can be given away. This land can never be subjected to bargaining since it is a trust whose preservation is the responsibility of all Muslim generations until the Judgement Day. Any concessions constitute an act of injustice to future generations and an arbitrary measure that is rejected by the Islamic religion. The opinion of non-governmental Muslim scholars and organizations has remained unchanged in *fatwas* issued in 1937, 1947, 1956, 1968, and 1979. In a recent *fatwa* issued after the intifada began in December 1987, a group of Muslim scholars (including MB leaders) stated the following:

> 'By virtue of the covenant which Allah put upon us in order to proclaim the truth and explain it to the people, we hereby declare that jihad is the sole means to liberate Palestine, that it is not permissible under any circumstance to concede a single square inch of the Land of Palestine to the Jews, and that no person or organization has the right or the authority to consent to the Jewish claims in Palestine or concede any part of it to the Jews or recognize their existence on any part of its soil.'[3]

In the same statement they also called for Islamization of the Palestinian issue.

This view of the MB contrasts with that of the Jordanian government, which recognizes the Israeli state. The MB accepts the Jewish minority, which was settled in Palestine before 1918 (before the British colonized it), as was expressed by Ibrahim Ghushah (former MB leader and the spokesman of Hamas), but under Muslim majority rule. It further accepts the establishment of a Palestinian state in any part of liberated Palestinian land, but only as a step toward full liberation.

The MB and the Palestinian leadership

Given this position of the MB, Palestinian nationalist organizations were not considered important. In fact, as regards the MB's position and views *vis-à-vis* the PLO, in the early and mid-1980s, the literature of the MB generally did not view the PLO positively. At the same time it did not declare directly that the PLO was not the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinians. The MB differed from the Jordanian government in that it was more concerned with the PLO's ideology and policy than with the issue of the PLO's representation of the Palestinian people, whether inside or outside Jordan. The MB in Jordan was far more hostile to the PLO than were other branches of the International Muslim Brotherhood (IMB), particularly in Egypt. In the early 1980s, the attitude of the MB towards the PLO appears to have been more flexible than in the late 1980s after the appearance of Hamas. There was an inner feeling or common belief among some leaders of the MB that the PLO was 'a Palestinian Front which represents "part" of the Palestinian people.' In a personal interview, Ziad Abu Ghanimah, a former spokesman of the MB said, 'We are the ones representing the [Palestinian] issue, not others such as the Arab Governments or the PLO.'

MB and the Palestinian Authority

The MB's position and views *vis-à-vis* the Palestinian Authority (PA) came into existence following Oslo Accords (September 1993). To begin with, it should be clear that the PA is almost a complete offshoot of the Palestinian Liberation Organization, which was there before signing the aforementioned agreements. The MB has so far declared no clear position regarding the recognition of the PA as the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. In other words, the MB has adopted the same view as Hamas; the PA, for them, is only one part of the Palestinian people. Therefore, they do not recognize the political legitimacy of the PA leadership of the Palestinian people. This, however, does not mean that the MB refuses to co-exist with the PA as a de facto leadership. On the other hand, the MB takes Hamas as its Palestinian brother in Palestine. It is not surprising that the two sides share the same ideology and close policies.

The MB and Jordan's relation with the West Bank

With regard to Jordan's relationship to the West Bank, the MB expressed through its former spokesman in Parliament, Yusef al Azam, the belief that 'we are in the two Banks one nation in blood and in family. We are one people not two.'[4] On this basis the MB tended to support the annexation of the West Bank to Jordan after its liberation from the Israeli occupation. It seemed that this support was based on the MB's principle of calling for Islamic world unity, more than on its political support for the Jordanian government's policy towards the West Bank. The MB therefore rejected the government's decision to disengage from the West Bank in July 1988.

The MB and the peace initiatives

The MB believed that all present peaceful initiatives and agreements – be they American, Israeli, Arab, or Palestinian – should be rejected because they surrender part of Palestine. As for the stand of the MB concerning the Palestinian-Israeli peace treaty (Oslo, 1993) and the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty of 1994, the movement declared, through its political and official statements and through its deputies at the Jordanian Parliament, its rejection of the above-mentioned treaties. In fact, it had launched a number of peaceful demonstrations as a means of protest. Furthermore, the MB demanded that the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty be frozen as one of its conditions to end its boycott of the 1997 Parliament elections.

It rejected all UN resolutions, in particular Resolution(s) 181, 242, and 338, because they were deemed inconsistent with standards of Islamic justice. The MB further asserted that negotiation or conciliation with the Zionist enemy, 'the usurper of Muslim land', in a way which leads to the surrender of Muslims' rights and land, were opposed by Islamic law.

The practical means of asserting Palestinian Islamic rights was *jihad*. The MB believed that this was the sole means of liberating Palestine from the Zionists and those who are behind them. The starting points for *jihad* are the Muslim peoples, supporters of the Palestinian Muslim people, and the Islamic lands, in particular the lands of the front-line states.[5]

Abdullah al-Akailah, former deputy leader of the Islamic Action Party and MP, pointed out:

> 'If we do not own the means of jihad or defence now, we demand of the Jordanian and other Islamic governments and people to prepare themselves. We do not want to compel our government to become involved in a military confrontation with a powerful enemy in this stage of weakness. Power is not everlasting and weakness is not to continue for ever.'

The MB and the Palestinian-Jordanians

With regard to the Jordanians of Palestinian origin, the MB expresses supreme loyalty to Islamic precepts, and priority is given to the promoting of an Islamic identity. As a result of this, it refuses to admit any distinction between a Jordanian and Palestinian identity. Both peoples, it insists, must have equal rights in citizenship and in Palestinian and Jordanian affairs, regardless of their citizenship or origin. This does not

mean that the MB accepts the Israeli idea of the 'Jordanian option' for the Palestinians. It totally rejects it. Through Islamizing the Palestinian issue, the distinction between Palestinians and Jordanians, and that between Palestine and Jordan are dissolved.

Summarizing these issues in a personal interview, Dr Isaac Farhan, one of the leading figures of the MB and the former Secretary-General of the Islamic Action Front Party, starkly expressed the contrasting view of the MB of Palestine:

> 'We consider the Palestinian issue a basic and key issue for three reasons. First, on the ideological side, the defence of Palestine is defence of the Islamic ideology. Second, on the national side *(umma),* the Israeli existence inside the nation's body divides and destroys the nation. Third, as homeland *(watan),* Palestine is an Arab and Islamic land and the homeland must not be surrendered.'

The MB's perceptions of the Palestinian issue were based on an ideology deriving from purely religious views, but as Jamil Abu Bakir, MB spokesman, in a personal interview pointed out, although the Palestinian issue was a 'holy cause', the MB wanted to avoid conflict with the Jordanian government, even though it opposed the peace process and possible consequences such as economic and cultural cooperation between Jordan and Israel.

It can be said that the MB, despite its ideological view, has always avoided collision with the government, even with all the 'U-turns' the government has chosen, in so far as the Palestinian issue is concerned. This clearly indicates the pragmatic nature of the movement's political behaviour, as well as its ability to strike a balance between its ideological stands on the one side and all variables on the regional and Jordanian political arena on the other. ✦

Notes

1. For more details, see the MB memorandum to the Palestine National Council (PNC) held in Amman in 1984; the election programme of the MB candidates in the parliamentary elections in 1989; and the speeches of the MB members in the Parliament. See, for example, the minutes of the Jordanian Parliaments in 1984, 1985, 1986,1992 and 1993. See also the political statement of the MB statement entitled 'Why the MB rejects Madrid conference and rejects the bilateral and multilateral negotiations with our Jewish enemy', 1992.
   Also, for more details, see Sami Al-Khazendar, (1997), *Jordan and Palestine: The Role of the Islamic and Left Forces in Foreign Policy-Making*. Ithaca Press, Reading.
2. Nur al-din Ali al-Haythami, (1982), *Majmaᶜ al-Zawa'id wa Manbaᶜ al-Fawa'id*. Vol. VII, Dar al-Kitab al-ᶜArabi, Beirut, p. 347-349.
3. *Our Stand Towards the Settlement*, the Information Office, Hamas, June 1991.
4. Yusef al-Azam, MP and member of the MB, Minutes of the Jordanian Parliament, first meeting in the first regular session, 21 January 1984, p. 12.
5. The Election Programme of the MB, *op.cit*, pp 24-25.

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Middle East

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Mahdism in the Sunni Arab World Today

Among scholars of Islam and some Muslims today, a curious misperception dominates: that only the Shiᶜa believe in the coming the awaited Mahdi. Sunni Arab views of the Mahdi since the Six Days War of 1967 have reached heretofore unplumbed depths of eschatological belief and the vigorous debate among the Arab intelligentsia concerning these beliefs, as well as the degree to which they impact the Muslim social and political realms, have followed suit.

Modern discourse, particularly in the American media, tends to distil Islamic ideological categories into only two: 'fundamentalists,' who are portrayed negatively, and reformers, who are depicted in a more positive light. However, this reductionist paradigm fails to take into account the eclectic views of many Muslims, not least that group which expects the imminent arrival of the Mahdi and attempts not only to anchor eschatology in current events but also to reconfigure the politico-military context so as to hasten his arrival.

Eschatological figures in Islam

The term 'al-Mahdi', meaning 'rightly-guided', surprisingly appears nowhere in the Qur'an. Rather, the characteristics and role of the eschatological Mahdi, as well as the political context in which he will appear, are described in a number of *hadith*, or traditions. Three of the six major 9th-century CE compilers of *hadith* – Ibn Mâjah, Abu Dâ'ûd and al-Tirmidhî – do mention the Mahdi. However, the two most authoritative compilers, al-Bukhârî and Muslim b. al-Hajjâj, eschewed such accounts. The source of Mahdist narratives plays into whether one accepts the idea as legitimate, as we shall see below.

Just who is this Mahdi, according to the traditions? He is one of the five major eschatological figures of Islam, along with Jesus, the Dajjâl or 'Deceiver' (Antichrist), the Dâbbah or 'Beast,' and the collective entity Yâjûj and Mâjûj, 'Gog and Magog'. The parallels with Christian eschatology, *mutatis mutandis*, are obvious: all of these end-time figures appear in the New Testament, especially its final book, Revelation. However, Jesus will reappear not as the Son of God and Judge but as the Muslim prophet sent back to assist the Mahdi in defeating the Dajjâl and establishing socio-economic and political justice on earth. The Dajjâl will be the miracle-working leader of the unbelievers and will be killed by Jesus. The enormous Dâbbah will emerge from the earth and mock unbelievers while the semi-human armies of Gog and Magog will escape from the prison built for them by Alexander the Great to pillage across the planet until destroyed by God at Jesus' behest. Other end-time events include earthquakes, great fires, appearance of false prophets, speaking animals, increase in immorality, the sun rising in the West, the striking of all words from the pages of every Qur'an and the predominance of unbelief. Finally, at some point Jesus and the Mahdi will die natural deaths and, in the eschatological denouement, the angel Isrâfîl will blow his trumpet twice: at the first all humans will die; at the second all will be resurrected for the Judgement.

Throughout Islamic history many religio-political leaders have claimed Mahdi-hood. Most rapidly faded back into obscurity. Some gathered followers, however, and a few took power. The most successful such movements were the Abbasids in the 8th-century CE Islamic heartlands, the Fatimids in 10th-century CE Egypt, the Almohads in 12th-century CE North Africa and, most recently, Muhammad Ahmad's followers in the 1880s in Sudan. Several other Mahdist-type movements in the last two centuries succeeded by transforming into separate religions: the Baha'is of 19th-century Iran, the Ahmadis of 19th-century India. In recent years only two such movements have developed in the Middle East: that of a self-styled Mahdi in Saudi Arabia in 1979, which met with a violent end; and the *sub rosa* movement that accompanied the success of the Ayatolloah Khomeini, in which whisperings that he was the Mahdi (Hidden Imam to Shiᶜites) went undenied.

Mahdism today

The Muslim world today is devoid of Mahdist claimants – so far. However, an Arab debate about the truth of Mahdism, and its meaning today, has been gathering steam and began boiling over after the Six Days War of 1967. There are several reasons for this. One is that millenarian movements within the entire Judaeo-Christian-Islamic milieu escalate sharply in a period of societal angst, which 1967 proved to be for the Arabs.[1] Another is widespread frustration at the failure of Arab economies to effectively raise living standards, of Arab governments to achieve unity and of the embarrassing dependence upon the world's lone superpower, the United States. Finally, although non-millenarian in the true sense of the word – Latin *milleni* means 1000, a period of time which holds no resonance for Muslims – the Islamic world has been unable to immunize itself against the influence of the world's largest religion, Christianity, and its *de facto* world calendar. Secular millennial issues like the Y2K bug, in tandem with religious aspects like the second coming of Christ, have fanned eschatological flames within the Arab portion of the Muslim world.

The slice of this debate examined here is that taking place within the Arab print media – specifically books.[2] The analysis can be summed up in the following paradigm:

Literalists
1. Qur'anic – No Mahdi in Qur'an, so false
2. Hadith
a. Not in Bukhârî or Muslim, so false
b. In other compilers, so true
Figurativists
1. Mahdi pernicious superstition
2. Mahdi benign superstition

Many opponents of Mahdism take their cues from the brilliant Ibn Khaldûn (d. 1406 CE). This intellectual, considered by some as the father of sociology, saw the Mahdi as a pernicious Shiᶜi heresy which had crept into Sunnism via the Sufism. This is the view of two modern opponents of Mahdism, ᶜAbd al-Karîm al-Khâtib in *The Awaited Mahdi and Those Who Await Him* (Cairo, 1980) and ᶜAbd al-Qâdir Ahmad Atâ in *The Awaited Mahdi between Truth and Superstition* (Cairo, 1980). In fact both adduce Ibn Khaldûn's motive for rejecting Mahdism: it is Sufi-transmitted Shiᶜism. Al-Khâtib also calls upon the *ulema* to abandon such foolishness and turn their attention to renewing Islam, while ᶜAtâ maintains that the true Mahdiyah will not come by means of a supernatural individual but via renewing and reforming Islam.

This Sunni scepticism about the Mahdi has given way, in recent years, to positive conviction about him. Muhammad Ibrâhîm al-Jamal, in *The Aggression and the Awaited Mahdi* (1980), says the Mahdi will come amidst unmistakable signs, but that Khomeini is (was) not the one. Hamzah al-Faqîr in *Three Whom the World Awaits: the Expected Mahdi, the False Messiah, Messiah Jesus* (Amman, 1995), is one of a growing number of supporters of Mahdism who adduces Sayyid Qutb (d. 1966), the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood strategist. More than most writers, however, al-Faqîr attempts to link current events to those presaging the Mahdi's appearance: particularly, he sees the 'tyrannical rule' of the exploitative 'petty states' under which most Muslims live as crying out for redress by the Mahdi, who will also humble 'Pharaoh,' otherwise known as the United States. A more idiosyncratic view is that of Kâmil Saᶜfân, *The Twenty-Fifth Hour: the False Messiah, the Mahdi, Gog and Magog* (Cairo, 1995), who manages to work the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, the Masonic Lodge and Jeane Dixon (the American psychic) into his philosophy of Mahdism. Amîn Muhammad Jamâl al-Dîn, in *The Life-span of the Islamic Community and the Nearness of the Appearance of the Mahdi* (Cairo, 1996), argues that the Mahdi's coming is very close and will be immediately preceded by a world war – which he terms *Harmagiddun* (Armageddon) – between al-Rûm, the West, and either China, Russia and the communist countries or Iran, Iraq and the Shiᶜa nations. A more 'ecumenical', less polemical approach is that of Bâsim al-Hâshimî in *The Savior between Islam and Christianity: A Study in the Cooperation between the Mahdi and the Messiah* (Beirut, 1996). He adduces Qur'an, *hadith* and New Testament to argue that the Mahdi and Jesus will cooperate to create a 'united world state'.

One final example of Mahdist believers is Fahd Sâlim who, in his 1996 book, *The Signs of the Hour and the Attack of the West before* [the end of?] *1999*, maintains that the Mahdi will be preceded by an Iranian – Shîᶜî – Dajjâl. Sâlim is one of several Arab authors who conflate Francis Fukuyama's idea of the 'end of history' (the triumph of democratic capitalism) with Samuel Huntington's 'clash of civilizations' (religio-cultural fault lines between cultures engendering conflict) into an ancient plot by the West against Islam. Sâlim also has an interesting way of explaining the *hadith* references to end-time warfare being fought with swords: after America's nuclear Armageddon against the Muslims, those will be the only extant weapons. Also, interestingly enough, he adduces Nostradamus' 16th-century predictions in defence of his arguments.

The non-Mahdist Muhammad Farîd Hijâb, in *The Awaited Mahdi between Religious Doctrine and Political Meaning* (Algeria, 1984), has the most philosophical deconstruction of the Mahdist idea: that it is a conflation of the motifs of the ancient Near Eastern deliverer, Plato's philosopher-king, and Machiavelli's strong man which survives today as a useful oppositional paradigm to unjust regimes. More prosaic is the criticism of Mahdism found in the anonymous work, *The Cutting Sword–The True Explication of the Book 'The Life-span of the Islamic Community and the Nearness of the Appearance of the Mahdi* (Cairo, 1998), which critiques that pro-Mahdist book for adopting irrelevant Western concepts like 'the end of history' and for fostering the dangerous idea that the Arabs must re-take Jerusalem before the Mahdi can come.

As this brief survey of modern Arabic works confirms, Mahdism, which has existed almost as long as Islam, shows no signs of waning. For although Muslims are a-millennial, they do expect the coming of a *mujaddid*, or 'renewer,' every 100 years – an idea which can be easily fused with that of the Mahdi. And since the next Muslim century begins in 2076, 'eschatological ideas will continue to play an important role in the Islamic world into the twenty-first century.'[3] ✦

Notes

1. Thrupp, Sylvia, ed. (1970), *Millennial Dreams in Action: Studies in Revolutionary Religious Movements*. New York: Schocken Books, pp. 31-42 and Ajami, Fouad (1981), *The Arab Predicament: Arab Political Thought and Practice since 1967*. New York: Warner Books, Inc.
2. English translations are given throughout the article for Arabic titles.
3. Hamblin, William and Peterson, Daniel (1995), 'Eschatology,' *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World*, p. 442.

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North Africa
REMCO ENSEL

Resurgent Voices
Profanation of the Shurafa in Modern Morocco

Ever since the early stages of Islamic conversion, the Shurafa have been successful in sanctifiying their individual personae and collective presence in Moroccan society. Countervoices that questioned the legitimacy of their religious stature have, however, never been fully silenced. In recent times, state formation and the concurring processes of the spread of public education and electronic media have given a new impetus to these resurgent voices. Anthropological research shows how, for some of these modern religious contestants, protest against Sharifi authority is part of a profound emancipatory struggle.

Contesting Sharifi descent as the basis of social distinctions and marker of identity has a long history in Morocco. Jacques Berque even once suggested complementing Lévi-Provençal's *Les historiens des Chorfa* (Paris; 1922) with a repertory on *Les opposants des Chorfa*.[1] In the modern era, fundamental criticism of the saint's cult and descent-based social distinctions was particularly articulated in connection with the growth of the Salafi reform movement. Originating in 19th-century Egypt, this movement aimed to return to the original prescriptions of the faith. Adherents opted for a scripturalist Islam, in a later phase objecting to hereditary sainthood and the notion of Sharifi descent. The influence of this modernist movement in Morocco at the governmental level can be seen from a law, proclaimed as early as 1949, that made it obligatory to hand over a notarial act when claiming to be a Sharifi, in particular ᶜAlawī, surname and honorific. It remains to be said that an ambivalent attitude characterized even the severest critics. Thus, both the cult of saints and 'Sharifianism' were never repudiated by all Salafi adherents. Some took great pride in their own Sharifi descent.[2] Moreover, socio-political criticism of the state was often translated into a dispute between Sharifi lineages, i.e., Idrissī criticism of the ᶜAlawī state. After independence, Sharifi descent remained a major point of discussion at the state level. Sharifi privileges were severely restricted when King Hassan II successfully blocked possible dynastic ambitions of alternative Sharifi collectivities. More importantly, state policy increasingly put pressure on the privileged status of the Shurafa through monopolization of education, arbitration and religious authorization. The state thus deprived local specialists of their functions and appropriated religion as the ultimate source of legitimation.

Central in the religious debate on the meaning of Sharifi descent has been the incongruity between the fundamental equality of members of the Islamic community, as formulated in the Quranic verse 49:13, and the privileged position of the descendants of the Prophet, as read from verse 33:33.[3] One crucial point of dispute was whether only contemporary members of the Prophet's family were entitled to public respect or also his descendants. When applied to social reform, the question was whether social equality is an ideal to pursue on earth or rather something attainable only in the afterlife.[4] Induced by the spread of education and electronic media as well as by urban migration, elements of these scriptural discussions are instilled at the local level.

Descent-based distinctions in debate

In the stringent social hierarchy of the oasis societies in southern Morocco, the Haratin population occupies the lowest level of the social ladder. Haratin are people of humble descent who have specialized in agriculture and handicrafts. One form of everyday resistance that some Haratin pursued against their humble status was to protest against the practice of taking descent as foremost criterion of one's personal identity. With respect to the Shurafa they raised particular objections to the use of honorifics. Thus when French presence enabled them to migrate to Casablanca, these Haratin, who 'had been taught to say *sidi* and *lalla*' to the local Shurafa back home, were no longer prepared to do so when on leave from their urban jobs. These youngsters, as was noted in a report in 1955, 'scandalize the elders who have maintained their servile mentality and who refuse to follow them on their revolutionary path.'[5]

It seems from research conducted in the 1990s that the struggle over the use of honorifics has not yet been toned down. This even appeared humorously in a joke told by a Sharif:

> A Sharif and a Hartani are having a quarrel. At one point, the Hartani announces that practices expressing differences among human beings have to be abolished: 'Everybody is equal, so from this day on everybody has to be addressed with the honorific *mulay'*. So the Hartani goes home, where he tells his relatives about his decision, and they agree. The next morning his young son wakes up and asks his mother: *'Mulay* mama, where is *Mulay* papa?' His mother replies: *'Mulay* son, *Mulay* papa has put the *Mulay* baskets on the *Mulay* donkey, filled them with the *Mulay* manure, and gone to the *Mulay* field'.

Notwithstanding the obvious ridicule over the Hartani's inability to differentiate between the human and the natural world – a fundamental quality of any civilized person – the joke signals the ongoing emancipatory struggle of Haratin against Sharifi authority.

Everyday resistance

From talks with Ibrahim, a young migrant living in a suburb of Casablanca, it appeared that the aversion of Haratin to the use of honorifics indeed stems from its connotation with the persistent system of social distinctions that had kept them in their humble position for so long. Ibrahim had left his natal village down south as a teenager, yet he still saw his former villagers, some of whom were Shurafa. Ibrahim told me of his involvement in a quarrel with a Sharifi migrant from his former village. Once when they met in the public bath, Ibrahim had refused to use the honorific *mulay*. When the Sharif asked for an explanation, Ibrahim's answer was simple: 'Did one say *mulay* to the Prophet Muhammad? There are only human beings, all equal before God. It is impossible to pay respect to people, just because they are born as members of a certain family. Only through his deeds can a person earn respect, but then again, a human does not know the hidden life of his fellow men: Who knows about the secret behaviour of a Sharif? Only God is able to judge human beings.'

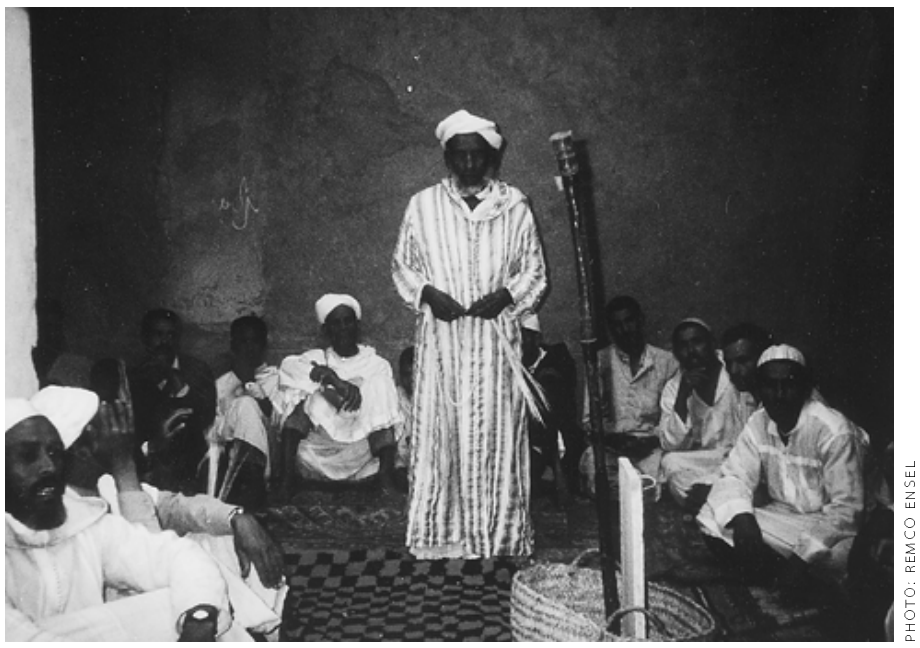

PHOTO: REMCO ENSEL

Sharifa ancestry and local sainthood often merge in the Moroccan countryside: a Sharif poses with the relics of the 16th-century village saint.

Ibrahim's aversion to naming practices, which he considered out-dated, was also apparent in his then recent name-change. His parents had named him Fatih, but once settled in Casablanca, he had changed his name into Ibrahim. Fatih was a name that was particularly carried by ᶜAbīd and Haratin. Ibrahim's rebirth, as symbolized in his name-change, can be connected to his interest in religious ideas that came to him through the texts of Abdessalam Yassin, a large collection of cassettes and an illegal videotape of the Algerian Islamic Salvation Front (FIS). Young Haratin like Ibrahim are not afraid to contest well-accepted divisions of ethnicity, disputing 'traditional ways' of religious expression and instead putting themselves forward as the ideal model to follow. Arguing against rural practices and rules *(qawnīn)* that keep the social distinctions alive, they suggest that the universal Shariah should be superior to these local 'laws'. They furthermore protest against the persistent practice of taking descent as determinant of one's identity. Showing their national ID, they made clear that their birthplace, instead of their descent, should be the decisive marker of identity.

Ibrahim's adversary in the quarrel was interested in the same issues as Ibrahim. This Sharif acknowledged that it was necessary to reflect upon some aspects of the Islamic faith. But he suggested that people who, like Ibrahim, argue in favour of practices regarding dress, table manners and praying, that followed the Prophet or his companions, should instead follow the example of members of 'the House of the Prophet'.

It has become increasingly difficult in an urban context to be acknowledged as descendant of the Prophet. Sharifi descent still is an important source of pride and public esteem in Morocco and continues to be a valuable asset in acquiring goods and favours. Yet for lesser Shurafa, it is not always easy to obtain acceptance of their descent as valid currency in these bargains. To avoid the inconvenience of one being unaware that he should address the other as a descendant of the Prophet, the Shurafa began paying civil servants to make them print *mulay* in front of the first name on their ID. The Shurafa thus also turned their ID into a symbol of their personal identity. In 1985, however, the government passed a law that put an end to this printing practice.

Fed by an emerging public domain in which discussions on the current state of affairs in and outside Morocco take place, resurgent religious voices like those of Ibrahim and other Haratin signal the seeds of a process of individualization in Moroccan society. It remains to be seen whether this socio-cultural transformation leads to the disappearance of the privileged stature of Shurafa and the persistent ethnic strife in the southern oases. ✦

Notes

1. Berque, Jacques (1982), *Ulémas, fondateurs, insurgés du Maghreb. XVIIe siècle*. Paris: Sindbad, pp. 232-233.
2. Munson, Jr., Henry (1993), *Religion and Power in Morocco*. New Haven: Yale University Press, pp. 87-114.
3. ibid., 11.
4. Agnouche, Abdellatif (1992), 'Les Chorfa face à l'état de droit dans le Maroc contemporain'. In: Jean-Claude Santucci, *Le Maroc actuel. Une modernisation au miroir de la tradition?* Paris: CNRS, pp. 273-283: 276.
5. Moureau, Cpt. (1955), *Les sociétés du Bani: Les Haratins. Parallele entre son evolution et celle des outres races des Bani*. Typescript. Paris: CHEAM no. 2431, pp. 1 and 8.

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East Africa

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Ethiopian Islam and the Challenge of Diversity

A perennial issue in the comparative study of Islam is how, as a faith and a way of life, it deals with diversity: religious, ethnic, or socio-cultural. This issue is all the more relevant in a world where globalizing discourses redefine traditional identities, including those of religious systems, both in their local (indigenous Asian and African) and universalist forms (Christianity, Islam). In many areas, complex and, in a way, exemplary patterns of mutual interaction and tolerance have developed between religious-communal groups. In Africa, such regions are found in Mali, Cameroon, Tanzania, Nigeria, and also Ethiopia. The history and current situation of Islam in Ethiopia, especially the northern part of the country, provide an interesting case study.

The situation of Islam in Ethiopia is remarkable for a number of reasons. First, there is its long history in the country (see Trimingham 1952; Hussein 1994). It is well-known that since the beginning of the new faith, before the Prophet Muhammad had even established himself in Mecca, a number of his followers were received in Ethiopia as religious asylum-seekers at the court of Aksum (615 CE). On the authority of the Prophet, Ethiopia was not to be targeted for jihad. In the subsequent period, Islam expanded in the country largely through peaceful means, and since the late 18th century especially through Sufi orders (Qadiriyya). This ancient history plays a role in the self-definition of Ethiopian Muslims. One historical episode is an exception to this pattern: the violent confrontation between the Christian empire and the Islamic sultanates of Ifat and Adal in the 16th century (c. 1520-1550), where, mainly as a result of Turkish assistance (e.g., fire-arms) and strong leadership, and zeal of the self-declared imam Ahmad ibn Ibrahim of Harar, the Christian state and its religious culture were almost annihilated in an unprecedented jihad.

Secondly, there is the complex relationship between ethnicity and Islam. Ethiopia knew virtually no Arab immigration, and Ethiopian Muslims belonged to the indigenous peoples, retaining much of their specific ethno-cultural characteristics, so that these often overshadowed 'Islamic identity' (This phenomenon is familiar from other countries as well). Arabic was not a spoken language among any group, and there were no Arab traditions related to marriage, inheritance, and other related customs, imported into Ethiopia. Shari'a law was always very partially applied and combined with the customary law of a region or of a dominant ethnic group.

Thirdly, Islam in Ethiopia always lived in the shadow of an old and powerful Christian kingdom (except in the violent period just mentioned). Christianity was the core world-view of the political elite and a defining element of the country's historical nationhood, and up to the demise of the monarchy in 1974, Muslims were excluded from this. They hence held a secondary place in the political and civic domains; there was a politically relevant 'boundary' between the two communities of faith.

While effective in the collective sense, in the realities of daily life this boundary was, however, not immutable. It did not prohibit social interaction in areas where Christians, Muslims and others – though following their own dietary and ritual rules – lived side by side and intermingled. The boundary could also be crossed by individuals changing allegiance and changing their identity.

Ambiguous identities?

It is this domain of boundary (crossing), in a social and religious sense, which offers an interesting entry to the study of Islamic lore and practice in Ethiopia. Muslims and Christians live together in many places and know each other intimately; they are masters of adaptation and improvisation in a precarious natural and political environment where knowledge of, and personal relations with, power-holders are crucial, but at the same time volatile and subject to unpredictable changes. Especially in parts of Northern Ethiopia where the numerical balance between Christians and Muslims was virtually equal and where the social conditions (poverty, land scarcity, lack of access to 'political resources') were the same for both groups, religious identity was made a strategic factor in the social careers of persons, related to marriage, trade, migration to a city or an area predominantly inhabited by members adhering to the other religion, or ethnic or political affiliation. People thus tended to choose what communal identity in what phase of their lives was best for them. In Northern Ethiopia (e.g. Wällo) this has led to long-standing patterns of conversion and re-conversion between the two faiths and explains the existence of extended families that are half-Muslim and half-Christian. Most importantly, people showed a tolerant and forgiving attitude in accommodating the variable identities and religious practices that others resort to and were not quick to judge others. This pattern is maintained until today.

This phenomenon of what could be called religious oscillation has not been studied systematically but is nonetheless of great interest. It shows not only the varied forms that Islamic religious culture can take in an African context, but also leads us to inquire into the nature of (Islamic and Christian) religiosity and into conditions of co-existence and non-exclusivist identification on the basis of religions usually held to be absolutist and – in the case of Islam – 'officially' not tolerating conversion to another faith.

The situation of co-existence and intermingling is not unique in itself; in other areas both in Africa and Europe, members of the two faiths worked out understandings and shared in each others' lives during festivals and religious occasions, though observing certain minimal rules in the process, e.g. not eating meat from animals slaughtered by people of the other faith.

Christians and Muslims: tolerance and exchange

It was often said by Ethiopian and other observers that Muslims (and Christians) in Northern Ethiopia only have a 'superficial adherence to their faith' and that they are not 'true believers' or are 'opportunists'. This may sometimes be the case, but in this the people concerned are no different from the countless others who do not shift their religion: can these always be said to be 'true believers'? Neither does this reproach do justice to the feelings of the people concerned and to their own way of dealing with religious values. It only holds when one applies an exclusivist interpretation of 'religiosity' and of Islam. The non-literate 'folk Islam' in Northern Ethiopia with its veneration of saints and shrines, its festivals or its specific prayer sessions perhaps goes against the grain of strict Islamic ulema doctrine, especially when seen in its ritual aspects. But it has been an identity based on other precepts of Islam, deemed more important by the local people. Little research has been done on how these practices of (re)conversion and co-existence are being worked out in daily practice and what the socio-political implications are. What is clear from a few interesting pioneer MA theses by Ethiopian social science students at Addis Ababa University, who have looked into these matters (e.g. Assefa 1992, Kalklachew 1997), is that local Ethiopian society shows an active religious commitment on the part of its people, based on a principled tolerance and mutual understanding. When a Muslim man's daughter marries a Christian, she is not ostracized or condemned by him, and when a Christian person's brother converts to Islam in order to facilitate his marriage to a Muslim girl, contacts are not broken off. Mixed Christian-Muslim participation in certain pilgrimages and their joint veneration of saints is not frowned upon. These practices make up the unique pattern of life in Northern Ethiopia, and as such form somewhat of a model for inter-communal relations in a plural society.

In recent years, especially after the 1991 change of government in Ethiopia, such patterns of tolerance in Wällo and elsewhere have come under stress. Revivalist movements (e.g., of Wahhabite persuasion) are emerging and are targeting traditional folk Islamic practices in Northern Ethiopia. As the anthropologist Kelklachew (1997: 99) ironically noted, the representatives of this movement (especially active in the towns) '… criticize everything that the Muslims of the area perceive as Islamic practice'. During fieldwork in the area I also heard some people say that their village had been visited by persons asking them to 'reduce their contacts and cooperation with the Christians' and 'reinforce the Muslim character' of their village. The villagers however did not see the problem and refused the message.

Hence, in the face of Islamic revivalism based on strict scriptural interpretations, the challenge of pluralism presents itself anew in Ethiopia (There is no such movement amongst Christians, who do not discourage contacts with the Muslims). A moot point is whether Islamic revivalism – and perhaps a Christian response which may eventually emerge – will articulate 'boundaries' where there were none before, or upset the balance and tolerance between communal groups. From various recent examples in Africa and the Balkans, we know that gruesome violence can be evoked in such a situation. These questions are also raised in Ethiopia. The answers given by most of the local population in Wällo is that they have worked out practical solutions to religious and cultural diversity, and that an emphasis on a strictly scriptural interpretation of the faith at the expense of folk religion would serve no purpose if the historical patterns of tolerance and accommodation would be reversed. Their example shows that there are more ways than one of being a good believer. ✦

Muslim traders at the market in Vemis , Northern Ethiopia

PHOTO: JAN ABBINK, 1998

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West Africa

ED VAN HOVEN

Medina Gounass: the End of a Religious Isolate

Medina Gounass is an isolated religious community situated in a remote area of Senegal. Until the 1980s, the leader of this branch of the Tijan *tariqa* refused all contact with the state authorities. The imperatives of *shari'a* were rigorously applied in nearly all aspects of social and religious life. But after the death of the founder of the community, things changed dramatically. Disputes between the heirs of the founder's legacy, struggles over agricultural resources, and fierce competition between supporters of political parties, made the intervention of the worldly authorities inevitable. Today, the community of Medina Gounass is, like so many Sufi orders in Senegal, courted by the state elite.

PHOTO: ED VAN HOVEN

Ahmed Tijan Be, current caliph of Medina Gounass

Located some 85 km south of the regional capital Tambacounda in eastern Senegal, Medina Gounass is one of the largest communities of the Haute Casamance region. Its inhabitants, mainly of Hal Pular (Toucouleur) and Peul origin, live in the many quarters of the community. A modern road system, constructed at the beginning of the 1980s, just after the ascension of the first caliph, is centred around the huge mosque. Its impressive minaret can hardly be missed upon entering the village by one of the dusty bush roads.

Ahmed Tijan Ba, usually referred to as *thierno*, is the current caliph of the community. He is the spiritual guide of the numerous followers living in Medina Gounass as well as abroad. His leadership extends to nearly all domains of everyday life in the community. He is both the politico-religious leader and judge. People choose to live in the community because they feel that his 'closeness to God' (*walaya*) is beneficial. Others, living elsewhere in Senegal or abroad, pay visits from time to time to Medina Gounass. Nowadays, the adepts have photographs, sold in the local shops, through which they experience the veneration of the *thierno*.

While walking the streets of Medina Gounass, one notices immediately the absence of women. It is stated that women should stay at home and rarely go out. If they do, they should be veiled – even within the confines of the compound. Women often gather to listen to the words of Thierno Amadou Seydou Ba, the community's founder who died in 1980, recorded on tape.

The foundation of the community

Thierno Amadou Seydou Ba founded Medina Gounass in 1935. He was a Hal Pular originally from the Fouta Tooro, a region located in the middle valley of the Senegal River. After several years of travel and study, mainly in the southern Casamance region, he finally settled in Medina Gounass with a handful of disciples. He preached the Tijan *wird*, a litany of prayers brought to Senegal from Morocco in the 19th century by the Hal Pular militant El Hadji Omar Tall.

At the outset, Medina Gounass was not more than a simple residential centre for followers, connected to the private home of the *thierno*. But it began to develop rapidly when large crowds of followers, mostly fleeing the harsh manifestations of colonialism or the dictatorial regimes in some parts of the subregion (e.g. Sekou Toure's Guinee-Conakry), settled in the community. While the circle of disciples expanded, the *thierno* demonstrated an extraordinary *baraka*. And this to the extent that he was able to transform a small group of adepts into a self-conscious religious community, with an elaborated structure and a firm religious base in the *shari'a*.

Under the guidance of the *thierno*, Medina Gounass soon became a religious isolate. Contacts with the French colonial state and then, after 1960, the independent state of Senegal, were limited to the paying of taxes and the commercialization of cash crops. In one of the few published articles on this religious community, the *thierno* stressed his fight against innovations (*bid'a*) and took a firm line on the implementation of *shari'a*.[1] Unlike other rural communities, where the state introduced its officials and the agricultural cooperatives, Medina Gounass became a new 'Pakistan', land of the pure, from which all *bida* were excluded.

Thierno Amadou Seydou Ba's stress on asceticism and isolation was to some extent a response to the luxury and corruption that went with the implementation of the bureaucratic state, but was also a perhaps unintended response to other Senegalese Sufi orders, and the well-known *marabout-homme d'affaires* in particular, who lived in luxury and closely cooperated with the worldly powers. Even during its annual *dakaa*, the nine-day spiritual retreat in the nearby forest, none of the state authorities were invited. Some fervent militants even engaged in violent protest against the icons of modernity; the *thierno*'s adepts were accused of having set fire to the Simenti tourist hotel in the Niokolokoba national park.

Outside interference

After the death of the community's founder, internal quarrels began to undermine the unity of this 'mini-republic'. The appointment of Ahmed Tijan Ba, the founder's son, as caliph was heatedly debated. The Peul section of the community claimed the leadership saying that they were the first to have settled in Medina Gounass. In 1977, party-politics entered the community. The Peul section voted massively for the opposition's Parti Démocratique Sénégalais (PDS), while the *thierno*, by then seriously ill and hardly capable of leading his followers, supported the ruling Parti Socialiste (PS). Already in 1975, he had banned commercial cotton cultivation, which was the main source of income for the Peul population. The leader told his followers that cotton cultivation would lead to a serious reduction in women's fertility.[2] But other more worldly motives played a role as well.

Like most Sufi orders in Senegal, the community leaders controlled peanut cultivation, which was an important source of income. Cotton cultivation, however, bypassed local agencies of control. Contracts were signed with individual farmers, personally responsible for fulfilling the conditions rigorously specified by the state-owned cotton company SODEFITEX. Farmers were now paid in cash, instead of the *bon d'achat*, used in the case of peanut cultivation, which could easily be gathered by the community's leader. The effect on the community's cohesion was devastating: fights broke out and several casualties were reported. The Peul left Medina Gounass on a massive scale to settle in nearby villages. For the first time in the history of the community, police forces intervened in their internal affairs.[3]

These events, of course, changed the position of the community *vis-à-vis* the national state. Today many state officials court Medina Gounass. During the latest *dakaa* celebration, regional as well as national state representatives made their way to Medina Gounass. President Abdou Diouf sent a delegation to 'greet and encourage' the *thierno* and to wish him and the attendants success and 'a perfect spiritual communion'. Might these and other events that have marked the recent history of Medina Gounass, prelude the end of the isolationist posture of this Sufi order?

Beyond the State

It is true that with these developments, a degree of ambiguity entered this religious community. Notwithstanding the many internal problems, which continued during the 1990s, Medina Gounass has not lost all of its original appeal. It is still a large community – approximately 14,000 inhabitants – guided by Ahmed Tijan Ba. So far, no official state structures have been created in the village. Religious and secular matters are still dealt with by the *thierno*, who is admired and venerated by his many adepts.

Though agriculture forms the most important source of income for the *thierno's* followers, commercial activities are expanding quite rapidly. Successful businessmen have gone abroad, securing a steady flow of income to the community and thus to its leaders. International relations have always been vital for the community; but today, they seem to have become even more important. Many followers migrated to Europe and America while important sums of money found their way back to Medina Gounass. This trend, which seems to be accelerating in the last years, enabled the community to reinforce its autonomy *vis-à-vis* the Senegalese state. The financial resources pouring into the community from abroad clearly bypass the state, in contrast to the income generated by cash-crop cultivation which had to be sold directly to the state-controlled companies.

The benefits of success, measured by the impressive housing facilities some of the migrants constructed in Medina Gounass, are entirely attributed to the *thierno*. Considerable sums of money are given to him in gratitude and in order to ensure further financial success. In the eyes of the followers, their material success is only intelligible in terms of the *thierno's* saintliness and his ability to teach the 'right path'.

Medina Gounass has always been a major centre of learning, attracting many students from neighbouring communities and abroad. Most children only attend the Qur'an schools in the community, generally run by the disciples of the *thierno*. They learn to memorize portions of the Qur'an and the basic ritual obligations. In this part of the country, the traditional learning centres are not challenged by state institutions. The *arrondissement* of Medina Gounass traditionally has an extremely low degree of modern education (4.23% in 1998). This points not only to the difficulties of implementing educational policies but also to the importance people attach to Muslim education.

Faced with a situation in which crowds of unemployed (but often well-educated) youth dwell the streets of nearby Tambacounda, parents feel that Qur'anic education is much more effective for transmitting Islamic knowledge and moral values to their children. In this regard, the education provided by a Muslim community that acts as a *contre-société*,[4] is very much compatible with the social and economic circumstances of contemporary Senegalese society. ✦

Notes

1. Y. Wane (1974), 'Ceerno Muhamadu Sayid Baa. Le soufisme intégral de Madiina Gunaas (Sénégal)', *Cahiers d'Études Africaines*, 56, XIV-4, pp.671-698.
2. E. van Hoven (1996), 'Local tradition or Islamic precept? The notion of zakat in Wuli (Eastern Senegal)', *Cahiers d'Études Africaines*, 144, XXXVI-4, pp.703-722.
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4. C. Coulon (1988), *Les Musulmans et le Pouvoir en Afrique noire: Réligion et contre-culture*. Paris: Karthala.

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Eastern Europe

VLADIMIR CHUKOV

Political Behaviour of the **Bulgarian Muslim Community**

Since the fall of the communist regime in Bulgaria in 1989, all Muslims in the country have come to experience a changed situation in which democratic consequences are evident: possession of individual rights and freedoms, intensification of contacts with the Muslim world, and free political expression. Because the political heritage of the dismantled communist system is quite original in Bulgaria, in comparison with a number of other Balkan countries, a specific confessional model can be witnessed.

The changes in the last decade for Muslims in Bulgaria are all the more significant when seen against the background of the situation prior: the regime of the last communist president T. Jivkov carried out (like that of Miloshevic in Yugoslavia) a kind of ethnic cleansing by challenging the local Muslims through changing their Turkic-Arab names into Slavic ones. Also the emigration process was indicative of the situation: in the summer of 1989, 500,000 Bulgarian Muslims left the country to settle in Turkey. Yet despite the considerable reduction of the community, the Muslim population in Bulgaria is still quite large. According to the official census in 1992, there were 1,110,295 Muslims registered (800,052 of which declared themselves Turks, 313,396 Gypsies, 4,515 Tartars and other Muslim minorities). Due to the deterioration of the economic conditions, Bulgarian Muslims (especially the Turks) massively migrated to Turkey. This process is still going on up to the present day and because of the illegal forms of migration, the exact size of the Bulgarian Muslim community is still unknown.

PHOTO: ROUMIANA ANDREEVA

Bulgarian Gypsies before the election day

After the installation of a competitive political system, the Bulgarian Muslim community seems to be an attractive electoral area for the newly established Bulgarian parties. However, the community has made it clear that it possesses its own electoral potation for transforming itself from an object to a subject in Bulgarian political life.

The Turks – leading Muslim group

In June 1990, the Movement of Rights and Freedoms (MRF) in Varna arose, officially denying that it recruited its activist corpus on an ethnic and religious principle. Political reality proves, however, that the party has become representative of the largest ethnic group among the Muslims: 90% of its membership is comprised of Bulgarian Turks.

Two general issues guaranteed the success of this political formation. The charismatic leadership of Ahmed Dogan, former activist against the 'Revival Process' and the special elitism within the party shaped by him. MRF elitism is strictly conservative, taking into consideration that the party's operational leadership is entirely based on 'ethnic and religious quota'. In the Central Council (the operational party level) the Turk domination is quite conspicuous with about 80-85%; the Pomaks (Bulgarian Muslims) are represented by 10-15% and ordinarily possesses one vice presidential seat.

Bulgarian Christians are involved in the leadership usually with 'external quota' and realize their political presence through participation in the electoral process. They are deprived of efficacious party competence. The MRF usually places between 14 and 24 deputies in Parliament (which numbers 240 in total), while the Christian quota is around 2 to 4 seats.

Concealed emphasis on ethnic (coupled with religious) corporativism is actually the immanent ideological approach to achieving the position of a main political grouping. It is in this way that the MRF's ideological basis intertwined secular ethnical commitment (adherence to Pan-Turkism, not in its radical expression) with unconscious, instinctively acquired Islamism (also as a cognitive – reflexive behavioural system). Combined, the above mentioned Pan-Turkism and Islamism became the ideological tools that MRF elaborated as operational criteria for attracting new supporters.

Meanwhile in the short history of post-communist Bulgarian legislative elections, Turk support is categorical and can be expressed by the following: in 1990 there were 540,000 votes for the MRF, approximately 95% of the Turk voters; in 1991 – 380 thousand, approximately 80% of the Turk voters; in 1994 – 340 thousand, approximately 90% of the Turk voters; and in 1997 – 250 thousand, approximately 90% of the Turk voters. The attempts made to marginalize the MRF – forbidding it by an act of the Constitutional Court in 1991, provoking schismatic disorder within the leadership – all remained unsuccessful.

Schismatic movements

Attempts to remove the ethnic and religious appearance of the party characterize MRF's official fluctuations and its coalition policy. Adem Kenan, former MRF deputy, provoked the first schismatic movement. He founded the Turkish Democratic Party, which remains unacknowledged by the state. His radicalism, based purely on secular Pan-Turkism, excludes Bulgarian Muslims. The federalist state structure (Bulgarian and Turkish autonomy districts) proposed by Kenan had to be considered as undermining internal peace. The extremist ethnic and religious tendencies had been eliminated since they grew up at the bosom of Bulgarian political thought.

Mehmet Hodja, another former party deputy, initiated the second schismatic movement derived from MRF. His Party for Democratic Changes (PDC) has to be considered as a personal revolt against the authoritarian methods of Dogan. However, PDC acquired a regional profile, strictly limited to the district of Kardjali, the biggest Southeast Bulgarian town with considerable Muslim (predominantly Turk) presence. In the legislative elections in 1994, the PDC mobilized 24,000 votes that represented approximately 0,1% of the total votes or 4% of the Turk voters. This electoral failure announced its political death.

The next two attempts for dissipating MRF political and electoral capabilities are related with the aspirations of the biggest local political parties – the Bulgarian Socialist Party (former Communist) and the Union of Democratic Forces (UDF). The former catapulted Nedim Gendjev, former *mufti*, by aiding him to establish the Democratic Party of Justice (DPJ). As a former cleric, his political formation seemed to utilize religious rather than ethnic slogans, emphasizing contact with the Arab world. Paradoxically, this was mixed with socialist egalitarian elements, which shaped its utopian character and ultimately resulted in failure. The DPJ also remained a regionally represented party. Gendjev organized bases predominantly in northeastern Bulgaria, around the city of Shoumen, ignoring the southeast and the southwest, also populated by a Muslim community. The DPJ logically shared the destiny of the preceding schismatic parties. It earned 24,000 and 27,000 in the 1994 and 1997 legislative elections, respectively, and also has been marginalized.

The last schismatic attempts have been going on up to the present political dislocations in the country. The UDF, as governing party since 1997, makes great efforts to isolate the MRF leaders from their basic supporters by involving them in different levels of its political power. Ivan Kostov, UDF leader and current Prime Minister personally offered a few deputy chairs to the former MRF activists, in opposition to Ahmed Dogan. Mid-1997 saw the establishment of the most important duplicate formation. It adopted the name of National Movement of Rights and Freedoms (NMRF), a very opportune electoral tactic, bearing in mind the potential confusion with the MRF. Guner Tahir, former MRF vice president and deputy, headed the newly founded party. With UDF assistance, he quickly constructed a wide network almost covering the entire country. However, according to the latest estimations, the anti-MRF effects once more proved mediocre because of the appeals of UDF leaders to their MRF opponents to approve their coalition policy during the approaching municipal elections. Indeed, on the eve of October 1999 the MRF conserved its overwhelming superiority in 30 municipalities representing the Muslim community and exerts influence in 65 municipalities, out of 260 in total.

The most successful political manoeuvre of MRF leadership, and of Ahmed Dogan personally, is the ideological juggling with liberal ideas and slogans. He initiated the Liberal Democratic Union with the former president J. Jelev, vice president of Liberal International. It seems that the contradiction between the officially adopted individualist ideas and the traditional adjustment of the Bulgarian Muslims to egalitarism and social equality does not disturb MRF founders. First, the liberal veil breaks up and 'dissolves' MRF into a Bulgarian political multitude. Secondly, it places the party among the family of European liberal parties. Thirdly, it moves the MRF away from the Socialist Party, which remains its true electoral competitor.

The others

The community of Pomaks is estimated between 170,000-200,000. Its political behaviour is different from that of the Turks. It appears that its social and economic marginality, due largely to its rural and especially mountain-dwelling membership (approximately 100%), influences and encourages a kind of 'regionalization' of political preferences. Usually its members adopt negative attitudes towards the dominant regional political tendencies. If they live alongside Turks (as in the district of Kardjali) Bulgarian Muslims generally support the BSP (except in 1997 when their support was for the UDF). On the contrary, in the southwest (Bulgarian Macedonia) the Pomaks ordinarily vote for the MRF, thus denying the UDF and BSP dominance.

Bulgarian Muslim Gypsies are electoral objects whose comportment is categorically unpredictable. Their extremely high level of unemployment, lack of education, and dominant rural status motivate political passivity and disorientation. All attempts at establishing a serious political ethnic formation corresponding to that of the Turkish MRF have failed. However, in 1998 'Euroroma' was founded, pretending to defend the Gypsies interests. Its electoral capabilities seem doubtful in as far as its activities reached only electoral agreements with MRF and the Bulgarian Euroleft party.

Analysing the political behaviour of the Bulgarian Muslim community is quite difficult. It risks running into inexactitudes due to the empirical nature of the data. Considering the characteristic Balkan circumstances, Bulgarian politicians have to do their best to promote the possibility of coexistence between Muslim and Christian communities in the country so as to avoid situations such as that in neighbouring Yugoslavia. ✦

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Eastern Europe

BOGDAN SZAJKOWSKI

An Old Muslim Community of Poland: the Tatars

The Muslim community in Poland is one of smallest religious-ethnic groups in the country. The main Muslim group comprises the Tatars, or more precisely Poles of Tatar origin. They have been a part of Polish history and its cultural and religious tradition since the 14th century. The case of the Polish Muslims provides a useful model of how Muslim communities can relate to the wider national communities to which they belong, for instance in Europe, and how, in doing so, they retain their own culture and identity, and contribute positively to these wider communities.

Mosque in Bohniki

There are substantial discrepancies in data concerning practising Muslim believers in Poland, but it is possible to gain reasonably convincing insight into the numbers involved from attendance of religious ceremonies and membership in relevant religious, cultural and social organizations. On the basis of this, one should conclude that the most accurate figure of practising Polish Muslims is probably around 5,000 – most of whom belong to the Sunni tradition. The overwhelming majority of Polish Muslims are Tatars[1] although the group also includes a number of recent Polish converts to Islam.

Soldiers and artisans

The Tatars arrived in the Lithuanian part of the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania in the 14th century. In the subsequent centuries, many Tatars from the Volga area and, in particular, Crimea followed earlier arrivals. Some came as prisoners of war, but most were recruited as mercenaries. Renowned and experienced warriors, they served mostly in special Tatar units with either the royal forces or the local magnates' own private armies. Tatar nobleman legally enjoyed the same privileges as the Polish nobility. In return for their services to the crown they acquired large estates and land titles. Those of more humble origin established themselves in villages and small cities, becoming known as excellent horse breeders, horse traders, gardeners, horticulturists and artisans.

Cemetery in Bohniki

PHOTOS: BOGDAN SZAJKOWSKI

In 1569, the parliament (*sejm*) of nobility gave formal permission for the construction of mosques and Tatar schools. The number of Tatars in 1591 was estimated at between 60,000-70,000, and mosques counted 400.[2] A 1631 census listed more than 100,000 Tatars in Poland.

The Tatars enjoyed religious tolerance and maintained contacts with Islamic centres abroad. Many Tatar customs became part of Polish tradition, especially among the Polish nobility; their traditional long robe (*kontusz*), fur cap (*kolpak*) and curved sword (*karabela*) were imitations of the garb worn by the Crimean Tatars.

The Tatars lost their language most likely sometime in the 17th century, and began using the local Polish or Byelorussian vernacular. Although most had lived in their ethnic enclaves, they became Polonized through inter-marriage and the slow adoption of values of the Polish majority. This process was undoubtedly accelerated by the rising religious intolerance towards the end of the 17th century and the prohibition on the construction of mosques. In 1795, when the Polish state ceased to exist, the Tatars joined the Poles in the fight for the country's independence. The Tatar fighters swore their allegiance to Poland on the Koran in the their presence of their imams. They played an important role in Napoleon Bonaparte's Russian campaign in 1812 and the two national uprisings (1830 and 1863) against the Russians, for which they were to be bitterly persecuted by the Tsarist regime.

When, in 1918, Poland regained its independence and statehood, only a small number of Tatar enclaves in the northeastern provinces remained within the Polish borders. The total population of Tatars in these areas was little over 5,000. In 1925 the first nation-wide congress of Muslims took place in Vilnius, with Jakub Szynkiewicz being elected the Chief Mufti of Poland. Also in 1925, the Socio-Cultural Association of Tatars was formed with its headquarters in Warsaw. The Association published *Rocznik Tatarski (Tatar Annals*) and a periodical *Zycie Tatarskie (Tatar Life)*. By 1936, 19 Muslim congregations and 17 mosques were under the religious supervision of the Chief Mufti. Each community was built around a parish council with its imam and had, as a rule, its own mosque and an appropriate religious cemetery.

During the Second World War, most of the Tatar intelligentsia was exterminated by the Nazis in retaliation for the gallant fight of the Tatar detachment against the invading German armies in September 1939. After the war, only two Tatar villages (Bohoniki and Kruszyniany) remained within the borders of Poland. Some Tatars from these former Polish territories were resettled in present western and northwestern Poland. This of course meant that a vital part of their religious and cultural heritage, including mosques, cemeteries, and schools, was left behind.

Rebuilding the community

It was only in 1969 that steps were taken towards rebuilding the organizational structure of the Muslims in Poland. That year, the Polish government permitted the holding of the first post-war Congress of Polish Muslims, which created the Muslim Religious Union of Poland. By 1971, the Office for Religious Denominations created a new legal basis for religious work among the Muslims. Since then, the mosques in the two oldest Tatar areas, Bohoniki and Kruszyniany, have been restored with grants from the Arab Gulf states. In September of 1984, the foundational stone was laid for the construction of a new mosque in Gdansk-Oliwa. The complex also has a library and facilities for the teaching of Arabic, in addition to its normal religious functions. The mosque is located in the close proximity of a Roman Catholic church. The sound of the imam's call to prayer often mixes with the ringing of church bells, calling the faithful for the celebration of the mass.

Also during the 1980s, the Polish Muslims began to establish closer contacts with the Islamic world. In 1984 the Chief Mufti of Lebanon, Hasan Khaled, visited Poland for the first time. His visit was followed by a delegation from the Organisation of Islamic States, headed by the IOS Deputy Secretary General Sheikh Mohammed Naser Al-Abudi. The delegation visited all the Muslim communities in Poland and apparently was most impressed by the mosque in Bohoniki (see photo). As a result of the visit, the first group of Polish Muslims was able to take part in the annual pilgrimage to Mecca. Some scholarships for Islamic studies in Saudi Arabia were also made available. In August 1988 the Secretary General of the OIS, Dr Abdulah Omar Nasif, visited Poland. Polish Muslims have treated attempts by foreign Muslims to court them with polite reserve. There has always been a healthy theological relationship with the nearest Muslim Academy in Sarajevo, but visits by Middle Eastern leaders have had only symbolic rather than cultural significance.[3]

In 1992 the Union of Polish Tatars was re-established. Its programmatic declaration speaks of the long tradition of the Tatar communities in Poland. It also offers interesting insight into the ideology of the Polish Tatars and their links with Poland. According to the document, the Union is re-constituted as a 'commemoration and continuation of the history of our Tatar and Muslim ancestors who settled in the Republic six centuries ago. She gave them land and nobility and assured them freedom of profession and all civil rights … she became our motherland. Forever loyal to her, the Polish Tatars dedicated their services to the augmentation of her splendour not only in military craft but in all spheres of national life, including science, diplomatic service, agriculture and the arts. Loyal to the memory of our fathers, their deeds of love for this land we restore the Union of Polish Tatars.'[4]

Most Polish Muslims today live within six congregations (parishes). The oldest include Bohoniki, Kruszyniany, and Warsaw. New congregations were formed in Gdansk-Oliwa, Szczecin and Bialystok, the latter being the largest (Local sources maintain that it has 3000 members). Many of the Muslims, especially among the younger generation, have migrated from the countryside to towns. They, however, maintain their tradition and links with their original communities, returning to their villages at times of Islamic festivals. The Polish Muslims have several separate organizations. The oldest is the Muslim Religious Union of Poland, with its headquarters in Bialystok. Most of the other organizations belong to the Shiite tradition of Islam and its membership consists of recent migrants from the Muslim world, expatriates and converts.

The survival and rejuvenation of the Muslim community in a predominantly Roman Catholic country, ruled for over forty years by a polity whose ideology was avowedly atheistic, is remarkable. The Polish Muslims consider their position as very special within the wider context of Muslim minorities in East Central Europe. They contend that by combining certain elements of Eastern and Western culture they can contribute to the moral revival of Europe and Islam. They hope to become the mediator between Poland and the Islamic countries. According to them, history shows that Polish relations with Turkey and other Muslim nations have always been good. Some of the Tatars emphasized that Poland 'is the greatest European country not to be blemished by colonialism', a country that has 'the glorious tradition of religious tolerance'. ✦

Notes

1. The name today applies to several related, but spatially disparate peoples. Modern Tatars cannot be regarded as direct descendants of the Tatar Mongols of Manchuria who overran much of Eurasia in the 13th century. They are distant scions of the Turkic-speaking Volga-Kama Bulgars, to whom they owe their Islamic heritage.
2. Leszek Podhorodecki, (1971), *Tatarzy* (The Tatars). Warsaw, Ksiazka i Wiedza, p. 365.
3. Simon Miles, (1993), 'Diminishing Tatars'. *The Guardian 2.* 29 October, pp. 20-21.
4. *Status Zwiazku Tatarow Polskich Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej.* (The Statutes of the Union of Polish Tatars in the Polish Republic), quoted after Katarzyna Warminska. 'Ethnic Identity and Ethnic Equality in the Ideology of the Polish Tatars'. (unpublished paper). pp. 189-190.

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Western Europe

PHILIP LEWIS

Muslims in Britain: Entering the Mainstream?

In August 1999, on the day that eight British Muslims from Birmingham were convicted in Yemen for allegedly planning a terrorist campaign, the BBC's prestigious news programme – 'Newsnight' – debated the issues raised. The presenter spoke to four people in the studio: a defence lawyer, a relative of one of the accused, a journalist and the secretary general of the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB).

The four guests on the programme were Muslims. Three were confident, articulate young men with regional British accents. The MCB official located the problem in terms of disproportionately high levels of unemployment and educational underachievement among sections of the community; but was careful to leave open the question of their guilt. The relative of one of the accused (a PhD student) insisted on the innocence of the men and rehearsed a familiar litany of government inactivity because of prejudice and 'Islamophobia'. The defence lawyer refused to present this as a Muslim issue at all, but rather simply focused on the fact that young Britons had been tortured to extract false confessions thereby rendering the whole legal procedure null and void.

The journalist argued that whatever the rights and wrongs of this particular case, it pointed to a continuing failure of the religious leadership to connect with the world of young British Muslims. This meant that a not inconsiderable number were attracted to the ranting of maverick militants such as Abu Hamza al-Masri, the self-styled Egyptian sheikh, whose son and godson were among the accused Britons. Some vulnerable youngsters could find themselves entrapped by the glamorized jihad rhetoric of such radical groups.

'Newsnight' indicates how far Muslim communities have come in the decade since *The Satanic Verses* affair. Then, the communities felt marginalized from British civic and public life with few articulate spokesmen capable of translating anger into argument. The BBC now had little difficulty in finding a range of able British Muslim professionals to debate the issues themselves. Further, with the birth of the MCB in November 1997, the Muslim communities have the best approximation yet to a representative body.

Seeking the common good

The MCB chose, for its inaugural convention and accompanying glossy literature, the slogan *Seeking the Common Good*, which deliberately echoed an influential document published a year earlier by the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales – *The Common Good and the Catholic Church's Social Teaching* – intended to influence the national debate in the run up to Britain's 1997 General Election. The MCB has also learned from the influential Jewish Board of Deputies, the respected representative body for Jewish affairs in Britain, the need to enlist the support of as wide a range as possible of Muslim organizations and individual professionals and academics. In its style, ethos, and willingness to relate to government and public bodies, the MCB has deliberately distanced itself from the controversial and provocative self-styled Muslim Parliament, child of the late Kalim Siddiqui.

Reshaping public discourse

It was clear from the television discussion that the term 'Islamophobia' has now entered public discourse. The term was popularized by an influential report – *Islamophobia, a Challenge to Us All* – published in 1997 by the Runnymede Trust. Until this inquiry, race relations in Britain had routinely ignored 'religion' as an important component in the identity and self-understanding of minority communities. The commission indicated that for many in the minority communities to demean and vilify 'Islam' was as exclusionary as racism and sapped their confidence to engage confidently with wider society.

The present government has responded positively to many of its recommendations. While Muslims have long been involved in local politics with a handful appointed as Lord Mayors, it was only in 1997 that the first Muslim Member of Parliament (Labour) was elected from the South Asian communities who comprise 75 % of Britain's 1.4 million Muslims. The government also appointed three Muslim peers to the House of Lords; the ten year struggle to enjoy the same right to state-funded schools as Christians and Jews was won in 1998; the government agreed to include a religious affiliation question in the 2001 census when it was clear that Christian and Jewish organizations supported this Muslim demand. The Home Office has latterly funded a research project to determine the extent of religious discrimination in Britain. While some of these measures are more symbolic than substantive, they cumulatively suggest that British Muslims do not have to render invisible their Muslim identity if they are to participate in public life. Finally, the Prime Minister's active advocacy of military intervention to support the Kosovars has begun to challenge the widely held Muslim view that British foreign policy is necessarily anti-Muslim.

The search for religious guidance

A cursory reading of Muslim publications in Britain indicates that the adequacy of the training of imams remains a continuing source of anxiety and debate. Many continue to be invited from South Asia and most lack the linguistic and cultural skills to connect with young British Muslims. However, one South Asian tradition – the Deobandis – now has a network of over a dozen *madaris* in Britain.

Recently a group of imams from within this tradition produced a series of pamphlets for Muslims in Bradford. These pamphlets offer an unvarnished, yet selective picture of Muslim street culture: drug taking, 'lavish wedding parties' whereby 'the sunnah of the prophet-[is] replaced with ridiculous Hindu and other *kafir* traditions'; neglect and abuse of wives; indifference to Islamic education of children; an increase in divorce; and a penchant for playing loud music from 'obscene films', even when passing mosques. What is significant is that the imams realize that to challenge such behaviour they have got to communicate in English and that it is not enough to simply rehearse Islamic prohibitions, but that reasons have to be given (e.g., the pamphlet criticizing gambling cites material produced by the organization Gamblers Anonymous).

Further, because the products of such *madaris* are too numerous to provide jobs in local mosques, there is the beginning of a tentative engagement with mainstream educational institutions. In 1998 the first group of such imams joined a BA course for primary teachers in Birmingham. If such a venture proves successful this could have a major impact on the ethos and curriculum of the *madaris* themselves bridging the chasm that now exists between school and mosque.

Three other developments are worthy of mention. The Islamic Foundation in Leicester has an Inter-Faith Unit which produces the informative *Encounters, Journal of Inter-Cultural Perspectives*. One of its staff has spent two years in Rome with the Dominicans studying Catholic theology before studying Protestant theology at a British university, where he is now working on a PhD in which he is developing a Qur'anic hermeneutics in dialogue with Christian hermeneutic developments. Here, then, a Muslim institute is laying the foundations for an Islamically serious encounter with religious pluralism.

Islamic studies are beginning to multiply in British universities with Muslims beginning to contribute to all branches of Islamic scholarship. As I write this I have in front of me an introductory work on the Qur'an written for British Muslims and non-Muslims, another scholarly work on the origins of Islamic law, some splendid translations of works by al-Ghazzali, an innovative article 'Women's Human Rights in Islam: towards a theoretical framework' and an insightful study of the radical movement Hizb al-Tahrir. While all of these scholars are working in Britain, their origins are from across the Muslim world, whether Egypt, Palestine, Pakistan, or Britain.

Because Britain is home to Muslims from all over the world, something of the intellectual excitement generated by this diversity and debate can be overheard in the English-speaking Muslim press which has also emerged in the last ten years, notably *Q-News*. Further, since English is now the second language of the *umma,* innovative developments in Islamic thought developed in Britain could have an impact on debates across the Muslim world.

Managing multiple identities

So far, the focus of this report has been – self-consciously – Islamic groups in Britain. However, the mass of Muslim youth in the larger urban conurbations, whether East London, Birmingham or Bradford, have minimal involvement with such groups. Muslims usually guess that no more than 10 % are involved, whether in local cities or on university campuses.

A recent publication 'Community flashpoints and young British Muslims' (1999), edited by Yasmin Alibhai-Brown, rehearsed the findings of three seminars organized by the prestigious Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR). The seminars' findings make for sober reading: sections of 'Asian' youth, excluded from wider society and by internal community patriarchies, often dissipated their energies in inter-group hatreds and prejudices. Black fighting Asian, Sikh youth fighting Muslims or radical Hindu groups, one Muslim sect fighting another. While there is a confident and informed Islamic identity emerging among some British Muslims, there is also a reactive and strident 'Islamic' identity emerging among many young Muslims in inner city areas, where most continue to live. The research of Dr Yunas Samad suggests that this had more to do with identity politics than with Islam.

Clearly, an understanding of developments within Britain's Muslim communities requires us to be alert to the specificities of the national and local situations, the ethos within the proliferation of transnational groups, whether rejectionist, isolationist or engaged, as well as the extent to which geopolitical rivalries – national, ideological and sectarian – impact on the British scene. What is clear from the British experience is that Muslims are beginning a serious dialogue with Christians and Jews.

Zygmunt Bauman has coined the useful term 'glocalization' which reminds us that globalization can often reinforce local and particular, as well as transnational identities. Across Britain in Muslim communities originally from Pakistan, local elections are increasingly contested by rival Kashmiri *biradaris* (clans). One conclusion is clear: those involved in researching and debating these issues will increasingly include British Muslims themselves. ✦

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Western Europe
MARJO BUITELAAR

Narratives on Partner-Choice

Young men and women of Moroccan descent in the Netherlands live in a world of many different social groups. Brought up by their parents to be 'good' Moroccans and Muslims, many have – well into their teens – lived with the expectation that their family would some day return to Morocco. From their peers in school and at work, they have learned about Dutch culture, which has also become part of them. Together with Moroccan and other Muslim friends, they seek ways to live in Dutch society with their particular cultural heritage. In the past, these 'second-generation migrants' have often been described as living 'between two cultures'. Analysis of the life stories of highly educated women of Moroccan descent, however, demonstrates that these women are able to creatively construct and combine their multiple social identifications, although their drawing upon multicultural capital to create new strategies of living is not without constraints.

Nezha is a 35 year-old woman of Moroccan descent living in the Netherlands. For the last ten years, she has been happily married to a man of her own choice. Had it been up to her parents, however, she would have married a candidate proposed by them. This is Nezha's story:

> 'When your parents say yes [to a marriage candidate, mb], that's final. You try to sail around it, but you can't say no. So I made inquiries about the police-school. I was invited for an interview and had to pass some exam. That went fine, so I was accepted. What I figured was that if the candidate would keep turning up and I would be about to marry, then I'd be off to Leusden [name of the city where the police-school is located, mb]. So I phoned him: "Listen, I've got a boyfriend, you should stop seeing me". Haven't heard of him since! I was so relieved! But my family felt that their honour had been damaged. You know: first he drops in all the time, and then he's disappeared all of a sudden. It makes them wonder: "What is wrong with her?" That's the first thing that comes to their mind, you know: "She's lost her virginity".'

Once 'the candidate' has given up, Nezha no longer needs the police-school as an escape from marriage and decides not to go there after all. In the meantime, she has met another Muslim man with whom she enters into a relationship. After a while the couple decides to ask permission from Nezha's family to marry. Since her boyfriend does not have any relatives in the Netherlands, he decides to contact Nezha's family personally:

> 'If somebody wants to ask your hand, his whole family should ask. But that was impossible in his case. So he acted alone and bought flowers, like a Dutchman would. And because the first candidate had never called again, my family thought: "Well, fine. Just go".'

The fact that her husband came to ask her 'like a Dutchman would', is not the only example of how he and Nezha improvise on family traditions. Nezha relates with pride how she organized her wedding in such a way that she could comply with the wishes of both her family and herself:

> 'I organized everything myself. That is so odd, it's really not done, a Moroccan woman who takes care of all that herself. But I phoned the registry myself. I refused to marry according to the Moroccan law, because I had heard all sorts of stories about how impossible it is to get a divorce and so on. But to make it look nice I went to the mosque. So that it looked Islamic, you know, with an imam to read a sura from the Quran for you. Well, the wedding was very nice.'

Representation of social identity in life stories

Nezha is one of the women who were prepared to tell me their life stories for my research project on young women of Moroccan descent who have university degrees and/or hold positions in which such qualifications are required. I am specifically interested in the representations of various dimensions of social identity by these women. The research focuses on the question of how these 'second-generation migrant' women construct a more or less coherent self-identity out of their shifting, multiple social identifications. I focus more particularly on the representations in their life stories of ethnic, religious and gender identifications. In analysing the relations between the narrations produced in the interviews, I hope to gain more insight into the question of how these representations of historical events, social relationships and individual action come together to construct social identifications, and how such identifications are transmitted, maintained and transformed.

Construction of multiple identifications

Here, I restrict myself to the question of what the narratives on partner-choice can tell us about the ways in which the 14 women with whom the interviews have so far been completed construct, maintain, and combine their various social identifications. In the above quotations, we get the impression of Nezha as a woman who, in arranging her own marriage, is creatively drawing upon different cultural resources. She challenges the views of her family, but makes sure not to loose touch with them. This kind of negotiating can be recognized in the stories of all interviewees. Their biographical narrations contain numerous episodes in which they improvise upon and shift the meanings of Moroccan core-values like virginity and obedience to one's parents. They do so in such ways that their identification with certain values that are treasured within the Moroccan community can be combined with, for example, the value of autonomy, which is highly valued within the community of Dutch peers with whom they also identify. Their stories demonstrate once more the inadequacy of the 'between-two-cultures' model of second-generation migrant identity, which suggests too static a conception of cultures as fixed, homogeneous units with clear-cut boundaries, and neglects the open and contestable nature of cultural notions and practices. It also implies a view of these young people as passive victims of their circumstances rather than as actors with a multiple cultural competence.

Instead, the life stories abound with illustrations of the fact that identification does not imply an 'all-or-nothing' attitude towards the groups to which one belongs. People always know more culture than they use, and different group members lay stress on different things. Nezha, for example, identifies with Islam as a source of guidance in her life, but does not agree with the interpretations of Islamic precepts in the Moroccan code of personal law. Also, sharing symbols does not necessarily entail sharing interpretations. The views of the interviewees on the symbolic complex of virginity is a case in point. Although very few women question the value of the symbol of virginity as such, their participation in Dutch peer groups – as well as their holiday experiences in present-day Morocco – have led them to stretch the corresponding rules of what is considered chaste behaviour. Furthermore, they no longer see virginity as a concern of the whole community, but perceive it as a personal responsibility and claim the right of individual privacy over such matters. Unlike her parents, Nezha, for instance, did not think it inappropriate to have a boyfriend as long as she safeguarded her virginity. Also, she was furious about her family's interference with her love life and maintained that whatever she and her boyfriend agreed upon doing or not doing before marriage was nobody else's business.

Constraints on using different cultural resources

Of course, drawing upon 'multicultural capital' to create new strategies of living is not without constraints. Time and again, the life stories contain evidence of the fact that the interviewees have internalized norms transmitted to them by their parents to such an extent that they entertain ambivalent feelings concerning their associations with men and their experiences of sexuality and falling in love. Such narrations illustrate that one is neither completely free in choosing one's identifications, nor in improvising upon the meanings attached to a particular group identity. Although Nezha, for example, emphasizes that she has a clear conscience, it hurts her to know that the false rumours about her premarital behaviour have damaged the reputation of her family and herself. She also dreads the day her two daughters will begin to take an interest in boys and acknowledges that she is not sure that she will allow them the same freedom of movement that she claimed for herself.

The individual's freedom to construct multiple identifications is also constrained by the fact that the emphasis on certain elements from a cultural repertoire implies the neglect of others. Not all the women interviewed are as happily married as Nezha. In fact, only four are presently married. The others are either still single or divorced. The price that these Moroccan pioneers with Dutch university degrees and attractive jobs appear to have to pay for the degree of autonomy that in Moroccan circles is, as yet, unusual for women, is that they have an even harder time than their Dutch counterparts in finding a suitable partner who appreciates the merits of a wife with a career. Due to the open and dynamic character of cultural notions and practices, it is, however, not unlikely that what these women are struggling with will prove to be a transitional problem that will decline as more highly educated women of Moroccan descent enter the Dutch labour market. ✦

Scene from a play at the Theater Cosmic, Amsterdam, the theme of which concerned freedom of partner-choice and mother-daughter confrontation. The actrices are all of Moroccan descent.

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Western Europe

VALÉRIE AMIRAUX

Is Islam Soluble into Germany? Sunni Muslims of Turkish Origin

Similar to the overall situation in Western Europe, the Muslim youth of Turkish background in Germany[1] are quite different to the generation of their parents. Far from homogeneity, being a Muslim is nowadays made up of differentiation, cultural complexity, and mobility at an individual level even if communal features remain relevant. The following aims at briefly reviewing these trends while underlining the opportunities provided by the German context.

The first element to keep in mind concerning Turkish Islam in Germany is its transnational dimension. Being located 'in between' at least two national contexts, namely home- and host-countries, Islamic groups – mainly organized into associations – and individuals develop original and particular social practices and discourses which deal with multiple national settings. This relevance of transnationalism is directly linked to the specific national background of Turkish Muslims. The transplantation of political religious trends from Turkish to German territory from the 1960s onwards mainly helped to increase the potential of these groups because Germany offered opportunities – stability, freedom, autonomy and independence – which Turkey, a Republic that, having interpreted *laicité* as state control of religion, did not and still does not provide. The transnationalization of the social space produced by Islamic-Turkish actors in Germany grows also on the basis of a 'long distance nationalism' referring to the extension of the 'traditional' audience among migrants through the media, maintaining the presence of some political personalities and debates in the daily life of Turks living in Germany.[2] The situation of Turkish migrants in Germany composes then a permanent interplay of social positions neither systematically, nor clearly attached to stable forms of social capital in both countries.

Muslims of Turkish origin in Germany can also benefit from their particular location in a country of which they are not systematically citizens. Associations can be viewed as providing alternative modes of action to that which is provided by the exclusive reference to the welfare state as a form of incorporation that is deeply embedded in territorial and national definitions of membership. This emergence of a transnational space in which Islamic mobilization has been organized lies at the cross-roads between the legal management of religion and the externalization of Islam as a 'foreigners' cultural issue'. It is a pure product of the complex articulation of rights, rules, and institutions, independent of the usual focus on debates about political participation and *jus sanguinis*.

The German political management of Islam is mainly diplomatic. In relation to the political agenda, Islam is treated as a Foreign Affairs issue, and more recently as a 'security linked' problematic. From its symbolic to material aspects, many indicators justify the assessment of Islam as not being a social-cultural policy matter. As the very symbol of the Kemalist definition of *laïcité*, the management of several aspects of religious life by the Diyanet Isleri Türk-Islam Birligi (DITIB, Office of Religious Affairs) introduces the Turkish state as one of the actors of the Islamic scene reconstructed in Germany. At the same time, the German authorities' designation of the DITIB as the 'most favoured lord' among the plausible partners stimulates competition between associations such as the Islamische Gesellschaft Milli Görüs (IGMG, Islamic Society National Vision) or the Verband der Islamischen Kulturzentren (VIKZ, Union of Cultural Islamic Centres) in the field of education, the opening of mosques or the 'importation' of imams from Turkey to Germany. Several means have been organized between Turkey and Germany to avoid a DITIB monopoly on these affairs. In the 1990s, for example, the VIKZ opened a centre for the education of *hocas* in Cologne, giving them the possibility to recruit persons with experience in living in Germany and German-language capacity to teach in their mosques. Significantly, those rivalries and competition between the main actors are not submitted to direct intervention and repression of the Turkish state.

Indeed, one of the first opportunities for Islamic Turkish associations in Germany arose from the distance from the Turkish state, in spite of its maintained sovereignty in Germany, especially through taxation and conscription. Escaping from Turkey without really leaving it, Turkish Islam in Germany cannot be dissociated from this permanent and complex interaction of the two national settings referring to different sets of opportunities.

The opportunities

The first elementary opportunities used by transplanted Turkish networks are legal – open to all non-German citizens who are allowed to organize *eingetragene Vereine* (e.V) associations. Thus, the Islamic associative network, which initially developed in Germany, corresponded to the juridical restoration of religious tendencies that exist in Turkey yet had found in Germany the possibility to act freely. This appears to be the first step of the installation of Islamic associative networks in Germany.

A second stable set of opportunities is provided by the rules concerning the position of religion in the public sphere. The German tradition separates religion and state without considering religion as a non-legitimate actor in the public sphere, such as is the case within the constitutional interpretation of *laïcité* in France or Turkey. One elementary resource the associations can thus mobilize stems from the status of corporation of public law (Körperschaft des öffentlichen Rechts), given to religious communities (Religionsgemeinschaft) which rule and administer their business in an autonomous way: raising taxes (*Kirchensteuer*), deciding the composition of religious instruction, opening religious places, and being represented in public institutions such as hospitals, the army, prisons, and the media. Islamic Turkish associations could gain immediate benefits from this recognition in terms of authority, legitimacy and independence in their functioning. It could be argued that the dynamism of the associative network among Muslims in Germany is a result of institutionalization in the quest for recognition. *De facto*, the claim for official recognition began in 1997 with an official demand made by the Turkish VIKZ – a demand rapidly followed by other requests. This is a real difference compared to other countries where the claim for institutionalization appears to be a late indicator of 'visibility'.

The third set of opportunities derives from the fact that given that the majority of Muslims living in Germany are not German citizens, the issue of Islam is not compelling for national politicians as an electoral argument. The lack of incentive is exacerbated by the collectively shared illusion of Germany as not being a country of immigration. The lexical stigmatization of foreigners is another part of a political intention to keep foreigners' issues (among them Islam) out of the domestic public sphere. But at the same time, being kept outside of domestic issues and even ignored by politicians and academics gave the opportunity to Islamic associations to organize their own social sites dealing with a double-sided 'changing face of religion'[3]: on the one hand is a need for new types of communal activities, and on the other, the transformation of tie binding the individual to his community of belongings.

A secular change?

This 'changing face' appears to be a central issue for the Islamic Turkish associations as well as for their audience. The urban landmarks they provide, and the identity references and discourses they mobilize, have been adapted to the change of clientele – passing from parents to children or grandchildren. Islam remains firstly defined as an origin and a praxis (respect of the five pillars), but being born Muslim is not a guarantee of orthopraxy. For instance, the relationship to religious belonging and praxis is not directly inherited from the family but is transformed and reinvented by younger generations, while the associative network maintains the collective reference such as the moral code and educational needs. The multiplication of the contacts and modes of participation in the host society gives new opportunities to young generations of Muslims who no longer need to stay exclusively in an assigned group or community. The *bricolage* of reference appears to be the key concept underpinning these new forms of dealing with religious belonging: people produce their own ways of being a Muslim.

At an individual level, this change gives relevance to the category of 'personhood' which mixes choice, faith and duty, without feeling under 'social' pressure in European societies. Different socialization dynamics meet and interact, the associative, familial or religious aspect being one part of it. It also represents an ethic for life which mediates familial relations, respect for the *halal* milieu, while also opening new spaces and guaranteeing the freedom of others. In this sense, 'personhood' represents a re-interpretation of tradition based on experience. It is about becoming a Muslim, not about 're-Islamization'. It is rather an 'Islamization' based on real knowledge of heritage, ethics and codes. The headscarf, for example, is increasingly becoming a non-cohesive argument between mother and daughter – an argument of technical interpretations against traditional ones. The daughter teaches her mother how to wear it.

The main demands remain, however, the same: easier access to German nationality, the right to double-citizenship, and acquiring for Islam a status equal to that of other religions.

So the public and communal dimension of Islam in Germany still asks for recognition and visibility in the urban milieu. But a strong differentiation is growing between 'belonging' and 'believing'. While the distance from the 'legitimate authorities' is growing, the religious practices are a matter of personal and individual choice and private conscience. This process is similar to that of transnationalism: multiplication of the identity references, mobility, invisibility, and avoiding state control and authority. This idea of multiple identities and complexity induces the idea of culture playing as a reference on both individual and collective levels, providing codes, symbols, repertoires and symbolic places in which people occasionally live. It also provides an ideological apparatus, practices and a symbolic repertoire by which the individual/collective consciousness as part of a believer's life is built, educated and controlled. In a kind of 'secular' perspective, the identification as Muslim is no more the exclusive producer of references and meanings. It rather figures one of the possible options, but certainly not the dissolution of religious affiliation. ✦

Notes

1. According to statistics there are approximately 2.8 million Muslims living in Germany, 79% are from Turkish origin/nationality.
2. Benedict Anderson, (1991), *Imagined Communities*. (2nd ed), London, Verso.
3. James A. Beckford, Thomas Luckmann (ed.), (1989), *The Changing Face of Religion*. Sage (*Studies in International Sociology*, vol. 37).

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Approaches

LOUIS BRENNER

The Study of Islam in Sub-Saharan Africa

The academic study of Islam and of Muslim societies in sub-Saharan Africa has developed during the past thirty years more as part of African studies than of Islamic studies. Islamic studies in Africa has therefore not been so deeply influenced by the orientalist heritage of Western scholarship that prevailed among those who studied Islam in the central Muslim regions. On the other hand, the global resurgence of Islam that has taken place during the same period, in all its social, political, religious and indeed academic forms, has had a profound influence on African Islamic studies.

In the 1960s, some scholars were confidently predicting that the political role of religion, and specifically of Islam, would shrink under the growing dominance of secularist political ideologies. Quite the contrary, however, has occurred. Throughout Africa, the religious is inextricably entwined with the political, often to the extent that it is virtually impossible to disentangle the two strands, even for analytical purposes. International politics have reflected a similar trend. Political developments in the Middle East since the 1960s, the economics of the oil boom in the 1970s, and the widespread political ramifications of the Muslim Revolution in Iran in 1979, have all contributed to giving 'Islam' a salience in the consciousness of non-Muslim Westerners that is probably unparalleled since the days of the crusades!

What Samuel B. Huntington describes as a 'clash of civilizations' certainly resonates of a contemporary replay of medieval Christian-Muslim confrontation. These developments have profoundly affected the academic study of Islam and of Muslim societies in numerous ways, not least in the amount of money that is being attracted to support such research and most notably in the recent appearance of numerous new centres of Islamic studies in academic establishments in Europe and the United States. A pertinent example of this process is the recent establishment of the ISIM, which publishes this Newsletter. Nonetheless, the explosion in Islamic studies in African countries with sizeable Muslim populations has been much more spectacular than in Europe or America.

Islamism and Islamic research in Africa

Elizabeth Hodgkin's article published in 1990, entitled 'Islamism and Islamic Research in Africa',[1] remains the most inclusive and systematic treatment of these trends in print, despite its somewhat limited geographical scope, focusing primarily on Sudan, Nigeria and Senegal. The article traces both institutional profiles as well as the ideological tensions in Islamic studies in Africa. As the title of her article suggests, Hodgkin's concern was primarily to explore Islamist trends in Africa and their impact on research and on the university environment. Her analytical point of departure was to distinguish Muslim 'modernists' (whom she defined as those who wish to modernize Islam) from the Islamists who seek to 'Islamize' modernity, and in particular in the university context, to Islamize contemporary knowledge. The thrust of her article was to highlight the many contradictions that this situation has produced, primarily amongst Islamists themselves. For example, she argued that Islamist scholars fell into two categories on the basis of academic background: those who had received Western-style disciplinary training and those who had received Arabist and Islamic studies training. In addition to the fact that these two groups tend to produce very different kinds of publications, Hodgkin noted that many Western trained Islamist scholars seemed to know relatively little about Islam, whereas the Islamically-trained scholars tended to write uncritically in highly normative terms.

Indeed, it is this uncritical and idealized presentation of Islam that causes concern amongst most non-Muslim, Western trained scholars who tend to dismiss this kind of writing as non-academic and to ignore it, or perhaps to try to turn it into an object of research. However, it is my view that this kind of writing is reflective of a much more complex and significant process which is taking place in the development of Islamic studies: the emergence of a Muslim African voice in academia. One of the most significant results of this change is that non-Muslim scholars no longer enjoy a monopoly in the field and must learn to engage with this new voice. The process can be painful for us non-Muslims, less, I think, because of the analytical or critical issues involved than because of the fact that the 'object' of our research is no longer silent.

The emergence of a Muslim voice in African Islamic studies is largely a postcolonial phenomenon, but then, so is African Islamic studies itself. Certainly, my own work has always been subject to criticism from an 'Islamic' perspective, from my earliest publications based on my PhD research in northern Nigeria in the mid-1960s,[2] to more recent research in Mali. The publication of a small collective book on Muslim schooling, co-edited with a Muslim Malian colleague, was greeted with considerable anger by one or two Malians.[3] The anger was focused precisely on the fact that certain contributors to the book took a critical view of various issues that in turn resulted in an accusation that the book was 'against Islam'. The person who made this accusation, the director of one of Mali's more prestigious *madrasa* schools, had cooperated with me in my research on the history of the *madrasa* schools. However, he clearly expected a non-critical, normative account of Muslim schooling in Mali and was perhaps particularly upset by the fact that the one patently critical essay in the book was authored by the only contributor who had actually attended a *madrasa* school. Apparently, this process of change can be painful for everyone concerned.

The 'secularizing of Islam'?

This incident illustrates one of the most intriguing contradictions that Hodgkin notes at the end of her article, where she observes that for all its advocacy of a deeper religious life, Islamism 'may be said to be secularising Islam'.[4] This is because, in her view, those who wish to Islamize modern life must at the same time come to terms with it; such a process of change is interactive and necessarily works in both directions. Criticism of the *madrasa* schools by its own products is something that arose in this case from the actual experience of questioning the relationship of *madrasa* schooling to the social, economic and political constraints of contemporary urban life in Mali. Open critical assessment of schooling in Mali seems essential to the development of the educational sector in a country where almost 80 % of the population remains illiterate. Nor can the *madrasa*s be exempted from such criticism, even in the name of 'Islam', since they account for an important proportion of schooling provision in the country. Thus, by offering a 'modernized' and 'relevant' form of Muslim schooling, the *madrasa* constituencies necessarily draw 'Islam' into a national debate about education that is informed by predominantly secularist principles.

Even if one would not agree with Elizabeth Hodgkin that this process contributes to a secularization of Islam, the Malian example certainly illustrates the extent to which the contemporary study of Islam and of Muslim societies is a highly politicized domain. In the same way that the *madrasa*s cannot exempt themselves from criticism as a part of the educational sector, scholars who engage in research on the *madrasa*s cannot expect that their findings will be exempt from critical response from those who have invested their lives in *madrasa* schooling.

Another example that illustrates the kinds of tensions that affect the study of Islam in Africa can be found in research into the *jihad* of ᶜUthman dan Fodio and of the Muslim state that he established at the beginning of the 19th century in what is now northern Nigeria. In 1967, Murray Last published *The Sokoto Caliphate*, a revised version of his PhD dissertation.[5] This book is a history of the *jihad* and the administration of the Caliphate based on meticulous study of the vast Arabic documentation then available. It was the first major study of the subject which used such sources, and in many ways has remained the most authoritative, perhaps primarily because most Nigerian scholars are reticent to touch the subject due to the profound symbolic role the Caliphate continues to play in Nigerian Muslim politics. Indeed, the only extensive treatment of the *jihad* by a Nigerian is Ibraheem Sulaiman's *A Revolution in History*,[6] which was viewed by some critics more as a programmatic text for the future than a serious historical treatment of the past.

Creative tensions?

These two examples, which could be multiplied many times over, raise numerous complex questions for the scholarly community. Is critical scholarship a 'secular' phenomenon that is inherently incompatible with Muslim religious sensibilities? Or is it possible that such scholarship can better assist committed Muslims in understanding their past and present and to build their future? Can the tensions that span these two extreme positions act as a creative impetus for scholarship? One prospect for such a development is the increasing number of African Muslim scholars active in the field of Muslim studies whose work is of the highest academic standard. These include Muslim scholars – Islamist as well as 'secularist' – whose competence in their disciplines is combined with a palpable sensitivity to things Islamic. At the same time, much of the scholarship of us non-Muslims nowadays also reflects a greater empathy with Islam and Muslim societies than it did thirty years ago. And the real challenge that faces us scholars today is to nurture these seeds of sensitivity and empathy, without which no fruitful development of our field can ensue despite the money that has been flowing into all the new institutes. ✦

Notes

1. Hodgkin, Elizabeth (1990), *Islam et Sociétés au Sud du Sahara*, pp. 73-130.
2. Nigerian reviews of the book based on my PhD dissertation were particularly critical of my representations of Islam: Brenner, Louis (1973), *The Shehus of Kukawa: a History of the al-Kanemi Dynasty of Borno*. Oxford: The Clarendon Press.
3. Sanankoua, Bintou et Brenner, Louis, eds. (1991), *L'enseignement islamique au Mali*. Bamako: Editions Jamana.
4. Hodgkin, (1990), p. 105.
5. Last, Murray, (1967), *The Sokoto Caliphate*. London: Longmans.
6. Sulaiman, Ibraheem (1986), *A Revolution in History*. London: Mansell Publishing.

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State of the art

VLADIMIR BOBROVNIKOV

Islamic Studies in Post-Soviet Russia: in Search of New Approaches

Research on pre-modern and modern Islam conducted in post-Soviet Russia, has been, and still is, very poorly known to scholars from abroad – both in the West and in the Muslim world. Despite the fall of the 'iron curtain' after the collapse of the Soviet Union, there is still an informational barrier separating post-Soviet and non-Soviet researchers. Many questions arise concerning what has happened in Islamic studies after the cease of religious persecution during the 'perestroika' years: What was the impact of the so-called 'Islamic revival' on research on Islam? Which academic schools training specialists in Islamic studies have survived since the pre-Soviet and Soviet times? To what extent do post-Soviet scholars know and share modern Western approaches and concepts in Islamic studies?

Islamic studies have benefited from the fall of the Soviet rule, which saw the return of Islam to the public sphere. Islam was recognized by Yeltsin's government as the second main religion in Russia. The state does not suppress research on Islam. Re-established mosque collections and even the secret archives of the CPSU and KGB were opened for scholars from Russia and abroad. On the other hand, the already negative view of Islam in the Russian public opinion further deteriorated from 1994–1999. Escalating violence prevents researchers from carrying out archival research and fieldwork in some regions of the Caucasus and Central Asia. Large collections of Muslim manuscripts in Chechnya and Abkhazia were burnt due to shelling during civil wars. Furthermore, the state funding of universities and academic institutes was considerably reduced.

The all-Union network of research institutes affiliated to the Academy of Sciences was dissolved as soon as the USSR broke down. But centres of Islamic studies established under the Soviet or pre-Soviet rule have survived in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kazan, Makhachkala and Ufa. They still concentrate on traditional scholarship of Islam including Arabic and Iranian philology, studies of the Qur'an, *hadith* and other Muslim texts. They, however, also include research on Sufism, history and social anthropology of Muslim societies and communities. Outside Russia, similar centres exist in Tashkent, other capitals of the former Soviet Central Asia and Baku as well. The best Islamicists still graduate from the Oriental Department of the St. Petersburg State University (OD SPSU). The most qualified anthropologists are trained at the Department of History of the Moscow State University (DH MSU) and the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology (IEA). Recently, departments of sociology have been established in the MSU and the SPSU and at the universities of Kazan and Ufa. They train specialists in modern political and social developments of the post-Soviet Muslim regions. The main research centres are the St. Petersburg and Moscow branches of the IOS, the IOS of Uzbekistan in Tashkent and the Dagestani Research Centre (DRC) in Makhachkala. All of them house large collections of Muslim manuscripts and rare printed material in Arabic, Iranian and Turkic languages.

Post-Soviet Islamic studies are in the process of flux and change. Russian Islamicists attempt to rethink the scholarly legacy of the Soviet and pre-Soviet periods, without dogmatically rejecting their contributions in traditional disciplines. Their work on collecting and translating Arabic manuscripts, interrupted in the late Soviet period, is being re-established. Growing interest of the general public in the religion resulted in an explosion of publications related to Islam. The Kazan and Tashkent editions of the Arabic text of the Qur'an and its Russian translation prepared in the 1920s by the prominent Soviet scholar I.Yu. Krachkovsky (1883–1951) as well as another one published in 1878 by the Orthodox missionary G.S. Sablukov (1804–1880) were reproduced by the millions. They were best sellers and regularly appeared even in such periodicals as *Physical Culture and Sport*. In 1995 in St. Petersburg the first Russian translation of the Qur'an by General D.N. Boguslavsky, completed in 1871, was prepared for printing by Dr E.A. Rezvan (IOS). In the same year, Prof. M.G. Osmanov (DRC) published in Moscow a new Russian translation based on the Muslim tradition. From 1989-1991 the Qur'an was translated into Azeri (by I. Agaev) and Kazakh (by Zh.M. Istaev), and later into other Turkic and Caucasian languages. Dr Rezvan is currently preparing a database of Qur'anic manuscripts kept in St. Petersburg.

In the field of history there was a blossoming of Islamic studies at the turn of the 1980s and 1990s. This mostly dealt with the earlier periods of Islam, for instance, Prof. O.G. Bolshakov's (IOS) *History of the Khalifat* in 6 volumes (three of which were published in Moscow between 1989–1995). These works were informed by an enormous range of scholarship. His work is the best Russian study available on the early Muslim state in Arabia and the subsequent Arabic conquests. Russian Muslims bought up almost all available copies of the first volume with Muhammad's biography, thus making it a rarity. Mention should also be made of the *History of Dagestan*, edited in Makhachkala in 1996, in which Prof. A.R. Shixsaidov (DRC) re-thought the Islamization that lasted in the North Caucasus from the 7th to the late 15th century.

The study of 'Russian' Islam

In the last years, Russian scholars have begun to turn their attention to 'Russian' Islam, as it emerged from close ties and the intense relationship between Russia and the Muslim peoples of the Volga River region, Siberia, the Caucasus and Central Asia. Islamic studies become more interdisciplinary in their approaches. In addition to written sources, Islamicists examine current institutes and practices of post-Soviet Muslims. Within this context, the world of modern holy men and Sufi sheikhs has been studied by Dr B.M. Babadzhanov and Dr A.K. Muminov from Tashkent (IOS). On the basis of his archival research and fieldwork, Dr Babadzhanov prepared a series of writings on the developments of the Naqshbandiya and other Sufi orders in Central Asia in the 18th-20th centuries. Some of these works have been published in German and French scholarly periodicals (*Islamkundliche Untersuchungen*, 1996, 1998, Bd. 1, 2; *Cahiers d'Asie Centrale*, 1998, 5–6). An excellent insight into the world of the *medrese* and Muslim libraries in medieval and contemporary Dagestan was presented by Prof. Shixsaidov in his publications (*Islamkundliche Untersuchungen*, 1996, 1998, Bd. 200, 216), resulting from comparative research of more than 200 private collections of Arabic manuscripts revealed in highland Dagestan by a joint expedition of the DRC and the Oriental Department of the Dagestani State University (OD DSU) from 1996–1999.

In the 1990s, many social and political scientists, in whose research Islam is not central, turned to the study of modern Muslim societies and communities in the post-Soviet regions. Their work, however, is not always accurate from the methodological point of view. Many of them share corrupted positivist and orientalist concepts and research methods which need to be criticized. Post-Soviet Islam is often interpreted as a 'revival' of unchanged 'local traditions', able to resist any Soviet innovation. The most eminent advocates of this concept include: Prof. Alexander Bennigsen (deceased), specialist in Soviet studies; his daughter Dr M. Bennigsen-Broxup; and Prof. S.P. Polyakov (DH MSU), the author of *Traditionalism in the Modern Central Asian Society,* published in Russian in 1989 and soon published in English in the USA. Some authors ignore primary sources including numerous field and archival data, while basing themselves on incorrect official materials. Both of these faults can be found even in accurate writings of contemporary political scientists such as *Islam in the History of Russia*, by Prof. R.G. Landa (IOS, 1995) and the *Muslim World of the CIS Countries* by Dr A.V. Malashenko (the Moscow branch of Carnegie Endowment, 1996).

Much more fruitful seem to be the approaches of Russian historians and anthropologists exploring the fate of Muslim societies and communities under Russian and Soviet reforms. For instance, Dr S.N. Abashin (IEA) studies forms of popular Islam in Soviet and modern Central Asia by proposing to look not so much at Muslim traditions surviving under the state, but at those constituted through state reforms. Dr A.A.Yarlykapov from the school of the late Prof. V.N. Basilov (IEA) argued in his doctoral dissertation on 'Islam among the Steppe Nogays in the 20th century', defended in June 1999, that the Soviet reforms caused the formation of opposed ethno-religious groups including so-called 'Wahhabis'. Works on 'Russian Islam' presented by the above-mentioned scholars were integrated with the Islamicists' studies in the lexicon *Islam on the Territory of the Former Russian Empire*, initiated by Prof. Prozorov from St. Petersburg in 1998. This is a fascinating project that is to bring together different specialists in Islamic studies in an attempt to understand Islamic civilization in Russia and its relationship to the Muslim world. The lexicon follows research principles of the encyclopaedic lexicon, *Islam*, published in Moscow in 1991. It will include three or more issues, two of which have just been published and the following fascicle will be compiled in 2000.

It is difficult to know how Islamic studies will develop in post-Soviet Russia in the future. But it is clear that a new era has begun, which is characterized by the expansion of the existing work and the development of new interdisciplinary programmes. New research bodies such as the Centre for Arabic studies (CAS), headed by Prof. V.V. Naumkin, and the Centre for Civilizational and Regional Studies (CCRS), under the direction of Dr I.V. Sledzevski, were founded within the Academy of Sciences in Moscow. While the CCRS concentrates on political studies in modern post-Soviet areas, the CAS has three main purposes: publication and translation of Arabic manuscripts, research on pre-modern Islam and Sufism, and studies in urgent political issues in the other post-Soviet Muslim areas. The CAS cooperates in its research missions with colleagues in St. Petersburg and Moscow. Its recent works, such as a case study by Dr D. Makarov on the introduction of Sharia court in a Dagestani Wahhabi community (see: *ISIM Newsletter*, 1/1998), contribute significantly to a deeper understanding of the various forms of post-Soviet Islam. ✦

This article is an adopted version of a paper given at the Summer Academy of the Working Group Modernity and Islam. (See page 4).

Islam on the territory of the former Russian empire, lexicon. The 1st issue edited in Russian by Prof. S.M. Prozorov. Moscow, *Vostochnaya Literatura*, 1998.

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DMG
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The Orient Institute in Beirut and Istanbul

The Orient Institute, with its centre in Beirut and a branch in Istanbul, is the only German research institution in the field of Near Eastern and Islamic Studies situated in the Middle East. Its aim is to undertake, initiate and support research in all fields of Oriental studies, particularly those focusing on its host countries, Lebanon and Turkey. Its objectives have always been broad, ranging from linguistic studies on Arab regional dialects via historico-philologic research on Muslim theology and Classical Arabic, Persian and Ottoman/Turkish literatures up to developments in contemporary thought and intellectual movements. In recent years the study of the dynamics conditioning contemporary Near Eastern societies, particularly the rebuilding process in Lebanon and the challenge of Turkey's integration into Europe, have occupied a central position within the Institute's research projects.

The initial task of the Institute at the time of its foundation was to promote basic research in the fields of Arabic, Turkish, and Semitic language studies, Islamic studies, and the study of the Christian Orient. Since then Oriental scholarly work on the region has shifted in focus and expanded significantly in contents and method. Besides traditional philological and historical work, which is continued, the Institute today also hosts scientific activities ranging from social anthropology, political and social sciences to methodologies of modern literary criticism.

The Orient Institute pursues diverse research projects supervised by the director and by fellows of the Institute. In addition, it provides visiting researchers and students with scientific, documentary, administrative and accommodation services. Research results are regularly presented in public lectures given in English, French or Arabic as well as in the framework of conferences and symposia which are organized by the Institute in order to enhance the scientific communication between Lebanese and Turkish colleagues and their counterparts abroad. They are also presented summarily in the Institute's yearbooks, the *Beiruter Blaetter* and the *Istanbuler Almanach*.

History and Locations

The Institute, established in 1961 in Beirut by the Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft (DMG), was to serve as a regional base for Oriental studies. Its founding director, Prof. Dr Hans R. Roemer, in choosing Beirut as the location, was led by the conviction that 'the experiences which have been made in previously founded institutions, and the flourishing of Oriental Studies at German universities in the past years, have made it imperative to establish a permanent "embassy" in one of the cultural capitals of the Orient.' His choice proved to be wisely taken; the Institute was to flourish during the following fifteen years, until the Lebanese Civil War made work in the city more and more difficult and eventually impossible.

The Institute continued to function even during the Civil War until in 1987 its German staff was forced to leave the town due to the beginning hostage crisis. Leaving a number of faithful Lebanese staff members behind in Beirut, the German researchers moved to Istanbul. Here they established themselves in an apartment in the quarter of Cihangir, which was initially meant to be no more than a temporary refuge. However, since the war continued the provisional refuge in the course of time consolidated itself, developing into an active branch for Turkish, Ottoman and Central Asian studies. When in 1994, finally, the Beirut centre was reopened and part of the German scientific staff returned to Lebanon, the Istanbul branch proved vital enough to subsist. It subsequently gained standing in its academic environment through long-term research projects initiated together with European and Turkish partners as well as international symposia on various topics. In view of these structural achievements and in view of the dimensions of its library – highly estimated by local and foreign researchers specialized in Ottoman and Turkish Studies – the German Government in 1998 decided to establish the Istanbul centre as a permanent branch of the Orient Institute.

The Beirut branch of the Institute is situated in a mid-19th-century mansion erected by a prominent Beiruti family on a vast garden plot in Zokak al-Blat, which was then one of the emerging suburban quarters of Beirut. Today this quarter has become a traditional Shi'i residential area right next to the newly rebuilt city centre of the Lebanese capital. In Istanbul, the Institute occupies four stories in an apartment building in Cihangir, not far from Taksim square and overlooking the Bosphorus.

Current Status and Library

The Institute has always aimed at presenting the achievements of German and international scholarship to Arab colleagues and academic institutions and thus to enhance the relations between German and European scholars and their Arab counterparts. Today this task has been widened to encompass similar work in Turkey.

Apart from the director and the library staff, four research fellows are working at the Institute in Beirut and three others in Istanbul. A number of cooperators, whose work is financed by the European Community and various scientific foundations, have joined them so as to make interdisciplinary work and long-term research projects possible. The Institute grants three annual scholarships for PhD students to continue their studies at the Institute and benefit from its infrastructure. The Institute also offers internships for young graduate students (e.g. in library work, publication projects and research).

The most important asset of the Institute is its library, which contains approximately 120,000 volumes in Beirut and 25,000 in Istanbul. Since the foundation of the Institute in 1961, the most important books and periodicals published in Beirut and in other centres of the Arab world (as well as later in Turkey) have been accessioned. Although the Institute does not have a manuscript collection, it has had the opportunity to buy a number of private libraries and collections so that the library stock may include a great number of volumes published well before the 60s. The Arabic and Turkish collections are complemented by literature in European languages on the fundamental topics of orientalist research.

Both libraries in Beirut and Istanbul are open to the public and attract a great number of local readers. The Institute is currently computerizing its collection and planning to make the catalogue accessible on the Internet.

Projects

Projects carried out at the Institute and/or pursued by members of the Institute in cooperation with partner institutions are as follows:

- 'Vie commune – mémoire partagée – Le Liban laboratoire de la Méditerranée' (on collective memory; in cooperation with CERMOC, Beirut);
- 'Le nationalisme turc face á l'Europe' (on culturalist movements and the problem of Turkey's integration into Europe; in cooperation with IFEA, Istanbul);
- 'Cultural Self-assertion of the Palestinians: Survey of Modern Palestinian Poetry';
- (In preparation): 'Zokak al-Blat – a Beiruti quarter – its urban structure and its history';
- 'The Beginning of Book Printing in the Arab Near East' (in cooperation with various Lebanese libraries, archives and Monasteries); and
- (In preparation): 'Levant as a paradigm. The co-existence of cultures in the Eastern Mediterranean' (in cooperation with various German and Lebanese universities).

Publications

The two main publication series of the Orient Institute are the *Bibliotheca Islamica* and *Beiruter Texte und Studien*. The *Bibliotheca Islamica* (BI) was established as early as 1926 by Helmut Ritter in Istanbul to facilitate the printing of Arabic text editions prepared by German scholars. The series includes important texts such as al-Ash'ari's *Maqalat al-islamiyin* and encyclopaedias like al-Safadi's *al-Wafi bi-l-wafayat*. Today editions are prepared by both European and Arab editors. *Beiruter Texte und Studien* (BTS) was established in the early 60s immediately after the foundation of the Orient Institute in Beirut meant to provide a forum for studies in linguistics, history, Islamic theology and Arabic literature authored mainly by the members and fellows of the Institute. Together both series come up to more than 100 published volumes in four languages. By now, three sub-series have been established: *Türkische Welten*, *Iranische Welten* in Istanbul and *Christlich-orientalische Welten* in Beirut.

The Institute produces an annual periodical, the *Beiruter Blätter*, presenting short academic and journalistic articles in German and English on social and intellectual developments in Beirut and Lebanon and giving an overview of the Institute's annual activities. An analogous yearbook is published under the title *Istanbuler Almanach* by the Istanbul branch of the Institute. A number of lectures given at the Orient Institute appear as booklets in the *Zokak el-Blat(t)* series of occasional papers published in Beirut and *Pera-Blätter*, published in Istanbul. Recent book publications of the Orient Institute include, amongst others:

- BTS 75 Türkische Welten 5: Tobias Heinzelmann, *Die Balkankrise in der osmanischen Karikatur*. 1999, 290pp.
- BTS 72: Stephan Guth, Priska Furrer, J. Christoph Bürgel (eds), *Conscious Voices. Concepts of Writing in the Middle East*. 1999. XXI, 332pp.
- BTS 69: Thomas Scheffler, Hélène Sader, Angelika Neuwirth (eds), *Baalbek: Image and Monument*, 1898-1998. 1998. XIV, 348pp.
- BTS 67 Türkische Welten 3: Günther Seufert, *Politischer Islam in der Türkei. Islamismus als symbolische Repräsentation einer sich modernisierenden muslimischen Gesellschaft*. 1997. 600pp.
- BTS 61: Barbara Finster, Christa Fragner, Herta Hafenrichter (eds), *Rezeption in der islamischen Kunst*. 1999. 332pp.

Forthcoming publications include, amongst others:

- BTS 64: Angelika Neuwirth, Sebastian Guenther, Birgit Embalo, Maher Jarrar (eds), *Myths, Historical Archetypes and Symbolic Figures in Classical and Modern Arabic Literature*.
- BTS 74: Carsten Walbiner, Bernhard Heyberger, Albrecht Fuess (eds), *Les Européens vus par les Libanais à l'époche ottomane*.
- BTS 76: Thomas Scheffler (ed), *Religion Between Violence and Reconciliation*.
- BTS 77: Angelika Neuwirth, Andreas Pflitsch (eds), *Crisis and Memory in Islamic Societies*.
- BTS 79: Patrick Franke, *Begegnungen mit Khidr. Quellenstudien zum Imaginären im Islam*.
- BTS 82 Türkische Welten 6: Günther Seufert, Jacques Waardenburg (eds), *Turkish Islam and Europe*. ✦

To order publications:
For the Beiruter Texte und Studien series:
Franz Steiner Verlag, Postfach 101061,
D-70009 Stuttgart, Germany
franz.steiner.verlag@t-online.de
For the Bibliotheca Islamica and the Beiruter Blätter and Istanbuler Almanach:
Das Arabische Buch,
Horstweg 2, D-14059 Berlin, Germany
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For more information on the Orient Institute of the DMG and for the series of occasional papers Zokak el-Blat(t) *and* Pera-Blätter *please contact our Institutes:*
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Prof. Dr Angelika Neuwirth was director of the Orient Institut der DMG in Beirut and Istanbul, and was recently succeeded in her office by Prof. Dr. Manfred Kropp. E-mail: oib-dir@netgate.com.lb

CERMOC
ELIZABETH PICARD

Social Sciences Research on the Arab Mashrek

The Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches sur le Moyen-Orient Contemporain (CERMOC) is among the youngest of several French research centres devoted to the Middle East and the Arab world, from Teheran to Rabat. It is based in Beirut with a research unit in Amman. First founded in 1977, CERMOC was closed in 1985 following the kidnapping of its researcher Michel Seurat in Beirut and was reopened after the Lebanese war in 1990.

CERMOC is dedicated to conducting social sciences research (from urban studies to anthropology, including sociology, political science, geography, economy and even contemporary history) on five Mashrek countries: Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine and Syria.

Production of a thorough knowledge

With a rather light set up – a team of about a dozen permanent researchers, a library of 20,000 volumes and an editor working with a local printing house – CERMOC has published since its reopening in 1990 some thirty books, while its researchers and associate researchers have published four to five times more articles. The Centre thus consistently contributes to the scientific knowledge of the Middle East, particularly of the three countries where its researchers are based – Lebanon, Jordan and Palestine.

In Lebanon, in spite of the Arabization and Anglicization processes, CERMOC has succeeded in being present on the editorial stage. In 1999 only, four new books presented four types of research developed by the Centre:

- The proceedings of the Euro-Arab conference held at CERMOC in June 1997 under the direction of Jean Hannoyer: *Guerres civiles. Economies de la violence, dimensions de la civilité,* Karthala – CERMOC;
- A thorough study of urbanist questions in post-war Beirut by a CERMOC researcher, Elie El-Achkar: *Réglementation et formes urbaines. Le cas de Beyrouth*;
- The translation of a German geography classic written by Helmut Ruppert under the title, *Beyrouth, une ville d'Orient marquée par l'Occident*; and
- The results of collective research conducted by CERMOC in 1997-1998 within the framework of a French-German programme financed by the European Union: *Reconstruction et Réconciliation au Liban. Négociations, lieux publics et renouement du lien social*.

In Jordan, before the opening of CERMOC's research unit, French publication on this country within the social sciences was hardly developed. The book *Amman, ville et société* directed by Jean Hannoyer and Seteney Shami (1996) came as a momentous event.

In 1999, three new books have been published (or are forthcoming):

- Issue 5-6 of the journal *Jordanies*, dedicated to the Jordanian election of 1997;
- The proceedings of a conference held at the Institut du Monde Arabe (Paris) in June 1997, edited by Tareq Tell, *State and Politics in Jordan, 1946-1996*; and
- A book directed by Riccardo Bocco, *Le Royaume hachémite de Jordanie: identités sociales, politiques de développement et construction étatique, 1946-1996*, based on seminars held at the CERMOC.

In Palestine, the editorial production of CERMOC's team hosted by the Law Institute of Bir Zeit University confirms the new role of the Centre:

- *Maghreb-Machrek* #162 (Paris), edited by Bernard Botiveau, which contains a dozen articles by Palestinian and European scholars who studied at Bir Zeit and is entirely dedicated to Palestine;
- The book written by Bernard Botiveau himself, *L'Etat palestinien*, Paris: Sciences Po; and
- The *Cahier du CERMOC* #22, by Jean-François Legrain: *Les Palestines du quotidien*, which deals with the Palestinian legislative elections of 1996.

With the participation of CERMOC researchers in workshops and conferences abroad and the output of documentary notes (about 10 in the past three years) and expertise reports, the Centre has become a legitimate member of the local scientific community. Through public conferences, it is known to a broader public – as evidenced by various briefs in the local press as well as by the results of the poll carried out in Beirut in 1998.

Training for research

CERMOC carries out specific functions in relation with other French teaching and research institutions devoted to the Middle East such as the Groupe de Recherches et d'Etudes sur le Moyen-Orient Contemporain (GREMMO) in Lyon, the Institut de Recherches et d'Etudes sur le Monde Arabe et Musulman in Aix-en-Provence, and URBAMA in Tours.

Social science training in the field of Middle East studies requires a long-term stay in the region and the learning of Arabic – add to this the difficulties related to the international situation and the nature of several political systems in the region.

CERMOC's role is to offer an opportunity to make this intellectual investment in a productive manner, thanks to contacts with local research, research seminars and the supervision of senior researchers. CERMOC provides a few research allocations, and supports applications which fall within its collective programmes. In 1998, many scholarships were granted: 5 Lavoisier, 1 from the city of Lyon, 1 Michel Seurat scholarship, 1 from the Florence European Institute and 4 scholarships from the French Ministry of National Education. Also, in Beirut, Amman and Bir Zeit, dozens of European and Arab students receive each year accommodation and academic support from the Centre.

In October 1998, CERMOC organized, together with the Maison Méditerranéenne des Sciences de l'Homme in Aix-en-Provence, a doctorate school in Beirut for 18 PhD students from Europe and the Arab world. The Centre is planning another session in cooperation with the Lebanese University.

When investigating the ensuing careers of CERMOC researchers, one finds a majority holding responsibilities in the Middle East or in institutions related to the region: research, diplomacy, and civil service.

Cooperation amongst French, European, and Arab researchers

CERMOC is not just a stimulating institution for students; the list of scholars who have been hosted by the Centre shows that beyond the use of equipment and lodging (3 rooms in Amman, 5 in Beirut) academics rightfully consider CERMOC as a support and a mediator on behalf of the local scientific community. It is a place where scholars from various universities and disciplines converge for seminars and conferences as well as library research, as affiliation to the CERMOC is considered a pledge of scientific requirement and freedom.

Two formulas have been privileged by CERMOC in order to institutionalize and promote cooperation between French and European researchers and local researchers: cooperation agreements, on the one hand, and bilateral or multilateral research projects, on the other.

Cooperation agreements

This policy came into being with the signature of a cooperation convention with the University of Provence (France). It includes the hosting of Aix-en-Provence students at CERMOC and of Arab students in Aix, the organization of the 1998 joint doctorate school and of a conference on 'Les représentations de la Méditerranée' in Beirut, and other future projects.

A general convention with the University of Bir Zeit, acting on behalf of the Law Institute, was signed in October 1998. As part of this convention, a senior researcher belonging to the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS, France) heads a research seminar in French and Arabic and supervises several French speaking PhD students in Bir Zeit. There will be exchange students from and at both institutions. A first round of negotiation with the President of Aleppo University showed willingness to cooperate with CERMOC in the near future.

Bilateral and multilateral research projects

Being a French academic institution based in the Middle East, CERMOC plays a central part in several cooperation projects between scientists from both sides of the Mediterranean. Various formulas are adopted to meet administrative and legal requirements.

- CERMOC may cooperate with a local research unit. That is the case with the Centre de Recherches en Sciences Sociales at the Lebanese University, in the framework of CERMOC's project on 'Municipalités et pouvoirs locaux au Liban'; or it may cooperate with the Institute for Palestine Studies in the framework of its research project 'L'UNRWA, une histoire dans l'Histoire'.
- CERMOC has developed a joint research project with the GREMMO in Lyon, the Institut des Sciences Sociales at the Lebanese University, and Cairo University on 'Nouveaux médias et le marché de l'image dans l'Orient arabe'.
- CERMOC is coordinator of a project prepared with professors from the University of Balamand and the Lebanese University on 'Usages et méthodes de l'Histoire orale au Liban' with a final conference planned in fall 2000.

A regional dimension

Most of the current research at CERMOC is devoted to local or domestic questions and conducted by highly specialized scholars. However, scientific concerns as well as social and political realities require a broader view. The understanding of societies, lands and powers must be sought at the regional level according to a pervasive cultural and historical heritage: Lebanon is not a self-contained, detached land, but rather the 'laboratory' of the Mediterranean Near East. Jordan stands as the witness of regional changes and Palestine is at the heart of regional recompositions. Thus, in view of CERMOC's limited means, the Centre works constantly under tension between local specific and regional thematic research.

To keep the coherence of the team, the research programme 'UNRWA, une histoire dans l'Histoire' has been confined to Jordan and Palestine, which means that a comparative work on Syria and Lebanon as well as a regional synthesis remain to be done. In the programme 'Municipalités et pouvoirs locaux', the CERMOC elected to start research on the case of Lebanon. A comparative dimension is introduced by a case study on Palestinian municipalities. Nevertheless, this programme is conceived on the regional scale, research in Syria and in Jordan both being possible and desirable in order to produce a documented study on local politics in the four countries of the Arab Eastern Mediterranean. The multilateral research project 'Nouveaux médias et marché de l'image dans l'Orient arabe' has been conceived with the participation of international partners, and has been devised in a regional perspective from the very start, for the project is to attempt to grasp the material and immaterial flows which permeate the region and link it to the rest of the world. ✦

Current information about CERMOC facilities, collective and individual research programmes, and publications can be found at: www.lb.refer.org/cermoc

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IIS

AZIM NANJI

The Institute of Ismaili Studies

The Institute of Ismaili Studies (IIS) aims at promoting scholarship and learning on Islam in the context of civilizational studies in general. Utilizing all relevant modern disciplines, it encourages research into Islamic history, with particular reference to its significance for the Muslim societies in contemporary times. While the IIS' interests encompass the Muslim world as a whole, it pays particular attention to Shi'ism and to Ismailism due to the relative neglect of these fields in modern Islamic scholarship.

Founded in 1977 by His Highness Prince Karim Aga Khan, who also serves as the Chairman of its Board of Governors, the IIS has grown from an educational establishment to a recognized academic centre of learning on Shi'ism and Ismailism.

The Institute's programmes and activities are informed by the full range of diversity within Islam and explore the relationship of religious ideas to broader dimensions of society and culture. Particular attention is given to issues of modernity and ethics that arise as Muslims seek to relate their heritage to contemporary circumstances.

The Institute's diverse constituencies include scholars and students of Islam and Ismailism, universities and educational establishments, as well as the Ismaili Community. Reflecting these diverse constituencies, the IIS collaborates with several prominent institutions of learning in the West and in the Muslim world. It also maintains close affiliation with the Aga Khan Development Network.

The Department of Academic Research and Publications (DARP) facilitates original research and publications of works by its faculty as well as scholars from outside the Institute. These fall into several different categories such as occasional papers, monographs, editions, translations, conference proceedings, bibliographical works and Ismaili studies.

Recent publications include:
- Nasir al-Din Tusi's spiritual autobiography, *Contemplation and Action* (edited and translated by S.J. Badakhshani, 1998);
- Farhad Daftary's *A Short History of the Ismailis: Traditions of a Muslim Community* (Edinburgh University Press, 1998); and
- Aziz Esmail's occasional paper on *The Poetics of Religious Experience: the Islamic Context* (1998).

The IIS Graduate Programme in Islamic Studies and Humanities involves teaching by an international faculty of distinguished scholars, including members of DARP. Attracting students from diverse backgrounds and regions – from Central Asia to North America – the programme prepares individuals for important roles in academic, public and community life. Former students have gone on to obtain Master's and PhD degrees from the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, the School of Oriental and African Studies and the University of Edinburgh, among others. In addition, the Institute offers scholarships for post-graduate studies in pertinent fields and organizes seminars and conferences on themes of contemporary relevance.

The Department of Education produces teaching and learning materials on Islamic education. It is guided by a two-fold objective. On the one hand, it aims to make the religious, cultural and historical traditions of Islam available to young Muslims. On the other, it draws upon modern principles of education and technology to make religious learning a creative and appealing process for the young mind, commensurate with advances in other branches of learning. In so doing, it faces the challenges of how to understand and present Islamic culture in a way that narrows and overcomes the gap between secular and religious learning; how to relate modern principles of child-centred and experiential learning with allegiance to a given historical and religious tradition; how to reconcile the development of the individual with moral responsibility to society; and how to bridge intellectual development with spiritual life and ethics. The department's materials are produced in eight different languages (English, French, Arabic, Persian, Tajiki, Urdu, Gujarati and Portuguese) and aim to meet a diversity of cultural contexts.

Supporting all these programmes is the IIS Library, which has one of the most valuable and comprehensive collections in the Western world of manuscripts, books and audio-visual materials relating to Ismaili studies in particular. This collection serves as a major resource centre for scholars and students, and aspires to become the most significant central archive of Ismaili materials in the world. ✦

For more information please contact:
The Institute of Ismaili Studies
42-44 Grosvenor Gardens
London SW1W 0EB, United Kingdom
Tel: +44 207 881 6000
Fax: +44 207 881 6040

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E-mail: pa_director@iis.ac.uk

CMCU

JOHN L. ESPOSITO

The Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding: History and International Affairs

The Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding: History and International Affairs (CMCU) was established in 1993 by Georgetown University and the Fondation pour l'Entente entre Chrétiens et Musulmans, Geneva, to foster the study of Muslim-Christian relations and to promote dialogue between the two great religions. The Center focuses on the historical, theological, political and cultural encounter of Islam and Christianity, the Muslim world and the West. Located in the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University, the Center combines teaching at the undergraduate and graduate levels, research and public affairs activities.

The establishment of the Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding reflects the role of religion in the contemporary international system. Both Georgetown's Catholic-Jesuit heritage and its location in Washington have shaped the University's abiding interest in the study of religion and international relations. The global presence and impact of Islam is a fact of international life. Understanding this fact, relating it to other dimensions of world affairs and to the role of Christianity in the world is a central concern of the Center's programmes.

Certificate and MA Programme

Courses on Islam and the history of Muslim-Christian relations are offered for undergraduate and graduate students at the University. The undergraduate 'Certificate in Islam and Muslim-Christian Relations' places emphasis on the study of Islam as a complement to the study of Western and Christian traditions involved in core curriculum requirements. The Master's Degree in Liberal Studies, with a specialization in 'Islam and Muslim-Christian Relations' was created to foster a better understanding of Islam and Muslim-Christian relations. Students focus on the present conditions under which Muslims and Christians interact on a global scale and in societies like the United States. The MA also offers coverage of the broader historical experiences of the Muslim and Christian communities as they developed and interacted in the past fourteen centuries.

Muslims in the American Public Sphere

CMCU is currently undertaking a major research project, funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts, to examine the role and contribution of the Muslim community in American public life. This three-year project intends to: publish a volume on the participation, contribution and role of the Muslim community in the American civic life; produce two major reference books; implement a two-stage national survey of Muslim communities; and disseminate research findings through workshops, regional seminars, a national conference, newsletters and other media. It will also develop a comprehensive website as a search engine, research (survey) tool and resource, and organize an intra-community dialogue with the nationally recognized religious leadership. The principle investigators are: Zahid Bukhari and Sulayman Nyang; and the coordinator is John L. Esposito.

Research and Public Affairs

The Center's research and public affairs activities seek to interpret Islam and the Muslim world for the diverse communities in Washington involved in international relations and the Muslim world. The focus of the Center's activities, both national and international in scope, is achieved through lectures, symposia, international conferences and extensive media coverage and publications (books, occasional papers, and monographs). The Center has sponsored or co-sponsored more than 16 major conferences, 117 seminars, and 373 presentations in more than 20 countries in Africa, Europe, the Middle East, Asia and the United States. Altogether, the Center's core faculty has published more than 50 books and 200 articles, including such works as: *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World* (4 vols.); *The Oxford History of Islam* (forthcoming, January 2000); *Islam, Gender and Social Change; Muslims on the Americanization Path; Islam: Continuity and Change in the Modern World*; and *Women, the Family, and Divorce Laws in Islamic History*. CMCU is co-publisher of the journal *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, along with the Centre for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations, Birmingham University, United Kingdom.

Recent and Upcoming Events

- 'To be a European Muslim: Muslim Identity in a non-Islamic Environment'
  Guest Speaker: Tariq Ramadan, College of Geneva and University of Fribourg
  Georgetown University / 27 October 1999
- 'The Message of Islam for Pluralist Societies'
  Guest Speaker: Farid Esack, University of the Western Cape, South Africa
  Georgetown University / 16 Nov. 1999
- 'Religion and Secularism'
  Co-sponsored with the Imam Khomeini Education and Research Institute, Qom, Iran / Georgetown University
  2–3 December 1999
- 'Islam and the West'
  Co-sponsored with the United Association for Studies and Research, Inc.
  Georgetown University
  26–27 January 2000
- 'International Workshop on Asian Islam in the 21st Century'
  Co-sponsored with College of Islamic Studies, Prince of Songkla University
  Bangkok, Thailand
  23–24 February 2000
- 'Becoming American: Immigration and Religious Life in the United States'
  Co-sponsored with Hartford Seminary
  Georgetown University
  11–12 May 2000

CMCU's faculty include: John L. Esposito, Director; John O. Voll, Deputy Director; Yvonne Y. Haddad; and Amira El-Azhary Sonbol. The Center has an endowed chair, the Malaysia Chair of Islam in Southeast Asia. In addition, the Center has had research associates and fellows from countries around the world, including Tajikistan, China, Bangladesh, Belarus, Lebanon, Egypt, Malaysia, United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, India and Sudan. ✦

For more information please visit our website:
www.cmcu.net
The Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding,
Georgetown University
37 & O Streets, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20057
Tel: +1 202-687-8375
Fax: +1 202-687-8376
E-mail: cmcu0001@gunet.georgetown.edu

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E-mail: espositj@gunet.georgetown.edu

University of Malaya
MOHD HAZIM SHAH

Second International Malaysian Studies Conference

The Second International Malaysian Studies Conference was held at the University of Malaya from 2-4 August 1999. It was attended by local participants from Malaysia, as well as many from such countries as the UK, Germany, Denmark, Japan, and the US. The papers addressed issues relating to Malaysia, particularly with regard to economics, politics, education, culture, technology, and religion, especially Islam. The following pertains to the sessions which made most reference to Islam. The Conference as a whole, however, was not confined to Islam.

Communities

Khoo Salma Nasution @ Khoo Su Nin, 'Colonial Intervention & Transformation of Muslim Waqf Settlements in Urban Penang: Case Study of Capitan Kling Mosque & Acheen Street Mosque Waqf', dealt with *waqf* lands, endowments of the early migrant Muslim communities in Penang. It was expected that the descendents of the Muslim leaders would continue to manage the endowments. However, when British intervention in the administration of these lands began in the early 20th century, contradictions between Islamic laws on *waqf* and the British laws resulted in years of legal disputes.

Abdur-Razzaq Lubis, in his paper on 'The Mandailing Role in Malaysian History' discussed ethnic Mandailing, a minority group in both Malaysian and Indonesian history, and examined the question of 'who the Mandailing are' on a historical basis.

Timo Kortteinen, in his paper on 'Social Hierarchies in Flux: Change of Social Organization in Kuala Selangor', studied the development and social changes in a small township – Kuala Selangor, which in a way reflects social change in Malaysia as a whole.

Research in Islam

This presentation session began with Maznah Mohammad's summary of her paper on 'Democratization and Islamic Family Law Reform in Malaysia'. According to Maznah, the Islamization in Malaysia includes Islamic Family Law, which is debated on by two parties, modernist UMNO and the conservative PAS. In the context of women's issues, UMNO promotes human and gender rights. PAS did so also but did not emphasize the gender rights as UMNO had done. In her opinion, women's issues will be promoted by both parties in the coming elections, an important determinant of the design of future Islamization.

Sharifah Zaleha Syed Hassan presented a paper on 'Surau and The Urban Ummat: The Case of Bandar Baru Bangi'. She began by listing factors that influenced the revival of the *surau* in urban areas in the 1970s. Her focus was on the activities of some *surau*s in Bandar Baru Bangi, notably Surau An-Nur, which was led by Dr Harun Din, Professor of Islamic Law at UKM. Surau An-Nur was involved in various activities, such as Islamic education, welfare, prayer and donations. The conclusion was that a *surau* can be transformed into an institution of learning and preaching, depending on its resources and management.

Patricia A. Martinez, chairwoman of this session, then presented a paper on 'The Possibilities in Tafsir and Istifsar for Islamic Discourse in Malaysia'. She explored classical *tafsir* methodology, giving her opinion on its development in Malaysian society. She held that *istifsar* contributes to the study of *tafsir* in certain contexts. Therefore, 'Malaysian *Tafsir*' should emphasize both. She concluded that the study of the Quran in Muslim society, especially Malaysia, should not reject the Western perspective totally since much could be learned.

Sharifah Zaleha Syed Hassan also read Asma Lafir Beatrix's paper entitled 'Behind the Veil: Islam in Malaysia and Tunisia'.

Islam and Politics

This session, chaired by Prof Osman Bakar, began with Ahmad Fauzi Abdul Hamid's paper on 'Political Dimension of Religious Conflict in Malaysia: State Response to an Islamic Movement in the 1990s'. He focused on the Darul Arqam movement, which was banned by the government in 1994. He claimed that the main reason for the ban was political rather than religious, suggesting that Darul Arqam challenged the government's brand of Islamization.

Farish Noor presented a paper on 'Formation of Political Frontiers between the government and Islamic Opposition during the 1998-1999 Political Crisis of Malaysia'. He gave a chronology of the current situation in Malaysian politics, which he feels is related to past occurrences between the government and Islamic opposition. His main focus was on the importance of political idealism rather than *realpolitik* in the shaping of Malaysian politics in the years to come.

Kikue Hamayotsu discussed the impact of the Islamic reformist movement on the process of nation-building in Malaysia. From her point of view, the development of Islamization in Malaysia was influenced by modernist leadership in UMNO as a ruling party.

Wan Shawaluddin Hassan made a brief summary of the Bosnian issues from the perspective of Malaysian government policy in his paper entitled 'Krisis Bosnia dan Dasar Luar Malaysia'. In his opinion, the Malaysian government involved itself in the Bosnian Crisis based on several factors, the most important being to demonstrate to the world the potential of Malaysia as a newly industrialized country. However, he did not deny that the Islamic cause was a major reason for Malaysia's involvement in the crisis. ✦

The full original conference report was compiled by Mohd Hazim Shah (Chief Editor), Rogayah Shariman, Wan Sharina, Chai Choon Lee, Badhrol Ghulam Malik, Zuhdi Marsuki, and Liew Chin Tong. See: www.malaysiakini.com/pssm

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New Approaches to Migration: Transnational Communities and the Transformation of Home

Sussex Centre for Migration Research
NADJE AL-ALI

The literature on transnational migration has so far mainly emerged in the context of labour migration to the United States. The question arises if, and in how far, existing theories and models revolving around transnationalism can be applied to different historical, cultural and political contexts, such as migration within or to Europe, for example. The attempt to apply, critically examine and challenge existing notions about transnational migration constituted an underlying goal in the first annual conference of the ESRC Transnational Communities Programme. A specific focus on the relationship between 'migrant/refugee communities' and 'home' created the framework in which to analyse the meaning and significance of transnational practices and fields.

A focus on 'transnational communities' has been widely heralded as an important new approach to international migration. More traditional approaches have tended to conceive international migrants as exceptions to the norm. Attention has been divided broadly between the process of migration – emphasizing the importance of geographical movement across international borders, and the product of migration – emphasizing the impacts of migrants on societies in which they settle. In contrast, the transnational communities approach conceives of international migrants not as anomalies, but rather as representative of an increasingly globalized world. It has refocused attention on the utilization by international migrants of modes of telecommunication and transport; their pooling of resources and successful exploitation of global markets, and their association with new social forms, political challenges and cultural resources generated by linkages across several geographical locations.

The transnational communities conference was hosted by the Sussex Centre for Migration Research, at the University of Sussex, between 21-22 September. It was attended by about 50 participants from an international audience, 16 of whom presented papers. The conference was opened by Professor Robin Cohen (University of Warwick), who located the conference theme in the context of a century of migration studies. The keynote speaker was Professor Michael Smith (University of California, Davis), who provided a critical overview of the relations between globalization and transnational urbanism, paying particular attention to the ways in which transnational networks and circuits of social interaction intersect in particular places and in particular times. Smith stressed the need to rethink the binary of local stasis vs. global dynamics, thereby developing the notion of the 'trans-local' as a viable alternative.

The remaining papers covered a wide range of disciplines (anthropology, geography, international relations, sociology and political science), as well as case studies from various geographical areas, i.e. Turkish and Kurdish refugees in Germany, Moroccan migrant women in Italy, Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, Sudanese refugees in Cairo, Eritrean refugees in Germany and the UK, and Bosnian refugees in the Netherlands and the UK.

The various papers were organized according to three broad themes:

- 'Transnational communities and the meaning of "home"', which explored the way that the concept of home is reproduced or transformed within the context of emerging transnational practices;
- 'The implications of transforming homes for transnational communities' examined the extent to which transformations in the country of origin, i. e. war, economic crises, peace, can impact upon the formation, maintenance and even decline of transnational communities; and
- 'Transnational communities and the transformation of home' explored the capacities of migrant and refugee communities in influencing or effecting transformations in their countries of origin.

The role of Islam in forging and maintaining transnational networks and ties was highlighted in several conference papers. Nina-Clara Tiesler (Department for Religious Studies, University of Hannover, Germany) explored theological conceptions of 'home' among elite European Muslims, thereby shedding light on the cognitive relationship between European Muslims and the 'Islamic world'. Other papers were more sociological and anthropological in approach and gave evidence to the ways in which the sense of being a Muslim does not only transcend national boundaries but could also give birth to transnational affiliations. This became particularly apparent in Ruba Salih's paper about Moroccan migrant women in Italy and Nadje Al-Ali's paper about Bosnian refugees in the UK and the Netherlands (both University of Sussex, Brighton, UK).

Overall, the conference provided new and interesting material derived from in-depth case studies and provided a timely contribution to debates on transnational migration by scholars working outside of North America. Many papers challenged the common perception that transnational practices are counter-hegemonic in nature and also took issue with an oversimplified political economic approach. Furthermore, the role of the state in shaping, creating and hindering transnational ties became apparent in different case studies. ✦

An edited collection of many of the papers presented is currently being prepared for publication.

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Book presentation

NICO J.G. KAPTEIN

Malay Islamic Literature

For the study of Islam in the Malayo-Indonesian world it is of the utmost importance to know what kind of texts have been and are in circulation. As far as printed Malay (and Arabic) texts are concerned, in the last decade great progress has been made through the publications of, among others, Virginia Matheson and M.B. Hooker on Jawi Literature in Patani; Martin van Bruinessen on *Kitab Kuning;* and Ian Proudfoot on early Malay printed books up to 1920. In addition to knowledge of the availability and circulation of printed texts, that of manuscripts is of equal interest. Very important in this respect is the recently published work by Teuku Iskandar, *Catalogue of Malay, Minangkabau, and South Sumatran Manuscripts in the Netherlands*, 2 vols., Leiden 1999 (ISBN 90-71220-09-5).

This brand-new catalogue by Teuku Iskandar describes all Malay, Minangkabau, and South Sumatran manuscripts (in *rencong* and Lampung scripts) in the Netherlands, and in sum comprises 2028 different items. It consists of 1095 pages which are divided over two separate volumes. Volume One (in 748 pages) lists the holdings of the Leiden University Library (in sum 1571 items), while Volume Two describes almost 500 other items, categorized according to the institutions where they are kept, like the Royal Institute for Anthropology and Linguistics, Leiden; Royal Tropical Institute, Amsterdam; Royal Household Archives, The Hague; and eleven other institutions. Moreover, this volume contains the bibliography (pp. 957-985). Nine different indexes of, amongst others, Titles, Authors, Copyists, Geographical Names, and Watermarks, conclude this voluminous work (pp. 987-1095).

It is striking that a minor part of the items described in the catalogue (pp. 1-106, to wit 259 items of the collection of the Leiden University Library) was published by E.P. Wieringa under the auspices of the Leiden University Library in 1998. Although a meticulous comparison between these two catalogues is good for philologists, a number of differences and similarities are obvious. On the whole, the catalogue which was published under the auspices of the Leiden University Library is far more ambitious, which is quite understandable from the perspective of the library. The biggest difference between both catalogues is the description of the collections of letters, which Wieringa has described in detail, while Iskandar roughly indicates them (e.g. in order to describe Cod. Or. 2229 – Cod. Or. 2242, Wieringa takes almost 150 pp., whereas Iskandar limits himself to 5 pages only). Furthermore, Wieringa gives more extensive descriptions of the other items, and adds more elaborate and up-to-date bibliographical references. A final obvious difference is that the 1998 catalogue contains many beautiful facsimile illustrations, while Iskandar's has none. On the other hand, Teuku Iskandar has followed a more humble cataloguing strategy: he has limited himself to the basic data of each item which are, of course, the same as in the corresponding descriptions of Wieringa. This different strategy has resulted in an easily manageable and orderly catalogue, despite the enormous amount of materials it opens up.

When browsing through Iskandar's work, one notices that the bulk of the described items in one way or another is relevant to the study of Islam: there are devotional treatises; *fiqh* works; sermons; prayers; mystical texts; *silsila*s; narratives about the Prophets, including the Prophet Muhammad; legal contracts; theosophical treatises; religious instruction literature; Malay adaptations of Arabic originals; theological treatises; and so forth. In other words, the work makes abundantly clear what infinite variety there has been (and still is) in Malay Islamic literary culture. In this respect, the catalogue of Iskandar forms an important addition to overviews of Malay literature, which usually focus more on *belles-lettres* and tend to pay less attention to Islamic literature. There has always been a stream within the Western tradition of Malay studies which regarded much of the Malay Islamic writings as merely derivative of Middle Eastern originals, as well as linguistically inferior as compared to 'classical' texts. As a result of this, many Malay religious writings were not considered worthy of serious study, and consequently did not figure in 'comprehensive' overviews of Malay literature. With the help of the catalogue of Teuku Iskandar, a more complete picture can be drawn up of the entire Malay literary production.

All in all, this work forms a most welcome addition to the existing research tools for the study of Malay religious literary culture. Teuku Iskandar is merited with compiling a valuable source which in a practical form gives access to all Malay manuscripts in the Netherlands. ✦

Note

* E.P. Wieringa, *Catalogue of Malay and Minangkabau Manuscripts in the Library of Leiden University and other collections in the Netherlands*; Volume One comprising the acquisitions of Malay manuscripts in Leiden University Library up to the year 1896, edited by Joan de Lijster-Streef and Jan Just Witkam, Leiden 1998.

Dr Nico J.G. Kaptein is coordinator of the Indonesian-Netherlands Cooperation in Islamic Studies, and secretary of the Islamic Studies Programme at Leiden University, the Netherlands.
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Art & Culture Agenda

THE NETHERLANDS

Exhibitions

De Nieuwe Kerk
Gravenstraat 17
1012 NL Amsterdam
Tel: +31 20 638 69 09
Fax: +31 20 622 66 49
E-mail: mail@nieuwekerk.nl

16 December 1999 – 24 April 2000
- *Earthly splendour, celestial art. Treasures from Islam. Persian carpets, Indian miniatures and jewellery are shown against a background of ponds, fountains, flowers and an aviary, recalling Paradise as it is described in the Qur'an. The exhibition is organized in cooperation with the State Hermitage St. Petersburg.*

Dutch Centre for Embroidery
Spinveld 13a
4815 HR Breda
Tel: +31 76 520 1001
Tuesdays through Saturdays

1 October 1999 – 12 February 2000
- *Oman: Textiles from the desert.*

Den Haag Gemeentemuseum
Stadhouderslaan 41
2517 HV The Hague
Tel: +31 70 338 11 11

Continuing exhibition
- *Islamic crafts. A renewed exhibition from its own collection, in particular ceramics. Other objects illustrating Islamic art.*

Thermenmuseum
Coriovallumstraat 9
6411 CA Heerlen
Tel: +31 45 560 45 81

3 October 1998 – 31 December 1999
- *The Bathhouse. Bath culture in East and West. Interactive and sense provoking.*

Fries Museum
Turfmarkt 11
8911 KS Leeuwarden
Tel: +31 58 212 30 01

10 April 1999 – 1 April 2000
- *Veils and shawls, about clothing and identity.*

Rijksmuseum of Antiquities
Rapenburg 28
2311 EW Leiden
Tel: +31 71 516 31 63

19 November 1999 – 19 March 2000
- *Ritual and Splendour. A precious collection, mainly of silver and golden artefacts from ancient Egypt, the Classical World and the Near East. Collected by Ms. Mihoko Koyama, the founder of the MIHO MUSEUM (Shiga, Japan).*

Rotterdam Museum of Ethnology
Willemskade 25
3016 DM Rotterdam
Tel: +31 10 270 71 72
Fax: +31 10 270 71 82
E-mail: mediatheek@wereld-museum.rotterdam.nl

- *Due to renovations the Museum will be closed until 26 November 2000. It will re-open with a permanent exhibition of Islamic art from its owncollection.*

Galerie A
Oldenzaalsestraat 256
7523 AG Enschede
Tel/Fax: +31 53 3413788

Continuing
- *Intercultural Art.*

Galerie Fi Beiti
Prinsengracht 157-hs
1015 DR Amsterdam
Tel: +31 20 626 44 32
Fax: +31 20 626 44 33

- *Contemporary art exhibitions by artists from the Islamic world.*

Lectures/Societies

Nederlands-Arabische Kring
Secretariat:
H. Zwaardecroonstraat 17
2593 XK The Hague
NAK Magazine:
Korte Jufferstraat 42
3512 EZ Utrecht
Tel: +31 30 231 95 53
E-mail: raz@casema.net

- *Organizes lectures and other activities in five regional branches: Amsterdam, The Hague, Groningen, Nijmegen, and Utrecht.*

El Hizjra Centre for Art and Culture of the Arabian World
Singel 300A
1016 AD Amsterdam
Tel: +31 20 420 05 68

15 October 1999 – 2 January 2000
- *Literary Contest for everybody from Moroccan or Arab origin. For further inquiries ring or write to El Hizjra.*

FRANCE

Exhibitions

Musée du Louvre
75058 Paris
Tel: +33 1 40 20 50 50
Fax: +33 1 40 20 54 42
E-mail: info@louvre.fr

17 March – 29 May 2000
- *Ottoman Calligraphy's Collections of the Sakip Sabanci Museum. The exhibition presents around 70 works belonging to the collection of the Sapik Sabanci University in Istanbul. They are all works by the most famous calligraphers of the period between the 15th and early 20th centuries.*

Institut du Monde Arabe
1, Rue des Fosses St-Bernard
75236 Paris
Tel: +33 1 40 51 39 60/ 33 1 0

19 October 1999 – 27 February 2000
- *Morocco, a way of life. Evoking the magic of the places, discovering the architecture of private houses, the refined mosaics, the exhibition resorts to the past without neglecting certain aspects of the more contemporary urban life. Music, films and poetry try to recreate the specific spheres of the vie citadine in Morocco.*

18 October 1999 – 30 January 2000
- *Matisse in Morocco. Exhibition.*

19 October 1999 – 16 January 2000
- *Les Ecrivains et 'l'appel du Maroc'. Source of inspiration for the imagination and the literature of the 20th century, Morocco has attracted numerous writers such as Pierre Loti, Henri de Montherlant, Paul Morand, Paul Bowles, Juan Goytisolo, Elias Canetti. Manuscripts, photographs, documents, first editions, and paintings testify to the continuing role Morocco can play and serve as sources of inspiration for the imagination and the literature of our time.*

GERMANY

Exhibitions

Vorderasiatisches Museum
Entrée Pergamonmuseum
Museuminsel
Am Kupfergraben
Berlin-Mitte
Tel: +49 30 2090 5401

7 May 1999 – 31 December 1999
- *100 years Vorderasiatisches Museum. An exhibition on the history of the collection which includes world famous works of art from the Sumerian, Babylonian, Assyrian and North Syria-East Anatolian regions.*

15 May 2001 – 30 September 2001
- *Agatha Christie and the Orient*

Museum of Islamic Art
Museuminsel
Berlin – Mitte
Tel: +49 30 2090 5401

Continuing
- *The continuing exhibition is dedicated to the art of Islamic peoples from the 8th to the 19th centuries. The works of art originate from an area stretching from Spain to India.*

Museum für Völkerkunde
Lansstraße 8
Berlin – Dahlem
Tel: +49 8301 438

9 June 1999 – 30 January 2000
- *Al inssan – People of the desert in Tunisia. Photographs by Claudia Okonek.*

Museum Schloß Rheydt
Schloßstraße 508,
41238 Mönchengladbach
Tel: +49 2166 9289 00
Fax: +49 2166 9289 49

31 October – 31 December
- *The Searose carpet, 21 yellow-ground Konya rugs. The Caucasian Alpan and the Elibelinde-Kelim are shown from the Orient-Star Collection, one of the world famous textile collections.*

Ifa Galerie Stuttgart
Charlottenplatz 17
70173 Stuttgart
Tel: +49 7 1122 25 173
Fax: +497 1122 25 194
http://www.ifa.de

Continuing
- *Exhibitions and contemporary art from the Middle East.*

IRAN

Exhibitions

Islamic Period Museum
Tehran

Continuing
- *Continuing exhibition of e.g. Koranic manuscripts, ceramics, metalwork and textiles.*

KUWAIT

Exhibitions

Dar al-Athar al-Islamiyyah
Mahboula
Kuwait
Tel: +965 565 3006

Continuing
- *Al-Sabah Collection of Islamic art.*

RUSSIA

Exhibitions

The State Hermitage Museum
St Petersburg
Tel: +812 110 9079 / 96 25
Fax: +812 312 1550
www.hermitage.ru

Continuing
- *Art of the Near East is represented in the Museum by an excellent collection covering the 7th to 19th centuries which includes several exquisite masterpieces.*

TURKEY

Exhibitions

The Museum of Turkish and Islamic Art
Istanbul

Continuing
- *Exhibition of Ottoman and Islamic Art, Folk Art and Folk Life.*

SINGAPORE

Exhibitions

Asian Civilisations Museum
39 Armenian Street
Singapore 179939

From November 1997
- *Calligraphy from the Tareq Rajab Museum Kuwait. The Qur'an, Holy Book for Muslims, was central to the development of the art of beautiful writing. In this exhibition is explored the various scripts that developed over the centuries and also calligraphy as a decorative motif on various media, such as ceramics and metalwork.*

UNITED KINGDOM

Exhibitions

British Museum and Museum of Mankind
Great Russel Street
London WCIB 3DG
Tel: +44 171 412 71 11
Fax: 44 171 3238614/8480

8 July 1999 – 14 February 2000
- *Later Persian Paintings and Lacquer.*

10 July 1999 – January 2000
- *Cracking Codes: The Rosetta Stone and Decipherment. This exhibition about the decipherment of scripts celebrates the bicentenary of the discovery of the Rosetta Stone, the 'most valuable relic of Antiquity'. The Rosetta Stone constitutes the remains of a stela inscribed with a priestly decree for Ptolemy V (196BC) in three scripts: hieroglyphic, a cursive form of ancient Egyptian, and ancient Greek.*

7 September 1999 – 30 January 2000
- *Life & Ceremony in Urban Algeria. This exhibition showing textiles, clothes, jewellery and household items is the result of a unique collaboration between the Museum of Art and Popular Tradition in Algiers, the National Museum of Ahmed Zabana in Oran and the British Museum.*

28 September 1999 – 16 January 2000
- *Bukhara and Beyond: Artefacts of Uzbekistan and Photographs of Edgar Knobloch. The photographs and artefacts of Uzbekistan concentrate on the Islamic history of the region from the 8th to the 19th centuries. The artefacts from the museum's permanent collection include a striking jade cup inscribed with the name of Ulugh Beg. Several 16th-century Bukhara school paintings are shown.*

Continuing
- *Continuing exhibition of the Oriental collection. Its Islamic pottery is considered the best outside the Islamic world.*

Victoria and Albert Museum
Cromwell Road
London SW7 2RL
Tel: +44 171 938 8500
http://www.vam.ac.uk

Continuing
- *The collection includes a rich collection of Islamic metalwork.*

Egee Art Gallery
9 Chelsea manor studios
Flood Street
London SW3 5SR
Tel: +44 171 351 68 18
Fax: +44 171 376 85 10
www.egeeart.com

Continuing
- *Contemporary and antique Middle Eastern Art.*

Sony Gallery
25 Connaught Street Marble Arch
London W2
Tel/fax: +44 171 262 9101
www.sonigallery.com

Continuing
- *International contemporary art especially from the Indo-Pak subcontinent and the Arab World.*

Ashmolean Museum
Beaumont Street
Oxford OX1 2PH UK
Tel: +44 1865 278000
Fax: +44 1865 278018

3 February – 2 April 2000
- *Golden Pages: Qurans and Prayer books from the H.E. Shaikh Ghasan I. Shaker collection.*

UNITED STATES

Exhibitions

Museum of Fine Arts
465 Huntington Avenue
Boston, Massachusetts 02115
Tel: +1 617 267 9300

14 November – 6 February 2000
- *Pharaohs of the Sun: Akhenaten, Nefertiti, Tutankhamen, captures the revolutionary epoch known as the Amarna Age (1353 to 1336 BC) when the Pharaoh Akhenaten assumed the throne of Egypt at its peak of imperial glory. One of the most important international presentations of Egyptian art and culture in recent decades.*

The Art Museum, Princeton University
Princeton
New Jersey 08544-1018
Tel: +1 609 258 3787 / 3788

Spring 2000
- *Islamic Art*

Metropolitan Museum of Art
1000 Fifth Avenue at 82nd Street
New York, New York 10028
Tel: +1 212 535 7710

16 September 1999 – 2 January 2000
- *The Nature of Islamic Ornament, Part IV: Figural Representation. The fourth in a four-part series on Islamic ornament dating from the 9th to the 18th centuries. Some 25 objects are drawn from the Metropolitan Museum's own collection to examine the incorrect perception that figural representation was never permitted to appear in Islamic art.*

16 September 1999 – 9 January 2000
- *Egyptian art in the Age of the Pyramids. The exhibition spans the 3rd through the 6th dynasties, the first truly great era of Egyptian art. Some 200 works, from reliefs to furniture and monumental sculpture, have been assembled from museums in the US and Europe.*

From 19 October 1999
- *New Galleries for Ancient Near Eastern Art. Newly renovated and reinstalled, with natural light now illuminating the Assyrian reliefs within, these galleries house the Museum's outstanding collection of Ancient Near Eastern art, including sculpture, metalwork, ivories, seals, and other objects dating from 8000 BC to AD 700 from ancient Mesopotamia, Iran, and their neighbours.*

14 September 1999 – 23 January 2000
- *Farouk Hosny/Adam Henein: Contemporary Egyptian Artists and Heirs to an Ancient Tradition. Sculptures by Adam Henein and paintings by Farouk Hosny – both prominent artists working in contemporary Egypt.*

16 November 1999 – 27 February 2000
- *'Only the Best': Masterpieces of the Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, Lisbon. Born in Istanbul of Armenian parentage, Calouste Sarkis Gulbenkian (1869-1955) became a pioneer in the international oil industry, a philanthropist, and a widely respected art collector. His vast collection – which totalled some 5,000 works – included European paintings ranging from the Renaissance to Impressionism, Egyptian sculpture, Roman medals, Islamic ceramics and textiles, illuminated manuscripts, 18th-century French furniture and silver, and spectacular jewelled objects by Lalique.*

Harvard University Art Museums

Arthur M. Sackler Gallery
Cambridge, Massachusetts
Tel: +1 617 495 9400

9 October 1999 – 2 January 2000
- *Letters in Gold: Ottoman Calligraphy from the Sakip Sabanci Collection, Istanbul. Calligraphy – the art of beautiful writing – is the quintessential visual art form of the Islamic world. This exhibition features approximately 70 exceptional works of Islamic calligraphy, dating from the 15th through the early 20th centuries of Ottoman Turkey.*

9 October 1999 through 2 January 2000
- *A Grand Legacy: Arts of the Ottoman Empire. As a complement to Letters in Gold, this exhibition examines the grand legacy of Ottoman painting, ceramics, textiles and metalwork, using works from the permanent collection at the Art Museums.*

Continuing
- *Harvard's collection of Islamic and later Indian art is small but magnificent. It comprises a broad range of works, from Samanid pottery and Mamluk calligraphy to Qajar lacquers and Ottoman textiles. Its masterpieces include a group of miniatures from the extraordinary 14th-century Great Mongol ('Demotte') Shahnama, the Safavid master Mir Sayyid-'Ali's Night-time in a Palace, and the miniatures of the 'pocket-size' Divan of Anvari produced for the Mughal emperor Akbar. The department also has one of the most important representations of Rajasthani painting in the world.*

The Arthur M. Sackler Gallery and Freer Gallery of Art
Smithsonian Institution
Washington D.C, 20560
Tel: +1 202 357 2700 (voice)
357 1729

17 October 1999 – 17 January 2000
- *Treasures from the Royal Tombs of Ur. More than 250 extraordinary objects revealing traditions of royal life and death – jewellery, musical instruments, games, furniture, seals and vessels – found in the tomb of a woman who died between 2600 and 2500 BC.*

17 November 1999 – 7 May 2000
- *Imaging the Word: Selections of Calligraphy from the Islamic World presents some of the principal calligraphic styles that have evolved in the Islamic world from the 9th to the 20th centuries as they appear in different media, from silk to agate and parchment to steel. The selection includes a folio from a minute, 9th-century Koran, a 15th-century royal wine cup from Iran, and contemporary works exploring the power of Arabic letters.*

21 November 1999 – 28 May 2000
- *Antoin Sevruguin (late 1830s–1933) and the Persian Image includes 50 images of rulers, courtiers, and commoners, and scenes of daily life in Iran from the late 1870s to the 1930s.*

21 November 1999 – 28 February 2000
- *Constructing Identities: Recent Works by the Iraqi artist Jananne al-Ani (b.1966). The exhibition presenting Islamic life in photographs, looks at some of the themes that also inspired Sevruguin's work – studio portraiture, images of 'exotic' people, and the construction of identities through appearance. Two pairs of al-Ani's large-format photographs, five pairs of transparencies, and a slide show make up the gallery's first one-person exhibition by a contemporary artist from the Islamic world. Her evocative prints address a topical issue – 'orientalism', and in particular the 'orientalist' representation of women.*

Continuing
- *Arts of the Islamic World. Some 60 works – Koran pages, metalwork, ceramics, glass, paintings, and calligraphy – from the 9th to 17th centuries explore Islamic artistic traditions. Themes include the forms and functions of the works of art, the role of calligraphy, the use of figurative decoration, and the meaning of abstract designs.*

UNITED NATIONS

Magazines

Museum International

UNESCO, Paris
Blackwell Publishers
108 Cowley Road
Oxford, OX4 1JF
United Kingdom

- Museum International*, No. 203 (Vol. 51, No. 3, 1999), features a number of interesting articles on the various approaches to Islamic art adopted by museums today, with a guest editorial on 'Exhibiting the art of the Muslim World', by Oleg Grabar, one of the foremost specialists on the subject of Islamic art.*

The Agenda is produced by the Centre of Islamic Culture in Rotterdam, The Netherlands. Please send all information with regard to activities related to culture and art in the Islamic World to:
The Centre of Islamic Culture
P.O. Box 361
3000 AJ Rotterdam
TheNetherlands
Fax: +31 10 270 71 82
E-mail: mediatheek@wereld museum.rotterdam.nl

Academic Meetings

Labour in Pakistan
Date: 26-29 December 1999
Venue: Karachi
Information: Dr Yunas Samad, Department of Social and Economic Studies, University of Bradford, West Yorkshire, BD7 1DP, UK
a.y.samad@bradford.ac.uk
tel +44 1274 234802,
fax +44 1274 385295
Dr Kamran Asad Ali, Department of Anthropology,
University of Rochester, USA
knar@uhura.cc.rochester.edu
tel +1 716 2758614
Karamat Ali
karamat@piler.khi.sdnpk.undp.org
tel +92 21 4557009
fax +92 21 45557009

The Centrality of the Qur'an in Islamic and Middle Eastern Culture
Date: 10-11 January 2000
Information: A. Jones or R. Nettler, The Oriental Institute, Pusey Lane, Oxford, OX1 2LE, UK
URL: http://users.ox.ac.uk/~neareast/qur'anin.htm

Crossing Borders: Cultural, National and Islamic Identities in Asia
Panel at the 2000 Association of Asian Studies Annual Meeting
Date: 9-12 March 2000
Venue: Town and Country Resort & Convention Center, San Diego, California, USA
Information: Ron Lukens-Bull, University of North Florida
Rlukensbul@aol.com

First Mediterranean Social and Political Research Meeting
Date: 22-26 March 2000
Venue: Robert Schuman Centre at the European University Institute, Via dei Roccettini, 9, 50016 San Domenico di Fiesole, Italy
Information:
Ann-Charlotte Svantesson
tel +39 055 4685785
svantess@iue.it
Imco Brouwer
tel +39 055 4685783 or 426
brouwer@iue.it

Iran 2000: The Challenges ahead. 18th Annual CIRA Conference
Date: 28-29 April 2000
Venue: Hyatt Regency Bethesda, Maryland, USA
Information: Kamran Dadkhah, Department of Economics, Northeastern University, Boston, MA 02115, USA
tel +1 617 3732297
kdadkhah@lynx.neu.edu
URL: http://www.dac.neu.edu/cira

III International Conference on Islamic Legal Studies: The Madhhab
Date: 4-6 May 2000
Information: Peri Bearman, Harvard Law School, Pound Hall 501, Cambridge, MA 02138, USA
pbearman@law.harvard.edu
URL: http://www.law.harvard.edu/Programs/ILSP

2000 South Asian Women's Conference
Date: 6-7 may 2000
Venue: Los Angeles, California
Information: Sangeeta Gupta, PhD, Director, SAWC, PMB 260, 1198 Pacific Coast Hwy, Ste. D. Seal Beach, CA 90740-6200,USA
sageetaucla@yahoo.com
URL: http://www.indianmall.com/sawc

The Third Biennial Conference on Iranian Studies
Date: 25-28 May 2000
Venue: Hyatt Regency Hotel, Bethesda, Maryland, USA
Information: SIS Executive Secretary, Kambiz Eslami, c/o Princeton University Library
tel +1 609 2581308
fax +1 609 2580441
keslami@pop3.cit.princeton.edu

BRISMES 2000 Centre for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies
Date: 2 and 5 July 2000
Venue: University of Cambridge
Information: University of Cambridge, Faculty of Oriental Studies, Sidgwick Avenue, Cambridge, CB3 9DA, UK
tel +01223 335103
fax +01223 335103
oriental-mes-admin@lists.cam.ac.uk
Deadline: abstract or proposal by 31 January 2000
URL: http://www.dur.ac.uk/brismes/activities.html

Respect and Tolerance between Islam and Christianity in the Texts of History and Liturature in 2000
Date: 15-18 May 2000
Venue: Cannakale, Turkey
Information: Terzioglu Kampusu, Canakkale Onsekiz Mart University
tel + 00 90 286-213 02 05/ 213 01 55
fax + 00 90 286-212 20 33
zekicemilarda@hotmail.com

6th Biennial EASA Conference: Crossing Categorical Boundaries: Religion as Politics / Politics as Religion
Date: 26-29 July 2000
Venue: Krakow, Poland
Information: Secretariat European Association of Social Anthropologists (EASA), Urgell 259, s.s.3, E-08026 Barcelona, Spain
tel/fax +34 9 33212259
easa@trivium.gh.ub.es
URL: http://www.ub.es/easa/6th.htm

International Interdisciplinary Conference on Language, Thought and Reality: Science, Religion and Philosophy
Date: 1-4 August 2000
Venue: Calcutta, India
Information: Dr Chandana Chakrabarti, Elon College Campus Box 2336, Elon College, N.C. 27244, USA, chakraba@numen.elon.edu
URL: http://www.elon.edu/chakraba

XVIII Quinquennial Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions (IAHR)
Date: 5-12 August 2000
Venue: International Convention Centre Durban, South Africa
Information: Prof. Pratap Kumar, Department of Science of Religion, University of Durban-Westville, Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000, South Africa
kumar@pixie.udw.ac.za
General Secretary of the IAHR
Prof. Armin Geertz,
Department of the Study of Religion,
University of Aarhus, Main Building, DK-8000 Aarhus C., Denmark
geertz@teologi.aau.dk
URL: http://www.udw.ac.za/iahr

International Congress of Asian and North African Studies (ICANAS) on Oriental and Asian Studies in the Era of Globalization
Date: 27 August – 1 September 2000
Venue: Montreal Convention Center, 201 Viger Avenue West, Montreal, Canada
Information: ICANAS 2000 Secretariat, Bureau des Congrès, Université de Montreal, P.O. Box 6128, Station Downtown, Montréal (Québec) H3C 3J7, Canada
URL: http://www.bcoc.umontreal.ca

International Conference on Middle Eastern Popular Culture
Date: 17-21 September 2000
Venue: Magdalen College, University of Oxford, UK
Information: Near Eastern Studies Programme, The Oriental Institute, University of Oxford, UK
neareast@orinst.ox.ac.uk
URL: http://users.ox.ac.uk/~neareast/middle.htm

7th European Conference on Central Asian Studies: Central Asia: Past, Present and Future
Date: 25-30 September 2000
Venue: Vienna University, Institute for Social and Cultural Anthropology
Information: Asst. Prof. Mag. Dr Gabriele Rasuly-Paleczek, Institute for Social and Cultural Anthropology, University of Vienna, A-1010 Vienna, Universitätsstr. 7/IV, Austria
tel +43 1 427748506,
gabriele.rasuly@univie.ac.at

Medical Ethics and Medical Law in Islam
Date: 19-21 March 2001
Venue: University of Haifa, Haifa, Israel
Information: Dr Vardit Rispler-Chaim, Department of Arabic Language and Literature, University of Haifa, Israel
tel +972 4 8249789,
rhla103@uvm.haifa.ac.il

XXVIII Deutcher Orientalistentag
Date: 26-30 March 2001
Venue: Bamberg, Germany
Information: Maurus Reinkowski, Lehrstuhl für Türkische Sprache, An der Universität 11, D-96045 Bamberg, Germany
tel +49 951 8632196
fax +49 951 8635182
dot2001@split.uni-bamberg.de

Islamic Studies in Europe Series
The International Institute for Islamic Thought (IIIT) and national academic institutions will be holding a series of seminars on Islamic Studies in Europe in various European cities from February 2000. The seminars will focus on the state of this discipline and identify serious lacunae in the present state of research within its many fields of specialization. Tentative date for UK conference is July 2000. For all other dates and more information about this series of seminars, please contact IIIT at the following address:
pf06@dial.pipex.com

ISIM Agenda

ISIM Lectures

11 January 2000
Richard Bulliet
Middle East Institute, Columbia University, New York, USA

February 2000
Reinhard Schulze
Institut für Islamwissenschaft, Universität Bern, Switzerland

7 March 2000
William Roff
Department of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies, University of Edinburgh, UK

19-25 March 2000
R. Stephen Humphreys
History Department, University of California, Santa Barbara, USA

April 2000
Gudrun Kr mer
Free University Berlin, Germany

ISIM Seminars

April 2000
'Muslim Intellectuals and Modern Challenges'
Seminar to be held in Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

June 2000
'Religion and Economy in Muslim Societies'
Seminar to be held in Jakarta, Indonesia.

ISIM Activities in cooperation with other institutes

17 January – 6 March 2000
'Europe's crescent'
Series of lectures on Islam in Europe organized by Felix Meritis and the European Cultural Foundation, in cooperation with the ISIM on the following dates at 20.30:

17 January 2000
Hafid Bouazza
'Images of Muslims in 19th and 20th-century literature' (in Dutch)

24 January 2000
Peter Clark
'From Fantasy to Faith: Islam and architecture in the United Kingdom'

January 2000
Martin van Bruinessen
'Aceh: Resistance against Dutch and Javanese colonialism' (in Dutch)

7 February 2000
Parvez Manzoor
'Islam and the notion of multi-cultural society in Europe'

14 February 2000
Ger Duijzings
'Islam in the Balkans: between myth and reality' (in Dutch)

21 February 2000
Martin van Amerongen
'Muslims in Mozart's "Die Enthführung aus dem Serail"' (inDutch)

28 February 2000
Steven Vertovec
'Muslim youth in Western Europe'

6 March 2000
Jørgen Nielsen
'Islamic orientations in Europe'

5 February 2000
'Living Islam'
An event on 'Islam on the Internet' and 'Islam and Music' organized by Felix Meritis, the European Cultural Foundation, and the ISIM.
Invited guest:
Peter Mandaville
(University of Kent, Canterbury, UK)

21–24 June 2000
'Vingt ans apr s'
Colloquium organized by the CERI, with the cooperation of ISIM, on Islamist movements in the last quarter of the 20th century.
(To take place in Paris, France)

ANNOUNCEMENT

New Web-Based Master of Arts Programme

The University of Melbourne of Australia, an internationally recognized teaching and research institution, is offering a Master of Arts in Islamic Studies by distance education from March 2000. Delivered mainly over the Internet, the course offers a comprehensive programme in Islamic Studies that attempts to bridge the gap between traditional and modern scholarship.

The Master of Arts in Islamic Studies is rigorous and maintains the highest academic standards, whilst offering a flexible approach to learning, enabling graduates in Islamic Studies or cognate disciplines, irrespective of their geographical locations, to continue their studies at the University of Melbourne.

The course focuses strongly on developing analytical skills, critical thinking and scholarly writing. It provides the student with tools, concepts and skills that build upon previously acquired skills and knowledge. It familiarizes the student with the extensive body of literature on Islam and Muslims in both Western academia and classical Islamic scholarship, enabling the student to place many areas of Islamic Studies into their philosophical, intellectual, social, historical and economic contexts.

Candidates for the MA (Islamic Studies) should have a BA Pass or BA Honours degree in Islamic Studies or in a related discipline and must satisfy the University of Melbourne English language requirements. Instruction is in English.

Course Objectives

The Master of Arts (Islamic Studies) has as its objectives that candidates completing the course should be able to:
- demonstrate a superior knowledge and understanding of current issues and challenges in each of the selected specialized areas of the course;
- demonstrate an in-depth knowledge and understanding of various conceptual frameworks and theoretical perspectives presented in the course;
- demonstrate an understanding and application of the latest research findings in the selected specialized area of the programme;
- express informed opinions about particular areas chosen by the student; and
- demonstrate an understanding of the theory and practice of research needed to evaluate research literature and carry out appropriate research activities.

Course Structure

Students with a BA Honours degree will finish the course in 12 months (full-time) or 24 months (part-time) by completing six subjects and a short thesis. Students with a BA pass degree will finish the course in 18 months (full-time) or 36 months (part-time) by completing ten subjects and a short thesis. At this stage, 12 subjects will be offered:
- Analysis of Texts in Islamic Sources
- Islam and Questioning of Modernity
- Methods of Qur'anic Sciences
- Researching Islam and Muslim Societies
- Methodology of Hadith
- Islamic Banking and Finance
- Islamic Theology: Schools and Methods
- Islamic Education: Philosophy and Methods
- Muslim Philosophical Traditions
- Methods of Islamic Law
- Sufism: Doctrines and Practices
- Minor Thesis in Islamic Studies (10 – 12,000 words)

Assessment & Examination

Assessment will depend on the units studied, details of which are provided in the study package. To complete each unit, students generally have to undertake a research paper of about 2000 words as well as sit a three-hour written examination at a centre approved by the University.

Application Deadlines

To commence studies in Semester 1, March 2000, the closing date for applications is 30 November 1999. Some late applications up to the end of January 2000 may be accepted. To commence studies in Semester 2, July 2000, the closing date for applications is 30 April 2000. ✦

Contents

VACANCIES

New ISIM Fellowships

The ISIM invites applications and research proposals for various fellowships throughout 2000. Applications from candidates in all fields of the social sciences, humanities and religious studies will be considered. All candidates should be competent in academic English.

The ISIM fellowships include:
– *PhD Fellowships*: ISIM PhD fellowships are granted for a period of up to 4 years. The applicants should hold an MA degree or similar qualification in their field. Most of the PhD fellowships are placed within one of the ISIM Research Programmes. However, innovative individual PhD research proposals are also invited.
– *Postdoctoral Fellowships*: ISIM postdoctoral fellowships are granted for a period of up to 2 years and are available to young scholars who have received their PhD degree less than 5 years prior to application.
– *Visiting Fellowships*: ISIM visiting fellowships are granted for a period of up to 3 months. Some of these senior research fellowships will be offered upon invitation, others will be awarded in open competition.
– *Sabbatical Fellowships*: the ISIM offers facilities to academic staff of participating and other universities to conduct research. In specific cases, the ISIM makes funds available to finance the temporary replacement for teaching at the home university.

For more information on the various fellowships and to download an application form, see the ISIM Website: http://www.isim.nl or write to: ISIM Fellowship Programmes, P.O. Box 11089, 2301 EB Leiden, The Netherlands

international institute
ISIM
for the study of islam in the modern world

The International Institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern World (ISIM) promotes and conducts interdisciplinary research on contemporary social and intellectual trends and movements in Muslim societies and communities. The ISIM's research approaches are expressly interdisciplinary and comparative, covering a large geographic range which includes North Africa and the Middle East, Sub-Saharan Africa, Central Asia, South and Southeast Asia, and (Muslim communities in) the West. Broad in its scope, the ISIM brings together all areas of expertise.