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The inaugural issue of the *ISIM Newsletter* has received favourable response. We tried to reach a large audience and reactions to the first mailing, indeed, came from all over the globe. These positive reactions demonstrate the existence of a demand for information on the multifaceted field of the study of modern Islam and Muslim communities – or ‘communities of Muslims’ as Filali-Ansary puts it (p. 6) – as well as for an exchange of ideas and findings generated by research. In this second issue, we try to continue along this line. In comparison to the inaugural Newsletter, the geographical spread of the contributions to this issue is expanded, bringing us to the geographical margins of the world of Islam: Vietnam, The Philippines, Australia, South Africa, Trinidad and the Czech Republic. More than anything else, this global expanse shows that the world of Islam – through migration and conversion – is interwoven with other worlds, both old and new. This interwovenness, however, does not mean that the mutual (and self) images and conceptions which Muslims and non-Muslims have necessarily imply social or religious affinities. In several contributions, the rapport – but also the lack thereof – is dealt with directly or indirectly, both within the range of academic and ideological discourse (e.g. secularism in Muslim and Christian experiences) and of societal and political practice (e.g. political representation and radicalization). The growing interest in non-political Islam, too, is evident in this issue; the religious debates within Islam receive increased attention, in particular the more ‘liberal’ trends, as do the more mystical currents. Mass culture and the new media

have recently stimulated fresh research into the swiftly expanding worlds of broadcasted and – even – digital Islam. Issues of gender and of other social and cultural categories, like age (youth) and ethnic background, feature in a number of articles, varying from reflection on methodologies to performing arts and song. Most, but not all, contributions deal directly with Islamic or Muslim categories. Some deal with aspects of societies which are predominantly Muslim in composition, but which have no, or no direct, bearing on religious thought or practice, but then no society of Muslims can be solely understood from religious angles. Furthermore, Muslim societies are also to be understood from the perspective of their historical experiences. More articles in this issue reflect this perspective than in the first.

The *ISIM Newsletter* has the ambition of covering activities concerning the study of Islam and Muslim societies. This information, along with news on vacancies, grants, and fellowships, is presented in the ISIM ‘Info Pages’. In order to offer updated information, the ISIM relies on its readers. You are invited to send us (by e-mail, fax, etc.) comments on the contents of specific articles or the Newsletter as a whole, and information on activities you think relevant to our audience (also by digital forms on our website). When processed, the information will be made available also on the ISIM website. ♦

DICK DOUWES
editor

MISCELLANEOUS

ISIM Academic Committee

The following scholars have become members of the ISIM Academic Committee, which is still in formation.

Prof. Dr Mamadou Diouf

Prof. Diouf is affiliated with the Université Cheikh Anta Diop Dakar-Fann and the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) in Dakar, Senegal. He is an anthropologist and historian. He is the author of, amongst others, *Le Kajor au XIX siècle: pouvoir cédde et conquête coloniale*, Paris, 1990.

Prof. Dr Jean-François Leguil-Bayart

Prof. Leguil-Bayart is director of the Centre d'Études et de Recherches Internationales (CERI) in Paris. His interests include political sciences, historicity of the state and foreign politics. His geographical interests are Sub-Saharan Africa, Turkey and Iran. Most recently he has published *l'illusion identitaire*, 1996.

Prof. Dr Gudrun Krämer

Prof. Krämer holds the chair of Islamic Studies at the Free University of Berlin since 1996. Her fields of interest are: modern Middle Eastern history and current Arab affairs, contemporary Islamic political thought, and minorities in the Muslim Arab world. Her main geographical interest is Egypt. To appear soon is *Der Gottesstaat als Republik*.

Sami Zubaida

Sami Zubaida is reader in Sociology, Birkbeck College, University of London, and chairman of the Department of Politics and Sociology since 1997. His interests are wide and include religion, ethnicity, and nationalism, and food and culture. His geographical interests comprise Egypt, Iran, Iraq and Turkey. He is the author of *Islam, the People and the State*, London, 1993.

ISIM Professorial Fellowship

The first Professorial Fellowship of ISIM has been granted to Prof. Dr Muhammad Khalid Masud. A graduate of McGill University, Montreal, Professor Masud became affiliated with the Islamic Research Institute, International Islamic University, Islamabad, Pakistan (See also ISIM Newsletter 1 page 43 for details on this institute). His interests are wide but he is in particular known for his work on Islamic law and legal philosophy. His geographical interest comprises most parts of the Muslim world, in particular South Asia. Professor Masud is a prolific author and has published books and articles in many scholarly magazines and journals. He is the author of *Iqbal's Reconstruction of Ijtihad*, IRI & Iqbal Academy. Among his most well-known editing works is *Islamic Legal Interpretation: the Muftis and their Fatwas*, co-edited with Brinkley Messick and David Powers, Cambridge, USA, 1996.

**Dr S.J. Noorda:
President of the University
of Amsterdam**

On 1 January 1999, Dr S.J. (Sijbelt) Noorda was appointed President of the University of Amsterdam (UvA). He had been acting President after the untimely death of his predecessor, Dr J.K.M. Gevers. Dr Noorda had been vice-president of the University of Amsterdam since 1991. The UvA is one of the founding universities of ISIM. Dr Noorda is Chairman of the Board of ISIM. He studied Theology at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and at the Union Theological Seminary/Colombia University in New York and defended his PhD thesis at Utrecht University.

Before embarking on his career as university board member, he worked as a scholarly member of the Bible Translation and Hermeneutics section of Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. He is currently Chairman of the project board of the new translation of the Bible into Dutch.

Letters to the Editor

The ISIM solicits your response to the ISIM Newsletter. We intend to allow space for reactions to, and comments or opinions on, articles contained in this publication. If you wish to contribute to this section, please do so via one of the following addresses. Be sure to indicate ‘Letter to the Editor’.

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Retraction

The ISIM Newsletter editors would like to apologize for a misprint in the inaugural issue. On page 42, the director's name and address of the CIE (Centre for Islam in Europe) figured on the bottom of the page under the information for the NIAASC (Netherlands Institute for Archaeology and Arabic Studies in Cairo).

The correct addresses are as follows:

Centre for Islam in Europe
Director: Professor Herman de Ley
Address: Blandijnberg 2
B-9000 Gent, Belgium
Tel: +32 9 264 40 251
Fax: +32 9 264 6441

Nederlands-Vlaams Instituut in Cairo (NVIC)

Former Netherlands Institute for Archaeology and Arabic Studies in Cairo (NIAASC)
Director:
Professor Johannes den Heijer
Address: 1, Mahmud Azmi Street
Zamalek, Cairo Egypt
Tel: +20 2 3400076
Fax: +20 2 3404376

**Netherlands-Flemish
Institute in Cairo**

*Nederlands-Vlaams Instituut
in Cairo (NVIC)*

On February 10, 1999 the Netherlands Institute for Archaeology and Arabic Studies in Cairo (NIAASC) changed its name. The NIAASC is now called the Nederlands-Vlaams Instituut in Cairo (NVIC) in Cairo (al-Ma'had al-Hulandi al-Falamanki bi l-Qahira in Arabic). The name change was witnessed by representatives of the Dutch and Belgian governments, the presidents of the General Board and the Scientific Council, and by representatives of participating institutions. Representatives of various Egyptian scholarly and cultural institutions as well as foreign institutions based in Cairo were also present.

At the occasion, the role of the NVIC (NIAASC) in Arab Studies in the Netherlands was highlighted by Prof. Dr R. Kruk of Leiden University, Chairperson of the Scientific Board of the NVIC. Prof. Dr U. Vermeulen of the Catholic University Leuven, member of the Scientific Council of the NVIC, spoke about the role of NVIC in Arab Studies in Flanders.