

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 programmes 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 Stra-

tegic 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*)