

# International Approaches to Islamic Studies in Higher Education

## A report to HEFCE

Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies

Subject Centre for Philosophical and Religious Studies

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# **International Approaches to Islamic Studies in Higher Education**

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## **1. Executive Summary**

1. This report presents the results of a desk-based study of international approaches to Islamic Studies in higher education, commissioned by HEFCE in December 2007. 'Islamic Studies' is taken to include the study of Islam and Muslim societies in a variety of disciplines and departments, including named Islamic Studies programmes as well as Religious Studies, History, languages and literature, Politics, Anthropology and Sociology, and interdisciplinary area studies programmes in Middle East or South Asian Studies. Researchers investigated the historical development and current approaches to Islamic Studies in eight countries: the United Kingdom, France, Germany, the Netherlands, the United States, Australia, Malaysia and Turkey. For each country special attention was paid to recent developments in Islamic Studies and the responses of governments, policy makers and funding bodies, as well as to interactions between institutions of higher education and faith-based organisations and communities. Case studies were developed for each country, excluding the UK, in order to highlight examples of innovative practice in relation to Islamic Studies in higher education.
2. In all of the countries surveyed, there was agreement that Islamic Studies had increased in prominence in the past ten years, particularly since 2001. A rise in student interest in the subject and attention to the need for better engagement of Muslim communities within each country has led to the development of new courses, research centres, and collaborations. From this research, the following general themes have emerged as important developments in Islamic Studies in higher education across most of the countries concerned:
  - a. the development of interdisciplinary and trans-regional centres for the study of Islam and Muslims in the modern world;
  - b. the development of networks of scholars, at national or regional levels, that encourage collaboration in research and teaching between universities;
  - c. the promotion of efforts to incorporate aspects of the training of local Muslim leaders, including imams, into higher education programmes;
  - d. the development of individual modules related to Islamic Studies that can be pursued by students on a variety of degree courses or offered as outreach education courses, in a variety of learning and teaching modes.
3. Interdisciplinary and trans-regional centres for the study of Islam and Muslims in the modern world have been identified as key locations for the development of new approaches to Islamic Studies across the countries investigated. Such centres may be located in one institution or may represent collaboration between a number of institutions. They are often funded primarily by the national education ministry, with additional funding from the universities involved or from outside sources. They may also be funded by philanthropic donations from the Muslim world. Examples of such centres include: the Institute for the Study of Islam and Societies of the Muslim World (IISMM) in France; the International Institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern World (ISIM) in the Netherlands; the Centre for Modern Oriental Studies in Germany; the Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Christian-Muslim Understanding in the United States; and the National Centre of Excellence for Islamic Studies in Australia.
4. Scholarly networks to develop research and teaching related to Islamic Studies have also played an important role in the development of the discipline in the past ten years. These networks may be formal collaborations between a small number of institutions to develop joint research projects or degree courses. They may also be national networks developed to share resources and best practice. Such networks may receive state

funding, or may rely on the resources of individual universities or outside funding bodies. In some countries, discussion of new approaches to Islamic Studies takes place within existing subject associations related to the study of Islam and the Muslim world.

Examples of recently developed networks and collaborations include: the National Institute for Technology and Liberal Education *Al-Musharaka* (the collaborative) Initiative in the United States, and Islamic Studies collaborations between the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Duke University in the United States. The ISIM in the Netherlands and the National Centre of Excellence for Islamic Studies in Australia are also collaborative projects that bring together the expertise of different universities.

5. In most of the countries investigated, the question of the relationship (if any) between higher education institutions and the training of local Muslim leaders, including imams, has arisen as a key priority in the past ten years. Each country has taken a slightly different approach to this question, related largely to the established relationship between the state and religious groups. In France, for example, a one-year programme for Muslim religious leaders focuses on providing students with an introduction to the principles of French secularism and the role of religion in society. In the Netherlands, Leiden University has developed a programme in collaboration with Muslim organisations that would provide a two-pronged training, the academic side being carried out by the university and the confessional side being carried out by the Muslim organisations. The wide variety of models highlighted in this report indicates the need for each country to develop an approach to this question appropriate to the local context.
6. With the increased student interest in Islam and the Muslim world, some universities have developed modules related to Islamic Studies that can be incorporated into different degree programmes. Themed courses such as Islamic finance or introductory courses on Islam for a general student population have been developed. Other universities have engaged in outreach education for those working in social services or government. Such courses and outreach programmes have been developed at various universities in the United States; at the IISMM in France; and at the National Centre of Excellence for Islamic Studies in Australia. Analysis in this report of the way that Islamic Studies operates within two Muslim majority contexts offers an indication of the parameters and/or inherent flexibility of some programmes.
7. The impact of these initiatives varies across the countries concerned, and in many cases the developments are too recent to be accurately assessed for long-term effectiveness. However, a number of the interdisciplinary research centres mentioned above (e.g. the ISIM in the Netherlands or the IISMM in France) have established reputations as leading centres for contemporary research on Islam and Muslims. Scholarly networks have had a direct impact on teaching and research outputs in many of the countries discussed, resulting in innovative modules and degree courses. Many of the collaborations between higher education institutions and Muslim organisations, particularly for locally designed imam training programmes, have only recently been developed, and further research would be required to assess their impact. This report provides a number of examples that, with further research and assessment, may provide appropriate models for developments in Islamic Studies in the United Kingdom.

## 2. Introduction

1. In response to HEFCE's November 2007 invitation to tender, the Subject Centres for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies (LLAS) and Philosophical and Religious Studies (PRS) received funding from HEFCE for a project entitled 'International Approaches to Islamic Studies in Higher Education'. Full details on these institutions and project personnel can be found in Appendix A. The project was commissioned by HEFCE to support their work relating to Islamic Studies, which was designated a strategically important subject in June 2007.
2. This action was taken following the release of the report 'Islam at Universities in England', prepared by Dr Ataullah Siddiqui (henceforth 'the Siddiqui Report').<sup>1</sup> The debates occasioned by this report raised the issue of the nature of Islamic Studies in UK higher education and the role it does or could play in broader social and political issues. These debates are not limited to the United Kingdom, but have arisen in a number of countries as demand for teaching and research related to Islam and the Muslim world has increased in the past ten years. Keeping in mind HEFCE's interest in Islamic Studies as an academic subject area within higher education, this report seeks to provide comparative information on approaches to Islamic Studies in order to support HEFCE's initiatives in relation to this strategically important subject.<sup>2</sup>
3. The report maps international approaches to Islamic Studies in higher education, bearing in mind the perspectives of different constituencies including academics, governments and policy makers, and members of faith communities. The report seeks to:
  - a. investigate how Islamic Studies has developed in the countries in question, what subject disciplines contribute to provision in Islamic Studies, and interactions between Islamic Studies and faith-based communities;
  - b. present findings on the size, scope and capacity of Islamic Studies provision in the selected countries and an assessment of the 'health of the discipline' in each country;
  - c. investigate relationships between publicly funded higher education institutions and private institutions, including faith-based institutions, in order to identify the issues associated with these types of collaboration;
  - d. present findings on developments in Islamic Studies in the respective countries in the past ten years and the responses of governments, policy makers and funding bodies, where appropriate. Particular attention is paid to instances where Islamic Studies capacity has been developed or generated through such initiatives;
  - e. provide selected case studies of departments, schools or research institutes concerned with Islamic Studies in the selected countries, with a particular attention to programmes that have developed innovative approaches to the study of Islam in the contemporary global context.
4. This study seeks to provide a robust and comprehensive mapping of approaches to Islamic Studies in higher education in six core countries, in both quantitative and

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<sup>1</sup> Ataullah Siddiqui, 'Islam at Universities in England: Meeting the Needs and Investing in the Future' (London: DFES, 2007). Available at <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/hegateway/uploads/DrSiddiquiReport.pdf> [accessed 8 March 2008].

<sup>2</sup> HEFCE, 'Strategically Important Subjects: Islamic Studies', <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/aboutus/sis/islamic/> [accessed 7 March 2008].

qualitative terms. The remit of this report was desk-based research and interviews. It was commissioned in December 2007 with a submission date of March 2008. The focus of this report is necessarily rigid: it is recognised that fieldwork, analysis of student experience, and a broader range of country studies could make a contribution to future research on Islamic Studies in higher education. The study kept in mind both disciplinary diversity and the historical relationship between Islamic Studies and each nation's interaction with the Muslim world or with Muslims in Western contexts. The countries surveyed each have long histories of developing approaches to the study of Islam, and have each responded in different ways to contemporary debates and issues related to Islamic Studies in higher education. The core countries were selected based on their value as comparative contexts for the UK and for known diversity of approaches towards Islamic Studies in its many forms. The core countries are:

- the United Kingdom
  - France
  - Germany
  - the Netherlands
  - the United States
  - Australia.
5. The report also includes information on Islamic Studies in two Muslim-majority countries: Malaysia and Turkey. These countries have been chosen for a number of reasons. Both have sent postgraduates to undertake Islamic Studies in the United Kingdom, and many of these postgraduates have later gone on to work as academics in universities in Malaysia and Turkey. The UK system has been seen as providing a benchmark standard, in the face of international competition for postgraduates, for which governments are prepared to fund their best students. In Malaysia, the federal and state university sectors have precedents in British structures and formats of higher education. This influence may be a two-way process, in that these students have also influenced the teaching approaches of Islamic Studies in the UK in higher education, or at least the ways in which some departments recruit and manage postgraduates. Both governments have sustained experience of incorporating and managing the study of Islam in their universities, while also promoting to different degrees a 'secularised' and technology-centred agenda. It is not intended to imply that these represent any form of best practice, but they do provide some understanding of curriculum management and the ways in which higher education in Muslim contexts *can* operate. These examples may be atypical compared with other approaches to the study of Islam in Muslim contexts, which could have been drawn upon in a wider study. They can also suggest approaches to how potential religious leaders, including imams, can be taught within a higher education setting.
  6. Researchers approached the main themes identified for each country using a variety of sources, including: published research articles and surveys on the development and provision of Islamic Studies in different national contexts; published research articles, policy documents, reports and media coverage on the development of Islamic Studies in the past ten years and the responses of governments and funding bodies; and quantitative data and relevant reports from national educational statistics agencies.
  7. Desk-based research was supplemented by consultation with a network of senior representatives of subject associations or academic departments related to Islamic Studies in the UK and in each of the case study countries. Project personnel drew on the Subject Centres' existing contacts in order to circulate project information to these organisations, including: the British Society for Middle Eastern Studies (BRISMES), the British Association for the Study of Religions (BASR), the European Association for

Middle Eastern Studies (EURAMES), the Middle East Studies Association (MESA), the American Academy of Religion (AAR), the Association Française pour l'Etude du Monde Arabe et Musulman (AFEMAM), and other subject associations identified for each country. This network contributed specialist information, assisted in identifying appropriate case studies, and advised on the analysis and findings of the study. The consultation was carried out electronically, but researchers also used telephone and face-to-face interviews where appropriate.

8. Telephone or email interviews were carried out with academics, policy makers and representatives of Muslim organisations in each of the countries presented in the report. Sample interview questions and a list of people consulted can be found in Appendices B and C. Interviews were used to obtain further information on: approaches to Islamic Studies in each country; important developments in Islamic Studies in the past ten years; government initiatives to develop Islamic Studies capacity; and the issues arising in partnerships between public higher education institutions and private, including faith-based, institutions or organisations. Interviewees had the opportunity to contribute anonymously. A full explanation of the remit of the project, and its anticipated distribution, was provided to all participants.
9. Case studies have been developed for each of the countries, focusing on departments or institutions that have taken innovative approaches to Islamic Studies in the contemporary global context, or cases which provide examples of interaction between publicly funded higher education institutions and private, including faith-based, institutions. Case studies were carried out initially by consulting websites and published materials to assess different approaches to Islamic Studies provision and the institution's collaboration with private, including faith-based, institutions. This was followed by structured telephone interviews with selected faculty at each institution, carried out in the appropriate language where possible. Interviews were used to obtain further information on the institution's approach to Islamic Studies; important developments in Islamic Studies at the institution in the past ten years; government initiatives to develop Islamic Studies capacity; and the issues arising in partnerships between public higher education institutions and private, including faith-based, institutions or organisations.
10. In this report 'Islamic Studies' is taken to include the study of Islam in a variety of disciplines and departments, including named Islamic Studies programmes as well as Religious Studies, Middle East Studies, and other relevant humanities and social science disciplines. Our approach to Islamic Studies takes into consideration that the study of Islam has developed following different trajectories related to disciplinary outlooks and to the history of interaction between 'Western' nations and the Muslim world(s). Approaches to Islamic Studies in Western universities today include the study of Islam through classical texts and languages as well as the study of Muslim communities and practice.
11. Scholars engaged in forms of Islamic Studies come from a number of academic disciplines, including Religious Studies, History, languages and literature, Politics, Anthropology and Sociology, and interdisciplinary area studies programmes in Middle East Studies and South Asian Studies. There is not necessarily parity between and within these fields, reflecting diverse political, financial and educational agendas in local and global contexts. Although many commonalities exist, different national contexts have given rise to different approaches to the study of Islam, and in certain cases traditions of Oriental Studies or theological perspectives on Islam are still of great importance. Islamic Studies can also be interpreted within a post-Orientalist matrix, in particular as a reaction to responses associated with Edward W. Said's 1979 book *Orientalism*.<sup>3</sup> In addition, in recent years the relationship between Islamic Studies and the presence of Muslim communities in Western countries has grown in importance, and national perspectives

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<sup>3</sup> Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (London: Random House, 1979).

on this relationship have had a direct impact on the development of Islamic Studies in different countries.

## Background to Mapping Islamic Studies

12. The present report represents a contemporary attempt at the mapping of Islamic Studies in higher education in a global context. Precedents are limited. Government reports on the need for developing capacity in languages and area studies in the UK date back to the 1909 Reay Report; subsequent reports in 1947 (Scarborough) and 1961 (Hayter) also highlighted the need for Middle East or Islamic Studies centres in the UK.<sup>4</sup> The Parker Report (1986) addressed specific needs surrounding language learning, including Arabic, Turkish and Persian, in the UK.<sup>5</sup> A 1997 volume edited by Azim Nanji endeavoured to map the study of Islam in various European contexts and in relation to different disciplines.<sup>6</sup> These and other works will be referred to in relevant sections of the present report.
13. The events and aftermath of 11 September 2001 galvanised reassessment of Islamic Studies at a variety of levels, with scrutiny emerging from government and media. The role of Islamic Studies, as represented across disciplines, became a heated topic. Academics in some contexts in the UK and globally felt 'under the microscope', with some expressing concerns about possible governmental interference in their teaching and research, whilst others noted fears of funding being streamed towards specific political agendas. This intensified further in the UK, in particular after the events of 7 July 2005, as part of a general appraisal of the roles of Islam in UK society.
14. As will be seen in this report, there can be conflict as to the positioning of Islamic Studies in diverse disciplinary areas, in particular with different positions being expressed between languages, linguistics and area studies (and related disciplines) and Religious Studies. It will be noted that these represent the constituencies of the authors of this report, and those with interests across the range of disciplines have been consulted.
15. A report from BRISMES in 2002 highlighted a perceived need for sustained investment in *Middle Eastern Studies*, and that this was in the national interest:

With the United States now limiting access to its universities, think-tanks and other resources for Middle Eastern and Muslim country nationals, it seems to make very good sense for the UK to capitalise on its historic and recognised links with the Middle East to intensify its relations with the Middle East and Muslim worlds and

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<sup>4</sup> [Hayter Report (Sir William Hayter)] University Grants Committee, 'Report of the Sub-Committee on Oriental, Slavonic, East European and African Studies' (London: 1961); [Reay Report (Lord Reay)], 'Report of the Committee Appointed by the Lords Commissioners of HM Treasury to Consider the Organisation of Oriental Studies in London' (London: 1909); [Scarborough Report (The Earl Scarborough)] Foreign Office, 'Report of the Interdepartmental Commission of Enquiry on Oriental, Slavonic, East European and African Studies' (London: 1947).

<sup>5</sup> Derek J. Latham, 'The Parker Report', *Bulletin (British Society for Middle Eastern Studies)* 13, no. 1 (1986); [Parker Report (Sir Peter Parker)] University Grants Committee, 'Speaking for the Future: A Review of the Requirements of Diplomacy and Commerce for Asian and African Languages and Area Studies' (London: 1986).

<sup>6</sup> Azim Nanji, *Mapping Islamic Studies: Genealogy, Continuity, and Change* (Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 1997).



encourage educational and broader Track Two contact with individuals and institutions of this area.<sup>7</sup>

16. In 2003, a report was compiled on 'The Crisis facing Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies in British Universities', with content by a number of academics associated with BRISMES.<sup>8</sup> Significant concerns in the report included the relative low numbers of British academics undertaking graduate research in Middle Eastern studies, combined with lack of motivation of any graduates to enter academia in these fields (due to limited numbers of posts and inadequate remuneration). These concerns have continued to be articulated by BRISMES, which is the main academic subject association in the UK associated with furthering Middle Eastern Studies.
17. In 2005, the PRS Subject Centre co-organised the 'Islam in Higher Education' conference, with the Association of Muslim Social Scientists (AMSS) and the University of Birmingham. This was attended by over 100 academics and educationalists, including participants from across Muslim communities in Britain. The organisers had worked on separate related events in the past: in March 2002, the Subject Centre organised a colloquium entitled 'Teaching Islam after 9-11', inviting academics engaged in Islamic Studies and Religious Studies to participate, and published a related article.<sup>9</sup> In 2002, the AMSS organised a conference on Muslim Education in Europe. A session at the conference was devoted to 'The Future of Islamic Studies in Higher Education'. The agenda of the Islam in Higher Education Conference was derived in part from the findings of both the PRS colloquium and the AMSS conference, which raised issues of pedagogy, recruitment, perceptions of 'the other', and the evaluation of learning and teaching materials.<sup>10</sup>
18. In 2006, Al-Maktoum Institute in Dundee published the results of their survey on the study of Islam in the UK. This sought to promote a 'new agenda to develop Islamic Studies into the Study of Islam and Muslims. This agenda should encourage us to build on the strengths of previous research and debate – that is, the Orientalist and traditionalist approaches – but also to learn from the many previous mistakes'.<sup>11</sup> The report concluded with a number of recommendations, including that Islamic Studies should become a separate discipline in its own right (rather than being attached to Theology and Religious Studies, or Middle Eastern Studies).<sup>12</sup> This report certainly

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<sup>7</sup> Anoush Ehteshami, 'Report – Middle Eastern Studies in the United Kingdom, A Challenge for Government, Industry and the Academic Community', 2002, <http://www.brismes.ac.uk/report%20-%20ME%20studies%20in%20the%20UK.htm> [accessed 8 March 2008].

<sup>8</sup> BRISMES, 'The Crisis facing Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies in British Universities: Report following Seminar at Portcullis House, October 2003, Sponsored by Robert Jackson, MP', <http://www.brismes.ac.uk/ME%20studies%20-%20seminar%20report.htm> [accessed 8 March 2008]. BRISMES describes itself as follows: 'At the national level, the Society pursues a concerted strategy by impressing on national, governmental and university bodies the importance of safeguarding and expanding Middle Eastern studies.' <http://www.dur.ac.uk/brismes/> [accessed 8 March 2008].

<sup>9</sup> Gary R. Bunt, 'Studying Islam after 9/11: Reflections and Resources', *PRS-LTSN Journal*, 1, no. 2 (2002), <http://www.prs.heacademy.ac.uk/publications/winter2002.pdf> [accessed 8 March 2008].

<sup>10</sup> Gary R. Bunt, 'Islam in Higher Education: University of Birmingham 29 – 30 January 2005', *Discourse*, 4, no. 2 (2005), <http://www.prs.heacademy.ac.uk/publications/spring2005.pdf>, and Abdul-Rehman Malik, 'Islam in Higher Education Conference – Review', <http://www.amssuk.com/docs/pdf/Islam%20in%20HE%20Conference%20Review.pdf> [both accessed 8 March 2008].

<sup>11</sup> Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi and Malory Nye, 'Time for Change – Report on the Future of the Study of Islam and Muslims in Universities and Colleges in Multicultural Britain' (Dundee: Al-Maktoum Press, 2006), 2.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

generated a degree of debate, which was followed through in other fora elsewhere, including at 'The State of Arabic and Islamic Studies in Western Universities' conference, held at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in November 2006.<sup>13</sup>

19. In May 2006, Higher Education Minister Bill Rammell requested Ataullah Siddiqui to produce a report on the teaching of Islam in England, to be published in 2007.<sup>14</sup> In part as a response to this initiative, a conference entitled 'Islam on Campus' was convened in December 2006 at the University of Edinburgh. It explored the different approaches towards Islamic Studies as a subject area, and responded to the accusations from some that there was a link between Islamic Studies and 'extremism':

In the view of those present, there was no link between the teaching of the Islamic Studies curriculum and extremism among students. The Islamic Studies curriculum was balanced, nuanced and designed with the long-term intellectual interests of the student at heart. While lecturers delivered the curriculum with integrity, they could not control how students used the knowledge they received.<sup>15</sup>

20. The 2007 publication of the Siddiqui Report generated considerable debate in the media, and critical responses.<sup>16</sup> A number of academics associated with Islamic Studies (including contributors to the present report) had been interviewed by Siddiqui and his team. As a formative document, which in many ways broke new ground, inevitably questions emerged as to how it informed the development of Islamic Studies in British universities (although its remit was England). Prominent issues of discussion included the definition(s) of Islamic Studies within different disciplinary frameworks, and the ways in which vocational training of potential imams could be incorporated (or not) into any higher education setting.
21. An announcement by then Prime Minister Tony Blair of £1 million for Islamic Studies, made at a conference in Cambridge at the same time as the publication of the Siddiqui Report, provided further impetus for debate. The present report is in part a response to subsequent discussions surrounding the Siddiqui Report.

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<sup>13</sup> We are unable to locate any reports on this event.

<sup>14</sup> Siddiqui, 'Islam at Universities in England'. Early coverage of the announcement of the Siddiqui Report was contained in Claire Sanders, 'Islamic Teaching to be Scrutinised', *Times Higher Education Supplement*, 19 May 2006. Available at <http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/story.asp?storyCode=203187&sectioncode=26> [accessed 8 March 2008].

<sup>15</sup> Yasir Suleiman and Ayman Shihadeh, 'Islam on Campus: Teaching Islamic Studies at Higher Education Institutions in the UK. Report of a Conference Held at the University of Edinburgh, 4 December 2006', *Journal of Beliefs & Values*, 28, no. 3 (2007): 309-29.

<sup>16</sup> For example, see Robert Gleave, 'Blending Islamic, Middle Eastern and Arabic Studies', in 'HEFCE Report on the Islamic Studies: Current Status and Future Prospects Seminar, 23 November 2007, Lion Court Conference Centre, London (Bristol: HEFCE, 2007).

### 3. Country Studies

#### 3.1 United Kingdom

##### Historical development and current approaches to Islamic Studies in the UK

1. Historically, the study of Islam and Muslim society as an academic field in Britain has its foundations in Orientalism, being (in this context) the study of the cultures and languages of the Muslim world, encompassing the Near and Middle East.<sup>1</sup> The first chairs in Arabic were created in Cambridge in 1632 and in Oxford in 1634.<sup>2</sup> By the nineteenth century, increasing contact with the Muslim world through travel and trade saw an expansion in the provision and interest in Islamic Studies.<sup>3</sup> This grew in the twentieth century, when the study of the languages and cultures of the Islamic world were seen as a necessary element for diplomacy, politics and international economic development for the United Kingdom.
2. In 1916, the School of Oriental and African Studies was opened as part of the University of London. The establishment of this institution followed the 1909 Reay Report, which saw a need for studies of the Islamic world for the 'training of persons who are going to the East or Africa, either for public service or private business'.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, this report also insisted on a balance between practical training and scholarly independence. It sought to strike 'a balance between the teaching of classical and of living spoken languages, and between teaching languages and teaching the history, religion and laws of the societies which used them'.<sup>5</sup> Likewise in 1947 the Scarborough Report added further emphasis on the need to maintain scholastic integrity whilst also utilising Islamic Studies to promote 'cooperation between the nations...the basis of world peace and future prosperity'.<sup>6</sup>
3. The development of Islamic Studies continues to be influenced by the historical context within which it finds itself. With the backdrop of established Muslim communities in the UK, and in a post-9/11 and 7/7 climate, disciplinary approaches to Islamic Studies are evolving and expanding. While the teaching of Islamic Studies remains in part within the legacy of its Orientalist heritage, the study of Islam and Muslim societies also takes place on a multi-disciplinary level. A particularly important development in Islamic Studies has been the growth in Islam being taught from within a Religious Studies tradition from the 1960s and 1970s.<sup>7</sup>
4. Islamic Studies emerging from an Orientalist heritage can be seen as a discipline with its own methodologies, core subjects and key texts. It focuses primarily on the Muslim world, particularly the Middle East; the acquisition of languages such as Arabic, Persian and Turkish; and the study of key Islamic texts including the Qur'an and the Hadith (traditions of the Prophet Muhammad). There are, however, scholars contributing to Islamic Studies located outside this model. These may approach the topic from a sociological, political or anthropological perspective.

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<sup>1</sup> Said, *Orientalism*.

<sup>2</sup> Albert Hourani, *Islam in European Thought* (Cambridge: CUP, 1991), 13.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 33-34 and 63-65.

<sup>4</sup> Reay Report quoted in Hourani, 67.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 68.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 69.

<sup>7</sup> Interview with Hugh Goddard, University of Nottingham, 27 February 2008 and interview with Ataulloh Siddiqui, Markfield Institute of Higher Education, 3 March 2008.

5. A mapping of the departments within British higher education represents this diversity of disciplines and approaches. There are very few named Islamic Studies centres or departments in Britain (Oxford and SOAS are exceptions). Rather Islamic Studies is taught and researched mainly in Middle Eastern and Arabic departments and Religious Studies departments.<sup>8</sup> In the main, the former represent the more traditionalist manifestations of Islamic Studies concerned with language acquisition, the Middle East and Arab culture, and the study of Islamic texts. Meanwhile, numerous Religious Studies departments offer a variety of courses at undergraduate and postgraduate levels on various aspects of Islam and Muslim societies, including programmes or modules on 'Islam in Contemporary Britain' at the University of Cardiff; 'Christian-Muslim Relations' in Nottingham; 'Muslims in Britain' at the University of Leeds; 'Islam Today' at the University of Wales, Lampeter; and 'Islam in the West' at the Open University. Furthermore, contributions to Islamic Studies are made in several Politics and Languages departments, for example at Manchester Metropolitan, Durham and Leeds.<sup>9</sup>

### **The 'health of the discipline' in the UK**

6. The mapping exercise undertaken by El-Awaisi and Nye illustrated a 'healthy' engagement with Islamic Studies and related subjects within UK higher education institutions. Islamic Studies is taught and researched in a diversity of areas, contributing extensively to scholarship on Islam and Muslim communities. Recent statistics demonstrate a rise in the enrolment numbers on Islamic Studies courses over the last five years, by 12% between 2002-3 and 2005-6, with 90% of all undergraduates on Islamic Studies courses in England previously domiciled in the UK.<sup>10</sup>
7. Despite a large percentage of home undergraduate students, 44% of all postgraduates in Islamic Studies in Britain are from overseas.<sup>11</sup> This lack of home-grown researchers could result in a detrimental minority of British academic post-holders in Islamic Studies in years to come. Moreover, a lack of home postgraduates is echoed in the relative lack of British funding specifically for Islamic Studies.<sup>12</sup> Several chairs in Islamic Studies and related subjects, not to mention dedicated Islamic Studies centres such as the al-Maktoum Institute, have Gulf funding, along with the attendant political contingencies potentially directing academic activities.<sup>13</sup>
8. Some have characterised the diversity of disciplinary approaches in Islamic Studies provision rather as a negative fragmentation whereby '[S]cholars and departments across these approaches tend to work in isolation from other areas and each one tries to

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<sup>8</sup> For example, the Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies in Exeter, the Institute of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies in Durham, the Department of Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies in Leeds, the Department of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies in Edinburgh, and the Departments of Oriental Studies in Oxford and Cambridge. The Centre for the Advanced Study of the Arab World, a collaboration between Durham, Edinburgh and Manchester, is a language-based area studies initiative funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council, Economic and Social Research Council, HEFCE and Scottish Funding Council. It sponsors postgraduate studentships and postdoctoral fellowships, many of them related to contemporary Islam. See <http://www.casaw.org>.

<sup>9</sup> For a full mapping of the teaching of Islamic Studies in the UK, see El-Awaisi and Nye, 'Time for Change', Appendix 1 and 2.

<sup>10</sup> HEFCE, 'Islamic Studies: Trends and Profiles', available at [http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2008/08\\_09/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2008/08_09/) [accessed 11 March 2008], 7, 12.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>12</sup> Ehteshami, 'Report – Middle Eastern Studies in the United Kingdom'; BRISMES, 'The Crisis facing Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies'.

<sup>13</sup> Suleiman and Shihadeh, 'Islam on Campus', 20.

protect and fight for their own corner'.<sup>14</sup> Scholars are unable to keep up to date with developments in the field due to this fragmentation. Commentators have voiced that this fragmentation represents the key problem in that Islamic Studies is a collection of disciplines engaging in aspects of Islamic religion or Muslim communities, rather than a self-defined discipline in itself. When interviewed Ataullah Siddiqui remarked:

'I would like to see Islamic Studies firmly defined and quality assured... Islamic Studies is still trying to find its own status, what Islamic Studies means... Islamic Studies is dispersed but should be brought together.'<sup>15</sup>

9. Current debate on the development of Islamic Studies in Britain once again articulates the historical juxtaposition of the field between academic autonomy and its utility in forwarding national political agendas. In 2007, Islamic Studies was determined to be strategically important to British national interests. In the context of the increasing Muslim population in Britain, along with the post-9/11 and 7/7 context, this categorisation of Islamic Studies as strategically important has triggered academic dialogue regarding the role, nature and application of the field. While some suggest Islamic Studies should maintain complete academic independence, and are sceptical of a perceived potential 'politicisation' of the subject, others advocate the responsibility of Islamic Studies to contribute to issues of national importance, highlighting the potential for Islamic Studies to combat extremism, promote 'moderate' Islam and train leaders of Britain's Muslim communities.<sup>16</sup> One interviewee stated:

'Islamic Studies must not be a vanguard for promoting moderate Islam to prevent other expressions of Islam becoming popular within the Muslim community. I do not see this as the role of an academic subject. I know the government feels it has a 'silver bullet' here, but I don't feel it has.'<sup>17</sup>

10. There is optimism among some scholars that the designation of Islamic Studies as a strategic subject will be beneficial. Several commentators have mentioned that one of the major issues facing the provision of Islamic Studies in UK universities is the lack of academics researching and teaching the subject. The thinly spread resource of academics working in the field limits opportunities for development, as research and teaching is time-consuming. Even worse than this is the so-called 'lone ranger' issue, wherein, especially in Religious Studies departments, there is only one academic involved with the provision of Islamic Studies. If this person leaves the department and is not replaced this can have a significant impact on the provision of Islamic Studies within the department. This type of staff turnover is a natural process in higher education, and staff movements may also result in the development of capacity elsewhere. Hugh Goddard of Nottingham University considered that the designation of Islamic Studies as strategic might result in investment in Islamic Studies, with an attendant increase in specialist academic staff.<sup>18</sup>
11. In an interview for this report, Robert Gleave of the University of Exeter mentioned that scholars engaged in the study of Islam and Muslims were producing excellent research. He believed, however, that:

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<sup>14</sup> El-Awaisi and Nye, 'Time for Change', 34.

<sup>15</sup> Interview with Ataullah Siddiqui.

<sup>16</sup> See Suleiman and Shihadeh, 'Islam on Campus'; Bunt, 'Islam in Higher Education'; HEFCE, *Report on the Islamic Studies: Current Status and Future Prospects Seminar* for views in the current debate.

<sup>17</sup> Telephone interview with Robert Gleave, University of Exeter, 27 February 2008. Gleave is also Executive Director of BRISMES.

<sup>18</sup> Telephone interview with Hugh Goddard.

'If we are going to establish Islamic Studies as a strong, independent subject area, multi-disciplinary, but producing work which can be respected in its constituent disciplines, we need to build a structure which is able to maintain that, and I'm not sure whether we are off the starting blocks yet.'

He continued by noting the potential pressures on academics to follow specific agendas, saying that:

'We need to have a self-defining conversation away from the pressures of people saying we need to have something on jihad, something on terrorism, and I guess my fear is that we won't be able to do this as the political reality will not allow it. But that is what needs to happen to achieve academic excellence.'<sup>19</sup>

12. With the evolving nature of Islam and the now-global Muslim community, debate concerning the nature and development of Islamic Studies centres on whether or not the subject needs to evolve with it. One academic interviewed suggested:

'It [Islamic Studies] is at a critical stage. Either it grows and flourishes or, as it is defined now, it will continue to be a marginal discipline.'<sup>20</sup>

El-Awaisi and Nye suggested that those unwilling to adapt their provision of Islamic Studies to the evolving nature of Muslim communities are not able to 'meet the needs for effective teaching and debate on the study of Islam and Muslims in the contemporary world and there are significant gaps that need to be considered and addressed'.<sup>21</sup>

Others, on the other hand, maintain the position that Islamic Studies must maintain autonomy and integrity. Gleave suggests that:

'A problem in the past ten years has been a twisting of people's specialisms to 'hot topics' and the result is as a field we are blown about by what is needed and popular with students... This is a worry as the field will become a 'service industry'.<sup>22</sup>

13. In 2007, the Siddiqui Report suggested that Islamic Studies has an increasing responsibility within Britain to inform public debate, and to address intellectually the issues affecting Muslims in Britain and around the world. To do this, Siddiqui advocates the need for Islamic Studies to move beyond the provision it offers at the moment. While conceding the validity of Islamic Studies as offered in Middle Eastern Studies departments, and as approached by Religious Studies, Anthropology, History and Political Science, according to the report higher education is failing to teach the essence of Islam. Islamic Studies must take into account the contextualisation of the Islamic faith and Islam as a living religion if it is to produce meaningful understandings of Muslim communities. He suggests:

'It is necessary to recognise the fact that the study of Islam without its believers is incomplete. It is not only the believers but also the nature of their belief that deserves serious attention.'<sup>23</sup>

14. Siddiqui also questioned whether Islamic Studies is failing to provide students with 'the opportunity to study under competent scholars of Islam who have been trained via

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<sup>19</sup> Telephone interview with Robert Gleave.

<sup>20</sup> Telephone interview with anonymous interviewee, 27 February 2008.

<sup>21</sup> El-Awaisi and Nye, 'Time for Change', 33.

<sup>22</sup> Telephone interview with Robert Gleave.

<sup>23</sup> Siddiqui, 'Islam at Universities in England', 36.

traditional Islamic routes and in subject areas which are of particular relevance to Muslims'.<sup>24</sup>

This is an example of one opinion in the ongoing insider/outsider debate within the study of religions and culture.<sup>25</sup> Within Islamic Studies in particular, one interviewee remarked:

'I don't think tutors realise the level of trauma they can cause Muslim students by questioning all their traditional beliefs. The critical approach is important, but has become equivalent to the the best way of getting to know what actually happened. This approach produces another alternative narrative, but it does not produce the truth. [...] There is an ethical responsibility to Muslim students in particular to provide the opportunity to gain knowledge of Islam that they will not have gained in their education in Britain to help them acquire a sense of identity.'<sup>26</sup>

15. Several issues are apparent within the academic community debate:

- What is Islamic Studies?
- Who is it for?
- Who should teach it?
- What is its role in public debate and agendas?
- How will the perceived crisis over the institutional fragmentation of the field be resolved?
- How will funding of the field be improved?
- Is Islamic Studies the study of texts or the study of people?
- Can Islamic Studies maintain academic autonomy as a result of government regulations, funding priorities and attendant relationships with Muslim students and communities?
- Is Islamic Studies about faith-based study or secular study?

### **Relationships between publicly funded higher education institutions and faith-based institutions in the UK**

16. In an appendix to the Siddiqui Report, Alison Scott-Baumann characterises Islamic Studies in Britain as existing in two 'parallel worlds', suggesting that:

'On the one hand there are British universities and on the other hand there are Muslim seminaries, *madrasas* and colleges that are not acknowledged by the higher education system.'<sup>27</sup>

Approaches towards Islamic Studies at each type of institution are significantly different. One interviewee for this study noted that:

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 63.

<sup>25</sup> See K. Knott, 'Insider/Outsider Perspectives', in *The Routledge Companion to the Study of Religion*, ed. John R. Hinnells (Oxford: Routledge, 2005).

<sup>26</sup> Telephone interview with anonymous interviewee.

<sup>27</sup> Alison Scott-Baumann, 'Building Bridges Between Muslim Academic Communities and British Universities', in Siddiqui, *Islam at Universities in England*, Appendix E, 77.

'In *dar al-ulum* [schools offering 'traditional' Islamic education] the texts are taught without an historical background. Higher education approaches are not found in *dar al-ulum*. I don't know how universities and *dar al-ulum* can bridge this gap.'<sup>28</sup>

17. Several collaborations have been developed between universities and faith-based institutions, which offer a range of undergraduate, postgraduate and professional development courses in Islamic Studies and related subjects:

- The Muslim College in Ealing, west London, offers postgraduate courses in Islamic Studies and professional development training for imams and other professionals. The college offers a Certificate and Diploma in Islamic Studies in collaboration with the Faculty of Continuing Education, Birkbeck College, University of London.
- The Markfield Institute of Higher Education in Leicestershire offers postgraduate level teaching with Postgraduate diplomas and Masters degrees, validated by Loughborough University. From 2008 it will also offer three MA pathways, particularly in Islamic Banking and Finance, validated by the University of Gloucestershire.
- The Islamic College for Advanced Studies in London, offers BA (Honours) and Postgraduate diplomas in Islamic Studies, validated by Middlesex University.
- The University of Gloucestershire has been involved in an ongoing partnership with Ebrahim Community College in London to establish a BA in Islamic Sciences and Society. Gloucestershire has also developed programmes for Muslim teacher training in collaboration with various institutions.
- The Institute of Ismaili Studies in London, the UK branch of the Aga Khan University, offers a three-year graduate programme in Islamic Studies and Humanities, which involves one year of study at a British university where the student attains a Masters degree.<sup>29</sup>

18. The Siddiqui Report suggests that:

'There is a need for the community and the universities to find ways to cooperate and collaborate in order to widen the influence of higher education among Muslims.'<sup>30</sup>

Higher education offers the Muslim community the opportunity to approach Islamic Studies in a way they would be unable to within *madrasas* and their local community. For Siddiqui, this critical dynamic is essential and universities can go a long way in redressing this deficiency:

'Freedom of thought and expression is essential... Universities offer these and there is a need to come to a mechanism to address what is lacking in *madrasas*.'<sup>31</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Telephone interview with anonymous interviewee.

<sup>29</sup> Information from email correspondence with Alison Scott-Bauman, University of Gloucestershire, 13 March 2008 and El-Awaisi and Nye, 'Time for Change', 103 -111; Muslim College, <http://www.muslimcollege.ac.uk/>; Markfield Institute of Higher Education, <http://www.mihe.org.uk/>; Islamic College for Advanced Studies, <http://www.islamic-college.ac.uk/>; Ebrahim Community College, <http://www.ebrahimcollege.org.uk/>; Institute of Ismaili Studies, <http://www.iis.ac.uk/> [accessed 14 March 2008].

<sup>30</sup> Siddiqui, 'Islam at Universities in England', 35.

<sup>31</sup> Interview with Ataullah Siddiqui.



## Developments in Islamic Studies in the past ten years and responses in the UK

19. A number of initiatives have been introduced, which have been interpreted as having implications in relation to Islamic Studies. However, in many cases, they have been addressing general issues associated with Muslims on campus, rather than having a direct impact on the academic disciplines associated with Islamic Studies. For example, in 2005, Universities UK/GuildHE/Equality Challenge Unit published 'Promoting Good Campus Relations: Dealing with Hate Crimes and Intolerance'. Building on this, a subsequent report was produced, entitled 'Promoting Good Campus Relations: Working with Staff and Students to Build Community Cohesion and Tackle Violent Extremism in the Name of Islam at Universities and Colleges'. In part as a reaction to feedback to that report, especially from Muslim communities, content from this publication was subsequently edited, updated and republished.<sup>32</sup>
20. In April 2007, the Department for Communities and Local Government published its report 'Preventing Violent Extremism – Winning Hearts and Minds'. This announced the development of an accredited Continuous Professional Development (CPD) Programme for Faith Leaders from September 2007, designed in partnership with educational (including the Qualification and Curriculum Authority) and faith organisations. It also proposes the establishment of a framework for minimum standards for all imams and Muslim chaplains 'who are engaged in the state' including those employed by colleges and higher education institutions.<sup>33</sup>
21. The Siddiqui Report, commissioned in May 2006, was published in June 2007 (and is discussed elsewhere in this present document). In the same period as its publication, the government announced a £1 million fund to improve the teaching of Islamic Studies in the UK, and Islamic Studies was designated a strategically important subject.<sup>34</sup>
22. In November 2007, Gordon Brown softened the Blair government's insistence on the role of universities in countering extremism on campuses, but suggested that the government will 'invite universities to lead a debate on how we can maintain academic freedom while ensuring that extremists can never stifle debate or impose their views (on others)'.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Department for Innovation, Universities & Skills, 'Promoting Good Campus Relations, Fostering Shared Values and Preventing Violent Extremism in Universities and Higher Education Colleges' (London: DIUS, 2007). Available at <http://www.dius.gov.uk/publications/extremismhe.pdf>.

Department for Education and Skills, 'Promoting Good Campus Relations: Working with Staff and Students to Build Community Cohesion and Tackle Violent Extremism in the Name of Islam at Universities and Colleges' (London: Department for Education and Skills, 2007).

Universities UK, Equality Challenge Unit, SCOP, 'Promoting Good Campus Relations: Dealing with Hate Crimes and Intolerance' (London: Universities UK, Equality Challenge Unit, SCOP, 2005). Available at <http://bookshop.universitiesuk.ac.uk/downloads/promotinggoodrelations.pdf>.

<sup>33</sup> Department for Communities and Local Government, *Preventing Violent Extremism - Winning Hearts and Minds* (London: Communities and Local Government Publications, 2007). Available at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/320752>.

<sup>34</sup> Department for Children, Schools and Families, News Centre, 'Islamic Studies to Become a 'Strategic' Subject in Higher Education – Rammell', 4 June 2007, [http://www.dfes.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn\\_id=2007\\_0099](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2007_0099). See also *The Times*, 'Islamic Studies to be Safeguarded with £1m Funding', 5 June 2007. Available at <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/politics/article1884207.ece>.

<sup>35</sup> Melanie Newman, 'Brown Softens Stand in Extremism Debate', *Times Higher Education Supplement*, 23 November 2007.

In November 2007, Gordon Brown also asked HEFCE to look into the possibility of setting up a European Centre of Excellence for Islamic Studies.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Gordon Brown, 'Statement on National Security', 14 November 2007, <http://www.number10.gov.uk/output/Page13757.asp> [accessed 12 March 2008].

## 3.2 France

### Historical development and current approaches to Islamic Studies in France

1. There has been a long history of Orientalism in France dating back to the sixteenth century and continuing to the mid-twentieth century.<sup>1</sup> Arabic has been taught at the Collège de France since 1539, and a national school for Oriental languages was created in 1793. Alongside the textual and philological approaches of the Orientalist tradition, studies based on travel and interaction with Muslim populations developed from the eighteenth century and reached full bloom in the French colonies of North Africa in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Ethnographic studies of Islam therefore developed alongside textual approaches. This led to the establishment of important centres for Arabic studies at the University of Algiers, though these departments were dissolved after Algerian independence in 1962.
2. In France itself, the Sorbonne first established an Institut d'Études Islamiques (Institute of Islamic Studies) only after World War II; further centres for research on Muslim and Mediterranean societies were established after 1962 in Aix-en-Provence and later in Bordeaux, Lyons and Strasbourg. The establishment of these centres also marked a general shift away from Orientalist approaches and towards social science approaches to the study of Islam in France. Writing in 1997, Mohamed Arkoun, then Professor of History of Islamic Thought at the Sorbonne, identified linguistics, political science and history as the dominant trends in Islamic Studies in France, with sociological and anthropological approaches less dominant but still present.<sup>2</sup>
3. It is important to note that 'Islamic Studies' is not a named discipline or department in French universities, and 'Religion', 'Theology' and 'Religious Studies' are also not incorporated into most public universities because of the strict form of institutional secularism (*laïcité*) in France. The main exception to this is in the region of Alsace-Lorraine, where, for historical reasons, the *laïcité* laws of 1905 do not apply. Universities in these provinces offer undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in Theology, but this is limited to Catholic and Protestant theology at the present time. There have been discussions in the past relating to the incorporation of Muslim theology into the university programmes in Strasbourg, but this has not happened as of yet. The study of religion in state-funded universities is done through departments of Political Science, History, Sociology and Anthropology; this has therefore influenced the approach to Islamic Studies in France.
4. Today the main approaches to the study of Islam in France are linguistic and literary approaches coming out of the history of Orientalist studies; Political Science; History; Anthropology; and Sociology of Religion.<sup>3</sup> The Sorbonne (Université Paris IV) offers teaching on Islam oriented primarily to a linguistic approach through the Department of Arabic and Hebraic Studies. The Université Paris I offers teaching and research related to medieval Islam. Political science approaches, which are humanities-oriented and often

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<sup>1</sup> General information on the history and current state of Islamic Studies in France is from Mohammed Arkoun, 'The Study of Islam in French Scholarship', in *Mapping Islamic Studies: Genealogy, Continuity, and Change*, ed. Azim Nanji (Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 1997) and Elizabeth Picard, 'French Social Scientists in the Middle East Turmoil: Contemporary Arab and Islamic Studies in France', in *Middle East Studies: International Perspectives on the State of the Art*, ed. Tareq Ismael (New York: Praeger, 1990).

<sup>2</sup> Arkoun, 'The Study of Islam in French Scholarship'.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.; telephone interview with Jocelyne Cesari, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique and Harvard University, 7 February 2008; telephone interview with Jean-Phillipe Bras, Institute for the Study of Islam and Societies of the Muslim World (IISMM), 4 March 2008.

include periods of field research, have been developed at the Institut d'Études Politiques (Institute of Political Studies, IEP, popularly known as Sciences Po). The IEP co-manages a research centre with the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (National Centre for Scientific Research, CNRS) called the Centre d' Études et de Recherches Internationales (Centre for International Studies and Research, CERI) where influential scholars such as Gilles Kepel and Olivier Roy have been based.

5. Much of the work related to the study of Islam and Muslim societies in France takes place at interdisciplinary centres that bring together scholars from various disciplines including History, Political Science, Sociology, Anthropology, languages and literature. These centres are based in universities but also funded by the CNRS. Many of these centres focus on the 'Mediterranean world', reflecting France's long history of contact with the Muslim societies of North Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean. These centres include:
  - Université Aix-Marseille I: Institut de Recherches et d'Études sur le Monde Arabe et Musulman (Institute for Research and Study of the Arab and Muslim World, IREMAM) and the Maison Méditerranéenne des Sciences de l'Homme (Mediterranean Centre for Human Sciences).
  - Université Bordeaux III: Centre d'Études et de Recherches sur le Monde Arabe et Musulman (Centre for Research and Study of the Arab and Muslim World, CERMAM).
  - Université Lyon II: Groupe de Recherches et d'études sur la Méditerranée et le Moyen-Orient (Group for Research and Study of the Mediterranean and the Middle East, GREMMO) and Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée (Centre for the Orient and Mediterranean).
  - École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (Paris): Institut d'études d'Islam et des Sociétés du Monde Musulman (Institute for the Study of Islam and Societies of the Muslim World, IISMM).<sup>4</sup> More details on the IISMM can be found in the case study section.

### **The 'health of the discipline' in France**

6. Teaching and research related to Islamic Studies takes place at a number of institutions and through a wide range of disciplines, as mentioned above. Because 'Islamic Studies' is not generally a named degree programme, it is difficult to calculate student and department numbers. However, in 2006-07, 151 students were enrolled in PhD programmes related to the study of Islam or the Muslim world in five universities, and 410 students were enrolled in the final year of undergraduate courses in Arabic language, literature and culture at 12 universities. Further information on department numbers and student numbers in Islamic Studies and related disciplines is found in Appendix D.

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<sup>4</sup> Institut de Recherches et d'Études sur le Monde Arabe et Musulman, <http://www.mmsch.univ-aix.fr/iremam/>; Maison Méditerranéenne des Sciences de l'Homme, <http://www.mmsch.univ-aix.fr/>; Centre d'Études et de Recherches sur le Monde Arabe et Musulman at Institut d'Études Orientales, <http://www.u-bordeaux3.fr/>; Groupe de Recherches et d' Études sur la Méditerranée et le Moyen-Orient, <http://www.gremmo.mom.fr/>; Institut d'Études d'Islam et des Sociétés du Monde Musulman <http://iismm.ehess.fr/> [accessed 8 March 2008].

7. French scholars have developed a wide range of approaches to the study of Islam, including interdisciplinary and social science approaches. However, one interviewee noted that the numbers of people studying Islam within these various disciplines is relatively low, particularly in comparison to the period before Algerian independence when training in the social sciences often included a period of study related to North Africa or Islam. She also commented that although there has been an important increase in the numbers of books and articles related to Islam in recent years, many of these publications are written from a journalistic perspective, not an academic one.<sup>5</sup>
8. Other commentators have remarked that the development of social science approaches to Islam has led to a neglect of other important disciplinary perspectives. In a recent article, the Muslim intellectual and professor of Islamic Studies Tariq Ramadan argued that a focus on political science approaches to Islam, in France and elsewhere, has led to a neglect of other approaches, including theological, legal and historical studies of Islam.<sup>6</sup> Mohammed Arkoun, Professor Emeritus from the Sorbonne, has also attempted to redress this imbalance through what he terms 'applied Islamology', which includes a re-reading of the Muslim textual tradition and a historicising of contemporary Muslim discourse.<sup>7</sup> Although their opinions are not aligned on the approach that should be taken to Islamic Studies, they both argue for a holistic approach that will incorporate religious or theological perspectives, something that has been neglected in Islamic Studies in France.

### **Relationships between publicly funded higher education institutions and faith-based institutions in France**

9. Muslim migration to France, particularly from French colonies in North Africa, began in the late nineteenth century. Although the first Muslim immigrants were seen as temporary workers who would eventually return to Algeria, Morocco or Tunisia, family reunification policies in the 1970s and 1980s led to the establishment of significant Muslim communities within France. Although population figures are not calculated in relation to religion in France, estimates place the number of Muslims living in France today at 4 to 4.5 million, or 7% of the total population.<sup>8</sup>
10. The strict conception of secularism in France has meant that there is little interaction between state-funded educational institutions and religious organisations. Muslim educational institutions have been formed in France as independent civil society associations, and offer training for French imams and chaplains as well as training in Arabic and Islamic Studies more generally.<sup>9</sup> These organisations include the Institut Européen des Sciences Humaines (IESH) with branches in Château Chinon and Paris;

<sup>5</sup> Telephone interview with Jocelyne Cesari.

<sup>6</sup> Tariq Ramadan, 'Plotting the Future of Islamic Studies: Teaching and Research in the Current Political Climate,' *Academic Matters*, December (2007): 6-8. Available at [http://www.ocufa.on.ca/Academic\\_Matters\\_Dec2007/islamic\\_studies.pdf](http://www.ocufa.on.ca/Academic_Matters_Dec2007/islamic_studies.pdf) [accessed 8 March 2008].

<sup>7</sup> Mohammed Arkoun, *Islam: To Reform or to Subvert?* (London: Saqi, 2006); Arkoun, 'The Study of Islam in French Scholarship'; and email correspondence with Arkoun, Sorbonne, 18 February 2008.

<sup>8</sup> Jocelyne Cesari, *When Islam and Democracy Meet: Muslims in Europe and in the United States* (New York and Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 183.

<sup>9</sup> Franck Frégosi, 'Les filières nationales de formation des imams en France: l'Institut Européen des Sciences Humaines et l'Institut des Études Islamiques de Paris', in *La formation des cadres religieux musulmans en France: approches socio-juridiques*, ed. Franck Frégosi, 101-140 (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1998).

the Institut de Théologie at the Paris Mosque; the Institut d'Études Islamiques de Paris which closed in 2002; and the Institut Avicenne des Sciences Humaines in Lille which opened in 2006.<sup>10</sup> These institutions are not funded by the French state, but may receive funding from abroad (particularly from the Gulf states) or from individual donations from Muslims in France. These institutions have little interaction with higher education institutions; indeed, one interviewee noted that because of the conflictual relationship between these organisations in France, to form a permanent relationship with one of them would result in the alienation of others.<sup>11</sup>

11. The French government has taken an interest in the training of French imams, especially through the establishment of a new course housed at the Catholic Institute in Paris.<sup>12</sup> This course, a one-year Diplôme Universitaire (University Diploma) entitled 'Religion, Laïcité, Interculturalité' ('Religion, Secularism, Interculturality') is run through the Institute's Social Sciences and Economics Faculty in coordination with the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Immigration, Integration, National Identity and Co-Development. The course focuses on the principles of French secularism, religion and human rights in France, and intercultural dialogue, and is aimed not only at imams and other religious officials but anyone working in interaction with different religious traditions.<sup>13</sup> Students from the Paris mosque imam training programme are currently enrolled in this course, which started in 2008.
12. The Ministry of the Interior has also supported the proposed establishment of a faculty of Muslim Theology at the Université des Sciences Humaines in Strasbourg, a university that specialises in religious studies.<sup>14</sup> In Strasbourg, as in the rest of the region of Alsace-Lorraine, for historical reasons the French laws on *laïcité* do not apply. This project was proposed as early as 1996 after a report issued by Etienne Trocmé, a former president of the university.<sup>15</sup> Plans are still in a preliminary stage, but the faculty would be modelled on the Catholic and Protestant Theology faculties that already exist at this university.

### **Developments in Islamic Studies in the past ten years and responses in France**

13. The Ministry of National Education designated Arabic Studies a priority subject area in 1983, and the following year five new posts at the Assistant Professor level were created.<sup>16</sup> The French government has taken an interest in the training of French imams

<sup>10</sup> Institut Européen des Sciences Humaines, <http://www.iesh.fr/>; Institut de Théologie at the Paris Mosque, <http://www.mosquee-de-paris.org/spip.php?article46>; Institut Avicenne des Sciences Humaines, <http://www.avicenne.eu/> [accessed 8 March 2008].

<sup>11</sup> Telephone interview with Jean-Phillipe Bras.

<sup>12</sup> Email correspondence with Bernard Godard, Ministry of the Interior, 8 and 11 February 2008.

<sup>13</sup> 'Nouveau Diplôme Universitaire: Religion, Laïcité, Interculturalité', Institut Catholique website, [http://www.icp.fr/fasse/actu.php?recipient\\_out=1772](http://www.icp.fr/fasse/actu.php?recipient_out=1772) [accessed 15 February 2008]. See also Pierre Cahné, 'Pourquoi la « Catho » a-t-elle accepté de former des imams?', *La Croix*, 30 January 2008; S.L.B., 'Débuts de la formation de Musulmans à la « Catho »', *Le Monde*, 29 January 2008; Martine de Sauto, 'La formation théologique des imams reste une priorité', *La Croix*, 31 January 2008.

<sup>14</sup> Email correspondence with Bernard Godard.

<sup>15</sup> Francis Messner, 'L'Enseignement de la Théologie à l'Université Publique: l'Exemple de la Création d'une Faculté de Théologie Musulmane à Strasbourg', in *La Formation des Cadres Religieux Musulmans en France*, 141-167; Etienne Trocmé, 'Rapport à Monsieur le Président Albert Hamm au sujet du développement des sciences des religions à l'Université des Sciences Humaines de Strasbourg', (Strasbourg: Université des Sciences Humaines, 1996).

<sup>16</sup> Arkoun, 'The Study of Islam in French Scholarship', 38.

(discussed below), but has not been particularly active in the development of Islamic Studies in higher education. The IISMM at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS) was established following a 'reflection group' organised by the Ministry of the Interior, which made it possible for the Ministry of National Education to propose the formation of this research centre to the EHESS.<sup>17</sup> More information on this centre can be found in the case study section.

14. The Ministry of National Education has also organised conferences and collaborations that draw on university research to improve teaching about Islam at the level of secondary schools.<sup>18</sup> In 2002, a report by Régis Debray for the Ministry of National Education proposed better coordination of teaching about religion in the French school system.<sup>19</sup> As a result of this report, the Institut Européen en Sciences des Religions (European Institute for Religious Sciences) was founded. This institute, housed at the École Pratique des Hautes Études, brings together pedagogic practice and academic research to make resources available for teaching about different religions, including Islam.<sup>20</sup>
15. Other government initiatives related to Islam and education have been focused on the relationship between Muslim practice and the secular school system. A report on 'École et Islam' which focused on French Islam within schools, was written by Jean-René Genty for the Ministry of Education in 2004.<sup>21</sup> Perhaps the most widely debated issue related to Islam and education in recent years has been the wearing of the *hijab* (religious clothing) in French public schools. A 2004 commission led by Bernard Stasi regarding this issue recommended a law, since put in place, that would forbid the wearing of religious symbols or clothing in public primary and secondary schools.<sup>22</sup> Although this law does not apply to higher education institutions, it is evidence of the strict separation between church and state that has had a direct impact on the development of 'Islamic Studies' in France.

## Case study

*École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS), Institut d' Études d'Islam et des Sociétés du Monde Musulman (Institute for the Study of Islam and Societies of the Muslim World, IISMM)*

16. The IISMM was founded in 1999 to fill a perceived need for an interdisciplinary research and teaching centre focused on the Muslim world.<sup>23</sup> It is housed at the EHESS and brings together scholars from different disciplines with an interest in Islam and the

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<sup>17</sup> Email correspondence with Bernard Godard.

<sup>18</sup> Email and postal correspondence with Michel Hagnerelle, Ministry of National Education, 7 February 2008. See also Dominique Borne et al., eds., *Europe et Islam, Islams d'Europe, Actes de l'Université d'Été* (Paris: Direction de l'Enseignement Scolaire, 2002).

<sup>19</sup> Régis Debray, 'L'Enseignement du Fait Religieux dans l'École Laïque (Paris: Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, 2002).

<sup>20</sup> Institut Européen en Sciences des Religions, <http://www.iesr.ephe.sorbonne.fr/> [accessed 12 March 2008].

<sup>21</sup> Jean-René Genty, 'École et Islam', *La revue de l'inspection générale*, no. 1 (2004) : 47-53.

<sup>22</sup> Bernard Stasi, 'Rapport de la Commission de Réflexion sur l'Application du Principe de Laïcité dans la République' (Paris: La documentation française, 2004).

<sup>23</sup> Information on the IISMM is from the IISMM website, <http://iismm.ehess.fr/> [accessed 8 March 2008]; and telephone interview with Jean-Phillipe Bras.

Muslim world, broadly defined. The centre does not employ researchers itself but brings together academics housed in other centres or departments of the EHESS and elsewhere. These academics lead graduate-level seminars that are part of the EHESS Masters degree programme, and they participate in various research groups housed at the IISMM with internal or external funding. Doctoral students also take part in these research groups.

17. The perspective of the IISMM is thoroughly interdisciplinary, and research groups bring together scholars from humanities and the social sciences to work on various themes. The IISMM also takes a broad geographical approach to Islam, and one of its main remits is to encourage the study of Islam outside the traditional centres of the Muslim world by looking, for example, at Islam in Indonesia, the Balkans, or Europe. As part of this approach the institute invites up to 12 scholars or other figures (novelists, filmmakers, etc.) from abroad, primarily from the Muslim world, to deliver seminars each year as part of a rotating 'chair'.
18. The IISMM also has a clearly defined mission to disseminate new research on Islam to the general French population. This is carried out through public seminars at IISMM that attract a broad public, and through seminar series organised in conjunction with the Université de Tous les Savoirs. The IISMM also carries out professional training programmes for those working in public services (the police, prisons, the education system, or the health system) who have a need to know something about Islam in their daily interactions with the public.



### 3.3 Germany

#### Historical development and current approaches to Islamic Studies in Germany

1. Islamic Studies in Germany, known as *Islamwissenschaft* (earlier known as *Islamistik* or *Islamkunde*), formed from the discipline of Oriental Studies in the nineteenth century although the study of Arabic goes back to at least the sixteenth century.<sup>1</sup> In Germany Islamic Studies has been based on philology or knowledge of the cultures and history of North Africa and Asia through knowledge of authoritative texts. During 1884-1918, the time Germany presided over colonies, interest in the Islamic world grew. Up until 1933, German scholars were often able to carry out original research, and were often relatively well supported by their academic institutions. During the 1933-45 period, scholars' academic freedom was restricted, with many working primarily with the intelligence.<sup>2</sup>
2. In the post-war period, there was a shift in scholarship: after rigorous training focused on language, the general goal of scholars in the field was to discover unknown facts and new sources. The fixation on facts gave Islamic Studies its positivistic orientation. In addition, due largely to Carl Heinrich Becker, Islamic Studies began to take on a cultural focus alongside its emphasis on language. Islamic culture and religion were emphasised as different to European and German culture.
3. During the 1960s and 1970s, demands were made for the development of Oriental Studies. A 1960 report by the German Research Association pushed for more chairs, among several other recommendations. A 1972 report by the German Oriental Society gave a number of proposals to promote the study of Islam as a distinct discipline, and to develop language credentials and understanding of Islamic cultures. It also emphasised the problem of Oriental Studies spanning a variety of disciplines and programmes, which posed difficulty to graduating students seeking employment.<sup>3</sup> Greater positivism in method was argued for. And, indeed, what followed was yet greater emphasis on facts within linguistic, literary and historical concerns. Although Germany's intellectual tradition is otherwise strongly theoretical, the few attempts to approach Islamic Studies through interpretation and theory generated little academic interest.<sup>4</sup>
4. It is to be also noted that before 1990 there was a significant difference in German approaches to Islamic Studies between West Germany, where the Orientalist approach was dominant, and East Germany, where contemporary and social issues were the focus, perhaps under the effect of Marxism. After 1990, however, and especially with scholars from the former West Germany occupying most of the former East Germany's chair positions, the two trends started to merge.<sup>5</sup>
5. The scope of Islamic Studies in Germany today includes, broadly speaking, Islamic religion and culture. Specifically, the focus is on the way religion and culture influence each other and how they compare in different societies. Interest is wide-ranging, in the sense that Islamic Studies includes not only the beliefs of people and how beliefs influence their lives within the 'Orient' or Middle East, but importantly the history of Islam and Islamic culture, and the relationship between Islam and literature, philosophy, law, politics, art, and architecture. Studies are, only recently, becoming social-research

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<sup>1</sup> General information on Islamic Studies in Germany is from Jacques Waardenburg, 'The Study of Islam in German Scholarship', in *Mapping Islamic Studies: Genealogy, Continuity, and Change*, 1-32.

<sup>2</sup> Andrew Higgins, 'The Lost Archive: Missing for Years, Cache of Photos Spurs Research on Islam's Hallowed Text', *The Wall Street Journal*, 17 January 2008, 14.

<sup>3</sup> Waardenburg, 'The Study of Islam in German Scholarship', 13.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>5</sup> Telephone interview with Lutz Rogler, Zentrum Moderner Orient, 25 February 2008.

oriented and remain largely text-oriented. Hence, studying the Islamic world is done primarily through texts (the Qu'ran and prophetic tradition) and historical documents (law references, classical literature and history).<sup>6</sup> The latest sensational research in Germany on what has been called 'The Lost Archive' claims to discover a totally new history of writing the Qur'anic text;<sup>7</sup> this illustrates the general 'Orientalist' approach. Islamic Studies is not conducted as a theological endeavour through Islamic scholarly works – as opposed to other theological disciplines (e.g. Christian) – nor are professors grounded in Islamic theology. Islamic Studies professors often make clear that their approach to Islamic Studies is from the 'outside' as anthropologists, sociologists, or political scientists, and not from the 'inside'.<sup>8</sup>

6. Students can study Islamic Studies either as a major subject (*Hauptstudium*) or as a minor subject (*Nebenstudium*). The BA equivalent and MA equivalent, as normally done in Germany together, includes eight to nine semesters (two semesters a year). The emphasis in all Islamic Studies departments is on languages of the Middle East. A student of Islamic Studies must learn Arabic and almost always Persian or Turkish and perhaps Urdu or Indonesian. Aside from language, the required courses cover broader areas and topics than other disciplines that focus on world regions, and include the study of eras, regions of the Islamic world, and a variety of disciplines (literature, philosophy, law, history or theology).<sup>9</sup>

### The 'health of the discipline' in Germany

7. Twenty-four German universities offer courses in Islamic Studies and Oriental Languages, largely in combination with other cultural emphases or social studies. At present around 3,000 students are enrolled on such courses, either as a major or a minor subject. A total of 34 professorships, institutes or seminars focus on the language, history, and culture of the Islamic world.<sup>10</sup> In the past few years student numbers have risen, due in part to growing Muslim communities in Germany. This growth has spurred others to learn more about Islamic practices and media coverage of Muslims and the Arab world. Student numbers have also expanded as Muslim organisations have drawn on the university system to encourage the integration of Muslim leaders and imams (see below).
8. The capacity of Islamic Studies is so broad that it is taught under different names at the various universities, such as Oriental Seminar (*Orientalistik* or *Orientalisches Seminar*), Islamic Studies (*Institut für Islamwissenschaft*), Arab Studies, or History and Culture of the Middle East, usually under the Faculty of Arts (not Theology). Because the discipline is relatively small, at one university it can be studied under Persian Studies and at another under Turkish or Semitic Studies, hence completely different faculties with professors of different specialisations, each focusing normally on language and the specific culture before 'Islam'.

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<sup>6</sup> Gudrun Krämer, 'Islamwissenschaft', <http://userpage.fu-berlin.de/~islamwi/invernizzi.htm> [accessed 18 February 2008].

<sup>7</sup> Higgs, 'The Lost Archive', 14-15.

<sup>8</sup> Krämer, 'Islamwissenschaft'; Ulrike Freitag, 'Orchidee des Monats: Islamwissenschaft', [http://www.abc-der-menschheit.de/coremedia/generator/wj/de/07\\_\\_Aktuell/Orchidee/September.html](http://www.abc-der-menschheit.de/coremedia/generator/wj/de/07__Aktuell/Orchidee/September.html) [accessed 18 February 2008].

<sup>9</sup> Krämer, 'Islamwissenschaft'.

<sup>10</sup> Goethe-Institut and Giga Institute of Middle East Studies, Islam Research Directory, <http://www.islamresearchdirectory.org/en/el.php> [accessed 5 March 2008].

9. As well as the university departments that offer Islamic Studies, there are a large number of publicly funded non-university institutes, think-tanks, and non-governmental organisations that collaborate with Islamic Studies university programmes. Many are even located on university campuses. Their collaboration can be Germany-wide and international. Most of the funding, however, comes from sources outside the universities such as cultural and scientific foundations, political foundations, the German state and, rarely, private companies. These research institutes include:
- *Zentrum für Türkeistudien* (Centre for Studies on Turkey in Essen), focusing on politics and economics in Turkey and migration.
  - *Institut für Geschichte der Arabisch-Islamischen Wissenschaften* (Institute for the History of Arabic and Islamic Studies in Frankfurt).
  - *Deutsche Orient-Stiftung* (German Orient Foundation in Berlin) focusing on the politics, economics and societies of the Middle East.
  - *Geisteswissenschaftliches Zentrum Moderner Orient* (Humanities Centre for Modern Oriental Studies in Berlin) focusing on the history, religion and society of the Islamic world, Africa and Asia.<sup>11</sup>
10. To assess the health of Islamic Studies in Germany – keeping in mind its origins and early focus – consideration should be made as to how well the discipline is able to move along the spectrum of a Eurocentric, classical script-oriented, positivist approach to a more inclusive approach in which Islamic societies are understood from the ‘inside’ through the incorporation of social-science methods and fieldwork. The script-based and literature-based approach is still more prominent than a social science approach which includes studying the value systems and qualitative data. That said, now in the era of post-Orientalism debate, universities are shrinking Orientalist departments; many were shut down during the 1990s, and are slowly adopting methods that include studying Islamic societies through fieldwork. Examples include the *Orient-Institut der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* (German Orient Institute) in Beirut and Istanbul where students can be immersed in the cultures and develop a sensitivity to the human dimension of these societies.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, professors are increasingly replacing the study of classical texts with modern texts.
11. However, non-text based studies are also problematic. Due to the continued influence of Orientalism, many have noted that Islamic Studies in Germany is still grounded in an assumption that what is ‘Islamic’ should be viewed as different and, more accurately, threatening to ‘Western civilisation’. It is a critique that Islamic Studies follows a different approach to any other study in that it is not ‘scientific’.<sup>13</sup> Popular themes today include the ‘clash of civilisations’ and ‘terrorism’.<sup>14</sup>
12. Moreover, Islamic Studies focuses strongly on the Arabic-speaking world to the neglect of non-Arab countries and regions, although these regions together have about 80% of Muslims, and despite the fact that most German Muslims are not from the Arab world. Bayreuth, Humboldt and Bochum universities have sought to remedy this problem.

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<sup>11</sup> Freie Universität Berlin, ‘Forschungseinrichtungen in Deutschland’, [http://www.geschkult.fu-berlin.de/e/islamwiss/links/Forschungseinrichtungen\\_in\\_Deutschland.html](http://www.geschkult.fu-berlin.de/e/islamwiss/links/Forschungseinrichtungen_in_Deutschland.html) [accessed 5 March 2008]. This webpage links to all these institutes’ websites.

<sup>12</sup> Waardenburg, ‘The Study of Islam in German Scholarship’, 22.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 21.

<sup>14</sup> Insight into a general feeling, among faith-based organisations, that Islam is viewed as a threat can be gained through numerous articles and commissioned reports at Martin Riexinger, ‘Islam in Deutschland’, <http://www.user.gwdg.de/~mriexin/DIslam.html> [accessed 17 March 2008].

Research carried out through the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees and at the *Zentrum Moderner Orient* (ZMO, Centre for Modern Oriental Studies) in Berlin has also looked at Muslims and religious practice in Germany.<sup>15</sup> These examples are discussed further below.

13. The broad range of topics a student is required to cover leads to the student not having grasped one area adequately and places more responsibility upon the student to go deeper into the various topics, a difficult task given the many language requirements within little time. Taking Islamic Studies as a 'minor subject' is especially demanding because of the focus on language or a specific region or country's history and culture. It is hoped, however, that because financial constraints have pushed what was East Germany to consolidate all the different faculties dealing with Islam or 'Islamic' languages, this will strengthen Islamic Studies as a discipline and make positions more calculable for graduating students.<sup>16</sup>

### **Relationships between publicly funded higher education institutions and faith-based institutions in Germany**

14. Muslim migration to Germany began in the nineteenth century as the new German state began developing close economic and diplomatic relations with the Ottoman empire. In the 1960s Germany signed agreements with Turkey, Morocco and Tunisia giving them special access to 'guest worker' status. The first migrants eventually brought their families to live with them, resulting in a sizeable Muslim minority in Germany, primarily from Turkey. Current estimates place the number of Muslims in Germany at 3 million (2.3 million of them of Turkish origin), or approximately 3% of the total population.<sup>17</sup>
15. Although leaders within the Muslim communities may be asked to give a talk at universities, there is little long-term collaboration between faith-based organisations and universities.<sup>18</sup> However, the discipline of Islamic Studies has been viewed by Muslim organisations and think-tanks as a means to integrate Islamic teachers, leaders, and imams into German society through the German education system. Frankfurt's Johann Wolfgang von Goethe University embraced this concept when it opened its theological faculty to Islamic Studies in 2005 and hired a Muslim faculty member in a coordinated effort with the Turkish Presidium for Religious Affairs. Although this cooperation and associated funding was highly disputed, this gives credence to the programme offered which is essential for these students.<sup>19</sup>
16. German primary and secondary schools offer denominational religious instruction, including instruction in Islam in some regions. However, there is currently a lack of teachers with German language skills to teach these courses, and recently-opened programmes for Islamic religious education at the University of Münster and the University of Osnabrück are still trying to attract significant student numbers. Outside of

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<sup>15</sup> Telephone interview with Mark Bodenstein, Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, 19 March 2008.

<sup>16</sup> Krämer, 'Islamwissenschaft'. Islamic Studies scholars also express the view that it is good for students to make their own way in landing jobs in various areas. See Freitag, 'Orchidee des Monats: Islamwissenschaft'.

<sup>17</sup> Cesari, *When Islam and Democracy Meet*, 12-13, 183.

<sup>18</sup> A comprehensive list of the various forms of (non-academic) Islamic organisations existing in Germany may be viewed at Riexinger, 'Islam in Deutschland'.

<sup>19</sup> *Deutsche Welle*, 'College Launches Disputed Islamic Program', 27 March 2005, <http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,1564,1529661,00.html> [accessed 12 March 2008].

the public schools, Islamic religious education is provided at three major institutions: the *Muslimische Akademie für Religiöse und Soziale Bildung* (Muslim Academy for Religious and Social Education), *Diyanet İşleri Türk İslam Birliği* (Turkish Islamic Union for Religious Affairs, one of the largest Islamic organisations in Germany), and the *Institut für Islamische Bildung* (Institute for Islamic Education), along with numerous smaller institutions.<sup>20</sup>

## Developments in Islamic Studies in the past ten years and responses in Germany

17. Educational policy in Germany is decided at a regional level, by individual German states (*Länder*), not at a federal level. Although the federal Ministry of Research and Education can propose guidelines or orientations for the states to follow, it is not able to carry out country-wide initiatives within higher education. Universities do, however, receive some funding from the federal ministry. The ministry has recently encouraged the development of the so-called 'small disciplines', including Islamic and Oriental Studies, and declared 2007 a 'year of the humanities'. This latter initiative led to the creation and funding of the Berlin Graduate School in Muslim Cultures and Societies at the Free University.<sup>21</sup> Federal funding has also encouraged the development of university-based research using social scientific approaches to the study of Islam and Muslims in Germany.<sup>22</sup>
18. The Federal Office for Migration and Refugees has also carried out research on Muslims in Germany, partly funded by the German Conference on Islam, an initiative of the Federal Ministry of the Interior to form a consultative body for Muslims in Germany. One goal of this research is to assess the interaction between German Muslims and local Muslim organisations, in order to understand how representative these organisations are. This research may apply to government policies related to cooperation with these organisations for educational or other initiatives.<sup>23</sup>
19. Although there has been an increase in student numbers in Islamic or Oriental studies programmes since 2001, this increase has not led to significant developments in the number of professorships or departments. In some universities, institutes and centres devoted to Oriental studies in a broad sense have been established, including the Asia-Afrika-Institut in Hamburg and the Centre for Near and Middle East Studies in Marburg. Collaborative courses and research projects have also been developed, for example between the universities of Bamberg and Nuremberg and the universities of Leipzig and Halle. On a national level, subject associations such as the German Oriental Society and the German Middle East Studies Association for Contemporary Research and Documentation (*Deutsche Arbeitsgemeinschaft Vorderer Orient*, DAVO) have been the main locations for discussions of new disciplinary approaches, but again these organisations have little power to initiate nationwide policies.<sup>24</sup>
20. Federal and state government funding comprise the majority of funds for a number of non-university institutes, think-tanks, and non-governmental organisations that collaborate with Islamic Studies university programmes. These include:

<sup>20</sup> Euro-Islam.info, 'Germany', [http://www.euro-islam.info/spip/article.php?id\\_article=1752](http://www.euro-islam.info/spip/article.php?id_article=1752) [accessed 7 March 2008].

<sup>21</sup> Email correspondence with Lutz Rogler, 10 March 2008. Free University of Berlin, Berlin Graduate School in Muslim Cultures and Societies, <http://www.geschkult.fu-berlin.de/e/graduateschool/en/> [accessed 12 March 2008].

<sup>22</sup> Interview with Mark Bodenstein.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Email correspondence with Lutz Rogler, 10 March 2008.

- *Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung* (Konrad-Adenauer Foundation in Essen), focusing on international relations and security, especially between Europe and the Middle East. Public funding comprises 97.3% of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung's funds, while 2.3% is derived from admission charges and miscellaneous private revenues and another 0.4% comes from income from funds and donations.<sup>25</sup>
- *Arnold-Bergsträsser-Institut für Kulturwissenschaftliche Forschung* (Arnold Bergstrasser Institute for Socio-Cultural Research in Freiburg), focusing on education, economic development and peace studies in the Middle East. Since 1964, the ministry of science, research, and the arts of the state of Baden-Württemberg has provided the bulk of the Arnold Bergstrasser Institute's finances. However, to maintain its range of activities, the Institute has had to obtain substantial amounts of third-party funds in recent years, mainly in the form of research grants from outside institutions. Third-party funds now account for about one third of the Institute's total budget. Moreover, in 1978 the Institute moved into its own premises built with a grant from the Volkswagen Foundation.<sup>26</sup>
- *Wissenschaftskolleg: Arbeitskreis Moderne und Islam* (Institute for Advanced Study Berlin: Working Group Modernity and Islam) focusing on cultural and social sciences, especially in the Islamic world. The Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin operates based on public funding, in addition to private donations in the form of fellowships for specific projects. Examples of donors are the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, Alfried Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach Foundation, Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, and European Commission, Research Directorate-General.<sup>27</sup>

21. There have not been significant initiatives by particular states related to Islamic Studies in higher education.<sup>28</sup> However, the governments of individual *Länder* have worked with the Turkish government, or governments of other countries of origin, to provide Islamic religious instruction in public primary and secondary schools. More recently, there have been initiatives by Muslim organisations within Germany to work with the Ministry of Education to design educational programmes for the schools. The most successful of these has been the provision of religious education by the Islamic Federation of Berlin, although the process of creating this course has not been without controversy.<sup>29</sup> There have also been discussions of incorporating imam training into German universities, advocated, for example, by Claudia Roth of the Green Party.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, 'Funding', <http://www.kas.de/wf/en/13/first.call/> [accessed 12 March 2008].

<sup>26</sup> Arnold-Bergsträsser-Institut, <http://www.arnold-bergstraesser.de/> [accessed 10 March 2008].

<sup>27</sup> Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin, <http://www.wiko-berlin.de/> [accessed 10 March 2008].

<sup>28</sup> Email correspondence with Lutz Rogler.

<sup>29</sup> The Islamic Federation of Berlin is associated with the Turkish Islamic movement Milli Görüs. See Cesari, *When Islam and Democracy Meet*, 68-70.

<sup>30</sup> Euro-Islam.info, 'Germany'.

## Case studies

*The Freie Universität Berlin, Institut für Islamwissenschaft (Free University of Berlin, Institute for Islamic Studies)*

22. The Institut für Islamwissenschaft is a unique and leading example in the field in Germany. It has a strong tradition of specialising in the history of Islamic societies.<sup>31</sup> However, it leads the way in covering new ground through its study of contemporary Islam. This is accomplished through greater appreciation of fieldwork opportunities and the inclusion of modern texts. Furthermore, it has been most successful in integrating the study of *Religionswissenschaft* (religion), viewed in Germany as strictly a separate discipline and culture. As such, some of its faculty have incorporated an approach to studying Islam from religious texts, religious scholars' opinions and edicts, and other core texts and manuscripts.
23. Some of its faculty attest Islamic Studies must remain defined as within the German tradition of looking at Islam, again from the 'outside',<sup>32</sup> but new scholarship is slowly breaking this tradition. It has engaged in interdisciplinary research on modern social, political and economic developments in the Middle East.<sup>33</sup>
24. This is, however, partly due to the dissolving of separate departments dealing with aspects of Islam, 'Islamic languages', and culture because of budget pressures.<sup>34</sup> Nonetheless, it also covers new ground in its incorporation of Islamic societies outside North Africa and the Middle East, particularly other regions of Africa. Also important is its recent emphasis on the effects of globalisation in the Middle East and how local Islamic practices and traditions are affected by and play a role in the process of globalisation. Particular focus has also been given to the relations between the Islamic world and Europe.<sup>35</sup>

*The Zentrum Moderner Orient (ZMO, Centre for Modern Oriental Studies), Berlin*

25. In its self-description, the ZMO claims to be 'the only German research institute devoted to an interdisciplinary and comparative study of the Middle East, Africa, South and Southeast Asia from a historical perspective'.<sup>36</sup> There are other interdisciplinary research institutions in Germany, such as the German Institute of Global and Area Studies in Hamburg, although this institute does use a more political perspective.
26. A new research programme of ZMO under the title 'Worlds of Islam' started in 2008. This is a significant departure from ZMO's original mission to provide an institutional framework for 'basic research', with a focus on historical aspects. It is considered a drawback, according to the German scholarly tradition, that researchers in ZMO

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<sup>31</sup> Institut für Islamwissenschaft, <http://www.geschkult.fu-berlin.de/e/islamwiss/> [accessed 12 March 2008].

<sup>32</sup> Freitag, 'Orchidee des Monats: Islamwissenschaft'.

<sup>33</sup> Interview with Wanda Krause, Forum Against Islamophobia and Racism (FAIR), London, 1 February 2008.

<sup>34</sup> Krämer, 'Islamwissenschaft'.

<sup>35</sup> Institut für Islamwissenschaft, 'Gegenstand des Faches', [http://www.geschkult.fu-berlin.de/e/islamwiss/institut/Gegenstand\\_des\\_Faches.html](http://www.geschkult.fu-berlin.de/e/islamwiss/institut/Gegenstand_des_Faches.html) [accessed 12 March 2008].

<sup>36</sup> Zentrum Moderner Orient, 'Home and News', [http://www.zmo.de/index\\_e.html](http://www.zmo.de/index_e.html) [accessed 15 February 2008]. Information on the ZMO is from the website and interview with Lutz Rogler, 8 February 2008.

generally do not teach in universities, except for a few individual cases. In addition, long-term research projects seem to be compromised by the fact that funding usually does not go beyond a two- or three-year period, a fact which implies the continuous change of research personnel and subjects.

27. The funding of the ZMO is twofold: one third of the budget is covered by the municipality of Berlin (the 'Senate of Berlin'). This part of the budget covers ZMO's basic infrastructure. The research (20 posts, travel costs, library, etc., which comprise two thirds of the budget) is funded, since 2008, by the German Ministry of Education and Research (for a period of six years). Until the end of 2007, research was funded by the German Research Foundation (*Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft*), a public funding organisation for scientific research in Germany. This change in funding led to the reduction of the number of researchers (and research projects) from about 30 to 20. Nevertheless, individual researchers are now allowed to seek funding for their projects outside ZMO, and later, to bring their funds and be associated with ZMO.



### 3.4 The Netherlands

#### Historical development and current approaches to Islamic Studies in the Netherlands

1. Islamic Studies formed from the disciplines focusing on Oriental languages, mainly Arabic, which goes back to the late sixteenth century in the Netherlands, specifically when Leiden University was founded (1576). The seventeenth century saw the rise of interest in the Islamic world and Muslim peoples through trade relations with Morocco, the Ottoman Empire, Safavid Iran, Moghul India and the Indonesian islands.<sup>1</sup> However, in the nineteenth century, trade interests supported the study of Arabic as well as Persian and Turkish. Indonesian languages were incorporated in the second half of the nineteenth century at Leiden, partly due to the Dutch colonial rule of the East Indies and, in fact, were a requirement for students until the late 1960s. Thus, Islamic Studies grew significantly as a discipline with the study of Indology and Indonesian languages.<sup>2</sup>
2. In the 1950s, the first chair of Arabic Studies and the first chair of Arabic language and cultural history were appointed at the University of Leiden. Until then, Arabic was studied together with Hebrew and other Semitic languages at all institutions of higher education with such a programme. The University of Utrecht has had a chair of Theology, Hebrew and 'other' Oriental languages since 1636, and in 1868 a chair of Oriental languages was created in the Faculty of Philosophy, rather than in the Faculty of Theology, even though language was still the focus. Four further universities that had interests in Islamic Studies were established in the 1950s, namely the University of Groningen, the University of Amsterdam, the Free (Protestant) University of Amsterdam, and the (Catholic) University of Nijmegen.<sup>3</sup>
3. Dutch scholars have made significant contributions to Orientalism and Islamic Studies, including the renowned *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, launched by the Hungarian scholar Ignaz Goldziher who had been trained at Leiden, and brought to conclusion by Arent Jan Wensinck who held the Chair of Arabic and Islam at Leiden University. Wensinck also initiated the *Concordance and Indices of Islamic Tradition* in 1916, completed in eight volumes in 1988. Both works are viewed as having had lasting significance for the progress of Islamic Studies.<sup>4</sup> Although Islamic Studies was taught at the above universities, the Institute of Social Studies, founded in the early 1950s in The Hague, played an important role in the development of new areas. A sociological framework was incorporated with a new focus on development.<sup>5</sup>
4. Today the scope of Islamic Studies in the Netherlands continues to include, firstly, the study of Arabic, Turkish and Persian, and fluency is required in at least one of these languages. Until recently, a student was also expected to learn other European languages, such as Italian, Spanish, and in some cases, Russian.<sup>6</sup> Thus, a graduate has been normally expected to have learned related languages and to have studied 'Islamic

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<sup>1</sup> Waardenburg, 'Islamic Studies in Dutch Scholarship', 68-94.

<sup>2</sup> Frederick de Jong, 'A Survey of Middle Eastern Studies in the Netherlands: Academic Tradition, Present-day Programmes, Research, and Working Conditions', in *Middle East Studies: International Perspectives on the State of the Art*, 149-164.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Waardenburg, 'Islamic Studies in Dutch Scholarship', 76; Arent Jan Wensinck et al., *Concordance et Indices de la Tradition Musulmane: les Six Livres, le Musnad d'al-Dārimī, le Muwaṭṭa' de Mālik, le Musnad de Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*, 8 vols (Leiden: E.J. Brill, c.1936-1969); Martijn Theodoor Houtsma et al., eds., *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 9 vols (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1913-1938).

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 77.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

culture'. Secondly, Islam is studied through traditional literature. This has been through texts (the Qur'an and prophetic tradition), *tafsir* (the interpretation of texts), *hadith* (the science of prophetic traditions), and *fiqh* (Islamic law). Religious history, Islamic arts, and the effects of Greek heritage on medieval Islam have also formed essential themes in most programmes. Thirdly, however, Islamic Studies has rapidly developed to be more interdisciplinary. Thus, within Islamic Studies students can now focus on Islamic civilisations, Islamist movements, the socio-economic aspects of Islamic societies – historical and contemporary – and issues related to Muslims in Europe.

5. Currently, the content of programmes is also broader due to the research interests and specialisations of individual professors.<sup>7</sup> For example, along with the general themes in Islamic Studies in the Netherlands mentioned above, the University of Utrecht focuses on languages (Arabic, Turkish and Berber), but also Islamic history and Asian studies. Themes have included Islamic mysticism and popular Islam, women in the Arab world, history of Arab science, legal texts, and classical Arabic poetry.

### **The 'health of the discipline' in the Netherlands**

6. Islamic Studies is found, even if only taught by a few faculty members, at the major universities in the Netherlands, and is concentrated at the universities of Utrecht, Leiden, Nijmegen and Rotterdam. As a discipline it is found in the Faculty of Arts, though at the universities of Utrecht, Leiden, and Tilburg Islamic Studies is currently found within the subsection of the Faculty of Theology. Islamic Studies is a four-year programme, although students often need longer, and the programme bridges into the MA degree. More information on department and student numbers can be found in Appendix D.
7. Universities in the Netherlands have developed a broad spectrum of approaches to Islamic Studies, with each university having its historical specialisation. Leiden University advocates an appreciation of the historical approach to Islamic Studies through a focus on archival material and medieval literature. The programme is also dedicated to historical and contemporary aspects of Islamic societies. Contemporary Islam from a sociological perspective and issues related to Islam in Europe are newly offered through an MA programme in the Faculty of Theology, while the Africa Institute in Leiden includes the study of Islam in African countries. The University of Leiden has the largest collection of Islamic and related manuscripts in the Netherlands, and a notable collection from Indonesia.<sup>8</sup>
8. Through the Institute for Languages and Cultures of the Middle East, the University of Nijmegen concentrates on Arabic language and culture and takes an interdisciplinary approach to the study of Islam. Although the university specialises in the Middle East as a cultural area, its courses are varied and include research and teaching on, for example, Muslim-Christian dialogue, Islamist politics, Islam and civil society/democracy, and identity politics. Recently its programme has grown considerably in student body and staff.<sup>9</sup>
9. At the Institute for the Study of the Modern Near East at the University of Amsterdam, the programme is also broad in scope, specialising in Islamic law, the modern history of Islamic countries, and the anthropology and political science of the Middle East. The University of Amsterdam's interdisciplinary approach is heavily social sciences-based

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<sup>7</sup> Interview with G.A. Wiegers, University of Nijmegen, Leiden, 23 January 2008.

<sup>8</sup> Interview with P.S. van Koningsveld, Leiden University, Leiden, 21 January 2008.

<sup>9</sup> Interview with G.A. Wiegers.

with its focus on globalisation, Islamism and Islamic societies, as well as Islamic movements in Southeast Europe, Russia and Turkey. In contrast, the University of Groningen's concentration remains largely text-based.

10. The Free University of Amsterdam's research and teaching interest is in the Greek heritage in Islam and broadens out to include Islamic communities in Europe and different religious communities in the Near East. Tilburg University similarly concentrates on the relationship between Islam and Christianity, particularly in the European context, from a socio-religious approach. It also teaches the political ethics of Islam and Islamic law.
11. Consequently, along with a traditional approach focused on language in most programmes, it is obvious that current issues related to Islam and Muslims in Europe and the Netherlands and other contemporary concerns have greatly influenced the interdisciplinary nature of Islamic Studies in the Netherlands.<sup>10</sup>

### **Relationships between publicly funded higher education institutions and faith-based institutions in the Netherlands**

12. Muslim immigration to the Netherlands was originally of workers from Turkey and Morocco, with another significant population from the former Dutch colony of Suriname. Today the approximately 1 million Muslims living in the Netherlands make up 5.8% of the population.<sup>11</sup> Integration of the Muslim population in the Netherlands has followed the Dutch model of relations between the state and religion, which respects a formal secularism but also allows for some interaction between the state and religious bodies. Although there has been a law instituting a strict separation of state and religious groups since 1983, some vestiges of the 'pillarisation' system, which divided Dutch society into different groups (or pillars) based on religion or ideology, still exist, and Muslim schools and other organisations can sometimes qualify for state funding.<sup>12</sup>
13. The first Dutch faith-based institution to deal with higher education circles was the Council for Moroccan Mosques in the Netherlands (MMRN).<sup>13</sup> Over the past few years, they played a vital role in the Dutch Ministry of Education and Science initiative for national imam education, especially in preparing a new training programme in association with Leiden University.<sup>14</sup> This programme will be discussed in the next subsection.
14. Another faith-based institution that has played a role in higher education in the Netherlands is the Islamic University of Rotterdam (IUR). It was established in 1997, and was originally funded by a group of first-generation Dutch Sunni Muslims from various backgrounds. Since 2001, however, IUR's board has been primarily of Turkish origin. IUR consists of three faculties: Islamic Sciences; Languages and Civilisations; and Islamic Arts. The MA programme includes imam training and a research component. IUR's research spans policy (e.g. integration), law (e.g. Islam and human rights, and democracy and Islam), institutions (e.g. Islamic banking), history and art. PhD degrees

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<sup>10</sup> Interview with Welmoet Boender, International Institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern World, The Hague, 22 January 2008.

<sup>11</sup> Euro-Islam.info, 'The Netherlands', [http://www.euro-islam.info/spip/article.php3?id\\_article=294](http://www.euro-islam.info/spip/article.php3?id_article=294) [accessed 10 March 2008].

<sup>12</sup> Cesari, *When Islam and Democracy Meet*, 74-5.

<sup>13</sup> Interview with Welmoet Boender.

<sup>14</sup> Interview with Mohammed M. Ghaly, Leiden University, Leiden, 22 January 2008.

are also offered and a 'fatwa commission' has been founded but is not yet active. According to 2005 figures, IUR has 147 full-time students and 170 part-time students. The male to female ratio is 45 to 55.<sup>15</sup>

15. IUR's objectives include conveying and deepening knowledge of Islam for Muslims living in Europe, and in the Netherlands in particular; and contributing intellectually to Dutch society by informing non-Muslims about the religion and culture of the Islamic world on an academic level. IUR has a strategic objective set by its board to obtain an official accredited status.<sup>16</sup>
16. Amongst the many challenges that IUR faces are: the enormous variety of student backgrounds; students' deficiency in both Dutch and Arabic; and funding. According to 2005 figures, IUR's funding comes from subsidies (10%), tuition fees (30%), and donations from businesses in the Netherlands, Germany and Turkey.<sup>17</sup> These challenges show that accreditation is crucial for IUR to continue functioning.<sup>18</sup>

### **Developments in Islamic Studies in the past ten years and responses in the Netherlands**

17. The Dutch government has a strategic need to reach out to the Muslim community in the Netherlands. However, because Muslims are divided into a large number of sub-communities and affiliations, the government has been attempting to find a Muslim equivalent of the 'elite blocs' of the liberal, social-democratic, Catholic, and Jewish communities.<sup>19</sup> There is a debate within policy circles in the Netherlands on approaches to interaction with the Muslim community, with positions being taken between 'integration', 'anti-radicalisation' and 'anti-terrorism'. Academics generally view 'integration' as the best starting point.<sup>20</sup>
18. Debates about the role of imams in Dutch society have been ongoing since the 1980s, and attention to the balance between freedom of religious expression and respect for Dutch values was heightened by a series of incidents beginning in 2001.<sup>21</sup> These included a statement by a Moroccan imam that homosexuality was a danger for Dutch society, and the murder of controversial film director Theo van Gogh by a Dutch-Moroccan Muslim in 2004. Public discussion of these incidents revolved around the role of imams, and led to a 2002 law requiring training in Dutch language and culture for all foreign-born imams, as well as a parliamentary decision that the importation of imams would be banned starting in 2008. The Contact Group Islam (CGI), one of two bodies engaged in official dialogue with the Dutch government, and comprising Shia, Alevis, Ahmadiyya and a council of Sunnis also declared its position as being against importing imams.

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<sup>15</sup> Welmoet Boender, 'From Migrant to Citizen: the Role of the Islamic University of Rotterdam in the Formulation of Dutch Citizenship', in *Politics of Visibility: Young Muslims in European Public Spaces*, eds. Gerdien Jonker and Valérie Amiraux (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2007).

<sup>16</sup> Interview with Mahmoud Al-Saify, University of Nijmegen, Amsterdam, 21 January 2008.

<sup>17</sup> Boender, 'From Migrant to Citizen', 116.

<sup>18</sup> Interview with Welmoet Boender.

<sup>19</sup> These are groups that were part of the 'pillarisation' system in the Netherlands.

<sup>20</sup> Interview with Welmoet Boender.

<sup>21</sup> Cesari, *When Islam and Democracy Meet*, 75.

19. The training programme for foreign-born imams was initiated through a committee developed by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of the Major Cities and Integration Policy. Because of the 1988 Law of Public Manifestations, which gives each denomination the freedom to regulate their own affairs related to religious matters, it was expected that the government would not intervene in the issue of imams coming from abroad. However the *Stichting Bijzondere Leerstoel Islam* (Foundation of the Extraordinary Chair Islam), occupied by Mohammad Arkoun and followed by others, made the case for intervention.
20. The programme has been formally established since the 2005-06 academic year. It was determined necessary as Dutch imams are expected to take on pastoral roles (e.g. in state-run prisons and hospitals), but do not have the necessary training. Importantly, they are viewed as 'community leaders', although they do not always know the language and values of the society in which they are 'leading' others. As imams were largely perceived as 'out of touch' with European society, and Dutch society in particular, the second and third generations have found it difficult to understand their teachings and have hesitated to view them as pastoral caretakers and counsellors. However, officials still largely believe that imams are to play a major role in integrating Muslims into Dutch society. Therefore the programme is meant to assist imams in playing this role more effectively. In this, it aims to replace the current generation of imams with a 'home-grown' generation and consequently produce a 'Dutch Islam'.<sup>22</sup> Significantly, the training aims to provide imams with the tools to 'de-radicalise Muslim youth' while at the same time prevent extremist influence from abroad.
21. The Dutch Ministry of Education and Science invited proposals for a national imam education programme and in early 2005 Leiden University, the University of Groningen, the Free University in Amsterdam, and the Humanistic University in Utrecht submitted their plans. These have since been in development whilst the courses have begun.<sup>23</sup>

## Case studies

### *Leiden University 'duplex ordo' system*

22. Leiden University, founded in 1575, is the oldest university in the Netherlands and established the first programme related to Islamic Studies in the sixteenth century.<sup>24</sup> Leiden is unique, however, in that although studies have worked heavily with classical texts, the university strives to initiate research on modern issues, especially related to Islam in the European context. Islamic Studies at Leiden is pluralistic in the sense that the programme represents different schools of Islamic thought, including various Sunni and Shia schools. It is also important to note that the university employs faculty both from European universities and from Muslim institutions. In terms of resources, the university has one of the most highly developed libraries of Islamic books and manuscripts and is used by scholars from all over the world.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Boender, 'From Migrant to Citizen', 104.

<sup>23</sup> Mohammed M. Ghaly, 'The Academic Training of Imams: Recent Discussions and Initiatives in the Netherlands', in *The Study of Religion and the Training of Muslim Clergy in Europe: Academic and Religious Freedom in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, eds. Willem B. Drees and Peiter Sjoerd van Kongsveld, 371-378 (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2008).

<sup>24</sup> Leiden University, Faculty of Religious Studies, <http://www.leidenuniv.nl/gg/> [accessed 12 March 2008].

<sup>25</sup> Ghaly, 'The Academic Training of Imams', 382.

23. With these strengths, when various universities submitted a proposal for Islamic Studies funding from the government in 2006, the State Secretary of Education chose Leiden. The university received €2.3 million for 2006-2010 to establish a four-year programme based on the system of *duplex ordo*. This system, established in 1876 as a way to train Christian ministers, means that the programme is divided into two distinct domains: the academic and the confessional. The first part, run by the university, focuses on the academic approach to education in a 'secular' style, whereas the second part gives space for Muslim organisations to set up their own supplementary confessional training programme in a 'seminary' style. The sole roles of the university in this latter domain are to ensure the quality of education and to protect the legal rights of employees.<sup>26</sup> This is the first time such a programme has been developed for students from non-Christian religions. The academic part (both the first year of the BA and the MA) started in September 2006. The confessional part, however, is still waiting for the conclusion of agreements with the Moroccan and Turkish organisations concerned.<sup>27</sup>

*International Institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern World, Leiden (ISIM)*

24. The International Institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern World (ISIM) is an interdisciplinary research centre focusing on social, political, cultural and intellectual trends in contemporary Muslim societies.<sup>28</sup> The institute was founded in 1998 and is a partnership between the University of Amsterdam, Leiden University, Radboud University in Nijmegen and Utrecht University. At each of these universities ISIM has established chairs to promote the study of Islam in the modern world within established postgraduate programmes. It also sponsors graduate, postdoctoral, and visiting fellowships to support its research. Other activities include the publication of the *ISIM Review* and the *ISIM Papers*, the organisation of academic conferences, and an outreach program of public debates.
25. The ISIM's research outlook is interdisciplinary and comparative, and the staff have expertise across the Muslim world, including the Middle East and North Africa as well as sub-Saharan Africa, Central Asia, South and Southeast Asia and Muslim communities in Europe. According to the website: 'The ISIM's research approaches are grounded in social and cultural science theory and methodology but attach great importance to solid knowledge of the languages concerned. They integrate the methodologies and accumulated insights of such disciplines as philology, literary criticism, Islamic studies, religious studies, history, legal studies, etc.'<sup>29</sup> Current research programmes include: 'Islam, Civil Society, and the Public Sphere'; 'Muslim Cultural Politics: Family Dynamics and Gender'; 'Agency and Change in Contemporary Muslim Societies'; and 'The Production of Islamic Knowledge in Western Europe'.
26. ISIM is funded by the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and the participating universities. As well as furthering academic research within the universities, ISIM sees its role as 'fundamentally attempting to offer new and critical perspectives on the ways in which questions about Islam and Muslims are framed in the public sphere'.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Interview with Mohammed M. Ghaly.

<sup>27</sup> Interview with Mahmoud Al-Saify.

<sup>28</sup> International Institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern World, <http://www.isim.nl/> [accessed 12 March 2008].

<sup>29</sup> International Institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern World, 'Research', <http://www.isim.nl/>.

<sup>30</sup> International Institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern World, 'FAQ/General', <http://www.isim.nl/>.

### 3.5 United States

#### Historical development and current approaches to Islamic Studies in the US

1. The study of Islam in the United States developed out of nineteenth-century Orientalist studies, and the foundation of the American Oriental Society in 1842. Some of the oldest locations for the study of Islam are those that came out of these approaches, in what are now called Departments of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations or Near Eastern Studies. These departments cover a wide range of areas and time periods, and often their approach to Islam is based on texts and a classical philological training. Near Eastern Studies departments are generally found at the older American universities, including Harvard, Princeton, Yale, Columbia, the University of Chicago and the University of Pennsylvania. While traditional textual approaches are still central in some universities, these and other departments have also developed innovative approaches that bring together different disciplinary perspectives (history, religion, literature, anthropology and the social sciences). Although Near and Middle Eastern Studies departments remain central locations for the study of Islam, some departments have developed trans-regional approaches, and the study of Islam in the West has also become a fast-developing field in the United States.<sup>1</sup>
2. The study of Islam in the United States is not generally found in departments specifically devoted to 'Islamic Studies',<sup>2</sup> although named programmes in Islamic Studies exist at the University of California at Los Angeles, Hartford Seminary, the University of Michigan, and Georgetown University. Instead Islamic Studies is mainly found in three types of department: Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations; Religion or Religious Studies; and Middle Eastern Studies. Scholars in other disciplines in the humanities, such as history and literature, and in social sciences such as anthropology and political science also contribute to the study of Islam. Departments of Religious Studies, which broke with the theological perspective of the divinity schools that formed the basis of many older universities, have slowly been expanding their coverage of Islam since at least the 1980s.<sup>3</sup> In these departments Islam is often taught alongside other religions. In recent years increased student demand has led to the creation of a number of new specialist positions in Islamic Studies within Religious Studies departments. Many programmes in this area are at the older and Ivy League universities, but Islamic Studies is also found in Religious Studies departments at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Duke University, Temple University, and Emory University.
3. The first departments of contemporary Middle Eastern Studies were not founded in the United States until after World War Two.<sup>4</sup> Federal funding starting in 1958 of what are now known as 'Title VI National Resource Centers' has been an important factor in the

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<sup>1</sup> Programmes that take a trans-regional approach include the Abbasi Program in Islamic Studies at Stanford University, the Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Christian-Muslim Understanding at Georgetown University, and the Islamic Studies collaborations between the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Duke University, discussed below. The study of Islam in the West has been developed at Harvard University's Islam in the West programme and through research at different universities on Islam in the United States.

<sup>2</sup> For general information on Islamic Studies in the US see Marcia K. Hermansen, 'Trends in Islamic Studies in the United States and Canada since the 1970s', *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* 10, no. 1 (1993). Information on approaches to Islamic Studies in the US is also taken from telephone interview with Carl W. Ernst, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 8 February 2008; email interview with John Voll, Georgetown University, 12 February 2008; email interview with Bruce B. Lawrence, Duke University, 4 March 2008.

<sup>3</sup> Richard C. Martin, *Approaches to Islam in Religious Studies* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2001); Brannon Wheeler, ed., *Teaching Islam, American Academy of Religion Teaching Religious Studies Series* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

development of approaches to the study of Islam. There are currently 17 federally funded National Resource Centers for Middle Eastern Studies in the United States,<sup>5</sup> and many other interdisciplinary centres funded by individual universities. These centres, focused on the study of the contemporary Middle East rather than the ancient languages and civilisations, act as a node for bringing together scholars from different university departments. The centres are found across the United States, often located in those universities with historical strengths in Near Eastern Studies and language training. The centres may offer undergraduate degrees, but more often offer minors or concentrations in conjunction with other departments. Although the area studies approach to the study of Islam has limitations, interdisciplinary centres are often successful at bringing together scholars from different disciplines for collaborative teaching and research projects.

### The 'health of the discipline' in the US

4. The number of universities offering undergraduate or postgraduate degrees in named programmes in Islamic Studies is very small, but there are a large number of departments that offer Islamic Studies through other disciplines. The Middle East Studies Association currently lists 123 institutions that provide teaching or degrees in Middle East Studies in the United States.<sup>6</sup> A survey carried out by the American Academy of Religion in 2000 found that undergraduate teaching on Islam was offered at one third (299) of the departments surveyed.<sup>7</sup> At present, of the 34 PhD programmes in Religious Studies in the US, about half offer a concentration in Islamic Studies.<sup>8</sup> In addition, statistics show that there has been a marked increase in student numbers in the related disciplines of Middle Eastern Studies and Arabic Language and Literature in the past ten years. In 1995-96 there were 84 BAs, 90 MAs and 18 PhDs granted in Near and Middle Eastern Studies. In 2005-06, 158 BAs, 142 MAs and 32 PhDs were awarded, an increase of 88%, 58% and 78%, respectively. Further information on department numbers and student numbers in Islamic Studies and related disciplines can be found in Appendix D.
5. Interviewees agreed that the field of Islamic Studies in the United States is thriving, due largely to the increased demand for courses and publications since September 11, 2001.<sup>9</sup> Increased student numbers has meant an increase in new faculty positions – while before 2001 there were generally about five jobs a year for Islamic Studies in

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<sup>4</sup> Tareq Ismael and Jacqueline Ismael, 'Middle Eastern Studies in the United States', in *Middle East Studies: International Perspectives on the State of the Art*, 3.

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Department of Education, National Resource Centers (NRC) and Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowship Programs Grantees and Funding for FY 2006 and 2007, <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/iegps/nrcflasgrantees2006-09.pdf> [accessed 12 February 2008].

<sup>6</sup> Middle East Studies Association, Directory of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs and Courses in Middle East Studies in the U.S., Canada and Abroad, <http://fp.arizona.edu/mesassoc/Directory/directory.htm> [accessed 10 February 2008].

<sup>7</sup> American Academy of Religion, 'Religion and Theology Programs Census', *AAR Religious Studies News*, Fall 2001, [http://www.aarweb.org/Programs/Department\\_Services/](http://www.aarweb.org/Programs/Department_Services/) [accessed 18 February 2008].

<sup>8</sup> Carl W. Ernst, Islamic Studies in Ph.D. Programs in Religious Studies, <http://www.unc.edu/%7Ecernst/reliprograms.htm> [accessed 8 February 2008].

<sup>9</sup> It is important to note that due to the 'liberal arts' approach of most American universities, this increase in student numbers does not necessarily result in more undergraduate degrees in Islamic Studies, but does result in an increased number of individual modules on Islam that may be taken by a wide range of students.



Religious Studies departments, today there can be up to 50 per year.<sup>10</sup> Most major publishers are actively developing their list of publications related to Islam. However, one interviewee noted that many of these publications are related to 'hot topics' such as 'Islam and violence', and the quality of publications may suffer as a result.<sup>11</sup> It was also observed that this new interest has resulted in an increased focus on contemporary events and the development of social science approaches to Islam, though there is still an attempt to retain a balance between the humanities and social science approaches in the US.<sup>12</sup>

6. A further indication of the state of the discipline is in developments within the American Academy of Religion (AAR). In 1973 Charles Adams called attention to the fact that he was the only scholar to present a paper on Islam at the AAR conference that year.<sup>13</sup> Now there are a variety of sub-sections operating within the AAR, including groups devoted to the Study of Islam, Islamic Mysticism, Qur'anic Studies and Contemporary Islam, resulting in a number of well-attended panels about Islam at each annual conference.<sup>14</sup> The Middle East Studies Association remains the main subject association connected to Islamic Studies; this fact and the importance of the National Resource Centers for area studies means that there remains an emphasis on the Middle East in Islamic Studies, to the exclusion of other regions, including Sub-Saharan Africa, South, Southeast, and Central Asia.<sup>15</sup>

### **Relationships between publicly funded higher education institutions and faith-based institutions in the US**

7. Muslim immigration to the United States has developed since the nineteenth century, with waves of migrants from the Middle East, India, Turkey, Pakistan, and the Balkans. This immigration increased significantly in the 1960s and 1970s, with many highly qualified migrants from Asia and Africa arriving in the US each year. In comparison to Muslim populations in many European countries, American Muslims are likely to be better off and more highly educated. There is also a significant population of African-American Muslims. Current population estimates place the number of American Muslims at 4-5 million, with 24.4% from the Asian subcontinent, 12.45% from the Arab world, and 46% American-born converts, the majority African-American.<sup>16</sup>
8. Some universities in the United States have developed partnerships with educational institutions in the Muslim world. Often these partnerships do not focus on Islamic Studies, but one interviewee cited the example of a collaboration to develop curricula for Islamic and Asian civilisation studies between the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the University of Malaya's Centre for Civilizational Dialogue.<sup>17</sup> Collaboration with

<sup>10</sup> Telephone interview with Carl W. Ernst and current job listings on the Carolina Center for the Study of the Middle East and Muslim Civilizations, <http://www.unc.edu/mideast/jobs.shtml> [accessed 27 March 2008]. See also Robin Wilson, 'Interest in the Islamic World Produces Academic Jobs in U.S.', *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 1 March 2002: 10.

<sup>11</sup> Email interview with John Voll.

<sup>12</sup> Email interview with Bruce B. Lawrence.

<sup>13</sup> Adams cited in Carl W. Ernst, 'The Study of Religion and the Study of Islam', paper presented at the Integrating Islamic Studies in Liberal Arts Curricula conference, University of Washington, 1998, <http://www.unc.edu/%7Ecernst/study.htm> [accessed 6 February 2008].

<sup>14</sup> Telephone interview with Carl W. Ernst.

<sup>15</sup> Email interview with Bruce B. Lawrence.

<sup>16</sup> Cesari, *When Islam and Democracy Meet*, 11, 16-17.

<sup>17</sup> Telephone interview with Carl W. Ernst.

US-based Muslim organisations is still relatively rare, due in part to mistrust and the clash between academic and faith-based approaches to Islamic Studies, but these collaborations are beginning to develop.

9. A number of independent educational organisations have developed programmes in Islamic Studies, largely focused towards American Muslim communities. These include the Zaytuna Institute in California, and Cordoba University in Virginia, which houses a Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences.<sup>18</sup> Although these programmes are not accredited by universities, graduates have found work in social services and have become imams or Muslim chaplains.
10. Along with running non-accredited training programmes for imams and community workers, the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) has recently launched a fellowship programme with funding from Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal to support MA students studying non-profit management or philanthropic studies. Students will take courses at the Indiana University Center on Philanthropy or other accredited higher education institutions. The goal of the programme is to train Muslim leaders to lead successful non-profit organisations in North America.<sup>19</sup>
11. Another organisation involved in educational partnerships with higher education institutions is the International Institute for Islamic Thought (IIIT), founded in 1981 and based outside Washington, DC. The IIIT supports research, publications and conferences related to contemporary Islamic thought and the social sciences.<sup>20</sup> Through its educational branch, the Fairfax Institute, it also offers training programmes for American imams, and general continuing education courses.
12. The IIIT has engaged in collaborations with higher education institutions through sponsoring conferences, speakers, research and publications, and by supporting undergraduate and postgraduate students at various universities through fellowships from the institute. The IIIT has also been involved in the development of philanthropic donations from the American Muslim community to US educational institutions. This included a recent donation to Central Florida University in Orlando, where a chair in Islamic Studies was funded by the local community and the IIIT, along with a matching gift from the state of Florida. This model has been applied in universities in Ohio and Texas as well. These gifts stipulated that members of the local Muslim community be appointed to the search committees to fill the funded chairs, and that the universities engage with local communities through outreach programmes and public seminars. IIIT estimated that, in seven to ten years, there would be at least a dozen such chairs in American universities.

### **Developments in Islamic Studies in the past ten years and responses in the US**

13. Since September 11, 2001 and its aftermath, there has been a dramatic increase in student demand for courses related to Islam. Students have identified potential employment prospects for graduates with degrees based around the study of Islam and

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<sup>18</sup> Zaytuna Institute, <http://www.zaytuna.org/>; Cordoba University School of Islamic and Social Sciences, <http://www.siss.edu/> [accessed 10 March 2008].

<sup>19</sup> Islamic Society of North America, HRH Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal ISNA Fellowship Program, <http://www.isna.net/events/Special-Projects/HRH-Prince-Alwaleed-Bin-Talal-ISNA-Fellowship-Program-.aspx> [accessed 15 February 2008].

<sup>20</sup> Information on IIIT is taken from IIIT, <http://www.iiit.org/> [accessed 14 February 2008] and telephone interview with Jamal Barzinji, IIIT, 15 February 2008.

Muslims, together with language training. Along with security-related reasons, questions of globalisation and the increased awareness of Muslims in the West have also led to increased interest in Islamic Studies.<sup>21</sup>

14. The increased prominence of Islamic Studies led to scrutiny of the discipline from policy makers, the media, and independent bodies. A prominent development was the foundation of Campus Watch in 2002, a project of the neoconservative, pro-Israel think-tank, the Middle East Forum. Campus Watch 'reviews and critiques Middle East Studies in North America with an aim to improving them'<sup>22</sup> but has been accused of attempting to police campuses and limit the academic freedom of those who do not support their political views.<sup>23</sup> The increased climate of suspicion on American campuses led the Middle East Studies Association to create a section of its Committee on Academic Freedom specifically devoted to North America in 2005.<sup>24</sup>
15. In terms of the funding of Islamic Studies in higher education, the federal government continues to support Title VI National Resource Centers in Middle Eastern Studies.<sup>25</sup> In recent applications for this funding, many centres drew attention to initiatives specifically related to Islamic Studies.<sup>26</sup> The government has also supported the development of training programmes for American imams, but this takes place outside higher education institutions.<sup>27</sup>
16. Most of the increased capacity in universities has been a result of increased student demand, making funds available to hire new faculty or establish new programmes in Islamic Studies. Another important development in terms of funding in the United States is the role of private funders in establishing chairs and even centres devoted to Islamic Studies. Two prominent recent examples are the Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Islamic Studies Program at Harvard University and the Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Christian-Muslim Understanding at Georgetown University.<sup>28</sup> Both centres received gifts of \$20 million in 2005 from a member of the Saudi royal family. The centre at Harvard will provide four new endowed chairs, graduate fellowships, and new research facilities. The centre at Georgetown was founded in 1993, but was renamed after receiving the grant. Other significant gifts were declined by American universities when ethical questions were raised about the source of the donations.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Email interview with John Voll.

<sup>22</sup> Campus Watch, <http://www.campus-watch.org/> [accessed 20 February 2008].

<sup>23</sup> Miriam Cooke, 'Contesting Campus Watch: Middle East Studies Under Fire, the Academy and Democracy at Risk', available at <http://www.arabworldbooks.com/Articles/article54.htm> [accessed 20 February 2008]; Sara Roy, 'Short Cuts' in *London Review of Books*, April 1, 2004, available at [http://www.lrb.co.uk/v26/n07/print/roy\\_01\\_.html](http://www.lrb.co.uk/v26/n07/print/roy_01_.html) [accessed 20 February 2008].

<sup>24</sup> Middle East Studies Association, 'In Defense of Academic Freedom', [http://www.mesa.arizona.edu/aff/academic\\_freedom.htm](http://www.mesa.arizona.edu/aff/academic_freedom.htm) [accessed 20 February 2008].

<sup>25</sup> This research has not identified initiatives from the federal government directly related to teaching and research on Islam.

<sup>26</sup> U.S. Department of Education, search for 'Islamic Studies', <http://www.ed.gov/> [accessed 20 February 2008].

<sup>27</sup> Telephone interview with Jamal Barzinji.

<sup>28</sup> Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Islamic Studies Program at Harvard University, <http://www.islamicstudies.harvard.edu/>; Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Christian-Muslim Understanding, <http://cmcu.georgetown.edu/> [both accessed 10 March 2008].

<sup>29</sup> These include an offer of \$2.5 million from the president of the United Arab Emirates Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan for the Harvard Divinity School and an offer of \$1.5 million dollars for an endowed chair at Temple University from the International Institute for Islamic Thought (IIIT), based in

## Case studies

### *Islamic Studies collaborations between the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Duke University*

17. The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-CH) Department of Religious Studies and the Duke University Department of Religion have collaborated on recent initiatives related to Islamic Studies.<sup>30</sup> Both departments offer a PhD degree with a concentration in Islamic Studies, and collaborate through joint courses, joint dissertation committees, collaborative research networks, and publications. This collaboration began in 1995-96 through the work of Carl W. Ernst at UNC-CH and Bruce B. Lawrence at Duke, who were both department chairs at the time. Students engage with approaches to Islamic Studies in humanities and social sciences disciplines, and the perspective is trans-regional and comparative. A sign of the success of this approach has been the large increase in applicants for the PhD programme. From a previous average of five or six applicants per year in Islamic Studies, the programme at UNC-CH now attracts between 30 and 40 applicants each year for two available places.
18. The collaboration also extends to research networks such as the Center for the Study of Muslim Networks, based at Duke University. This network brings together scholars from Duke, UNC-CH, North Carolina State University, Emory University, and several universities from the Muslim world and elsewhere for a programme of visiting fellows, workshops, conferences, and working papers.<sup>31</sup> The universities draw on local resource centres such as the Carolina Center for the Study of the Middle East and Muslim Civilizations and the Duke Islamic Studies Center.<sup>32</sup> As the title of the Carolina Center indicates, this centre goes beyond the traditional Middle East area studies perspective to consider the study of Muslim civilisations trans-regionally.
19. Ernst believes the collaboration between the two universities has created 'a sense of intellectual community' among faculty and students. He emphasised that such collaborations give 'a maximal benefit from those kinds of association that are important

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Virginia. IIIT was targeted in a 2002 federal investigation into the funding of terrorist groups in the United States, and has historical ties to the Muslim Brotherhood. See Judith Miller, 'A Nation Challenged: The Money Trail; Raids seek evidence of money-laundering', *The New York Times*, 20 March 2002. *The New York Times* later reported that no evidence of connections to al-Qaeda had been found in these raids. Vincent M. Cannistraro, 'The War on Terror Enters Phase 2', *The New York Times*, 2 May 2002. Al Nahyan was accused of connections to a think-tank in the UAE that had hosted speakers with anti-Semitic and anti-American views. This think-tank was closed in 2003. Stephanie Strom, 'Arab's Gift to be Returned by Harvard', *The New York Times*, 28 July 2004.

<sup>30</sup> Information on these programmes is taken from University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Religious Studies, [http://www.unc.edu/depts/re\\_l\\_stud/grad/sf-islamic.shtml](http://www.unc.edu/depts/re_l_stud/grad/sf-islamic.shtml); Duke University, Graduate Program in Religion, <http://www.duke.edu/web/gradreligion/academics/areasofstudy/islam.htm>; Carl W. Ernst, Graduate Admission Information for Islamic Studies at UNC, <http://www.unc.edu/%7Ecernst/applicants.html> [accessed 10 March 2008]; telephone interview with Carl W. Ernst.

<sup>31</sup> Center for the Study of Muslim Networks, <http://www.duke.edu/web/muslimnets/> [accessed 10 March 2008].

<sup>32</sup> Carolina Center for the Study of the Middle East and Muslim Civilizations, <http://www.unc.edu/mideast/>; Duke Islamic Studies Center, <http://www.jhfc.duke.edu/disc/> [accessed 10 March 2008].

to all academics without having to duplicate all the investments in personnel at every single institution'.<sup>33</sup>

#### *National Institute for Technology and Liberal Education Al-Musharaka Initiative*

20. The National Institute for Technology and Liberal Education (NITLE) is a national network of private liberal arts colleges<sup>34</sup> that encourages collaboration through the use of technology.<sup>35</sup> The national coordinating committee was founded in 2001 at the same time as a national initiative focusing on Middle Eastern Studies called the *Al-Musharaka* (collaborative) Initiative. NITLE was initially funded by the Mellon Foundation, though it is now transitioning to become subscriber-funded. The 93 colleges that participate in this network are generally elite, undergraduate-only institutions, but they are often geographically isolated and do not have the extensive resources of larger state or private universities.
21. The Al-Musharaka Initiative seeks to develop innovative ways of applying information technology to teach about Arab, Islamic and Middle Eastern societies. The approximately 70 participants from colleges across the country include specialists in Middle Eastern Studies and non-specialists who want to expand their expertise to provide coverage of topics related to the Middle East or Islam. The project includes: an inter-college resource sharing website; an annual seminar to develop faculty initiatives for collaborative projects; strategy-oriented meetings that bring faculty together to discuss thematic subjects; and periodic professional development events such as virtual 'brown bag' (lunchtime) seminars. Participants are members of an e-mail discussion list, and use the e-learning platform Moodle for discussion and sharing resources (course outlines, readings, etc.). The annual seminar has led to several collaborative projects, including a semester-long Introduction to Islam course, run across two to three colleges each year using audio and video streaming for lectures and discussion sessions.
22. Michael Toler, the programme director of the Al-Musharaka Initiative, emphasised the advantages of using technology to develop collaborative projects, especially for academics who are often geographically isolated. He also stressed that for such collaborations to work it was essential that each institution have something to bring to the table, in order to share the burden of work and build on each others' strengths.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Telephone interview with Carl W. Ernst.

<sup>34</sup> Liberal arts colleges provide four-year undergraduate BA or BS degrees but not postgraduate degrees.

<sup>35</sup> Information on NITLE and the Al-Musharaka Initiative are from Michael Toler, 'Extending the Campus: Al-Musharaka and Technology-Assisted Collaboration', *Middle East Studies Association Bulletin* 39, no. 2 (2005): 169-174; and telephone interview with Michael Toler, Al-Musharaka Initiative, 15 February 2008.

<sup>36</sup> Telephone interview with Michael Toler.

### 3.6 Australia

#### Historical development and current approaches to Islamic Studies in Australia

1. Islamic Studies is a relatively new, yet growing, field at Australian universities. Area studies is the most substantial disciplinary approach to the study of Islam and Muslim societies in Australia, with research traditionally grounded in the study of Southeast Asia, particularly Indonesia. This is largely due to the geographical proximity of Australia to Southeast Asia, though increasingly over the past decade or so, Islamic Studies in Australian universities has begun turning its attention to the Middle East and to Muslim communities within Australia itself. While research into Southeast Asia provides the main area of strength of Australian scholarship on Islam, the study of Australian Muslim communities generates the second area of strength.<sup>1</sup>
2. Between 1998 and 2004 research related to Islamic Studies received nearly A\$4 million from the Australian Research Council (ARC). A growth in interest in Islamic Studies is reflected by the dissemination of those funds, with only one successful Islam-related research project gaining funding in 2002 compared with six ARC-funded projects focused on Islam in 2004. The large majority of this funding has been for studies relating to Indonesia.<sup>2</sup>
3. While area studies accounts for a large part of Islamic Studies provision in Australian universities, Australian scholarship on Islam and Muslim societies is an interdisciplinary project, covered within Architecture, business and finance, the study of religions, Health, History, language (e.g. Arabic), Law, literature, Philosophy, Political Science and International Relations. More recently, however, 'universities have begun to appoint staff with skills in "traditional" areas of Islamic Studies and they are collaborating with colleagues in other disciplines in offering Islamic Studies programs/subjects'.<sup>3</sup>
4. In recent years there has been increased interest in the role of Islamic Studies within multicultural Australia and its potential within higher education institutions for the training of Muslim religious leaders and imams. This is reflected by the production of several 'stock-taking' reports, including 'Australian-based Studies on Islam and Muslim Societies' (2004), funded by the ARC, and 'Stock-take of Islamic Study at Australian Universities', commissioned by the Department of Education, Science and Training.<sup>4</sup> These reports resulted in the establishment of the National Centre of Excellence for Islamic Studies, discussed in further detail below.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For general information on Islamic Studies in Australia, see S. Akbarzadeh et al., *Australian-based Studies on Islam and Muslim Societies*, Monash University (2004). Available at <http://www.arts.monash.edu.au/politics/research/arc-network-islam-report1.pdf> [accessed 15 February 2008].

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>3</sup> Email interview with Abdullah Saeed, National Centre of Excellence for Islamic Studies, 25 February 2008.

<sup>4</sup> Muslim Community Reference Group, 'Stock-take of Islamic Study at Australian Universities', Department of Education, Science and Training (2006). Available at <http://www.dest.gov.au/> [accessed 15 February 2008].

<sup>5</sup> National Centre of Excellence for Islamic Studies, [www.nceis.unimelb.edu.au/](http://www.nceis.unimelb.edu.au/) [accessed 10 March 2008].

## The 'health of the discipline' in Australia

5. Several universities in Australia have specialised centres for research into Islamic Studies and related topics including:
  - Centre for Citizenship and Human Rights at Deakin University.
  - Griffith Islamic Research Unit at Griffith University.
  - Centre for Islamic Law and Society, formerly the Centre for the Study of Contemporary Islam at the University of Melbourne.
  - Centre for Muslim States and Societies, the Australian Consortium for In-Country Indonesian Studies at Murdoch University.
  - Centre for Arab and Islamic Studies at the Australian National University.<sup>6</sup>

Some of these centres also provide undergraduate teaching and PhD supervision.

6. During the 1990s the Australasia Middle East Studies Association and the Asian Studies Association of Australia provided the main point of reference for academic collaboration on Islam and Islamic Studies-related topics. Although the Asian Studies Association still exists, the Australasian Middle East Studies Association disbanded in 2000. Nevertheless, and as a reflection of the continued growth of Islamic Studies in Australia, the Islam node of the ARC-funded Asia Pacific Futures Research Network was set up in 2004.<sup>7</sup> It provides a vehicle for inter-disciplinary collaboration for Australian-based researchers working on Islam and Muslim societies in the Asia-Pacific, covering the Middle East, South and Southeast Asia, and Australia. The Network website provides information on scholars and doctoral students across Australia working on Islam and Muslim societies.
7. Several scholars of Islamic Studies and related area studies have contributed to both Australian national and foreign policy making. The 2004 report 'Religion, Cultural Diversity and Safeguarding Australia'<sup>8</sup> and the stock-take of Islam at Australian Universities referred to above are examples of the former, whilst contributions by academics to the Australia-Indonesia Institute, the Council for Australian-Arab Relations and Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade are examples of the latter.
8. According to the 2006 stock-take, several universities have connections with overseas universities and institutions, most notably the University of Melbourne which has connections with universities in Muslim-majority countries such as Malaysia, Bangladesh and Pakistan, as well as countries such as the Netherlands, the UK and the United States.<sup>9</sup> The report concludes by stating:

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<sup>6</sup> Centre for Citizenship and Human Rights, <http://www.deakin.edu.au/arts-ed/cchr/>; Griffith Islamic Research Unit, <http://www.griffith.edu.au/arts-languages-criminology/griffith-islamic-research-unit/>; Centre for Islamic Law and Society, <http://www.cils.unimelb.edu.au/>; Centre for Muslim States and Societies, <http://www.acicis.murdoch.edu.au/>; Centre for Arab and Islamic Studies, <http://arts.anu.edu.au/cais/> [accessed 10 March 2008].

<sup>7</sup> Suez to Suva, ARC Asia Pacific Futures Research Network, <http://www.sueztosuva.org.au/islam/> [accessed 10 March 2008].

<sup>8</sup> Desmond Cahill et al., 'Religion, Cultural Diversity and Safeguarding Australia', Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs, Australian Multicultural Foundation, World Conference of Religions for Peace, RMIT University and Monash University (2004). Available at [http://www.amf.net.au/PDF/religionCulturalDiversity/Main\\_Report.pdf](http://www.amf.net.au/PDF/religionCulturalDiversity/Main_Report.pdf) [accessed 15 February 2008].

<sup>9</sup> Muslim Community Reference Group, 'Stock-take of Islamic Study at Australian Universities', 11.

'[R]esponses to the stock-take show that the Australian higher education sector is strongly engaged in Islamic Studies and research.'<sup>10</sup>

9. One interviewee demonstrated the health of the discipline by citing the establishment of several posts in Islamic Studies over the past 12 months:

- A chair in Muslim-Catholic Relations at the Australian Catholic University in Melbourne, funded by the Gülen movement.<sup>11</sup>
- A lectureship in History at Monash University, funded by the Gülen movement.
- A chair in Islamic Studies at the University of Western Sydney, funded by the university.
- An associate professor position at the University Melbourne, funded by the university.

He also observed, however, that despite an increased government and public interest in Islamic Studies:

'It bears pointing out that the rise in student enrolment is generally much slower than anticipated by university administration. This is especially true at the undergraduate level.'<sup>12</sup>

10. In recent years the Australian government has taken an interest in the provision within Islamic Studies in Australian higher education for the training of home-grown imams. Until the recent establishment of the National Centre of Excellence for Islamic Studies, this was a gap in Islamic Studies provision in Australia.

### **Relationships between publicly funded higher education institutions and faith-based institutions in Australia**

11. Muslim contact with Australia dates back to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries from Indonesia, while the 1950s and 1960s saw the arrival of immigrants from Pakistan and Turkey after immigration restrictions were eased. Substantial migration from Afghanistan to Australia continued in the 1970s.<sup>13</sup> The 2006 census reported 340,400 Australian Muslim residents, accounting for 1.7% of Australia's total population, and making Islam Australia's second most common non-Christian religious affiliation, after Buddhism. The greatest number of Australian Muslims live in Sydney, 47% of the total. Of the 340,400 Muslims in Australia, 38% were born in Australia, 9% in Lebanon and 7% in Turkey.<sup>14</sup>

12. Several Australian universities have some connection both to their local Muslim communities and to faith-based institutions. There are several notable instances of this relationship mentioned in the stock-take report. For example:

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>11</sup> Gülen movement, <http://en.fgulen.com/> [accessed 14 March 2008], a Turkish Islamic movement that funds educational programmes around the world.

<sup>12</sup> Email interview with Abdullah Saeed.

<sup>13</sup> Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 'Bringing Communities Together: A Statistical Representation of Muslims in Australia' (2007). Available at [http://www.facsia.gov.au/internet/facsinternet.nsf/vIA/community\\_together/\\$file/Bringing-Communities-Together\\_intro.pdf](http://www.facsia.gov.au/internet/facsinternet.nsf/vIA/community_together/$file/Bringing-Communities-Together_intro.pdf) [accessed 18 February 2008].

<sup>14</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, 'Census Shows non-Christian Religions Continue to Grow at a Faster Rate'. Available at <http://www.abs.gov.au/> [accessed 18 February 2008].



- The University of Sydney's Faculty of Islamic and Arabic Studies develops courses in conjunction with community groups and in particular it has received guidance from the Australian Centre for Sufism, the Affinity Intercultural Foundation and Auburn Gallipoli Mosque.
  - Edith Cowan University, in collaboration with the Australian Islamic College, a Muslim high school in Perth, offered a four-unit, fee-paying Executive Certificate in Islamic Studies in 1999. Eight people graduated from the course in the initial year. After the first group of students, there was insufficient interest to enable the course to continue.
  - Studies of Islam and the Middle East in Victoria University are being developed with the assistance of the Australian Federation of Islamic Councils, including specialist courses in Islamic finance, Arabic for academic purposes, nursing for Muslim contexts, and multimedia for Arabic contexts.
  - The stock-take also notes the contribution from the local Muslim community of A\$700,000 to the Griffith Islamic Research Unit.<sup>15</sup>
13. In addition, several universities in Australia, including the University of Western Australia and Victoria University, offer specialist teacher training programmes which help prepare their students for roles in multicultural and religious environments, including Islamic schools and public schools with Muslim students.
14. The newly opened National Centre of Excellence for Islamic Studies provides a Professional Development programme, offering short courses, developed in collaboration with the National Consultative Committee, designed to meet the needs of local, state and national businesses, as well as government and private organisations. The Centre also offers subjects through the University of Melbourne's Community Access Program including an Understanding Islam short course, Islamic Studies at undergraduate level, and a Graduate Diploma in Islamic Legal Studies.

### **Developments in Islamic Studies in the past ten years and responses in Australia**

15. The two main Australian government departments which have affected policy concerned with Islamic Studies over the last decade have been the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST), now called the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, and the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC).<sup>16</sup> DIAC's input into Islamic Studies development stems from its objectives and policy stratagem concerning multiculturalism in Australia. Numerous policy papers have been produced since 1997 including: 'Multicultural Australia: the Way Forward' (1997); 'Charter of Public Service in a Culturally Diverse Society' (1998); 'Australian Multiculturalism for a New Century: Towards Inclusiveness' (1999); 'A New Agenda for Multicultural Australia' (1999); and 'Multicultural Australia: United in Diversity' (2003).<sup>17</sup>
16. One Australian government initiative concerned with multiculturalism has been 'Living in Harmony', commenced in 1998, and designed 'to build social cohesion through the promotion of the following concepts: respect, participation, a sense of belonging, and

<sup>15</sup> Muslim Community Reference Group, 'Stock-take of Islamic Study at Australian Universities', 7-9.

<sup>16</sup> Department of Education, Science and Training, <http://www.dest.gov.au/>; Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, <http://www.dewr.gov.au/>; Department of Immigration and Citizenship, <http://www.immi.gov.au/> [accessed 10 March 2008].

<sup>17</sup> All available at <http://www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/alphabetical-listing.htm> [accessed 18 February 2008].

Australian values'.<sup>18</sup> In 2004 the report 'Religion, Cultural Diversity and Safeguarding Australia' was funded by the Living in Harmony initiative. This report highlights two areas of concern regarding Islamic education:

- The need to build a Muslim educational institution staffed by international scholars for educating imams and other community leaders for the Australian context.
- Professional development programs for imams and other Islamic leaders to assist them in their leadership in a multi-faith society.<sup>19</sup>

17. In 2005-2006 the National Action Plan to Build on Social Cohesion, Harmony and Security (NAP) was developed 'to reinforce social cohesion, harmony and support the national security imperative in Australia by addressing extremism, the promotion of violence and intolerance, in response to the increased threat of global religious and political terrorism'.<sup>20</sup> The NAP focuses on four areas: Education, Employment, Integrating Communities, and Enhancing National Security.

18. Its strategy for education states:

'The education and training sectors are fundamental in equipping students of all ages and backgrounds with the skills, democratic values and principles for effective participation in a culturally, linguistically and religiously diverse society.'<sup>21</sup>

Under the plan, three main principles of the education system in Australia are highlighted which could contribute to social cohesion, harmony and national security:

- Reinforcing values and civics education.
- Informing Australians about religious and cultural diversity.
- The training of religious leaders and teachers in Australia.

19. The Muslim Community Reference Group (MCRG) was established for a one-year term in 2005 to advise the Australian government on Muslim community issues. It acted as the Muslim community consultation component in the development of the NAP. The MCRG Final Report also recognises the place of education in contributing to the NAP:

'Education and training increase understanding of diverse cultures and religions. Bringing together Islamic and other schools in a range of intellectual and physical activities will enhance respect and social cohesion. Similarly, Australian-based education and training of imams and Islamic scholars will provide a greater understanding of Australian society and culture.'<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Living in Harmony, About Us, <http://www.harmony.gov.au/aboutus.htm> [accessed 18 February 2008].

<sup>19</sup> Cahill et al., 'Religion, Cultural Diversity and Safeguarding Australia', 93.

<sup>20</sup> Ministerial Council on Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, 'National Action Plan to Build on Social Cohesion, Harmony and Security' (2005-2006), 6. Available at [http://www.immi.gov.au/living-in-australia/a-diverse-australia/national-action-plan/\\_attach/National-Action-Plan-2007.pdf](http://www.immi.gov.au/living-in-australia/a-diverse-australia/national-action-plan/_attach/National-Action-Plan-2007.pdf) [accessed 18 February 2008].

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>22</sup> Muslim Community Reference Group, 'Building on Social Cohesion, Harmony and Security' (2006), 18. Available at [http://www.immi.gov.au/living-in-australia/a-diverse-australia/mcrg\\_report.pdf](http://www.immi.gov.au/living-in-australia/a-diverse-australia/mcrg_report.pdf) [accessed 18 February 2008].

20. Two outcomes of the MCRG report are particularly important with regards to Islamic Studies in Australia:

- The 2006 stock-take of Islamic Studies in Australian Universities.
- National Professional Development Opportunities for Imams, a government pledge of A\$8 million toward the establishment of a National Centre of Excellence for Islamic Studies which will 'offer university accredited courses that provide a knowledge and skill foundation for students aspiring to religious leadership and teaching roles in Australia (e.g. imams) and also support the ongoing learning of existing Australian religious leaders and teachers'.<sup>23</sup>

## Case study

### *National Centre of Excellence for Islamic Studies*

21. The National Centre of Excellence for Islamic Studies is an Australian government initiative under the NAP, which as previously stated has been devised in consultation with the MCRG. On 16 July 2006, Julie Bishop MP, then Minister for Education, Science and Training, and Andrew Robb MP, then Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, jointly announced the Australian government's decision to provide A\$8 million over four years toward the establishment of the Centre at an Australian university or consortium of universities.<sup>24</sup>

22. The host consortium was selected through a competitive process open to all Australian universities. On 22 January 2007, Bishop announced that a consortium of Australian universities led by the University of Melbourne had been selected to host the National Centre of Excellence for Islamic Studies. The consortium is comprised of the University of Melbourne, the University of Western Sydney and Griffith University. The Centre was officially opened on 23 October 2007, with Abdullah Saeed, the Sultan of Oman Professor of Arab and Islamic Studies and Head of the Asia Institute at Melbourne University, as its Director.

23. The Australian government provided funding to support the establishment of the Centre, including:

- 40 new commencing student places for Islamic Studies at the Centre. The first enrolment of students will take place in 2008 with student numbers estimated to grow to 109 places by 2011.
- Infrastructure funding of A\$4 million. Funding is expected to be used for a range of infrastructure development or renewal applications to help establish the Centre and its Islamic studies courses across the three locations.

24. According to the Centre's website:

'The Centre is intended to meet the learning needs of aspiring and existing Muslim community leaders, teachers and other professionals. It aims to achieve an international profile among Islamic scholars and students, and to deliver multi-disciplinary teaching and research at national and international levels. The Centre

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 27.

<sup>24</sup> Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, 'Background and Context to the National Centre of Excellence for Islamic Studies', [http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher\\_education/programmes\\_funding/programme\\_categories/key\\_priorities/nceis/context\\_background.htm](http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher_education/programmes_funding/programme_categories/key_priorities/nceis/context_background.htm) [accessed 15 February 2008].

brings together established expertise in teaching and research, and will play an important leadership role in public debate on contemporary Islam, particularly in the Australian context. It provides tertiary accredited qualifications and offers professional development programs for the community, government and corporate organisations.’<sup>25</sup>

25. The Centre’s objectives also include:

- ‘Focus on issues of significance and relevance to Islam and Muslims in the contemporary period with a special focus on Australia’.
- ‘Provide a knowledge and skill foundation for students aspiring to religious and community leadership roles in Australia and...provide opportunities for professional development in relevant areas’.
- ‘Have an ongoing engagement with the Australian community, which will inform its programs and activities’.
- ‘Teaching and research activities will promote harmony and cultural inclusiveness’.<sup>26</sup>

26. The disciplinary approaches taken to Islamic Studies both in undergraduate and postgraduate courses reflect approaches spanning language and text-based study, with courses including ‘Great Texts of Islam: Qur’an and Hadith’ and ‘Methodologies of Hadith’, and more sociologically-based approaches with courses including ‘Islam and the West’ and ‘Islam, Media and Conflict’.

27. The undergraduate subjects are taught online by the consortium, and are available to students of the University of Melbourne, the University of Western Sydney and Griffith University, along with weekly face-to-face tutorials available at all three campuses.

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<sup>25</sup> National Centre of Excellence for Islamic Studies, ‘Director’s Welcome’, <http://www.nceis.unimelb.edu.au/about/welcome.html> [accessed 10 March 2008].

<sup>26</sup> National Centre of Excellence for Islamic Studies, ‘Objectives’, <http://www.nceis.unimelb.edu.au/about/objectives.html> [accessed 10 March 2008].

### 3.7 Malaysia

#### Historical development and current approaches to Islamic Studies in Malaysia

1. In traditional Malayan society, the normal practice of religious scholars in spreading Islamic knowledge was to open *pondok* (religious teaching centres). Students lived in small, hut-like sleeping quarters attached to the mosques and the homes of the scholars. The curriculum in most of the *pondok* schools was restricted to the transmitted sciences of Islamic subjects. These subjects include Qur'anic studies in areas such as recitation and memorisation, Islamic jurisprudence and law, and Islamic tradition. Some institutions offer a very broad curriculum, including philosophy and logic. A central subject area in the *pondok* is the reading of *Kitab Jawi*. *Kitab* is Arabic for 'book', and *Jawi* is the rendering in Malay of Arabic script. Most of these books are translations from the Arabic and discuss the transmitted sciences. A key text studied is the translation of *Ihya 'Ulum Ad-Din (The Revival of the Religious Sciences)* by Muslim scholar Abu Hamid al-Ghazali.
2. The principal study method in the *pondok* entailed a group of students sitting with a scholar, whilst he immersed them in information and theoretical explanations from books. Subsequently, these students would attempt to memorise what they have received, and prior to the emergence of an independent federal Malaya in 1957 (to become Malaysia in 1963), the successful 'graduates' would generally go on to pursue their studies in the Masjid al-Haram, the grand mosque in Mecca. The system of *pondok* Islamic education is still practised in present day Malaysia, although not widely.
3. By the early twentieth century, the Malaysian peninsula experienced the return *en masse* of graduates from the University of al-Azhar in Egypt, influenced by a reform movement which had taken place in this de facto Islamic university. These newly qualified scholars, inspired by the ideas of reformists Jamal al-Din al-Afghani and Muhammad Abduh, formed alternative Islamic schools (*madrasas*) that offered an extensive syllabus. The curriculum included the classical Islamic texts as taught in the *pondok* schools, together with academic subjects such as physics, history and mathematics. The *madrasas* borrowed educational ideologies both from the Arab world and the 'West', and as a consequence of this unique curriculum, were to recruit a wide range of students. The *madrasa* system used to produce imams for Malaysia, but today it operates solely as a secondary and higher-secondary institution.
4. Many students of Islamic studies in Malaysian universities graduated from *madrasas*. A large number of students from Malaysian *madrasas* go on to pursue their studies in the Middle East's Islamic institutions. As well as topics related to Islamic Studies and the general secular subjects, students are normally taught not only Malay, but Arabic and English. *Madrasas* produce young imams who have normally had placements in mosques and communities before continuing their studies at a higher level.
5. Islamic Studies is offered as a degree course in both public and private higher education institutions in Malaysia. The discipline of Islamic Studies is divided into the following categories:
  - Islamic Studies (without any specialisation).
  - *Syariah* (Sharia/Law).
  - *Usuluddin* (Theology).
  - Arabic and Islamic Civilisation.
  - *Al-Qur'an* and *Al-Sunnah* (Prophetic tradition).
  - *Dakwah* (Islamic propagation).

All students, either from public or private institutions, are trained to have the skills of an 'imam'. However, their levels and abilities vary according to the different programmes on offer.

### **The 'health of the discipline' in Malaysia**

6. There are two types of higher education institutions in Malaysia:
  - *Institusi Pengajian Tinggi Awam* (IPTA) (Public Institution of Higher Learning).
  - *Institusi Pengajian Tinggi Swasta* (IPTS) (Private Institution of Higher Learning).
7. There are at least 20 public universities in Malaysia. Most of the IPTAs offer programmes in Islamic studies. The most well-known of these IPTAs are:
  - University of Malaya (UM).
  - National University of Malaysia (UKM).
  - International Islamic University of Malaysia (UIAM).
  - Science University of Malaysia (USM).
8. There are 24 private universities, university colleges, or colleges accredited by the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA) that run Islamic Studies programmes at diploma and degree levels.<sup>1</sup> There are also numerous private universities, university colleges or colleges which are not accredited by the MQA. However, most of their courses are validated within a collaboration with Middle Eastern institutions who are themselves generally accredited by the MQA. All of these private institutions are faith-based and intend to produce students of Islam who can become imams or teachers in the community centres or learning institutions.
9. According to the statistics on the official website of the Malaysian Ministry of Higher Education, there were 9,333 diploma and first-year degree-level students enrolled on Islamic Studies programmes between the years 2000 and 2005, in the Malaysian IPTAs alone. This number does not include postgraduates.<sup>2</sup>
10. According to two interviewees, there is a lack of in-depth textual studies, whereas the sociological approach towards the discipline has been growing in Malaysia.<sup>3</sup> Many Malaysian universities offering Islamic studies have developed a mixture of textual and sociological approaches to the field.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Malaysian Qualifications Agency official website, *Kelulusan*, <http://www.lan.gov.my/eskp/KSenarai.cfm> [accessed 5 February 2008].

<sup>2</sup> Ministry of Higher Education, Statistics of IPTA, [http://www.mohe.gov.my/webkpt\\_v2/sub1.php?navcode=NAV020&subcode=SUB001](http://www.mohe.gov.my/webkpt_v2/sub1.php?navcode=NAV020&subcode=SUB001) [accessed 5 February 2008].

<sup>3</sup> Interviews with Khairuddin Amin, National University of Malaysia, and Kamaruzzaman Noordin, University of Malaya, 1 March 2008.

<sup>4</sup> Interview with Wan Adli Wan Ramli, University of Malaya, 1 March 2008.

## Relationships between publicly funded higher education institutions and faith-based institutions in Malaysia

### *Faith-based and private Islamic higher learning institutions*

11. There are many private Islamic higher learning institutions in Malaysia, the actual number of which could not be obtained. A proportion of these are not accredited by the Malaysian Qualification Agency. They offer diploma and BA degree-level programmes, mostly validated by universities in the Middle East. In most of these institutions, Arabic is the language of instruction, and their curricula reflect those of al-Azhar University in Cairo.
12. One example of an accredited institution is the Sultan Ismail Petra International Islamic College (KIAS) in the State of Kelantan. KIAS was built in 1999 by the Kelantan State government, and considered private as long as the federal government did not take over its administration. KIAS offers a diploma in *Syariah* (Islamic law), *Usuluddin* (Islamic Theology) and *Al-Dakwah Wal Qiadah* (Islamic Propagation and Leadership), and a BA degree in *Syariah* and *Usuluddin* in collaboration (2+2) with the University of al-Azhar. One of its objectives is to provide a higher education opportunity for those who graduated from the *madrasa* system.<sup>5</sup>
13. Amongst the unaccredited private institutions is the College University Darul Quran Islamiyyah (KUDQI) in the State of Terengganu. Established in 1998, it offers a BA in *Syariah* and *Usuluddin*. The BA is validated (3+1) by the University of al-Azhar. From 1999 to 2004 it received financial help from the Council of Islamic Religious and Malay Affairs of Terengganu (MAIDAM), a funding council of the state.<sup>6</sup>

### *Maahad Tahfiz as imam training institutions*

14. Although in Malaysia all higher learning institutions can be regarded as imam training institutions, especially the private ones, there are a number of higher secondary schools and colleges that offer programmes entitled 'imam training'. These programmes teach students to memorise the whole Qur'an with the correct recitation, alongside other Islamic sciences and the normal Malaysian curriculum. Normally, such an institution is referred to as *Maahad Tahfiz*.
15. According to a website published by the Malaysian Club of Tahfiz al-Qur'an (PERMATA), there are at least 31 *Maahad Tahfiz* throughout the country; 11 of them being located in the Kelantan state of Malaysia.<sup>7</sup> Some of these institutions are funded by government federal or state organisations, such as the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM).
16. Many of these *Maahad Tahfiz* offer programmes at diploma level, where students will study for some years and may continue to degree level either in Malaysian universities or abroad. For example, the *Maahad Tahfiz* of Pahang offers a three-year diploma which qualifies the student to take a degree course in Malaysia or overseas.<sup>8</sup>
17. The most well-known is perhaps Maahad Tahfiz Al-Qur'an Pulau Condong (MTAQ), in Kelantan State. Founded in 1992, it was initiated by the Chief Minister of Kelantan, Nik

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<sup>5</sup> KIAS, <http://www.kias.edu.my/> [accessed 12 March 2008].

<sup>6</sup> Interview with Khalil Abdul Hadi, Kolej Islam Darul Quran Islamiyyah, 17 January 2008.

<sup>7</sup> PERMATA, <http://www.tahfizmalaysia.com/> [accessed 12 March 2008].

<sup>8</sup> Maahad Tahfiz Pahang, <http://www.tahfizpahang.edu.my/> [accessed 12 March 2008].

Abdul Aziz Nik Mat, and funded by the Kelantan Foundation of Islam (YIK), a state-government organisation.

### **Developments in Islamic Studies in the past ten years and responses in Malaysia**

18. In 1997, an announcement was made to introduce Islamic Civilisation Studies as a compulsory subject in all public and private institutions of higher learning in Malaysia. This was due to the decision made subsequent to a joint meeting of the Islamic Affairs Development Committee and Islamic Consultative Body chaired by the then acting Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim. It has been said that the decision was made to 'promote tolerance and understanding'. However, the decision led to complaints from members of the non-Muslim minority of the country's population, including representatives from the Chinese-based political parties such as the Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA) and the Democratic Action Party (DAP).<sup>9</sup>
19. Malaysian students who go on to pursue Islamic Studies in law or theology at the level of diploma and BA degree in any of the Malaysian public universities can apply for a scholarship from the Public Service Department of Malaysia (JPA).<sup>10</sup>
20. Mohammad Firdaus points out that there has been a large amount of funding from the federal government to develop Islamic Studies. However, this funding is only given to the public universities, because there is a limited relationship between the federal government and private institutions.<sup>11</sup>

### **Case studies**

#### *The Academy of Islamic Studies, University of Malaya (UM), Kuala Lumpur*

21. The existence today of the Academy of Islamic Studies, University of Malaya<sup>12</sup> is a result of a merger between the Department of Islamic Studies (*Jabatan Pengajian Islam*) and the Academy of Islam (*Akademi Islam*). Both were independent institutions within the UM before the merger.
22. In 1959, the Department of Islamic Studies was formed as a result of a formal relationship between the then Islamic College of Malaya and the University of Malaya. The Department functioned under the control of the Council for Islamic Colleges (*Majlis Kolej Islam*). In 1981, the Academy of Islam was formed as a result of the taking over of the Kelantan Foundation for Higher Islamic Studies. The Academy consisted of two faculties, namely the Faculty of *Syariah* and the Faculty of *Usuluddin*. Its academic language was Arabic.

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<sup>9</sup> Cheu Hock-Tong, 'Islamic Studies Requirement Debated', Kokugakuin University (1998): 1-2. Available at <http://www2.kokugakuin.ac.jp/ijcc/asia-nl/news/news000053.html> [accessed 5 February 2008].

<sup>10</sup> Public Service Department of Malaysia, <http://www.jpa.gov.my/lskhidmat.asp> [accessed 12 March 2008].

<sup>11</sup> Interview with Mohammad Firdaus Mohammad Hatta, *Kulliyah* of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences, International Islamic University, 1 March 2008.

<sup>12</sup> University of Malaya, Academy of Islamic Studies, <http://apium.um.edu.my/> [accessed 12 March 2008].



23. In 1996, the Department of Islamic Studies was merged with the Academy of Islam to become the Academy of Islamic Studies (AIS). Since then, the AIS has nine departments which are split into four divisions:

- The Division of *Syariah* Studies comprises: the Department of *Fiqh* and *Usul*; the Department of *Siasah Syariah*; the Department of *Syariah* and Economics; the Department of *Syariah* and Management; and the Department of *Syariah* and Law.
- The Division of Theological Studies comprises: the Department of *Aqidah* and Islamic Thought; the Department of Missionary and Human Development; the Department of al-Qur'an and al-Hadith; and the Department of Islamic History and Civilisation.
- The Division of Joint Studies conducts the Islamic Education Programme (Division 3) and the Islamic Studies Programme (Division 4), which are combined within the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

*The International Islamic University of Malaysia (IIUM), Kuala Lumpur, and the idea of 'Islamisation of Knowledge'*<sup>13</sup>

24. In the 1960s, a general call was made in Malaysia for an 'Islamic University'. As a result of the first World Conference of Muslim Education held in Mecca in 1977, Mahathir Mohamad announced the foundation of IIUM after taking office as Prime Minister. The university was finally established in 1983, sponsored by the Malaysian government and the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC). Its first rector was Abdul Rauf, an Egyptian scholar who was an active advocate of the 'Islamisation of knowledge'. The all-Muslim staff came from all over the world.

25. The aim of the university is to integrate Islamic values and principles into all disciplines, because Islamic revealed knowledge is the basis of all other knowledge. Therefore, the establishment of its *kulliyah* (faculties) aimed to disseminate secular knowledge, but this would be led by Islamic teachings. There are 14 *kulliyah* in the IIUM. The most well-known amongst them are:

- Ahmad Ibrahim *Kulliyah* of Laws (IAKOL): here students are taught legal studies based upon current Malaysian law (mainly common law) and the Sharia.
- The *Kulliyah* of Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences (KIRKHS): this is the largest faculty in IIUM. Various subjects are taught from an 'Islamic perspective' including language, History, Philosophy and social sciences.

26. The university admits non-Muslim students, despite being founded on the basis of Islamic principles. Its female students outnumber male by 3:1.

27. Hassan Ahmad Ibrahim observed that the IIUM was the first modern higher education institution to combine the study of Islamic revealed sciences with human sciences. He pointed out six key aspects that made the IIUM different from other Islamic universities:

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<sup>13</sup> *The Star Online*, 'Aiming to be premier Islamic university', 30 November 2007, <http://www.thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2007/11/30/nation/19579717&sec=nation> [accessed 5 February 2008]; Anne Sophie Roald, *Tarbiyya: Education and Politics in Islamic Movements in Jordan and Malaysia* (Lund, Sweden: Dept. of History of Religion, 1994); International Islamic University, <http://www.iiu.edu.my/about/about.shtml> [accessed 12 March 2008].

- 'Uses English, along with other 'Islamic' languages as a primary language of teaching, recognising that the Arab world is no longer the centre of the Muslim world'.
- 'Encourages dialogue between Muslims themselves by promoting the active interaction of divergent viewpoints'.
- 'Encourages the empowerment of women, as the majority of students are women and senior academic positions are occupied by women'.
- 'Provides a critique of traditional and modern education and the ending of the dichotomy of knowledge into sacred and secular'.
- 'Promotes the learning of academic skills, scientific methods and sound methodological approaches to social sciences combined with the study of values, ethics and moral conduct'.
- 'Utilises an inclusive curriculum that teaches ethics and engagement with other philosophical systems, religious traditions and worldviews'.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Hassan Ahmad Ibrahim, paper discussed in Abdul-Rehman Malik, 'Islam in Higher Education Conference'. See also Bunt, 'Islam in Higher Education'.

### 3.8 Turkey

#### Historical development and current approaches to Islamic Studies in Turkey

1. During the late eighteenth century, the *medrese*<sup>1</sup> system in the Ottoman State, which had been an evolving higher education system since the classical Islamic period (eleventh century), was surpassed by major educational reforms based on contemporary European structures.<sup>2</sup> One of the main reforms implemented was the establishment of numerous Western-style higher education institutions and the first Ministry of Education in 1857.<sup>3</sup> Due to these reforms, the Ottoman State acquired a dual higher education system that had the traditional structure (*medreses*) and the Western type (*mekteb*).<sup>4</sup> In 1908 the first Islamic Studies department was established in a modern higher education institution outside the *medrese* structure. However this faculty was closed down in 1919 by the state. It was reported that this was due to the state believing that the *medreses* were sufficient to provide Islamic education.
2. In 1924, the new Republic of Turkey passed the Unification of Education Act Law, which put all educational institutions under the state. At the same time the Ministry of Education abolished all *medreses* and all Sufi institutions.<sup>5</sup> During that year, the Darul Fanun Faculty of *Ilahiyat*<sup>6</sup> (Faculty of Divinity within the School of Arts) in Istanbul (1924-1933) was opened. At the same time *imam-hatib*<sup>7</sup> schools at the secondary level were introduced to train imams since the *medreses* had been abolished. The *imam-hatib* secondary schools did not just concentrate on Islamic sciences but used a secular pedagogy and included subjects such as Civil Law, sciences, Mathematics, Economics and Sociology. The new curriculum at the Darul Fanun Faculty of *Ilahiyat* in Istanbul promoted a modern and active understanding of religion, and it was argued that it would train specialists in Islamic Studies, meet the need for religious instruction in schools, and produce graduates fluent in modern scientific methods. The faculty was allowed to accept students from *imam-hatib* schools. The faculty received more than 400 students that year directly from the abolished *medreses*.<sup>8</sup> However, by 1933 the *imam-hatib* schools were refused secondary school status, which directly caused the closure of the *Ilahiyat* Faculty since the majority of their students came from these schools.
3. Nevertheless, various factors led the parliament in 1948 to argue that a faculty of *Ilahiyat* should be established and some other religious education institutions should be opened to get qualified men who could lead prayers and funeral ceremonies. Eight new *imam-hatib* courses were therefore opened that year. In 1949, Ankara University Senate established the first Faculty of *Ilahiyat*. Since 1959 numerous *Ilahiyat* faculties have been

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<sup>1</sup> *Medrese* is the Turkish for *madrassa*.

<sup>2</sup> R. Hefner, 'Introduction: the Culture, Politics and Future of Muslim Education', in *Schooling Islam; the Culture and Politics of Modern Islam*, eds. Hefner and M. Q. Zaman, 13-14 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007).

<sup>3</sup> Selçuk Akşin Somel, *The Modernization of Public Education in the Ottoman Empire 1839-1908* (Brill: Leiden, 2001), 20-22.

<sup>4</sup> Yasin Aktay, 'Political and Intellectual Disputes on the Academisation of Religious Knowledge' (MPhil Thesis, Ankara University, 1993). Available at <http://www.angelfire.com/art/yasinaktay/tezler/MSThesis> [accessed 18 February 2008].

<sup>5</sup> Ozcan Demirel, 'Education in Turkey: From Empire to Republic' in *Education in the Muslim World*, ed. Rosarii Griffin, 131 (United Kingdom: Symposium Books, 2006).

<sup>6</sup> *Ilahiyat* can be translated as 'divinity' or 'theology'.

<sup>7</sup> Loosely translated as Imam-Precacher.

<sup>8</sup> Mehmet Pacaci and Yasin Aktay, '75 years of Higher Education in Modern Turkey', *The Muslim World Journal*, LXXXIX (1999): 389-413.

established and since 1966 graduates of *imam-hatib* schools have been given the opportunity to attend university.<sup>9</sup>

4. From 1971 a number of independent new higher education institutes began to teach Islamic Studies in order to provide staff for the growing *imam-hatib* schools.<sup>10</sup> However, by 1982, the Council of Higher Education (CHE) transferred all of the private higher Islamic Studies institutions into the *Ilahiyat* faculties through extensive reforms. Since the 1980s many conferences have addressed the status of Islamic Studies at various universities across the nation.<sup>11</sup> One of the main national conferences was entitled 'Symposium on the Problems, Restructure and Future of Higher Religious Education in Turkey' in 2003, hosted by Suleyman Demirel University (SDU). This conference dealt specifically with what should be taught in *Ilahiyat* faculties with regards to religious service.<sup>12</sup>
5. Even though the Islamic Studies faculties in Turkey today are called theology faculties, they largely lay emphasis on the academic study of Islam and on the epistemological study of religion. Since 1992 the main departments of *Ilahiyat* faculties across the country have been standardised into three departments: the Basic Islamic Sciences Department, the Philosophy and Religious Studies Department, and the Islamic History and Arts Department.<sup>13</sup> The BA degree is also standardised throughout the country as a four-year course, and all students are obliged to take modules from each department.
6. Departments of Basic Islamic Sciences offer academic modules such as: *Tafsir* (Qur'anic exegesis); Hadith (traditions of the Prophet Muhammad); *Kalam* (Islamic theology); Islamic law; history of Islamic sects; and Arabic language and literature. Haluk Songur, of Suleiman Demirel University, argues that the department of Basic Islamic Sciences deals with subjects that are classical, but that their approach is academic, including textual and sociological studies. The latter especially has developed widely in recent years.<sup>14</sup>
7. According to Muhsin Akbas of Canakkale Onsekiz Mart University, the departments of Philosophy and Religious Studies are similar to a Religious Studies department in the UK, where modules such as philosophy of religion, psychology of religion, sociology of religion, epistemology of religion, and history of philosophy are taught. He argues that the three departments within the *Ilahiyat* Faculty have a wide range of approaches due to the variety of subjects. For example, the Philosophy and Religious Studies Department is very sociological and philosophical, dealing with range of scholars such as Ibn Sina, Aristotle, Ibn Rushd, Jung and Freud.<sup>15</sup> Another module found within this department is on logic, which Ismail Hacınebioglu of Suleiman Demirel University points out is a classical Islamic subject which is taught in very few Muslim countries today.<sup>16</sup> Departments of Islamic History and Arts take an academic approach to subjects such as

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<sup>9</sup> Stephen Vertigans, *Islamic Root and Resurgence in Turkey* (Westport, CT: Praeger/Greenwood, 2003), 94.

<sup>10</sup> Bekim Agai, 'Islam and Education in Turkey', in *Schooling Islam: the Culture and Politics of Modern Islam*, 156.

<sup>11</sup> Pacaci and Aktay, '75 years of Religious Education in Modern Turkey', 403-404.

<sup>12</sup> Telephone interview and e-mail interview with Ismail Hakki Goksoy, Suleiman Demirel University, 5 February 2008.

<sup>13</sup> Pacaci and Aktay, '75 years of Religious Education in Modern Turkey', 405.

<sup>14</sup> Telephone interview and e-mail interview with Haluk Songur, Suleiman Demirel University, 14 February 2008.

<sup>15</sup> Telephone interview with Muhsin Akbas, Canakkale Onsekiz Mart University, 15 February 2008.

<sup>16</sup> Telephone interview with Ismail Hacınebioglu, Suleiman Demirel University, 6 February 2008.

the history of the Islamic world, the history of Turkish-Muslim arts, Turkish-Islamic literature, and Turkish religious music.<sup>17</sup>

### The 'health of the discipline' in Turkey

8. Within the 53 state universities in Turkey there are at present 23 faculties of *İlahiyat*. In the academic year 1997-98, there were 14,320 students in all faculties of *İlahiyat* in Turkey and of these 4,487 were female students and 9,833 were male students. In the 1997-98 academic year, a total of 3,218 students were accepted into the *İlahiyat* faculties and 328 female students and 1,091 male students graduated. With regards to religious officers (imams and Qur'an teachers), Ministry of Religious Affairs findings revealed that only 3.76% of imams had a higher education certificate in 1997.<sup>18</sup>
9. Due to changes in the *imam-hatib* schools and quotas allocated to Islamic Studies after 1997 (see below), by 2004 only 445 *imam-hatib* graduates could register at the *İlahiyat* faculties. In 2005-2006 the Council for Higher Education reported that the full number of students studying at the BA level in *İlahiyat* faculties across Turkey was 6,126. In 2005-2006 it also reported that the full number of students registered for the pre-BA *İlahiyat* programme (imam training) at universities that year was 10,638.<sup>19</sup>
10. All the people interviewed were unanimous in pointing out that due to the wide range of the *İlahiyat* faculty the subject is studied from historical, sociological, philosophical, textual and even scientific approaches using critical academic analysis. It is important to point out that Turkish universities that do not have an *İlahiyat* faculty still have numerous modules that would be traditionally related to Islamic and Religious Studies. For example, Bogazici University in Istanbul has elective modules that cover both Islamic and Ottoman history in its History department; in the Philosophy department there is a module on 'Islamic Thought'; and in the Sociology department there are modules with definite scope for the study of the interaction of religion and society.<sup>20</sup> According to the statistics quoted above and the rest of the country report, it is clear that the 'health of the discipline' is 'strong' on the basis of its academic approach and research, but it is 'weak' when it comes to student intake due to a forced annual quota.

### Relationships between publicly funded higher education institutions and faith-based institutions

11. All higher education institutions, private or public, are under the jurisdiction of CHE. Numbers of students admitted to BA and pre-BA programmes are determined annually by CHE. Students are admitted to such programmes through a central competitive entrance examination.
12. According to the Turkish constitution, religion in an organised way cannot be taught or studied outside of the Ministry of Religious Affairs or the National Education Department.

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<sup>17</sup> Even though the example above has been taken from one university (see case study), all faculties of *İlahiyat* follow a standard model provided by CHE throughout the country with minor differences. This information is based on interviews and Internet research on the university curriculum.

<sup>18</sup> Pacaci and Aktay, '75 years of Religious Education in Modern Turkey', 406.

<sup>19</sup> CHE website, '*İlahiyat* Faculties Archive', <http://www.yok.gov.tr/duyuru/arsiv/2006.htm> [accessed 18 February 2008].

<sup>20</sup> Bogazici University, Undergraduate Course, <http://www.boun.edu.tr/undergraduate/> [accessed 18 February 2008].

Thus, there is no relationship between private faith-based institutions and publicly funded higher education institutions.<sup>21</sup> However, the relationship between *imam-hatib* secondary schools, the pre-BA *Ilahiyat* imam training programme and the BA *Ilahiyat* programme is very interesting for this research.

13. According to various interviews carried out for this research there are at least three ways to educate an imam in Turkey. One is that the student graduating from the *imam-hatib* school takes a central national exam to become eligible to be an imam. Second, which is being favoured more by the Presidency of Religious Authority and CHE is the Open Learning University, which has offices in nearly every university city. Here, graduates of *imam-hatib* schools, who already have the status of imams, register for a two-year imam training course based upon textbooks, national radio programmes and national television programmes.<sup>22</sup> These students are able to sit in on any class at the closest university theology faculty but they are not seen as registered students of the Theology faculty. The third way is to do a BA degree after *imam-hatib* secondary school and then follow that with the central national exam to become eligible for imam status. According to Ismail Hakki Goksoy of Suleiman Demirel University (SDU), the BA Islamic Studies degree in SDU offers practical training in religious service; for example, they have modules such as 'Introduction to the Profession of Religious Services', 'Religious Services in Social Institutions', 'Experience in Religious Services', and 'Practices in Religious Services'.<sup>23</sup>
14. Ismail Hacinebioglu notes that during their BA degree, students complete work practice for a period of time in mosques, Qur'an schools and other religious service institutions.<sup>24</sup> It was also reported by Goksoy that just this year, Ankara University had introduced a new department within their theology faculty entitled 'Religious Education and Services' which may be the new way ahead for imam training in higher education in Turkey.<sup>25</sup> In addition, Haluk Songur pointed out that the Open Learning imam training based in Ankara had started by sending academics from Ankara that did the lectures themselves, but now academics from SDU were being asked to lecture as well as invigilate exams.<sup>26</sup> Finally, in 2006 two *Ilahiyat* faculties, at SDU and Cumhuriyet University, took the initiative and specialised in educating their students for religious service.<sup>27</sup>

### Developments in Islamic Studies in the past ten years and responses in Turkey

15. Since Ministry of Religious Affairs statistics showed that a low percentage of imams had a higher education certificate, in 1997-98 a new two-year, pre-BA *Ilahiyat* programme was introduced by the Ministry of Religious Affairs and CHE. 4,000 imams were accepted in the first year. The purpose of this programme was to develop further the education of imams who had recently graduated from *imam-hatib* schools and were already in religious service. Since it was an Open Learning imam training programme, it

<sup>21</sup> CHE website, 'Current Status: The Turkish Higher Education System', <http://www.yok.gov.tr/english/part3.doc> [accessed 18 February 2008].

<sup>22</sup> Telephone interview with Ismail Hacinebioglu.

<sup>23</sup> Telephone interview and e-mail interview with Ismail Hakki Goksoy.

<sup>24</sup> Telephone interview with Ismail Hacinebioglu.

<sup>25</sup> Telephone interview and e-mail interview with Ismail Hakki Goksoy.

<sup>26</sup> Telephone interview and e-mail interview with Haluk Songur.

<sup>27</sup> Mehmet Pacaci and Yasin Aktay, '75 years of Religious Education in Modern Turkey', in *The Blackwell Companion to Contemporary Islamic Thought*, ed. Ibrahim M. Abu-Rabi, 122-145 (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 143.

was developed by both the Faculty of *Ilahiyat* at Ankara University and the Open Education Faculty of Anadolu University (Eskişehir). In 1999 the records show that the numbers had decreased to 2,370 students; out of these 1,890 students were regular BA students in the *Ilahiyat* programme.<sup>28</sup>

16. This may have been a direct result of the change that occurred to *imam-hatib* schools during the military intervention in 1997. According to Bekim Agai, 'by the mid-1990s about 10% of all students in Turkey were *imam-hatib* students',<sup>29</sup> and their graduates became known for their very high marks in the central university exam as well as having the highest proportion of girls of all secondary schools. These graduates were allowed to enter any field at university at that time. However, after 1997, the laws restricted *imam-hatib* graduates from entering any university faculties other than the *Ilahiyat* faculty. This seems to have resulted in a drop of student numbers in the *imam-hatib* schools, and today only 2.5% of pupils choose to study at *imam-hatib* schools. This has also caused a detrimental decrease in numbers in the *Ilahiyat* faculties across Turkey.<sup>30</sup>

## Case study

### *Ilahiyat Faculty in Sulaiman Demirel University (SDU)*

17. The duration of a BA degree in the *Ilahiyat* Faculty of SDU is four years. However, if a student passes the first two years and then wants to leave, a pre-BA degree (diploma) is granted. MA and PhD degrees are provided by the faculty academic personnel through the Institute of Social Sciences, which enrolls only post-graduate students. The *Ilahiyat* Faculty of SDU has three departments and 19 disciplines. The most important programme is that of Theology at the BA level, important especially for educating students and preparing them for occupations in religious teaching and religious services. MA and PhD programmes are also important, in particular, for the academic study of Islamic sciences and for the improvement of academic knowledge in Islamic Studies. There are departments of Arabic language and literature in some faculties of Language or Arts, but they are not intended to be departments for the study of Islam.
18. The main approach to Islamic Studies in SDU is to teach students the classical Islamic sciences such as *tafsir*, *hadith* and Islamic law, together with modern religious sciences such as Philosophy of Religion and Sociology of Religion as well as some Turkish cultural subjects. The SDU *Ilahiyat* Faculty, like other theology faculties in Turkey, is academic and non-sectarian although the majority of the academic personnel come from the environment of the Sunni school of thought. Like most theology faculties, it publishes its own journals in Islamic Studies.
19. Although the basic approach is the same as in most theology faculties in Turkey, most of the academic personnel in the *Ilahiyat* Faculty of SDU received their doctorates from outside Turkey, especially from Germany and the UK. This highlights their approach to the subject. In 2007 it was the first *Ilahiyat* faculty to have preparatory classes in English language for one year for its students. In addition, the faculty has introduced lessons for students that may become imams such as the preparation and presenting of *khutbas* (sermons), religious talks, and leading daily, Friday and *Eid* (feast day) prayers as well as prayers for certain other occasions. The ILITAM programme (Completion of Theology Graduation) is an Open University BA programme in Theology, organised by the

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 143.

<sup>29</sup> Agai, 'Islam and Education in Turkey', 154.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 153.

Theology Faculty and the Center of Online Education at Ankara University. Seven Theology faculties, including the *Ilahiyat* Faculty of SDU, collaborate by holding exams and giving lessons for these ILITAM students.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Case study on the *Ilahiyat* Faculty in Sulaiman Demirel University based on interviews with Haluk Songur, Ismail Hakki Goksoy and Ismail Hacinebioglu, February 2008.



#### **4. Analysis of Findings**

1. The following brings together many of the issues arising from the country studies in relation to the five general themes identified for the report. The reader is referred to these studies for further information on specific programmes and initiatives.

##### **Historical development and current state of Islamic Studies**

2. The main question addressed within this section of the report is how approaches to Islamic Studies have developed in the past and how the discipline has changed in the past ten years in terms of methods, teaching, and general approaches.

##### *Disciplinary diversity*

3. The report finds, in general terms, that the diversity of disciplinary approaches associated with Islamic Studies in the UK can be located in other countries as well, although inevitably there are distinct differences in approach. It is not feasible to talk about country-specific models (i.e. 'German Islamic Studies'), given that individual departments can present specific approaches that are not in synch with their peers. It may well be that an Islamic Studies department in one location has more in common with a department in another country than with a neighbouring university. In part, this indicates diversity within the Islamic Studies marketplace, offering potential students a wide range of options in making their degree choices. Across the countries surveyed, distinct differences could be noted between and within area studies-oriented departments (such as Middle East Studies) and religious studies departments. At a basic level, the focus on language learning within many area studies departments is not necessarily reflected within Religious Studies/Islamic Studies departments, which may present a different set of expectations and emphases. On occasion, such distinctions are represented within a single department. It is not, therefore, possible to bring Islamic Studies down to a single paradigm.

##### *Religious Studies approaches*

4. While recognising this diversity, it is also relevant to note that there are some specific trends associated with Islamic Studies relating to individual countries. In many of the 'Western' university contexts, there was little association between the undertaking of Islamic Studies at degree level, and the pursuit of a qualification for religious leadership or religious knowledge (i.e. an imam qualification). Some countries have not pursued Islamic Studies from a Religious Studies or Theology perspective to a great extent (e.g. France, Germany, Australia). Religious Studies departments often provide a space for reflection on comparative dimensions, looking at Islam in the context of other traditions (e.g. collaborations between the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Duke University in the US). Even within these narrower disciplinary frameworks, there is still scope for considerable diversity of academic approaches.

##### *Orientalism and textual versus social science approaches*

5. The report notes, within the various country contexts, that the Islamic Studies disciplines have been influenced to varying degrees by academic approaches arising from Orientalism and from social science approaches, which can be in contention with one another. It is not intended here to rehearse the Orientalism debates, only to note that the formative influences of Islamic Studies, especially in the European context, largely had their basis within Orientalist and philological traditions. In some ways, there has been an historical continuity with these traditions within Islamic Studies departments; this cannot be stereotyped as necessarily possessing entirely negative connotations, although it is recognised that much of the Orientalist scholarship has to be interpreted within its historical and social context.

6. All the countries surveyed have scholars working from text-based approaches, as well as scholars using social science approaches to study Islam and Muslim societies. The division between these two approaches has developed in different ways. In general terms, social science approaches are more developed in some countries (France, US) than they have been in the UK. Across all the countries surveyed, specific issues arise in the study of Islam relating to concepts associated with insider and outsider perspectives and methodologies.

#### *Interdisciplinarity*

7. Across the countries surveyed, interdisciplinarity has been identified as a key issue. Scholars study Islam from a wide range of disciplines in many countries (History, Religious Studies, Law, languages and literature, Political Science, Anthropology, Sociology, area studies, Art History, etc.). While these scholars may be connected through interdisciplinary research centres, this does not always imply an interdisciplinary or holistic approach within research outputs and student training. Interdisciplinary approaches have developed further in some contexts and, in a number of countries, the possession of an integrated approach that draws on different disciplinary frameworks was seen as an inherent strength. The combination of distinct areas of specialisation into interdisciplinary and trans-regional centres was also seen as advantageous, for example in Australia, the Netherlands, France and the United States.

#### *Developments in the past ten years*

8. There is a general sense across the countries that Islamic Studies has gained in prominence in the past ten years, especially since 2001. For example, in the United States, the '9/11 effect', particularly a significant increase in student interest, has impacted on the nature of funding and the types of courses offered to students. In other contexts as well, teaching of Islamic Studies has clearly adjusted to demands influenced by current events. This may be to the detriment of more traditional courses or research outputs, but also reflects an increased interest in Islamic Studies in general. The '9/11 effect' has also raised issues of academic freedom. In some contexts, a relative sense of academic freedom is recognised as necessary and relevant to innovation and progression of the discipline. This can be compared with a centralised, government driven approach to Islamic Studies, represented to a degree within Malaysian and Turkish contexts.
9. Related factors influencing the nature of Islamic Studies in recent years include the increased presence of Muslims in Western societies, not just in terms of numbers, but in relation to changes in senses of identity and religiosity. Islamic Studies within different countries is influenced by the colonial, political and economic history of the country – and also the ancestral affiliations of local Muslim populations. The demands of Muslim students have influenced departments, some of which have had to adapt to the demographic pressures of Muslim students with interests in Islamic Studies, but who may feel poorly served by area studies programmes. In the UK, it has been felt that there is a general disconnect between the majority of the Muslim population, and Middle Eastern and South Asian studies programmes. Although Middle Eastern studies is one of the main approaches for the study of Islam, these programmes are generally limited to the Arab world, while South Asian studies programmes are generally focused on Indology rather than Muslim South Asia (although there are exceptions). This can be compared with, for example, the sustained focus on North Africa in France, reflecting French colonial history as well as its demographic influences.
10. Questions may arise as to whether departments are equipped to satisfy these new demands, or are prepared to adapt their programmes to fit a shifting marketplace. These would appear to be common issues across the core countries surveyed. Within the

Muslim countries surveyed, where expectations relating to Islamic Studies may differ, there is still evidence that the content of programmes has adapted in response to shifting global contexts, especially in relation to ensuring that courses locate themselves within the parameters of governmental expectations for Islamic Studies. This relates in particular to the issue of training religious scholars and functionaries, which falls in these countries under the general rubric of Islamic Studies but presents a different set of teaching and learning outcomes.

### **The 'health of the discipline' of Islamic Studies**

11. The key question here is how UK provision and scholarship stands in relation to international comparators. There are distinct difficulties in determining the markers representing the health of any discipline, especially Islamic Studies. The following are some key indicators, although further research would be necessary to evaluate the full implications of each of these factors.

#### *Student numbers and demand*

12. Most of the countries surveyed, including the UK, have experienced a significant increase in student numbers in Islamic Studies in recent years. However, although in general terms student numbers are rising, at the same time there is a general lack of understanding of what 'Islamic Studies' does or should entail. Student numbers may provide one indicator, but this should also be interpreted in the light of successful outcomes, through the number of degrees awarded and at what level. The outcomes would also incorporate the career outcomes of graduates. Although these are factors beyond the present report, they would be useful for a future study. There are specific issues of accreditation and academic validity to consider, as there are different expectations within and across disciplinary frameworks. This is a potentially controversial issue, especially in courses where a degree of memorisation rather than interpretation is required (for example, in Malaysian or Turkish contexts when rote learning is required to memorise the recitation of the Qur'an).
13. The critical reading of religious texts may be a subject that in general terms can be pursued more openly within some Western contexts (for example, in those institutions focusing on the nature of religious knowledge). Facilitation of university courses that can meet the aspirations of religiously motivated Muslim students as well as the (often separate) aspirations of those students (Muslim and other) seeking to deconstruct and criticise religious knowledge remains a consistent theme across countries. Whether there is scope between and within these poles is a subject for further discussion. Across the range of departments and countries, a consistent factor is the ambition to provide students with the tools necessary to equip them with an understanding of Islam appropriate for traditional and contemporary contexts.
14. In addition to these student-led factors influencing approaches to Islamic Studies, some believe that Islamic Studies has a role in addressing current social or security issues. However, it is not clear how this might function in conjunction with requirements for academic impartiality, or whether it should shift the teaching and learning agendas of institutions.

#### *Research, teaching and networking*

15. Research outputs may also be seen as an indicator of the health of the discipline. Certainly, in the UK context, the influence of the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) has driven the agendas of a number of Islamic Studies departments. This stress on

publication is not universal, with departments elsewhere prioritising in different ways, including with a focus specifically on teaching and learning.

16. Research, teaching and learning may also be enhanced by networking, another indicator of disciplinary strength. Across countries, examples could be found of institutions, organisations and scholars whose networking supported their teaching and research activities. Centres such as ISIM in the Netherlands, the Center for the Study of Muslim Networks in the US, and the National Centre of Excellence for Islamic Studies in Australia draw upon experience from academics whose specialisations cross many Islamic Studies disciplines. Subject associations also have a role to play, in global and national frameworks. Collaborations with faith-based organisations provide a separate indicator of the health of the discipline (discussed below).

### **Relationships between publicly funded higher education institutions and faith-based institutions**

17. The central question in this aspect of the report was what lessons could be drawn from international examples of collaboration between publicly funded higher education institutions and private, including faith-based, institutions. A key finding of this report is that such collaborations are often centred on the question of imam training for the local context, although other forms of collaboration (e.g. philanthropy, outreach education and joint academic projects) also exist. Joint academic projects, particularly in the form of degree validation, have already been developed in the UK. It is important to note, however, that in some of the countries surveyed (e.g. the US and France), and even in the case of the Netherlands where programmes have been put in place, there is an ongoing discussion about how to choose appropriate interlocutors for such collaborations among the diverse Muslim communities and organisations.

#### *Imam training*

18. Imam training has emerged as an issue in most of the countries discussed, and raises questions about the forms of relationships between different types of institutions. It is significant that approaches towards imam training differ, and that it is not necessarily undertaken in departments of Middle East or Islamic Studies. Essentially, one key lesson is that collaboration can work within this field, as demonstrated by the Dutch examples, particularly the *duplex ordo* programme recently established at Leiden University. These initiatives are recent, so whether these represent long-term 'success stories' is a subject for future research.
19. There are also examples of publicly funded faith-based institutions, who may also collaborate with other elements within the public and private sectors. In Malaysian and Turkish contexts, there are a number of different models in operation, ranging from (in general terms) federally-funded universities with an Islamic ethos through to private colleges acting as feeders to pre-university and university level courses. A blend of these elements can be seen within the examples discussed in this report.
20. The Malaysian and Turkish sections of this report also indicate that there can be diversity within and between Muslim contexts in relation to the issue of imam training. There can be a degree of separation between imam training and other forms of study associated with Islam and Muslims. There are distinct levels of qualifications associated with becoming an imam, and attaining a full university degree is not always necessary. Universities within Malaysia and Turkey also offer separate forms of Islamic Studies, which may or may not integrate with imam training. There are some specific, gender-

related issues here too. While women are often in the majority for the study of Islam in these contexts, the traditional role of an imam is a distinctly male occupation.

21. The training of imams in Western contexts represents, in some cases, an example of collaboration between private and publicly funded institutions. There is a sense, however, that many Islamic Studies departments do not have imam training on their agenda, and believe that it would raise distinctly problematic issues if it was somehow grafted onto long-standing academic programmes. Degrees of separation between 'academic' and 'vocational (academic)' programmes are implicit, reflecting a trend that can be found within Religious Studies departments (between Theology and Religious Studies).
22. Within discussions on the nature and training of imams, there can be a conflation of issues associated with the role of Islamic Studies. This reflects similar discussion relating to Religious Studies and religious vocational training in general. There can also be confusion when an implicit or direct parity between the status of imams in Islam and the status of religious functionaries from other religions is assumed. The status clearly varies within different social, cultural and religious contexts. The accreditation of imams through university courses can be seen within the examples presented in Malaysia and Turkey, where employability and status of an imam may be linked to degree outcomes. In terms of examples of imam training within Western contexts, the case studies demonstrate that these are limited at present.
23. The concept of a 'state-approved' imam emerging from Western higher education contexts (complete with accreditation) is recognised as a potentially controversial and sensitive issue requiring further feasibility research and debate. There are distinct political and social risks in such programmes, not least when a state-sanctioned form of interpretation alienates and potentially marginalises other approaches. Although the reality is much more complex, at a basic level, forms of Islamic understanding dominated by specific Sunni models may, for example, alienate Shia populations (and *vice versa*). Legalistic, esoteric, cultural and linguistic factors have to be integrated into any approach towards imam training. A great deal of research about the nature and status of imams (as part of studies on religious authority) has been undertaken by academics within a range of Islamic Studies departments in the UK and elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> The subject has particular relevance within understandings of local and global networks of religious authority, and interpretations of Muslim affiliations that transcend national and cultural borders.<sup>2</sup> Synthesising this research, and consulting the academics involved, would be a useful activity within any further investigation of this issue.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For example, see Jorgen Nielsen, *Muslims in Western Europe*, 3rd edition (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004); Philip Lewis, *Islamic Britain: Religion, Politics, and Identity Among British Muslims*, 2nd edition (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002); Ron Geaves, 'Britain', in *Islam Outside the Arab World*, ed. David Westerlund and Ingvar Svanberg, 357-378 (Richmond: Curzon Press, 1999); Gary R. Bunt, 'Decision-Making Processes in British Islamic Environments', *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 9, no. 1 (1998): 103-13; Richard Antoun, *Muslim Preacher in the Modern World: a Jordanian Case Study in Comparative Perspective* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1989); Bruce Lawrence, *Defenders of God: the Fundamentalist Revolt Against the Modern Age* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1989).

<sup>2</sup> Peter G. Mandaville, *Transnational Muslim Politics: Reimagining the Umma* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001).

<sup>3</sup> Sophie Gilliat-Ray and Fiaz Ahmed, *The Training and Development of Muslim Religious Professionals in Britain: Summary Report of a Pilot Study Funded by the Leverhulme Trust October 2003-March 2004*, Cardiff University (2004). Available at <http://www.cf.ac.uk/relig/resources/training-development-muslim-summary.pdf> [accessed 14 March 2008].

## **Developments in Islamic Studies in the past ten years and responses of governments, policy makers and funding bodies**

24. The key question addressed in this section of the report is how governments, policy makers and funding bodies have worked to develop Islamic Studies capacity in the past ten years. Responses vary significantly, based largely on current events and funding structures in each country. However, certain themes have emerged as central across many of the countries.

### *Publicly funded centres for Islamic Studies*

25. Governments have had a direct role in some contexts in establishing Islamic Studies centres or institutes. These may be academic institutes within universities or collaborations between universities that are largely financed by government funding bodies. In some cases these institutes have been established through government initiatives. In Australia, for instance, the National Centre of Excellence for Islamic Studies, opened in 2007, is an Australian government initiative under the National Action Plan to Build on Social Cohesion, Harmony and Security. Centres in other countries have been designed by universities and are supported by government funding. The question of public funding, and particularly public impetus to form such centres, raises distinct issues relating to governmental influence on the nature of Islamic Studies. Further research is required in this area. Potential models, such as in Australia, have not been established for enough time to formulate a response.
26. Related issues emerge in some countries when discussing the impact of private funding, particularly from Gulf states, and of the implications of this on curriculum development. Again the influence is not always clear cut, but this is a live issue both in the UK and international contexts, where the endowment of chairs has been interpreted in some cases (rightly or wrongly) as detrimental to the academic impartiality of a department. When departments have received funding from local Muslim organisations, similar issues have arisen. While some institutions might be happy to work under the auspices of a benefactor, and in some cases have outputs influenced by sponsorship considerations, this does not always result from such donations. Many institutions have successfully maintained what their staff feel to be an appropriate balance between sponsor and academic output.

### *Imam training and relations with local Muslim communities*

27. The question of training imams for a local context and improving relations with local Muslim communities is one that has arisen in many of the countries discussed in this report. Many of the initiatives developed in recent years have been at the impetus of government bodies and through government funding. These initiatives, and the attendant questions arising, have been discussed above.

### *Islamic Studies in primary and secondary education*

28. In most of the countries discussed, the national government has not taken many direct initiatives related to Islamic Studies in higher education, outside the establishment of research centres or imam training programmes. However, there have been initiatives related to teaching about Islam in public primary and secondary schools. Although these initiatives are outside the scope of this report, some of them (for example the European Institute for Religious Sciences in France) provide models for engagement of Islamic Studies scholars in higher education with other levels of education.

## Case Studies

29. The main question here is to assess what lessons can be drawn from the experiences of case study institutions. The case studies illustrate a richness and diversity of practice associated with Islamic Studies. Not all programmes would be seen as mutually complementary, or cater for similar profiles of students, and their learning and employability outcomes are distinctly different. Each programme is fine-tuned for specific types of outcomes, associated with different disciplinary expectations. The case studies demonstrate that the market is big enough to accommodate this range of disciplinary outcomes, which can cater for distinctly different studentships.
30. Many of the themes that have emerged from the country studies in general are reflected in the case studies. These include the importance of interdisciplinary and trans-regional centres for the study of Islam and Muslims in the modern world. In some cases these centres have developed new approaches to the study of Islam, including research on local Muslim populations. However, it is important to point out that not all institutions have found it necessary or relevant to provide programmes or conduct research relating directly to these populations, especially those institutions with a long-standing historical focus on specific religious, cultural and linguistic fields of study.
31. The case studies also provide examples of networks of scholars that have worked together for research and teaching. In some instances these networks have resulted in innovative modules and degree courses. These networks may also extend to incorporate local Muslim populations and private faith-based institutions, in order to exchange information and share learning and teaching opportunities. There may be market-driven forces at work here, in response to the perceived expectations of the post-9/11 context, together with a realisation that the traditional paradigms associated with Islamic Studies (based in the conceptual frameworks of Orientalism) are under pressure in some cases to be reframed to meet the needs of governments, institutions, academics, students, and, possibly, public pressure.
32. The case studies also indicate that the issue of imam training, and concerns about the nature of Islamic Studies, are issues that arise in many of the countries concerned. The variety of models found within this report indicates the varied approaches to this question in different national contexts. These questions are also closely monitored within Muslim majority contexts. Shaping curricula to fit governmental expectations has raised specific issues within Turkey and Malaysia, which continue to be redefined and adapted within shifting political and social contexts. The case studies offer a series of models, which might be adapted and provide a sounding board for future debate. They also indicate that there is no single solution to the issue of imam training.

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Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin. <http://www.wiko-berlin.de/>.

Zaytuna Institute. <http://www.zaytuna.org/>.

Zentrum Moderner Orient. <http://www.zmo.de/>.

## **Appendix A                      Information on the Subject Centres and Project Team**

The Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies (LLAS), is a UK-wide support service for enhancing quality in these disciplines. LLAS (<http://www.llas.ac.uk>) is funded by the Higher Education Academy (<http://www.heacademy.ac.uk>) and currently has 18 members of staff and over 3,000 subscribers to its mailing list. LLAS promotes good practice in the teaching of languages, linguistics and area studies in UK higher education through staff development workshops and seminars, national conferences, research projects and materials development. It has experience of leading on research projects, including a recent review of research in Modern Languages commissioned by the Arts and Humanities Research Council. It also has considerable expertise in project management and event organisation and is considered to be a key player in both pedagogic and policy related initiatives.

The Subject Centre for Philosophical and Religious Studies (PRS), is a UK-wide support service for enhancing quality in these disciplines. PRS (<http://prs.heacademy.ac.uk>) is funded by the Higher Education Academy and currently has 11 members of staff and over 2,200 subscribers to its mailing list. PRS promotes good practice in the teaching of philosophy, theology, religious studies, and history and philosophy of science in UK higher education through staff development workshops and seminars, national conferences, research projects and materials development. The Subject Centre has delivered a number of research projects, including recent works on both policy and pedagogical research in Theology and Religious Studies. PRS developed the highly successful *Faith Guides for Higher Education* series, including Islam, which provides an essential resource for teaching people of faith in higher education. PRS ran a number of events on teaching Islam in higher education, including an international conference in 2005, and has published several articles in this area.

### **Project Team**

Dr Jasser Auda, Research Fellow, PRS, University of Wales, Lampeter.

Dr Lisa Bernasek, Research Fellow, LLAS (editor).

Dr Gary R. Bunt, Senior Lecturer in Islamic Studies, University of Wales, Lampeter/ Subject Coordinator, Subject Centre for Philosophical and Religious Studies (editor).

Dr John Canning, Academic Coordinator, LLAS.

Mr Jon Gilbert, Research Fellow, PRS, University of Leeds.

Dr Amjad Hussain, Lecturer in Religious Studies, Trinity College, Carmarthen, University of Wales.

Prof. Michael Kelly, Director LLAS; Professor of French and Head of the School of Humanities, University of Southampton.

Dr Seàn McLoughlin, Senior Lecturer in Religion, Anthropology and Islam, University of Leeds.

Mr Abu Dardaa Muhammad, Research Fellow, PRS, University of Wales, Lampeter.

Dr Simon Smith, Associate Director, PRS.

## **Appendix B                      Sample Interview Questions**

### Academics:

- What are the main disciplines that contribute to Islamic Studies in ...?
- Where are the most important programmes (either named programmes in Islamic Studies or programmes that incorporate an Islamic Studies component)?
- What are the main approaches to Islamic Studies at ... universities? Have these approaches changed in the past ten years? What is the balance between textual approaches and sociological approaches to the study of Islam?
- How would you say the approach to Islamic Studies might differ in ... in comparison to other countries?
- How would you assess the 'health of the discipline' of Islamic Studies in ...?
- Has Islamic Studies gained in prominence in the past ten years? If so, why?
- Have there been government initiatives to develop Islamic Studies teaching and research in the past ten years?
- What is the role of different funding sources for Islamic Studies (government, university, private donations, funding from Muslim states, others)?
- Are you aware of any educational partnerships between higher education institutions and faith-based institutions or organisations? What are the advantages and disadvantages of such partnerships?

### Representatives of government or educational funding agencies:

- How are Islamic Studies and related disciplines supported by government funding structures in ...?
- Has Islamic Studies gained in prominence in the past ten years? If so, why?
- Have there been government initiatives to develop Islamic Studies teaching and research in the past ten years?
- What is the role of different funding sources for Islamic Studies (government, university, private donations, funding from Muslim states, others)?

### Representatives of faith-based institutions or organisations:

- Where are the most important programmes in Islamic Studies in ... (either named programmes in Islamic Studies or programmes that incorporate an Islamic Studies component)?
- How would you say the approach to Islamic Studies might differ in ... in comparison to other countries?
- How would you assess the 'health of the discipline' of Islamic Studies in ...?

- Has Islamic Studies gained in prominence in the past ten years? If so, why?
- Have there been government initiatives to develop Islamic Studies teaching and research in the past ten years?
- Has your institution or organisation been involved in any educational partnerships with higher education institutions? What have these partnerships entailed? What are the advantages and disadvantages of such partnerships?

Representatives of case study institutions:

- What are the main disciplines or departments that contribute to your programme in Islamic Studies?
- What is the general approach to Islamic Studies in your programme? What is the balance between textual approaches and sociological approaches to the study of Islam?
- How would you say your approach to Islamic Studies might differ from that at other institutions?
- What kinds of changes have taken place in your programme/institution in the past ten years?
- Have there been government initiatives to develop Islamic Studies at your institution or more widely in the past ten years?
- What is the role of different funding sources for Islamic Studies (government, university, private donations, funding from Muslim states, others) at your institution?
- Has your institution been involved in any educational partnerships with faith-based institutions? What have these partnerships entailed? What are the advantages and disadvantages of such partnerships?

## **Appendix C                      People Interviewed or Consulted**

### *United Kingdom*

Prof. Robert Gleave, Professor of Arabic Studies at the Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies, University of Exeter and Executive Director of the British Society for Middle Eastern Studies

Dr Shuruq Naguib, Lecturer in Religious Studies, University of Lancaster

Prof. Hugh Goddard, Professor of Christian-Muslim Relations, University of Nottingham

Dr Ataullah Siddiqui, Director of the Markfield Institute of Higher Education

### *France*

Prof. Mohammed Arkoun, Professor Emeritus, Sorbonne

Prof. Jean-Phillipe Bras, Director, Institute for the Study of Islam and Societies of the Muslim World (IISMM)

Dr Jocelyne Cesari, Senior Research Fellow French National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS) and Visiting Associate Professor of Islamic Studies, Harvard University

Mr Bernard Godard, Advisor, Central Office for Religions (Bureau Central des Cultes), French Ministry of the Interior

Mr Michel Hagnerelle, Dean of History and Geography, General Inspectorate of National Education, French Ministry of National Education

### *Germany*

Dr Mark Bodenstein, Research Fellow, Federal Office for Migration and Refugees

Dr Wanda Krause, Research Fellow, Forum Against Islamophobia and Racism (FAIR), UK

Dr Lutz Rogler, Research Fellow, Zentrum Moderner Orient (ZMO), Berlin

### *Netherlands*

Dr Welmoet Boender, OIKOS Organization and Research Fellow, International Institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern World (ISIM)

Dr Mohammad Ghaly, Lecturer, Department of Comparative Religion, Leiden University

Dr Mahmoud al-Saify, Lecturer, Department of History of Religion, University of Nijmegen, and Member of the Academic Board, Netherlands Institute for Human Studies

Prof. P.S. van Koningsveld, Chair, Department of History of Religion, Leiden University

Prof. G.A. Wiegers, Chair, Department of History of Religion, University of Nijmegen, and Director, Nijmegen Research Institute for Religious Studies

### *United States*

Dr Jamal Barzinji, Director, International Institute of Islamic Thought

Prof. Carl W. Ernst, William R. Kenan, Jr. Distinguished Professor of Religious Studies, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and Director, Carolina Center for the Study of the Middle East and Muslim Civilizations

Prof. Bruce B. Lawrence, Nancy and Jeffrey Marcus Humanities Professor of Religion, Duke University, and Director, Duke Islamic Studies Center

Dr Michael Toler, Programme Director, National Institute for Technology and Liberal Education Al-Musharaka Initiative

Prof. John Voll, Professor of Islamic History, Georgetown University, and Associate Director, Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding

#### *Australia*

Prof. Abdullah Saeed, Director, National Centre of Excellence for Islamic Studies and Sultan of Oman Professor of Arab and Islamic Studies, University of Melbourne

Assoc. Prof. Shahram Akbarzadeh, Deputy Director, National Centre of Excellence for Islamic Studies and Convenor, Islam Node, Australian Research Council Asia Pacific Futures Research Network

#### *Malaysia*

Dr Mohamad Khalil Abdul Hadi, Lecturer, Kolej Islam Darul Quran Islamiyyah

Dr Khairuddin Mohamad Amin, Lecturer, Faculty of Islamic Studies, National University of Malaysia

Dr Mohammad Firdaus Mohammad Hatta, Lecturer, Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences, International Islamic University, Malaysia

Mr Abdul Halim Mohammad Naam, Officer, Ministry of Education, Malaysia

Dr Kamaruzzan Noordin, Lecturer, Academy of Islamic Studies, University of Malaya

Dr Mohamad Zuhdi Marzuki, Lecturer, Academy of Islamic Studies, University of Malaya

Dr Wan Adli Wan Ramli, Lecturer, Academy of Islamic Studies, University of Malaya

#### *Turkey*

Assoc. Prof. Muhsin Akbas, Head, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, Ilahiyat Faculty, Canakkale Onsekiz Mart University

Prof. Ismail Hakki Goksoy, Head, Department of Islamic History & Arts, Ilahiyat Faculty, Suleiman Demirel University

Dr Ismail Hacinebioglu, Lecturer, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, Ilahiyat Faculty, Suleiman Demirel University

Assistant Prof. Haluk Songur, Lecturer, Department of Basic Islamic Sciences, Ilahiyat Faculty, Suleiman Demirel University

## Appendix D

### Quantitative data on international Islamic Studies provision

1. This section presents available data on Islamic Studies provision in six countries: the UK, France, Germany, the Netherlands, the United States and Australia. Sources and specific limitations of the data for each country are discussed under the appropriate heading. In searching for degrees in 'Islamic Studies' researchers used all degree titles that included the word 'Islam', 'Muslim' or 'Islamic' in the title.
2. Data is also included for related disciplines (Religious Studies, Middle East Studies and Arabic Language and Literature) to put the typically low numbers in 'Islamic Studies' into context. However, no judgements can be made about the amount of time a student may spend studying Islam or Muslims in any one of these subject areas.
3. In all cases the numbers of 'Islamic Studies' degree programmes are small, and these numbers are unlikely to accurately reflect the amount of teaching and research related to Islamic Studies taking place in each country.
4. The different methods of collecting statistics in each country render direct comparisons inappropriate.
5. Even in cases where named programmes in Islamic Studies exist, the proportion of time students spend studying Islam is likely to vary. In the US, for example, undergraduates are likely to have studied more than one subject during their degree course.
6. Degree titles are country- or institution-specific. A programme named Islamic Studies at one institution may be similar in content to a degree in Middle East Studies or Religious Studies at another institution.

### United Kingdom

**Table 1**      **Current degree programmes in Islamic Studies and related subjects at UK universities**  
UCAS data, <http://www.search.ucas.co.uk>

<b>Degree programme</b>	<b>Institutions: Undergraduate (BA) degrees</b>	<b>Institutions: Postgraduate (MA, PhD) degrees</b>
Islamic Studies	9	15
Religious Studies	15	2
Middle Eastern Studies/Languages	3	-
Arabic Language and Literature	5	2

**Table 2**      **Enrolment on degree programmes in Islamic Studies and related subjects at UK universities, 2002-03 to 2005-06 (figures shown include full and part-time students)**

Higher Education Statistics Agency, <http://www.hesa.ac.uk>

Numbers for Islamic Studies are from: Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE). 'Islamic Studies: Trends and Profiles', [http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2008/08\\_09/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2008/08_09/).

Year	Degree programme	Undergraduate	Postgraduate
<b>2002-03</b>	Islamic Studies	567	
	Theology and Religious Studies	10240	4405
	Modern Middle Eastern Studies	1325	515
<b>2003-04</b>	Islamic Studies	580	
	Theology and Religious Studies	10070	4715
	Modern Middle Eastern Studies	1415	530
<b>2004-05</b>	Islamic Studies	610	
	Theology and Religious Studies	10765	4790
	Modern Middle Eastern Studies	1425	545
<b>2005-06</b>	Islamic Studies	635	
	Theology and Religious Studies	11010	4880
	Modern Middle Eastern Studies	1475	575

## France

**Table 3**      **Current degree programmes in Islamic Studies and related subjects at French universities**

Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche, Portail d'Étudiant, <http://www.etudiant.gouv.fr>

Degree programme	Institutions: Undergraduate (BA) degrees	Institutions: Postgraduate (MA, PhD) degrees
Islamic Studies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Études arabes et civilisations du monde musulman</li> <li>Langues et civilisations: Études arabes et musulmanes</li> <li>Monde arabe, musulman et semitique</li> <li>Études arabes, civilisations islamiques et orientales</li> </ul>		5
Religious Studies (excluding Catholic/Protestant Theology)	2	7
Arab World Studies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Histoire: Études arabes et hébraïques</li> <li>Sciences sociales: Villes et territoires monde arabe</li> </ul>	1	1



Degree programme	Institutions: Undergraduate (BA) degrees	Institutions: Postgraduate (MA, PhD) degrees
Arabic Language, Literature & Culture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Langues, littératures et civilisations étrangères arabe</li> <li>• Langues étrangères appliquées arabe</li> </ul>	12	3
Comparative Law <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Droit des pays arabes</li> <li>• Droit musulman</li> </ul>		2
Comparative politics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Europe post communiste, asie, monde musulman</li> <li>• Amérique latine, europe méditerranéenne, monde arabe et musulman</li> </ul>		2

**Table 4 Enrolment on degree programmes in Islamic Studies and related subjects at French universities, 2006-07**  
Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche, Portail d'Étudiant, <http://www.etudiant.gouv.fr>

Degree programme	B.A. Final year	M.A. Final year	Ph.D. Total
Islamic Studies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Études arabes et civilisations du monde musulman</li> <li>• Langues et civilisations: Études arabes et musulmanes</li> <li>• Monde arabe, musulman et semitique</li> <li>• Études arabes, civilisations islamiques et orientales</li> </ul>		45	151
Religious Studies (excluding Catholic/Protestant Theology)	32	70	23
Arab World Studies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Histoire: Études arabes et hébraïques</li> <li>• Sciences sociales : Villes et territoires monde arabe</li> </ul>		10	
Arabic Language, Literature & Culture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Langues, littératures et civilisations étrangères arabe</li> <li>• Langues étrangères appliquées arabe</li> </ul>	410	43	
Comparative Law <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Droit des pays arabes</li> <li>• Droit musulman</li> </ul>		42	
Comparative politics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Europe post communiste, asie, monde musulman</li> <li>• Amérique latine, europe méditerranéenne, monde arabe et musulman</li> </ul>		35	131

## Germany

**Table 5**      **Current degree programmes in Islamic Studies and related subjects at German universities**

Deutscher Bildungsserver, Higher Education Statistics,  
[http://www.eduserver.de/zeigen\\_e.html?seite=305](http://www.eduserver.de/zeigen_e.html?seite=305)

<b>Degree programme</b>	<b>Institutions: Undergraduate (BA) degrees</b>	<b>Institutions: Postgraduate (MA, PhD) degrees</b>
Islamic Studies	6	4
Religious Studies	8	8
Middle Eastern Studies/Languages	1	-
Arabic Language and Literature	5	4

Student numbers unavailable.

## Netherlands

**Table 6**      **Current degree programmes in Islamic Studies and related subjects at Dutch universities**

Studychoice123, <http://www.studychoice123.nl>

<b>Degree programme</b>	<b>Institutions: Undergraduate (BA) degrees</b>	<b>Institutions: Postgraduate (MA, PhD) degrees</b>
Islamic Studies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Islamic Theology</li><li>• Islam and the Modern World</li></ul>	1	2
Religious Studies & World Religions	5	4
Theology	11	3
Middle Eastern Studies		1
Middle Eastern Languages & Literature	5	8

**Table 7**      **Enrolment on degree programmes in Islamic Studies and related subjects at Dutch universities, 2006-07 (figures shown include full- and part-time students)**  
Studychoice123, <http://www.studychoice123.nl>

<b>Degree programme</b>	<b>B.A. (enrolled 2006-07)</b>	<b>M.A. (enrolled 2005)</b>	<b>Ph.D. (figures unavailable)</b>
Islamic Studies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Islamic Theology</li> <li>• Islam and the Modern World</li> </ul>	12	9	
Religious Studies & World Religions	137	32	
Theology	158	6	
Middle Eastern Studies		8	
Middle Eastern Languages & Literature	95	7	

## **United States**

**Table 8**      **Current degree programmes in Islamic Studies and related subjects at US four-year colleges and universities**  
National Center for Education Statistics College Navigator,  
<http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator>

<b>Degree programme</b>	<b>Institutions: Undergraduate (BA) degrees</b>	<b>Institutions: Postgraduate (MA, PhD) degrees</b>
Islamic Studies	4	2
Religion/Religious Studies	551	115
Near and Middle Eastern Studies	29	16
Arabic Language and Literature	10	3

**Table 9 Degrees granted in Islamic Studies and related disciplines at US four-year colleges and universities, 2002-03 to 2005-06\***

National Center for Education Statistics Annual Digest,  
<http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest>

\*Figures reflect degrees granted not student enrolment.

Year	Degree programme	B.A.	M.A.	Ph.D.
<b>2002-03</b>	Islamic Studies	0	1	2
	Religious Studies	3753	634	256
	Near and Middle Eastern Studies	123	82	30
	Arabic Language/Literature	13	3	0
<b>2003-04</b>	Islamic Studies	1	2	0
	Religious Studies	3967	560	210
	Near and Middle Eastern Studies	140	132	29
	Arabic Language/Literature	13	3	1
<b>2004-05</b>	Islamic Studies	1	3	1
	Religious Studies	3971	523	197
	Near and Middle Eastern Studies	178	102	37
	Arabic Language/Literature	21	5	0
<b>2005-06</b>	Islamic Studies	2	2	2
	Religious Studies	4041	510	185
	Near and Middle Eastern Studies	158	142	32
	Arabic Language/Literature	26	4	2

## Australia

**Table 10 Current degree programmes in Islamic Studies and related subjects at Australian universities**

Australian Government, Study in Australia, <http://studyinaustralia.gov.au>

Degree programme	Institutions: Undergraduate (BA) degrees	Institutions: Postgraduate (MA, PhD) degrees
Islamic Studies	-	1
Religious Studies	-	1
Theology	27	28
Middle Eastern Studies	-	1
Arabic Studies/Arts	3	-

Student numbers unavailable.